



From 'rat hulk' to maiden of Leith Basin



POTTED HISTORY

- Built in 1919 by George Brown & Company in Greenock
- Length: 125.6ft
- Originally named the HMS Samuel Green
- Served as officer and group commander's accommodation during the Second World War
- Sailed to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in search of buried treasure in 1924
- First moored into the Water of Leith in 1983
- Last functioned as a cocktail bar 13 years ago

Eyesore vessel is ship shape after owner sinks cash

NAINA BHARDWAJ

FOR years it has been a rat-infested eyesore, its slowly deteriorating bulk becoming an increasing embarrassment to Leith.

But now the owners of the Ocean Mist, the luxury yacht that was once the plaything of millionaires and socialites but that had been left rusting for 13 years in Leith Basin are confident their ambitious plans to restore it to its former glory are within sight of success.

Alan Pendle attracted a raised eyebrow or two when he decided to restore the Ocean Mist to her former glory by converting her into a fully functioning hotel while promising to maintain the vessel's rich history.

And, as he gave the Evening News a sneak peak on the ongoing restoration, Mr Pendle admitted it was a labour of love.

Mr Pendle said: "My wife and I have spent our life savings on her and she's not a normal hotel so we hope that she becomes the jewel of Leith."

The entrepreneur is no stranger to revamping ships as he was responsible for every part of the design and management of the £5m MV Fingal project. The Ocean Mist will undergo a similar transformation but retain the history which makes her so special with each cabin either named after a historical reference, former owner or naval term.

For example, a cabin on



BEFORE AND AFTER: Top left, Ocean Mist when Alan Pendle first found her; main, restored to her former glory; above, she was 'teeming with rats' but is now shipshape

the main deck will be called King George IV owing to the fact that it overlooks the quay where the King first stepped foot in Scotland.

Meanwhile, there will be a cabin on the lower deck named Chain Locker, referring to the space in the forward part of the ship which contains the anchor chain when the anchor is secured for sea.

The Ocean Mist will also have a bar called the Castle View Bar owing to its spectacular view of Edinburgh Castle and a forward lounge called

The Bridge after its view of the Victoria Swing Bridge.

The Ocean Mist was due to be completed in time for the Edinburgh Festival this year but the coronavirus outbreak has meant that it will be ready in early spring.

Originally named the HMS Samuel Green, the ship was built in Greenock by George Brown & Company and completed in 1919 to replace the steam trawlers which had been lost during the First world War.

In 1920, she was acquired by Kenelm Lee Guinness, a mem-

ber of the brewing family and a racing driver who used the ship to ferry his cars across the sea to France and Italy.

After years of various tasks and incarnations she found her final home in Leith in 1983.

Hilary Thacker, Treasurer of the community organisation Friends of the Water of Leith Basin said: "It was teeming with rats and it had become a public health issue. Now, it's fit to go to sea in theory."

Old cars found in Water of Leith - Page 23

Time to call the midwife once again

FILMING has commenced on the Christmas special of Call The Midwife's tenth anniversary series, it has been announced.

The BBC One series, made by Neal Street Productions, will return with a 90-minute episode.

The episode, set in December 1965, will see Sister Monica, who is played by Judy Parfitt, get rushed to hospital.

Executive producer Dame Pippa Harris said: "Alongside the rest of the country, we have all been devastated to see how Covid-19 has affected people around the world.

"Our midwives and nurses may not be the frontline heroes of today's NHS, but by getting back to work, they, and we, hope to bring some joy and respite into people's lives.

"In such difficult times, the values of Call the Midwife seem more resonant than ever. In series 10 we will continue to celebrate the skill and bravery of the UK's NHS whilst bringing laughter and love into our homes."

Other popular programmes including EastEnders, Holby City, Doctors, Top Gear, Coronation Street and Emmerdale have already resumed production.

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