

# Cambria Trust Newsletter September 2012 No. 38



## From Cambria's Wheel

The newsletter lead article "**From Cambria's Cabin**" was always Tony Ellis's preserve, he led the newsletter until his untimely death in 2008, and since then I have tried to follow his footsteps.

In the May 2012 newsletter William Collard reported on the re-dedication of **Cambria** and the blessing of the Memorial Compass and Plaque to Tony's memory.

I feel it is fitting that the "lead article" should represent Tony's place at the guiding end of **Cambria**, from the wheel, overlooking the compass. Now that the barge is sailing again the cabin is the preserve of the skipper in charge of her current mission, whatever and wherever that may be. I trust our readers will be happy with the change.

**SB Cambria** was present at the **Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant** in the **Pool of London** and this will be reported in more detail elsewhere. She sailed back from London with a charter party of Rotarians, not young carers as is her usual crew, but those responsible for arranging the young peoples' charter trips, a senior Rotarian Crew.

On arrival at Gravesend on 8<sup>th</sup> June there was a quick turnaround in preparation for her next charter with the '5th young carers group'. They returned to disembark at the PLA Camel, Denton, Gravesend on June 10<sup>th</sup>.

From here **Cambria** had two day charters; on June 14<sup>th</sup> 'The Bawdsey Haven Yacht Club', and on June 15<sup>th</sup> 'the Company of Shipwrights'. Her passage back to Faversham on June 18<sup>th</sup> a lively one, weather wise, was a training session for volunteers. At Standard Quay, Faversham she was on educational and public duties until the next young carers charter which set off on July 6<sup>th</sup>. This trip ended at the Bull Nose, in the Medway, anchoring on Sunday July 8<sup>th</sup>, lack of wind prevented her making Gravesend as planned.

**Sea Change of Maldon** now took command and had **Cambria** on a long charter. During the early stages the barge took delivery of a 'token cargo of Old Bob Bitter' at Maldon, and delivered to various ports, the last being Gravesend. They also fitted in a hull cleaning and painting job. **Cambria** arrived in Gravesend in time to take part in the Thames Sailing Barge Match again winning line honours: Captain Titchener and crew coming away with an armful of Cups.

Following the match **Cambria** remained on the Town Pier Pontoon, Gravesend for a week. During her stay the volunteers hosted several events on board: –

On Tuesday members of the Gravesend Art Club came, and enjoyed time painting and using their photographic skills on board.

On Wednesday two lectures were given by **Hugh Perks on the 'Evolution of the Sailing Barge'**. The evening lecture was particularly popular.

The Thursday talks by local volunteer Tricia Gurnett in support of **RNLI and Cambria** were sadly poorly supported, but the visit by the Gravesend Lifeboat crew to the barge was enjoyed by both crews, familiarising themselves with each other's vessel.

Friday was a busy day: **The Thames and Medway Canal Association** had an on board exhibition coupled with a morning and afternoon lecture given by their members. An impromptu visit by Gravesham council members accompanied by colleagues from Medway council mingled with the proceedings.

Later in the evening the **Cambria Sea Scouts** based at Greenhithe, came on board to have a look at the barge followed with a talk and question session.

During each day the barge was open for public visitors, and during the week around 180 people took advantage of the opportunity to come on board. Through sales and donations we raised several hundred pounds towards **Cambria**.

**Sea Change of Maldon** took **Cambria** away from the pontoon on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2012 to continue their charter on the East Coast, which included a re-enactment of **SB Cambria's** last cargo run in 1970, from Tilbury to Ipswich. It is possible to follow their activities on **Facebook**, under the heading '**Cambria Watch**', and there will be a continuation of the barges activities in the next newsletter.

### **Basil Brambleby**



**Tony Farnham presenting the 1930 Cambria Cup to Basil Brambleby.**

### **1930 Cambria Cup**

June 19<sup>th</sup> 1930 a day with very little wind saw **Cambria** enter the Thames Barge Match, Coasting Class along with three other barges of the present day fleet; **Phoenician**, **Reminder** and **Thistle**. Unlike the last two Thames Barge Matches where the **Cambria** has triumphed emphatically she had to settle for third place behind the **Redoubtable** and **Phoenician**. **Reminder** incidentally won her class and the **Thistle** was unplaced.

For finishing in third place in the Coasting Class the Cambria's captain A.B. Finch and owners FT Everard's and Sons Ltd were presented with a cup by Mess'rs Bray Gibb & Co Ltd. Looking them up on Google revealed that they were a London Based insurance company underwriting manufacturers of a aeroplanes and seaplanes.

82 years later, Tony Farnham, having acquired the cup for third place, presented that day, decided that he would like to return it to the SB Cambria. The presentation, to recognize and encourage members and volunteers to continue their high standard of support carrying the barge into the future, progressing her successful career, as a significant part of our Maritime Heritage.

At the re-dedication this year, the cup was awarded to Basil Brambleby who accepted it on behalf of all the members/volunteers whose hard work and dedication ensured that Cambria is the credit to the barge world that she is today.

Well done to Basil and his team and many thanks to Tony Farnham for this wonderful gesture.

**Dave Brooks, Secretary SB Cambria**

### **Cambria's Journey to QDJP by Bethany Pihama.**

Amidst darkening clouds we spotted the red sails of **Cambria** greeting us from afar as we approached the jetty at Gravesend. Walking down the gangway, I felt a sharp breath of air across my cheek and the feeling of excitement grew. We greeted some of the crew and slinging our bags onboard, we hopped after them, following them onto the familiar deck. After a brief safety talk, we prepared to leave the mooring. With a bit of sudden frantic activity on the part of the more experienced crew, we easily slid our way out and proceeded on our journey.

We tacked across the river and made good progress; the water streaming out from under **Cambria's** bow slicing through the grey water. We passed under Dartford Bridge, listening to the rush of cars and the sounds of a ferry coming up river from behind us. During one of the tacks across, my sister and I were allowed to take the wheel, relieving the captain of his duties for a moment (or perhaps adding to them!). It was amazing to feel the barge respond to your actions and thinking that was me!

Mooring at Erith for the night, the deck was tidied – ropes coiled etc, and we went below to help get dinner ready for 17 people! After a hearty dinner (and a large amount of washing up), we crept on deck, hearing the soft sound of the waves lapping against the barge. The twinkling lights from the land glistened over the water to **Cambria**, who rocked gently on the waves, and the faint sounds of the leeboards creaking met our ears. We picked our way over to the compass, where dad had wanted to check the light that he had put underneath. The yellow glow lit up our faces, casting shadows onto the deck and water. Eventually, after a tiring day, we made our way to our bunks; listening to the quiet chatter that died down and the quiet swish of the water.

After a surprisingly comfortable night, I woke early and listened to the sounds of preparations to make way. Above my bunk through the small clouded pane of glass, I could see **Cambria's** mast towering above in a cloudy sky. We sailed off to where our tug would arrive to tow us to the other side of Tower Bridge.

We waited for a while for our tug to arrive and in the meantime hoisted our flags, which fluttered proudly in the wind. With **Cambria** now safely attached to the little tug, the second stage of our journey began. Along our way, it turned into a bit of a sightseeing trip – seeing the Thames Barrier, parts of the Olympic park and more. The water was busier, with many little tugs or ferry boats passing, with people snapping pictures of us as we were towed proudly past.

There was a short wait before Tower Bridge opened, the water before the bridge was crowded with activity and final preparations for the pageant. We eventually made our way towards the end of our journey; just on

the other side of Tower Bridge. With two other barges ahead of us, and Tower Bridge slowly opening in the background, it was a fantastic shot for photos! It was another moment which highlighted our pride in being part of **Cambria's** story.

### **SB Cambria dressed overall ready for the QDJP.**



### **Queens Diamond Jubilee Pageant : Sunday 3 June 2012**

The morning dawned grey and wet but with an air of optimism we headed to London in the hope of the weather holding and it not 'raining on Her Majesty's parade'. Alas this was not to be the case...

It was a privilege as President of the Rotary Club of Maidstone Riverside, to be invited with my wife Jo to be onboard Cambria to witness the pageant from her mooring close to Tower Bridge. We accompanied the Rotary District Governor Lynn Mitchell and her husband Ray to be the Rotary representatives amongst the few able to be onboard Cambria for the day, due to the strict conditions imposed by the authorities.

Lynn had the vision for Rotary Clubs to enable young carers to have respite weekends away from home and made the connection with Cambria. I was onboard for the first Charter weekend in September last year and have sailed 3 times since as a volunteer crew hand, (with 2 more weekends in October).

We arrived at St Katherine's Pier after moving through security for our transfer to Cambria. There we met others from Cambria Trust waiting to board. There was an amazing atmosphere amongst the crowd with flags waving and the majority of people wearing something red, white and blue.

The transfer on the rib was daunting for some and also led to wet bottoms! On arriving on board we were greeted by Rob Bassi, Basil and Nancy, Bruce and Kitty. The smell of coffee and pastries was most welcome and we all soon settled in. A short while later the Patron of Cambria Trust David Suchet and his family joined us.

The crowds on the riverbank were in fine voice and some clearly thought we were all important people as they waved to us and observed us through their binoculars. We couldn't help but raise a glass to them!

With the benefit of TV on board (thank you Bruce) we kept in touch with what was going on up river as the pageant assembled whilst enjoying a wonderful lunch. We also realised that we were also occasionally in view on BBC TV as Matt Baker and Sophie Reyworth gave their commentary from a studio pod just 100 metres from us. If the camera panned to Sophie's right Cambria could be seen behind them. This tempted David's son at one point to run out onto the pontoon and wave for us to see on screen.

As time moved on, and the pageant made its way down river towards us so the clouds became heavier, and the rain began to fall. No sooner did we get a view of the top of the Shard it disappeared again. It was indeed going to rain on the Queen's parade.

The crescendo from the crowd, helicopters above and the sounding of horns from boats moored along the route alerted us to the arrival in view of the front of the pageant. Braving the wind and rain we made our way on deck to witness the spectacle heading our way. It was an unbelievable sight and one that made our spines tingle. We were about to witness from close proximity an historic and fantastic event. The 'bell barge' spearheading the procession came into view followed by rowing boats spread from one side of the river to the other. Then we could see the Royal barge in all its glory. As it sailed past us we 'toasted the Queen' who we could see clearly along with other members of the Royal Family, less than a 100 metres away. The boats just kept coming, all shapes, sizes and colours, row after row filling the river.

The honking horns, calls from the crowd, sounds of the boat engines, helicopters, music and waving flags were a spectacle to behold. The sheer number and type of boats that came past was incredible. It looked good on the TV but to actually be there on the water in the 'thick of it' will be an experience we will not forget.

A wonderful display of pomp and ceremony – what the UK does best, - witnessed from the decks of a remarkable boat, who herself has a distinguished maritime history, in typical British weather in great company and with good food and wine. What a day! Thank you Cambria and members of Cambria Trust.

Oh, did I say we got wet through? Well it didn't matter. We were dry by the time we got home.....

Thank you all.

**Martin and Jo Carter**

#### **ROTARY, CAMBRIA AND YOUNG CARERS AN INTRODUCTION BY ROTARIAN LYNN MITCHELL**

It's hard to believe that it was 2 years ago, in September 2010, that I first met Basil Brambleby and Bruce Richardson, and said to them " I have an idea" .....

..... I was due to start my year as District Governor, for Rotary District 1120, in July 2011, and had already chosen my themes, Music and 'Giving Children a Childhood'.

I'd discovered that young carers are a group of children who often get forgotten. They perhaps care for a parent or sibling – some from as young as 4 or 5. I'd thought about inviting the members of our Clubs to sponsor young carers to have breaks away and had been searching for a house, somewhere in our District, which covers Kent, East Sussex and SE London. At the same time, quite by chance, I had heard from one of our members that the Cambria was being re-built, and that's when I first contacted Basil.

At that first meeting I put my idea for young carers to have breaks away on Cambria, and to my delight, everyone was keen to know more. We started to piece together how this would work and then I was taken to visit Cambria for the first time, in her dry dock at Standard Quay. Work was in full swing, sawing, painting, drilling, and I've never heard so many radios playing on different stations all at the same time! We discussed how the sleeping quarters could be fitted in, so that boys and girls could take part, how many children for each sailing, suitable age groups and endless questions and answers took place, followed by even more paperwork!

Cambria was due to be ready to sail in the summer of 2011, and when visiting our Rotary Clubs, I began explaining about the project and how it could be funded. I suggested that fundraising could be any event at all, perhaps with a music theme. Our members were really supportive of the idea, especially as it was a local project, it ticked many boxes.

A 'trial run' was planned for the first weekend in September, and this was sponsored by my own Club, Dartford, and the Maidstone Riverside Club, and a group of young carers, boys and girls age 14 – 16, from the Maidstone area went on their voyage. It was a huge success, and as we had received enough sponsorship for a second trip, we quickly arranged this for the first weekend in October, this time with young carers from the Tonbridge area. Again, a wonderful experience for the youngsters, and we all knew that this idea was working!

We met again for debrief meetings, and made plans for sailing trips for 2012. Eight weekends were put in the diary, and at the time of writing, 4 have taken place, with 2 more this month, and 2 for October.

On each trip there are 2 volunteer bosuns, one from Rotary (usually from the sponsoring Club/s), and one from the Carers Association connected to the group of young carers.

A week or so before each weekend away, we have an Information Meeting, with the young carers, and wherever possible their parents come along too. Rob Bassi or Basil gives a brief history of Cambria. It's also an opportunity to meet with the bosuns, members of the sponsoring Rotary Club/s, to see a DVD and photos from other trips and to ask questions. Each group of young carers are different, but the feeling is always the same – anticipation and excitement.

I have been amazed at the support the idea has received and the sailing dates we had for 2012 were completely booked. The project will continue and already there are pledges and sponsorship for 2013, and we are looking to substantially increase the number of trips next year – perhaps with mid week breaks too and there may be the possibility of static breaks away, staying on the Cambria, for the younger carers who would be too little to actually sail her.

There are 86 Rotary Clubs in our District and members have raised funds in very different ways, from swimming a marathon to golf days, and with many music events including an Old Time Music Hall and a Ships, Shells 'n Shanties evening.

Cambria looks beautiful, and we're very proud that the Rotary Logo and the District website [www.rotary1120.org](http://www.rotary1120.org) is now on the topsail for all to see.

To say that the young carers have a wonderful time on their weekend would be an understatement. This unique opportunity gives them an exhilarating experience, away from home, with other youngsters who understand their everyday lifestyle.

A few comments from their blog .....

*..... The first day of sailing was very different because we needed to do a lot to even get going, but it was fun and brilliant. I hope I can come again for longer ..... Today has been amazing, the whole trip is amazing, I've loved every minute of it ..... What a lovely day, the weather has been perfect and we sailed under the beautiful canvas, what a privilege ..... Tonight we stood on board looking at the amazing number of stars in the sky and we all saw a shooting star. Perfect! ..... My most memorable experience was going out on the bow sprit. It has helped me learn new skills. It has been a great experience. I would love to do it again .....*

For me, to see how much progress has been achieved this year, I almost have to pinch myself when I remember that it all started from a little idea. I took part in the Rotary Adult Voyage in June, so I can fully appreciate what the young carers' experience, and, how stunning Cambria is when she's sailing.

Cambria now has a very different cargo, and I can't thank you all enough.

#### **Useful Information: Cambria Trust**

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***Thank you.***