

The Meridian

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LANGHAM WINES AN UPDATE FROM JUSTIN LANGHAM

By the time you read this we will have completed our 2019 harvest but currently, about three weeks away from harvest, we are having a very anxious time. The potential crop on the vines is very similar to last year's record breaking crop of 93 tonnes, well above our average of 39 tonnes, but as the weather has now turned for the worse, part or all of this could be ruined before it is ripe enough to pick.

I have said all year that I wouldn't expect another year like 2018 again possibly in my lifetime but, if we did have it the following year, as welcome as this would be in many respects it does put quite a strain on our business. This is due to the fact that our sparkling wine has to age for several years so it has to be financed and kept. From last year's harvest we had to invest in more tank space, and so we took the novel approach of purchasing concrete tanks which have been built below ground to store our "reserve" wine, wine that will be blended with future years production to even out our annual bottling and make the wine more consistent. This, in the long run, will have a lower carbon footprint and be cheaper as we won't need to heat and chill the wine at different times of the year to maintain a constant temperature.

We also invested in our own bottling machine, which was the only part of the process we didn't directly do ourselves, but had a contractor come on site with their machine. Due



Concrete tanks being installed to store 'reserve' wine

to the size of last year's harvest, we had more to bottle than ever before, 80,000 bottles, so the economics of buying our machine were looking more favourable and it gave us greater control over the bottling process, which is important.



Bottled wine stored in 'cold war' tunnels at Portland Port

Our wine storage building was then too small to cope with this increased amount, so we took the novel approach of converting some cold war era underground tunnels and caverns at Portland Port into wine cellars. They are a perfect constant temperature, so again will be cheaper and less energy intensive than storing in an above ground temperature controlled building. Unlike still wines, sparkling wine made by the "Traditional Method", or "Methode Champenoise", has the secondary fermentation carried out in the bottle. This secondary fermentation gives the wine a little more alcohol, but most importantly gives it the bubbles from the carbon dioxide dissolved in the wine. The byproduct of this secondary fermentation is dead yeast or "lees" but this gives the wine a lot more character and flavour when the wine is aged for some years, unlike Prosecco which isn't aged at all and isn't bottle fermented.

When the wine is considered ready, it will then be transported back to our winery where the riddling and disgorging process will be carried out; this removes the lees from the bottle, before it is corked and sold.

If this all sounds a bit complicated, do come and visit us when you are passing to learn (and taste) more about our wines!

STONE MARINE PROPULSION - GATE RUDDERS

Stone Marine Propulsion's latest development, the Gate Rudder, is probably the most significant single advance in screw propulsion technology since the first propeller was invented over 180 years ago. In official tests the rudders produced energy savings of 14%. While this figure is impressive, what is even more so is that the results were achieved when comparing two identical ships, operating on the same routes, one fitted with a standard flap rudder, the other with Gate Rudders. Comparing fuel consumption over a period of time it was found that the Gate Rudder equipped vessel was regularly using up to 25% less fuel than her sister ship.

The patented device was originally invented by Chairman Sadatomo Kuribayashi of Kuribayashi Steam Co, and longtime Stone Marine Propulsion collaborator Noriyuki Sasaki, a visiting Professor at the University of Strathclyde. Development and testing has been carried out by Dr Sasaki, Strathclyde University and a Japanese Consortium. Although the design team were predicting a good improvement in fuel efficiency, the figures that are being achieved have exceeded all expectations.

As Adrian Miles, Stone Marine Propulsion's Managing Director, has pointed out, "It isn't really correct to describe the Gate Rudder system as a rudder. It is a combined propulsion device with the effect of a ducted propeller and a stern thruster."

Apart from the large fuel economies on ships fitted with Gate Rudders, the crew will benefit from a number of other significant improvements. The Captain of the Gate Rudder fitted vessel confirmed that her handling and general seaworthiness were much better at sea in heavy weather and in harbour the Gate Rudders acted as a powerful stern thruster enabling harbour entries in worse weather than would normally be the case and reducing the requirement to use tugs when docking or departing. With the concept now proven, development programs will be accelerated. These currently include an application for European funding from the Horizon 2020 project to retrofit Gate Rudders to tankers. This year, papers on the Gate Rudder have been presented at various conferences including RINA Propellers and Impellers in London and at AMT in Rome.



Gate Rudder

Stone Marine Propulsion see the Gate Rudder as a potentially ground breaking device which will make a significant contribution to world shipping's ability to meet the tough environmental targets put on the sector by Government and shipping regulations.

With the Gate Rudder being unique and suitable for all types and sizes of ship Adrian Miles commented that, "We look forward to exciting times for the company in the future as we spread the news at events and exhibitions around the world."

POWER GENERATION PROJECT ON PORTLAND PORT



Portland Port with the power plant site in the foreground

After many months of discussion and negotiation, in May this year Portland Port finalised an agreement for the development of a new "Energy from Waste" power plant at the Port. As the name indicates the plant takes waste that would otherwise go to landfill and turns it into useable energy. The waste is burnt and the superheated steam produced is used to drive steam turbines to generate electricity. Once the necessary planning permissions are in place a new thirty year lease will be finalised enabling the construction of an 11MW plant. The power produced, the equivalent of power for over 20,000 homes, will be available not only to the Port and other port tenants but will also help supply local demand on the Isle of Portland itself. The availability of a new power supply will also greatly enhance the Port's ability to attract other new business with high power demands as well as allow the future provision of shore power to ships.

NEWS FROM STONE MARINE SERVICES

As we move into the latter part of 2019 Stone Marine Services has some cause for celebration. The business has continued to strengthen its client portfolio in the UK and internationally with customers from Latin America to Turkmenistan - and with growth comes opportunity! Between now and the year-end Stone Marine will be formalising several new cooperation and agency agreements, which will build on the core competence of servicing propulsion equipment and deck machinery by adding new products.

MORE EXPANSION AT PORTLAND

Following the success of the Outer Coaling Pier Extension project the port is now investing in Q Pier to provide two additional deep-water berths.

As Portland Port continues to expand there is increasing congestion at the two main deep water berths with cruise ships, cargo vessels and often Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels all jostling for space. The one thing the Port doesn't like to do is turn away ships and so a major investment started this year to add two more deep water berths at Q Pier, a long jetty in relatively shallow water. This investment will supplement the successful lengthening of one of the existing two deep water berths in 2016.

Both sides of the outer arm of Q Pier have been strengthened with a sheet pile structure and the pier has been lengthened by 50 metres with the addition of another dolphin. The strengthening is needed in advance of dredging, otherwise dredging could undermine the structure.

The dredging operation will commence early next year and involve removing 135,000 cubic metres of material to form two berths with a minimum water depth of 11m. The total investment in the strengthening of Q Pier and the dredging is in excess of £4.0 million and will allow the Port to cope with the growth in ship visits expected in the next decade.



Q Pier

On the 27th September, Steven Fyfe and Ryan McIntyre attended the Sea Trade Exhibition in Dubai where they met industry colleagues and discussed new service opportunities and partnerships. To end what was a successful week in the Emirates, a new cooperation agreement was formally signed which will support the Namibian service centre to work on REINTJES gearboxes as a preferred partner in the region. REINTJES has existed for almost 140 years and has been manufacturing maritime geaarboxes for the global market since 1955 at its headquarters in Hameln, Germany. With a combined heritage spanning 300 years, we look forward to seeing this new relationship grow and prosper.



Arun Kumar, Reintjes Regional Managing Director for the Middle East and Africa , and Steven Fyfe, Managing Director of Stone Marine Services

To meet market demand for shaft seals a new sales and service agreement has been agreed with Versitec. Based in Canada and the United States, Versitec has been manufacturing seal solutions since 2002 with users of their products benefiting from improved performance and reliability with the environmental characteristics that are now deemed essential as operators turn their attention to more sustainable products. Effective seals which prevent any oil leakage, and of course keep the water out, are vital for the safety of both the ship and the environment. Seals require regular servicing and replacement something Stone Marine Services is well equipped to perform.

To complement the Versitec agreement Stone Marine will shortly be announcing a cooperation with Sub Sea Global who is based in Miami, Florida. This exciting opportunity will see Stone Marine provide expertise and resource in the overhaul of large thruster units most likely in the Gulf region where many large drill vessels require regular maintenance.

The company will continue to look at added value services and agreements providing they complement the existing portfolio and deliver profit opportunity and customer benefit.

ALL CHANGE AT SHIPCARE

Don Quilliam has retired as Managing Director of Stone Marine Shipcare after an astonishing 53 years of service with Stone Marine companies. Don joined Stone Manganese Marine in 1966 as an apprentice draughtsman soon after the Company was formed by the merger of J. Stone & Company of Greenwich and The Manganese Bronze and Brass Company of Birkenhead. He progressed through many positions including Chief Inspector, Works Engineer, Works Manager, Technical Manager, before becoming General Manager of the Birkenhead site responsible for 350 employees. Don's unrivalled experience and knowledge of propellers was then put to good use in 2000 when he became Managing Director of newly formed Stone Marine Shipcare, a position held until June this year when he handed over to his able deputy, Fran Johnson, another long serving Stone Marine employee with 22 years of experience.

Don built up Stone Marine Shipcare from the Service Division of Stone Manganese Marine into a leading propeller repair company with a worldwide reputation for technical excellence. In addition to repairs, propeller modification to improve fuel efficiency and reduce engine wear are an important speciality: Stone Marine Shipcare works closely with our propeller supplier Stone Marine Propulsion, and today provides an unrivalled propulsion service to shipowners. Fortunately, Don is continuing to work on as a consultant and so his unique knowledge will continue to benefit the company.



The Chairman presenting Don Quilliam with a silver salver

WINTERS MARINE

Exciting plans are now in place at Winters Marine Ltd in Salcombe to double the size of the undercover boat storage offered.

This new facility of 1,000 square metres will allow for more boats to be worked on during the winter and meet the demand of new boat owners who wish to keep their boats looking pristine all year round.



Sublift 40T from Swede Ship

A fully enclosed building is quite rare now in boatyards who often only offer open sided storage or on stacking frames. The new shed will be completed with a bunded brick wall to meet the environmental impacts of a SSSI area and will be able to accommodate boats up to 20 metres in length.

Work is due to start in August 2020 with a finish date of October 2020, in time for the winter storage period.

In addition to this investment there are plans to upgrade the lifting equipment on site which will see an increase in the size of boat that can come ashore, allowing Winters into a new market of yacht owner.

A new 40 ton fully submersible remotely controlled hoist will be purchased at a cost of £200,000. This state of the art machine can be driven down the existing slipway completely underwater, apart from a snorkel to provide air to the engine, whilst the operator stays on dry land.

In total the investment will be in the region of £500,000 and will put the boatyard in a very good position for many years to come.

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