

## **Chapter 2**

### **1961 to the present Towage Services Operated by Fowey Harbour Commissioners**

Foreword:-

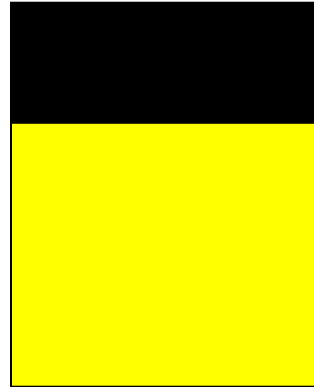
This chapter records the history of the Towage service, the tugs and people from 1961 when the Harbour Commissioners took over operating the tugs and ensuring that large ships could use the port for the export of china clay and later cruise liners and the visits of larger war ships

Full details and the history of each tug are recorded separately.

## The Harbour Commissioners House Flag and funnel markings



**The Harbour Commissioners House Flag**



**The Harbour Commissioners Funnel Colours**

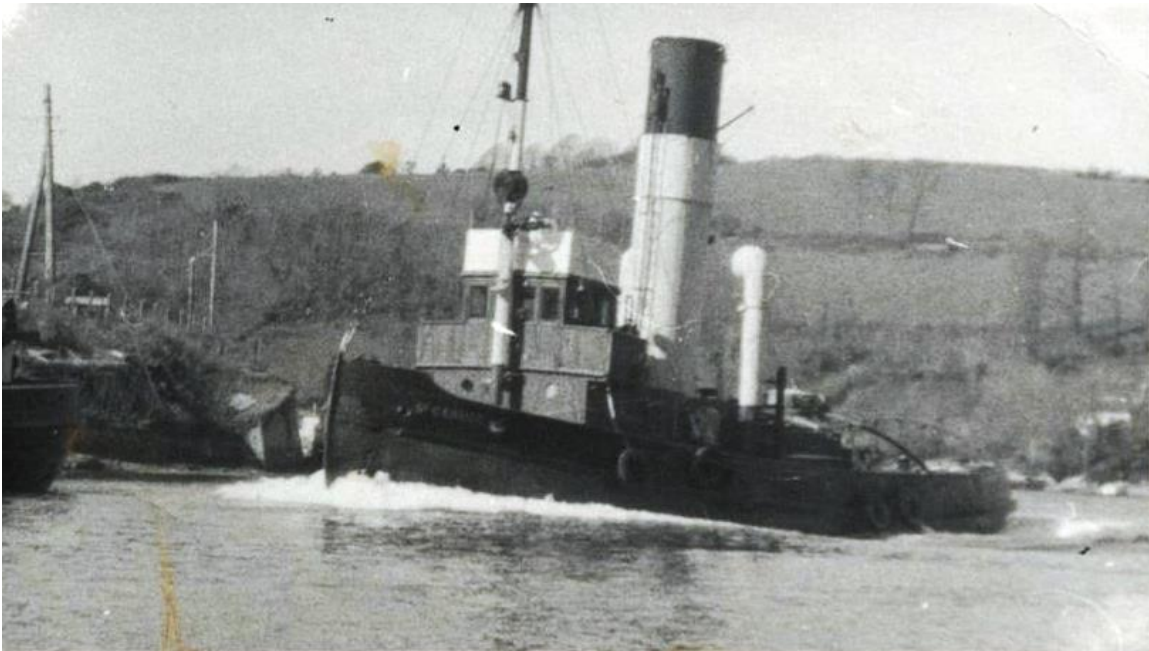
**Hull colours were traditionally green except for dedicated pilot cutters which are black. After the arrival of Morgawr hull colours gradually changed to Black**

For some time the Harbour commissioners had been considering the need to take over the operation of the tugs with the Towage Committee looking at the options on a number of occasions. Steam tugs had needed large numbers of crews and had to be manned around the clock. It had become uneconomical to operate the tugs on a stand-alone basis. Discussions started with the tug owners as to the best way forward. These included the chairman of the China Clay company and British rail representatives. It was becoming apparent that the only way forward was for the Harbour Commissioners to take on providing the service.

Meanwhile, the Harbour Master, Captain Mitchell, anticipating a need for the commissioners to consider different tugs had found details for their consideration. The admiralty was selling a tug "Empire Imp" and at a meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1961 the Board agreed to submit a tender of £5000 guineas. Captain Mitchell also made the journey to Denmark with a view to purchase the tug St. Knud, now named "Othnia."

Agreement to take over the towage service was reached on **29<sup>th</sup> August 1961** but not necessarily to purchase the two tugs. Penleath needed replacing. On the 19<sup>th</sup> September an offer was made of £7000 for Othnia with an option to go up another £500. It was agreed to withdraw from the "Empire Imp" as on inspection she was not in as good a condition. Later in September it was agreed to purchase the "Tolbenny" for £8250 which would be taken out of Lloyds survey and a price of £7200 was agreed for the Othnia.

The Othonia was Built at Fredrickhavn in 1931 for the Odense Harbour Authority and she sailed from Odense on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1960 and arrived in Fowey on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1960 having stopped in Rotterdam for bunkers and food. She was renamed **St. Canute** the English for St. Knud and started her service in Fowey late in November. The vessel was well maintained and had spacious accommodation. She was built as an icebreaking tug and had very thick plating for the job. On the measured mile she registered 10.75 knots. She was 86ft long with a GRT of 153 tons. Her coal fired steam engine developed 500 IHP. Ernie Holder, her Master, found her difficult to handle at times, especially when the forward tanks were light.



**St. Canute steaming down Lew Roads from Mixtow**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1961 the Towage Co. was wound up. The Commissioners took over increasing charges to finance the purchase of tugs.

The Commissioners took over both **Tolbenny** and **Penleath** deciding to dispose of the latter in 1962. She left to be scrapped in Rotterdam.

The **St Canute** needed boiler repairs in Dec 1961 and had to go to Plymouth to facilitate this. Boiler repairs and maintenance was a continuous process with steam tugs with rigorous surveys ensuring all was safe.

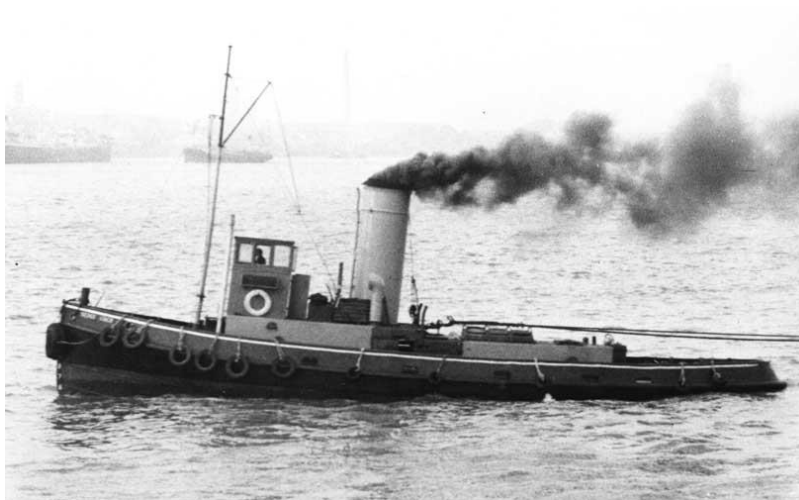
On 28<sup>th</sup> February 1962 the Danish ship Ingga Dan of Esberg went aground stern first in Peak Cove to the East of Panches Cross. She was 218ft long and 496 GRT. "**Tolbenny**" carried out her salvage towing her into the harbour and mooring her at Prime Cellars. A reward of £1500 was made.

1962 was the first year that tugs were used as committee ship for the Royal regatta a job St. Canute carried out for many years. There was a severe gale on the 29<sup>th</sup> / 30<sup>th</sup> September from SSE and the ss Merchant Duke parted her moorings and she was recovered by the St. Canute and the dredger Lantic Bay managing to moor her alongside the ss Daphne and remained on station for 12 hours. The Daphne which was laid up parted her mooring ropes in an easterly gale and "Tolbenny" provided steam to her to enable the ship to remoor. The Daphne sailed on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 1963 and the "Tolbenny" had to give steam again this time to the Merchant Duke also laid up.

Captain Mitchell was succeeded as Harbour Master in 1963 by Captain J.G. Wilson DFC, RNR and the latter soon recommended to the Harbour Commissioners that diesel power was the future for towage.

As there was apparently some doubt about the use of diesel it was agreed to arrange a towing match and the commissioners agreed to hire the tug "Sedgecock". This was for a period of 5 weeks at £100 per week. This covered a period when the "Tolbenny" was having major boiler/engine repairs. A smaller tug than other Fowey tugs, she had started life with a steam engine but had been re-engined with a Crossley HR8 engine. She arrived from Fleetwood on 7th February 1964 and was used on various tug jobs as evaluation. She was 70 ft long and 72 GRT, with the diesel engine she developed 500 BHP at 340 rpm.

The tug of war arranged by Capt. Wilson took place between the **St. Canute** in the steam corner and the "Sedgecock" in the diesel one. The larger and more powerful St. Canute could not hold the "Sedgecock" although at first she held her own but as steam pressure was reduced so did her power. The diesel engine, even operating below designed power and with apparently the wrong propeller, towed the Canute down the harbour with the Board Members watching from the Board Room. The Sedge Cock was later slipped by her owners at Brazen Island to change the propeller.



The Sedge Cock

The competition was a success in convincing the Commissioners. However, it was apparent that the “Sedge Cock” was too small for the port operations, especially as the ships were getting bigger. She left the port for Denmark on 1<sup>st</sup> June sold for £26500.

In May 1964 the Rochester based diesel tug **Enticette** owned by the London and Rochester Trading Co. also known as Crescent shipping was inspected by Captain Wilson. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June an offer for her was accepted this subject to survey which was carried out by H.E.Moss & Co. On 6<sup>th</sup> July the Commissioners were successful in purchasing her.

She was built in 1953 at Richard Dunston, Thorne on the Humber largely for barge work. At 91 GRT she had a Crossley 2 stroke engine developing 600 BHP. She was 84 ft in length with a bollard pull of 7.5 tons and cost £26,500. Captain Wilson mate Hunkin and engineer Salt, travelled up that day and with an engineer from the previous owners set sail for Fowey. The wind increased and they first sheltered in Dover before heading further west sheltering in Cowes harbour and then taking the inside passage round the Isle of Wight. They left Cowes on the Sunday at 2045 hrs passing Portland Bill at 0300hrs on Monday arriving in Fowey at 1130hrs the next day. Her funnel markings were quickly changed to black and yellow.

She was registered in Fowey renamed as the **Cannis** on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1964 with Fletcher Hunkin as her first Master. The **Cannis** thus became the first diesel tug to be owned in Fowey.



Cannis and Canute towing a Russian ship off Polruan Castle

Part of the duties that mainly fell to the **Cannis** was to tow the dredging barges to sea. In addition to the Lantic Bay, which the Commissioners built at their Brazen Island yard in Polruan, the Commissioners obtained a dredging pontoon and three hopper barges. Four of these were dumped, weather permitting, each day.

With a new tug up and operating, the Commissioners then sold **Tolbenny** who was put up for sale On 27<sup>th</sup> July 1964. She went to W.J. Reynolds of Torpoint on 28th September for £1750. She was renamed Tactful by the new owners and returned to Fowey from time to time to assist when tugs were in maintenance. She continued operating under Cory Towage who took over Reynolds operations in Plymouth until 1973. In addition to the "Tactful", the Cory tug "Anthony" was chartered several times in 1966.



the "Anthony"

Within a year it was established that the operational costs for the "Cannis" were considerably less than the "St.Canute" and she could be in service within a short period of time. She also needed less crew.

The **St. Canute** operated for another 4 years when with increasing break downs it became necessary to seek a replacement for her. At the April meeting in 1968 the Board agreed to inspect two tugs owned by Tees Towing, Middlesbrough. The **Ingelby Cross** and the Golden Cross, sister tugs, with a top price of £32000. After an inspection by the Harbour Master and for a fee of £30000 the Ingelby Cross was purchased on 27<sup>th</sup> May. The name Gribbin was chosen however this was not available and "**Gribbin Head**" was adopted instead. Spare parts were bought separately which were considered essential as both tugs would now have the same model Crossley diesel engine. Arriving on 10<sup>th</sup> June she started work immediately, being renamed when she went on the slip. This tug was 87 ft long and had a bollard pull of 10 tons and was 132 GRT. She had dual operating from flying bridge and the bridge. Ernie Holder became her first Master, being succeeded by Basil "Spam" Miller. Terry Liston spent much of the time as her engineer whilst working in the Commissioners repair yard under Alfie Crapp who, as foreman engineer, was responsible for maintenance. This remained the case until Terry Liston took over as yard foreman and Bill Brown

moved from the **Cannis** to be engineer. With dredging duties largely falling to the **Cannis**, **Gribbin Head** assumed primary role for towage duties.

On 14<sup>th</sup> August she with the help of the “**Cannis**” towed the m.v.Trevisco out of Par harbour and once clear of the bay towed her to Falmouth on her own.

Various offers were made for the “**St. Canute**” including one to convert her to a house boat. The Board accepted the offer of £1750 from I.S.C.A. Maritime Museum ,Exeter at their meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September and on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1968 she steamed out of the harbour bound for the Exeter Canal under the Command of Capt. Wilson, the Harbour Master with engineers Hughes and Adams. After an overnight stop in Brixham she arrived at Exeter the following high tide where she became an exhibit as part of the Maritime Museum. Here she remained until 1999 when she left for a new home in Stocka, Sweden via Holland.

In the late 60's and early 70's the tugs were kept busy with the dredging programme associated with the construction of the new nos 5/6 jetties and other port improvements including the removal of Fowey Rock. “**Gribbin Head**” was taken out of Lloyds register in August 1969 as it was not necessary for her to make coastal passages and to reduce costs. She had also taken over the role of outside committee ship for the regattas.

Late in February 1972 the **Gribbin Head** towed the Dutch vessel m.v.Malasias from near the Eddystone into Par harbour. “Spam” Basi Miller became her master in April that year at the time when the **Cannis** collided with the bow of the “Antonio de Sotruslegud” making fast her tow line. Luckily there was no serious damage and no one was hurt. Another tow in job by the **Gribbin Head** on 21<sup>st</sup> July that year of the German vessel m.v.Oemborg resulted in a salvage claim being lodged.

Another ship which got into trouble and was assisted by the Gribbin Head was the Danish vessel Elizabeth Boye which had gone ashore on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1975 at Spit Beach at 0845hrs. She was towed off and into Fowey around noon.Her crew were Mssrs Miller, Scott, Nolan Liston.

In December 1976 D.Taylor who had been master of the Cannis for a number of years left and Graham Nolan was promoted to master. He remained her master until she left Fowey.

**Cannis** and **Gribbin Head** provided an increasing towage service until June 1986 when the Chairman Peter Voelcker proposed and the Commissioners agreed that a more powerful and newer tug was needed. By then the port was handling ships of 17,000 tons DWT and 164 metres length and when the Astrea, the largest ship handled, had an accommodation fire whilst in the port it was apparent that handling a dead ship of this size was not possible. The newly appointed Harbour Master Capt. Mike Sutherland inspected the tug **Forth** in Grangemouth and a purchase was completed on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1986. She was delivered to Fowey arriving at 0600hrs on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1986 after a 60hr



passage. She was renamed **Tregeagle** the name of the Commissioners old bucket dredger and a name of a legendary Cornish giant.

**Tregeagle** was built by John Lewis of Aberdeen in 1964 as the **Flying Demon** for Clyde Shipping Co. Ltd. At 93 ft length she has a GRT of 131 tons and the British Polar 1,000 BHP engine produced a 15 ton bollard pull. Her power being delivered through a variable pitch propeller in a steering Kort nozzle all controlled from the bridge. "Spam" Miller assumed command transferring from **Gribbin Head**. Graham Nolan, who had become Master of the **Cannis** in 1976 at the age of 24 years transferred to replace him. Bill Brown moved to the **Tregeagle** and Fran Crapp, who had become engineer on the **Cannis** moved as well. **Cannis** became the reserve tug covering for maintenance periods and when the **Tregeagle** went to Plymouth to provide cover for Cory Towage who operated the Plymgarth there.



Gribbin Head turn m.v Astrea in the swing ground





**Tregeagle , Gribbin Head and Cannis in convoy**

On 17th November 1987 the **Gribbin Head** suffered major engine failure caused when the holding bolt on the counter weight broke. This happened when she was towing barges for the dumping of dredged spoil. The weight smashed the crankcase and other terminal damage was caused to the engine making it uneconomical to repair. Given the age of the vessel, the Commissioners decided to acquire another vessel of similar capacity to **Tregeagle** and thus capable of handling the largest ships. With the insurance and her sale they were able to finance a replacement. **Gribbin Head** was sold to Haven Marine of Milford Haven and she left the port on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1988 under the tow of Dunheron owned by Carmet Towing. Dunheron, formally **Golden Cross**, was a sister ship of **Gribbin Head** being one of the three identical tugs built for Tees Towing. **Gribbin Head** was eventually re-engined and named Tuskar, heading first to Ireland and then Spain.

A suitable replacement was found in Sunderland. She was the **Dunhelm** owned by the Tyne and Wear Towing Co. She was inspected by Capt Sutherland, the Harbour Master, Tug Master "Spam Miller" and engineer foreman Terry Liston and found to be in good order. Her purchase was completed on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1988 and the following day she left her home port for the passage to Fowey arriving at 1500 hrs. on 21<sup>st</sup> March to be escorted in by **Tregeagle**. At 90 ft length with a GRT of 132 tonnes she was powered by a Ruston Hornby engine developing 970 BHP. This gives a 14.5 ton bollard pull through a conventional propeller drive system. She had a reputation of a reliable and able tug on the Tyne and was often used for the drag operation she would be needed to carry out in Fowey. She had been built in Richard Dunstone (Hessle) Yard in 1964. Taking the name **Pendennick**, she formed an ideal tug to complement **Tregeagle**. Graham Nolan transferred to her as Master along with Fran Crapp as engineer. Both had made the passage to Fowey in her in quite rough conditions.

**Cannis** had filled in the towage duties whilst in the period a replacement was being sought and towed the last barge to sea for dumping on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1988. The Dredging of Pont pill to provide deep water moorings had been completed and the disposal of surplus plant was made. The barges were sold in the June that year and the dredging pontoon left the harbour in September under tow of the Barribald tug **Proceed**.

In October 1989 the **Pendennick** did a spell of relief work in Plymouth assisting ships in and out of Victoria Wharf and Cattedown wharfs. On 19<sup>th</sup> October at 1700hrs the m.v.Bonita, fully loaded ran aground outside the harbour near Coombe beach. The **Pendennick** had just assisted her on sailing quickly attended and she was refloated and brought back into the harbour. Following a survey it was discovered she was holed in a number of places and the **Tregeagle** escorted her to Falmouth for dry-docking and repair. Pendennick returned to Plymouth in the December to tow the fuel barge "Contributor" to Fowey for slipping and engine repairs at Brazen Island.



Swinging the Julia with Pendennick and Tregeagle



Tregeagle and Pendennick manoeuvring m.v. Clary through Lew Roads

On the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1988 the Harbour Commissioners assumed responsibilities of pilotage for Fowey, Par and Charlestown. It was necessary to have a relief vessel capable of towing in Par and Fowey whilst also acting as relief pilot boat. The 42 ft Yarra was purchased from Bailey Boyton Marine of Hull. Renamed **Penleath**, the third vessel to carry the name, she was modified for the dual role. Powered by twin 6 cylinder 6 LXB Gardeners producing 180 BHP, her duties in Fowey were to assist in the turning of ships in Mixtow Reach and to move small plant, mooring barges etc. around the harbour.

The summer of 1991 saw the first cruise liner to enter the port. The Seabourn Pride entered the harbour in the June and was swung by the two tugs in the lower harbour mooring to the Underhills flood tide buoy. She was 133.4m long by 20.5m beam Gross Tonnage 9975 and built in 1988

This trade was new to the harbour and it became a regular feature during the summer months each year with as many as 12 ships calling in any one year. The Crystal Harmony arrived in September 1994 . With her length of 241m she anchor just outside the harbour and the Pendennick was used for stay to hold the ship across the wind giving shelter for the 800 passengers getting on and off the boats ferrying them ashore.

In an effort to attract larger ships it was agreed to turn them outside the harbour towing them in stern first. The arrival of cruise liners entering early in the morning and departing early evening became a magnificent sight and watched by many.





Bringing in the m.v.Boudicca stern first

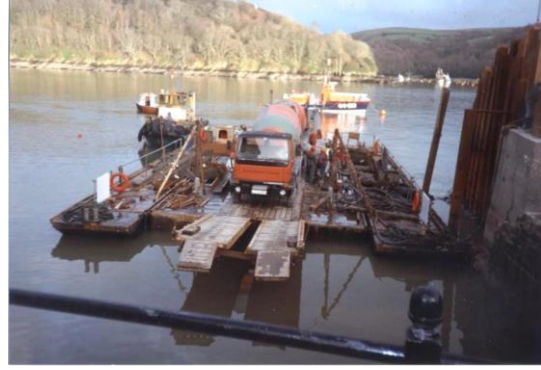
In the November of 1993 and that winter and for the following winter a major contract was carried out by S.W. Water to put in sewage plant for Fowey and Polruan and **Penleath** carried out the main works of moving the various plant around. **Tregeagle** was also used and occasionally the **Pendennick** to move the large contractors barge.



Tregeagle towing crane barge



Pendennick towing split hopper to dump ground



Penleath moving barge with concrete structure and another barge off town quay with concrete lorry.

**Cannis** remained in reserve, occasionally being used. In January 1993 it was agreed that the Cannis should be sold. This did not happen until September 1995 when she was sold to William Barbour of Enfield for £8000. She did not leave the harbour however until 14<sup>th</sup> March 1996 at 1600hrs when she left for the Clyde. She then became a house boat moored in the Bristol City Dock ahead of the s.s. Great Britain at David Abel's yard and is now berthed near Chivenor in North Devon.

In Par, pilotage duties were carried out by Par Pilots who assisted towing and pushing ships in berthing. With plans to upgrade berths and to handle even larger vessels and at the request of Imerys the Commissioners decided to replace the vessel. Early in 2002 a decision to build a purpose built vessel for ship handling and pilotage duties in Par and Fowey was taken and tenders were sought. By January 2003 Toms yard in Polruan was selected as the lowest tender and as it was local and contracts were signed at the February Board meeting. **Polmear's** keel was laid early in the May and she was launched a year later entering service in June 2004.



Polmear's frames



Launching at Toms Yard, Polruan





Gerry Williams, chairman of the Commissioners naming the Polmear and receiving the keys at the handover from Paul Toms, Toms Yard



This was the first new build towage vessel for the Commissioners and the first to be built by Toms Yard. Her role was dual purpose to provide boarding and landing as well as towage. She was designed for the shallow water operation necessary in Par with a 10 ton bollard pull. This was provided by twin Cummins NTA 14M engines giving 440 BHP at 1800 rpm. Initially primarily for Par duties, the build was to provide for reserve duties in Fowey as well. A substantially larger vessel than **Par Pilot** and **Penleath** she measured 14.65 metres in length with a draft of 1.67m. The twin propellers had fixed kort nozzles and twin rudders. She became the first vessel to operate in the port's fleet fitted with a bow thruster. From time to time **Polmear** was used for towage duties in Fowey where early in 2006 she took over as reserve pilot boat as well. With the downturn in trade in Par, she was moved to be permanently based in Fowey later in the year.



Assisting the m.v. Nordland in Fowey





Pendennick and Polmear on the pilot boat pontoon

In June 2008 it was decided that as part of the ports restructure to cope with the new china clay export regime and the need to upgrade the towage units **Polmear** could be disposed of together with the decision to sell both **Tregeagle** and **Pendennick**. Jenkins Marine of Poole purchased the **Polmear** in August 2008 and she left for a new life working in their operation along the south coast, based at Poole. Purchasers for the Pendennick were also found at the same time as the **Polmear's** departure and it was then possible to purchase another tug. The Board agreed to go ahead with the purchase of a bigger tug.

Early in September 2008 The Harbour Master, Capt Mike Sutherland, pilot Will Mitchell and Steve Barker, John Burges, tug masters and engineer Keith Mutton inspected Svitzers Cardiff based tug **Holmgarth**. Trials were undertaken On 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008 the Commissioners completed the purchase of the tug. This had followed five days of training by the Svitzer crews in both Cardiff and Newport. She arrived in the port two days later to assume primary towage duties, together with providing a service to other ports and along the south coast. At 28.45 Metres LOA and a beam of 8.5 metres and a draft 4.5 metres a Deadweight of 103 tonnes, Gross tonnage 223 tonnes and NRT of 66 tonnes she was to become the biggest tug in Fowey. Certificated under Lloyds to 100A1 she was a Voith tractor tug producing a 23. ton bollard pull. Highly manoeuvrable and with sea going certification enable the commissioners to offer services along the south west coast.



Holmgarth being escorted in by Tregeagle and Pendennick. Passing Bodinnick



Mrs Tessa Williams naming Morgawr

The Commissioners chose the name Morgawr the Cornish for “sea giant” to follow the theme of the Tregeagle another Cornish giant. She was renamed by Mrs Tessa Williams, wife of the chairman before the Board meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008



**Morgawr** with **Pendennick** and **Tregeagle** alongside their depot barge

Not long after acquiring her she was engaged by Serco Marine who provided the services in Devonport (and other naval ports) to the Royal Navy for the next 18 to 20 months she spent many days on duty there relieving tugs in maintenance and until new tugs had joined the Serco fleet. Being berthed in the Cattewater and with the arrival of bigger tankers she soon started assisting the Cattewater Harbour commissioners "Princerock" to berth these ships. It wasn't long and she was also down in Falmouth helping to berth, dock undock and sail large ships from the docks. Here she was working alongside her sister tug the ex Hallgarth renamed St. Piran. Another service provided was to tow targets for the navy south of the Eddystone Lighthouse.



Towing a target in Plymouth sound    Assisting SD Faithful with a French warship





Turning the Marida Maple in Cattewater. With St Piran in Falmouth



Towing in HMS York into St Helier harbour in Jersey with the tug Duke of Normandy

May 2009

A trip to the Channel Islands in May 2009 saw the **Morgawr** berth the warship HMS York in St Helier Harbour. The biggest warship to berth in the port needed two tugs. **Morgawr** remained in St Helier for the duration of her stay assisting to sail the vessel on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

There followed a trip to St Brieuc in France where a new ship hoist had been fitted and as part of a Cornish / Breton exchange of trade the Harbour Commissioners were invited to use as a promotion. Unfortunately the lift strops could not be situated clear of the Voiths and the project was abandoned.



Seen her in the hoist awaiting divers

On the passage back to Fowey a stopover in Guernsey for bunkers was arranged.

In Mid September 2014 Morgawr proceeded to Portsmouth to provide backup for the Serco Marine tugs in serving the naval base there

The title of the **Pendennick** transferred to new owners on 2008 but she remained in the port until 21st January 2009 when she sailed for Belfast on a contract then on to her temporary home port of Great Yarmouth. She remains in service engaged on tows all over the UK and continental waters.

To provide a service to Fowey and especially ensuring cruise liners could berth and cover the ports of Plymouth and Falmouth there was a need to have a second tug capable of covering and supporting **Morgawr**.

After much consideration and in acknowledging the role the tugs outside towage played in their finances and the need to keep tugs available to ensure the largest china clay ships could use the harbour the board gave the go ahead to purchase a second modern tug. **Tregeagle** was 48 years old and spares were drying up.

After some searching the tug **Coatham Cross** was identified as a suitable option and Capt. Sutherland, Pilot Capt. Will Mitchell a harbour Commissioner, Steve Barker tug Master and Keith mutton engineer inspected her in Middleborough on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

Svitzers accepted the Commissioners offer and she was dry-docked in the Tees at 0800hrs on 10<sup>th</sup> April for survey.

She arrived off Fowey at 0900 hrs on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 to be escorted in by Morgawr and Tregeagle



Cormilan arrived at 0900 hrs on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 to be escorted in by Morgawr, Tregeagle and the pilot cutter Gribbin



She was named by Mrs Mary Pemberton, wife of the chairman on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011



Bringing in Silver Cloud ready to turn in the lower harbour



In Falmouth assisting three Falmouth tugs berth Largs Bay

Tregeagle was sold McCormick Transport of Bally Macarthur, Greencastle Co. Donegal and their subsidiary company of Foyle on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013



On 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 whilst leaving the harbour at about 0300 hrs The Cormilan hit rocks off Point Neptune on her way to Plymouth to stand-by a cruise liner. She suffered damage to her starboard Schottel unit and started to take on water in the engine room. The crew managed to get her back to her berth alongside the barge in Mixtow where with the help of the fire brigade she was pumped out and the hole in her hull where the unit had been broken off sealed by divers. After extensive survey and costings the insurance company paid the commissioners and she became their property.

Cormilan left Fowey under the tow of MTS Taktow just before midday on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2014 bound for Falmouth for an initial layup and then repairs. Thus ended a relatively short career in Fowey but one where she provided useful service to the port and its neighbours.



Tug Taktow taking Cormillan on her last voyage out of Fowey towards Falmouth

With the departure of the Cormillan it became necessary to find a replacement tug to ensure the service continued. After looking at a number of possibilities and inspection by The Harbour Master Capt Paul Thomas and his team of the Svitzer tug **Svitzer Constance** registered in Hull but based in Sunderland proved satisfactory. The Board agreed to purchase an she left Sunderland on following in the steps of the Dunelm when she left Sunderland bound for Fowey. A good passage was made .



Svitzer Constance shortly after arrival in Fowey and before her change of name and company colours

She went into service nearly immediately whilst work started in changing her to the Harbour Commissioners colours. The name of **Cannis** was chosen by the Board and granted by the Registrar of Shipping in Cardiff as the previous Cannis, now a houseboat on the river Teign, had been de-registered.



The 1<sup>st</sup> tow job for the Cannis Taking the Flinter Rhidi back to No 4 berth

She was renamed **Cannis** on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014 by Mrs Shirley Mitchell, wife of the chairman together with the rededication of the Harbour Commissioners dredger Lantic Bay



Mrs Shirley Mitchell renaming Cannis with a bottle of cyder. Lantic Bay on pontoon



A picture by Capt Will Mitchell Pilot

Towing RFA Argus to sea from Falmouth

**The History of the ports towage service continues and will be updated from time to time and as new records become available or are dug up.**

**Any information relating to the history of the tugs and their service is welcomed and contact can be made via the Contacts page on the website or to [Mikesuds65@gmail.com](mailto:Mikesuds65@gmail.com).**

## **THANKS AND RECOGNITION**

It is important to record the history of the port and its towage service.

The following people have provided so much information on the History of Fowey tugs and without their help putting together the details it would have been impossible.

Grateful thanks are acknowledged for their information, pictures and advice.

Captain Mike Sutherland,  
Retired Harbour Master Fowey.

They are:-

Captain Stephen Carter	Isle of Man tug historian
Paul Richards	Fowey local maritime historian
Chez Stone (Deceased)	Fowey marine enthusiast
Jim Matthews	Fowey Photographer
Spam Miller, Polruan	Retired Tug Master
Graham Nolan, Fowey	Retired Tug Master
"Tug" London	and his excellent website <a href="http://www.thamestugs.com">www.thamestugs.com</a>
Stephen Swinhoe, Sunderland	for his photos and information
Jim Hall, Sunderland	Retired Engineer on Dunelm for 21 years until 1986
Ray Nicholls, Sunderland	Ex Industrial Editor of Sunderland Echo and author of Changing Times
Gerry Williams, Fowey	Ex Chairman of the Harbour Commissioners
Bill Smith, Fife	Tug man for his history on Flying Demon and Forth
Marcus Lewis	collector of marine photos etc