

Norwegian king hailed as honorary member of Wirral yacht club

by Liam Murphy
LDP STAFF
liam.murphy@liverpool.com

ONE of England's oldest and most respected sailing clubs welcomed its latest recruit during an official visit – the King of Norway.

The Royal Mersey Yacht Club (RMYC) in Wirral played host to His Majesty King Harald V of Norway after the king accepted honorary life membership – as first revealed in the Daily Post last year.

The RMYC was founded in 1844 and counted then Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel among its members. Now the club is working with Wirral Council on a massive redevelopment of the borough's Mersey coast line from Rock Ferry up to Eastham.

The plans at Rock Ferry include a new club and launching facilities.

Yesterday, former commodore Dr Nicholas Jedynakiewicz – who had invited the King to visit – escorted His Majesty around the club, where he was welcomed by Commodore David Massey and the Flag Officers of the club.

The club commodore David Massey said: "We are delighted to welcome such an accomplished and passionate sailor as His Majesty to the club."

"The Royal Mersey is proud of its traditions and long heritage whilst currently in the vanguard of imaginative and exciting Rock Ferry regeneration proposals.

"The club currently race three classes of modern and classic keel-boats and is active in racing at both club and international levels.

"We are proud that His Majesty is recognising this by joining us and now with this visit".

The King is a well-known sailor and represented his country sailing in the Olympic team three times.

He has also won gold, silver and bronze in the European Championships.

Wirral's chief executive Steve Maddox and the Mayor Cllr Andrew Hodson joined the club members and His Majesty for lunch in the club and to view the racing yachts. They presented the King with a book highlighting Wirral's links with Norway by local author Stephen Harding.

Cllr Hodson said: "This is a great honour for the club."

After viewing some of the boats out of the water, the Commodore escorted the King on board the yacht *Momentum* and took him on a cruise of the racing waters where he could see the club fleets on their moorings.



Special sailing – King Harald of Norway, second left, was taken in a small boat to the yacht *Momentum*, to sail over to disembark at the Albert Dock

Pictures: ANDREW TEEBAY/ at040510bking-4



Momentum speeding down the river



King Harald pays his visit to the Royal Mersey Yacht Club, Rock Ferry



After sailing past the historic Unesco World Heritage Waterfront of Liverpool, and via Albert Dock they went to visit GL Watson & Co Ltd, the oldest dedicated yacht design firm in the world.

A reception and dinner held by RMYC in the King's honour was later held at the Town Hall in Liverpool, along with His Royal Highness the

Duke of Gloucester. At the dinner, Commodore David Massey presented the flags of the RMYC to the king, continuing its historic links with royalty.

The RMYC's first Patron was Queen Victoria and each reigning monarch continued the patronage until 1952 when it was taken over by the Duke of Edinburgh, who had vis-

ited its headquarters in 2008. The present premises, at 8-10 Bedford Road, Rock Ferry, were purchased in 1901, and the existing pair of semi-detached houses the clubhouse opened on May 31, 1901.

The club house, overshadowed by an oil terminal, is a few yards from the jetty that is used by the club for access to the river.

Building on its illustrious history the club remains active and arranges more than 50 races a season, including a regatta in June, and during the Menai Straits regattas in August.

One of its claims to fame is that former members Henry Ismay and son Bruce, the proprietors of the White Star line, sketched plans for the Titanic in its committee room.

New roadworks on Rice Lane

COMMUTER chaos has returned to Rice Lane just days after a four-month diversion ended.

The carriageway out of the city had been closed since January with a large diversion route in place while £1.2m of improvement works were completed.

The road reopened last week but has now got tem-

porary traffic lights and more tailbacks after Scottish Power discovered a problem.

A Liverpool City Council spokesman said: "Scottish Power are having to carry out emergency repair works to a high-voltage cable at the junction of Rice Lane and Yew Tree Road.

"The work is necessary

as the cable feeds a number of substations and if the repair work does not take place it would mean thousands of households would be without power.

"It should be noted that this work is not connected with recent improvement work on Rice Lane."

No estimate on an end date for the repair has been offered.

Novel anniversary

ROMANCE publisher Mills & Boon will publish a special novel to mark the 400th anniversary of one of Britain's historic homes.

Ham House, in Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey, will feature in *Scandalous Innocent*. The house, built in 1610 for Sir Thomas Vavasour, Knight Marshal to James I, features heavily in the story by Juliet Landon.

The author weaves the story of her fictional heroines into the lives of two past Ham House residents, the extrovert Duchess of Lauderdale, who lived there in the 17th century, and the 6th Earl of Dysart, who made the house his home in the early 19th century.

Premium quality kitchens fully installed for around 1/3 less than our rivals

LIFESTYLE KITCHENS
KITCHEN DESIGN FOR LIVING

FREE quotes - 0800 975 9897
www.lifestyle-kitchens.net