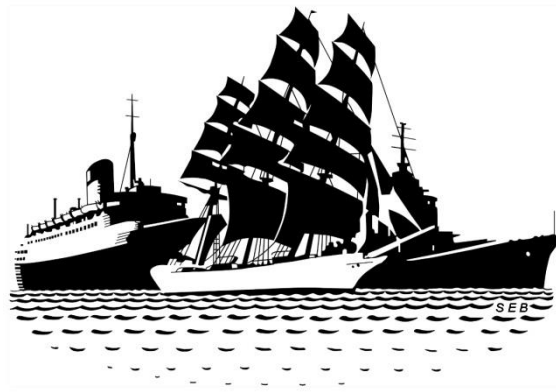


Black Jack

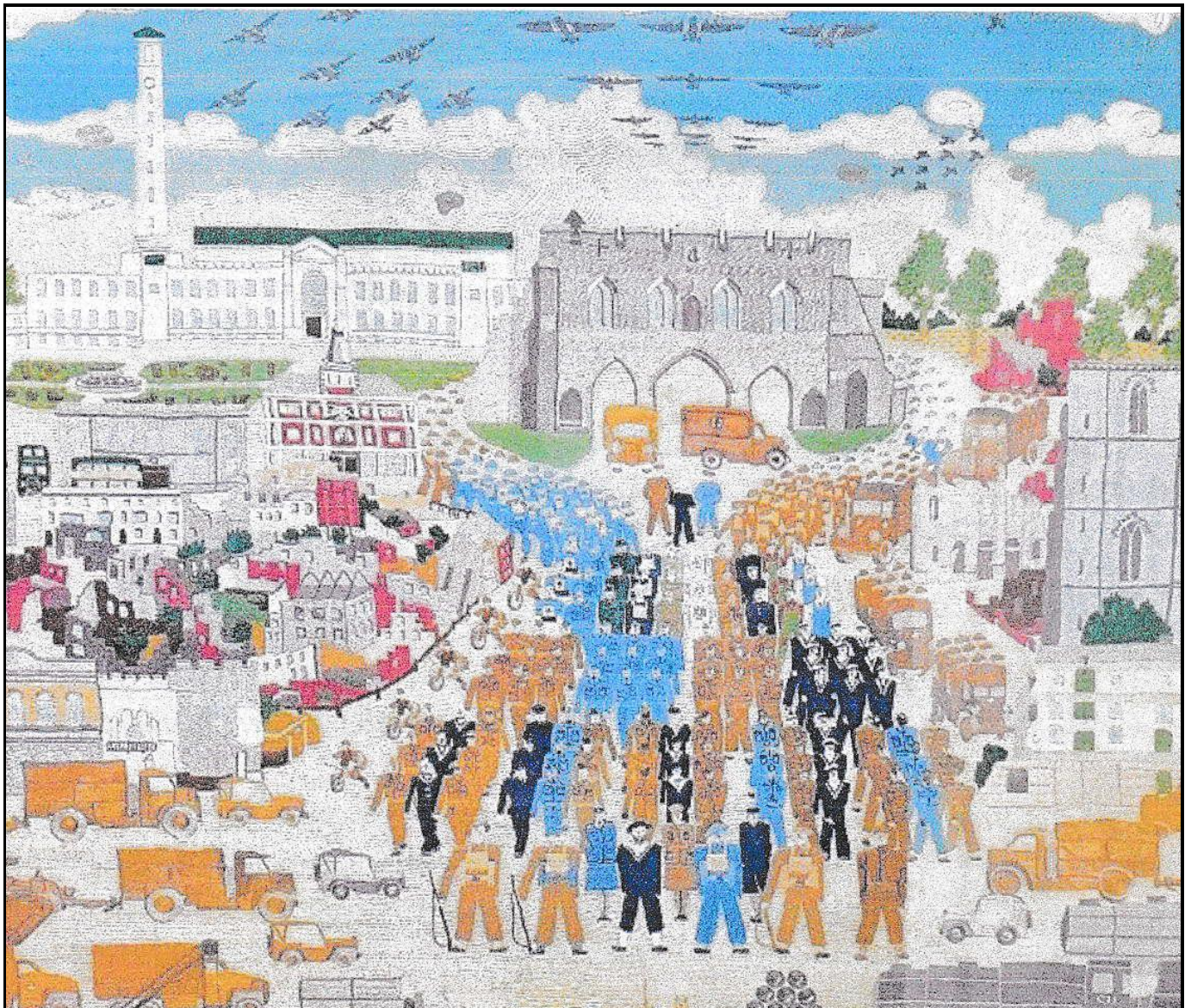
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY
www.sotonwss.org.uk



Issue No: 211

Summer 2024

80th ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY



Part of Southampton D-Day Tapestry

Black Jack – Summer 2024 No.211

Editorial team
Nigel Robinson, David Hornsby & Andrew McAlpine.
Website – Neil Richardson

Black Jack is the quarterly magazine of the Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society.

Branch Meetings

Venue:

St James Road Methodist Church

St James Road

Shirley

Southampton, SO15 5HE

All meetings commence at 19.30 and the meeting room is to be vacated by 21.30. Meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month.

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2024 Branch Meeting Programme

June 11th	Capt. James Cook.	Dr Michael Walshaw
July 9th	Cable Ships.	Barry Peck
August 13th	London Dock in the 1960s.	Ian Wells
September 10th	The Bristol Floating Harbour and the SS Great Britain	Philip Benstead FIET AOC ARINA
October 8th.	Amsterdam.	Richard Joliffe
November 12th	AGM and Digital Photography Competition	
December 10th	Travels with Andy Skarsten	

Branch Cruise 2024

Monday 15th July – from Town Quay departing 11.15 returning at 6.15 – numbers limited to 60. Cost £35.

SITUATION VACANT!!

The Branch urgently needs an Hon. Branch Secretary – please consider if you could take on this important position. Note that the Branch cannot officially function without a secretary!

Articles please!!

Your editor would as always be delighted to receive any articles for inclusion in Black Jack and also any snippets and photos for possible inclusion,

All contributions to *BJ*, by post, email, memory stick or CD are most welcome. Any article with a connection to The Solent area would be much appreciated. The Editor could reproduce magazine or newspaper articles but preference is given to articles 'by the branch – for the branch'.

Would members please ensure that any changes to their postal and/or email addresses are notified to the Branch as soon as possible.

Andrew's Note Book

Some new or infrequent callers to Southampton Docks by Andrew McAlpine

Welcome to the latest notebook from the port of Southampton, here are the latest updates on the comings and goings and other news from around the port. Its that time of year again and the cruise ships have returned for their UK summer season, March saw the return of the first ship Sky Princess, and in April **MSC Euribia** and **MSC Virtuosa** were in together for the second and final time as **Virtuosa** arrived to replace **uribia**.



Left: Seeing double - MSC Euribia arrives alongside MSC Virtuosa 23 rd April 2024

below: **Queen Anne** seen arriving early evening 30th April 2024.



The container terminal remains busy despite the loss of a couple of services. The capacity upgrade of CMA CGM's FAL1 service is complete, and we have now seen visits from all of the 23,000TEU *Jaques Saade* class ships that are now deployed. The last one being **CMA CGM Montmartre** which arrived 27th March. More significantly 24,000TEU ships are now able to berth on the original berths (1-3) which involves sailing round the tight corner opposite Marchwood Sailing Club. The first ship to do this was Hapag-Lloyd's *Manila Express* 1st May.



left: Making History **Manila Express** sailing past "the knuckle" for SCT

CMA CGM has ventured into the car carrying marking with a series of ships all named after famous race tracks. The second ship in the class **CMA CGM Monaco** arrived 7th April.

right: The LNG fuelled **CMA CGM Monaco** arriving 7th

April. **Until next time wishing you Happy ship spotting**

all photos by Andrew McAlpine



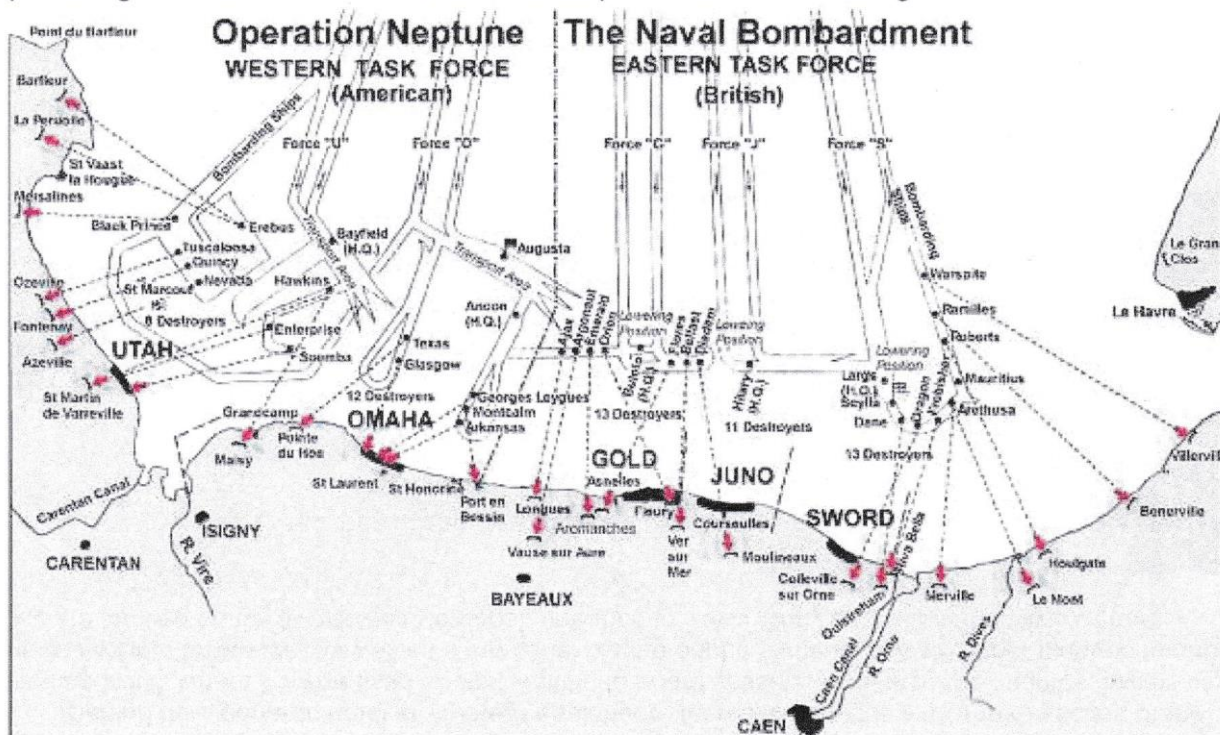
D-DAY AT SOUTHAMPTON

by David Hornsby

EIGHTY YEARS AGO on 6 June 1944, Southampton was at the forefront of the Allied invasion of Europe, the largest amphibious invasion in history and the turning point to end the Second World War. The plans for the invasion force, designed to set up a Second Front were known as **OPERATION OVERLORD**, while the seaborne part of the invasion was known as **OPERATION NEPTUNE**. The plans had first been conceived back in 1942, but the extent of the plans, organisation and equipment build-up took time.

The date for the invasion was finalised at a high-level meeting at Southwick House, the temporary HQ for Eisenhower and Montgomery. The numbers involved during D-Day itself were almost unbelievable with 132,815 Allied troops actually landed on the five Normandy beaches (SWORD 28,845, Canadian JUNO 21,400, GOLD 24,970, US OMAHA 34,350 and UTAH 23,250) with some 4,000 lives lost, 2,000 of which were US at Omaha. An additional 16,000 airborne troops were landed behind SWORD (4,000) and the UTAH beaches. During the following week, the total number of troops landed increased to 326,000 with 50,000 vehicles and over 100,000 tons of equipment..

Map showing the beach locations and the mine-swept channels to the landing areas.



One of the greatest problems was trying to avoid the enemy becoming aware of the build-up and the intended invasion points. Great efforts were taken to ensure secrecy and mislead the Germans into believing any attack would be launched elsewhere. In the secret lead-up to the embarkation and departure of the Invasion Force, southern England was divided into Marshalling Areas, each with numerous temporary 'transit' camps to house troops in readiness, these generally being in wooded areas to avoid detection. The initial plans were to provide Marshalling Areas around the south and south-east coast to enable 40,700 personnel and 6,500 vehicles to be embarked prior to D-Day with an additional 4,000 personnel and 600 vehicles daily thereafter.

Southampton Area was designated Marshalling Area 'C' with 21 'transit' camps with capacity for 43,250 personnel and 6,265 vehicles. Locally, the largest group of 4 camps (C6-C9) was at Cranbury Park, Chandlers Ford accommodating 11,000 personnel and 2,00 vehicles, the next largest being 4 camps (C18-C21) set up in the northern wooded area of Southampton Common for 8,500 men and 1,000 vehicles. Other camps were located at Harefield/Moorhill, Botley, Netley Common, Bushfield (Winchester), Stoneham/ Bassett, Hursley Park, Crampmoor/Broadlands (Romsey), Toot Hill/Grove Place (Nursling) and at Chilworth. On 24 May, the camps were sealed and guarded to maintain secrecy, while camouflage netting covered many main road routes to prevent camps and equipment being seen from the air.

Other local Marshalling Areas included Area 'A' inland from Portsmouth, with camps as far west at Sarisbury Green, Park Gate and Funtley and Area 'B' in the New Forest with camps at Cadland, Beaulieu, East Boldre and Brockenhurst. The main local Embarkation Area (HMS Squid) was in Southampton Docks with additional loading ramps for vehicles next to Town Quay in Platform Road and in Mayflower Park. Other designated loading areas were at Warsash (Hards for LST and LCT, also maintenance base), Stokes Bay (four embarkation areas with 16 LCT hards), and Exbury/Lepe (4 hards), Lymington (2 hards and LCT maintenance base HMS Pauline) with other landing craft bases at Hythe (HMS Squid II), Beaulieu River (HMS Mastodon) and Cowes (HMS Vectis), while there was a secret training base at Bursledon (HMS Cricket).

The local UK forces HQ was based at the South Western Hotel, but it was not only UK personnel who embarked at Southampton. In 1943, the US Army set up their 14th Major Port Transportation Corps HQ in the Civic Centre at Southampton with Officers billeted at the Polygon Hotel and men in Hoglands Park or at Blighmont Barracks in Millbrook. This was the 4th largest of 60 Major US Corps HQ world-wide.

Between June 1944 and May 1945, over 3½ million troops and 250,000 vehicles sailed from Southampton, including 2 million American troops, around 60% of the US contingent sent to Europe. As early as 25 October 1944, Paul Shimer a private from the US Seventh Army became "the Millionth Yank" through the Port. Behind the Leonardo hotel at Western Esplanade, there still remains a 19-metre section of the "American Wall", where 76 American troops, waiting to board vessels, scratched their names, initials or home States into brickwork. As well as a memorial plaque on the "American Wall", other plaques recording D-Day are located on the Mayflower Memorial, entrance to Town Quay and within the Civic Centre.



above : various types of Landing craft lined up in the Western Docks

In Southampton, landing craft waiting to board troops and equipment were 7 or 8 deep in the Western Docks, almost quay-to-quay across the Empress Dock and were moored on both banks of the River Itchen from Crosshouse to Millstone Point and from Supermarine Works to the northern end of Chessel Bay.



above : Berths 108/109 and 7 dry dock entrance

above: landing and other craft in Empress dock

'Force J' comprising 25 landing craft tank (LCT), 14 destroyers, 3 corvettes, 7 trawlers and 3 flotillas of minesweepers loaded at Southampton and Portsmouth, then assembled in Solent/Spithead for Juno Beach, while 'Force G' loaded at Southampton for Gold Beach. The exact number of Allied invasion craft actually

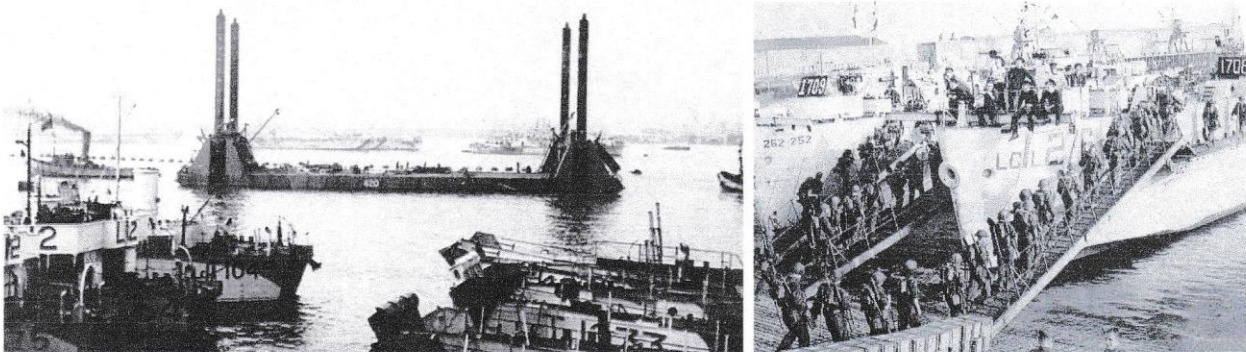
leaving Southampton is unclear, but the the Allies landed some 247 LCI (landing craft infantry) mainly 160ft long around 385 tons displacement carrying 200 armed men, some 486 LCM (landing craft mechanized) with about 120 troops each and some 768 LCT (landing craft tank) each 192ft loa x 31ft beam with 3'10" draft on 640 tons displacement when carrying 5 Churchill or 11 Sherman tanks.

By dawn on 6 June, thousands of paratroopers and glider troops were already on the ground behind enemy lines, securing bridges and roads, when the amphibious invasions began at 6:30 a.m. The British and Canadians overcame light opposition to capture the beaches codenamed Gold, Juno and Sword, as did the Americans at Utah Beach. However, U.S. forces faced heavy resistance at Omaha Beach, where there were over 2,000 American casualties. By day's end, approximately 156,000 Allied troops had successfully stormed Normandy's beaches and hinterland. According to some estimates, more than 4,000 Allied troops lost their lives in the D-Day invasion, with thousands more wounded or missing.

The invasion fleet, which was drawn from eight different navies, comprised 6,939 vessels with 1,213 warships, 4,126 landing craft of various types, 736 ancillary craft, and 864 merchant vessels. The majority of the fleet was supplied by the UK, which provided 892 warships and 3,261 landing craft. In total there were 195,700 naval personnel involved, comprising 112,824 from the Royal Navy with another 25,000 from the Merchant Navy, 52,889 were American; and 4,998 sailors from other allied countries.

Less than a week after D-Day, on June 11, the beaches were fully secured and over 326,000 troops, more than 50,000 vehicles and some 100,000 tons of equipment had landed at Normandy.

From 1943, Southampton was also involved in the construction of Mulberry Harbour sections in the dry-docks with other sections being built at Lepe and Beaulieu. Another important activity was HMS Abatros, planning PLUTO (pipe-line under the ocean) to supply fuel to the Normandy beach-heads.



above left: Mulberry Harbour section being towed passed in Western Docks

above right : D-Day troops boarding LCI(L) 276 and 262 at a 'hard' in Platform Road, Southampton

With Southampton school children being sent away to 'safer' areas, many schools and other suitable buildings were requisitioned for military use. Tauntons Grammar school (whose pupils had relocated to Bournemouth) became a prisoner of War camp, while on the opposite of Southampton Common, King Edward VI school was used as barracks.

In the aftermath, casualties were brought back from France on a variety of hospital ships, including the Southern Railway ferry *Dinard*, LNER's *Prague*, Coast Lines *Lady Connaught*, the former American *Naushon* and two American hospital ships. U.S forces took over Netley Hospital, where 68,000 casualties were treated, including 10,000 German troops, while 200,000 German prisoners of war were landed at the Royal Pier and were initially marched to a temporary camp on Western Esplanade.

On a personal note, the authors' late father, by pre-War profession a Master Tailor, became a Company Quartermaster Sergeant (Q) in the Royal Engineers and was camped on Southampton Common prior to D-Day, having relocated from Longmoor Camp and Faslane in Scotland.

He crossed from Southampton on D-Day+1 to Gold Beach and after the initial 6-week hard-fought battle was present at the liberation of Caen on 19th July. His Unit subsequently moved forward behind the Front Line, providing logistical support through Belgium, the Netherlands to Hamburg.

D-Day Headquarters ships were

HMS HILARY and HMS LAWFORD in Area 19 Line W

HMS ROYAL ULSTERMAN and HMS WAVENEY in Area 19 Line E

Landing Ships Infantry used in the assault included

In Area 7 - HMCS PRINCE DAVID, ss. BIARRITZ, ss ISLE OF GUERNSEY, HMS DUKE OF WELLINGTON, HMS PRINCE ALBERT, ss PRINCESS MARGARET, HMS PRINCESS JOSEPHINE CHARLOTTE, ss VICTORIA and two boom carriers in Area 7

In Area 18 - ss LADY OF MANN, HMS ST HELIER, HMS BRIGADIER, ss MONOWAI, ss CLAN LAMONTHMCS PRINCE HENRY and ss LLANGIBBY CASTLE

In Area 22 - HMS INVICTA, ss ISLE OF THANET, ss MECKLENBERG, ss DUKE OF ARGYLL, HMS QUEEN EMMA, HMS ULSTER MONARCH, ss CANTERBURY, ss LAIRD'S ISLE, HMS PRINCESS ASTRID and ss MAID OF ORLEANS Force J comprised

25 LCT (two in Area 18, two in Area 20 and the remainder in Area 22)

14 Destroyers (four in Area 4, three in Area 22 and seven in Area 31)

3 Corvettes in Area 26

7 trawlers in Area 31

3 Flotillas of Minesweepers in Areas 29, 30 and 31

NEW RED FUNNEL VEHICLE FERRIES ?

RED FUNNEL have announced that they are planning to build three new vehicle ferries to replace the current "Raptor" class that were built 28-30 years ago. The current proposal is to construct three slightly smaller hybrid-powered ferries with similar capacity at a probable cost of about £100 million with delivery between 2028/9 and 2031.

Since June 2017, the Red Funnel Group has been owned by Hawk Acquisition Ltd, then Falcon Acquisitions, jointly on behalf of UK and Canadian pension funds, the West Midlands Pension Fund and the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board of Province of Ottawa. Hawk/Falcon acquired the Red Funnel business via Australian Bank Macquarie from Infracapital Partners, a Prudential Group Fund, who themselves had acquired the business from the previous owners in June 2007 for £200 million. Prior to that, the Company was owned by a management buy-out backed by Bank of Scotland (2004-7), JP Morgan Partners (2001-4) and ABP Holdings (1989-2001).

The three current "*Raptor*" ferries, **Red Falcon** (1994), **Red Osprey** (1994) and **Red Eagle** (1996) were built in Scotland by Ferguson Shipbuilders at Port Glasgow. The ferries were rebuilt and refitted between 2003 and 2005 by Remontowa SA at Gdansk in Poland, including being slightly lengthened with an additional car deck to increase car equivalent capacity from 100 to 213 units with 892 passenger capacity. The Company also operates the **Red Kestrel** (2019) freight ferry, two fast ferries, **Red Jet 6** (2016) and **Red Jet 7** (2018). Following reduced passenger numbers since Covid, the third fast ferry, **Red Jet 4** (2003-2024), was recently sold to South Korean owners and left Southampton on 25th May as deck cargo on **AAL Kobe**. In September 2023, the Company also acquired Blue Funnel Ferries from Lee Rayment, including the Hythe Ferry service across Southampton Water, now renamed Hythe & Southampton Ferry Co. Ltd.

The current Chairman of Red Funnel is Stephen Ridgeway, the CEO Fran Collins and other directors are Erik Ostergaard (also a director of CalMac Ferries) and since September 2023 local developer Iain Delaney of Captiva Homes. Eight other directors resigned en-masse at the end of February 2024. The Red Funnel Group has a reported current turnover of about £60 million per annum.

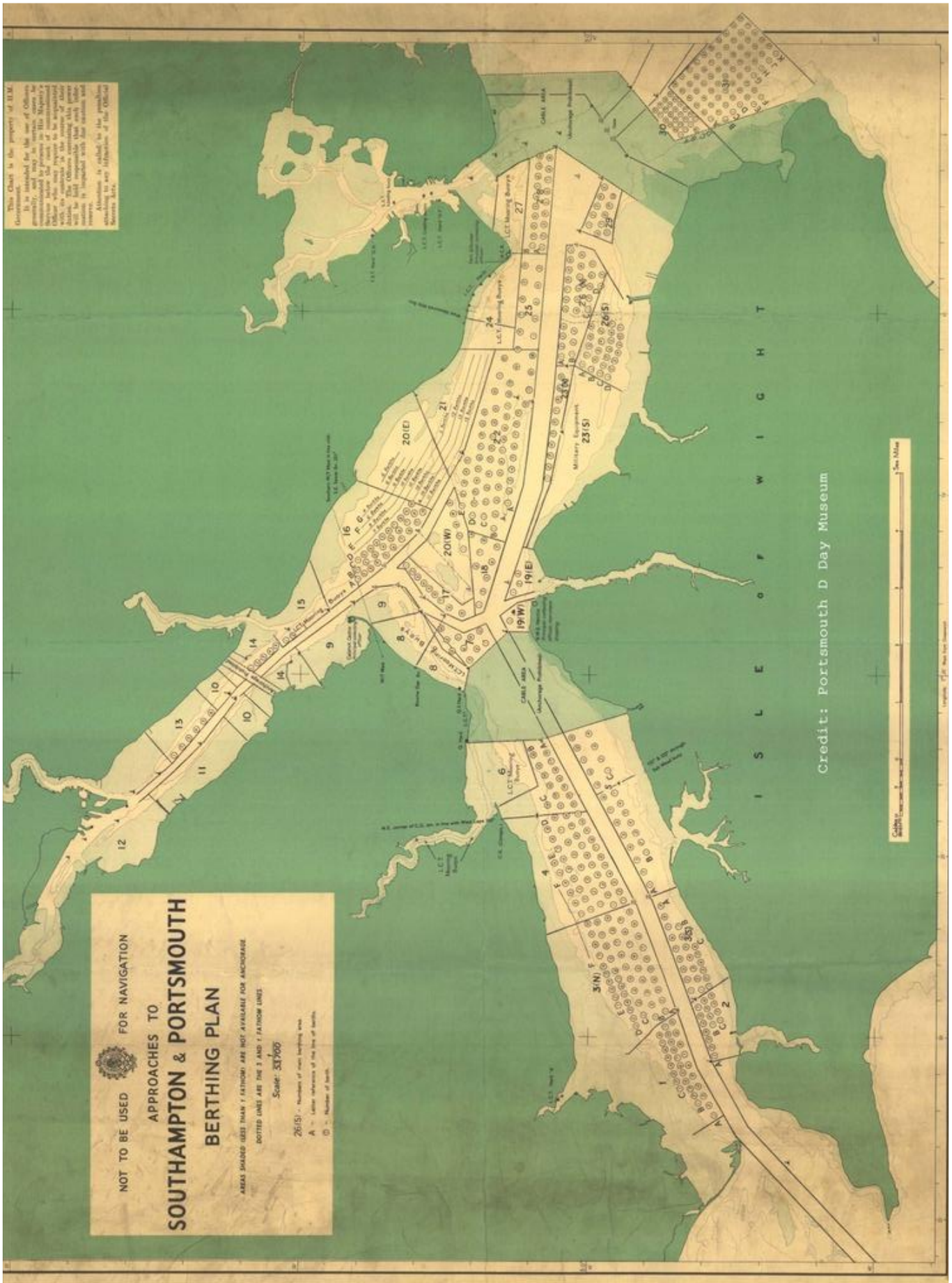
This Chart is the property of U.S.M. Government.
 It is intended for the use of Officers and Crews of U.S. Navy Vessels and is not to be loaned, sold, or otherwise disposed of without the approval of the U.S. Navy. It is not to be used for any other purpose without the approval of the U.S. Navy. It is not to be used for any other purpose without the approval of the U.S. Navy. It is not to be used for any other purpose without the approval of the U.S. Navy.

NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

APPROACHES TO SOUTHAMPTON & PORTSMOUTH BERTHING PLAN

AREAS SHADING DEEPER THAN 1 FATHOM ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR ANCHORAGE
 DOTTED LINES ARE THE 3 AND 1 FATHOM LINES
 Scale: 33,700

26(5) - Number of moorings
 A - Letter reference of the line of moorings
 D - Number of berths



Credit: Portsmouth D Day Museum