

A model of the Skylark IX floating at Dunkirk shore on the 75th anniversary of Operation Dynamo

A Dunkirk Little Ship that saved 600 lives is itself going to be rescued thanks to National Lottery funding and the passion of a local community group. The restoration project will allow recovering drug addicts to learn new skills by working with a specialist boatbuilding team.

Skylark IX was built as a passenger cruiser for 75 people in 1927. But in 1940 she was called to the aid of the stranded Allied troops in Dunkirk as part of Operation Dynamo. She, and the ordinary seamen that sailed her, saved hundreds of lives.

However, due to disrepair, the Dunkirk Little Ship sank on Loch Lomond in 2010.

Anne Dyer, advisor to the *Skylark IX* Recovery Trust, said: "*Skylark*'s first mission was to save Second World War Allied forces stranded on the shores at Dunkirk and today she will continue to save lives by allowing recovery clients from Alternatives to bring her to life again."

Creating a floating museum

Skylark IX was raised by the Royal Navy following following a campaign involving veterans and the local community, and is currently located at the Scottish Maritime Museum in Irvine. She will be restored thanks to £404,400 National Lottery funding to create a floating museum which will sail on the River Clyde telling the fascinating story of her role in

the Second World War.

The project will include paid traineeships leading to recognised qualifications in woodworking skills. The traineeships will be undertaken by clients of Alternatives Community Drugs Service, who are partners in the project.

[quote=Lucy Casot, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland]“The Skylark IX is a part of Scotland’s Second World War history and we are delighted she will be saved to share her incredible story."[/quote]

Anne continued: “When we started this venture, we never really knew the climb we had in front of us but in our hearts, we had a sense that if we set out our vision and gather like-minded people then we would get there in the end.

"Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund has made this mission real. They have supported and encouraged us every step of the way and with them and many others, we now can bring our dream to the fore.”

Lucy Casot, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, added:“The *Skylark IX* is a part of Scotland’s Second World War history and we are delighted she will be saved to share her incredible story. As part of her recovery, others will recover too, learning skills that will help secure them a better future too.”



Moving the Skylark IX

Modern-day rescue for Second World War heritage