

The Daniel Adamson, now restored, crossing the Mersey Greg Dunbavand

Thanks to a £3.8million HLF grant, the Daniel Adamson, the UK’s last remaining steam tug-tender, is restored and ready to take to the waters again.

The boat, affectionately known as the 'Danny' and with a history dating back more than 100 years, will be rededicated in a ceremony today at Albert Dock in Liverpool.

Sara Hilton, Head of HLF North West, said: “This vessel has a remarkable story to tell and is an important part of the region’s history. Industrial and maritime heritage has shaped the North West’s past and has a real relevance to the region’s future. The restoration of the 'Danny' offers a valuable addition to the attractions already in the area and a new opportunity to explore Liverpool’s maritime history.

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“It’s also been fantastic to see it delivering learning and training opportunities. We know that there have been at least 20 volunteers working hard on the restoration and more will be recruited to help as tour guides.”

A long and varied past

Originally built in 1903, the vessel was named the *Ralph Brocklebank* after a member of the shipping dynasty, and worked as a tug boat, moving barges and carrying people and livestock. The tug was bought by the Manchester Ship Canal Company and had two art deco saloons and an elevated promenade deck added in the 1930s.

After the re-fit, the tug was renamed the *Daniel Adamson*, in honour of the Manchester Ship Canal Company's first chairman. It took on a new role as an inspection vessel, transporting VIP guests such as the Danish Royal family and General Dwight D Eisenhower. It continued with this work until taken out of service in the 1980s. The need for boiler repairs, expensive maintenance work and vandalism problems led to a decision to scrap the vessel.

Then, in 2004, the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society (DAPS) was formed, which saved the ship by buying it for just £1. Fittingly, it was Mersey tug skipper Dan Cross who led the campaign and formed DAPS alongside other volunteers and with support from across the country.

A new home and a new life

A team of hard-working, dedicated volunteers have re-built the vessel and its engines, with the help of Mersey-based Cammell Laird. The *Daniel Adamson* will, after the festivities today, be part of the Steam on the Dock event in Liverpool. It will then have a new life as a moving visitor and museum attraction, based near the Merseyside Maritime Museum, as well as offering cruises on the River Mersey.



The Daniel Adamson

£3.8m Heritage Lottery Fund grant to restore historic steam tug-tender