



» Fleury II, one of the Little Ships used in the Dunkirk evacuation 80 years ago, has been restored to her former glory by Cockwells boatbuilders Photos by Andrew Wright

# Dunkirk Little Ship sails again as boatbuilders bring history to life

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**A** TEAM of boatbuilders have brought a piece of history back to life.

The shipwrights at Cockwells Modern and Classic Boatbuilding usually spend their time creating award-winning luxury superyacht tenders or classic motor launches.

As boat lovers they also relish the challenge the restoration of a historic vessel presents.

Fleury II – a Dunkirk Little Ship with a glassed deck that was leaking and a rotting deck beneath – was taken to Cockwells' Mylor Creek Boatyard in autumn 2018 for much-needed structural repairs.

Built in Christchurch, Dorset, in 1936, the motor yacht, was designed by Eric French, of Poole. She was named by her original owners, the Fleurets.

The Little Ships of Dunkirk sailed from Ramsgate, Kent, to Northern France between May 26 and June 4, 1940, to help rescue more than 336,000 British, French and other Allied soldiers trapped on beaches during the Second World War.

Cockwells' skilled craftsmen have now restored Fleury II to her former glory.

Mark Curnow, from Cockwells, said: "Originally, solid strips of thicker wood would have been used in the deck's construction and steamed in but today we can laminate thinner strips in situ to repair

hard-to-reach areas. We have also maintained the aesthetics of the deck but have gained durability by using marine ply and a layer of fibreglass/epoxy where traditionally wooden boards covered with painted canvas would have been used.

"One of the highlights of Fleury II is that her original keel is intact and her backbone can be seen in its original state. This is a tribute to the fine craftsmen who built her, who we are proud to follow today."

The deck fittings, stanchions and one of the aft-cabin sides have also been replaced, while the wheelhouse and skylight have been repaired and the windlass has received a complete overhaul.

The interior has been painted to

lighten the space and the exterior has been stripped and revarnished.

Holly Latham, the restoration project manager, said: "Another rewarding part of this project has been the new owner's eagerness to respect the history of this vessel whilst making sure she can be fully enjoyed during the next chapter of her life."

"Practical changes have been introduced sensitively and are hidden, where possible, to complement Fleury II's heritage and ensure her survival for decades to come."

Fleury II will take part in The Association of Dunkirk Little Ships' return to Dunkirk to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the daring mission. The event, scheduled for May, had to be postponed until next year because of coronavirus.

## Carrot baton is carried in virtual relay for charity

» CARROTS have been carried from West Wales to Truro in a virtual relay for charity.

Staff from Brewin Dolphin – each carrying a carrot – walked, ran, swam and rode bikes and horses for a total of 618km to raise more than £2,600 for Farms for City Children.

That is the distance from the charity's farm on the West Wales coast, via its other farms on the River Severn and near Okehampton, Devon, to the investment management firm's office in Truro.

Growing vegetables is part of the experience offered by Farms for City Children, which was founded by author Sir Michael Morpurgo and his wife Clare – hence the carrot baton.

Each participant chose how far they wanted to go and by what means – one managed 74km.

Brewin Dolphin assistant director Rhiannon Bates said: "The pandemic has made it even more important for children cooped up for months in cities to enjoy the countryside once government guidelines permit."

To donate, visit [justgiving.com/fundraising/brewindolphinsw/farmsforcitychildren](https://justgiving.com/fundraising/brewindolphinsw/farmsforcitychildren)

## Arts organisation to spread the word

» AN arts organisation dedicated to sharing the joy of words has been chosen to bring a national scheme for schools to Cornwall.

From October, The Writers' Block, a space dedicated to creative writing at Cornwall College, Pool, will be supporting Cheltenham Festivals to deliver its Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils project throughout the region – one of four new hubs across the country.

Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils offers free reading groups for teachers, using the best new literature for younger readers, with the aim of inspiring the next generation of book lovers and raising educational attainment.

Amanda Harris, director of The Writers' Block, said: "We are delighted to be a strategic partner in this very exciting and inspiring programme to support children's reading. We also can't wait to get stuck into some really good books with the teachers."

To sign up, visit [thewritersblock.org.uk/rtrp](https://thewritersblock.org.uk/rtrp)

## Packaging prize

» REUSABLE protective packaging made from recycled paper pulp by Porthleven company Flexi-Hex has been shortlisted for the Innovation Award and Recycled Product of the Year in the National Recycling Awards. The winner will be announced on December 15.

