

# THE FIFE REGATTA 2008

## WELCOME HOME TO THE AYRSHIRE LASS

### HELENSBURGH

**PRESS RELEASE: Tuesday, June 24, 2008**

With a lay day on Monday the Fife fleet enjoyed a chance to dry out in the sun at Rhu Marina. Following Ayrshire Lass's first place in Sunday's race, instead of a well earned rest with the fleet, she was out sailing again, this time with her former owner, Clynder's only lady boat builder, 94-year-old Lizzie Todrick, she was reunited with the boat that she owned and sailed for 40 years. Liz bought the boat in 1939, shortly after she became the only female shipwright at the McGruers yard at the mouth of Loch Long and she employed the skills she learned at the shipyard to repair and maintain the craft over many years. From 1937 until 1977, Liz was a regular sight sailing the 1887, William Fife II-built Ayrshire Lass on the Clyde and to the Western Isles, and locals still talk of seeing her with the tiller wedged under her arm, knitting as she sailed.

The reason for the reunion, which occurred at Rhu Marina, opposite the old McGruer's yard was that the boat has recently undergone an extensive restoration by her new owner, super yacht skipper, Paul Goss. Mr Goss saw the boat 25 years ago, laid up ashore, and harboured a wish to buy her ever since. When the boat came up for sail, Mr Goss, who travels the world at the helm of the enormous three-masted schooner, Adix, owned by chairman of the Bank of Santander, Jaime Botin, bought her and shipped her to Ireland where she has been totally restored over the last two years. The boat was returned to the waters of the Clyde for her first sail just two weeks ago in time to compete in the five-yearly Fife reunion yacht regatta.

Though just six years away from her letter from the queen, Liz hopped straight aboard Ayrshire Lass to sail the small open boat, giving a hand with lines and taking the helm once more on the Clyde.

ENDS

(329 words)

©Paul Jeffes 01475 689100 and ©Martin Smith 07799 396810