

COASTLINES

This quarter's feature on tugs was collated from various sources and I hope that it has helped to update readers on the various types of tug, their advantages and limitations. Henk Henson provided me with some useful contacts but a particularly valuable resource was a presentation on tugs by the well known tug expert and author, Jack Gaston, who kindly gave me permission to plagiarise his work* and to use the picture below. Jack is a skilled model maker and he explained that his daughter presented him with the, originally static, duck display model as a challenge to transform it into a remote controlled model, which, as you can see, was achieved without problem much to the delight of Jack's grandsons and, no doubt, all the onlookers at the local pond!

*Jack's presentation can be accessed at: http://www.britishtug.org/BTA_2011_6.pdf



TUGS TO THE RESCUE!



On January 14th a major fire broke out at Sheerness docks. Three of Svitzer's tugs moored nearby were quickly on the scene and joined the fire brigade in tackling the blaze. Local Fire Officer Jamie Ashby was very grateful for the tug assistance and said that at least another two warehouses would have gone up without the impressive power and volume of the tug's water cannon. He stated that it was the quickest he had seen a fire of that size put out. *Photos: British Tug Owners Association website*



PEC STANDARDS MAINTAINED!



As the Marine Navigation Bill sails through the Houses of Parliament and Lords and politicians blindly ignore logical and coherent professional arguments against the de-regulation of the PEC regime, I was delighted to observe that in my home port of Sandwich, traditional standards are being maintained on the river as the Master and his "bonio fido" Mate manoeuvre the river tour boat alongside the quay. Sorry!

AT LAST! ARCTIC CONVOY VETERANS ARE TO BE HONoured WITH A MEDAL

Veterans of the Arctic convoys that supplied Russia with vital fuel, food and munitions during World War 2 are finally to be awarded their own medal after years of campaigning for official recognition of their bravery. A review of medals policy has concluded that the Arctic veterans should have their own medal. The announcement was criticised by some convoy veterans, who said it was tainted by the fact that it had taken so long to recognise the courage of thousands who had died while wrangling over protocols continued.

92 year old Commander Eddie Grenfell, said "it should not have taken 67 years to get the recognition of a star medal. We are pleased but not delighted. As soon as David Cameron came to power I reminded him of the promise. Only now has he got around to doing it. In the meantime God knows how many of my Arctic convoy chums have died waiting for these bloody politicians who have never heard a shot in their lives to make up their minds."

More than 3,000 seamen were killed during the convoys with 85 merchant ships and 16 Royal Navy vessels sunk. Over 66,000 men sailed on the convoys, but only 200 are alive today.

However, veterans will not be able to receive their medals immediately. The Ministry of Defence has to draw up eligibility criteria before it will award the decorations, and that could take months.