

SPECIAL 400 YEARS MAASSLUIS

MAASSLUIS 400 YEARS – TOWN OF TOWAGE FOR 145 YEARS



Photo: Nationaal Sleepvaart Museum, (NSM)

On Thursday 15th May a new exhibition will be opened in the National Towage Museum at Maassluis, The Netherlands. The town of Maassluis exists this year for exactly 400 years. This is of course a fine opportunity to show the visitors of the museum the history of the town as a towage port. The exhibition will be opened by Mr. Govert de Haas, managing director of the local De Haas Shipyard. Who knows more of the history of Maassluis related to tugs? Only very few people, because his yard, always managed by members of his family, built quite a number of this type of vessels. Of course no one in Maassluis had ever heard of tugs 400 years ago. In the 17th century so called waterships and seacamels assisted seagoing ships over the sandbank Pampus, which hindered the entrance of the Amsterdam harbours. Only in the 19th century the first paddle-tugs appeared in Dutch waters. Coming from the North Sea it was quite a task to reach the Rotterdam ports. In case the wind was not favorable the sailing ships sometimes needed more than a week for the relatively short trip. In 1869, three years before the New Waterway to sea was opened, the first tugs were On Thursday 15th May a new exhibition will be opened in the National Towage Museum at Maassluis, The Netherlands. The town of Maassluis exists this year for exactly 400 years. This is of course a fine opportunity to show the visitors of the museum the history of the town as a towage port. The exhibition will be opened by Mr. Govert de Haas, managing director of the local De Haas Shipyard.

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short trip. In 1869, three years before the New Waterway to sea was opened, the first tugs were stationed at Maassluis. The sons of Mr. Fop Smit, the man with an incredible sharp view on future developments in towage, decided to do so. They believed that Maassluis was going to be an important port for tugs. Both the sea and the Rotterdam port region can be reached from this small port in less than an hour. The first clients were fishermen. Early pictures show tiny tugs towing a series of fishingvessels in a row to sea. Gradually paddle-tugs were replaced by steam-tugs equipped with propellers. From 1892 onwards the first for that time strong ocean-going tugs visited their homeport Maassluis, although the stern showed 'Rotterdam' as their home, because in this town the head-office of the Smit-company was established. Those early tugs were the first to bear the later traditional names like **Noordzee, Oostzee, Oceaan, Roode Zee** and **Zwarte Zee**. From 1900 on there were even two towage-companies at Maassluis. Smit as well as the International Towage Company were of great importance for the inhabitants. Fishermen changed their profession to towagemen and local suppliers, like the rope-yard, profited of the fast developing towage-industry. In 1923 the two competing companies merged and that's how the famous company was established that later on would be internationally well known as "Smit International". Even now that dredging-company Boskalis purchased Smit in 2010 the name of the towage-company remains unchanged. The fifties and sixties of last century are no doubt the best decades for the towage-industry. The greater part of the inhabitants of Maassluis still knows the names of the famous tugs of that time by heart. When the number of the inhabitants increased considerably during the seventies the new citizens were confronted with the maritime past of the town by local festivities that are celebrated each year viz. the 'Furieade' and the 'Day of the seagoing towage'. Maassluis is in the first place the national town of towage. The National Towage Museum is representing both the past and the actuality of this branch of industry that used to be typical Dutch. Now that towage is more wide spread over the world the museum keeps a sharp eye on international developments too. The De Haas-yard at Maassluis, nowadays towage companies still established in Maassluis, the preserved tugs as well as new developments are not forgotten in the new exhibition. The staff of the museum expects a lot of

visitors. Don't forget that the museum, run by volunteers, is open every day from 13.30 till 16.30 hrs., except on Mondays. *(Press Release National Towing Museum by Nico Ouwehand).*

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EXPERIENCE 400 YEARS MAASSLUIS



Festive opening weekend on 16, 17 and 18 may 2014. After months of preparation, consult, conferencing, for fun, plans and countdown it's finally 16 may! The day we officially celebrate Maassluis 400 years independent. From 16 may until October 4, no one can fail to notice that Maassluis celebrate this independency. There is a complete full program with all kinds of events for all ages. The opening weekend is now stands like a House. But what is the program fort his 3 days weekend of 16, 17 and 18 may:

Maritime Maassluis

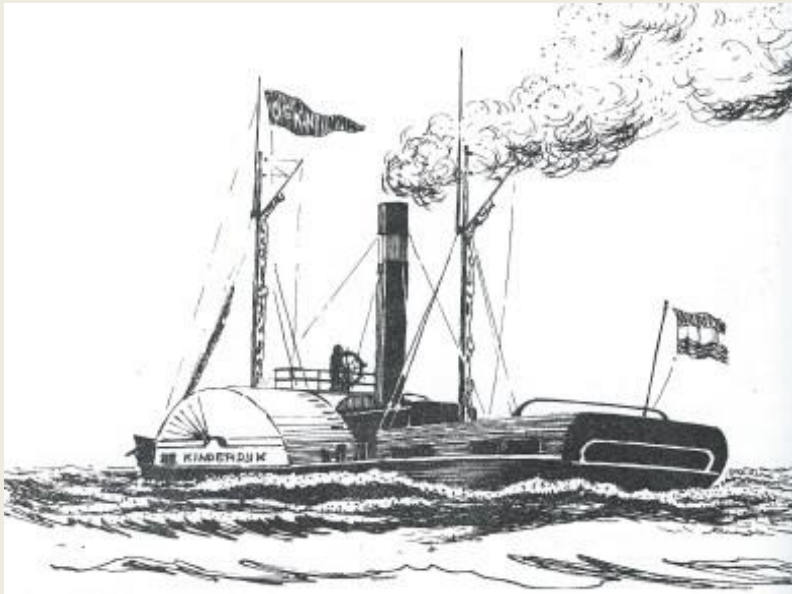
On Saturday 17 may, all day in the sign of the rich maritime history



Photo via Teun van der Zee

of Maassluis. From fishing history, cargo transport, towing history and salvage they all are present. The goal of the event Experience 400 years of Maritime Maassluis is rich history of the port both inland- and seagoing shipping. So there is in the outer harbour of Maassluis place for the Tugs, Salvage vessels and Coasters. When you visit this impressive ships it will take you back to the old days. During the day of the towing service there is always much to experience on the New Waterway. This is not to be missed as an annual returned parade of the tugs. This fleet show should also not be missed in the program during 400 years of maritime experience Maassluis.

SMIT MOVES TO MAASSLUIS



In the year 1826 towage to and from the Rotterdam port was also gaining in importance as finally the urgent need for a towing service was realised. The barques, frigates, schooners and all other types of sailing vessels together with the occasional steamship came and went, generally via the Brouwershaven Channel, between the islands of Schouwen-Duiveland and Goeree-Overflakkee – also via de Goeree Channel, between Goeree-Overflakkee and Voorne-Putten.

From 1830 most vessels destined for or coming from Rotterdam used the Voorne Canal, dug between Hellevoetsluis and Nieuwesluis. This was a new channel. Which under favourable weather conditions allowed a sailing time between Rotterdam and the sea of six or seven hours



Photo via Teun van der Zee

In July 1842 a number of Rotterdam shipowners and insurance brokers met to discuss the setting up and scope for a towing service for both channels and also the outline of the way in which the service should operate.

The first tug a paddle steam tug – which was also equipped with a set of sails – was launched at Kinderdijk and it seemed quite natural that Fop Smit, the founder of the new towing service company, christened it with the same name of the place where he was raised – [Kinderdijk](#)

After the death of Fop Smit, on the 25th August 1866, the towing company lived on. Three weeks after the death of their father, Jan – then 55 years old – and Leen, who was 53, together with their nephew Jan Smit Janszoon and Murk Lels (who was married to their niece Ottolina) had agreed that they would continue to devote all their energy to Fop's work.

On the same day that ground breaking ceremony was held for the digging of the New Waterway – 31st October 1866 – the four officially joined forces. It is quite feasible that the four deliberately chose that day, which was so important not only for Rotterdam port, but also for their own maritime future. In any event, the new enterprise – L. Smit & Co. – would have much to do with the new channel between Rotterdam and the Sea.



Photo: Teun van der Zee

Finally the New Waterway, which opened in 1872 and has a length of approximately 20.5 kilometres (12.7 mi), was constructed to keep the city and port of Rotterdam accessible to seafaring vessels as the natural Meuse-Rhine branches silted up. There are no bridges or tunnels across the New Waterway. The "New Waterway" is a ship canal in the Netherlands from het Scheur (a branch of the Rhine-Meuse-Scheldt delta) west of the town of Maassluis to the North Sea at Hook of Holland.

The time was now ripe for large scale development and the growth of the towing company would be impetuous. Owners were starting to realise the possibilities of steam. The New Waterway had given Rotterdam a direct, unhampered connection with the sea and Rotterdam port was becoming busier and busier. L.Smit & Co. closely followed the developments and took advantage of them. Outdated tug stations were abandoned and new tugs were added. The head office moved some decades later – in 1900 – to Rotterdam and [Maassluis](#) become the major operating base. [Maassluis](#) also become the first town at the New Waterway and shows the importance for her inhabitants and for the towing business.

EXHIBITION “MASSLUIS TOWN OF TOWAGE” OPENED

The Dutch National Towage Museum plays an important role in Maassluis in relation to the towage industry. After all as described above Maassluis is the Port of the tugs and then of course there is a Museum about her history. So on the 15th May the National Towage Museum opened her door for the new exhibition of this town of Towage



The reason that the exhibition was opened on an unusual Thursday was that the festivities around the Maassluis 400 years jubilee were planned during the weekend. No extra time could be reserved for this opening ceremony in the impressive weekend program. Still some 150 persons visited the De Kuiperij (The Coopers) house close to the museum and listened to an introduction of the exhibition. Chairman Karel Kaffa welcomed the about 150 persons who were interested. Mr. Nico J. Ouweland gave a kind of lecture about the history of Maassluis as a town of

towage. The first Smit-paddle tugs were stationed at Maassluis in 1869, because from there both the North Sea and the Rotterdam port-area could be reached in a short time. Three years later the New Waterway was completed and it turned out that the choice of the sons of Mr. Fop Smit was successful. The main clients of the tugs in those days were fishermen. In a row the tugs were towed to the sea. From 1892 onwards the real seagoing tugs were built at Kinderdijk and regularly visited Maassluis. These ships with engine powers up to abt. 1250 hp towed i.e. floating drydocks, dredging material, ships to be scrapped or with engine troubles and tin dredgers all over the world. During the thirties of last century the economic crisis became visible a.o. because sometimes the harbour of Maassluis looked like a forest of smokestacks belonging tugs. During the second World War it was not allowed to take photos at the harbour. So from May 1940 to the days of liberation in 1945 almost no pictures are known. During the war, however, the crews of the tugs that were outside under the allied flag acted like heroes, however some of them were badly traumatized. The fifties and the sixties were the flourishing-decades of the Dutch towage industry. The local authorities of Maassluis even made plans to extend the harbour in western direction, also because coasters and pilot vessels visited the port every day. Those plans were never realized. In the beginning of the eighties the last real oceangoing-tugs of Smit that visited their homeport were



Schelde and **Thames**. The first mentioned ship was sold to the U.S. and never returned to Holland. Thames was converted into a superb yacht, that still sails all over the world. Yet there is still activity in the port of Maassluis. First of all there are the preserved tugs like **Elbe**, **Furie** and **Hudson**, the salvage vessel **Bruinvisch** and smaller tugs like **Maassluis**, **Krimpen** and **Adriaan**. Two more modest towage companies, Gareloch Support Services and Wesselius, are still doing well from their Maassluis-offices. Of great importance is the local yard De Haas, nicknamed “the hospital of ships in the Rotterdam area”. Harbour- as well as coastal tugs are regularly to be found at the yard for repairs or maintenance. Managing director Govert de Haas was invited to open the exhibition. He explained the role of his yard in the light of the history of the town and memorized that quite a number of harbour tugs, that are still sailing, were built at the De Haas yard. Finally, together with his spouse he rang the bell of tug Zwarte Zee (I) built in 1898. This tug was sold to Russia in 1905. However her bell was discovered in Hong Kong during the eighties and taken to Maassluis as hand-luggage by a Dutch sailor with strong feelings for ships history. Don't forget to drop in when you are in the Maassluis area. The National Towage Museum is open every day from 13.30 till 16.30 hrs. except on Mondays. *(Source & Photo's: Nico Ouwehand;)*

TUGBOAT PARADE

On Saturday 17th May a spectacular Tugboat Parade was hold on het Scheur in front of the tugboat port Maassluis. Below an impression of the tugs. But first to see what this tugboat parade give the spectators for view click on the link [here](#). This beautiful movie is made by “Dubbelklik” The Dutch National Towage Museum will thanks Matthijs en Natanja for their grandiose contribution.



The outer port of Maassluis. All vessel waiting for the Tugboat parade. *(Photo: Jan Oosterboer)*

With the tug former Doeksen tug **Holland** in front of the former office of L.Smit & Co. In 1950 built by Ferus Smit, v/h J. Smit & Zn – Foxhol. In 1951 delivered to NV Scheepvaart en Bergings Mij. G.Doeksen & Zonen – Terschelling. In 1976 chartered to Rijkswaterstaat
In 1998 end of contract



with Rijkswaterstaat, for disposal. In 1998 to Holland Shipping Company BV (Arjen Terpstra and Bert Blokhuis). In 2001 to Stichting Zeesleepboot Holland - Opperdoes/Den Helder for preservation homeport Oude Rijkswerf Willemsoord at Den Helder. *(Photo: Jan Oosterboer)*

The Ocean Going Fleet vessels:

Some countries in the towing world attended the parade. With Turkey's **Izmir Bull** in front, she is the former Dutch International Towing Contractors tug **Sirocco**. Second in row is seen the German tug **Jade**. In third place the Italian tug **Carlo Mango**. Fourth is seen the Singaporean tug **Salvicero**. And last in row is the brand new Dutch tug **Kolga** from Heerema.



Photo: Nico Ouwehand

The Inland ancient fleet:

Within front an old fishing vessel. Behind her the oldest in the parade the steamtug Hercules, towing a steam sheerleg. Right is seen the steamtug Furie.



Photo: Jan Oosterboer

A spectacular show:

Now we will see a lot of tugs showing their capacity, manoeuvrability, power, speed and firefighting capacities. A show where each tugboat enthusiast dreams on and to would lick his fingers. Below an impression.



Smit Cheetah shows her firefighting capacity. In 2009 delivered to Smit Shipping Singapore Pvt Ltd at Singapore. In the same year 2009 transferred to Smit Harbor Towage Rotterdam – Rotterdam. She is a Damen ASD 3213 design. *(Photo: Nico Ouwehand)*

The **SD Rebel** shows her power. In 2012 to Kotug BV at Rotterdam. In 2012 founded SD Rebel Ltd – Valletta. In 2012 delivered to SD Rebel Ltd – Valletta and managed Kotug - Kooren International BV - This tug is a Damen ASD 2810 design. *(Photo: Willem Holtkamp)*



The **Fairplay XIV** shows her manoeuvrability. Built 2009 by Astilleros Armon SA – Navia and delivered to Pastor Servicios Financieros SA - La Coruna, chartered to Fairplay Schleppdampfschiffs-Reederei Richard Borchard GmbH – Hamburg and managed by Fairplay Towage BV - at Rotterdam. *(Photo: Nico Ouwehand)*

Here below an impression of the Tugs normally berthing in the Tugboat Port of Maassluis

The 1959 built former L.Smit & Co's tug **Elbe** by J. & K. Smit's Scheepswerf – Kinderdijk. 1976 - rebuilt at Cobh, Ireland as pilot. In 1977 to Association of Maryland Pilots at Baltimore renamed **Maryland**. In 1985 to Green Peace at London renamed **Gondwana**. In the same year rebuild in Amsterdam and renamed **Greepeace**. In 2002 instead of scrapping, donated to the Harbour Museum in Rotterdam for preservation restored to her original state by the "SMCR - Stichting Maritieme Collectie Rijnmond" and renamed **Elbe**. In 2012 trial run under own power. A fantastic job by the volunteers. *(Photo: Jan Oosterboer)*



The in 1948 in Maassluis on the yard of De Haas built tug **Maassluis**. In 1969 transferred to Sleepdienst & Transportonderneming Gerrit J. Eerland LCM zn NV – Rotterdam. In 1978 sold to A.J. Wemmenhoven – Lith and renamed **Libra**. In 1978: chartered to Stoomsleepdienst Mars - Rotterdam. In 1988 to van Hasselt's Baggermij BV - Ohe en Laak / Stevensweert. And renamed **VH 76**. In 1995 sold to Grind & Baggerbedrijf Dragasa Bvba – Kinrooi and renamed

D 16. In 2011 for preservation to Stichting Maritiem Erfgoed Maassluis – Maassluis. In 2012 restored and preserved in the tugboat port Maassluis. *(Photo: Andre Kempe-www.andrekempe.nl)*

The tug **Furie** built in 1916 by Gebr. G. & H. Bodewes - at Martenshoek as Gebroeders Bodewes VI. In 1919 to Holmens Bruks & Fabriks A/B – Norrköping and renamed **Holmen III**. In 1968 to Gustav A. Akerlund – Stockholm and renamed **Holm**. In 1968 renamed **Holmvik**. In 1976 to AVRO a Dutch TV-channel, restored for the tv-soap Hollands Glorie and renamed **Jan van Gent** and **Furie**. In 1977 for breaking up to Thaumias BV - Zaandam. In 1979 for preservation to Stichting Hollands Glorie - at Maassluis. *(Photo: Andre Kempe-www.andrekempe.nl)*





renamed **Krimpen**. In 1996 to C.J. Woestenburg - Zwaag. In the same year to A.M.W. Tichelaar - Harlingen. In 2002 to Hebo Maritiem Service BV (H. Bonsink) – Zwartsluis. In 2006 to S.W.M. Willemstein at Nieuwendijk. In 2007 for preservation on loan to Tugboat Harbour Maassluis – Maassluis. *(Photo: Andre Kempe-www.andrekempe.nl)*

Than we have the Ocean Going Tugs attend this parade

The Italian anchor handling tug **Carlo Mango** is built in 2006 by Cantieri Navale Rosetti Marino Spa in Ravenna for Augustea Imprese Marittime E Di Salvataggi Spa. *(Photo: Willem Holtman)*



The Turkey's tug **Izmir Bull** is built in 1975 by Matsuuro Tekko Zosen KK – Higashino and delivered to International Transport Sirocco Inc and managed by ITC Management BV – Haarlem as **Sirocco**. In 2011 to Izmir Offshore Services Inc and managed by ATA Tug & Salvage Inc – Istanbul and renamed **Izmit Bull**. *(Photo: Richard Wisse)*

The German tug **Jade**. In 1999 the hull built by Stocznia Remontowa Nauta SA – Gdynia. In 2000 completed by J.G. Hitzler Schiffswerft & Maschinenfabrik – Lauenburg. And delivered to SILEX Mobilien-Verwaltungsgesellschaft mbH & Co KG, and managed by Unterweser Reederei AG – Bremen. *(Photo: Richard Wisse)*



The Singaporean anchor handling tug Salviceroy is built in 2007 in Japan. She is owned by Posh Terasea Offshore Pte. Ltd. *(Photo: Richard Wisse)*

The brand new Dutch tug **Kolga** built in 2014 by Astilleros Armon Vigo, S.A. for Heerema Marine Contractors. *(Photo: Richard Wisse)*



It is also worth to mention that there are many other smaller tugs from around the Maassluis port area as an important factor to this tugboat parade

And at the end of this beautiful sunny day every one again returned satisfied home. The organisation did a wonderful job.

Herewith I would like express my thanks to all photographers for their entry to me. This because I myself was unable to attend this event.

This special is sponsored by Eddy Tug – www.eddytug.com

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Last week there have been new updates posted:

1. Several updates on the News page posted last week:

- [KOTUG International B.V. winner King Willem I Award 2014](#)
- [Boskalis trading update](#)
- [Damen names Royal Oman Navy flagship](#)
- [Five Years Towingline.com](#)

<mailto:jvds@towingline.com>

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