

THE PHAROS TRUST

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HARWICH HISTORIC LIGHTSHIP TO STAR IN HOLLYWOOD MOVIE

The historic Lightvessel LV18, has returned to Harwich after starring in a new blockbuster film. Filming for the new Richard Curtis movie **The Boat That Rocked** has been taking place in and around the Dorset harbour of Portland over the past 5 weeks.

The Boat That Rocked is written by Richard Curtis, the Emmy, BAFTA and WGA Award-winning filmmaker whose projects have included films **from Four Weddings and a Funeral, Notting Hill, Bridget Jones's Diary** and **Love Actually** to **Mr. Bean** and **Blackadder**. It will also be directed by Curtis, his second directorial outing, but first non-rom-com.

The film, based on the story of two offshore pirate radio ships in 1966 features actors, Rhys Ifans, Kenneth Brannagh, Bill Nighy and Philip Seymour Hoffman.

In 1966, arguably British pop music's finest era, the BBC played only two hours of rock and roll every week. But pirate radio blasted rock and pop from the high seas 24 hours a day. And 25 million people - more than half the population of Britain - listened to these pirates every single day.

The Boat That Rocked is an ensemble comedy in which the romance takes place between the young people of the '60s and pop music. It's about a band of rogue DJs that captivated Britain, playing the music that defined a generation and standing up to a government that, incomprehensibly, preferred jazz.

*Leading the cast are Philip Seymour Hoffman (**Charlie Wilson's War, The Savages**) as The Count, a big, brash, American god of the airwaves; Bill Nighy (**Love Actually, Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End**) as Quentin, the boss of Radio Rock - a pirate radio station in the middle of the North Sea that's populated by an eclectic crew of rock and roll DJs; Rhys Ifans (**Notting Hill, Elizabeth: The Golden Age**) as Gavin, the greatest DJ in Britain, who has just returned from his drug tour of America to reclaim his rightful position; Nick Frost (**Hot Fuzz, Shaun of the Dead**) as Dave, an ironic, intelligent and cruelly funny co-broadcaster; and Kenneth Branagh (**Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Hamlet**) as British Minister Dormandy, a fearsome government official out for blood against the drug taking, record playing lawbreakers of a once-great nation. The film also stars Tom Sturridge, Jack Davenport, Ralph Brown, Chris O'Dowd and January Jones.*

LV18, owned by the charity the Pharos Trust, is a familiar landmark in Harwich Harbour and has been used as a base for 'Pirate' Radio celebrations on several

occasions. Last August the BBC used the vessel as a base for the popular 'Pirate BBC Essex' broadcast to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the 'Marine Offences Act' of 1967, which brought about an end to the era of Radio Caroline, Radio London and other offshore radio stations just off the coast of Harwich.

The event brought back many of the original 60s DJs including Johnnie Walker, Roger Day, Keith Skues, Dave Cash and Emperor Rosko, with many ex-pirates travelling from aboard to participate. The broadcasters lived aboard LV18 for a week, attracting thousands of visitors to the town.

LV18 Project Manager and Trustee, Tony O'Neil said, "We are really pleased to have had the opportunity to play a major part in this new film. We hope that the publicity gained from this will not only highlight our endeavours to bring the LV18 alongside permanently as a tourism and community resource but will also, through 'Film Tourism', attract many people who will want to see the vessel due to its starring role in **The Boat That Rocked.**"

LV18 was the last manned Trinity House Lightvessel in service and has been maintained in her original 'live aboard' condition with the objective of achieving a permanent berth on Harwich Quay to open as a museum portraying the history of the manned lightvessels and their part in guarding the mariner around the coastline. The vessel has 9 cabins, mess room and fully functioning electrical and mechanical systems.

All the Trinity House Lighthouses and Lightvessels are remotely operated from the new Trinity House HQ at on Harwich Quay. Mr O'Neil added, "I hope at long last that we will be able to save this historic vessel for her home port of Harwich. We are now more hopeful that the project will be seen to form a key element in the forthcoming regeneration of Harwich Quay and be a most appropriate attraction to visitors to the area."

LV18 has been partially repainted for the film and can be viewed from the Ha'penny Pier, Harwich.

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