

Cutty Sark reunion

Families from Cutty Sark's history traced for reunion

Descendants of shipbuilders, sailors and captains who worked on the Cutty Sark are to gather on board the famous tea clipper in the largest reunion of families who have been involved in the vessel's history.

It is almost 143 years since Sophie Kennedy Clark's great-great-great grandfather saw the completion of his most famous ship.

Hercules Linton's design for the Cutty Sark allowed the tea clipper to become the fastest vessel of its time, capable of even outrunning the more advanced steam ships that had begun to take to the seas.

Now his descendant, an actress and model who appears in the latest Johnny Depp film *Dark Shadows*, will set foot on his ship for the first time to take part in the largest ever reunion of the families of the men and women who built and sailed the vessel.

Researchers have traced 400 living descendants of crew members, captains and shipwrights who worked on the Cutty Sark and at least 170 of them will be brought together for the first time on board the vessel at an event to mark the completion of an five year restoration of the ship.

"It is going to be like a giant family gathering of people I didn't know existed," said Miss Kennedy Clark, 20, who has modelled as the face of Burberry and has appeared alongside David Tennant in the TV drama *Single Father*.

The work to track down the descendants was commissioned by HSBC, who are sponsoring the Cutty Sark, to mark the reopening of the famous vessel to the public at its dry dock in Greenwich, south east London, following a £50 million restoration project

Francis Clark, 60, Miss Kennedy Clark's father and great great grandson of Hercules Linton, said: "We are very proud of our family connection to the Cutty Sark. It is part of our family history and identity. There is a strong maritime vein running through the family – four generations of our family have been involved in the fishing industry.

Read more @: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/9276809/Families-from-Cutty-Sarks-history-traced-for-reunion.html>