



Bristol skipper's city wine mission

A Bristol skipper has jumped on board an ambitious new idea, which mixes French wine with the only surviving wooden schooner of its kind.

Rob Salvidge was at the helm of a new partnership between Frederic Albert, a wine importer, and the wonderfully crafted tall ship Kathleen and May.

They recently attempted to ship over a cargo of 6,000 bottles of wine from France to Dublin and the UK - to eventually end up in Bristol - with the dream of a return to the days of wind-powered transport.

The Kathleen and May would have been a regular visitor to ports all along the Bristol channel about 100 years ago.

In those days she made her money carrying coal from and to Ireland - now, with her precious packages, she's hoping that old fashioned wind-powered commerce can help to secure her future.

The Kathleen and May was built in 1900, and for more than 60 years she carried cargo between the ports of England, Wales and Ireland.

But by the end of the last century she'd been abandoned and had to be rescued from the rot - with years of painstaking restoration.

Her eventual return to open seas was a triumph but it still costs thousands of pounds a year to keep her sea-worthy.

So, now the crew are taking the radical step of asking the Kathleen and May to pay her own way and have put her back to work.

Frederic, from Fair Wind Wine, said: "People from the past [were] right. It's no pollution with a sailing ship and it's cheaper, because we don't use at all oil to bring wine to Ireland and the UK."

You can see if Rob and Frederic make it to Bristol on this week's Inside Out West on Monday, 2 November 2009 at 7.30pm - or you can watch until Monday, 9 November on the BBC iPlayer.

Story from BBC NEWS:

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