The COBBOLD Family History Trust

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H M Y Britannia, the Royal Yacht of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Part 3 *…and becoming the finest visitor attraction in the world* (Tripadvisor)

Britannia was decommissioned in 1994. She had sailed over a million miles, had made 696 foreign visits to 135 countries and completed 272 visits in British waters. She had hosted 4 American Presidents: **Eisenhower**, **Ford**, **Reagan** and **Clinton**; numerous other leaders including **Churchill**, **Thatcher**, **Mandela** and **Yeltsin** and provided honeymoon accommodation in 1973 for **Princess Anne** and **Mark Phillips** and in 1981 for **Prince Charles** and **Lady Diana**.

Following decommissioning, to the evident regret of Her Majesty, *Britannia* tied up at the **Ocean Terminal**, Leith in **Edinburgh**. There, all her clocks are set at 3.01 pm to record the moment on December 11th 1997 when Her Majesty was piped ashore for the last time during her decommissioning ceremony in Portsmouth. A fitting tribute to Her Late Majesty and to her yacht's 44 years of service.

Britannia was certainly 'Top of the Bill' during those 44 years and she retains her position of pre-eminence in later life. She has been at the top of Tripadvisor's popularity poll for the last three years with over 300,000 devotees each year. Her five decks are all category 1 accessible and the Royal Deck Tearoom serves exquisite cream teas.

Her shop sells (of course) the ubiquitous branded mug, *Britannia* nautical clothing, gift hampers and soft toys, and tours include the **Admiral's Cabin** and the serene **State Apartments**. If you need to stay overnight her sister ship

Fingal provides luxury accommodation. For a special celebration you can hire the whole ship.

As a tourist attraction she is exceptional, but thus it has always been. As **Prince Charles** said years ago, '*She is a living, working, sailing demonstration of the best of Britain'* described by his mother as '*The one place I can truly relax*.'

Rule Britannia!

Anthony Cobbold