

# CLASSIC FAST FERRIES

AUGUST 2019

HYDROFOILS HOVERCRAFT SESS & CATAMARANS



ALESSANDRO MILESI photo

## A new beginning for Lord Byron



# A NEW BEGINNING FOR LORD BYRON



Preparing RHS 150FL *Lord Byron* to be moved from Lago Maggiore to Lago di Como at Arona in June / PAOLO ZONCA photo

As most Italian followers of *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES* will know, there is a new hydrofoil on Lago di Como in northern Italy. Which is bending the truth somewhat as the vessel, RHS 150FL *Lord Byron*, was completed by Rodriquez in late 1989 and entered service with Navigazione Lago Maggiore in 1990.

The transfer of the hydrofoil from Lago Maggiore to Lago di Como was carried out this past June under the motto 'the difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes a little longer'. Since it is obviously not possible to navigate between the two lakes, the move was made by road. This meant disassembling the hydrofoil at the Navigazione Lago Maggiore base at Arona and transporting the hull and superstructure on flatbed trailers the



ROBERTO ROLANDO photo



ROBERTO ROLANDO photo

approximately seventy kilometres to Valmadrera on Lago di Como. Here the hydrofoil was lowered onto the water and towed to the shipyard at Dervio to be put together again. Certainly an unusual operation, performed by Battazza and supervised by Intermarine (Rodriquez), but not unseen before as all hydrofoils for the three lakes of Como, Garda and Maggiore were delivered by road to their destination after having been taken from the building yard in Messina to the north Adriatic under their own power. In each case the foils would be removed, for obvious reasons, but this may be the first time when the superstructure was dismantled from the hull.



It takes meticulous planning and precision to move a hydrofoil from one lake to another – by road. The hull of the RHS 150FL has a length overall of 28.70m and breadth of 6.50m / PAOLO ZONCA photo



The superstructure on arrival at Valmadrera on Lago di Como / JACOPO MEMEO photo

In addition to these two hydrofoils three more are operated on Lago di Como, RHS 150SLs *Freccia delle Valli* and *Guglielmo Marconi* and RHS 150FL *Voloire*, built in 1979, 1983 and 1989 respectively.

While sharing the basic designation RHS 150, the appearance of the two generations SL and the FL differ significantly. Each has been described on several occasions in previous issues of CFF.

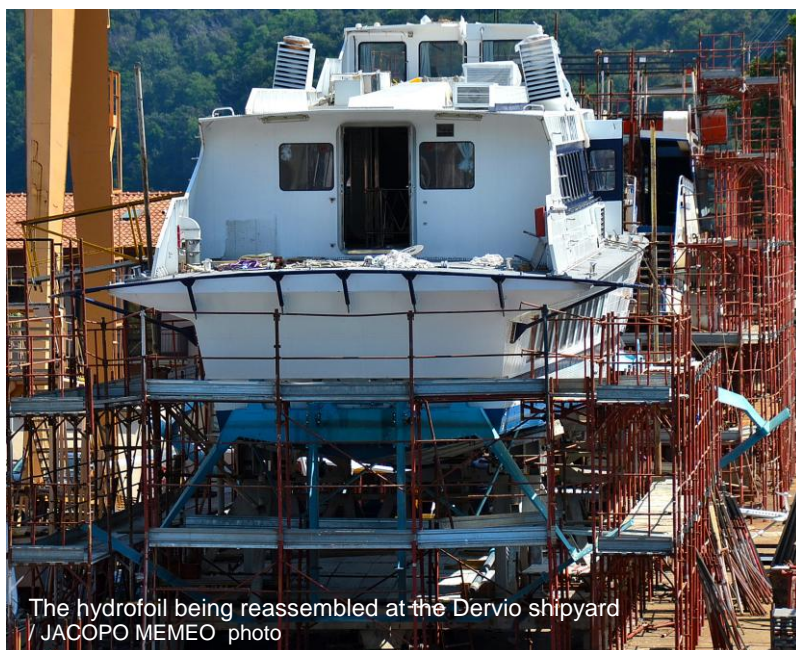
(more overleaf)

## NOT A FIRST

Also, this was not the first time a hydrofoil switched lakes to Lago di Como.

Two were transferred from Lago di Garda in 1982 and 1993; PT.20 *Freccia degli Ulivi* and RHS 70 *Freccia dei Gerani*, delivered in 1965 and 1977. The PT.20 never actually entered service on Lago di Como whereas *Freccia dei Gerani* still exists but has not seen service for some time and is no more likely to now with the arrival of *Lord Byron*. Unless it will be reintroduced on less demanding services during the low season.

A petition to preserve this last remaining RHS 70 has been brought forward by members of the Italian hydrofoil group *n gli aliscafi* on facebook.



The hydrofoil being reassembled at the Dervio shipyard / JACOPO MEMEO photo



## AND THEN THERE WERE TWO

With the repositioning of *Lord Byron* there are now only two hydrofoils left on Lago Maggiore; RHS 150SLs *Frecia dei Giardini* and *Ennio Fermi*, delivered in 1980 and 1984. The first of the three lakes to introduce hydrofoils in regular service, a total of eight have been operated since the beginning in 1964, however, not all at the same time. Even before this, in 1953, a small PT.10 hydrofoil, *Frecia d'Oro*, built by Supramar in Switzerland, was used on sightseeing trips.

Of the three RHS 150FLs built the other, *Goethe*, which was also the first completed, in 1988, remains with Navigazione Lago di Garda. This operator likewise still has its pair of RHS 150SL

hydrofoils, *Frecia delle Riniere* and *Galileo Galilei*, delivered in 1981 and 1982. **CFF**



RHS 150FL *Lord Byron* fresh out of the shipyard at Dervio sporting an all-white livery, except for the blue line on the hull. The Navigazione Laghi logo at the bow is a nice touch. See also cover photo

/ ALESSANDRO MILESI photo, both