

CLYDE RIVER STEAMER CLUB

Dear Member,

PROPOSED NEW YEAR CRUISE - WEDNESDAY 2nd JANUARY 1985

After trying for some years to charter M.V. PIONEER, we have at last the opportunity of cruising on this somewhat elusive but nevertheless extremely useful member of the CalMac fleet. Not surprisingly the cost of chartering PIONEER is greater than the likes of JUNO/JUPITER, such cost also reflecting the recent substantial increases in fuel prices.

Your Committee has given careful consideration to the charter proposal, on the one hand, desirous of meeting one of the Club's basic aims, "to provide opportunities for members to meet and sail together", but on the other hand acutely aware of the substantial financial risk involved in such a venture.

With the cooperation of Caledonian MacBrayne over the question of cancellation, the Committee are proposing that we proceed with a charter sailing of PIONEER to Tarbert, subject to sufficient firm bookings being received by, at latest, 30th November 1984. Should we fail to meet the required level of response by that date, the charter will be cancelled and our sequence of attractive and enjoyable New Year cruises brought to an end.

Considering that the average support for these winter cruises over the last four to five years is little more than one quarter of the Club Membership, we require to charge a fare of £11.95, just to approach a break-even figure. Clearly if the number booking is below average, the cruise will not take place - BUT, IS THAT WHAT YOU THE MEMBERS WANT?

Whatever your particular interest in the Clyde Steamer Scene, we are sure, as a member you appreciate that, for the Club to thrive and maintain all the facilities offered to its membership, collectively we must retain an active interest, not only in the great steamers of yesteryear, but also in the current ferries, the true inheritants of those first paddlers which forged the many links between the island and coastal communities of the Firth of Clyde.

This proposed sailing could well be the only occasion we will have of chartering PIONEER and certainly of sailing in her through the Kyles of Bute to Tarbert. Please think seriously about this opportunity. We know it is asking for a sizeable financial commitment, but sailing on Clyde 'Steamers' is the very essence of our existance as a Club. Do not let this very important basic activity die out.

Our Club excursions, quite apart from providing pleasureable cruising and its associated and often unique photographic opportunities, are a most natural means of meeting together, furthering mutual interests and strengthening bonds of friendship.

Individually, let each of us do all we can to ensure the continuing presence of such opportunities, so that, collectively, we can maintain and further the aims and activities of our Club.

Let us be 'Pioneering' in our fight against apathy.

Yours sincerely,

Eric J. Schofield

Convener of Cruises.