



SETTING SAIL: Sula III has different boarding levels on the bow and side and is fitted with a £40k gyro-stabiliser unit which will minimise rolling

Launched: Sula III will soon be plying her trade at sea

Bass Rock tour boat is designed to the highest spec

NAINA BHARDWAJ

A BRAND new passenger boat which is due to arrive in North Berwick in a fortnight's time has been launched in Oban.

Sula III set sail on Saturday and will travel to the east coast via the Caledonian Canal after being commissioned by North-Berwick based Sula Boat Trips in 2018 but being delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The 13m long boat was designed by Murray Cormack Naval Architects who have designed the bow and side

boarding at different levels and fitted in a hi-tech £40,000 gyro-stabiliser unit.

This will minimise rolling, enhance passenger comfort as well as make it ideal for taking photos during journeys around the Bass Rock to see the gannets and other seabirds.

Sula III will be able to carry 65 passengers and will take people on voyages on the Firth of Forth and to the world renowned bird sanctuary on the Isle of May.

Owner Duncan MacRae was looking forward to taking the helm for the first time after the launch.

He said: "It's brand new so it has been built to the highest possible standard and it has been brilliant being able to get

it built in Scotland. It could have been built somewhere else for a lot cheaper but I've been able to go through and visit and generally keep an eye on it which was great."

"Watching her slide down into the water was a really proud moment for everyone"

KAREN PAYNE

The original Sula began trips around the Bass Rock in 1970 but was also used for lobster fishing by local fisherman Fred Marr and his son, Chris.

As the popularity of the trips

rose, Sula II was purchased to take over the sailings after beginning her life as a fishing vessel in Norfolk.

The family business continued operating until it was sold in 2011 and then eventually acquired by Duncan and Claire MacRae in 2018.

However, due to more stringent regulations being introduced, she was no longer allowed to carry passengers.

Therefore she was sold and is currently operating from Lulworth Cove in Dorset and a new vessel was needed to ensure that Sula Boat Trips could continue running well into the future – leading to Sula III being commissioned.

This is the sixth passenger vessel which AluTec Marine

Ltd, who build aluminium boats at Creran Marine's facility north of Oban, have made using a proven hullform, with the first being built in 1998 for use in the exposed waters off Barra.

Karen Payne, who runs AluTec Marine Ltd alongside her husband Edwin said about the launch: "Watching her slide down into the water was a really proud moment for everyone."

"It hasn't been an easy road, with the pandemic stopping work for months, but the team here at Creran have been amazing and it's credit to everyone involved that we now have such a beautiful boat."

"It's definitely something to be celebrated at the end of what has been a very difficult time for everyone."

Family drops plan to sue US government

THE family of Harry Dunn have withdrawn their intention to sue the US government in a bid to find a "resolution to the impasse".

Mr Dunn's parents, Charlotte Charles and Tim Dunn, previously said they would pursue a claim against President Donald Trump's administration for its handling of their son's case.

But Mrs Charles has told reporters that the family "can now see that the US government are working towards" suspect Anne Sacoolas facing the UK justice system.

The US State Department recently said it was looking for a "reasonable resolution" after news emerged that the UK Attorney General, Suella Braverman QC, was considering a virtual trial or a trial in Sacoolas's absence.

The Dunn family said they hoped their decision to not pursue a claim against the US government would encourage them to find a way forward in their quest for a trial in the UK.

Mr Dunn, 19, died when his motorbike crashed into a car outside RAF Croughton in Northamptonshire on August 27 last year.

Sacoolas, 43, the wife of a US intelligence official, claimed diplomatic immunity after the collision and was able to return to her home country, sparking an international controversy.

Schindler's List top score

JOHN Williams' score to Schindler's List has been voted the nation's favourite piece of film music.

The composer's Oscar-winning accompaniment to Steven Spielberg's 1993 feature, about a German businessman who saved more than 1,000 lives during the Holocaust, topped the list compiled by Classic FM listeners and Radio Times readers.

The film also knocked Howard Shore's score for The Lord Of The Rings off the top spot this year.

Williams secured five entries in the top 20, including Star Wars, Jurassic Park, Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone and ET The Extra-Terrestrial.



OPTIMISTIC: Emily Eavis

Glastonbury bosses hope for return in June rather than September

GLASTONBURY organisers aim to have the festival back in June, Emily Eavis has said.

Founder Michael Eavis has previously said the fate of next year's event is uncertain.

The festival was cancelled this year, on its 50th birthday, because of the pandemic.

Co-organiser Emily Eavis tweeted that they are

hoping the festival will return in June – its usual month – and not be pushed back to the autumn.

"We have no plans to move next year's Glastonbury to September 2021 – we're still very much aiming for June," she wrote.

She said next year's festival, at Worthy Farm in Somerset,

remains sold out, because so few people have asked for a refund this year.

Sir Paul McCartney, Taylor Swift and Kendrick Lamar were set to headline the Pyramid Stage this year to celebrate the festival's landmark anniversary.

Michael Eavis previously told ITV News that they are "moving

heaven and earth to make sure that" they are back next year.

"But that doesn't necessarily mean it's going to happen, that's wishful thinking," he said.

"The only certainty I think is the year after, 2022, so we might have to wait for two years maybe."

Emily Eavis tweeted: "We've moved our ticket resale back from October to April, because so few people have asked for a refund (next year's festival remains sold out), meaning we don't have enough tickets to resell."

"Plus, we've extended the free cancellation deadline until the end of January."