

THE BARGE RACE by Shirley Morpew

Beautiful ladies of the sea
A sight of bygone days.
Now a once a year treat
As they gracefully sail up the Thames.
Wind taking them wherever it blows,
To the left, to the right
About turn, opposite direction
Twisting and turning
Slowly, gracefully, silently, drifting
Wherever the gentle breeze guides them.
Not at all like the humdrum M25
On this hot sunny afternoon
The river is like a mirror
With hardly a ripple
Silently the wind arises as if from nowhere.
Sails fill to bursting
Full steam ahead.
Hooters blasting
A gun firing
First, second, third
Excitement lifting
Horns blowing
Home at last
End of a long summer's day – 3rd July 2011

Result: The Guinness barge won, crossing the line at 4.35pm. Seven barges finished with two stragglers left way behind.