

# Created for a purpose

By Cliff Neill

**T**he Cutty Sark is a clipper ship. She was designed and built in 1869 in Dumbarton, Scotland.

Her name comes from a poem by Rabbie Burns called 'Tam o' Shanter' that tells of a Scottish farmer who is chased by a witch called Nannie Dee. Nannie wore only her 'Cutty Sark' or short shift, a kind of mini-skirt, if you wish. The ship's figurehead is a representation of the witch, her arm outstretched to catch the tail of the Tam's grey mare on which he was escaping. Portuguese seamen referred to her as 'Pequena Camisola' or little shirt.

The Cutty Sark was designed and built for the tea trade; actually she was the last clipper to be built for that purpose. The tea trade was an intensely competitive race across the globe from China to London, with immense profits for the ship which arrived back with the first tea of the year.

Thus this famous little ship was designed for a specific purpose—purpose built for a special function—to win the race from China and gain a huge reward.

What about us? Were we made for a purpose?

As human beings we are all unique; our DNA, our fingerprints, our eye and voice prints are totally different. In fact, our hearts actually beat with a different rhythm from everyone else's. Out of all the billions of people that ever lived—no one has had a heartbeat like yours!

I believe that we have all been created for a special purpose and that purpose is to love and serve each other, to use our time wisely and productively in the service of others as we pass along the way during our time here on earth. One ancient Danish proverb says: 'What you are is God's gift to you. What you do with yourself is your gift to God!'

Interestingly, author Jack London (1876–1916), well known for his adventure novels such as *White Fang* and *The Call of the Wild*, wrote these words before his death:

I would rather be ashes than dust! I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than be stifled by dry rot. I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The proper function of man is to live, not just to exist. I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them. I shall use my time.

Now that's a terrific motto for life, a life shared with others, a lifestyle that reflects the very purpose for which we were created because we all need each other on this beautiful blue jewel we call home.

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