



Norfolk Wherry Trust

Volunteers Newsletter

Winter 2012

Base News

Welcome one and all to the latest copy of the Norfolk Wherry Trust volunteers newsletter. I hope you all come to enjoy this on a regular basis, and quite quickly I hope, you will also come to realise that it now offers a broader appeal, to include anything thought to be relevant from anybody who



volunteers for the NWT. With luck, I hope to bring much experience into the writing of this newsletter based on the skills I have attained over many years writing for wood turning clubs and, for the national and international press. The main thing I need to get across to my readers is the fact that this newsletter can only succeed if I am given content to put into it. I don't really mind

where the content comes from, so long as it has a general appeal to those volunteering for the Norfolk Wherry Trust. For my part, I am happy to report that during October 2012 I oversaw the re-construction of the external quay heading on the tenant's side of our dyke. This was all carefully planned to coincide with Albion's trip to Lake Lothing, thus leaving the dyke reasonably clear for work boats to moor. I was initially told that work was not likely to start until late

on the first planned day as the work boats had got to come some distance. Bron and I went



down to the base at about noon on that day, and low and behold, all the old quay had gone. It just goes to show what a poor condition it was all in. A couple of days later I watched as a 5 meter length of treated timber was pushed into the ground as if it were going through butter. All in



all, a fine job has been done by Amis & Co., and the tenants should be well pleased when they return in the spring. At the same time, all the mooring posts were replaced on our side of the dyke, so beware, if you happen to kick one of the new posts, you are likely to come away with a bruised toe. It has been suggested that we could paint them all pretty colours, but this decision has not yet been finalised. Thanks go to Martin and Ivor who helped me supervise the work being done on site. Thanks also go out to those who have been up on the roof helping to clear out the gutters, maintain the wind vane, etc., etc.



Also new this winter is 'Pete's Shed'. This now provides much needed storage space for all the stuff we need infrequent access to. This of course now frees up lots of space in the main shed. All offers of a name to pin up over the door will be gratefully received.

Don't forget, if you want this newsletter to continue, please give me some content to put in it.

Jon Simpson, Base Manager

Education

Following the successful school events run in 2012 we plan to continue them in 2013. We have put 15th May, and the 5th and 12th June in the calendar. As always, these days are totally dependent upon volunteer participation so please put these dates in your diary also. I will write to all who helped last year but new members are always welcome. I'm not sure who enjoys these days most, the visitors or the Volunteers! We have already had one booking for 2013, as Magdalen Gates School in Norwich wish to come again and have booked 12th June. The event is organised by the Archive and Education subcommittee which has yet to meet (N.B. January 22nd) to finalise next year's content but it will be largely the same as last year. Any feedback will be welcome though. I do have some feedback for you in as much as in talking to the NCC Advisor on Outdoor learning he had heard how good the event was, so the word is getting around.

Martin Symes, Archives & Education



Web Matters

In case some of you may not have noticed, could I draw your attention to the refreshed Volunteer's Section of our website? As well as containing mildly irreverent observations on our volunteer's comings and goings (ref. Volunteers World) there are a couple of other items you might like to keep an eye on. Specifically for crew, there is a new section that will contain digital copies of the various forms needed for your activities from where you will be able to print your own copies. (Passwords for this section have been issued to everyone on the official crew list). There is also a version of

the "Base Blackboard" which will contain details perhaps of interest to the casual volunteer who doesn't get down to our base regularly. Items thereon will include details of when work sessions are re-scheduled, lengthened etc. Within the Volunteer's World there is also a link to events such as the "Christmas Party" which you may need to make diary notes for! Hope you find this section of the website both entertaining and informative.

Trevor Hipperson, Membership

Green Issues Around The Base

Many of you will have noticed small changes around base and Albion over the last two years. They all revolve around our bid to be accredited as part of the "Green Business Scheme." Why, you might ask, and, what has it got to do with me?

As for the "why" there are a number of reasons for embarking on this course. In the first instance, we have for many years been committed to keeping our site (as far as is possible) in a natural state, reflecting the local scenery. Secondly, we have realised that many of the things that we have done naturally have been as kind to the environment as possible. Thirdly, the Green Business Scheme takes on board "local" issues and working with the community and this is also an aspect of our work that has been embedded in our philosophy for many years. If you also add that Albion, by virtue of being a sailing boat and constructed of locally-sourced materials would be viewed as green you can see why, when the opportunity came along to be accredited for what we do, we decided to develop things.



After an initial visit and an assessment visit in June 2011 we were awarded bronze level, with silver and gold to aim for. At present the assessment only affects our land-based facilities, but in the future we see the opportunity of including Albion also. As well as being low-impact in our approach we hope to benefit from our members and others who use both base and boat by our sustainable approach.



What has it got to do with you? Obviously we hope you will agree that by taking simple, small steps to do things in a way that does not damage our environment as much and that stresses the use of local products and purchasing and an involvement with our local communities and heritage, we will be improving things, albeit perhaps in only a small way. It would be really

helpful if you can try, as I am sure you already do, to support what we are doing. It is difficult in a short article to give full details of our actions, but please do ask Bron Simpson, who will be leading this for us, and Martin and I who are also involved with it.

You may have seen the new notice boards at base. Do look at these for further information. To make this project a success we all need to embrace it. Please try to assist us whenever and wherever you can in its promotion and action.

Roger Watts, Chairman

The Open Days

Seven open days in 2012 was quite a challenge for the volunteers to cope with. We started the season at Potter Heigham, a day which coincided with the Diamond Jubilee. Despite the weather not being at its best our volunteers were kept very busy. Next came our historic return to Geldeston where the



forecast was for some sun, followed by showers later. Much to everyone's

delight the wherry Albion was quite an attraction where we had a continuous stream of visitors, one of whom was able to pass on photo's of Albion on the exact same mooring, at Geldeston Lock, in 1907. By 3 o'clock in the afternoon all eyes were turned towards the heavens, and the open day was abruptly closed as we were enveloped in lightning, thunder, and a typical summer downpour. For some reason, the visitors chose to retreat into the

pub, never to be seen again. At Reedham we continued to enjoy the "Olympic weather" and those that could tear themselves away from Team GB's efforts on the TV had a great day out looking over Albion. On arrival at Oulton Broad we found little water under Albion and had to resort to asking our visitors to "walk the plank" to get



aboard ! Despite this, we had a good turnout in mainly glorious weather, the near obligatory

southern rivers downpour waited until near the end of our visit ! For Norwich, we had had previous discussions with the Broads Authority management, resulting in us only being able to sell souvenirs from the boat, and NOT from the jetty at the Yacht Station due to limited space. In spite of this, we had an extremely successful day. The volunteers were kept very busy on a glorious day, the local press and TV welcomed our arrival, and the crowds stayed with us throughout. It was brilliant to be kept so busy

(although it didn't seem so at the time !).

On the 14th August we found ourselves at one of regular haunts at Horning whilst on the



26th August we found ourselves the guests of the Bure Navigation Conservation Trust's centenary celebrations of the great flood of 1912 at Coltishall. There is absolutely no doubt that the effort of getting Albion up to Coltishall was well worth the effort and points up the benefits of NWT supporting other Broadland volunteer projects, including other Trusts.

These were all very successful events and thanks go to everyone who played a part.

Ivor Stemp, Souvenirs

A Rookie Goes For A Ride

On Saturday, December 8th, I joined the volunteer crew to bring Albion home from Oulton Broad. Albion had been at the Excelsior yard on Lake Lothing for winter maintenance. She had become stranded at Oulton Broad due to bridge repairs on the Waveney and the Bure.



At 8am the volunteer crew and their equipment were dropped off at Oulton Broad yacht station and the cars departed leaving the crew to make Albion ready for her return to



base. The plan was to cross Breydon Water and reach Great Yarmouth at slack water, and then be back at Ludham before dark.

Every member of the crew knew exactly what was needed and set about their tasks. Most of them had made this trip several times before. The frosty morning had covered Albion's plank-ways and hatches

with a veneer of ice, making movement around the vessel quite treacherous. The crew, mainly skippers, were very experienced, I was the only "Greenhorn" on board, my job was to record the journey. For my part in the proceedings conditions could not have been better. No wind, crystal clear light and winter sun - absolutely perfect.





Albion's mast had been removed for overhaul some weeks earlier, so Badger, a motor cruiser, was tied alongside to power the wherry on the return journey. We had an overall beam of 26 feet and a length in excess of 60 feet, with Badger providing the power and Albion providing the steerage. Additional power, if required, could be supplied from Albion's tender

which was hitched onto the stern.

After about forty minutes preparation our little flotilla cast off. The tender was quickly pressed into service nudging Albion's bow through forty five degrees until she came about and headed towards Oulton Dyke. I was able to get some great shots from the tender as it manoeuvred around Albion. Then we were back on board and heading down the Waveney toward Great Yarmouth. This was the first time I had travelled on this stretch of water so



everything around me was very fresh and new. From a photography point of view, if I did this trip one hundred times, the light and conditions would never be as good as this again. Ahead of us the river was as calm as a mill pond, golden coloured reeds reflected in the still water as we glided by, it was all absolutely priceless! Astern of us the wake from Badger glistened in the



early morning sun.

Through St Olave's bridge and past Burgh Castle, Badger's engine never faltered, we were bang on schedule to reach the Breydon bridge at slack water. There was a burst of activity on the plank-way as chains and mud weights were readied in case they were needed at "Bure Turn". As we crossed the desolate, but strangely beautiful mudflats of Breydon, experienced eyes noted the tide was slowing by watching the current flowing around the navigation posts. Under Breydon bridge at 12.10 - perfect timing.



Next, the old Vauxhall railway bridge, we were on time, on the Bure, and on our way home.



Badger's engine note changed it's tune as the "wick was turned up". Behind our flotilla the wake was decidedly more agitated as our speed increased. Home before dark was the plan.

The sun was following an ever lowering arc creating longer shadows but still perfect for filming. The cold air was beginning to nip at the fingertips by the time we reached

Stokesby and one last foray in the tender captured great footage of Albion shooting Acle bridge. A setting sun made the water sparkle and Albion's crew became silhouettes against an evening sky of burnished gold and blue.

Into the Thurne and faithful old Badger was cast off and literally drifted off into the sunset. The tender's outboard powered Albion on the last leg of the journey along the narrow channel of Womack water. Six and half hours after leaving Oulton Broad Albion was home. For the folk who regularly sail the Norfolk and Suffolk waterways I guess this journey would be nothing out of the ordinary. But for this "Geenhorn" sailor it is a trip I shall always remember.

John Parker

Another View On The Green Issues

If we are to look forward to a profitable future The Norfolk Wherry Trust must be competitive in the leisure and tourism market in Broadland. Although we have gained the Green Tourism Bronze Award we must not be complacent. We



need to think 'outside the box' and see the Trust as a green business venture that includes not only the way we use the Albion but also the Forsythe Wherry Yard which is set in a conservation area. To keep our award we are responsible for passing on ideas for 'green'



responsibility by all - that is ourselves as volunteers, our charterers and the public in general that we come into contact with.

Much has been achieved so far, from





managed waste disposal to using eco friendly soaps and cleaners and producing our literature with sustainable materials or using email to in fact cut down on paper usage.

I have set up a notice board at the base which gives information on green issues that can be used by ourselves or can be passed onto our charters. At present there are items covering invasive species to look out for, the Ash die back problem, advice about becoming a 'green'

boat owner, wildlife in your garden and how to build bird boxes and set up compost bins. If anyone has anything for the board that they feel is relevant please make contact with me either at base on a Thursday morning or by email at jonandbron@googlemail.com

I would like to develop the base site as a nature area and intend to look in detail at the Flora and Fauna of the area. In fact some of you may already have seen me mooching around taking photos of fungi etc. Helen Baczowski, conservation officer from The Norfolk Wildlife Trust has already been to see the site and given us some interesting advice as to how to develop the area. Many of you will be relieved to hear that she recommends it stays as it is as far as possible but it may mean we pollard the odd tree and plant a few indigenous plants here and there. I do intend to plant wild flowers along the newly built quay heading.



I would also like to see set up a sightings board at base so that we can monitor the wildlife and plants seen in the area. Already we are seeing a regular Kingfisher and it would be something interesting for our charters to see as they wait to go out. If there are any volunteers that have a particular interest in developing our wildlife scene or promoting our 'green' credibility I would welcome their help and suggestions.

Bron Simpson



Ramblings From The Shed

Albion finally returned home from "down south" on December 8th, aided and abetted by some pretty chilly volunteers. Why is it that recently, every time we bring her back, Oulton Broad seems to be enveloped in a new Ice Age? This time it was a very thin covering, not even requiring the attention of our ice breaker, Phil

Hubbard, but he still tore around the Broad pretending he was opening up the North West Passage! The conditions did, however, set the tone for the day - cold! The tea awaiting our return to base (thanks Jon) was more welcome than usual.

This autumn at Lake Lothing, two planks (or parts thereof) were replaced on the starboard side, and Maynard built and fitted a new rudder. The actual tiller has been a personal project of the Chairman for some time and has been lying down at base under a piece of tin for a couple of years or so - suddenly it took on an air of urgency but like most things was finished and fitted in time. The new rudder, and indeed the tiller, were not fitted until the morning of the intended launch but, of course made it in time. Kim also spent hours under the hull flashing the tar and replacing wherever necessary and boy, does she look smart in her new coat. It is just a shame it goes dull so quickly.



It is a testament to the quality of the workmanship that when re-launched she took on very little water - a relief I will confirm as we always have someone down below with



their head in the bilges! Another volunteer task to add to the skills acquired when removing and replacing the ceiling, shifting it to the paint shop and back and the re-fixing thereof. Why is it, that even with the plans, those planks never quite go back in the right place? And who said this was an unskilled labour force?

Back at base a new phenomenon has been spotted - Jeff and Gill applying white gloss using a three handed system - roller and brush and brush and roller or is that 4 handed? No wonder they paint their boats so often but it did speed things up to such an extent that some bits have been repainted which I swear I have never even seen, let alone refurbished!

In my new kingdom (the new shed!) I have been storing away bits of rope and string which have long cluttered up the existing store and shed, and now these have been moved there is even more room to paint even more!

In the new year we shall continue with the "normal" maintenance, both in and out. We will be replacing the paint on a few more hatches and the moving uprights with the new "breathable"



paint and the dinghy will be attacked by the Horning set, Mike and Clive, to ensure all those scratches and bumps are lost beneath an exquisite, glossy finish. Guys if only they knew what tender (!) care that received, they would all be more careful! Everything will be spick and span and all tasks completed before Roger's return from Australia - or so I have told him!



Albion's regular maintenance is still managed and achieved by a core of dedicated volunteers - come the spring this wonderful and iconic piece of Broadland history will once again be out sailing, bringing pleasure to our many charterers and thousands of holidaymakers brandishing their cameras and iPads. Yet this

maintenance is just one part of the Trust and my thanks go, not just to the "Shed" volunteers, but all those others that have differing, but no less important roles to play in this Trust continuing successfully into the future.

Pete Jermy, Volunteer Co-ordinator

A Christmas Fairy Tale

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a tiller, and a lovely tiller it was! Bathed in a glossy white and provocatively shaped, it was both sensual to see and touch, and was decorated with rows of tiny layers of cord along its edges. But all good things come to an end and five years ago it was discovered that the elegant tiller, though lovingly painted and caressed was starting to look a little careworn. Removal of the tiller exposed dark soft rot in her innards, the work of many a year, hastened along by countless skippers forcing her into various positions and above all sitting on her.

So sadly, and with much gnashing of teeth, it was decided to pension off this delectable tiller and replace her with "this years' model!" Except this can never be the case. So in the depths of winter 2007, a motley team of elves descended on the "purveyor of timber to the wherry" with an image of the tiller requesting that a baulk of oak as shapely as could be found. Up and down the country they went, seeking the grail of the new shapely tiller, until one fine day a new baulk, deemed to be suitable appeared. Once unloaded it was marked out and an initial cut was made in two dimensions to allow the baulk to season off more readily, and she was stored. The baulk exhibited none of the tillers' intended fine shapeliness at this point. The baulk



The baulk exhibited none of the tillers' intended fine shapeliness at this point. The baulk

lingered in hiding beneath guardians of iron until, on one fine day she came out into the daylight once more. What was to be seen? The baulk had taken on a wobbly turn whilst resting and was shaky as shaky could be. Was this doom for the new tiller? But no, up to her rescue came a handsome prince from Gt. Yarmouth, who leaping from his charger knelt beside her and whispered into her ear that he had come to save her. And so it came to pass, to cut a long story short, that the wizards elixir, the bubbling fomentation from the West appeared and was applied liberally. In due course the handsome prince caressed the tiller with gentle hands and an assortment of tender devices until she looked as winsome and elegant as her predecessor.

The handsome prince decided that his elegant tiller would not be "tarted up" like a cheap tiller but would exhibit a sense of propriety. So it came to pass that rope work was cast to one side for the understated elegance of stopped chamfers; an altogether more appropriate appearance for a tiller of her period.

Our tiller tale is complete. Mince pies have been eaten and calm has returned once more to the kingdom. To illustrate our tale we have shown our dearest new tiller alongside Baron Tigger. Very much a case of "Beauty of the Beast!"

Prince Charming (?)



A Post Script On The New Tiller

And low, whilst the finest new tiller was being fettled by Prince Charming, the one who is known as "the keeper of the sheds" did spot a bonus opportunity, an opportunity not to be missed.

The gentle cutting and carving of the tiller did result in long, thin, sensuously shaped off cuts of fine English Oak. With care and due diligence the timber off cuts were carried on a Vauxhall cart to a secret location in the parish, where, by the grace of god, they would be stored in safety until needed.

During the dark months the timber would be transformed by "the keeper of the sheds" (who is also known as "the maker of pens") into many pieces of finely polished craftwork, to be sold at the grand fair to be held at Potter Heigham and other places during the year to come.

With luck, she that is the holder of the landlords purse (the Fair Mother Hubbard) will be pleased with the anticipated results, adding many pieces of gold to the coffers.

Brother Jon, Wizard, and purveyor of fine wooden articles

For Sale

One Careful Owner
 Soft Top
 Low Mileage
 Never Raced Or Rallied
 Two Tone Paintwork
 Fully Undersealed

All Offers to
 Margaret Hubbard Please



So, 2012 came, and has now gone. We had a really good sailing season and a good series of visits and open days, with several of them breaking new ground in terms of the quantity of cash taken. We also had a minor catalogue of memorable events, the perpetrators of which will remain nameless as far as these pages are concerned.

I am writing this piece at 12.30 a.m. on 1st January, 2013. Bron and I have just walked back from Ludham village where the annual fireworks display has just taken place. Considering the size of Ludham, the pyrotechnics were quite spectacular, full of shimmering colour, whizz-bangs and crackles. Also, the reflections in the church windows were something to be amazed at. We have heard reports that some people down on the Thames embankment actually turned round to watch our display rather than the puny affair taking place on the river before them. Well done Ludham, the home of Albion.

My thanks go out to all those who volunteered in 2012, and may we have a great season in 2013.

And Finally..... This is for all of us over 50 years of age. You will find it is amazing what we can do if we try, I should know I have already tried this. Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax. Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer. After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags. Then try 50-lb potato bags and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute (I am at this level). After you feel confident, start again at the 5-lb level, but this time, put a small potato in each bag.

Best Regards, and a Happy New Year, Jon Simpson