

Golden Chaffcutter

Thames Sailing Barge Trust



Issue 132

www.bargetrust.org

February 2021

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This image is from a magic lantern slide and is thought to have been taken of an unknown barge in 1905. The image is from a collection we have obtained from Richard Crangle, who is a leading authority on magic lanterns.

From the Helm

Peter Taylor has asked me to write the introduction to this edition of the Golden Chaffcutter. Firstly, we all hope that everyone is well and coping with the lockdown. When the last edition of Golden Chaffcutter was issued we were all looking forward to spending Christmas with friends and family, and how quickly did that change? Many of you may well have had your first jab by the time you read this and hopefully the second one will not be too far away, ready for the Spring and Summer.

With the current lockdown, the Trust is working towards having a Covid-19 secure sailing programme at the start of the season and full details are on pages 10 & 11. We have decided to start the season early as we have been asked to re-rig Centaur for the end of March for a filming event in Maldon, this means we can do some sailing in April. Our focus is to operate a number of half-day sails (3 hours) either morning or afternoon and then add in some 1-day sails with the hope that we can then start some of our traditional weekend sails. Please support us by coming for a sail.

The income we gain from these trips will help us through the year. It looks as if holidays this year will be in the UK, so why not come to Maldon and book a trip with us.

Tim Jepson and Geoff Harris have been working hard on Centaur as you will see in Tim's update. The Trustees have already started to think about Centaur's future once the work on Pudge is completed. We have a list of items that we know need to be done and we will be arranging for Centaur to be surveyed shortly to see what else may need attention. The work so far identified will cost a lot of



money, and although we plan to apply for grants, any donations that you maybe able to make would be appreciated. A fund has already been set up so if you would like to contribute, please send a cheque to John Rayment payable to the Thames Sailing Barge Trust at 25 Repertor Drive, Maldon, CM9 6FQ. Another way of supporting the Trust in the future is through legacies, so if you are making a will or amending your existing will, why not consider including a legacy.

Although the lockdown has impacted many things, the one project that keeps moving on is Pudge. We are very pleased with how the work is moving forward and Kevin Finch and his team are getting towards the end of the first part of the project. It is hoped that Pudge will be out of dry dock before the end of March.

She will then spend some time beside the Quay at Fullbridge for non-dry dock work to be completed and then moved to the Hythe Quay where we hope volunteers will be able to start painting below deck, ready for her accommodation re-fit in the Autumn. Plans for the accommodation are nearing completion and we hope to have a feature on these in the next issue.

Following feedback on the work being done on Pudge, we thought some members would like to understand more about a barge's construction so Shiner Wright, one of our mates, has put together an article on page 4 which you might find of interest.

Two casualties of the pandemic are the Fitting Out Supper and AGM which would normally feature in this edition. These will be rearranged for later in the year and details should appear

in the next newsletter. Although we have some Open Days planned, these may also be impacted by the pandemic.

Finally, thank you to all members who have made a donation with their membership renewal. This is appreciated. If you have not yet renewed, please do so as soon as you can.

John Rayment - Editor

Membership Renewals

Thank you to all members who renewed their membership in January. A special thank you to those who also made a donation to Trust funds. Your donation is most welcome.

Unfortunately there at the time of going to press 29 members who have not yet renewed their subscriptions so perhaps you can check the address box on the rear of this edition of the Golden Chaffcutter and if *** stars appear after your surname, then your renewal has not been received.

Membership fees are detailed at the end of this note, however if you were a Concessionary Member pre April 2018 the renewal subscription is £25.

If you know of anyone who would like to become a member, please get them to join. This can be done on line or by

contacting me.

New members in the last two months:

Becks Wilkinson of Llandrindod Wells

Dorothy Moore of Watford

Ray Ball of Chelmsford

Bruce Leggett of London

The Trust has a life membership category and we are happy for members to upgrade their membership at anytime. If any members would like to consider upgrading then please contact the membership secretary.

Trust membership may also be a good Birthday present so if you have a friend who you know is interested in sailing barges then why not get them a years membership subscription.

If you have any questions about membership, please contact the membership secretary, John Rayment at: 25 Repertor Drive, Maldon, Essex CM9 6FQ. Tel: 07587 141054 or at: membership@bargetrust.org.

Membership rates for new members are now:
Full Member: £35 pa
Joint Membership £50 pa
Joint Concession £40 pa
Corporate Membership £360 pa
Life Membership £600 (Concession [65+] £400)
Joint Life Membership £900 (Concession [65+] £600)

John Rayment

Dates for your Diary



3rd & 17th & 18th April

These dates are subject to any Covid 19 restrictions so only six volunteers will be allowed on each date, although this will be reviewed if restrictions change and published on our website.

If you plan to help, can you please call Tim Jepson a few days prior so he can manage numbers. If you are trainee then please advise Mick Nolan.

Tim Jepson can be contacted on 01621 851817 or timjepson411@gmail.com

Events

The AGM and Fitting Out Supper have been cancelled for April and will be re-arranged once Covid restrictions allow.

Provisional Open Days

(all dates subject to change depending on Covid-19 restrictions)

May Day Open Days

Sunday & Monday 2nd & 3rd May
Hythe Quay, Maldon

Maldon Mud Race Open Day

Sunday 23rd May
Hythe Quay, Maldon

Maldon Maritime Weekend

Sunday & Monday 30th & 31st May
Hythe Quay, Maldon

Children's Day

Thursday 3rd June 11:00—16:00
Hythe Quay, Maldon

Exhibition

Thursday 6th May to Friday 30th July
Red Sails over the Estuary
organised by Thames Sailing Barge
Trust and Southend Museums as part
of the Pudge Project at Priory Visitor
Centre, Priory Park, Southend. Entry
Free
Open Tuesday to Sunday

Working Parties

The Thursday Group meetings have now been suspended until further notice. Members will be advised when these are set to re-start.

Weekend Working Parties for the winter will only be on Saturdays and the dates are detailed below.

20th February

6th & 20th March (either of these will be blocks weekend)

100 Club

The winners of the bi-monthly draws are published in the Golden Chaffcutter.

All income raised through the 100 Club is put aside towards large scale projects such as the new decks on Pudge.

Due to the renewal of the Club for the

forthcoming year we are now publishing the winners of the last three draws.

January/February

1st Prize £50 Terry O'Sullivan
2nd Prize £20 Ron Weyda
3rd Prize £10 J E Jarvis

If you would like to take part in the 100 Club, and help raise funds for the Trust, then please contact me on 01621 788276
Thank you for your support.

Terry O'Sullivan

Membership Renewal

**Please remember that your membership was due for renewal
on the 1st January 2021**

**If you have not yet renewed your membership then please do so now. Check the address box on
the back of this newsletter to see if the ***symbol appears after your surname to signify that your
renewal is outstanding**

THANK YOU

Thames Barge Construction for Novices

Following feedback from a couple of members, about the work being undertaken on Pudge. We were asked to provide some information about how a sailing barge is built. The following article has been written by Shiner Wright a former Trust trainee and now a qualified Mate which we hope this helps. Editor

The Thames Barge evolved from a simple cargo lighter into one of the most successful sailing cargo vessels. Since the Middle Ages unriggered vessels were used to lighten ships coming into the port of London and move cargoes around the port and beyond. Swim head lighters which were not much more than a wooden box with some refinement to the bow and stern to give them some concession to seaworthiness in the confines of the river, not dissimilar to the steel swim head lighters in use still. As London became the busiest port in the world, ships became larger and they became less able to discharge cargo alongside its tidal wharfs and had to anchor in the stream and rely more on these flat-bottomed craft to "lighten" cargo and move it about the port. These craft were moved by warp and paddle in conjunction with windage and current. It was a small step to add a mast and sail to help when the wind was fair. There is evidence that sometime in the 17th century lighters began to set a simple square sail on a yard (like the Humber Keel) and later this became a fore and aft sail which we recognise in the spritsail barge. The secret of its long success was that this simple vessel, requiring a small crew, evolved specifically for use in the River Thames and its estuary. So how exactly is a Thames Barge constructed?

A barge was typically built on stocks which were set up on a slip or even a beach sloping into the river, typically a fall of around 6 feet in 90. They consisted of a deal (plank) about 9in by 3in blocked up at each end until about 30in of the ground. Using a centre line between the two end stocks the others would be filled in at approx 8ft intervals. A further two blocks would be set at each end for the stem and stern posts. Once all in place and secured the keel plank of elm which varied depending on size of barge but typically, 14in

by 5in increasing to about 7in at the ends, was laid along the centre line in a shallow slot cut into the stocks. The stem and stern posts of oak and 12in by 10in were set up and tenoned into the keel and strengthened with apron and deadwood bolted to the keel. Then a plank either side was rebated into the keel and then the bottom was planked out from the centre with the boards clamped together with each joint carefully prepared and sealed with a mix of elk or cow hair and hot stuff (coal tar and pitch). These boards would be Oregon or pitch pine with the outer, the chine plank, being elm. In the barge oak was favoured for strength and elm for its better ability to take fastenings. Some barges were double planked on the bottom with felt and tar between similar to the barges sides, some had a single skin, depending on the builders preference. Once fitted the boards were left to settle for a day or so and then the chine planks were cut to shape the floors of oak about 6in by 6in were laid across the barge at about 20in centers. The ends were normally dovetail cut to receive the timber heads or frames. Once spiked through from below they were drilled for oak trunnels, about forty in each floor. Back breaking work for the apprentice.

Framing up would then commence in 6in by 6in oak. Four timbers first being set up and braced at the ends of the straight sides before they "run" into the stem and stern posts. The depth of the side was marked on each timber (to the underside of the deck) and a long pine batten 3in by 2½in called a harpin was fixed outside. Next the timber head nearest the middle was set up made easier now the harpin was set up. Once the rest of the straight timbers were set up, patterns for the forward and aft frames were made from boards to be used as patterns by the sawyer to cut grown oak frames to the required shape, every barge was different in this respect. These frames were set up against a curved harpin made specifically for the barge.

Once framed up and the timbers braced, the harpin was removed and a long flexible sheer batten was fitted by eye and then adjusted several times until the foreman shipwright was satisfied, he taking great pride in the looks

of his barge. Building a barge for up-river work would need a much flatter sheer to allow bridge clearance (although some of the flat sheered barges could be very fast in the estuary, if a bit wet on passage). The first plank fitted outside the frames would be the out-whale fitted above the sheer batten. This plank was oak and thicker (at 4in by 20in) in depth than the other planks as it needed great strength. Once the out-whale was fitted the barge was planked up from the chine plank and the runs steam bent to curve into the stem and stern posts. The chine plank along the bottom edge was elm. If the rest of the planking was to be pine it would be double skinned with barge felt between and if planking with oak the edges were rebated. In both cases the joints would be set with hot stuff and hair. The thickness of the planks would be somewhere between 2in and 3½in depending on size of the barge and whether she were to be used in river or coasting work.

The barges keelson provided much of the longitudinal strength, otherwise provided in a wooden vessel by the keel, and if at all possible it should be one length. Oregon or pitch pine was favoured for this reason but it was still common for it to be in two pieces which needed to be scarfed at the join. It would typically be 14in square. It was usual to lift this into position with the use of sheerlegs and tackles, it would need marking up before being raised and trimmed before being joggled into position between deadwoods at either end. It would then need to be bolted through the floors and keel plank with bolt holes bored through alternately port and starboard down the centre line. Along either side a chine keelson again of pine and some 12in by 3in, would be forced into shape with shores, along the inside of the frames above the floors and cut to fit each timber before being bolted from the outside of the barge with the inside of the bolt being cut off and riveted over a washer.

Above the floors were sealed with a 3in pine ceiling and inside the frames a 2in lining which became an integral part of the structure as well as forming the cargo hold. It stiffened up the structure immensely and care was taken in the quality of timber used, its fastening and

jointing. A gap was always left between the top board of the lining and the in-whale for ventilation (and conveniently provided a discreet place to hang bottles of contra-band safe from the Revenue Inspector if engaged on continental work).

Once the keelson was set in and planking underway another set of shipwrights could start with deck beams and carlins, knees and brest hook. An in-whale of oak, 15in by 4in was fitted inside the frames in order to support the 8in by 8in cambered deck beams and carlins. Large wooden (later iron) hanging knees bolted beams to adjacent frames for support and similar lodging knees set horizontally to act against loads from mast, bits, stem and quarters. The bits, the large upright timbers on which the windlass was fitted, needed to be a strong point and were carried through the deck to the floors with a deck beam set against the front edges to act against the pull of the anchor chain.

The deck beams and carlins were fitted to form openings in the deck forming cargo hatches, a larger one abaft the mast and smaller forward. The hatch

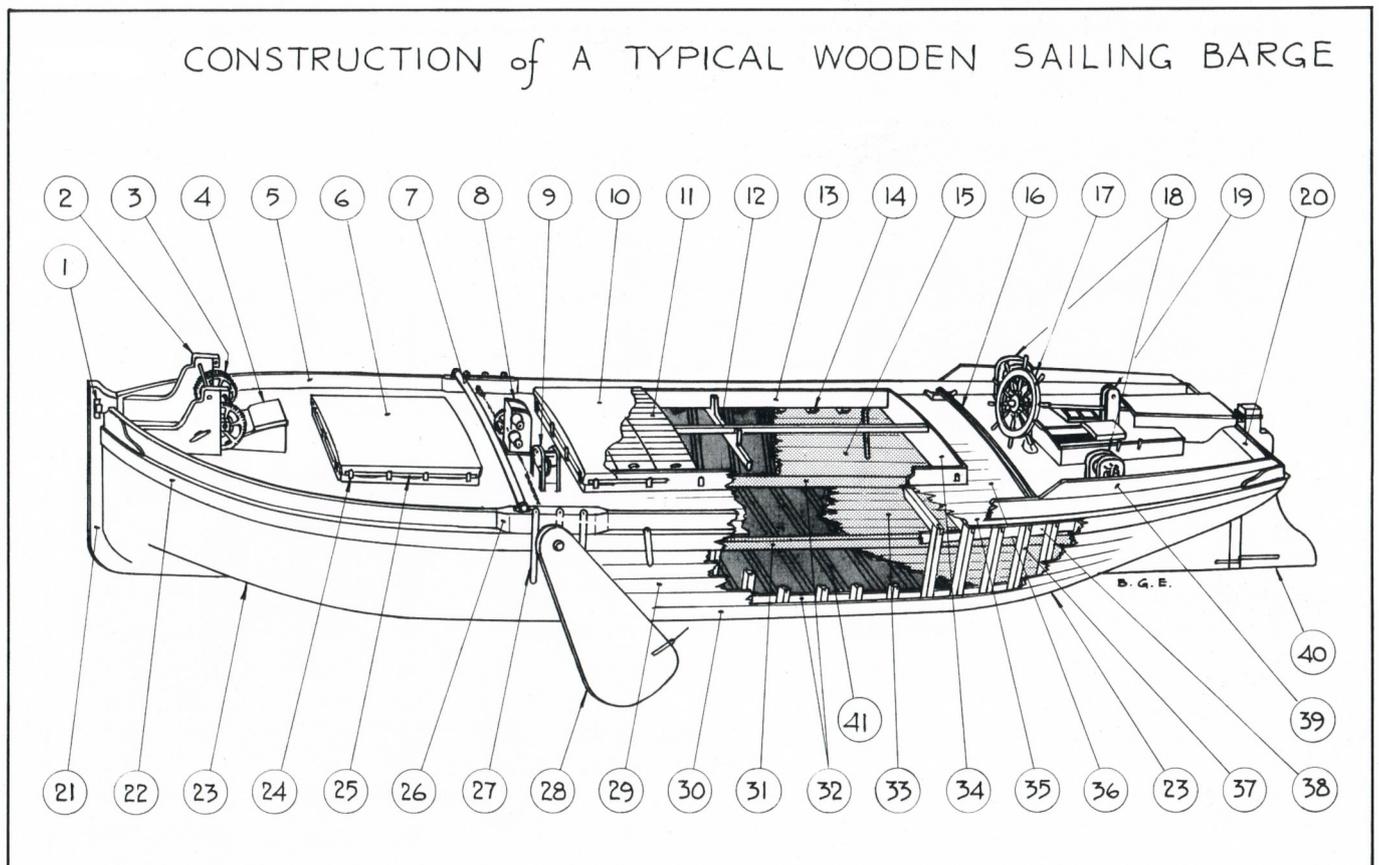
sizes were larger on craft used in river work and smaller for coastal work but regardless considerably larger than sea going vessels from which they loaded cargoes for transshipment. This aided easier loading and unloading and was key to the barges success. Deck beams were cambered to allow water to run off ensuring dryer cargos and resisting rot.

Decking would commence, starting with the covering board which runs around the outer edge closing the gap between the linings and outer planking, atop the frames either side, above which the rails, rigging chocks and saddle chock would later be fitted. The decking below the mast was thicker than elsewhere and a compression post carries the weight of the mast to the keelson. Two wider King planks run the length of the barge under the edge of the hatch either side onto which the hatch comings are fitted, again adding longitudinal strength. Finally, a head ledge shuts the comings forward and aft of each hatch. The larger main hatch would have a tie beam fitted at its mid-point to pin the sides of the barge together and help support the ridge for the hatch covers. The deck planks are the only

planks laid with a V groove along the top edge which would be regularly caulked with oakham and pitch in the conventional manner. This describes the building of the hull but of course it would need to continue to fit rudder, lee boards, mast, rig and sails.

Because the barge had no keel, leeway or sideways drift was an issue but a leeboard on each side provides grip when light and when loaded the slab-sided form did the same. Another significant advantage is the spritsail rig which, once set up, allowed the main sail, its largest and heaviest sail to be left hanging on its headrope and was set by dropping it out and stowed up with the brail winch and brails, this ensured the minimum of labour was required to sail and allowed easy efficient reefing and stowing. It also provided all the gear required to load and unload its own cargo. It was even possible for the crew to lower the entire rig and raise it again to navigate through low bridges to ports otherwise only accessible to craft without sails, although it was normal to engage the help of a local Huffer to assist with this.

(Continued on page 6)



Drawing by kind permission of Roger Beckett. Key can be found on page 6

(Continued from page 5)

So, it can be seen that when compared to conventional ship building, the Thames Barge was relatively straightforward in construction, providing a maximum cargo capacity for its size. She relied on its wide flat square chined hull to provide form stability rather than ballast which was required by other craft, so it could be sailed safely "light" - that is without cargo or ballast - and without a conventional

keel she needed less depth and could safely dry out on a flat mud or sand berth. In this way the barge was cheap to build, maintain and it could cover the vast area of the Thames Estuary from the smallest creek to the North Sea. A winning combination in trade.

With acknowledgment to:
Don Satin - Barge Building & Barge Builders of the Swale
Hervey Benham & Roger Finch -The Big Barges

F G G Carr—Sailing Barges
Roger Beckett -The Thames Sailing Barge A Practical Guide

It is to be noted timber types and sizes quoted give some context but in practice would vary depending on availability and the size and intended use of the barge in build.

Shiner Wright

1	Fairlead. Cast Iron. In some cases, fitted with rollers to reduce friction	15	Hold Lining. Normally 2" pine spiked to frame	29	Side Planking
2	Bitt Head & Bitt Knees. Of Oak. Approx. 12"x 5" Secured to under-deck bitt beams and bolted to frame or floor at heel. Bitt knees bolted through beam partners and bitt heads	16	Main Horse	30	Chines
3	Windlass	17	Wheel	31	Main Keelson. If timber about 14" square. Some barges built with steel girder keelson's
4	Hatch to fo'c'stle	18	Leeboard Crab Winch	32	Chine Keelson
5	Rail. Would have been 3" oak, nowadays more likely to be imported hardwood	19	Mizzen Mast Case	33	Hold Ceiling. 2½" pine spiked to floors
6	Forehatch	20	Saddlechock	34	Headledge
7	Forehorse. Steel tube or timber	21	Stem. Oak. Normally about 10"x12"	35	Covering Board
8	Mastcase. May be fitted with barrels (winches) to handle brails, topsail halliards etc.	22	Outwale. Oak or Iroko 3"- 4" thick, approx.. 20" deep	36	Deck Planking (the one indicated is a King plank)
9	Main Brail Winch	23	Runs. Elm below waterline. 3" thick often in two skins	37	Frames. Oak approx. 6"x6"
10	Hatchcloth	24	Batten Hooks	38	Inwale
11	Main Hatchboards. Some barges had small 'domino' boards similar to those used on ship's hatches	25	Hatch Battens	39	Quarterboard
12	Tie Beam. The large is a point of weakness. Tie beam prevents the coamings moving apart and the hatch opening up	26	Rigging Chocks. Oak. Usually about 10" wide	40	Rudder
13	Coaming. Normally 4½" pine. Fastened down to beams and carlings and rabbeted on top inner edge to take hatch boards. Edges of coamings protected by iron rubbing bands	27	Chain Plates. Bolted through wales	41	Floors. Oak about 6"x6" at 20"-24" centres
14	Deck Carling. Oak 5"x5" approx.. Often bulb angle or 'T' section iron gor mild steel.	28	Leeboard. Oak planks 3" thick, riveted through and steel reinforced. Some barges now have steel leeboards		



PERPETUATING PUDGE'S FUTURE
THE PUDGE PROJECT
THAMES SAILING BARGE TRUST

For regular updates on the Pudge Project visit the NEW Pudge Project website at

www.thepudgeproject.com

Designed by Ben Gosling a pupil at Plume Community Academy, Maldon

TSBT Exhibition—Red Sails over the Estuary

As part of the Pudge Project, the Trust in association with Southend Museums and Southend Borough Council are holding an Exhibition at the Priory Visitor Centre, Priory Park Southend between Thursday 6th May and Friday 30th July.

The exhibition will tell the story of the Thames sailing barge along with its association with Southend.

The research team that was set up 18 months ago to work on research projects for the Trust will see their work displayed at the exhibition along with other information from the Trust and the Society of Sailing Barge Research.

The Trust has employed with the help of the Heritage Lottery, a designer to create the displays and we are working with Plume Community Academy in Maldon to produce a 15 minute media

presentation.

The exhibition will be free to enter and will be open from Tuesday to Sunday.

Publicity for the event is currently being designed and more information will be provided in the next issue of the newsletter.

John Rayment

Pudge Book

As you maybe aware, 2022 will be Pudge's Centenary.

Many years ago the late David Wood, started to write a book about Pudge's History. The Trust were given a copy of the transcript and we have decided in view of Pudge's Birthday and her expected return to sailing in 2022 to complete the book and publish it.

A small team led by John Rayment are working on the script and content and

will be including much of the information we have picked up during the research carried out during the Pudge Project.

We are also working on including suitable images that we can find of Pudge.

So far we have found many pictures of Pudge as a motor barge, but we are lacking images of Pudge when she was sailing in trade with full sails. If anyone has any such images in their photo-

graphic libraries, would they please make contact with John at editor@bargetrust.org

We have no firm date for publication, but hope that it will be in the summer of 2022. Once more details are available then they will be published in the Golden Chaffcutter.

John Rayment

Support the Trust when Shopping Online



During the last 10 months, more and more people have purchased items online.

With the current restrictions and the expectation of these continuing for a while, people will continue to use this as a means of shopping.

If you purchase items using **Amazon**, did you know that you could help support the Trust by using the associated page **Amazon Smile**.

Amazon Smile will make a donation to the Trust based on the amount of sales that you as members make each quarter. Amazon Smile then transfer this donation directly to the Trust.

It is very easy to set up, you just have to remember to log in to Amazon Smile, rather than just Amazon.

In your browser search Amazon Smile, set up an account and when you see the box 'supporting' towards the top of the page search for Thames Sailing Barge Trust.

The amount we receive is not great, but as of November the Trust has received just under £120 from members purchases. The more of you that use Amazon Smile, then the more we will receive.

So when you next plan to use Amazon, think **SMILE**

John Fuller Donation

It was reported in the June 2020 Golden Chaffcutter that John Fuller, who sadly died in April, had requested that all donations in his memory should go to the TSBT *Pudge* Fund.

The Trust has been most grateful to receive £1,115.22, donated by John's family, friends and fellow barge

enthusiasts.

The Trust has written to Graham, John's son, thanking him for this generous gift in memory of his father, which will help ensure *Pudge* can continue to introduce more people to the joys of sailing.



Centaur Update



**New Saddlecock taking shape
Picture by Tim Jepson**

Since the last update two of us have been plodding away with the rig overhaul and making the replacement saddlecock as well as a pair of new quarter badges, and repairing one of the anchor cable gratings.

The new saddlecock is being laminated in place, trying to construct it out of solid timber would mean working with a piece of timber 15 feet long by 4 inches deep and by 16 inches high and weighing about three hundred weight, it would also mean dismantling the very greasy heavy steering gear, so since time is on our side laminating it is the obvious, but very time-consuming option. The deck planking under the saddlecock also needed some minor repairs where the pitch pine decking had softened up in the thirty odd years that it has been in place and it seemed silly to fit the new saddlecock on wood that was going to continue to

deteriorate, so new timber has been epoxied in place after the old dead timber had been removed. This area of decking stays dry under the winter cover over the cabin top so can be worked on at all times which is very useful.

To date the new saddlecock has reached the height of the stern post.

The forty year old saddlecock was this height amidships but had been made with a straight top

instead of having a cambered top as the original one had. The replacement will also have a cambered top. The next laminations will not span the complete length as a cut out will have to be formed to clear the steering gear. After it is completed it will need planing down and sanding before painting, it also needs bolting down to the transom. The fairleads need refitting and the assembly fastened to the quarter boards.

To remove the old saddlecock the quarter badges had to be removed to get at the

fixings that held the saddlecock to the quarter rails, an easy job as many years ago when we replaced the quarter rails the badges were only pinned in a temporary fashion as we knew they were the wrong size with wrong scrollwork on them and intended replacing them, a job that got put on the back burner until now. The new badges have been made and we are trying to get a good drawing or photo of an original Cann badge to show us the correct scroll work.

The new quarter badges, repairs to the cable grating and of course the rigging work are all jobs that we do in our very well-equipped workshop. What would we do without our old lighter!

Tim Jepson



**One of the new quarter badge
Picture by Tim Jepson**

Pudge Update

At the end of the last report the shipwrights had shaped up the two main hold hatch coamings.

Soon after, the main hold head ledges were made, followed by the fore hold coamings, and head ledges. The corners between the coamings and the head ledges are jointed together by half dove-tail joints, such that the ends of the head ledges clamp down on the ends of the coamings. This together with the through bolts, holds them down to the deck and beams below, to make a stiff box around the hold. The coamings and head ledges have also had their Batten hooks put in

place.

Pudge had a makeshift tie beam of steel half way along the hold to support the fore and aft hatch support beams when the Trust purchased her. At this point the deck carlings on either side are of larger section than the others. It is possible that originally it may have been a continuous wood beam right across, as some other barges. After discussion with Kevin Finch our shipwright, we have decided to fit an oak beam/head ledge between the main coamings to tie them together. This beam will be supported

down to the keelson with a steel stanchion, as before. This job will be done after the coamings have been completely fixed down.

The saddlecock has been fashioned to fit the deck, and the rails, and a trial fitting has been completed. We have decided to reinstate 2 hawse pipes through the saddlecock, as originally fitted. Holes have been cut ready for these. Also, we have asked Kevin to carve in her PLA no. on the starboard side of the saddlecock.

Whilst waiting for new bolts and other

sundries, Kevin decided to start removing the ceiling, so it can be replaced. It had degenerated into a mixture of odd short planks, and there is rot from rain-water leaks in various places.

The majority of the floors below were found to be in reasonable condition, except for the first three aft of the raised fo'c'sle ceiling. The first of these was rotten in the centre, which had been below the old saloon stove's chimney. The second was rotten between the keelson and port chine keelson.. The third had a sheared diagonal split right through on the same side. It was decided that we would replace all three with new oak floors. To remove them the keelson had to be cut just aft of the three floors, and removed along with its fixing bolts. The fo'c'sle ceiling had to be dismantled to facilitate this, as well

as two short lengths of the lining. Three new floors have now been fitted, and the keelson welded and bolted back in place.

When there was a few dry days Kevin and the boys fitted the new stem and stem band back in place, together with a new knee abaft the stem, bracing it to the deck and beams below. Two new knees to brace the bitts have been partially fashioned, and trial fitted in position. The final shaping will be done when the windlass is being refitted.

Another job completed was re-hanging the rudder with a new slightly reduced diameter pivot pin, as the old one was too tight.

The next job was to remove the old inwales. This has been done, and a few

frame heads on the starboard side that had split or were soft have had new wood grafted on. New planks have been cut and put aboard the barge. Now Kevin has started the tricky job of fitting the new inwales.

There are many other small jobs being done in parallel. One that has been started is making new pads to bed down the mooring bollards. These will be needed soon as we are hoping Pudge will leave the dry dock in March. More of that in the next report.

If you are bewildered by all the barge terms? Then look out for Shiner's article and all should be revealed, maybe.

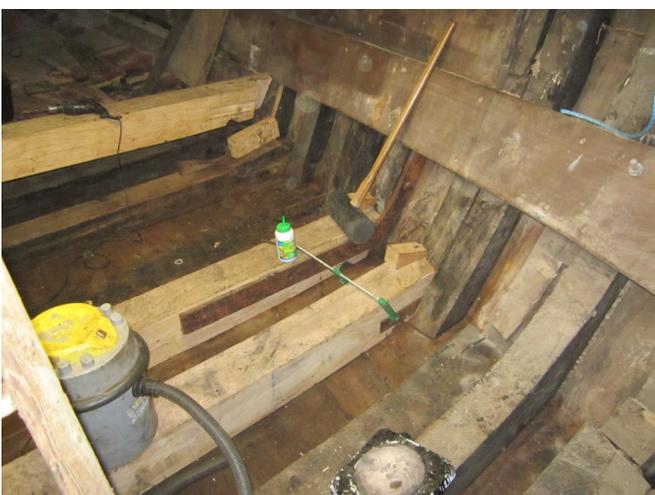
Terry O'Sullivan (Pictures also by Terry)



One of the new half dovetail joints on the head ledges



Refurbished batten hooks in place



New floors in place



Pudge's PLA number being carved into the saddlechock

Never to Sail Her (New Book)

This is the previously unchronicled story of Queen Victoria's *Victoria & Alberts III*, the nation's Royal Yacht until replaced by the *Britannia*. Queen Victoria and her family, her Government Ministers and her Admirals, all had their opinions regarding a new Royal Yacht; the King and Queen and Heads of State who were hosts or guests on board during the Yacht's half century of service, from Tsar Nicholas II of Russia to our present Queen Elizabeth II, all are recorded here in this engrossing account. The title is explained by the fact that Queen Victoria died a month before the Yacht was commissioned in 1901 though, intriguingly, she had already declared she would not step foot aboard.

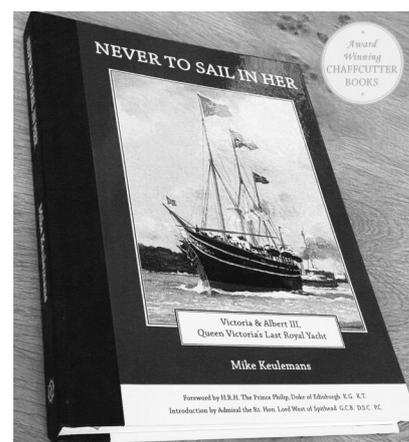
A foreword has been kindly provided by H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh and the In-

roduction written by Lord Admiral Lord West of Spithead.

Never to sail has been created as a matter of record, in production of just 300 numbered copies. Profusely illustrated with images of the yacht and its opulent interior, as well as pictures of the tours she undertook, many in colour, this is an opportunity to acquire what is certain to become a rare and sought after heirloom edition.

The book is written by Mike Keulemans, a member of the Trust, published by Chaffcutter Books, 39 Friars Road, Baughing, Ware, Herts, SG11 2NN (www.chaffcutter.com) in association with the Society of Sailing Barge Research.

The book costs £45 plus p&p and is in



large format hardback with cloth spine 'quarter-bound'. Contains 240 pages with 238 illustrations in colour and black & white.

Orders can be made online or in writing to Chaffcutter Books.

2021 Sailing Programme

With Spring not being far away, now is the time to consider booking one of our sailing trips.

The planned sails are all subject to Covid-19 restrictions, but we hope by May that we will be able to undertake some half and full day sails which can be socially distanced and then during the summer expand to some of our more traditional weekend trips.

The Trust will at all times make sure that we are meeting the Governments Covid Requirements.

There are plenty of dates available for Charters so give me a call on 07840 862685 or email me at bookings@bargetrust.org to discuss your requirements, dates etc.

All of our Public Cruises, weekends and Day trips and on the tide trips, can be

booked on-line via the Trust's website www.bargetrust.org. Each trip is priced individually depending on its length and what it includes.

We anticipate a high demand for sailing in 2021 as we all make up for a lost year, so book early to be sure of getting on board.

David Gibson
Bookings Secretary.

2021 Sailing Programme May—July 2021

Date	No. Nights	Boarding & Time	Disembark & Time	Description of Cruise	Price per person
April					
25th		Maldon Sunday 25th 09:45	Maldon	On the Tide Small Group 3 hour Morning Cruise A small group cruise down the Blackwater enjoying this scenic river onboard the 126 years old sailing barge Centaur	£34 (inc. Bacon Roll, tea & coffee)
May					
1st, 2nd & 3rd		Maldon Saturday 14:00 Sunday 14:45 Monday 15:45	Maldon	On the Tide Small Group 3 hour Afternoon Cruise See details 25th April	£34 (Inc. soup & roll, cake tea & coffee)
7th, 8th & 9th		Maldon Friday 08:15 Saturday 09:15 Sunday 10:00	Maldon	On the Tide Small Group 3 hour Morning Cruise See details 25th April	£34 (inc. Bacon Roll, tea & coffee)

Date	No. Nights	Boarding & Time	Disembark & Time	Description of Cruise	Price per person
May Continued					
22nd		Maldon Friday 22nd 07:00	Maldon Sunday 23rd 21:00	Full Day Blackwater & Mersea Island Cruise Come with us on a full day sail with only 12 passengers, on the river Blackwater. When under sail see how 2 men handle the barge and when appropriate you may fancy a go on the wheel or pulling some ropes. Our plan is to visit the hidden gem that is West Mersea, a delightful blend of old fishing village and seaside town. We will anchor just offshore around midday and take the barge boat ashore for about three hours. There is an excellent Museum; the beach is good; there are lots of places to eat, lots of cafes, an Oyster Bar, the Victory pub and the famous Company Shed fish restaurant. For the more energetic there are local walks.	£95 (Inc. cooked breakfast and tea & coffee)
23rd		Maldon Sunday 08:00	Maldon	On the Tide Small Group 3 hour Morning Cruise A small group cruise down the Blackwater enjoying this scenic river onboard the 126 years old sailing barge Centaur	£34 (inc. Bacon Roll, tea & coffee)
29th/ 30th/ 31st		Maldon Saturday 13:00 Sunday 13:30 Monday 14:30	Maldon	On the Tide Small Group 3 hour Afternoon Cruises—one on each day A small group cruise down the Blackwater enjoying this scenic river onboard the 126 years old sailing barge Centaur	£34 (Inc. soup & roll, cake tea & coffee)
June & July					
5th		Maldon Saturday 5th 8:00	Maldon Saturday 5th 21:00	Full Day Blackwater & Mersea Island Cruise Details as 22nd May	£95 (Inc. cooked breakfast and tea & coffee)
6th		Maldon Sunday 6th 9:00	Maldon Sunday 6th 21:30	Full Day Blackwater & Mersea Island Cruise Details as 22nd May	£95 (Inc. cooked breakfast and tea & coffee)
12th		Maldon Saturday 12th 12:15	Maldon	On the Tide Small Group 3 hour Afternoon Cruise A small group cruise down the Blackwater enjoying this scenic river onboard the 126 years old sailing barge Centaur	£34 (Inc. soup & roll, cake tea & coffee)
13th		Maldon Sunday 13th 12:45	Maldon	On the Tide Small Group 3 hour Afternoon Cruise See details 12th June	£34 (Inc. soup & roll, cake tea & coffee)
18th to 20th	2	Maldon Friday 18th Evening Depart Sat. 06:00	Maldon Sunday 20th 20:00	Available for Exclusive Two Day Charter Why not hire Centaur for a trip with your Friends and Family? Contact David Gibson for details 07840 862685	Call David Gibson for details
1st to 4th July	3	Maldon Thurs. 1st Evening Depart 05:30 Fri- day	Maldon Sunday 4th 20:30	Pin Mill Barge Match Three-day cruise including one of the toughest barge matches due to the narrow channel, the Pin Mill barge match, offers an impressive nautical spectacle. Always well attended, with lots of barges racing through Harwich Harbour, followed by a evening ashore in the Pin Mill Yacht Club for the prize giving and evening meal. Sunday will be a relaxing sail back to the Maldon Quay.	£260 (inc. meals)
9th to 11th	2	Maldon Evening Friday 9th Depart 23:30	Maldon Sunday 11th 14:30	Available for Exclusive Weekend Charter Why not hire Centaur for an unforgettable trip with your Friends and Family? Contact David Gibson for details 07840 862685	Call David Gibson for details
17th		Maldon Saturday 17th Board 05:30 De- part 06:00	Maldon Saturday 17th Evening	Blackwater Barge Match A nautical spectacle not to be missed. Always well attended, with lots of barges and fishing smacks racing on the River Blackwater. Back to Maldon Quay for the Saturday night prize-giving event and evening meal.	£130 (inc. meals)
18th		Maldon Sunday 18th 06:00	Maldon Sunday 18th 18:30	Full Day Blackwater & Mersea Island Cruise See details 22nd May	£95 (Inc. cooked breakfast and tea & coffee)
23rd to 25th	2	Maldon Evening Friday 23rd Depart Midnight	Maldon Sunday 25th 14:00	Available for Exclusive Weekend Charter Why not hire Centaur for an unforgettable trip with your Friends and Family? Contact David Gibson for details 07840 862685	Call David Gibson for details

Registered Address: Thames Sailing Barge Trust, Handseel House, Walden Close, Great Totham, Maldon, Essex CM9 8UJ

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Visit our web sites
www.bargetrust.org &
www.thepudgeproject.com

Newsletter produced and edited by John Rayment. Your comments are welcomed about the newsletter. Email or write to the Editor or Trust.

Deadline date for articles for the next issue should be sent to John Rayment by the 4th April 2021



A recent addition to our collection
Centaur at Whitstable 1953 from the Barry Jackson Collection

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