



NORTH EAST MARITIME TRUST NEWSLETTER

Restoring traditional boats | Rebuilding heritage skills

A roof for Fred's

Well, half a roof to be exact. By the time you read this, work should be well underway on re-roofing the south west half of the slipway shed. Thanks to a grant of £10,000 from the Sir James Knott Trust, as well as a GoFundMe campaign and generous personal gifts, at least half of the shed will now be a safer and drier place to work.



Newsletter Editor

After many years chained to his computer, Arthur Hamilton has stepped down as editor of the Trust's newsletter. We all owe him a large debt of thanks for his work. It's not going to be easy following his lead, but board member Mark Batey has volunteered to have a go. All contributions gratefully received as ever.

Bringing Bedford home

A proud moment for the North East Maritime Trust when we joined forces with a group of local businesses and South Tyneside Council to rescue the historic lifeboat the Bedford and bring her back to the Tyne.

She was built in 1886 and served for more than fifty years, being launched from her new boathouse at the Coble Landing just a few yards from our workshops in South Shields. She was sent out on 52 missions, saving 49 lives.



She went to a museum in Exeter in 1968, and then was in Eyemouth in the 1990s. She was put up for auction in July due to the collapse of the museum company.

Jerry Dudman and Steve Landells worked to bring together a group of interested local organisations who, led by Port of Tyne and the Council, along with Dickson's, BT and JML were able to pledge funds to buy the boat.

Now plans are afoot with the Tyne Lifeboat Society to form a consortium that can be responsible for finding a permanent home for the Bedford.

Pub Quiz

Come and have fun at our pre-Christmas nautical themed pub quiz and curry night. If you think you know your thofts from your bumkins you'll be in good shape. Otherwise just rock up and enjoy the curry and have a drink.

It's on Wednesday 13th December at the Steamboat pub on Mill Dam in South Shields.

Starts at 7.00pm, tickets in advance for £5 from Phil Smith (07988 660930), all profits to NEMT.



Museum curator

Please welcome Steven Robinson, our new volunteer curator. You'll mostly see him wielding a vacuum cleaner, trying to keep the dust down - and there's a plea from him to keep the workshop door shut! He'll be assessing our collection of maritime memorabilia and heritage tools and keeping the catalogue up to date, as well as looking for new ways of best showing it off.

Fender bender

Work on the Henry Frederick Swan is gathering pace, with the most obvious present work being the addition of heavy oak rubbing strips above the fenders. It's not an easy job shaping and bending two inch thick oak to follow the curve of the gunwale, but Dave Parker and the team proved up to the job and the strips are mostly now in place, although the aft-most ones will have to wait until the lifeboat is moved as there isn't space to manoeuvre them into position right now.



One other obvious change is that the forward whaleback is nearing completion with the bulkhead strengthened and the upper surface waterproofed and painted.



Cygnets

NEMT's first new build, the Cygnets, is coming along nicely. The boatbuilding classes are continuing on Monday and Thursday nights under Phil Smith's guidance. Although the trainees are now getting so good at the tricky art of shaping, bending and fitting planks that he's mostly relegated to fetching cups of tea.

The spine is complete, and we're now onto the fourth and fifth planks each side.

Joan afloat

Repair work to Joan that became necessary after her filming experiences are pretty much complete. She developed a crack in her garboard, a section of which had to be replaced. Now she's on the slipway full of water, and we're hoping that the drips



stop as she "takes up".

Following a GoFundMe campaign and donations she now has a sail made by traditional sailmaker Steve Halls. An official launch ceremony being planned.



The next big job will be to fit the engine, but there's a bit of work to do first.

The boat will have to be lowered onto rollers using specially hired hydraulic jacks that can support the eleven tons or so that she weighs. Then she will be slowly and carefully winched into the back end of the shed. This will give enough headroom to erect a scaffolding gantry to lift the engine into place.

The engine can be then be lowered onto the engine beds, the gearbox fitted and tests can begin.

Sailing Royal Diadem

In these cold winter days it's good to look back at the summer time when we were able to enjoy the good weather and take Royal Diadem II out for a sail.

Cobles are challenging boats to sail - something as straightforward as tacking involves lowering the sail with its heavy yard into the boat, manhandling it round the mast, reattaching the tack line and main sheet, then hoisting it again.

Classic Boat magazine

We have been working with Clare McComb, one of the writers for Classic Boat magazine, who is preparing an article about the north east fishing coble.

She has interviewed Dave Parker on his work on restoring Peggy, and we've helped her out researching archive photographs at Beamish Museum.

It's great to be able to get some national coverage for our work. No news yet about which issue we will be featured in. Watch this space.

Email please

We hope you are enjoying this new-look newsletter. If you are getting it by post and have access to email, please contact Jerry Dudman and ask him to send future editions electronically. It requires less effort here, and saves us the postage too.

jdudman@nemaritimetrust.co.uk

But it's worth all the hard work for the magnificent sight of one of the most beautiful boats on the north east coast doing what she does best.



Just as important, more of us are gaining the skills to sail her. We'll be doing lots more when winter is over - if you would like a trip out, or better still, if you would like to learn how to help crew her, just ask Dave or Jerry.

Peggy restoration finished

After hundreds of hours of work, the fishing coble Peggy is off the slip and back on the water. She was in pretty good shape for a vessel that is ninety years old, but there were still significant areas of woodwork above the waterline which needed repair or replacement.



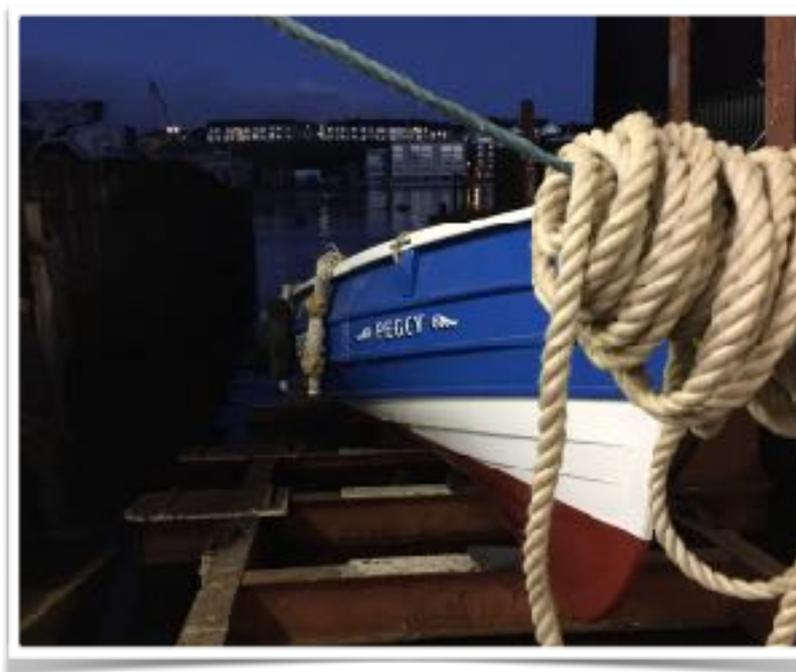
Maritime Heritage Forum

NEMT was represented at the 9th UK Maritime Heritage Forum in Hull, in October.

Apart from opportunities to learn from guided tours of the Maritime Museum, the Spurn Lightship, Humber Keels and Sloops, the Arctic Corsair and Trinity House, the trust's reputation was confirmed among several of the other representatives who had learned about our purchase of the lifeboat Bedford (see main article) and were aware of our previous work renovating the Tyne boat.

Interest in this project included enquiries from the RNLI and National Historic Ships - UK.

With the bulk of the work done by Dave Parker, she has had various sections of planking, parts of the transom surround and knees replaced. Also new are the engine box, the propeller inspection hatch and sections of gunwale.



The rigging has all been overhauled, and many hours have been spent on a thorough and beautiful paint job. Signwriter Paul Robinson added the final touches with the name on the bow, and a special addition on the stern in memory of our friend Charlie Lowdon. She'll look great in full sail alongside Royal Diadem next summer.

