



The Deben

41 Autumn 2010

RIVER DEBEN ASSOCIATION OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

September 2009

Chairman	Leigh Belcham Speeding and Policing 45A Western Avenue, Felixstowe, IP11 9SL. 01394 285674 lbelcham1@aol.com
Vice Chairman	Robert Simper History Plum Tree Hall, Ramsholt, Woodbridge IP12 3AD. 01394 411273 robertsimper@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Chris Brown Membership Data Base 4 June Avenue, Ipswich. IP1 4LT. 01473 259674 chriswendy@talktalk.net
Secretary	Wendy Brown 4 June Avenue, Ipswich. IP1 4LT. 01473 259674 chriswendy@talktalk.net
Magazine Editor	David Bucknell 6 Ferry Rd, Bawdsey Quay, Woodbridge, IP12 3AX. 0780 3612 059 rasmusbuck@aol.com
Website Administrator	Annie Leech 5 Seckford Street, Woodbridge. IP12 4LZ. 01394 386262 annievleech@btinternet.com
Peter Clay	Maritime Woodbridge 83 Ipswich Road, Woodbridge IP12 4B. 01394 384374 pete@peterhenryclay.co.uk
Adrian Judge	Representative DEP, Wildfowlers 29 Bredfield Street, Woodbridge IP12 4NH. 01394 38335 adrianjudge@keme.co.uk
Anne Moore	Footpaths, Access, Woodbridge 2 Grundisburgh Road, Woodbridge IP12 4HG. 01394 383559
Simon Read	Representative DEP. Projects - Saltmarsh Recovery. Environment Barge Jacoba Lime Kiln Quay, Woodbridge. IP12 1BD 01394 384060 jacoba@simonread.demon.co.uk
Ed Stanford	Planning 21 Ipswich Road, Woodbridge IP12 4BS . 01394 386362 maryedstanford@btinternet.com
Neil Winship	Waldringfield Sandcliff, School Road, Waldringfield IP12 4QR. 01473 736423 neil@alpheco.co.uk

The Deben

Autumn 2010

1	RDA Officers and Committee	
2	Contents	
3	Editorial	
5	Chairman's Report	
7	New Website	Annie Leach
8	News from the Hard Maritime Woodbridge - this years event.	Peter Clay
10	View from the Waldringfield Hard - global warming, a look into the future.	Kassien Winship (aka. Niel Winship)
12	News from the Ferry - of boats, rocks and cycles.	Leigh Belcham, Anne Moore, David Bucknell
12	A Community Opportunity - A proposal for policing the river.	Leigh Belcham
14	On the tide..... - Notes on speed limits	
15	A Walk in Pursuit of News from the Hard - Wilford Bridge to Kyson Point	Anne Moore
19	Waldringfield's Threat to Hitler - Dummy Landing Craft at Waldringfield	Bob Crawley
23	Who Manages the Deben? - Part One: The Crown Estate and the Fairways Committees.	David Bucknell
29	'Artists and Writers' - a profile of George Arnott author of 'Suffolk Estuary' a 'story' of the Deben. - Artists of the Deben	Robert Simper et al. David Bucknell et al.
36	'Renewal' - a gull in search of an identity – 'renewal' in man and in nature.	Simon Read
38	Boats of the Deben – Where is 'Nellie' now? - The story of 'Nellie' and her owners	David Bucknell
42	Letters	

EDITORIAL

Increasingly, we live in an electronic world. A world where communication



is instant and continuous. The bleep of our phone reminding us of another text, another email. The temptation is to answer, to interrupt the conversation. Friendship and comment is instant via facebook and blogs. Through our computers we can have access to infinite information and images - all without leaving the comfort of our homes. We are bombarded by packaged news and a backcloth of local radio and train announcements.

While huge benefits stem from this electronic world, (particularly if you are the Editor of a magazine such as this), there are dangers. The media bombardment is impersonal and we may react by distancing ourselves from it or allowing it to wash over us. It becomes a superficial and banal experience.

A focus on the River Deben is an antidote. Our feeling for this stretch of water, which is close to many of us and accessible, encourages us to explore it in all its aspects, to go deeper. We can explore its landscape, its history, its geography, its natural environment, the dynamics of its ebb and flow, the way it has changed over time, its characters and

their stories. This is a source of inspiration and fascination for us and we can appreciate and engage with the Deben in whatever way that interests us.

Exploring it in all its dimensions helps us to reflect on our own identities and provides a perspective and sense of the timescale for our lives. At the same time this focus encourages us to be active and explore the Deben for ourselves. We engage with the river; and you will have created your own adventures and stories during the summer, walking, sailing and reading about it. Those who put pen to paper are actively engaging in the process of reflection.

The Magazine can be a helpful adjunct to this process as a vehicle for illustrating different perspectives and narratives. This edition continues the tradition.

Anne Moore is taking over from Denzil in News from the Woodbridge Hards. In this piece she provides a 'taster' of her knowledge of the walks around Woodbridge and the events and people who have shaped them. I hope Denzil will continue to enjoy his walks. Neil's piece I have entitled 'View from the Waldringfield Hard' and the reason for this will become clear.

We have reports from Maritime Woodbridge and from the Safer Neighbourhood / RDA Working Party

on Policing and Speeding in the Deben. It is important that you as members have your say and comment, either through your Committee members or the website.

I welcome Bob Crawley as a contributor to The Deben. His thoroughly researched and crafted account of the Dummy Landing Craft at Waldringfield perfectly illustrates the historical dimension I am alluding to. I hope this will be the first of many articles.

In the same way, the Deben has inspired artists and writers who live close by; who write about the river and paint it. Art is another way in which our experience is enhanced and we see things afresh and with different eyes.

A friend said to me of George Arnott's book 'Suffolk Estuary' 'For anyone who is interested in the Deben this is a 'must have' book.' And so it has proved. Robert Simper has kindly provided an introduction to George Arnott and I have included some recollections from others who knew him.

Many of you are involved in the discussions about the issues affecting the Deben and so it seemed to me appropriate that we review 'Who manages the Deben?' I have made a start with the role of the Crown Estate and the Fairways Committees. I have tried to do this in a way that reflects

their historical significance and the characters who initiated them and continue to serve them.

Simon's piece on 'Renewal' is, as he puts it, a 'whimsical' look at 'renewal' in nature and in man. It made me think about the comfort of rituals and perhaps the need to renew ourselves through fresh challenges. Maurice Griffiths changed boats every few seasons. May be I will change the colour of the antifouling.

'Boats of the Deben' continues to focus on the 'narratives' of the boats and their owners. Many of you will have seen Nellie by the Horse Sand Buoy or in Woodbridge. I was intrigued to know more about her and what happened after she left Mel Skeet's yard.

There is an ongoing debate about whether, and how much we update, what is now called The Deben magazine. While many of you, (including the Editor), like the existing format and the 'familiarity' of the cover and the drawings; it may be time for 'renewal' and reaching out to a wider public. Radical changes have been resisted, partly for practical reasons; however, there are some changes which I hope you will regard as improvements. We are calling it a magazine to acknowledge the substantive contributions that have been made over the years and the intention to provide bi-annual newsletters via the website.

The website offers a great opportunity to make the RDA more interactive with its members and to interface with the magazine. We can present illustrations in colour, and in a piece such as 'Artists and Writers' this is the only way we can do the artist's work justice. Over the years there have been many well crafted and important pieces in the magazine and I hope by the time you read this we will also have found a way to include pictures in the text of archived articles. The history of the RDA is an interesting read and we can learn from this, both in what we do and how we present ourselves.

As Editor, in researching the articles I have been involved with; and talking to contributors, I have been obliged to pick up the phone and go out and meet people. I have already met for the first time many interesting people with their own perspectives and stories. I hope you will do the same and come forward and contribute.

The dark evenings to come are just the right time to put pen to paper. Enjoy the log fire!

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS: "Scratching where it itches"

"There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things"

When Niccolo Machiavelli included that advice in his book, The Prince, in

1532, he clearly did not have the River Deben Association in view. I can only say that the admittedly modest changes introduced during my first 6 months at the RDA helm appear to be scratching where it itches.

WEBSITE

Feedback about our new website has been altogether positive. Helpful suggestions have been acted on by Chris Woods of U2R Design, who designed and built the site, and Annie Leech, our Website Administrator. The site, **www.riverdeben.org**, now enables members with internet access to keep abreast of the latest Deben-related news and to read articles archived from past magazines, and potential members to learn more of our work. Have you obtained your password yet to allow you access to the members-only section? You will soon be able to find Committee minutes there as well as the online edition of The Deben. Your password will also allow you to add a comment to any item posted on the site.

NEWS

Those who can access our website are able to read the three newsletters so far published by the Deben Estuary Partnership, of which the RDA is a founding member. These have included news of an initiative whereby landowners, in co-operation with the Environment Agency, are now allowed to repair damaged river walls. A recent post on the website referred to the DEPs planning

application in respect of the degraded saltmarsh at Sutton Hoo, where the DEP plan is to install a geotextile barrier and wave-attenuation screens to inhibit tidal scouring and allow a build-up of material on which saltmarsh can regenerate. As I write these notes, I understand that funding is already in place and a contractor engaged.

Other posts have included details of the Environment Agency's work on strengthening the river wall between the Deben Yacht Club and Kyson, and on its scrub clearance work on the walls in Martlesham Creek.

"MARITIME WOODBRIDGE"

Chris Woods also designed the new

RDA flyers, used for the first time on our stand at "Maritime Woodbridge" on 11th and 12th September. The theme used for the flyers, "It's a beautiful river Together we can keep it that way," was carried through on to the three A1 display panels, provoking considerable interest, and bringing us 22 new members. The police proposal to tackle inconsiderate and unsafe activity afloat using an officer on a PWC (jet-ski) received a warm welcome from many visitors to our stand. This proposal is dealt with at greater length on another page.

EMAILS

It has been good, too, to be able to communicate by email with the 174 members who have supplied email addresses. One was amazed and pleased to receive the email asking his view on the new logo! If we still do not have an email address for you, I am afraid that we will be unable to keep you as up-to-date as we would like with current issues. For instance, last month we drew online members' attention to www.noadastralnewtown.com, where they could learn the latest on the Adastral Park development at Martlesham, join a protest march or sign a petition. A regular members' newsletter is planned for the near future, but postage costs alone would be about £120



each time if we sent hard copies. Of course, we could increase our subscriptions . . . but by email it's free! So, if you have still not given us your email address, please send it today to Wendy Brown, our Secretary, at chriswendy@talktalk.net.

“THE DEBEN”

Editor of The Deben, David Bucknell, gave us a bumper issue in the spring, provoking many an appreciative comment. All editors struggle to find contributors, so if you feel like writing about your recent cruise to Norway, your views on the expanding anchorages on the Deben or how saltmarsh is essential for nurturing small fish, then let David know right away.

FORUM

The new RDA Forum will meet twice a year, providing an opportunity for representatives of all water-sports and other river-based organisations to air current concerns, debate them with others and to be briefed on action being taken by other statutory and voluntary bodies such as the DEP, the Environment Agency and local authorities. The first meeting will be at 9.30am on Saturday November 20th. Further information and invitations will be mailed shortly as well as posted on our website.

OPEN MEETING

I hope to have the pleasure of meeting many of you face-to-face at our Autumn Open Meeting on

Thursday 28th October at Woodbridge Community Hall, when Anthony and Celia Mason will recount their epic voyage in Tomia. If I don't get to speak to you then, please make sure you stop by for a chat when the RDA display stand visits your club.

Very best wishes,

Leigh Belcham

Chairman, River Deben Association

NEW WEBSITE

The new RDA website is now up and running at <http://www.riverdeben.org/>. We want it to be a dynamic and interesting resource for RDA members and the general public. The more people use it the better it will be.

RDA members who register to use the site will be able to log in to “member only” areas. These are the pages that cover the most recent magazine, minutes of recent meetings and other RDA business.

If you register to use the website you can also post comments about news items and other information on the site and respond to comments posted by other people. We will be operating a “light touch” moderating process for all comments – but we are not expecting to need to use it.

Let me know what you think about what's on the site already and

anything else that you think we should add. You can contact me on annievleech@btinternet.com or the contact link on the website.

Annie Leech

NEWS FROM THE HARD ... Maritime Woodbridge 2010

The Maritime Woodbridge festival has always been something of an enigma to describe and this year was no exception. Many of its activities seem to operate on different levels. The Normans down at the Tea Hut by the model boat pond beat the living daylights out of each other and provided a thrilling spectacle for old and young alike - the latter squealing, booing and hissing depending on their courage and personal view of the invaders. On another level the re-enactors provided a major historical attraction with their carefully researched costumes and depictions of Norman life in the encampment, beside the boating pond.

A short walk up past the band-stand to the sound of lively jazz music took you along the river wall past a barbeque and more music at Bass Dock. Lying in the Dock was a number of interesting boats; three pretty Albert Strange gaff yawls; a C19th Guernsey cutter and one of the three Arthur Ransome boats attending the festival. You could walk on glancing at their histories mounted on boards nearby, or stop and plunge

into deep discussions with their owners about varnish, rigging-screws or bowsprits. Round the corner you would have been greeted by another fine collection of classic boats and traditional work-boats, in the little harbour at the old Whisstocks boat yard. Beyond the Boston smack-yacht, the Leigh-on-Sea cockler and the Paglesham oyster smack lay Dinah, the fully restored "half" barge, sprit-rigged just like her big sisters, the Thames sailing barges. Moored ahead of Dinah lay the famous Nancy Blackett owned once by Arthur Ransome and, under the name of "Goblin", star of his children's book "We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea".

If you'd made this little journey on the Sunday morning you would have found the renowned actor Gabriel Woolfe standing in one of the three big Whisstock sheds not a hundred yards from the little "Nancy Blackett" thrilling a packed audience with his dramatic reading from Ransome's "We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea". Did I call it a children's book? More than half the audience was adult! The story is of four young children drifting out to sea in the Goblin through no fault of their own, and then running before a strong wind all the way to Holland, making grown up decisions and handling the boat the way they had been taught. How many of those adults in the audience were asking themselves whether we have prevented today's children from developing the resources to cope with



the dangers and responsibilities of such a situation.

Outside the shed in the improvised coracle pond there were children who were certainly having a challenge. Some were coping quite well with these awkward circular boats, while others were making no progress at all and one or two tipped out of their coracles completely, much to the amusement of everyone.

On both days one of the sheds was full of stalls, some selling books cards or jewelry, while others were promoting local societies and charities. In the middle children were busily painting parts of the Bayeux

Tapestry, their finished works being pinned up on panels for all to see. At the front of the shed was the International Boatbuilding Training College stand showing their activities and a student building a rowing skiff in the traditional way, fastening the ribs to the planks with copper nails and roves

Later on in the adjacent shed Dr. Sam Newton, a “regular” at Maritime Woodbridge, gave a talk on the Bayeux Tapestry. As always he had a big audience. Following Sam’s talk and on an even more specialist topic, came David Jones who has built a Norman replica boat and rigged it with the strange triangular sail that is shown so much in the Bayeux Tapestry. This is a subject of much controversy- whether the triangular shape is the result of artistic licence or is accurate as depicted. Earlier in the day David’s boat had been sailing on the Deben and then hauled up the Woodbridge Thoroughfare by invading Normans. We all listened carefully, Dr Sam too, and we recalled how in 2008 a PhD. student from Dublin fixed our attention with the account of the 100ft Viking warship replica “Sea Stallion” making the heroic voyage from Roskilde in Denmark to Dublin and back. These two projects were both examples of experimental rather than speculative archeology. Following the research the artifacts were constructed and then taken out to sea to ascertain how they might have functioned.

It is surely a tribute to speaker and audience that a dilapidated old shed should be packed with people on a sunny Saturday and Sunday afternoon to listen to talks such as these.

Some interesting consequences of Maritime Woodbridge are these connections with Sutton Hoo, Dublin and the Roskilde Viking museum in Denmark. A further connection this year is between David Jones and the Viking museum who are interested in his work and would like to try one of his triangular sails on one of their replica boats in Roskilde.

Hot on the heels following these talks, on a lighter note but no less enthusiastic, came the Maritime Proms featuring the Farlingaye School Shanty Singers, the School wind quartet and String ensemble, Patricia Naysmith with some English songs, and the Excelsior Training Band. The whole cast rounded off these Norman proceedings appropriately with a stirring rendition of RULE BRITANNIA.

Pete Clay.

VIEW FROM THE WALDRINGFIELD HARD

It is 40 years ago I was standing here by the launch slips with my grandfather. I asked who had made them, so he told me how the hardcore was for launching the flotilla of

dummy landing craft to mislead the enemy before the Normandy Landings. He then reminisced about the beauty of the empty River Deben during the austere post war years, and how it had gradually filled with moorings and larger craft. He said some people felt the crush on the Deben was actually good for young helms and the remarkably high competitive skills the Waldringfield Sailing Club has fostered.

Grandfather then told me to treasure that vista from The Tips to The Rocks, sunshine on the Sutton shore, boats, children swimming and crabbing and mullet feeding on the flood tide. I then made the big mistake of asking him about tides!

He drew circles in the sand to represent Earth and Moon but happily not to scale and without the Sun. Next he sketched oceans pulled by the moon's gravity, although it took fair patience to explain how our rotation makes tides rise and fall in harmony with the Moon. Springs and neaps came next with me at first picturing Zebedee eating turnips: Mum was a Mackenzie and served tatties and neeps with the haggis on Burn's night. Drawn back from my daydream I heard granddad reminisce about the gradual changes to the shoreline, marshes where sea walls had broken and encroaching mud in the rills and docks that barges used to use before the wars.

So as I stand on the Waldringfield hard 40 years on, I try to spot the differences. The number of moorings is still about the same but the walks along the sea walls are evidently more used than ever; great that the RDA had helped to surface them against footfall erosion!

Most obvious now is the line of flotsam showing how high spring tides come. They often reach almost to the top of the wooden wall that the Waldringfield Sailing Club maintains so stalwartly. I am told that 50 years back climate change scientists began warning of that a 2°C rise in average world temperatures would swell the volume of the oceans a good deal more than the gradual melting of icecaps and glaciers. The forecast figure was something like $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch a year, which really didn't sound too frightening.

In the event though, the average temperature has gone up by nearly 4°C so the global sea level has gone up by about two feet; and the sinking of whole Thames Tectonic Plate has added a further three inches. That would not have been too bad for Waldringfield except for the increase in surge tides that has had the most noticeable effect. Grandfather remembered the surge of 2007 when the boatyard and dinghy park were awash but in those days surges only came about once or twice in a decade. Nowadays they seem to happen most years, and while often beautiful in their way, they are

overtopping the sea walls leaving more salt in the marshes. Actually they have become quite an attraction for clientele of the Maybush.

The other noticeable change has been the big increase in paddlers and swimmers on the Waldringfield beach. This is partly due to a large increase in housing throughout the whole Felixstowe peninsula. These new homes were planned to cope with all the extra jobs as the Haven Gateway was expected to expand fast after the big recession of 2008; it did and of course people like my parents live ever longer.

Also we have Adastral Newtown on Waldringfield Heath, which brought about 7,000 more residents to the edge of our area of such outstanding beauty. Adastral Newtown is really quite Mediterranean looking with its boulevards and shutters against the stifling summer heat that Suffolk 'enjoys' so often now. It has attracted quite a number of southern Europeans, many having apparently moved here to escape the frequent, searing heat waves that regularly cause extra deaths all around the Mediterranean basin. A good deal of effort was put into managing the extra cars as well as people and almost everyone now harvests rain during the fairly frequent summer storms. Anglian Water has had to ban mains water for garden and farm irrigation annually now throughout spring and summer for almost as long as I can remember.

There have however been two welcome local effects of climate change. We can more often recline under sunshades on our well-maintained Waldringfield beaches while young and old enjoy warmer swimming. And most of us, who may regret that apples are now grown up north, now relish the many excellent Suffolk wines!

Kassien Winship (aka.Neil)

NEWS FROM THE FERRY

John White says that the knolls have stayed much the same during the summer. However, he has noticed many more boats from Holland and Belgium this season. He also thinks the Ferry is carrying a lot more bicycles.



The picture is of 'Alice Teresa'. She was a Harwich fishing boat in the 60's. She has been decommissioned and is now being converted into a 'cruise ship' by Felixstowe Ferry Boat Yard. Word on the hard is she may become the Deben equivalent of Lady Florence on the Ore. In the background is one of the first new

houses to be built at the Ferry for many years. It will be interesting to see the design and how it fits into the pattern of the sheds and houses!!

For many years the channel has moved south as was mentioned in the last Edition. This threatens to undermine part of the rock armour. This process has continued and there has been some movement of the rocks during the year. The Environment Agency says that it is monitoring the situation, and is ready to take emergency measures should the clay wall protected by the armour erode seriously. It is understood that this would involve bolstering the landward side of the wall with spoil. Given the failure of the armour to provide effective protection in the long-term, the agency is thinking about alternatives should they be needed.

AM,DB,LB.

A COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY

Throughout 2010, I was part of a Working Group established by the police Safer Neighbourhood Scheme in Felixstowe. Initially, I had represented the Felixstowe Ferry Forum, but more recently, as RDA Chairman, have been able to speak for folk along the length of the Deben – or at least all those who deplore the prevalence of anti-social activity ashore or afloat.

Responding to widespread concern about speeding and other forms of

inconsiderate behaviour, not to mention theft and criminal damage, on and along the whole of the river, the Working Group proposed that police officers use a PWC (or “jet-ski”) to give them an effective education and enforcement role in relation to the District Council byelaws, the COLREGs and, of course, the law of the land. Other police forces already make very effective use of similar craft.

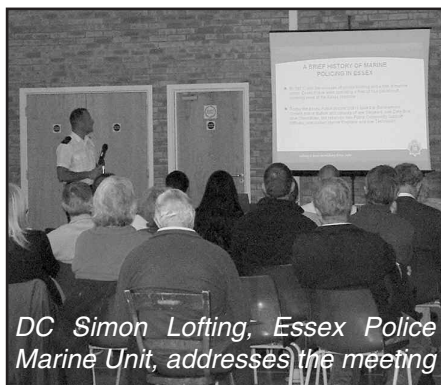
Representatives of all river-based organisations were invited to a meeting at Waldringfield Village Hall on Thursday 23rd September 2010 at which the police introduced this initiative and answered questions. The meeting was attended by about 30 people, who heard Inspector Stephen Gallant of the Felixstowe Safer Neighbourhood Scheme outline the proposal, and DC Simon Lofting of Essex Police Marine Unit describe how the police in Essex and Kent use PWCs to great effect over an extensive area of water and along many miles of coastline.

Inspector Gallant made it clear that implementation of what was proposed depended on two factors: community funding and community support. He stressed that annual running costs for a PWC were relatively low and that, through the use of Special Constables, there would be no manpower costs. However, no police funds, especially in these days of financial restraint, were available to meet the estimated £15,000 that it would cost to purchase a PWC, train

and equip officers, and run the vessel for the first year. If the river community wanted the scheme, which was additional to normal policing, they would have to fund it. Moreover, the police needed to know that the scheme had substantial community support – that it would be owned by river users rather than imposed on them.

A minority from the power-boating community did express reservations, although one encouragingly referred to the anti-social element as “muppets”. Apart from that, overwhelming support for the proposal was shown at the meeting, with almost all representatives indicating that they felt positive about the initiative. Everyone present was given a briefing paper outlining what is proposed and was urged to sound out their organisations as to whether sufficient financial support would be forthcoming for the scheme to go ahead. At the time of writing – the day after the meeting - that response is currently awaited.

Leigh Belcham

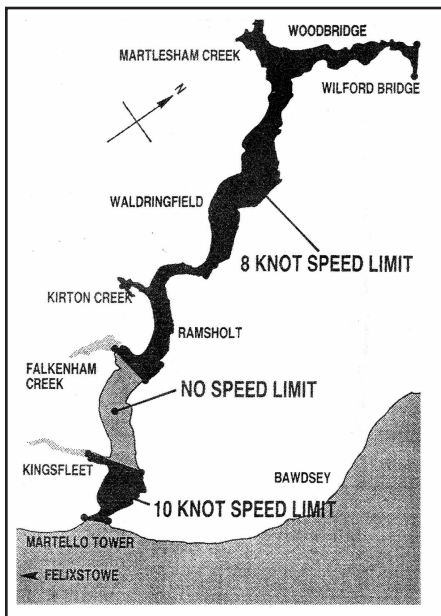


DC Simon Lofting, Essex Police Marine Unit, addresses the meeting

ON THE TIDE

River Deben Byelaws - Extracts

The current bye laws, which came into operation on 1 December 1980, introduced the speed limits indicated below. The speed limits only operate between May and September.



Inspector Gallant in his presentation in September noted that on the Essex Rivers the speed limit is 8 knots and because a PWC planes at this speed enforcement is made easier.

It seems that SCDC were persuaded that, because of the strength of the tide at the Ferry, the speed limit needed to be ten knots rather than

eight. For many years the Fairways Committee and the Harbour Master have tried to get the speed limit reduced. Given the general opinion that the maximum current is five knots there seems no reason for the ten knot speed limit, in what is often a congested area of water crowded with moorings. On a Spring tide this could mean a speed of 15 knots over the ground. I am not sure, either what the argument is against having an 'over the ground' speed limit – am I missing something here?

Two bye laws deal with the issue of 'behaviour' on the river and 'noise' with a reference to the need for a 'silenced' engine.

'5. No person, being the navigator of a pleasure boat, shall cause or suffer such pleasure boat to be driven or sailed in a dangerous manner or without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons.

6. No person being the navigator of a pleasure boat propelled by an internal combustion engine, shall use such a pleasure boat unless the engine thereof is fitted with a silencer suitable and sufficient for reducing, as far as may be reasonable possible, the noise caused by the escape of gasses from such engine.

7. Any person offending against any of the foregoing bye laws shall be liable to summary conviction to a fine not exceeding two hundred pounds.'

It seems to me that as part of the current debate we should be revisiting the issue of speed limits, which in my opinion are too high for a river, and limit effective enforcement. I also think they should apply throughout the year. No doubt you will have your own views.

David Bucknell

DEP News

Saltmarsh – the planning application to put in a tidal sill and brushwood fence at Sutton Hoo has been approved. Subject to the necessary licenses work will start in October. The aim will be to restore the saltmarsh; the project will be carefully monitored to assess the effectiveness of the methods used.

Scoping Document – the Environment Agency has issued a Scoping Document as part of the preparation of the Deben Estuarine Strategy. This is a consultation document the purpose of which is to make sure all the relevant issues are being considered and the relevant organisations consulted. Simon Read, has fed back information regarding marine industries and sedimentation on behalf of the RDA, which were two areas missing from the document.

Coastal Access.

The Marine & Coastal Access Bill 2009 received Royal Assent before

the General Election - writes Adrian. Within the Bill was the requirement to provide a coastal access path around the country and it was anticipated that work would start this year. Due to monetary restraint it is likely that only the section around Weymouth, the site for the sailing events at the 2012 Olympics, will be given the go-ahead now. Work on the remainder is currently postponed indefinitely as Natural England is short of funds. Note: they have also had to abandon their involvement with RSPB to reintroduce sea eagles to East Anglia.

A WALK IN PURSUIT OF NEWS FROM THE HARD

Yes, I knew it wouldn't be easy taking on News from the Hard, after Denzil: he had written just about all one could about the River Deben. 'Fools rush in....' etc was rattling in my head.

But the task had to be done, so I set off on my small wheeled bike and headed for Wilford Bridge. In spite of carrying with me plums and pears from the garden, I turned into the butcher at Melton Station to buy one of their superb sausage rolls.

I had lacked the nerve, however, to ask to use their loo and not feeling I could risk the bushes at the picnic site, sprang on the thought that half a pint of Adnams at the nearby public house would be a good idea.

It being a Monday, I was startled to see as I entered, so many people in

there eating and chatting. Choosing to sit outside in spite of the ferocious wind which rushed noisily through the nearby poplars, I was glad to be alone and therefore, to my relief, no cigarette smoke.

Watching the trickle of people leaving and arriving by car, most of whom were extremely frail and elderly, filled me with some alarm. At least I would soon be picking up the footpath by the river at Wilford Bridge and so be off the road.....

This path would lead me to my first source of News from the Hard, but not before this now, clearly defined down river route, evoked memories of our dear Rosemary (Schlee); and of how determined campaigning zeal and the ability to galvanize others into action can achieve the required end with the right perseverance - Rosemary did the work.

Thinking I'd sit now to eat my sausage roll I squatted on a massive, foot square oak beam of at least 12 feet long, which lies in a natural sort of alcove among the gorse bushes there. A good place to sit and rest at any time and I felt, not for the first time, that I would love to carve Rosemary's name on it: the location is perfect.

Before moving on I had felt curious at the sight of three boats visible through the bushes that are moored alongside just below the bridge. Does anyone know anything about these craft?

Who owns them, why they are there?

Unable to resist the temptation to fill my small, but now empty, sausage roll bag to bursting with blackberries, I then made my way towards the mid afternoon autumn sun. It was good to pass by some Oystercatchers wading and feeding on the low tide. These birds can open mussel shells, with their strong, red beaks and in the quieter parts of the estuary sometimes lay their eggs on or beside the path. There was a larger and more concentrated number of the small, Black Headed Gulls than I have seen for some time, all standing with their heads into the strong north-westerly wind. Over the past decade or so I have noticed that the larger, more bullying Herring Gulls have worked their way inland and often scatter the less aggressive smaller sea birds.

I spied a solitary Black-tailed Godwit, with its straight beak and elegant presence, unlike its more squat bar tailed cousin. The Curlew might have been a Whimbrel, it was hard to tell through my wind whipped eyes, but the four Little Terns that I then saw I would not confuse with the Black Headed Gulls, which, at this time of year have already acquired their white, winter bonnets, indeed, since August at the end of their breeding season.

A spindly bush of rosehips looked beautiful in the sunlight and alongside the path a pair of engaged Cabbage

Whites where active: at least one of them was, but I'm pretty sure the other one was dead!

Suddenly, as I looked up I saw an astonishing number of Canada geese. I had never seen so many all together. And did I see, nearby, a handful of Brent geese? Until the late 80s these chaps were never seen here until February, when people would keenly go out in the early morning hoping to see them fly in. And, sure enough, not much further down, there were the Herring Gulls, beating the bounds on the edge of the mud by the very low tide.

Stephen was busy at Larkmans; I could only hear his hammer but Fred told me they had been busier than usual and had started laying up already as people seemed to be wanting to do so earlier this year.

Simon Skeet at Melton Boatyard, had also been busier than usual and had had six barges in from 'all over' this summer. He was chatting to Ian Smith who has a workshop in the old Skipper Yacht factory building, doing cabinet making, joinery and conservation and lead work. Skipper Yachts are of course made in China now! The rest of the factory is used by an upholsterer and furniture restorer. There are certainly more boats moored alongside by Melton Boat Club, than when I last passed that piece of river.

Next, I passed the factories that had been built where, until the 80s, a small flint and brick warehouse of Turban Date origin had stood. The little place that had been for many years the business premises of Classic Marine (now moved to Martlesham Creek) is still unoccupied. I hope it doesn't befall to the fate of the little bungalow by Lime Kiln Quay which had been replaced by a new-build, timber-framed monstrosity, opposed by the RDA.

Too late to catch anyone at Robertson's this day, I turned my wheels towards the path again where, looking down, I spied some pebble mosaics, beautifully worked in front of a cottage.

Next day Mike at Robertson's reported a normal summer with most people's boats in the water, some of which it seems returned, since he added that they had more collision damage repairs than usual this season! He also said that their quay had been slowly sinking and as they need to put their crane on the corner it was important to re- do the piling and planking, which they had done.

In preparation for the shooting of an ITV film there had been set up a 1930s Boulton & Paul river launch that was 'beyond repair' (unless you had a fortune to spend). It had very appealing lines and had obviously been a very elegant boat in its time. They had in their shed, stripped

down, a lovely old caulked Hillyard of some 30 feet in length, being repaired for the owner's retirement, disappointingly named "Majorie".

Four people operate in Everson's Shed. Geoff reported that they too had been as busy as ever with many wooden boats still coming in for their never-ending repairs. Some owners, luckily, realise they are an endless task to keep in good nick: a coat of paint and varnish is simply not enough! A newly replaced hard, with ramp to pontoons, has fitted in well and looks good. Next season will see completion of a replacement jetty with centre handrail to comply with Health and Safety.

As we leant over the floodgate, I could see a Redshank making the most of the low tide along with a Whimbrel and a young Herring Gull, whose juvenile plumage made him look something quite else. But, my eye spotted below, in the mud, a mooring weight which Geoff said had been thrown down from where they'd left it ready, along with sandbags, for use by the Environment Agency. It seems Friday night larger louts are still about.

Geoff asked me what I thought of the new Rowing Club building. "I'm getting used to it" I replied "but its a bit 'in your face', being so near the river path" "Mind you"

I continued, "it was our former Chairman's input that stopped us having to live with the upper half being clad in metal". Geoff went on to explain that the origin of the tradition of using black was the proximity of the long-gone gasworks. He talked of the soft colours seen across the channel and praised the recent work that had been done on the "Cross" in Quay Street. When Everson's is rebuilt, as it must be sometime, he hopes it would be possible to have a colour. Wouldn't the Granary look good in a soft pale shade!

Due to the revetment work on the flood wall, I needed to cut inland and over the level crossing with my bike, which, I hasten to add, I had wheeled along the riverside path; but which I rely on to lean against as I walk. Passing the tennis courts, I headed for the "back path" to Kyson. Passing the crack willows in the water meadows, which with their wide but shallow roots went 'bottoms up' at almost exactly this time of year 23 years ago in the great storm of 87. Called by some folks "widows' willow", due, apparently, to their

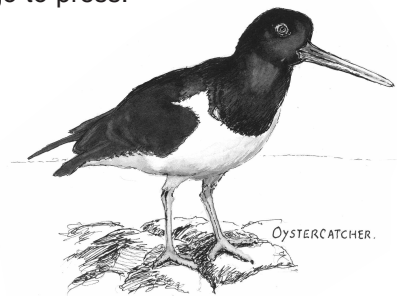


inclination to drop a branch without notice!

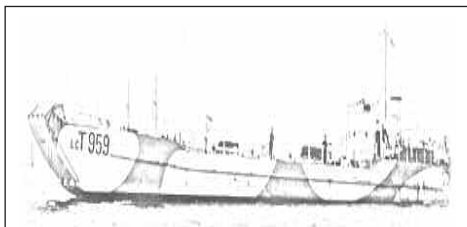
Kyson Point evoked a memory of landing there with my Laser Tipy by name - where is it now I wonder, pretty well 30 years ago. My universal joint had broken, but a spare piece of cord secured to the end of the tiller enabled me, in the easterly breeze, to sail safely back to Waldringfield dinghy park.

Here, at Kyson Point, is where the RDA's work began really. We were concerned about the fencing that had been erected, ostensibly, we thought at the time, to conserve the grasses and plants there. We were concerned, that if allowed to remain it could set a precedent for the rest of the river. Woodbridge School now keep its dinghies there and can often be seen going out in the afternoons during term time.

I hope you will find enough of interest here to enjoy reading it. The shadows have grown longer since I began gathering this news. Time is running out and the rest will have to follow in our next issue: our Editor is waiting to go to press.



WALDRINGFIELD'S THREAT TO HITLER.

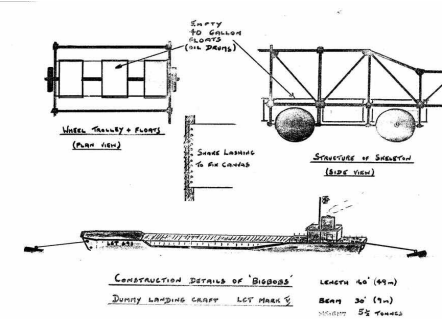


In World War Two the Allies wanted Nazi Germany to believe that the invasion of Europe would land at Calais and not Normandy. Consequently in early 1943 a grand deception plan was devised code named "Operation Fortitude".

A small part of this plan was "Operation Quicksilver". The idea was to position Dummy Landing Craft with fake army encampments in East Coast rivers from Yarmouth to Folkestone. This would be consistent with the main invasion being at Calais. Surprisingly, for such a small village, Waldringfield played a central role in all this and the River Deben was a significant part of the ruse.

We know quite a lot about the plan partly from the memories of villagers but mainly through the book "Operation Quicksilver" written by the Royal Navy officer Peter Tooley who was part of the launching team. He took a river trip on the Jahan back in 1995 and was good enough, subsequently, to write to the Boatyard with some details of the operation and

enclosed a copy of the "Top Secret" plans.



The deception plan was masterminded by Sir John Turner who was Director of Works at the Air Ministry. By late March 1943 work on the prototype had started and trials were underway on the South coast by July. The Royal Engineers felt the task did not need their skills and so the early versions were built by the Pioneer Corps although the Americans were involved at a later stage.

The specification called for a dummy craft that would be a lifelike replica of an LCT Mark IV (Landing Craft Tank), could be moored in estuaries in a force four wind and, most importantly, assembled in less than eight hours. These dummy Landing Craft were officially called device 36 but were known as "Bigbobs". This was to distinguish them from the inflatable rubber dummy landing craft known as Wetbobs. Just like the real thing each Bigbob had a length of 160 feet and a beam of 30 feet. (roughly 50m by 9m). They weighed five and a half tons compared to the 400 ton

displacement of the real LCT IV.

The engineering firm Cox's of Watford was engaged for production of the kits of parts and orders were placed in December 1943 for delivery in March 1944. The kits were manufactured with the cover story that they were mechanical elephants. Each kit was made up into a frame of 3 inch steel tubes which was assembled on top of empty oil drums for flotation. This was covered by lace up canvas sheets (that's a lot of canvas) and topped with a wooden wheelhouse. Around 30 oil drums should be needed for flotation.

SUBJECT: Dummy Craft Indication

GHQ Home Forces

TOP SECRET

21 Army Gp/00/261/3/6(4)

1. The following is the proposed layout of dummy craft in Eastern and South Eastern Comds.

SERIAL	PLACE	QUANTITY OF CRAFT	SUGGESTED SITUATING PLACE	LOCATING HARD	AREA OF DEPLOYMENT
1	YANTOWN ref OS 1" to mile, sheet 67	50	PITCHERS QUAY 986256 and Rly Yard 986258	PITCHERS QUAY and Rly Yard	CHETAG JATAM
2	LOWESTOFT ref OS 1" to 1 mile sheet 77	20	CHAMBERS YARD 986258	CHAMBERS YARD	CHETAG JATAM
3	WALDRINGFIELD R. DRENN ref OS 1" to 1 mile sheet 87	66	WALDRINGFIELD	WALDRINGFIELD	CHETAG JATAM

In all 266 Bigbobs had to be assembled and launched on the East Coast in about three weeks of Summer 1944 and therefore many men had to be trained how to build them.

Waldringfield was chosen as the training centre with the Maltings (the three storey house on the other side of Cliff Road to the Maybush) as Headquarters. The Officer in charge

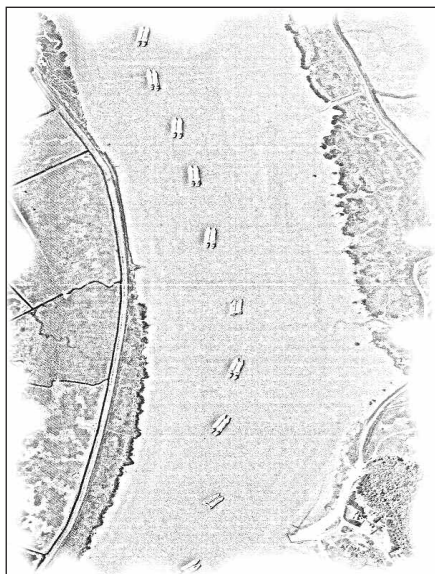
of training was Captain Allen of the Royal Engineers. Initially men from the Worcestershire and Northamptonshire regiments were trained with other units following.

The courses took place from February to March 1944 with 700 men being trained in all. Officers were billeted at Mrs Turner's Guest House, now Deben House and men at the Maltings and in Ipswich. Extra beer rations were provided for the Maybush although Albert Hill, the publican at the time and for many years afterwards, was in Felixstowe as a Petty Officer at the MTB repair base.



A large construction area with access to the river was needed. Several beach huts were demolished or moved and the field called Sedge Close as well as what is now the beach dinghy park were used for assembly of the kits. The concrete walls in the area may have been constructed as part of this project.

Each Bigbob came as a 500 part kit and required a team of twenty men working overnight to assemble and launch before dawn using temporary wheels for moving them to the water. Three sub teams worked in parallel on the bow, middle stern and wooden wheelhouse sections. The design incorporated hinges so that as the structure was rolled down the slipway on steel wheels to the water the floating portion was able to float horizontally whilst the remainder rolled down the incline. At the water's edge responsibility transferred from the Army to the Royal Navy.



For the Navy positioning and mooring the Bigbobs must have been difficult as it had to be done rapidly, in darkness, regardless of wind and tide conditions and with no hull in the

water they cannot have been easy to manoeuvre. The shallow water and sticky mud must have been very troublesome in the dark. There can also be quite tricky currents in that part of the river. If construction was not finished by first light the whole assembly had to be dismantled and hidden.

As the real invasion of Normandy approached draconian secrecy measures were imposed. A one mile wide exclusion zone was established from the Wash to Land's End and, of course, this included the whole of the village, additionally no civilian visits were allowed into a ten mile exclusion zone. Travel to Ireland was stopped, foreign diplomats were not allowed in or out of the U.K. and transatlantic telephone and radio communication was cut off.

The Deben, with 66 Bigbobs was to have the largest fleet after the Orwell with 70. The Waldringfield invasion fleet was built over nineteen days in May and June 1944. Traffic in village must have been heavy as to deliver four Bigbobs per day would require 28 three ton trucks in and out and this would have gone on for nearly three weeks. We have one aerial photograph which shows Bigbobs moored in pairs around Ramsholt. From measurements of the reconnaissance photograph it can be calculated that the fleet of 66 moored in pairs would have stretched over three miles.

Test aerial photographs had revealed that the Bigbobs looked too good to be true so they were painted with oil stains and rust to make them realistic. Once our 66 Bigbobs were moored in the Deben the White Ensign was flown every day, smoke was generated, laundry hung out and regular visits made by tenders to the skeleton crews on board. Anti Aircraft gunners were given orders to fire at visiting enemy reconnaissance planes but make very sure that they missed so that reconnaissance pictures would get back to Germany.

Operation Quicksilver was a complete success with captured records showing that they believed there to be 500 Landing Craft and 42 divisions in reserve whereas there were, in reality, only 15 divisions and no Landing Craft were available. On May 25th 1944, just before "D-day" on June 6th the German Commander in Chief, West still believed that the invasion would be between Dunkirk and Dieppe. Even on June 25th he believed that the Anglo American main force was uncommitted. The Germans did not move a division from the Calais area to Normandy until July 25th. Clearly this was a major contribution to the eventual defeat of the Nazis with Waldringfield and the River Deben playing their part.

Bob Crawley

Waldringfield History Group

The Waldringfield History Group have further tales of Waldringfield and the Deben's part in the War which we'll save for another time.

The group is interested in all aspects of village history and any information on wartime Waldringfield will be welcomed in particular the location of the fake landing strip intended to decoy bombs from RAF Martlesham Heath. In 2009 our annual village talk focussed on World War Two and a DVD is available of this.

Contact via our website at:
www.Waldringfieldia.com.

WHO MANAGES THE DEBEN?

In this series I intend to try and find out about the main authorities who have a role in managing the Deben. I hope to do it in a way that highlights the history of the developments and some of the characters associated with them.

Part One: the Crown Estate and the Fairways Committees

The Crown Estate

William the Conqueror did, what his name implied. He took for himself all the land of England and Wales together with possession of tidal estuaries and the waters offshore.

Over time some of this land has been sold or given away, by successive monarchs for favors of one kind or another. In 1760 George III, who may have needed funds to fund his army and navy, relinquished his rights over these assets in exchange for the Civil List. The assets were effectively nationalized.

The residual assets are managed on behalf of the nation by the Crown Estate Commissioners under the Crown Estate Act of 1961. Currently the Crown Estate has over £210 billion worth of assets held in urban property including Regent Street, other land and marine assets. The Crown Estate is run by a Board of Commissioners who have a duty to maintain and enhance the value of the estate and the return obtained from it, but with due regard to the requirements of good management.

'We are first and foremost a commercial organisation which exists, under Act of Parliament, to manage a range of urban, rural and marine assets throughout the UK.'

'We have two main objectives: to benefit the taxpayer by paying the revenue from our assets directly to the Treasury; and to enhance the value of the estate and the income it generates.' (Crown Estate website.)

The marine estate includes more than 55 per cent of the UK's foreshore, tidal river-beds and almost all of the

seabed up to 12 nautical miles off shore – including rights to all minerals (excluding hydrocarbons). The Deben is effectively owned by the Crown Estate and this ownership includes the river bed and the foreshore defined as the strip of land between mean high water and mean low water. The ownership covers the tidal reaches of the Deben which effectively end at Wilford Bridge and extends to 12 miles out to sea from the mouth of the Deben. This ownership is subject to the public's right to navigate and fish the river. Consequently the Crown Estate do not own the 'column' of water.

Interestingly, the Crown Estate does not own the Orwell, as when Ipswich was granted its Royal Charter it was given the right of access to the sea.

Agents of the Crown Estate, solicitors in Colchester, negotiate 5 or 15 year leases with each Fairways Committees and review the fees for moorings every five years.

Background to the Fairways Committees

There are currently five Fairways Committees covering different stretches of the river. They were formed independently of each other and at different times: Felixstowe Ferry 1962 (The mouth of the river to Green Point) Ramsholt 1961 (Green Point to Falkenham Creek) Waldringfield (Falkenham Creek

to Methersgate) Kyson 1980 (Methersgate to Robertson's and up river) Knolls (Robertson's boat yard to Eversons.) Each Committee has its own 'story'.

Prior to the formation of the Fairways Committees, no one authority had control over what happened on the river. At Felixstowe Ferry there was a Harbour Master - Clifford Newsom (Billy) and two Trinity House Pilots Billy and Teddy Newsom known as Settler. They guided boats in and out of the Deben and looked after the beacons on the shore. However, there was no control over moorings and private individuals laid them where they thought fit. Often they were laid too close to each other and boats collided. While individuals were concerned, the turning point came when Henry Fox bought Felixstowe Ferry Boatyard off Mr Pierce. The boatyard immediately laid 40 moorings. At the same time the RAF Sailing Association laid four moorings on the Bawdsey side of the river which was generally considered to be the Fairway. Billy Newsom the Trinity House pilot responsible for keeping the fairways clear apparently said 'We can't have that. We need to keep the Fairways clear'.

These developments raised fears that if the boatyard controlled everything, mooring fees would escalate and that commercial exploitation of the river would lead to the prospect of moorings throughout the river. There

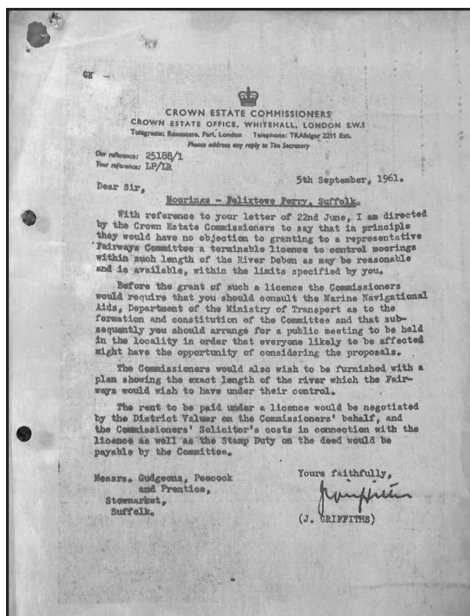
was a fear that the Crown Estate might take over and fees for moorings would escalate to the levels on the south coast. Suggestions that the Eastern Regional Board for Industry, which represented local authorities, should take over the management of the Fairways was also resisted.

Two dentists were the main movers in the approach to the Crown Estates - Teddy Suddell from Waldringfield and Jack Rowbotham from Felixstowe. Jack was a member of the Yacht Racing Association, later to become the RYA, and a keen member of the Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club. He approached the Crown Estates and a series of letters went to and from the Board of Trade who set out how the Fairways Committees should be organised. A letter was sent in 1961

which stipulated the objectives and functions of the Committee, what the committee needed to do to be properly constituted and who should be represented on the Committee.

A series of public meetings was held. At the first one of these, held in Felixstowe Town Hall in 1961, the proposal to form a Fairways Committee was unanimously rejected. The main issue was that many people wanted to retain the freedom to do as they wished and resisted control by an authority. (This may still be the central issue in the today's debate over policing and speeding on the river.)

Robert Simper has written that "When the yachts appeared, each anchorage had been a closely guarded territory of waterman who controlled the moorings, but as the numbers shot up, the system began to breakdown. The yacht clubs, commercial boatyards and local government all claimed that they should be responsible for managing the river. However, the Deben had always been a free river and even the lords of the Manor had no authority over the tideway. The boat owners wanted it to remain an open river, but opinion was divided about how this was to be achieved. There were the old protectionists who fought to retain the old tradition of total freedom, and there were those who wanted mooring committees to organise the fairways.'



Robert Simper 'The Deben River' p.4
This debate has taken place in relation to the setting up of each of the Fairways Committees and many of the meetings associated with the development of the Committees were heated. Peter Clay writes of Kyson –

'It was my father Jim Clay, Frank Knights et al who took the view that if the "free-for-all" chaotic mooring on the Deben was left to itself the SCDC would step in and regulate it. There was another group very slightly smaller who took the opposite view and who thought any kind of regulation would spell the end. Fortunately at a noisy meeting they decided to approach the Crown Commissioners and offer a deal to administrate the moorings at a commercial price (which was by that time a requirement of the Commissioners).

The stretch of river was Kyson to Methersgate and the result speaks for itself- £45 for a swinging mooring, buy and lay your own tackle, and the boats don't generally hit each other. Dad resigned from the committee eventually because he, two of his sons and a son-in-law all had moorings and he felt his impartiality was being stretched! That was in the days when disinterest meant disinterest and not whatever.'

Finally at the Ferry after considerable discussion a public meeting was held in the Felixstowe Ambulance Hall

attended by 70 members of the public. The following committee was elected –

Jack Rowbotham
Yacht Racing Association
Charlie Brinkley
Harbour Master
Barry White
Local Publican (Ferry Boat Inn)
A.S.J Painter
Yachting and Boating.
Hector Horne
Ferryman
Ted Newsom
Trinity House Pilots
D Walden
None affiliated boat owners
William Gibson
Landowners at the Ferry

There are representatives of Suffolk Coastal District Council and the Parish Council on the Committee which meets, as and when necessary, and at least twice a year. The original interest groups are still represented and when a member cannot continue new members are selected by the Committee.

In 1962 the first five year lease was granted to the Trustees of the Fairways Committee.

We cannot find a record of the original objectives and functions but we can assume they were similar to those of the Ramsholt Committee.

"A) To organise administer and control the area as set out in the

schedule hereto attached.

To specify, plan site and allocate moorings.

B) To establish from time to time the appropriate economic charge to be made for such moorings.

C) To regulate the area by means of Fairway Committee's rules and regulations.

D) To preserve the rights of the public in the area and specifically the right to navigate and the right to fish.

E) To prevent encroachment and trespass.

F) To represent the interests of the associate organisations belonging to the Fairways Committee."

Fairways Committees are responsible for marking the Fairway and John White and Mel Skeet keep charts, which they regularly update, showing the Fairway, buoyage and associated hazards. Trinity House inspected the channel markings looked after by Mel Skeet this year and you can find a chart prepared by Mel on the Melton Boatyard website.

The Felixstowe Ferry Fairways Committee has the status of a 'not for profit common enterprise.' As it is not an incorporated body there is no public AGM or Membership structure and this is the same for Ramsholt. There are three Trustees who hold the lease. As Nigel says they all

share a 'passion' for the river. There are four at Waldringfield and I assume the other Committees have similar structures. The leases are negotiated individually by each of the Fairway Committees and are generally from between five and fifteen years.

Every five years the Crown Estate through their agents, solicitors in Colchester, negotiate the annual rates for the moorings with each individual Committee. While the Crown Estate will come with suggested figure, say for somewhere like Aldeburgh, each committee will make a case for being charged less; having to purchase a permit for your tender at Ramsholt, putting up with rougher water at Felixstowe and so on. While there is the potential for one Fairways Committee being played off against the other it seems, from talking to their representatives, that although, they don't meet together on a formal basis, they seem to have a knack of knowing what each other is doing.

From my own observations the Fairways Committees appear to have functioned well over the years. They operate with a minimum of fuss and keep their administrative costs down. The Felixstowe Ferry and Ramsholt Committees pay the expenses of Harbour Masters who are well respected in the communities they serve. The Committees seem to involve the 'right' local people with the expertise and skills to manage the

moorings and have a representative structure. From my own experience, the Fairways Committees do not court publicity although Ramsholt does produce a newsletter.

One of the intriguing aspects of the Fairways Committees is how generations of family members have continued to serve on the Committees both at the Ferry and Ramsholt. Nigel Gibson's father was one of the early members of the Felixstowe Ferry Fairways Committee John White followed Barry White and George Collins, who has now been on the Ramsholt Fairways Committee for forty years, succeeded his father George Collins Senior. Norman Simper was a founding member of Ramsholt Fairways Committee.

Since the fifties there has been a large increase in the number of moorings and the area devoted to moorings on the river as a whole. George Collins tells me that in the 50's when George Arnott was sailing the Deben there were probably fifty moorings at Ramsholt; there are now two hundred; although he says that the number of moorings has remained the same for the last twenty years at Ramsholt. Both the Ferry and Ramsholt have waiting lists and have resisted pressure to put in piles or fore and aft moorings of the type found on the Hamble. John White says there is a commitment not to increase the number of moorings

above the existing level at the Ferry. There is a clear understanding about the rights of the river users and the need to keep the fairways clear. However, we rely on the commitment and values of those who serve the committees to protect and conserve the river. The spread of moorings has only been kept in check by the Fairways Committees who do not want to spoil the river and want to allow some open water. With the projected increase in population in the hinterland I wonder how pressures will be resisted. If there is a waiting list it would be easy for the Crown Estate to put pressure on to maximise the revenue generated from moorings.

One issue that has been raised is the pressure to take on the function of Harbour Authorities, for example in disposing of hazardous waste. This would inevitably lead to more expenditure and higher mooring fees. I hope to review this in next Edition of The Deben.

Where does Suffolk Coastal District Council fit in?

While Suffolk Coastal District are represented on the Fairways Committees, their primary responsibility is limited to 'terrestrial' planning as they put it. Suffolk Coastal District Council is responsible for any development above the high water mark and the normal planning process applies. They do however

have powers under particular legislation to make bye laws. The current bye laws which were confirmed on 11 November 1980 were made under Section 76 of the Public Health Act 1961.

‘These bye laws were made for the protection of danger, obstruction or annoyance to persons bathing in the sea or using the sea shore.’

(As a swimmer this seems mildly reassuring.)

No one authority has an overarching authority over the river although the Marine Management Organisation has been set up to take responsibility for Marine and Coastal Access and planning responsibilities which include estuaries. Currently, arrangements are being worked out with the local authorities concerned with terrestrial planning.

In terms of conservation and the spread of moorings we are reliant on the common sense of the Fairways Committees. It is important, however, that the Crown Estate have recognised the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Management Plan and the importance of landscape and natural character.

Nigel Gibson is Treasurer of The Felixstowe Fairways Committee. He has exceptional knowledge of the history of the Ferry and has been invaluable in helping me understand the background to the Fairways

Committees and their formation. I hope he will continue to contribute to the magazine. My thanks also to Peter Riches Agent for the Crown Estates and George Collins Harbour Master at Ramsholt.

In part two there will be an interview with Mike Steen of the Environmental Agency and I hope a representative of Natural England. (In the Newsletter No 31 Autumn 2005 Glen Cooper, Conservation Officer for, what was then English Nature, wrote an informative article on the various designations the Deben is subject to including SSSI, Ramsar and so on. I will try and reproduce this on the website.)

David Bucknell

‘ARTISTS AND WRITERS’

“Poetry can lead to new understandings in the same way as paintings and photographs open people’s eyes.” Andrew Motion encourages people to ‘see’ sometimes for the first time, the realities of the natural world that have been there in the background all along. Things they knew already but didn’t realise.

(Andrew Motion talking to Rob Hume RSPB Birds Magazine 2008)

This series will introduce some of the ‘Artists and Writers’ who have been inspired by the Deben and who live or work close by.

George Arnott.

Many of you will already be familiar with George Arnott's 'Suffolk Estuary' published in 1950; for those who are not, here is an introduction.

This book is a mine of information about the Deben. Arnott starts with an exploration of 'How the Estuary took its shape and then recounts the history of the Deben through in a series of chapters including Fairway to the Deben, Ships of little Draft, Ferries and Beacons, Riverside Inns, The Lower Reaches, Sutton and the Pool of Woodbridge.

Arnott has done a massive amount of research and the book contains fascinating maps and pictures. I found his maps and account of the former port of Gosford particularly interesting, and it has encouraged me to walk where once it was. Aside from its factual detail, the book is peppered with anecdotes and stories of the characters who have made the Deben. It is not written in a dry academic style; Arnott's 'voice' comes through the text and is reminiscent of Maurice Griffiths. It is not surprising to hear from George Collins, Harbour Master at Ramsholt, what a sociable man George Arnott was. You feel you are travelling with him and know him well by the end of his journey.

Reading 'Suffolk Estuary' you share George Arnott's passion for the Deben and some of his opinions. He mounts a scathing attack on the

concrete of the flood defences in Woodbridge and I wonder what he would have thought of the 'rocks' at the Ferry. George Arnott foresaw many of the problems we are encountering today and believed that people, including local politicians needed educating about how to manage change and development. Above all when you read this book you share George Arnott's love of the beauty and peace of the river and the moments he treasured. Although the river has changed these qualities can still be experienced.

It is fitting that Robert Simper has provided an introduction to George Arnott.

Robert Simper writes:

George Arnott sailed on the River Deben roughly in the period 1930-60, the river's best years. Commercial shipping had ended and the yachting boom had barely started. The river was almost empty.

George's father had been a very successful auctioneer, estate agent and property owner in the Woodbridge area and George took over the business. However, to be honest he didn't let work get in the way of his sailing. His best-known boat was the 35ft L'Atalanta and she was often to be seen anchored in the Deben. George, a man's man, was the subject of numerous stories and was a man of very strong views.



George Arnott

From 'The Deben River' – Robert Simper

George Arnott, a tall lanky man, with a big nose and nearly always a deep suntan, spoke loudly at any public meeting connected with the Deben and Woodbridge. He believed, with great passion, that the Deben should be an open river on which everyone could do exactly as they wanted. He strongly opposed the setting up of mooring committees, and raged about the use of concrete on river wall defences. I doubt whether he would have had much time for the RDA, which he would probably have seen as interfering with individual liberty. He expected the river to continue being the same, as he had known it as a young man, as a quiet backwater, unchanged from the Victorian period, but this didn't happen. He had no idea how many

boats, moorings, and high-speed craft would use this river one day. I think if he came back now he would be deeply shocked at the amount of boat traffic there is on the Deben in the summer.

Above all George saw himself, probably because of his family's prominent position in Woodbridge, as being the authority on the Deben and he was not in the least slow in saying so. His authority was further enhanced by his book *Suffolk Estuary* published in 1950, the first of three books about Suffolk rivers. It is only my opinion, but I think his first book *The Place-Names of the Deben Valley Parishes*, published in 1946, was a much more thorough work. These books were pioneering works on Suffolk's maritime history. I just wish he had written more and spent less time anchored sun bathing off Ramsholt Cliff !

Although Mr Arnott was very outspoken, he was a very private man, and spent many hours with his books at his home in Church Street. When he died his research material was passed to his nephew Nicholas Minifie. Through Nicholas, who sadly died recently, some of this material was passed on to me. I hoped that I might get a glimpse of G.W.Arnott, the private man, but no, he remained private. If there were diaries they were destroyed. However, there are notebooks of very carefully written notes. George had been the protégé of the local historians (the Redstone

family) and he drew heavily on their researches and their notes were in the Seckford Library and then passed on to the Woodbridge Library.

George made illustrated log books for his boats, the sailing barge Eureka, the gaff yacht Merlin and then the long years with L'Atalanta which he insisted on calling a Norwegian pilot boat, but was actually an ex-Swedish Customs Cutter. One feels that navigation was not George's strong point as he ran aground on the Deben bar, the Cork Sand, on the sandbanks off Dunkirk and few other places. In those years, however, long before SAT NAV, the North Sea was far more challenging than it is today.



L'Atalanta in the 1987 Gale
Taken from 'The Deben River' – Robert Simper

George Arnott left the quiet waters of his beloved Suffolk estuaries when he took L'Atalanta, with Frank Knights as crew, for the Dunkirk Evacuation in 1940. In fact the Navy, wisely, kept the deep-keeled L'Atalanta at Ramsgate. Not in the least deterred,

George boarded a motorboat and went off to help get the soldiers back from the beaches. He made the Deben men laugh because, even in a bad war situation he stripped off to the waist to make the best use of the sun.

I remember George because he bought L'Atalanta to the Deben and she became my dream ship when as a boy of fourteen I rowed around this black, heavily rigged cutter from the Swedish side of The Sound. It was a dream that came true because I went on to own her for twenty-three years. Now she sits in storage near Orford.

When George Arnott was on the river everyone knew him, but how should we remember him today? His vigorous attempts to stop mooring committees being formed and any form of progress on the Deben made him a reactionary, defiantly not a visionary. His lasting contribution to the Deben was the books he wrote and his careful keeping of documents relating to the Deben's past.

Robert Simper.

George Collins - Harbour Master at Ramsholt recalls George Arnott -

"Yes I knew him for years after the war. He had his boat in Waldringfield in the 50's. He used to come here in his boat, him and his men friends. No females at all. Then he used to sit on his boat and skinny dive off here with no clothes on. They used to anchor

off here and sit on the boat with sail down one side down from the boom. They were skinny diving on the other side. No one could see them unless you were on the water. He anchored off here in those days. Used to be a half a dozen of them. They always had a party. Then they used to come to the pub. Always very jolly. He used to drink quite a bit. Never married.

He used to do all the boat sales. Jumbles they are called now. Sold boats and bits and pieces – where the swimming pool is now. He was well known in Woodbridge – well known everywhere - tall skinny chap. People did not take much notice (of the swimming ed.) – there weren't that many people around in those days. Most of the river people knew him but the public did not know about him. In Woodbridge they just knew him as auctioneer. I imagine he was good auctioneer - he was a good speaker.

He only talked about the water. He used to call me and my brother 'Collins Bros.' because he couldn't tell the difference between us. He used to know my father -he used to drink with him on the boat. He had a mooring here for fifteen years just off the hard. I can't recall him going anywhere. In those days people didn't go that far. He just enjoyed the river. He would always chat to everybody. Chatted about boats. He'd be in the Pub amongst them. There weren't that many boats but everybody knew him. His black boat stuck out a mile.'

Margaret Wyllie writes-

'George Arnott was a local Estate Agent and art expert. His father had been an Estate Agent before him - Arnott and Everett. This became Arnott Calver around 1959.

He ran successful picture sales in 60's. They were held in the annex behind Crown Hotel – then sale rooms. He was an authority on local artists including William Churchyard and Lionel Smythe.

Arnott was possibly the first person to be taken in by Tom Keating. A painting was sold at A and C's auction as a Lionel Smythe which later turned out to be by Keating - faked. This, with an image of the sale catalogue, was used in the BBC programme about Keating. I am not sure if that started the demise of the picture sales.

A & C also held an annual boat sale on the Woodbridge Quay. There were some boats, lots of equipment/jumble. I used to act as clerk and take money in a room at the lower end of the quay. I think it belonged to Mr Northcote. George did most of the auctioneering with his nephew Nicolas Minifie.

George Arnott was generous; he used to hold Christmas parties in his home in Church Street for relations and old family friends, his sister Janet Minifie and Eddie her husband, Nicolas and me, aunt Mary Stephens who lived in the Park House The Thoroughfare,

daughter Jane, who is still alive, the Miss Galls, Amy and Edith who lived on the corner of Cherry Tree Road Opposite Notcutts' entrance.

His house was stylish for those days, big patterned wall paper and furnishings from the General Trading Company – his favourite shop. We got Christmas presents from there - I still have a tray.

After my divorce he used to send me a hamper from Fortnum's every Christmas. He was also generous to old 'retainers'. He owned several houses in the top end of Church Street and used to let old ladies live in them till they died. Mostly they had run them as little shops.

He loved the sun and was always very brown. He had a large bulbous nose and a high pitched voice.

All his family were articulate, sensitive and artistic, his sister Janet painted water colours. George Arnott had strong opinions which he aired but he cared about people and the river. He was a true Edwardian.

ARTISTS OF THE DEBEN

This is very much a 'work in progress'. I have begun to talk to local artists and I hope by the time you read this you will be able to access some of their work on the website.

Ron Wragg

It is appropriate that Ron Wragg should start this series as he has provided many of the illustrations for the magazine. He does not charge for this work and has given the RDA the copy write. We do not have all his pictures and consequently the need to repeat the ones we do have has not done his work justice. Ron is also a wood carver. Examples of his work will be on the website.

In 2006 he wrote:

'My affair with Deben began in the mid 1950's. I was a teenager and a pal of mine suggested a jaunt. I rode pillion on his motor bike and went for the first time to Felixstowe Ferry. I was a town boy, brought up near the busy Ipswich Docks, full of majestic Thames barges. By contrast Felixstowe Ferry with its little fishing boats looked quaint and old fashioned, and pleasantly scruffy. I recognised the hulls of half a dozen old flying boats, wingless and propped up on the shore where now the house-boats are moored. I still found them exciting because I loved aeroplanes. We wandered round, lost in a world that seemed slow and comfortable, governed by tides and not clocks.

Since then, I have at various times walked almost all the west bank and quite a bit of the east bank from Ufford down to the sea. I've swum it ,

sailed on it. As an amateur photographer I have taken many photographs of the Deben, in all its moods and tides, and used many of the photographs as material for my paintings. My wife, waiting in the cold for me to take another shot, claims I have taken that picture on a previous occasion, but it is not true - every time I see the Deben there is something new to see- the light, the tide, the weather, the season. I think my wife is going to get cold on many other occasions because I don't think will ever tire of taking photographs of this lovely river. '

Ian Moore

'Living in Bawdsey and working full-time at Felixstowe Ferry Boatyard requires a commute by rowing boat or a long drive on stormy days, however, my part-time occupation is based at my studio Butley. I paint mainly in oils, the majority of my work being depictions of elements within the coastal landscape, both locally and, and on the Hebridean Islands which I visit annually.

Recently I have been concentrating on trees and hedgerows in local landscape. Accuracy of colour and detail are important to me, I describe my work as 'painterly realism'. Available and past work can be seen on my website at:

www.ianmoorepaintings.co.uk"

Ian also made the clinker built rowing boat he uses to cross the Deben at the Ferry. If you need to learn about how to cross the Deben in different conditions including gales, wind against tide - watch the course Ian takes to make the journey. As someone said to me "It only takes 'Three good strokes to get across!" If you understand their meaning.

Paul Bruce

'My love and affection for the River Deben goes back to the 1950's. At the age of seven my father had a houseboat at Felixstowe Ferry. It was a converted Naval Cutter lying in a mud berth behind the boatyard along with about seven other houseboats that were being used for holidays and weekends. Along with two of my cousins, we spent summer holidays exploring the creeks and the banks around Felixstowe Ferry. When I became old enough to own my own boat I sailed from Woodbridge and in 1975 I purchased 'Windhaver' a fifty foot Dutch fishing Botter which laid in the corner of Woodbridge Quay for 25 years. When I was in business I used her as a weekend retreat along with sailing my 20 foot gaff rig Hillyard, 'Twinkler'

In the mid 1990's I acquired a mooring at Ramsholt, having sold Twinkler, and moved on to a more manageable craft. Over the years the intrigue of the Deben, changing light

and amazing colours has inspired me to paint every aspect of the river.

In 1993 I had a one man show at the Haste Gallery in Great Colman Street, Ipswich entitled 'The Deben and Beyond'. Also, during these years I staged exhibitions on board 'Windhaver' with contributions being donated to the RNLI. The sunsets especially, from my mooring at Ramsholt are absolutely remarkable and I have been fortunate enough to exhibit some of these subjects with the Royal Society of Marine Artists at the Mall Galleries in London, along with sculptures which have also been inspired by the Deben. Some of my paintings can be seen at the Ramsholt Arms, mainly of the Deben shoreline.'

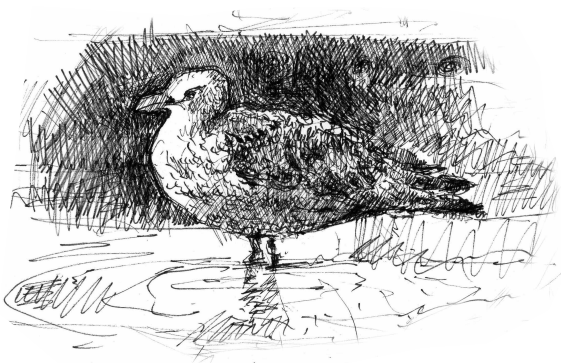
paulbruce@tiscali.co.uk

In future the magazine will feature artists including Simon Read, Margaret Wyllie, Hugh Webster (who paints from a hut at Felixstowe Ferry and who has an exhibition at the Peter Peers gallery starting on the 11 October). John Barham, Paul Reeve who has painted the Ferry on many occasions, Caroline Poole and others.

RENEWAL:

I have been watching a juvenile Herring Gull from the wheelhouse of our barge; it is certainly a teenager and by his body language, it must be a boy. He just hasn't quite got it,

hanging around, tweeting for attention and copying any old role model that comes along. Now he has attached



himself to a Godwit and diligently follows, probing the mud with his inadequate bill and shaking his head. Most times he just hangs around to pounce on handouts from the barge opposite. Other times, he has a go at being a swan or a ridiculous duck but upon hearing the cry of a mature gull, he hurries over squeaking, only to be studiously ignored. So, shoulders hunched he stands until the rising tide covers his knees, wondering what to do next. This is a one individual only place; the presence of Herring Gulls on our brackish upper reaches is vagrant and singular. There is no big gang for individuals to lead each other on.

It is autumn and the young gull is not the only seasonal indicator: it will soon be time for the yachts to return for layup and refit. After 30 years barging around here we are accustomed to the annual ritual of renewal that is a winters sleep under

covers accompanied by desultory maintenance, followed by fitting out. Year in year out the same boats are reborn through the unstinting effort of owners who, unlike their charges, are not able to respond to the same treatment.

I have considered myself to be immune to this process; however recently, I was interrupted in the normal round of knocking off rust and priming steel, by a gentleman of indeterminate years. He told me about a smart barge, just like ours, that used to be moored where we are now, but owned by a younger couple. I asked him how long ago this was and he reckoned about twenty years and when I said that it was most likely us, he insisted that it couldn't possibly be; this was a young couple with a child and he went on to describe our previous selves. I said that yes, this indeed was us and that yes we do all grow old; that child has grown up and left home. He sighed and muttered something about the barge looking smart in spite of it all.

This process of renewal is an act of faith, that through rehearsing the same rituals of haul out, wash off, lay up, fit out, there lies a belief in continuity, life goes on and all is well. We have seen the same boats pass from father to son or sold to energetic new owners who cherish and pamper them but stopping short at changing their appearance, only allow themselves license to upgrade

electrical or mechanical systems. If genius loci can be applied to objects then boats must surely have it in plenty, every year the same boats are drawn out at our yard to rest on precisely the same patch of concrete as the year before, usually next to another same boat that was also there the year before. A weekend club is reconvened; owners, cheerfully shabby, exchange the same advice on varnish, paint finishes and stern gland packing in each others cockpits over horrible coffee, accomplish little and go home contented.

The cycle moves on and come Easter or earlier, the first orbital sander of spring is heard and pretty soon becomes a squadron. The weeks pass and activity rises to fever pitch, the yard looks like a second hand car lot. Piles of fenders, ropes, sails and upholstery stack up and are stowed away. By the end of May, one by one, they are back in the water, down on moorings from which they might sally forth once or twice before the whole round starts again.

This is just one of the rhythms that measures our life, it is an entropic round of decay and renewal against which we pitch our own spans. Just so, that recurring conversation about durability of salt marsh is bound by the same limitations. I am frequently told that it has always been as it is and that there is nothing amiss. Change happens as we change and, since we live in the permanent

present, so does everything else. We are only brought up short with something sudden like a damned good flood as a hydrologist friend of mine once said. Otherwise it is all so incremental that you don't see it until after the event. Unless you take the time to monitor this stuff, it is extremely difficult to recall how it all was, whether there is any loss or gain let alone hazard a guess at the implications. This is not at all helped by inexact science that finds itself unable to be categorical about what is going on; who knows whether the impacts are knock on effects of the initial reclamations in the 17th-18th centuries or the first symptoms of sea-level rise, or maybe something completely radical like the impact of burrowing crabs, but for the majority, who cares?

The idea that our rivers have always been the way they are is enshrined in our inability to see beyond our day-by-day experience, therefore if a body as august as the Environment Agency says that a river system should look after itself, it is difficult to raise the evidence to gainsay it. It is like saying that our immature seagull is the same individual because it both looks and behaves the same year on year. The River Deben Association has been discussing the wisdom of interfering with estuary systems to the extent of positively managing salt marsh for quite a while. Now, through the agency of the Deben Estuary Partnership there is a proposal to

install a tidal sill at the breach in the wall of the salt marsh area below Sutton Hoo. This scheme looks like it will happen; in which case what has degraded into mudflat through tidal erosion should regenerate. Not that many are likely to realise this for if they notice anything at all it will be an undramatic increase in salt tolerant plant cover.

Apparently nothing changes; reassuringly the same old boats return to the same old moorings and look exactly the same as they always did, don't they.

BOATS OF THE DEBEN - WHERE IS 'NELLIE' NOW ?

Nellie was a familiar site for many of us, moored above the Horse Sand and then fore and aft in Woodbridge. As Yacht Broker Tim Allen, her former owner says 'a character boat with a certain charm' (a euphemism for a porker if ever there was one!) Nellie was the home to several local people including a Felixstowe fisherman, an Everson's boat builder and a part time yacht broker. Sadly Colin Parish who lived aboard her with his dog Tegg drowned and she was then sold to Tim Allen of Temple Marine. Tim sold her to the present owner Bevis Musk.

I had I always been intrigued by Nellie, her name and her attractive lifeboat lines topped with a rather 'in your face superstructure' and chimney. Tim's daughter has aptly

labelled her as a 'Postman Pat' boat.

I met Tim and Bevis in 2009 when Nellie was being refitted in Mel Skeet's yard. Bevis told me that he wanted to sail her round Britain and write as he went. There were mutterings round the yard that this was an unwise thing to contemplate and that she would soon be consigned to the deep. So how has Bevis got on?



Trials off Cowes

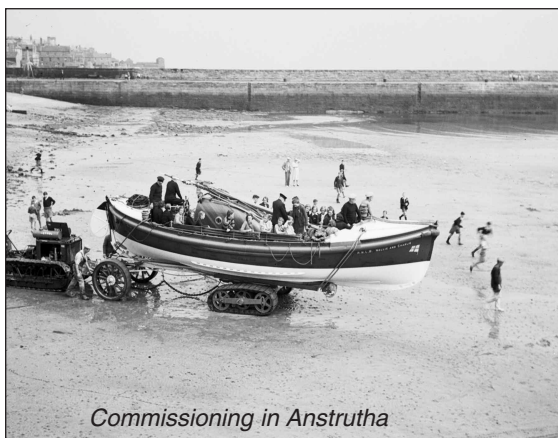
When I met Bevis he had removed all the floors. Perched on the side of Nellie's wheelhouse he showed me Nellie's massive engine and recounted her history*.

Nellie was built by JS White of Cowes in 1932-33. Her full name is 'The Nellie and Charlie'. Her 'benefactor' Mr Neil Robertson of Pitlochrie named her after his wife and cousin. She is a Liverpool Class Two single screw life boat of which

only 12 were built. She has the order number 746 carved into the bulkhead and her weight is 6 and 74/100 tones also carved on the bulkhead. The original Bill of Sale was for £3416. She was built traditionally in double diagonal mahogany over Canadian elm ribs on a teak keelson with English grown bend oak stem posts. (Oak specifically grown in a bend for the RNLI)

She was shipped to Dundee on the SS. Luger and then sailed round to Anstrutha on the east coast of Scotland. Nellie in those days had a 35 hp Weyburn petrol engine together with auxiliary sails.

Nellie served as the Anstrutha lifeboat between 1933 and 1950 and is accredited with 72 lives saved. Although, as Tim says the figure is likely to be much higher as 'shouts' in the war, army and navy personnel were often not recorded for



Commissioning in Anstrutha

propaganda purposes. In the early 70's she was worked by two brothers dredging for seaweed off Shoreham selling it for iodine. Later she was converted and the stern cabin added with an open hold in the bow. The bow cabin was added later.

When Nellie moved to the Ferry she served as a house boat and also a yacht. Tom Goulding who worked for Eastern Counties installed the current 130 hp Leyland bus engine.

After Bevis Musk bought her, Nellie was out of the water for 18 months at Mel Skeet's. Bevis worked to get her ship shape and reconditioned the engine - getting married in the mean time. The hull was surveyed and found to be 'literally as good as new, 75 years on with 'dust in the bilges'. When she was put back in she did not take up any water.

Bevis decided to go to Bristol via the Thames. Nellie motored happily to Reading where she made the rest of

the journey to Bristol by road. Nellie is based in the old Sharpness Dock now a marina on the Gloucester and Sharpness canal.



Bevis's story is as good as Nellie's. Latterly he was making carbon fibre parts for Grand Prix cars, including many of the wheels. He was particularly associated with F1 Williams Team. His current business makes carbon fibre wheels for military vehicles.

Bevis fitted out the forward and main cabin and wheel house; installing a dry and wet locker. He has fitted a calorifier and a marine hot water system. He is in the process of restoring the external fabric of Nellie and is replacing her cork fenders which have rotted. These will be replaced 'like for like' but will be hollow and made from carbon fibre. They will have automatic valves to pump out any water and this should help Nellie's stability in rough



weather. While Bevis is hopeful of finding the original mast and sails he is preparing to make a new mast out of carbon fibre which would be much lighter than the original. Bevis has also fitted an air filter system which is normally fitted on racing cars. Bevis says this makes the engine quieter and smoother.

As Bevis says, part of the enjoyment of owning a boat like Nellie is that he meets so many interesting and good people. He has met one of the original crew members who recognised the boat and he also met an old lady who was present at the ceremony when Nellie was commissioned in Anstrutha. Nellie is registered with the Historical Society and is much in demand at Festivals. Bevis has been asked to organise a display of lifeboats at the Historic Ships display as part of the Bristol Harbour Festival. At one festival Nellie was united with her sister ship Always Ready No 748 who she hadn't

been alongside since they were built in Cowes together over 75 years earlier.

And for those who doubted her seaworthiness, Nellie has just completed a 1000 mile voyage round the Isle of Man, Holyhead and the coast of Wales, Lundy and Cornwall. She came up the Bristol Channel after a force nine gale. 'She rolled terribly for six hours but she gets there.' says Bevis.

So built in the south, Nellie served in the north, became a houseboat in the east and is now completing her journey in the west – a wonderful story of 'renewal' if ever there was one.

David Bucknell

(Thanks to Tim Allen of Temple Marine and Bevis Musk for the story and the pictures.)*

www.templemarine.co.uk



Nellie today

LETTERS

Richard Hare writes:

6th April 2010

re: RDA - 'The starting line'

Dear David,

At risk of being pedantic I want to pick up on a statement in Denzil's 'Looking Back: Looking Forward' in the spring issue.

It was an excellent article but I want to correct the list of names of those at 'the starting line'. Given that some of them have since died or otherwise moved on I think it best if I put my recollection on record now before I too forget who was there.

It began with a Steering Committee, its role being to define the river organisation, give it a name and hammer out the constitution. It met in what was then the back room of the Woodbridge King's Head and there were about three meetings. On board were: Anni Healey, Ian Battye, Francis Matheson, Adrian Judge, Robert Simper, Lil Tudor-Craig (who designed the logo), Brian Scott, Annette Burt, Ann Moore and Richard Hare.

This same committee went on to become the first RDA committee. It was joined by Adrian Overbury and Moray Macphail who represented river commercial interests. Anni Healey and Ian Battye were the main drivers and are the two who must always be credited with the vision and courage to forge a shared aspiration into an organisation that was later to be pivotal in crushing the Bentwaters airport application. Ian was the first chairman, Anni the second.

I don't recall Anthony Mason or Mike Atkins being on the first committee although they were both soon to join and play powerful roles in developing the association into the organisation that it has since become.

Best wishes

Richard Hare

The Boat Inn
Woodbridge



River Deben Association

AUTUMN OPEN MEETING

Woodbridge Community Hall

THURSDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2010

7.30 pm

**"12,000 miles
& 700 days
(so far)"**

*Anthony and Celia Mason, with some
stunning photos, recount the highs and
lows of sailing Tomia to the USA
via Spain and the Caribbean.*

