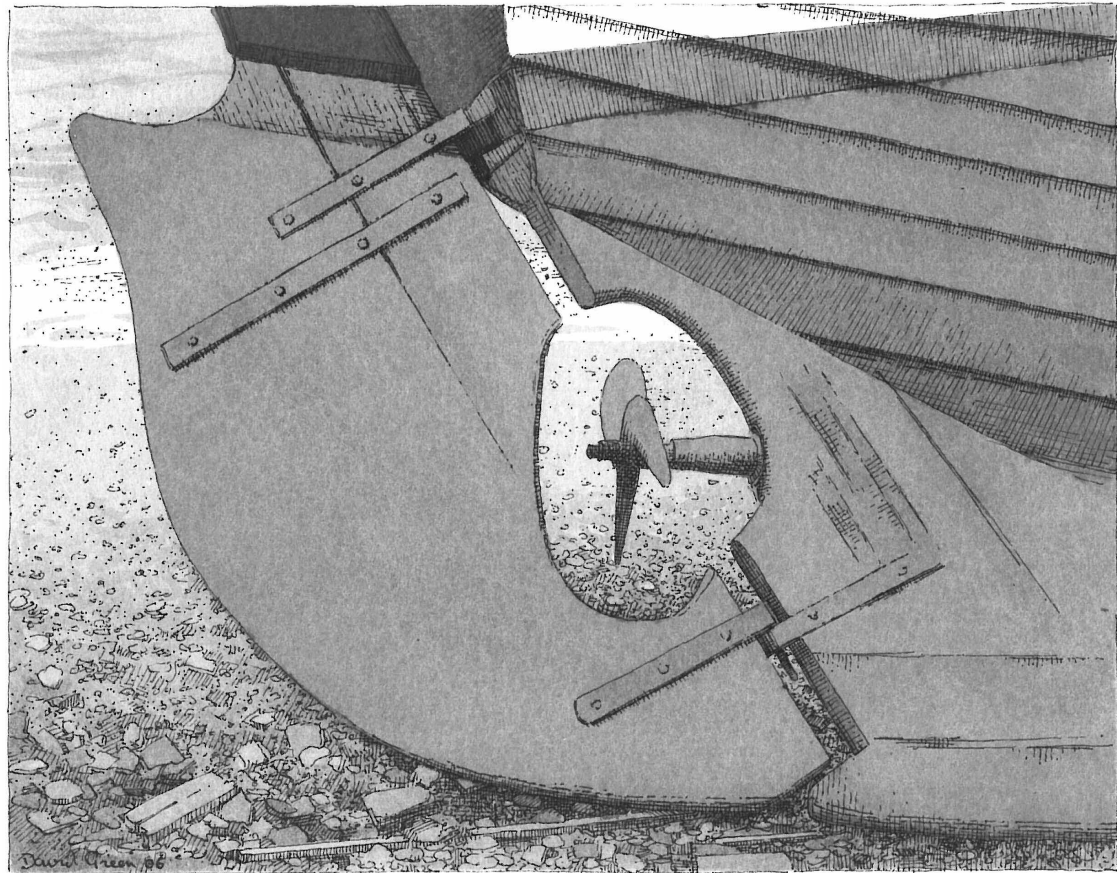


# The Deben



42 Spring 2011

**The River Deben Association  
Officers and Committee  
March 2011**

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# The DEBEN

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(Cover ‘The Blue Rudder’- David Green 2006)

## EDITORIAL

By the time this edition of The Deben reaches you we will be days away

from the start of the financial year, with large scale cuts in the public sector, bigger than anything we have seen in our life time.



We are already beginning to see the impact of the cuts in relation to the Deben with agencies such as the Environment Agency tightening funding for projects. Suffolk County Council is ending its involvement with amenity areas such as East Lane - and having refurbished the jetty at Bawdsey is now ceasing its involvement with the jetty at Bawdsey and at the Ferry. Suffolk Coastal is similarly looking to local groups to take over some facilities. Whatever 'localism' means, a cover for cutbacks or a real commitment to devolve power to communities, it is clear that bureaucracies, be they Local Government or the Environment Agency, will look to local groups to take over responsibility for many services which will not be funded in future.

At the same time, changes in the planning process, may give developers the opportunity to push through schemes justifying 'whatever goes' in terms of creating employment and growth. Adastral Park is an interesting test for 'localism' as many local people do not want it, and yet it seems to be going ahead in spite of informed and reasoned objections to the scale of the project. So the question is, will 'localism' and the 'Big Society' really devolve power, or just be an excuse for transferring responsibilities and costs previously covered by public finances on to local communities.

These trends undoubtedly will have an

impact on the Deben. While there may be less bureaucracy there will be a lessening of planning controls and this may lead to areas like the Deben being more at risk of a 'free for all', with those who have the money and power to determine outcomes and get their way. It will also mean that schemes will be suggested to raise funds for projects, such as sea defences, and this could have an impact on communities and the environment we value. Partnership will be the new mantra.

Come back Sir Cuthbert Quilter - all is forgiven! (he was a banker). Will people with wealth take responsibility and be as conservation minded as Sir Cuthbert was when he systematically used the wealth of his estate to maintain its sea defences, plant trees and create employment.

While there may be threats and challenges there will be opportunities to generate constructive partnerships and community based projects. However, it will need people getting involved and demonstrating their commitment to the things they care about. Their will be a significant role for the RDA in giving voice to your views.

We will have to adapt to new circumstances and one of the themes that permeates this edition of The Deben is 'adaptation'. Jenny James looks at the way in which plants and animals adapt to the challenges of the different environments of the Deben, land and sea, salt and fresh water. We learn how the quay at Waldringfield has developed over the years in response to changing circumstances, from a cement factory to a centre for yachting on the Deben. In 'Who Manages the Deben' the excerpts from an interview with Mike Steen of the Environment Agency illustrate how we may have to adapt to the forces of nature and to the economic pressures facing an organisation such as the EA which already is giving rise to new partnerships to fund local sea and river defences.

Local artist David Green is the featured artist for the series 'Artists and Writers' and his picture, The Blue Rudder is the cover of this edition; incidentally a yacht in Everson's Yard.

We hear in this edition how Everson's is changing and at the same time we celebrate the character of the 'shed' in terms of its artistic appeal, with the help of David Green and through the story of the two sisters who lived in the shed. Their story illustrates how people can adapt to changing circumstances if they have the resilience and determination to endure. May be we can take something from these examples in how we respond to the challenges we are going to face.

Spring is here, following a harsh winter - the first winter for years when the river froze. Whatever the issues, The Deben is a wonderful river to explore and enjoy. While we don't have to raise funds to enjoy it we need to be aware of the developments which will affect it and make sure we protect a beautiful, scarce and fragile asset.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

We have decided to print this as an insert. Amongst a number of topics it includes updates on the policing initiative, the successful RDA Forum held at Waldringfield (For a full report see the website.) and the river and sea wall Improvements.

## **NEWS FROM THE HARDS**

### **WOODBIDGE**

Our Labrador Jake doesn't take boat-yards too seriously. If he is lying asleep on the warm gravel opposite my boat the approach of an 8-wheel crane doesn't disturb him. Fred Larkman patiently stops, climbs down and politely explains the need to get up and move. So it was that when I changed the pattern of my riverside walks to include lengthier than usual conversations with the boat-yard owners, Jake was equally unimpressed.

At Larkmans he was left outside in the cold while I, in the big work shed, heard from Steve Larkman how they had laid up a record number of boats for the winter last year- in excess of 250. Almost all of these had been covered over by the yard.

Upstairs in the big shed I admired a new Dragonfly which James Palmer is building, the first since 1969. The 14 foot Dragonfly was the racing dinghy adopted in 1948 as a class for the Waldringfield Sailing Club and originally built by Robertsons and Nunns. There are 9 Dragonflies currently racing and several more undergoing restoration, so James will have plenty of competition.

Under a working cover, as opposed to a winter cover, stands Ted Evans' Ragged Robin, Arthur Ransome's penultimate boat. Ted is working on her decks.

Reunited with an excited Jake, I walked over to the footpath by the river where the recently restored Cherub is standing. This



is the first of the little pre-war cutters built at Eversons (see "Rohaise II" in the Everson notes) and a real piece of Deben history.

The next yard down-river is Mel Skeet's. Mel is a self-confessed raconteur and Jake's body language spoke clearly "Oh no!" as I spotted Mel in the yard and engaged him in conversation. Mel told me he'd seen ice flows on the river for the first time in 23 years- ice flows big enough to move the marker buoys out of position! He'd already put these back into their proper location and was hoping that the bad wintry conditions were not going to return.

Lying on a pontoon I saw "2605", a 68ft WW2 Air Sea Rescue Launch. Last summer, they lifted her out of the water and fitted new frames and planking to her port side. Evidently this had generated a lot of interest from some WW2 veterans, who visited the boatyard and were treated to a guided tour of this historical vessel.

During the winter they also lifted out Dinah, (half sized Thames Barge) belonging to Richard Johnson, she has had an early refit and has been re-launched ready for this coming season. Dinah has been a regular visitor to Maritime Woodbridge contributing to the historic atmosphere of the event.

A third historic vessel to be lifted out, and another Maritime Woodbridge visitor, was Paul Webster's "Quiz", a traditional sailing smack. She was out for a small re-fit.

Mel was looking forward to the forthcoming spring and summer season and wanted to wish all his customers and friends a good season.

" Whew", said Jake as he finally was allowed to bound off down the river wall in the direction of the Town Quay. Poor dog. That was enough for one day.

A day or two later found me walking up-river with a keen southwesterly against my

back. At the Melton Boat Club beside Deben Mill I met Steve Sinclair. Steve runs this little Club and has a converted Scottish fishing vessel lying there beside a number of interesting house-boats.

Steve is a man of interesting facts: did I know that that the sun rises behind the Sutton Hoo burial mound on the winter solstice? Well, no I didn't. Did I know that if I take a beeline from St. Johns church spire to the flood-gate at the Melton Boat Club on a bright clear morning you will experience a magic moment? Well, no I didn't but I'll try it as soon as we get a bright clear morning! (Nothing seemed so unlikely on that particular day).

Steve pointed out a notice board called "THE TOWPATH TELEGRAPH" that he put up a few years ago for passers-by to come up with interesting things to say about the river (drawing pins provided). "It needs to be used more" says Steve "you can access it from the back." Good idea; a blog that gets you out of the house! Jake was getting the idea of the amateur journalist. Short discussion- and off back down the river wall.

Robertsons was the next yard and Mike Illingworth complained too about the awful winter weather. "Bitter December weather made work inside difficult and work outside impossible". With the refit of "Lothian", a 1954 Camper and Nicholson sloop complete and a host of smaller (but equally interesting) jobs well advanced, Mike was keen to start on the preparation of Olly Hicks' new boat. Olly is a remarkable young adventurer with quite a list of achievements under his belt already. These are:-

- Cycling 1609 kilometers-Lands End to John O'Groats.
- The Marathon Des Sables. (Running six marathons back to back across the Sahara)
- The Yukon Canoe race. (Canoeing 700 kilometres: the longest canoe race in the world)

Olly will be making a second attempt to row, single-handed around Antarctica. The design problems which hindered him previously have been corrected, so with the summer to do the work he should be ready to ship the boat to New Zealand ready for an October start to his next adventure! Watch this space.....

Next came Jake's favourite stretch of river, from "Frank Knights" boatyard to Eversons. Charter Marine Engineering in Frank's old premises is run by Gordon Wise whom I found amongst the machinery at the back of the workshop. He told me that he is keeping very busy with reconditioning, repairing and servicing outboard and inboard marine engines and other marine engineering work.

Meantime the "Oude Reijn", an elegant Dutch barge, lies alongside the dock and Gordon told me she is in the middle of an extensive refit. Over the past 6 months her bare shell has been fitted with full accommodation, including galley and heads- all in teak. There is fair way still to go before they start on the outside and hull.

In September the dock was host to a number of fine classic yachts during the Maritime Woodbridge festival. Arthur Ransome's penultimate boat "Ragged Robin" was there and a number of fine Albert Strange designs.

Sensing the end of this discussion Jake bolted off down-river towards Eversons where John in the office always has a large bag of dog biscuits under his desk. This generates much excitement in passing dogs.

Unfortunately Geoff Sinton, who runs Eversons, was in Australia at the time but an email when I got back home produced an immediate response. The first news was that Everson's has been renamed "The Woodbridge Boat Yard Ltd." With an increasing number of customers now coming to the yard through internet and directory searches they felt that someone

looking for a boatyard in Woodbridge would start with the name of the town. The Everson name is being kept alive however in the new postal address, so that the yard site is now called "Everson's Wharf".

Improvements in the yard include the replacement of all the pontoons with new, more dinghy-friendly units in 2010. All new decking ready for fitting on the Jetty, with handrail to follow. Plans for a new workshop and associated buildings are taking shape and will be announced soon.

In the yard stands the 1931 teak Hong Kong built "Teal", undergoing a full restoration. The Hastings beach boat "Arwen" with her interesting "lute" stern is having a new engine. "Rohaise II" is one of the Cherubs built at Eversons in the 30s and sister to the first Cherub up at Larkmans. She is in the shed having one of her topside planks replaced, and fresh paint and varnish. The yard is looking for an example of the original engine- a 4hp Stuart Turner- to install.

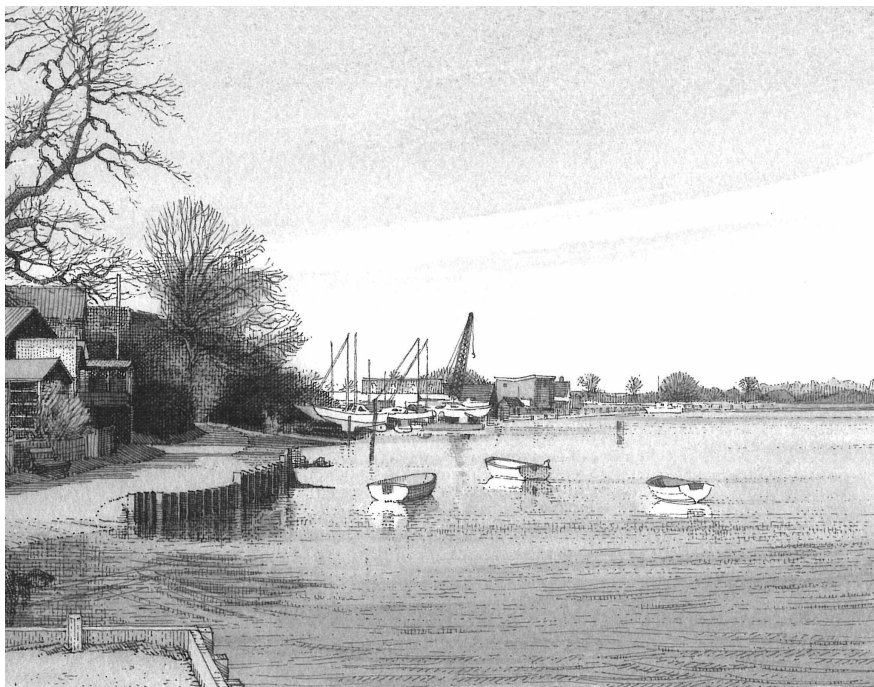
In common with all the yards Geoff is looking forward to better weather and starting to re-launch boats for the summer season, along with all the commissioning work that entails.

My journey had been fascinating and clear proof that even in February, when the Deben riverside seems to be hibernating, a brisk walk with a dog reveals the bustle of spring.

**Pete Clay**

*The Woodbridge Riverside Trustees are looking for an enthusiastic volunteer to join the Whisstocks Project team with a view to heading up our Working Group looking at sources of funding.*

*Please contact John Gibbins 07787 537 314 [johng@gibbins.co.uk](mailto:johng@gibbins.co.uk)*



*Waldringfield in winter - 1993*

## **WALDRINGFIELD**

The main items of news buzzing in Waldringfield at the moment are the proposed New Town Development at Adastral Park and its impact on the village and the Deben estuary and the proposed siting of the pontoon at the downriver end of the foreshore.

**Adastral Park** - The approval of the Local Development Framework, which includes the Adastral Park proposal for 2000 houses, has been postponed so that SCDC can respond, as they are required to do under the European Habits Directive, to the report received by Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT). This report, based on a professional survey, has highlighted the dangers of increased visitor numbers to internationally protected wildlife sites.

If the project goes ahead in its present form it will have a significant impact on the Deben and so far there seems to have been little recognition of the impact of the proposal on the immediate hinterland.

There is an aerial picture on the NANT website which highlights the implications for Waldringfield and the Deben.

To keep in touch with the NANT campaign, donate to the fighting fund or offer help contact the organisers via the website [www.noadastralnewtown.com](http://www.noadastralnewtown.com)

The submission from Suffolk Wildlife Trust begins to develop an overarching strategy and this is something the RDA and the Deben Estuary Partnership will need to address in the future.

The proposed **Sailing Club pontoon** continues to be a contentious issue. The Sailing Club have referred the proposal to the Fairways Committee and have consulted the Crown Estate. While the Crown Estate does not have an 'opinion' they will need to see that the various 'consents' have been obtained. Given the status of the Deben in terms of wildlife and landscape this could be lengthy process



and at some point is likely to involve a formal planning application. Following on from the last edition of the Deben this is a relevant case study in relation to the role of the Fairways Committee and how developments on the Deben are processed.

### **AT THE FERRY**

In December Felixstowe sailor Alan Rutherford was presented with a Royal Yachting Association Lifetime Achievement award by HRH the Princess Royal for over twenty years work developing a small local scout group into one of the largest youth sailing charities on the east coast. Felixstowe Ferry Youth Sailing (FFYS) regularly attract 70 members and get out on the water in all weathers including the winter months. Woodbridge sailor Simon Shaw was presented with a Community Outstanding Contribution Award for his work fundraising and overseeing the development of the Deben Yacht Club. He has replaced piling and pontoons and developed disabled-friendly access. Congratulations to them both!

Mark Johnson and Phil Usher of the Environment Agency gave a helpful presentation to the Felixstowe Forum, including the history of the defences at the Ferry. The agency has completed much of the current work at the Ferry including infilling and the development of a clay bank behind the existing rock armour defence. More rocks have been placed in front of the wave wall apron which has been uncovered recently.

So, as more beach is lost, both through the forces of nature and through the intervention itself, it does seem as if rocks bring with them their own negative dynamics. One also wonders if the north and south wave walls had been linked in 1968 whether any of this would have been necessary. What is certain is how little we seem to understand about the dynamics of nature and of our own interventions.

### **BAWDSEY QUAY**

A group of local stakeholders has met during the winter led by DEP Chair Christine Block to consider the impact of increasing visitor numbers on the Quay and its surrounds including parking and environmental impacts. Seasonal and weekend pressures generate particular difficulties and it is not easy to find a way of dealing with the pressures and conserving a relatively unmanaged and unspoilt environment.

Suffolk County Council are withdrawing from the maintenance and funding of the jetties on either side of the river and the implications of this are not yet clear, however, the DEP is facilitating meetings to consider the impacts and possible ways forward.

### **MARGINS OF THE LAND**

The constantly flowing tide of water which moves daily up and down at the junction between the sea and the land has created a unique environment for living things - an environment of daily contrasts; wet and dry, hot and cold, salty or freshwater.

Each plant or animal which is able to survive these rigorous conditions has done so by a tough process of adaptation; every bodily function has been challenged by the need to survive these extreme experiences, all within a period of 24 hours, as the influence of the moon's gravity pulls at the water in the oceans and creates the ebb and flow of the tides.

The nature of the sea shore is determined by its geology. On the west coast of Britain where the ancient granite rocks are resistant to erosion, many of the shores are steep and rocky whereas in East Anglia the rocks are more recent and therefore softer. Our coast is series of low-lying estuaries formed from river valleys, submerged at the end of the last ice age, when the sands and gravels of the Sandlings were also deposited.

The Deben estuary is fringed with mud flats and salt marsh with occasional sandy beaches where low cliffs of coralline crag, a soft limey sandstone, have been eroded.

The plants and animals found between the high and low tide marks of this estuary are typical of those found in similar regions throughout Britain. Mud is the key ingredient with firmer substrates provided by occasional areas of soft rock on the foreshore.

The question is, are these living things land dwellers or sea dwellers? Are they land plants and animals which have adapted to surviving in sea water for part of the day, or are they sea plants and animals which can cope with terrestrial conditions?

The sea provides a much steadier environment, consistently wet, a small temperature range, and on open sea coasts a steady 3.5% salinity. But, the life of an estuary has a range of salinities to contend with, ranging from pure fresh water at low tide to almost full salinity at high tide, depending on the size of the river. In the River Deben, with such a small inflow of fresh water, the salinity is only slightly less than that of the open sea. (Woodbridge 2.9%)

A brief survey tells us that in the Deben Estuary we have something of everything. Sea weeds such as the wracks, bladder wrack and serrated wrack, are water plants, from the most primitive group, the Algae. They are functioning fully only when floating, supported by water, where their fronds can catch the light which they need for growth. Their attachments to rocks and stones on the foreshore do not function as roots do in land plants, in that they only serve to anchor the plants and do not take up water and nutrients. These are gained by absorption from the surrounding water at high tide. Seaweeds are not water proofed as land plants are, they would dry out rapidly without the daily immersion in

sea water. All aspects of their life cycle from growth to reproduction can only take place in water.

The seaweeds which are found nearer to the high tide mark are more tolerant of drying out than those further down, the huge fronds of kelp, for instance, which we see on exposed rocky shores bobbing in the waves at low water are only rarely exposed at spring tides, they cannot survive for long in the drying air.

On the other hand, salt marsh plants such as sea lavender, samphire, thrift and the salt marsh grasses are fully fledged land plants, self supporting and functioning best when surrounded by air. Salt water would suck water out of the tissues and desiccate ordinary land plants. Salt marsh plants survive because they have developed ways of preventing this. There is a pattern to the distribution of these plants as in the sea weeds, the least tolerant of salinity such as sea lavender being found near the high tide mark and those with most adaptations to cope with it, such as samphire, at lower levels.



Most of the animals which we find on the shore are basically aquatic so are only active at high tide. In the Deben Estuary, as soon as the tide covers the mud, then the action starts. Ragworms swim and feed on the mud, lugworms burrow seeking food and leave their 'tell-tale' worm casts and buried cockles siphon water over their gills sieving out the food. Crabs emerge from

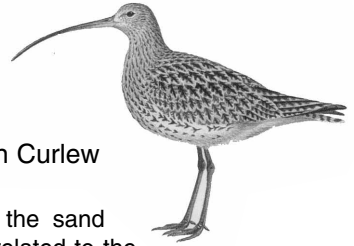
hiding to scuttle along the sea bed attracted by passing scraps of debris, sometimes getting hauled up into a net in the process. On more rocky shores mussel shells open as they begin to filter microscopic organisms out of the sea water, periwinkles and limpets start gliding over sea weed and rock surfaces grazing the algae with their rough tongues, barnacles lie back inside their shells and kick their legs in the air to create water currents from which they can extract food.

All these animals have ways of coping with the exposure to air at low tide. Some have a waterproof outer covering which protects these inter-tidal animals from drying out. There are a variety of designs, bivalve shells, coiled shells, conical shells in one piece or many small pieces and complete external skeletons with jointed limbs. We can see how efficient this waterproofing is when we try to open an oyster, in which the two shells are tightly clamped together with a very strong muscle which only expert hands can locate and sever. The seal is air and water-tight, inserting the oyster knife is a difficult task for the beginner. Other organisms such as the worms hide in sea water filled burrows

Only a relatively small number of marine animals have made the leap from a deep water existence to an inter-tidal one and, like the plants, they are found in a certain pattern on the shore according to how long they can survive without drying out.

Barnacles, mussels and limpets are among the most waterproof and they are usually found in huge beds along the middle shore. Soft bodied animals such as sea anemones, whose tentacles emerge from inanimate looking blobs of jelly, as the tide covers them, to fire poisoned barbs at passing plankton, are confined to shaded crevasses, rock pools or to places lower down the shore.

Just a few of the animals we find on the shore have moved in from the land, one of



Eurasian Curlew

these is the sand hopper, related to the woodlouse. The sand hopper prefers shady damp places, burrowing in the sand or under piles of seaweed during the day and emerging at night to feed, when there is less danger of drying out.

Estuary mud is an incredibly rich source of food for these inter-tidal animals. These in turn provide food for the birds for which the Deben is famous - the over-wintering waders. These birds are superbly adapted to feeding in the mud with their long legs and beaks which probe the mud. Each beak length or shape is adapted to a particular source of food. The short bills of the turnstones, feed on the surface and under stones on small molluscs and crustaceans, the longer bills of the godwits probe deeper for worms. Oyster catchers have sturdy bills with strength to prise open the shells of bivalves such as cockles. A number of birds, some gulls in particular have learned to carry tightly closed bivalves from the shore and to smash them by dropping them from a height onto the hard surface of the riverside footpath.

The plants of the salt marsh also provide food for wintering ducks such as wigeons and teals. The water channels between the blocks of salt marsh have been shown by Simon Read (see RDA Magazine 39 2009) to provide invaluable sheltered sites for egg laying and hatching of some important coastal fish.

Some of us prefer to walk by the river at high tide and others at low water. Whatever our preference, we can marvel at the riches in the mud and beneath the water.

**Jenny James**



## THE CEMENT FACTORY OF WALDRINGFIELD 1872 -1907

Visitors to Waldringfield might be forgiven for not knowing that it was once the site of a large cement factory. All that now remains of the industry is the quay, the factory manager's house, which may be seen behind the sea wall to the north of the village and, on Quay Lane, a three foot thick wall, ending in a private garden which was part of a kiln.

In the 1860's there was a small cement works in Waldringfield— probably just one kiln. In 1871 the works were sold to George Mason, a slate and timber merchant from Ipswich whose intention was to manufacture Portland cement. Until then he had manufactured Roman cement in the Ipswich area from cement-stone dredged from the River Orwell.

There had been no real advances in cement making between the days of the Romans and the 1820s when 'Portland' or 'British' cement was first patented. The manufacture of Portland cement, which is two parts chalk to one part clay, had started in 1851 in the Medway area where there were plentiful supplies of both chalk and clay. Demand had increased out of all proportion with the expansion of the London metropolis and the exportation of

this 'British' cement abroad.

Although Waldringfield, a small predominantly agricultural village, might seem an unlikely place for a cement factory, the River Deben provided a good supply of clay and there already was an established barge route between the Deben and the Thames, with some of the barges being owned by Mason himself. There was an active coprolite industry and the village was used to the loading and unloading on the shore and the coming and goings of horses and carts. The barges would be readily available to bring chalk and coal or coke from the Medway and to take cement back to the Thames either for use in London or for export. There was a supply of labour as work in the area was becoming scarce; farming was not the employer it once was and the large private estates were beginning to feel the pinch

A family in Waldringfield has deeds which show that in 1871 George Mason bought from Arthur Thomas Cobbold - one of the heirs to the Cobbold dynasty and then owner of the Maltings - land adjoining the Maybush Inn together with *'the Quay or dock lying next to the river Deben and also all the land with Maltings office and other erections, including six cottages, the two parcels of land known as the office piece and the Bush piece'*, (probably either side

of the main road) *'together with one acre & twenty three perches of land'* where, later, the Masons built cottages for the workers. The purchased land lay to the north of the allotments on the left hand side of Cliff Road looking south and behind Mr Cobbold's land, Cliff House (now The Maltings). It stretched to the edge of the Waller family's fields to the north of the village and down to the water's edge.

In addition there was some land to the right of the Cliff Road where there is now a row of twelve cottages. These were built for some of the cement workers. Today they are known collectively as 'cement cottages'. A house was built for the manager to the north of the factory and it was probably known as 'factory cottage'. It is now known as 'Swans Nest' and, with its commanding view of the River Deben behind the sea wall, it attracts a market value at least six times that of the average home. It is not certain what else would have been seen before reaching, on the left, the coach house to The Maltings and, on the right, the Maybush – known then as Bush Inn.

The Portland Cement works in Waldringfield was set up in 1872. Photographs of the village, taken from the River Deben at the start of the twentieth century, show that there were three rows of kilns, each row sporting four chimneys, one chimney for each kiln. They dominated the skyline and were built of special heat resistant bricks. The base of one, which is about twenty feet across on the inside, remains at the bottom of a private garden in Deben Lane. The back walls of the remaining three are also to be seen in another private garden.

We are told that in the days of the cement works, when the wind was from the north, clouds of dirty brown smoke would envelop the beach, thus making it totally unusable. It is very difficult now to imagine such a scene, even without the smoke.

George Mason died in 1893 and one of his three sons, Frank continued the business. (Arrangements had been made in 1892 for the land to be inherited by Frank Mason from his father, 'subject to the payment by the said FW Mason of rent to the successor of the late Colonel George Tomline' – the Prettyman Estate.)

Apparently, Mr FW Mason lived on the North Cliff in Felixstowe where he was able to watch his barges making home to the Deben on the London to Waldringfield run. He is said to have been a philanthropic gentleman who provided well for his workers. Cottages were rented for 2 shillings and sixpence a week and coal was to be had from the factory for a shilling (equivalent to 5p) a bag. There was a reading room which cost one penny a week (There were 240 pennies in a pound).

There was even a staff health facility with one Dr Hollis who, apparently, attributed most of the illnesses he encountered to an excess of beer – or not enough of it, depending on the drinking habits of the patient.

### **Making the cement.**

The required mud was extracted from the saltings probably from shallow draft mud barges in narrow channels. The picture gives a birds-eye view of the likely clay workings on the southern side of Waldringfield



First the marsh peat would be removed by means of a shovel. Then wooden 'fly tools' would be used by skilled labourers known as 'muddies' to flick blocks of clay into the barge. It is said that a really good muddie, like Mr Stebbings, of the barge called Kingfisher, could have one block in the air whilst the first block was landing in the barge and the third block was being dug. It is likely that Kingfisher Creek was named after Mr Stebbings' barge. One has to wonder what might have become of these narrow, shallow draft barges and whether any of their hulls lie covered in mud in the saltings.



As many as one hundred barge-loads a month of chalk, coal or coke, would arrive from the Medway. According to Mr Kenneth Mason, a descendant of Frank, the mud and the chalk were off-loaded from the barges and tipped into a wash mill on the quay. It was mixed with water into slurry and then it flowed via wooden troughs to slurry reservoirs. The water rose to the top of the slurry in the reservoir. It was then let off via sluice gates to return to the river. The remaining mixture was then wheel-barrowed to an oven heated floor, spread about nine inches thick, and left until dry enough for barrowing to the kilns.

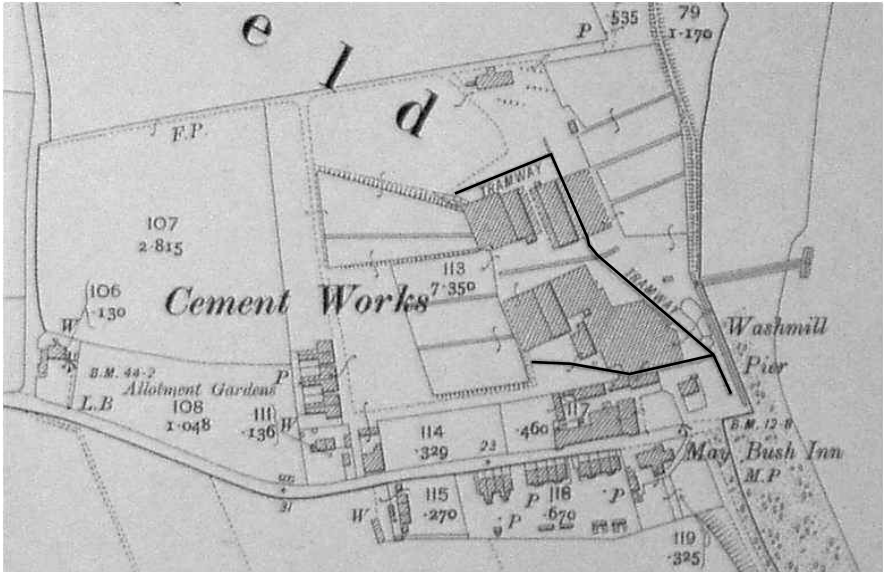
The kilns were prepared for firing by placing faggots of wood in an arched duct

beneath the floor of the kiln. Then alternate layers of coke and cement slurry were placed in the kiln. The kiln was bricked up, set alight and left to burn for five days. Once the process was finished and the kiln had cooled down the cement clinker would be removed, loaded into wheelbarrows and taken to the grinding machine to be ground into fine cement.

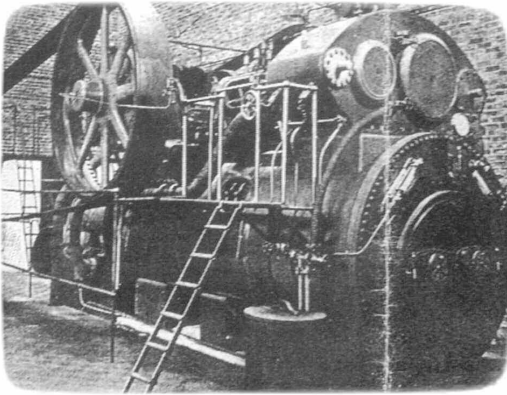
Initially clinker was ground in a Big Ball Mill, a German invention installed in Waldringfield by German engineers. It seems there was considerable friction between the Germans and the local work-force, not helped by the Germans bragging that each one of them was worth three of the locals both in strength and in work done. There is a story, courtesy of the late Walter Tye, that one day there was a large slab of concrete to be moved. One of the wry locals stood at one of the four corners of this great large slab and said to a passing German. *'We'll soon get this shifted. 'oi'll lift this corner and yew can take the other three'*

The grindings from the Big Ball Mill were transferred by conveyor belt to the Griffin Mill for finer grinding and then barrowed or conveyed to storage sheds. Filling sacks and loading barges with the finished product was said to be the dirtiest and hardest job of all – although the clay digging sounds pretty hard going.

A tramway was constructed across the site; although much of the fetching and carrying was said to have been done with wheelbarrows. The tramway engine was driven by Charles Bloomfield who was listed in the census 1891 as 'Engine driver – portable'. Charles Bloomfield lived in Woodbridge Road, Waldringfield, now a 'by-road' to Martlesham.



The machines and the 12.50 lunchtime siren were all powered by a large steam engine brought from Leiston – it was known as the Wunnerful Wissel and could be heard all down the Deben. It seems



there were complaints from Ramsholt one day when the Wunnerful Wissel was late, thus throwing working schedules into disarray.

**Decommissioning and demolition**

The Cement works functioned for thirty-five years closing in 1907. Profound technological changes in the 1890s and the need to upgrade to new ball-and-roller

grinding mechanism and to rotary kilns had led to the decommissioning of the Waldringfield plant. The factory closed in 1907. The pier was taken down and the kilns were either demolished or filled in by one Arthur Quantrill and his Territorials between 1907 and 1912. It is said that one of the houses in School Road was constructed using 30,000 of the heat resistant bricks from the kilns. By 1912 the factory was gone bar a few remnants. It had taken five years to dismantle.

When the works closed Mr Mason gave the occupants of the cottages the opportunity to purchase them, paying as and when they could. The manager of the works at that time was one Arthur Stollery who went with the Masons to manage their new works at Claydon.

With the close of the factory at Waldringfield the village was left in peace to develop the pastimes it supports today

**Dr Gareth Thomas**

*Pictures copyright Waldringfield History Group*  
[www.waldringfieldia.com](http://www.waldringfieldia.com)

# WHO MANAGES THE DEBEN?

## PART TWO - THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The Environment Agency is an important organisation in the life of the Deben. What follows are excerpts from the first part of an interview I recorded with Mike Steen - Coastal Advisor for the Suffolk Coast, in September 2010. In the interview I wanted to explore some of the central policies and assumptions of the Environment Agency for the benefit of those, including me, who are not familiar with them. This is pretty much a verbatim transcript.

DB: Mike could you tell me what your role is at the Environment Agency.

MS: I have worked round here for most of my working life, looking after the local rivers and the coast. I am an engineer by training...These days I am more of a politician I think at times - sometimes even a sociologist. I am the Coastal Advisor for the Suffolk Coast and for the tidal estuary rivers.

DB: I have heard about Drainage Boards, you have mentioned river authorities. Could you explain the background?

MS: Back in the thirties we were known as River Boards, I think we became River Authorities, then we became part of Anglian Water. Then we became the National Rivers Authority and after that we became the Environment Agency; all with slightly different roles and different backgrounds, things they are interested in. We have been the Environment Agency for over ten years now, so I think we are well overdue a name change.

DB: What are the Drainage Boards?

MS: Think of it like a big tree. The main trunk and the main branches we would term 'main river'. 'Main river' is designated by Act of Parliament. Tidal rivers are all main rivers. If you go inland the Deben remains a 'main river' to way beyond Brandeston, probably into Debenham. Main rivers we have an interest in; after that...there are various ditches and water-courses that come in on the way. Other people have a responsibility for those. There are Boards called Internal Drainage Boards, which tend to be in low lying drainage areas? So there is the river Deben Internal Drainage Board or IDB as it is known and it facilitates the drainage of the land that is protected from flooding by sea defences in its area...

DB: Who runs the Board?

MS: Normally it is a consortium of local land owners who vote for a number of them to sit on the Board and administer it. There is a rule as to whether you pay rates into a drainage board which is to do with the level of the land. If you are in a lower area and need to provide drainage then you have a Board.

DB: So they fund their own drainage and organise it themselves.....they still exist?

MS: Yes. There are some consortiums, for example, in the Broads area and further north, that are beginning to take over some of the smaller Boards. There are some fees involved and farmers pay the Consortiums to do the work.

DB: How does the Environment Agency differ from these boards?

MS: As well as the EA, Local Authorities have responsibilities for some water courses, mainly those ones in urban areas. Some water companies have responsibility for some drainage channels because they use them for surface water drainage. And then you come to the riparian owner or the



land owner who has responsibility – they have some responsibilities all the way through the chain. Finding out who does what is not always the easiest thing.

DB: So if the EA is not responsible for those areas how would you explain the difference?

MS: Well I have very carefully not used the word responsibility so far – the EA has very few responsibilities. We have powers that we can exercise. We exercise them in terms of the national perspective or the national good. So talking about the Estuary, if we think there is a problem with flood defences somewhere, we can exercise our powers in terms of the national good and if we think it is something that is worth doing we can go and do it - we have the power to go and dredge a river for example. If we don't think it is in the national good and we don't think it worth doing then you can't compel us to do it. The basic law here is that you should not impede your upstream neighbour's drainage. And that works all the way through the system.

DB: So the EA has responsibility for flood defence.

MS: Again we don't have responsibility - we have powers to carry out work. I suppose our broad remit is that we are empowered to work on main rivers and coastal estuary flood defences.....The broad aim apart from our environmental responsibilities is to prevent flooding, where flood defences are required. And on fresh water rivers it is to keep rivers flowing to prevent flooding and to allow land drainage to happen. So yes, the simplest answer is to prevent flooding.....

DB: How are you funded?

MS: We are funded mostly by central government with a bit of local funding. What we are required to do is to provide defences a) where the nation can afford to

provide them and b) where the cost of providing those defences is less than the value of what is being protected. So there is an economic element in there as well.

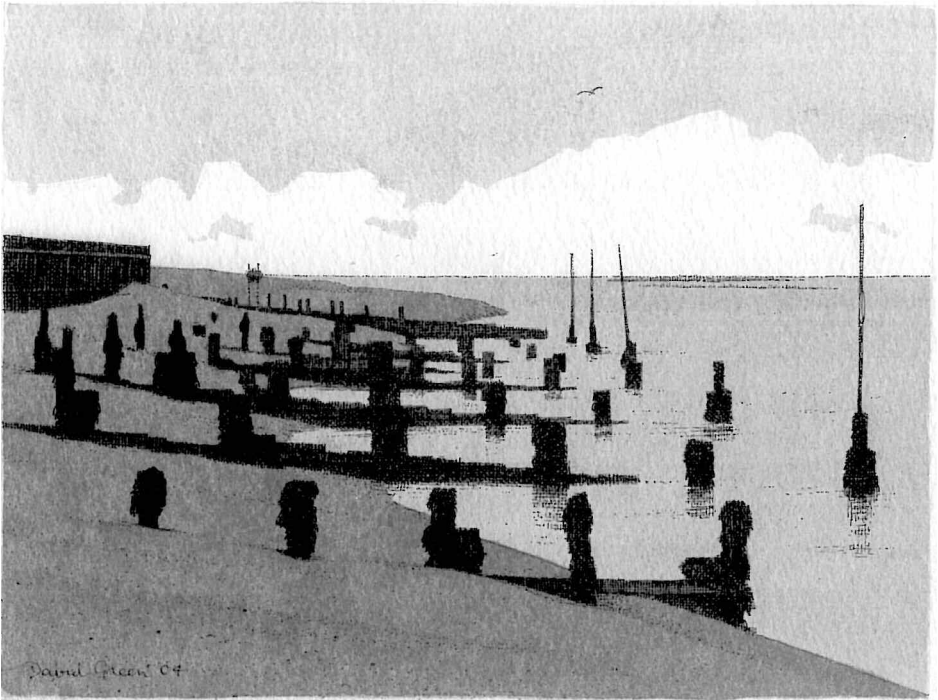
We also need to talk about the environment, because this river we are looking at is a European Designated Site, it is a Special Protection Area or SPA and if any of the land behind the flood bank is an SPA or a Special Conservation Area or SCA or 'triple SSSI', Special Site of Scientific Interest, and is protected by a flood bank, we are required either to defend it or replace it somewhere else or re-create it. In this situation we are required to do it; we have a duty to do it. If you want to be defended you can't make us defend you. So you don't have a right to defence. Whereas, if you are the right bird or the right plant in the right place you have the right to be defended.

DB: Have I got this right - at East Lane there was difference between the remit of the EA and the remit of Suffolk Coastal District Council.

MS: The coast is divided up into two sections: where there is low land that could flood and coastal defences are provided then, flood defence, coastal defence, call it what you will, happens and we have an interest in that. Where the land is high and flooding would not take place but erosion might, then you have coastal protection and that is looked after by the Maritime District Council and in this case that is Suffolk Coastal. Now at East Lane – Bawdsey, the line between the flood defence and the coastal protection was determined to be somewhere north of the Martello Tower at East Lane - which is why we were both involved....

DB: How do you decide what projects you take on?

MS: In terms of flood defence it is probably easier if we take an example. If we take the Falkenham Marshes, it is protected by a



Bawdsey - The Groynes 2004

wall. We are currently looking at the wall and the process we will go through will be to survey the wall, which we have done - so we know what sort of condition it is in and what height it is. We also know from the work we have done what sort of height we can expect from various flood events. Therefore we know what sort of level of protection we get out of the existing wall.

Then we look at what it actually protects. Does it protect houses, farmland, factories, designated environmental land, reserves, whatever...? Then we start working out from that what we can actually do. Now if there is a protected environmental site we are required to protect it and the money will be given to us by the government to do that, or we have to find somewhere to re-create it elsewhere. We have to re-create it before we can stop defending the existing site. Here there are no 'environmental issues' on the other side of the wall. There are actually not very many houses and the Treasury guidelines on how we work these

economics out, stipulate that firstly, it must be in the national interest. A simple example of that is that if you have a caravan down on the Falkenham Marshes and you know you are going to get flooded, you will probably hitch your car up to your caravan and go somewhere else where you won't get flooded. So the net loss to the nation is zero, so we can't count your caravan as an asset to help us with the economics.

We also have to determine whether the cost of providing defences exceeds the value of what we are protecting. Successive governments decided that farmland is worth less and less money. So farmland doesn't add up to very much money in terms of when we are looking to add up the value of what is being protected. It is quite a lot, but it is not as much as it used to be. Houses and businesses are where we get most of the value. Apart from Felixstowe Ferry, where there are probably about 40 properties that

are at risk, there are very few properties in the Falkenham Marshes. So we add all those values and we come up with a figure that says this is the value of what is being protected.

There are other things we can add to that. We can add in tourism, we can add social deprivation and things like this. They require a huge amount of work to do and actually only provide a very small percentage of the final figure. So what we tend to do is to look at the main contenders- the land and the property and see if we are in the right sort of sphere. If we are close, then we will start looking at some of the other factors if they exist, and that might just nudge us into the position that allows us to do some work. If we find that we have a value of X, and the cost of doing whatever work is necessary to protect that is going to be less than X, we have got an economic situation. You divide one by the other. We are looking for an answer above one. However, as I have said the country does not have a lot of money any more so there isn't that much money in the pot and this is a national pot we are talking about. The government gives us money and it goes into a national pot and every scheme in the country that wants money out of that pot has to rate itself against every other scheme.

We are currently going through this process for the Deben.

DB: So you are suggesting that there is an unlikely to be a huge pot of money

MS: I'd prefer to say that I know there isn't a huge pot of money but I don't know what the results are, so I cannot predict the outcome. But I can tell you that it is getting more and more difficult. What is likely to happen on the Falkenham Wall is that I think we are likely to find we have an economic case; in other words the equation comes out to at least one. To stand any chance in the priority systems,

needed to get into the pot and to get a share of it, you probably need an answer between five and seven; in other words the value of what is being protected has to be between five and seven times more than the cost of protecting it.

DB: Thank you Mike, that was helpful.

*In the second part of this interview Mike Steen talks about the work at the Felixstowe Ferry and at East Lane, the relationship between the SMP and the Estuarine Strategy, 'managed realignment' and the implications for the Deben, the assumptions the EA makes in terms of sea level rise and opportunities for new partnerships.*

As Mike says:-

'Change brings new opportunities it doesn't always mean 'the end'. The key will be how we adapt to the way our world is adapting.'

**David Bucknell**

## **'ARTISTS AND WRITERS'**

### **DAVID GREEN**

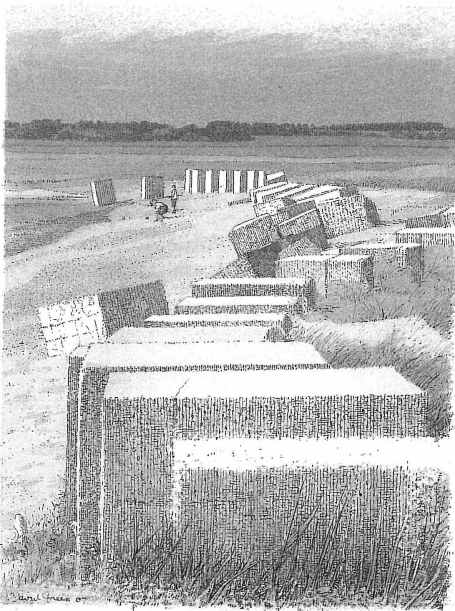
David Green's work will be known to many of you, particularly his pictures of Woodbridge and the Tide Mill. He has painted a series of pictures including Martello Towers, wrecks, jetties, parts of boats, together with landscapes - all of which capture the spirit of the Deben.

He is a prolific writer and his books testify to his career as a teacher of art. He is a sculptor, particularly in ceramics and wood. He recalls that during the tragedy of Dutch Elm disease, when millions of trees were lost, he had an endless supply of wood to create memorable sculptures - salvaging objects of beauty from the wreckage. Here he talks about the subjects that inspire him around the Deben.

## Pictures of the Deben

In 'An Artist's View of the Tide Mill at Woodbridge', published last year, I wrote in some depth about the geometry of picture making, the proportional division of surface areas and the mathematics of the Golden Mean, which were also explained diagrammatically. So there is no need to go through these basic patterns again just now.

We can move straight to the river starting with Bawdsey at the mouth which is a favourite area for artists of all temperaments. Here the shingle beach slopes deeply into the water and sweeps majestically around the bends where it is littered with wooden posts standing up from the groynes like soldiers on parade. Each is a sculpture and would do well in the Tate. (page 16)

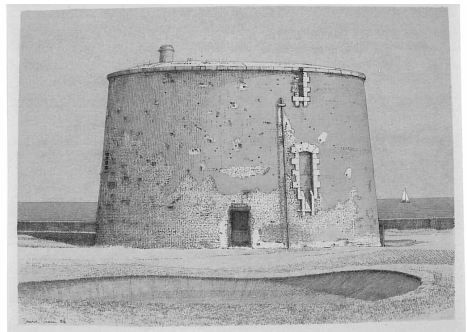


*At Bawdsey - 1940*

So would some of the cubic concrete blocks, set in the shingle some quarter of a mile up river to prevent tanks from landing in the 1940 rather than from sweeping

away the beach today. This scene is infinitely fascinating. I remember them from boyhood being set up with frantic urgency, and can now see that it is the rhythmic repetition of such basic forms in contrast with the softness of the natural ones of the beach and landscape, that intrigues. I hope there will never be another attempt to tidy them up for Health and Safety reasons. We need these memorials to keep us mindful of the reality of the past - they are more vivid than footnotes in history books! As a matter of fact two painted versions of this subject still remain in the house here, one long and narrow - 15"X 5" showing 37 blocks and one brick pill box under a stormy sky. The other is a vertical composition looking along the tops of almost as many blocks which is more compact and more suitable for many circumstances, though less dramatic.

Across the river at Felixstowe the ancient defences are of a different order, almost having been put up as part of our architectural heritage rather than for immediate use as fortifications. Would Napoleon have been sent a note requesting that he should wait for a year or so, so that details of the Towers – the cornices etc. could be finished properly? Whatever, there is something grand and

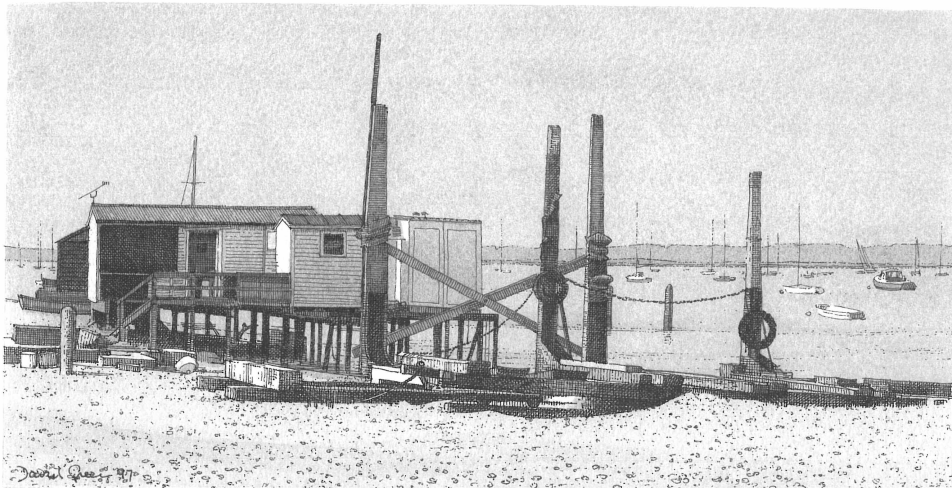


*Portrait of a Martello Tower - 2006*

positive about the Martello Towers. The one I have been in, and had the chance to examine thoroughly, (the one among the buildings on the Ferry beach itself) is a

magnificent structure, beautifully thought out in every detail, from preventing damp from accumulating in the thick stonework to keeping dust under control in the magazine

Felixstowe Ferry itself yields endless painting material and as I start to write all sorts of subjects come to mind. There is a fine wreck that I have always called 'The

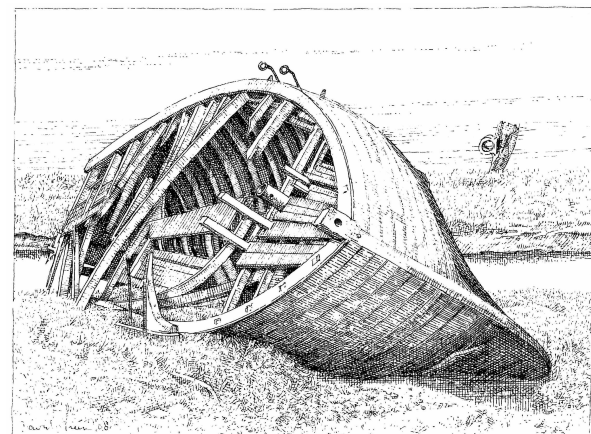


*The Slipway at Felixstowe Ferry - 1997*

and storing rifles in an orderly fashion around the column. It is tragic to see the one on the golf course itself just left to rot and I have made it the subject of a special painting to preserve the memory. I was surprised to find how readily it composed and how imposing it looks in a composition on its own. In view of the many bullet holes left in the tower this picture was originally called 'After the Messerschmitts had gone!'

Whale' and there are a number of ingenious landing stages which can only survive on trust and hope - a pictorial virtue of the compositions they create!

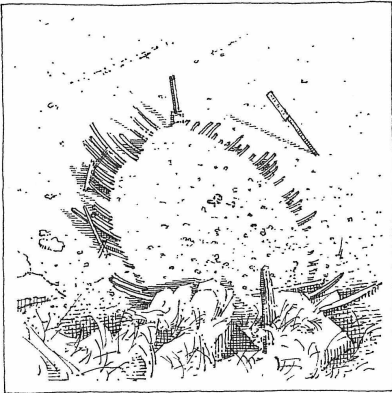
Up river at Ramsholt order takes over from the delightful chaos of the Ferry and the moorings, presented by the huge sweep of the curve of the river here, are used extensively and in a thoroughly ordered fashion. The short length of the Quay makes a useful pictorial feature from several angles and an excellent viewpoint.



*The Whale - 2006*

Moving further up the river public access is somewhat restricted, but over on the Woodbridge side there is an exquisite beach and inland area of Waldringfield.

One of the features that makes this area so pictorial is I believe contrast of the mature tree population behind the beach itself and the beach huts among them. There is also the benefit of the cliff which allows for higher view



*The Wreck*

points and back grounds. There is too the little boatyard with its crane which always seems to be pointing in the right direction to complete any composition – as indeed Everson’s crane does at Woodbridge! (page 26)

Oh, at Waldringfield there is too that lovely miniature wreck set deep in the mud and only visible at low tide. It is quite perfect and needs a carefully timed visit to be seen before the tide sweeps in again. No other wreck that I know has this perfection of shape with the snapped off ribs showing such regular formation just above the mud

at water level.

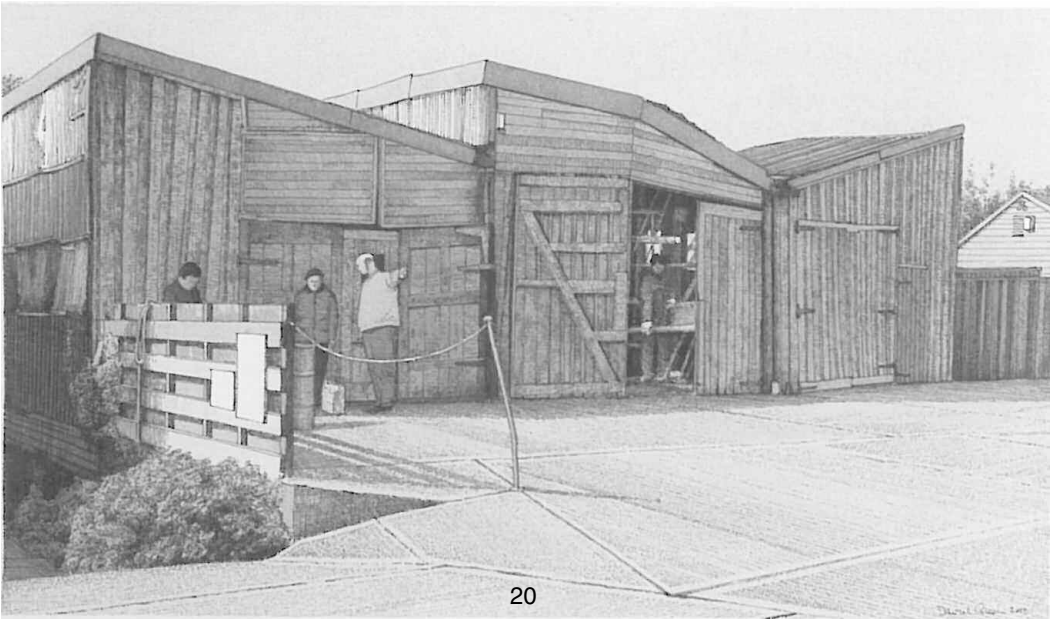
The brief riverside walk northwards from the boatyard and Waldringfield is attractive too, especially where it turns inland and is set out with planks on the sweeping curves which require perfect balance and concentration to complete the course. Failure is unthinkable!

The last length of the Deben River walk can only be approached from the north from Kyson Point where a practically hidden path leads inland to secret delights of Martlesham Creek a magical formation that only reveals itself when the tide is at its lowest.

At the head of Martlesham Creek there is a tiny marina, safely tucked away from the storms and pirates, a haven of peace and quiet.

## EVERSON’S SHED

Albert Alfred Everson (A. A. Everson) b.1862 was a joiner carpenter who came from Diss and moved to Melton. He married Alice Robertson whose father was Ebenezer Robertson. Ebenezer and his



son Robbie set up the business on Lime Kiln Quay which is Robertson's. Albert moved down river to what was then a coaling quay and started Everson's in 1889. The yard burned down in 1911 and was rebuilt on the foundations hence the name - Phoenix Works.

I have long been an admirer of Everson's Shed. I love its irregularity, its texture and what it evokes in terms of boat building history. The shed is unique and however we define 'character', Everson's shed, in my opinion, has it in abundance.

When I mentioned Everson's to people they often said 'Have you heard about the sisters who lived in the shed with their cats.' I was intrigued and began to research their history; at the same time I came across David Green's evocative picture of the shed.

Here are David's perceptions as an artist of the shed and how he came to paint the picture.

"So there are rumours that a decision is about to be made concerning the future of Everson's shed on the waterfront in Woodbridge. Should it be restored or replaced; patched up or knocked down? Well last year I hinted in a booklet on the Tide Mill and waterfront that at all costs it should be protected with a preservation order. It has so much character and as I noted I thought it provided the perfect counter to the neat formality of the Quay complex- the Mill and the Granary- to which I added that it is by far the wackiest building we shall ever see on this site because it is impossible to imagine it ever having evolved from the drawing of an architect's board! All of which I still believe to be perfectly true.

But there is clearly another side to this issue. Soon after I had written those comments I learned that my eldest daughter had not walked alongside this

building, down the Avenue, for many years because she is suspicious of the fixtures of the windows down this side of the building. Any how many others feel the same?

So something needs to be done. There are thoroughly capable architects about and the Council takes its planning duties very seriously; which leaves it to me to explain why I felt it worthwhile to spend so much time and energy on painting a picture of a so derelict a shed!

Well Everson's shed lies more or less half way down to the river walk between our home and the town centre which means that we walk past it pretty frequently, or on average say four times a week. As we have lived here since 1990, this yields a total of somewhere in the region of between four or five thousand times; surely enough to have made a decision about whether or not is worth looking at from the point of view of making a picture, though I have to confess that for about half of these journeys I took very little notice of it; certainly I never saw it as a painting.

But one day I passed the shed, somewhat later than usual, probably about one pm, when the sun begins to leave the building. The fencing on the left with the two white notices was brilliantly lit, creating a powerful contrast with the rich texture of the panelling. The fencing creates a powerful 'interlock' between the two largest shapes of the composition - the shed itself and the concrete walk; and providing too, at the tip of its shadow, the perfect location for the position of the aesthetically important bent iron post set in the concrete pavement.

The situations of the figures, their poses, the mysterious light inside the building and many other features across the whole scene would doubtless only be revealed to someone involved in making a drawing or recording verbally what they perceive. The subtle lines in the concrete pathway, revealed by the bright sun make a splendid

feature in the lower half of the picture which only really become apparent when the lines are strengthened with ink on a photocopy, or better still in a drawing of your own making.

**David Green**

## **TWO SISTERS**

Everson's Yard is well known for its long tradition of boat building and repair. What is less well known is that for more than twenty years two sisters Molly and Ethel, together with their numerous cats, lived in what was then the chandlery and store for the yard. Who were they and how did they come to be there? How did they manage in such spartan surroundings, surviving harsh winters and floods?

Alfred Albert Everson the founder of Everson's Yard and his wife Alice had two sons and four daughters. Their two sons Cyril and Bert and two of their daughters, Molly and Ethel ran the yard. Cyril did the river work, maintaining the moorings and moving the boats around the river. He was a rigger and did the painting and fitting out. Bert was a skilled boat builder. They had very different personalities, Cyril was calm and approachable while Bert could be short tempered, which at times led them not to speak to each other for long periods. Ethel was the tea lady for the yard and the cleaner. Molly helped to take orders and money for the chandlery, did the accounts, repaired sails and generally worked around the yard including antifouling boats.

Molly and Ethel lived with their parents in a cottage in Crown Place Woodbridge. When Alfred died in 1936 Molly looked after her mother until she died in 1944, after which the house was sold and Molly moved into a shed behind the yard with her sister Ethel; presumably because they had no money and nowhere else to live. Molly



*Launching of a Cherub with the 'Shed' in the background*

had given up a relationship with a long standing boyfriend and became a spinster for life to look after her mother; a 'price' not uncommon for women to pay in those days. Meanwhile, Bert and Cyril were living in their own accommodation elsewhere in Woodbridge.



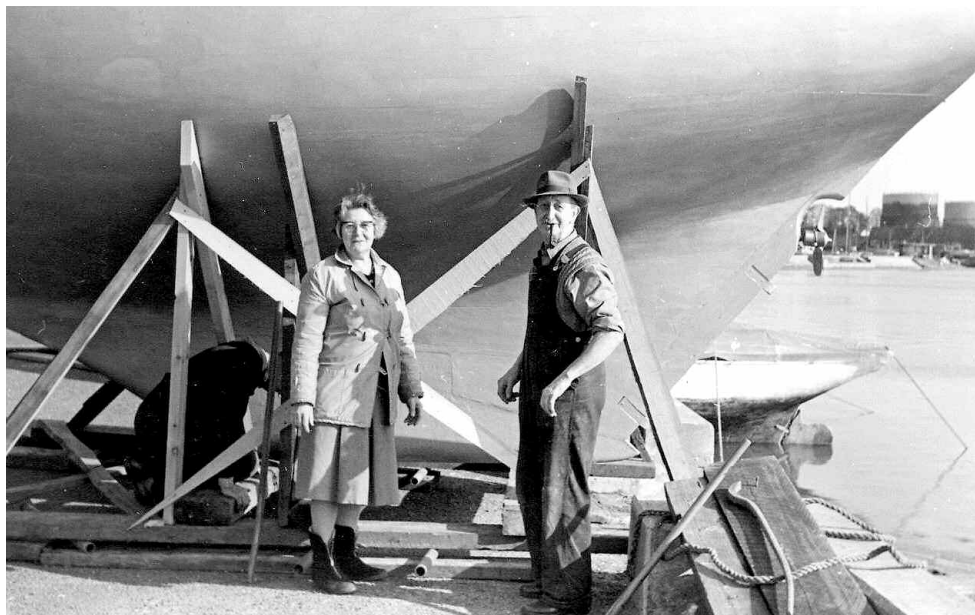
*Molly with Ron and Eric at Crown Place*



Molly was a great lover and rescuer of cats and has been referred to as the 'pied piper' of cats. People, even if they don't remember much about them remember 'the sisters and their cats'; there were more than ten cats, some of which were wild, living with them at any one time.

home at one end of the chandlery where they could just fit in two bunk beds. The rest of the shed was used for storing ropes, chains, anchors, pulleys and blocks.

The shed was insulated with cardboard stapled to the walls. There was a free-



*Molly with Bert in the Yard*

The shed they were living in was washed away in a flood prior to the 1953 flood. Richard Clark ('Will Laud'), remembers, as a child, watching as the shed was destroyed by a torrent of water. Molly and Ethel, together with their cats, moved into a 'tin hut' on the higher ground by the river. This was the shed beside the main workshop which was the chandlery and store for the yard.

The second home, the tin hut', (Shown in the picture of the launch) was on the site of what is now the rowing club. It was a wooden shed with a corrugated iron roof painted in red oxide paint. The accommodation was sparse. Its main purpose was as a chandlery for the yard and the sisters made a new and modest

standing paraffin stove in the middle of the shed with a cast iron hob on which the sisters cooked. Paraffin bottles were stored on the walls. Louise Everson, the sister's great niece, can remember sitting on an old sofa but cannot remember much else being there. There was no water in the shed and the sisters used the stand pipe at the back of the workshop. Although the yard had an earth closet, Molly and Ethel at some point were able to use the public toilets close by. Molly grew flowers and vegetables behind the shed.

In spite of living in such circumstances, Molly was always well presented and looked young for her age. Her nephew Ron Everson said 'it was a tough old life but Molly was a tough old bird'.

Both her and her sister survived cold winters and two floods and seemingly never complained. Their main passion was cats who they continued to rescue and share the shed with. Philip Hawes, whose father was a fishmonger in Woodbridge, remembers taking fish heads to the shed to feed the cats. Passers by remembered the 'awful' smell of the fish heads cooking - One person interestingly referred to this as a 'cauldron'.

'Molly was a 'fighter' for what she believed in. She would have been well known to Council officials as she fought numerous battles with the Council including a fight to save some near-by trees. She meticulously kept hand written copies of the letters she wrote in a small book. Ethel was 'easier' going despite being deaf. She is remembered as a person who would laugh more than her sister who didn't have much of a sense of humour.

Molly's last big fight was in 1969 when the yard was sold to Peter Darby. Peter wanted to demolish the shed, which he described as a health hazard; it was dilapidated and dirty, had no windows and was infested with rats - even with Molly's many cats. In spite of an agreement with Bert that Molly would move out, Ethel had already moved, so Peter could develop the yard, Molly resisted all attempts to persuade her to leave.

Eventually, Peter told her he was going to put her belongings in a pram and push it to the level crossing gates - and this is exactly what he did. The shed was demolished with a tractor, pushed over the wall and burned on the beach.

After leaving the shed Molly joined Ethel again and they both lived in a flat at the top end of the Thoroughfare.

Molly had a 'Mind of her own, a certain amount of stubbornness; she would not accept what you had to say unless it could

be proved. You would have great difficulty changing her mind if she was set on something - she could be dogmatic', remembers Ron. However, combined with this independent spirit Molly proved she was a carer, first for her mother and then for her brother Bert. After Lillian, his wife's death, Molly moved to live with Bert in 26 Cumberland Street where she looked after him until he died in a car accident at Shingle Street. Ron believes that when Bert died he left Molly and Ethel the house, together with a house in Shingle Street. (This was designed by John Penn the husband of the water colourist Audrey Penn.)

Although, Molly has been described as a tough character, she was well liked by the local community. As Betty Everson says 'When you visited her in Cumberland Street you invariably met people visiting her. She knew everything and lots of people called on her, both when she was in the shed and when she was at Cumberland Street. When you visited she wouldn't give you tea but she would give you a drink at Christmas'.

Molly was a great knitter and knitted beautiful toys which she would give to the local hospital - 'stuffed toys like teddies'. They crocheted their own blankets. She lent Louise a pattern for teddy bears but made sure it was returned. Tim Everson remembers 'Even when she was in the shed, local people would come and place their orders for Fairisle sweaters'.

Ethel was a heavy smoker and died before Molly in 1977. Eventually, Molly had a stroke and moved into residential care. Surprisingly, she settled well and enjoyed the company.



Molly died in her 90's in 1997. As Ron Everson says 'She was a character.'

The sisters are buried together in the same plot in Woodbridge Cemetery.

(My thanks to Ron and Betty Everson, Louise, Francis and Tim Everson and to Peter Darby for sharing their memories of Molly and Ethel.)

**David Bucknell**

## **BOATS OF THE DEBEN**

### **AMITY**

The blue sails of the small schooner rigged yacht 'Amity', have been seen on the River Deben for more than 30 years. Based at Ramsholt she has been sailed by three generations of my family around the rivers

of the Thames Estuary, with occasional adventures to Holland, Belgium and northern France. Amity was bought by my father John Owles in 1973, from the family of John Clappen, Amity's designer and owner. He brought her to the east coast from Birdham Pool, where she had been laid up for a year or so after his death.

During the 1950's John Clappen farmed land at Witnesham, Suffolk, sailing on the Deben, with friends when he could, and drafting plans for the yacht of his dreams in spare moments. The drawings were not completed until he had retired from farming and moved to Bosham, Hampshire, by which time his yacht to be had been shortened to 32 feet from the original outlines for a 40 footer, to suit his budget. He had R & A Hampers of Fareham build her, with the hull of pitch pine on bent rockelm frames and mahogany bright work, at their Quay Street yard. She was launched on 11 June 1964.



Various rigs and sail plans were examined and assessed, for a mast head sloop, cutter, ketch and schooner. His reasoning for settling on the Bermudan schooner rig was that it provided a balanced sail plan, with the ability to set plenty of sail for gentle breezes, yet easily handled as each sail is of quite small area, no large winches are required, and area is quickly reduced by simply dropping a sail if caught by a squall. The aluminium masts and spars were supplied by Sparlight, with the aft (main) mast a couple of feet higher than the fore mast.

Sail combinations available include mainsail, foresail,

and No.3 or No.1 genoa, also storm jib with trysail, although we haven't yet set these in earnest. When the breeze is abeam or more a main staysail could be added, or cruising chutes to both masts, so plenty of string and sheet trimming for all on board. In practice of course, we do not have such a comprehensive sail wardrobe, with little space to stow them all with their attendant gear, we have just the main staysail to play with. The forestay has a roller furling foil which works well with either genoa, hoisted to suit conditions.

Amity is good fun to sail, being responsive and handy, seeming easily driven. Short tacking in the rivers is simple as the genoa can be sheeted home quickly without big muscles. Although not as close winded as many yachts she is quite powerful, shouldering aside the short North Sea lop, keeping up a good pace without drenching the crew, and as the wind becomes free sheets are eased and she sets off with a rushing bow wave.

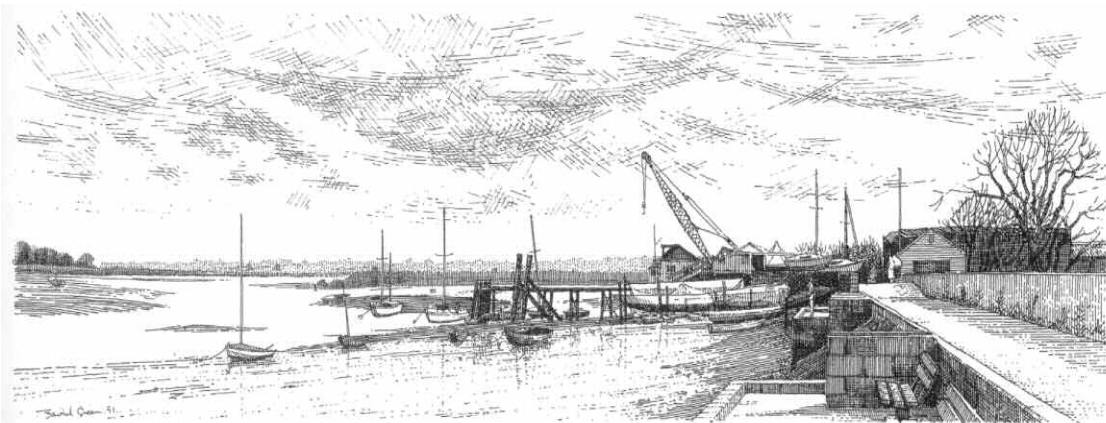
**Tom Owles**

## LETTERS

*Email from Ian Burn to Chris Brown  
Saturday 23 October 2010*

“Chris. Many thanks for a brilliant bumper magazine and about wartime on the River. Our hut was formerly on a site at the top of the steps before going into the Club car park at Waldringfield, with fabulous views up and down the Deben. Then owned by Cleer Cutting of the brewers Cobbold. It was seemingly used as a prime observation post during the war. Unfortunately, we had to move the hut down the field to the other site to let the Rev. Waller take over the site - it is still there. Remember well Albert Hill of the Maybush and the men's toilets with the bestest view of the river!! We will try to see if we can dig up some history on all this.

Regards **Ian Burn**”



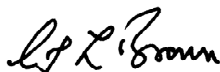
*Eversons' Crane*

RIVER DEBEN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING  
DECEMBER 31 2010

<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2010</b>		<b>2009</b>	
<b>Income</b>	£	£	£	£
Subscriptions inc arrears	3,046		2,777	
Donations Inc BBC (0 in '10)	375		450	
Bank interest	6		6	
Refreshments	36		36	
Sundries inc cash	6		15	
Suffolk Coastal DC			2,500	
		<b><u>3469</u></b>		<b><u>5,784</u></b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Postage	491		342	
Secretary's Honorarium	200		300	
Offices services/stationery	197		0	
Newsletters	1128		768	
Other printing	171		7	
Hire of hall/meeting room	200		120	
Meeting costs with Refreshments	148		80	
Refreshments for meeting	8			
Insurance	200		190	
Civic Trust	0		200	
Other	33		260	
Maritime Woodbridge	391		0	
Sutton Shore Project	0		1,615	
Bank charges	0		0	
Web Page	665			
Total		<b><u>3832</u></b>		<b><u>3,882</u></b>
<b>Excess of income</b>			<b><u>-364</u></b>	<b><u>1,902</u></b>

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2010**

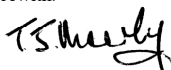
<b>Assets</b>				
Bank	10969		11,342	
Cash	134		130	
		11103		11,472
<b>Less Liabilities</b>				
<b>Creditors</b>				
Advance subscriptions	178		168	
Civic Trust	0		200	
U2R Designs Maritime W'bridge	185	363		368
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b><u>10740</u></b>		<b><u>11,104</u></b>
<b>Representing</b>				
Balance brought forward	11104		9,202	
Surplus	-364		1,902	
<b>Balance carried forward</b>		<b><u>10740</u></b>		<b><u>11,104</u></b>



C.J.L. Brown (Hon Treasurer)

8<sup>th</sup> March 2011

I have examined the papers and vouchers of the association for the year ended 31 December 2010 and confirm that the above income and expenditure account and the balance sheet are in accordance therewith.



T.J. Moorby, Chartered Accountant (Hon Independent Examiner)  
Woodbridge

8<sup>th</sup> March 2011

RIVER DEBEN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING  
DECEMBER 31 2010

Notes to the accounts:

1. The year has seen some developments to the RDA that have resulted in unusual costs. However it must be noted that the running costs have risen. Thus, for the first time for some years, expenditure has exceeded income. A noteworthy expenditure, however, is that the Association now has a web page that will enable those who do have access to the web more frequent and rapid access to the Association news. An email facility has also been developed.
2. There has been no project that has attracted any grants this year
3. The Membership now stands at 851. This is similar to the previous year but does represent a number of new members who have replace those who have left.
4. Subscriptions: The subscription income in 2010 including arrears was £3046 which was an increase on last year resulting from new members and an increase in the proportion of members paying the correct subscription.
6. Some members who have consistently over a number of years failed to increase their subscriptions were not provided with the Magazine. This was after a number of suggestions that they should pay the required amount and a warning that this would happen.
7. A statement or letter about underpayment was sent to members this year in April. These showed how the last subscription was paid so that any action to ensure the correct payment this year should be clear. There are some members who have changed their standing order. This seems to have resulted in a new standing order for the new amount being opened but the old standing order has remained in place. Any member who notices that there is more than one standing order in favour of the Association are advised to cancel that which is for the wrong amount. The Association cannot change a Member's standing order. Those that do pay twice are making a welcome but possible inadvertent donation to the Association.

Chris Brown - Treasurer



**THE RIVER DEBEN ASSOCIATION**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at 7.00pm**  
**WOODBIDGE COMMUNITY HALL**

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting  
*(Now available on [www.riverdeben.org](http://www.riverdeben.org) and as paper copies at the AGM)*
3. Matters Arising
4. Accounts for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 *(Included in the magazine)*
5. Appointment of Examiner for 2012 accounts
6. Chairman's Report *(See insert - will be taken as read)*
7. Elections: Officers willing to stand for re-election are Chairman -L Belcham, Vice-Chairman - R Simper, Secretary - W Brown, Treasurer - C Brown. Following retirement by rotation after 3 years, Committee members willing to stand for re-election are A Moore, S Read, N Winship. Co-opted members standing for election are P Clay, A Leech.
8. Constitution: To approve revisions to the constitution  
*(The draft revised constitution has been mailed with this magazine. The revisions have been highlighted.)*
9. Other Business

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Refreshment break  
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**“The MMO -  
what on earth's that?”**

*A presentation by two speakers from the  
MARINE MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION  
will help us understand the impact that this  
newly-constituted and important national body  
will have on our time afloat. There will be time  
for questions.*









