

# The Deben



54 Spring 2017

# The River Deben Association

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### March 2017

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**Cover: 'Methersgate' Nicole Harris**



## Editorial

# The EU and The River Deben

Whatever your view of Brexit, as members of the RDA we need to be mindful of the importance of EU environmental legislation. For the last 40 years the EU has led the way in environmental protection. Somewhat ironically the UK has been a leader in the EU in developing effective legislation through the drafting and negotiating skills of its diplomats. The UK has moved from being 'the dirty man of Europe' to be a leader in implementing the European directives. Four directives are of particular importance to the river Deben.

The Birds Directive, put in place protection for all wild birds in the UK and many of these species, including Avocets and Dark Billed Brent geese, are found in the Deben. The directive also places restrictions on the birds that can be hunted and captured. The Habitats Directive introduced Special Areas of Conservation and protected over 200 habitat types, including many of the Deben's habitats such as saltmarshes. The Water Framework Directive protects rivers like the Deben in the quality and management of its waters. The Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment Directive also ensures that major planning applications have to produce an assessment, which, while it identifies the risks to the environment of planning applications it ensures that steps to mitigate harmful impacts are taken.

These directives are very important in the achievement of the RDA's primary objective: the protection and conservation of the River Deben and its environment. If the UK leaves the EU and the free trade area, this legislation, unless the UK government retains it, will cease to apply. Given the 'presumption of development' in relation to planning applications, this could be a parlous situation for environmental campaigners. Food for thought for the RDA and its members ! The RDA needs to join agencies such as Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the RSPB and CPRE in campaigning to retain this legislation.

Hopefully, Robin's retirement from the chairmanship of the RDA will not result in such potentially dire consequences. During his three-year term he has brought a youthful passion, energy and enthusiasm to the concerns of the RDA, which has been welcomed. Robin has been forthright in his pursuit of scientific rigour in relation to issues such as flood protection, the river walls and the conservation of salt marshes and has challenged some of the assumptions that have been made about different topics. He has been active in promoting experiments such as Lodgers Cut and at Waldringfield to test out assumptions about salt marshes and their predators, including crabs and rag worms. As some people have found out, he has not been afraid to stand up and be counted, and once he starts on a cause he can be dogged in its pursuit. We have not all shared some of his

enthusiasms, such as bi-planes over Bentwaters, but his work on the moorings in the Deben was welcomed by everybody and hopefully it can be carried forward as a substantive policy.

Robin's adventures with Gillie in *Bumble Chugger* are the stuff of legends, including trips to Brittany, Norway, Holland and round the canals of London. This year a trip to Ireland with a voyage up the Shannon is being planned. Robin has not lost his competitive edge either, as crews and adversaries in the Shrimper will tell you.

Robin has been an excellent source of articles for the 'The Deben', whether about river walls, saltmarshes, Shrimper adventures, childhood at the Ferry and in this edition writing about his father's boats, including the history of the two-way jamming cleat. As Editor I want to thank him for all his contributions to the magazine over the years together with his support in general.

I hope Robin will continue to be involved in the issues relevant to the RDA and the Deben and we will continue to read about his adventures in the future.

In this edition Jeff Coleman recounts the tragic story behind the plaque at Ramsholt. We have an update on the work of the Waldringfield Flood Defence Group from Jon Wilkins and a report of Waldringfield sailors win in the Cadet World Championships. Sarah Zins provides an introduction to the Curlew, a bird often seen on the mud banks of the Deben, although whether I can see the difference between a Curlew and a Whimbrel remains to be seen. Anne Moore has provided an account of JK's work restoring *Mist* and we hear about another Albert Strange boat in need of restoration. Nicole Harris, is our 'Artist of the Deben' with her work featured on the cover of this edition provides an introduction to her work. I have enjoyed reviewing Janet Harber's East Coast Rivers cruising companion.



Woodbridge -Courtesy of East Coast Rivers Archive



River Deben Association

## Chairman's Report

The days are getting longer and signs of spring appearing at the time of writing this report. Apart from the flood alert on Friday, 13th January we have been reasonably clear of storms this last winter.

**Committee:** The Committee has approved that Sarah Zins should be the next Chairman elect. I do hope that this will be confirmed at the AGM on 27th April. I shall be standing down as Chairman then. I have enjoyed my time in this post and am very grateful for the support that the Committee has given me during my time as Chairman. I have overrun by one year and am relieved that we have found someone to take my place. I am confident that Sarah will do an excellent job in this role. The Committee is looking for a replacement Vice Chairman (formerly Robert Simper), Secretary following the recent resignation of Judith Clements and Jane Hawthorn and a replacement for Sarah as Membership Secretary. I hope that volunteers will step forward to support Sarah and her Committee.

**Planning Applications:** The result of the appeal for the development at Candlet Road, Felixstowe is still awaited. The development at Dukes Park, Martlesham was refused and an appeal has been raised. The RDA has written objecting to both these developments. The land for the Adastral development has been sold to Commercial Estates Group.

**Whisstocks Project:** Progress on both sites has continued well. The completion and hand over of the Longshed and Museum will take place in early July. The RDA has made a donation of £500 to the Woodbridge Riverside Trust towards the 'fit out' of the Longshed. This will be recorded on a plaque within the shed. Plans for an opening concert The King's River – a musical spectacle on the banks of the River Deben are well advanced. This will take place as part of the opening ceremony.

**River Walls:** The cross wall at Felixstowe Ferry is complete and grass has been planted on it. Although some of the Felixstowe Residents have expressed concern that the top level of the wall is below the level of the sheet piling, the height is at 4.1m AOD, which is higher than the level of all the other walls on the Deben (apart from around Woodbridge).



Work on the river wall of Flood Cell 4, Shottisham Creek, has been delayed but the Environment Agency intends that this will be completed by summer 2017.

The arrangements for upgrading the river wall of Flood Cell 1, Bawdsey Marshes, are being coordinated by the Environment Agency, Inland Drainage Board and the Deben Estuary Partnership. The RDA has written to these organisations and the relevant landowners, strongly supporting the need for this work. The letter also proposes that the scheme should include the provision of a pathway on top of the river wall. This could be set up as a 'permissive path' unless, of course, Natural England insists that it becomes a public footpath in its plans for a Coastal Path.

**Bawdsey Manor:** Bawdsey Manor has now been sold to PGL Adventure Holidays. The Committee has expressed its concern in the event of the sale going to someone not interested in the preservation of the parts important to the community (e.g. the quay and adjacent properties). The RDA has sent two separate letters to the Suffolk Coastal District Council requesting its support for ensuring a satisfactory sale of the key parts of the estate. One was addressed to the Head of Planning, Philip Ridley, and the other to the Leader of the Council, Ray Herring.

**Saltmarshes:** The RDA Saltmarsh Research Group had its first meeting on Monday, 26th September. James Pullen has been asked to give a quote for using his drone to map the saltmarsh of Loder's Cut Island. This can be done to an accuracy of 1 to 2 cm in plan. This will be more accurate than the present hand method of measurement, and it is proposed that such a survey should take place in June/July 2017. This could be the first of an annual or biennial drone survey. Vertical measurements at each of the 12 posts would continue to be made by hand as this is still a more accurate method than drone photography. The survey shows that the level of the saltmarsh has been rising steadily at the same rate as the relative sea level rise (total of 11mm since the start of measurements – 3.5mm per year). The Pilot Study on the saltmarsh just upstream of Waldringfield has been running since June 2016. This included investigation of the tunnelling effects of shore crabs on the erosion of mature saltmarshes in Suffolk (and Essex).

The Deben Estuary Partnership has recently set up a Deben Saltmarsh Group. Similar Groups will be set up for the other Suffolk Rivers and there will also be a Suffolk County Saltmarsh Committee to provide co-ordination. The first meeting of the Deben Saltmarsh Group discussed how the saltmarshes provide protection to river walls, by absorbing some of the wave energy at times of high tides with strong winds.

**Autumn Open Meeting 2016:** Jamie Clay gave a fascinating presentation of his life and experience in building wooden boats. It was well attended (over 100 people) at the Waldringfield Village Hall.

**RDA Forum:** 26 people attended this meeting. Representatives from the

Boatyards and other Businesses, Fairways Committees, Harbour Masters, Clubs, Tide Mill, Felixstowe Foreshore Trust, Deben Estuary Partnership and Woodbridge Riverside Trust were present. A copy of the notes of the meeting can be found on the RDA Website ([riverdeben.org](http://riverdeben.org)). General concern was raised about the difficulty and cost of obtaining licenses for dredging from the Marine Management Organisation. This is needed to clear areas for the boatyards and other activities, and for providing a source of mud to replenish the saltmarshes.

Robin Whittle

*Adieu sailing past the Bawdsey Manor*



Courtesy Janet Harber/Fernhurst Books

## Sarah Zins

In his Chairman's report, Robin has noted my nomination by the committee to take over the role of Chairman, if approved at the AGM.

I have been the membership secretary of the River Deben Association for the last year and, after seeing quite how much time Robin devotes to the task, and the huge variety of activities in which he is involved, I realise how very large are the shoes that I will be trying to fill.



The range of activities in which the RDA has an interest is immense and Robin has accomplished a great deal in his time as Chairman. He has put in place a code for river users and printed hundreds of copies for the various river-using clubs to distribute to their members, he has been an active member of the Deben Estuary Partnership and has contributed to the Deben Estuary Plan, he is



fascinated by saltmarshes, and has brought his engineering background to bear on the issues and personally set up a hands-on monitoring project.

The RDA committee meets every two months, and comprises a number of dedicated members, some of whom are tasked with a particular area of activity, such as editing the wonderful magazine, looking after our finances and expanding the website, and others who represent important areas of interest. I am very much looking forward to working more closely with all the committee members. We would love to find a new secretary to join the committee, so if you could help please get in touch with me.

A little bit about me. I have been coming to the Suffolk Coast since I was 18 months old when my parents bought a summer cottage in Knodishall. My youth was spent sailing on the River Alde, and for many years we owned a weekend house in Aldeburgh. Some 14 years ago, my husband, small daughter and I left London and moved to Suffolk full-time. We now live in the centre of Woodbridge, pretty much on the River Deben. I love the river at every stage of the tide and whether from ashore or afloat. After the sad demise of *Alcyone*, a wooden Sea King which we had rashly bought sight-unseen online from Wales and moored opposite Eversons, I have moved to lower maintenance craft. I keep two toppers at the Melton Boat Club and a small rowing boat, in which I make short excursions to Wilford Bridge and to 'Honolulu', as the little beach below Sutton Hoo is called. I love jogging along the river path, walking by the river to Kyson Point and at Ramsholt and Sutton, looking at the fishing huts and moored boats at Felixstowe Ferry, eating at the riverside pubs, canoeing under the Wilford Bridge, and watching the wonderful bird-life and spotting the occasional seal and even an otter.

I am looking forward to the challenge of taking over the chairmanship of the River Deben Association. I heartily endorse the RDA's aim of protecting and conserving the character, beauty and environment of the River Deben which are so important to all the RDA members. But I have been on the committee long enough to know that reaching consensus between the sometimes-conflicting views of all the interested parties is not an easy one. Some people think that the objective of achieving a balance is somewhat wishy-washy, but I am firmly of the view that, while it may be the trickiest of objectives, it is also the most important. I will do my absolute best over the next three years to work with the RDA committee to represent that balance.

# *News From the Hards*

## **When Doris had her Day**

There were layers of fronds of pale green Willow, like crumbled shredded wheat, strewn around the riverside as I tricycled down to get some exercise and blow the cobwebs away by the river in Woodbridge, the stormy day of Thursday 23rd February. People stood watching the line of poplars by the railway as they bent right over looking as if they'd lose their grip in the ground at any minute.

This had been at about three in the afternoon and sure enough, we heard the next day, that at 5.20 pm, one had broken low down and most of it landed on racks of Deben Rowing Club skiffs that were parked by the Water Sports Centre Hut near the level crossing, doing ten thousand pounds worth of damage.

Deben Yacht Club had got off more lightly, with just two Wayfarers blown over breaking their masts and some Toppers and lasers that took a tumble.

There does not seem to have been any significant damage elsewhere along the River. Tide Mill Yacht Harbour was unscathed and have now got all their boats that were lifted out while the work there was completed; with others taken out for winter and repairs, gradually disappearing into the new bay. They will no longer mar the view from the path as one walks up from Kyson.



Richard Kember there, tells me that the remainder of the mud that can be seen from the nearby footpath, will be levelled, to raise the ground in the surrounds of the Harbour.

Readers who may have noticed that the Cruising Club Pontoon has gone, will possibly have thought that, that was torn away in the Storm; but the Club itself removed it, since it was no longer financially viable - the fees to Crown Estate being more than they received from the few members who wanted to use it.

**Anne Moore**

## **The Old Whisstocks Site**

For about 20 years the Whisstocks boatyard has languished, derelict, unloved and the object of avaricious eyes eager to maximise its commercial value.

Many of us knew, or thought we knew, what we didn't want on this neglected plot of land by the river, but few had any feasible plan for what they did want. Meantime WAMRAG- the Woodbridge and Melton Riverside Action Group- worked tirelessly to protect this "jewel in the crown" of Woodbridge from "inappropriate" development.

In due course the Woodbridge Riverside Trust was formed and John Gibbins devoted most of his retirement years to trying to find a way to satisfy the two principle wishes, confirmed by a professionally run survey about the site: first it must involve maritime activity, and secondly it must be accessible to the public.

The public passion for exclusive maritime usage of the site slowly waned and a compromise plan began to gain more general acceptance. The idea of a publicly owned facility in which to build a full-size reconstruction of the "Mound One" Anglo-Saxon burial ship excavated at Sutton Hoo, became the inspiring catalyst for the long-awaited break-through.

A developer came on the scene with a vision to present to the town, to the planners and to the myriad public interest groups. He also had sound financial backing; in return for retail and residential use on part of the site the remainder would be gifted to the Town in the form of 1) a new Woodbridge museum building, 2) a long shed big enough for the construction of the Anglo-Saxon ship, 3) a public open space in front of these buildings and 4) a refurbished slip-way.

If we "fast forward" to March 2017, the site is well on its way to reaching completion. To celebrate this event there will be a performance of "The King's River" on July 11th 12th 13th 14th 15th

"The King's River" is a new musical theatre performance composed by Jana Rowland, librettists are Sylvia Fairley and Dominic Shea. It will be performed by local children and adult singers, dancers and musicians and professionals.

Part One takes place outside at the new community site at the old Whisstocks boat yard with approximately 105 performers from schools, choirs and musicians from Woodbridge and the surrounding area and tells the story of an Anglo Saxon village following the death of their King, King Raedwald.

During the interval the audience walk along the river wall to the Riverside Theatre Part Two takes place in the Riverside Theatre with approximately 50 performers and tells the story of the discovery of the treasure at Sutton Hoo, Mrs Pretty's dream and a sherry party in 1939.

The King's River has been awarded Arts Council funding which together with incredibly generous support from local business and private donors has enabled the appointment of a professional Artistic Team.

For more information on giving financial or practical help please check this link:  
[www.thekingsriver.co.uk](http://www.thekingsriver.co.uk)

Peter Clay

# Waldringfield Flood Defence Group

## Waldringfield Saltmarsh Project

In 2016, as a final phase in their three year programme of procuring improved flood defences for Waldringfield, the Waldringfield Flood Defence Group (WFDG) commissioned works involving the restoration of an area of fringing saltmarsh owned by Crown Estates and stretching over a length of approximately 1 km immediately north of the village. The adopted approach involves the installation of at least 1000m of low level polder fence work that is constructed from driven chestnut stakes supporting strapped bundles of hazel faggots.

After the lengthy and costly bureaucratic process of obtaining a MMO licence site, work began in June. Wet weather made initial progress difficult as working windows were restricted to either side of low tide. Heavy rain was problematic for operatives and it adversely affected ground conditions within the site for transferring materials from the storage area on land owned by the Trustees of Dairy Farm Marsh to the places they were needed along the saltmarsh. Fortunately, weather over the rest of the summer improved and the scheme was completed to time and budget.



The layout for the polder fence work was designed by Karen Thomas from the local Internal Drainage Board and health and safety considerations dictated that erection of the polder fences was undertaken by operatives from the IDB.

Voluntary input from the WFDG continued to control other aspects of the project not least the procurement of funding as well as more mundane tasks such as manually assisting with alterations at footpath junctions. The project cost nearly £110k. Financing involved a major grant from the Coastal Communities Fund with additional grants from the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB unit and the SCDC Community Enabling budget, together with a smaller sum from the Parish Council. The RDA contributed towards the MMO licence in order to facilitate their Pilot Study that is now set up on the Waldringfield saltmarsh and looks at possible causes of saltmarsh degradation.

The primary engineering benefit of using this traditional method of saltmarsh stabilization is to provide protection to the adjacent river wall that was substantially improved in the flood defence works procured by the WFDG since

the 2013 tidal surge.

Interestingly, there have also been various spin-off benefits from the project. Firstly, the challenges local community groups face obtaining MMO consents for saltmarsh work has been raised through the Suffolk Coastal Forum and are being discussed at the National Coastal Special Interest Group via Cllr. Andy Smith with Waldringfield being used as a case study example. Secondly, lessons learnt from this project in terms of monitoring, construction techniques and costs are being shared across the local estuary partnerships to promote further saltmarsh restoration projects. Thirdly, recent fish surveys within the saltmarsh at Waldringfield have revealed that a significant number of key fish species are using the marshes for breeding and feeding, thus suggesting that the polder fences have created 1km of new fish habitat that is operating as a refuge for small fish fry, including sea bass.



Looking to the future, WFDG has set aside sufficient funds to allow for both detailed monitoring of the outcomes from this polder works over the next 10 years (at which stage a final report will be issued to all interested parties) and also to allow, if necessary, for the commissioning of minor remedial works. In conclusion WFDG would like to offer particular thanks to the Water Management Alliance (our local IDB); without their expertise our original realisation of this project would not have been fulfilled and also to the Trustees of Dairy Farm Marsh for allowing us access across their land. A complete archive of the WFDG's flood defence work dating back to the flood surge of December 2013 is available on our website [www.waldringfieldflooddefencegroup.onesuffolk.net](http://www.waldringfieldflooddefencegroup.onesuffolk.net).

## Jon Wilkins

Chair Waldringfield Flood Defence Group  
30th January 2017

**Editors Note:** In Robin Whittle's article 'Work on the river wall defence at Waldringfield: phase two.' (The Deben 53.) We would like to acknowledge that the source of some of the data was from the Waldringfield Flood Defence Group website. We would also like to point out that since 2012, when the Group was formed, it has been responsible for preparing the basic designs, routes and permissions for the Works. The Group has raised over a million pounds of funding, and has retained financial control, formed formal working partnerships and also employed the IDB as contractors; the Committee has input many thousands of hours on a purely voluntary basis.



### Cadet Worlds in Argentina

Over Christmas and New Year the Neilson GBR Cadet World Team travelled to Buenos Aires for the 50th Cadet World Championships. Over half the team were from Waldringfield Sailing Club underlining the Club's reputation as one of the top junior racing clubs in the country.

The Argentinians have never lost a Cadet Worlds when it's been held in their country but hopes were high amongst the British team and, knowing the venue was likely to be light and fluky, the Waldringfield contingent in particular travelled with confidence.



The event saw 56 boats from 8 countries compete on the Rio de la Plata over 10 races. Conditions were very difficult - 40 degree heat, 7 hours a day on the water, light winds and a short chop looking to stop the Cadets, with their stubby bow transoms, dead.

Jamie Harris and Antonia Wilkinson prevailed to become the first GBR World Champions since 2000, winning the regatta on the last race of the final day after an earlier dismasting looked to have put paid to their ambitions. Jamie sails at Bristol Corinthian but is a member of Waldringfield thanks to his grandfather Gordon, who still races a Wayfarer competitively on the Deben. They were joined in the top 10 by Hattie and Hamish Collingridge who were 4th and secured the First Girl trophy, Ellie Wootten and Amelia Mayhew in 5th and Cara Bland and Ines Green in 7th overall. All from WSC. With Katie Spark and Conor Line and Harry and Faye Chatterton rounding out the Waldringfield contingent it was great



to see all the GBR team in the top half of the fleet.

Perhaps more notable was, that apart from the Brits and Argentinians no other country had a single boat in the Top 10 overall - it was truly a performance by everyone, which underlines the strength of the fleet and the dedication which these young sailors put into their sport.



It was a wonderful event, we had a massively worthy winner and the Argentinian hosts were exceptionally friendly, even if at times it felt like they were loading the odds against our sailors! We visited the British Embassy where an official reception was held, spent time in Buenos Aires seeing the sights, including La Boca Juniors iconic football stadium and were very sad to leave.

Our sailors are already home, although their boats remain somewhere mid Atlantic in a container, and training, for next year's Worlds team has already started in earnest.

## West Knoll Buoy

John White, Harbour Master at Felixstowe Ferry, reports that the West Knoll Buoy was lost during Storm Doris. The entrance to the Deben has been surveyed by Trinity House and there have been changes to the entrance. John will be producing a new 'chartlet' which he is aiming to have on his website by Easter. Ed.

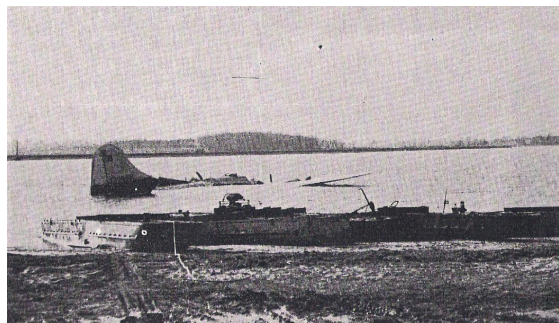
## Ramsholt Quay 20th Feb 1945

It's just after 9am on the morning of the 20th February 1945, the weather cold, misty and overcast and Shotisham locals, Aircraftsmen Arthur Reeve 22yrs old, home on leave, and his old friend Arthur Hunt have arranged to go fishing in the River Deben just off Ramsholt Quay.

The tide was still running out, and for their purposes they wanted a slack tide. As they got things ready Arthur Hunt looked inland towards Waldringfield and saw flames showing above the river wall towards Stonner Point. In a few seconds a B-17 Flying Fortress turned towards Ramsholt opposite Kirton Creek with a serious engine fire.

The pilot Lt. Frederick Stindt and his Co Pilot 2nd Lt. Irwin Roth realising the on board fire extinguishers had failed to stop the fire, prepared to ditch their aircraft in the shallower waters of the River Deben. This was the crew's 18th mission[1] together and they were well rehearsed in crash landings, having already left three previous B-17 aircraft in Allied Occupied France after crash landings due to significant ack-ack gunfire damage, sustained during bombing raids over enemy territory. This one would be different though, it was on water. T/Sgt. Jewel K Haynes, top turret gunner and flight engineer, braced himself behind the co-pilot's seat so he could read out speed and altitude during their decent. Only minutes had passed since they had taken off from Debach Airfield, just north west of Woodbridge, and he was still raising the landing gear when he'd noticed the fire in No. 3 engine. Lack of altitude prevented 'bailing out'; and anyway with a full fuel and bomb load an immediate decision was required, any delay may result in their aircraft crashing in or near to Alderton Village. Other members of the crew made their way to the relative safety of the radio room amidst ships once the decision to ditch had been taken.

Meanwhile the two 'Arthurs' had jumped behind a storage boat for some shelter in case of a collision with the Quay, but as they looked up, the aircraft ditched in the middle of the river about 150 yards from them. Immediately they realised they needed to row out to the motor boat they used for fishing, if they were



going to help survivors. Arthur Hunt was an experienced mariner, spending most of his life at sea, losing the use of one lung after an action at sea off Naples during the First World War, so the younger Arthur rowed as he'd never rowed before. As they scrambled from dingy to motorboat they prayed 'Oh please God let the engine start

first time". By now they could hear the call of a survivor; the engine did start first time and away they went, to a hand sticking out of the water and a muffled cry.

On hitting the water B-17 43-38568 had pitched forward, smashing out the glass of the bombardiers front turret, forcing water up and into the aircraft, knocking T/Sgt. Haynes through a partition and onto his back in the bomb bay. As he recovered his thoughts the aircraft was already sinking fast. Heading back to the cockpit, he realised 2nd Lt. Roth had escaped through the cockpit window; Stindt was having difficulty releasing his chair chute. Now underwater, by some miracle they both somehow managed to escape the aircraft. Sadly the rest of the crew were not so fortunate and seven brave young American airmen perished trapped inside the radio room.

When the 'Arthurs' reached the crewman they could not get him into the boat, his clothing and equipment were waterlogged. However, holding him by his harness they managed to get him back to the quay where they left him propped up and vomiting up the salt water – this was T/Sgt. Haynes [1]. They noticed another crew member scrambling towards the shallow water and mud. Arthur Hunt shouted at him to go to the edge, which would enable him to make his way to the quay – this was Lt. Stindt [1]. They left them together on the quay and headed back towards the stricken aircraft hoping to find other survivors.



They searched around the plane, which was now very dangerous because of all the leaking fuel in the water. Unfortunately no other survivors were visible so they continued their search down river towards Green Point. By the time they got back to the quay the local police had arrived and the lady from the Ramsholt Arms had taken the two crew members away from the quayside. They never again saw the survivors they had helped. Regrettably the body of 2nd Lt. Roth was found the following day, he had drowned in the strong current as it swept him down stream.

B-17 43-38568 nicknamed "Little Davy II" had only been allocated to this crew two days beforehand after it had been fitted with radar and new engines. Now regarded as a Pathfinder Lead Aircraft, the previous day had been spent slow running the new engines and being introduced to replacement crew members, Sgt. Francis Godfrey, Navigator and Sgt. Norman Reck, Gunner. Mission 18 was to be their first and only flight with Lt. Stindt's crew.

Lt. Carroll Bracy, leader of a previous crew had given 43-38568 her nickname after his first born son. He and his crew flew 19 missions in her and 16 in his previous command, "Little Davy" a B-27 Liberator. Most of these missions were undertaken during the disastrous month of November 1944 when the Mighty 8th lost over 200 aircraft and crews.

This crew came across from the USA - Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Tennessee, California, Illinois, Michigan, Massachusetts and New York State. They were brought together during 1944 and trained at the Ardmore Army Airfield in Oklahoma, before being posted to England, arriving at Debach Airfield on the 25th October 1944. They flew their first mission on the 11th November – the target Coblenz, Germany.

The survivors, Lt. Stindt and T/Sgt. Haynes, attended the funeral of their fallen colleagues, "the greatest bunch of guys we ever knew", on the 6th March at the Cambridge American Cemetery [3], where only S/Sgt. Paul Hataleskey and 2nd Lt. Irwin Roth still lay. After the war, families had the opportunity to repatriate loved ones to family cemeteries back home in America, if they so wished.

On the 20th May 1994 a small plaque [4], donated by the village of Alderton, was unveiled on the wall outside the Ramsholt Arms where it remains today in honour of the crew of "Little Davy II"



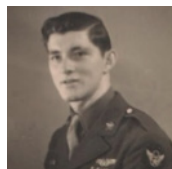
L to R Lt F Stindt



T/Sgt JK Haynes



2nd Lt I Roth



Sgt F Godfrey



Sgt N Reck



S/Sgt P Hataleskey



S/Sgt L Deniston



2nd Lt A Johnson



S/Sgt A Baraniak



T/Sgt W Deutsch

These facts have been compiled from written records made by Arthur Reeve (my father's cousin) and T/Sgt. Haynes (who kept a journal) at the time. Further details can be found at the American Airforce Museum in Britain website [5]

[1] T/Sgt. Haynes now 95 lives with his son in California. Lt. Stindt died 1994 at his home in Texas.

[2] Mission "8th AF 836" - Railroad Station and Marshalling Yards Nuremburg Germany. This included c1200 aircraft of the 8th AF Heavy Bombardment Groups - [http://www.8thafhs.com/old/get\\_one\\_mission.php?mission\\_id=1848](http://www.8thafhs.com/old/get_one_mission.php?mission_id=1848)

[3] Cambridge American Cemetery - <https://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials/europe/cambridge-american-cemetery#.WHaCTPmLSM8>

[4] The names of 2nd Lt Irwin Roth and S/Sgt. W Deutsch were incorrectly recorded.

[5] American Air Museum in Britain - <http://www.americanairmuseum.com/aircraft/12573>

## Memories of my father's dinghies at Felixstowe Ferry

My father had a weakness for buying peculiar types of sailing dinghies. Just before the 2nd World War he bought what he thought would be a fine racing dinghy. It was number 4 of the 'Felix Fury' class ('ff4' on the sail) designed by a local man. It was a very odd looking boat; about 15ft long, three quarter decked and clinker built, with high shear (a very pointed bow) so that the water-line length was only 12ft. It turned out to be almost the slowest sailing boat on the river!



After the war my father kept buying and selling boats of various classes and forms including: Felix Fury ff 4 in 1938

- a semi-14ft International' dinghy.
- a damaged mahogany '14ft International' dinghy (beautiful!)

- a 14ft Merlin (also beautiful) called *Hush*. It was carvel built which was allowed before the class joined up with the Rocket class. She got her name when she was being built at home, the family used to come over to the workshop when the hammering got too much and shout 'hush!'.

- a 14ft Rocket. This was also a dinghy produced before the Merlin-Rocket Union. It was a heavy clinker built boat, suitable for rough estuary sailing.



*Puck*: war defence scaffolding still in place in 1947

- a very fragile fibre glass 'Puck' sailing dinghy.
- in 1948 a canvas fold-up 'Seabird' sailing dinghy.

- in 1949 an ex-Olympics (1948) 'Firefly'(No.489). My elder brother, Colin, raced this successfully for many years. [see note below]

- in 1951 An aluminium alloy 12ft mono-sail dinghy 'Fury' designed and built by Alan Eckford (also designer of the 'Fleetwind'). These were made of four strips of duraluminium bent about a single axis. The boat had a fully rotating, unstayed mast.



*Seabird* 1948: me sailing, aged 12, with a school friend (note: no life jackets)



My father bought seven of these dinghies and sold them to members of the Cam Sailing Club, where he was Commodore from 1957 to 1959. This provided some exciting competition.

For several years I raced one of these (No. 11) in the Deben Week Regatta and also in the Aldeburgh Regatta

- in 1955 a '505' (No. 7 I think) – this was the first '505' seen at the Ferry. My father, I and a friend raced this in the fast-handicap class, without trapeze or



My father repainting his Fury FY7

had just turned the windward mark up at Iken and were planing back down river on a broad reach. I was in the most forward position holding the jib sheet. My friend was acting as ballast between me and my father, at the helm.



Me sailing Fury FYU1 aged 15 (note: no life jacket)



Me crewing, aged 13, with my brother Colin in his Firefly in 1949

spinnaker, at the Aldeburgh Regatta that year and beat its closest rival, an Uffa Fox 'Jollyboat'. We had one rather unfortunate incident during the last race in a force five. We



Furies racing on the Cam, 1954

I became alarmed that the bow appeared to want to submarine.

The early 505s were built with cold-molded marine plywood and the foredeck was much more rounded than the later fibreglass version. This exaggerated the feeling that we were nose diving and I shifted my weight back, pushing my friend back and my father on to the transom. Another puff came and I shifted back a



bit further. This time the effect was to push my father off into the water and we capsized in a cloud of spray. I had just time to climb over the side and stand on the plate, but the other two had to swim to rejoin the boat. I was not the most popular person when we managed to right the boat and get sailing again!

## Firefly No. 489

The story behind my brother Colin's Firefly, No. 489, is a curious one. The boat had come third in the 1948 single-handed Olympics sailed by Koos de Jong of the Netherlands. After the Olympic Games the boats were sold off and my father bought F489 at a sale near Peterborough for my brother Colin in 1949, who was aged sixteen at the time. It still had the Olympic rings painted on the transom and a curious contraption bolted to the centreboard casing. This was a central jib sheet jamming cleat, a heavy ungainly brass piece of equipment, specially developed for a continuous jib sheet. All the Olympic boats had it fitted. My father replaced it with a conventional jamming cleat on each side of the boat.

Jamming Cleat for continuous jib sheet



My brother had nine years happy racing in F489, mainly at Felixstowe Ferry, at Waterbeach on the River Cam and at Ely Sailing Club.



The Colin Whittle Trophy

It wasn't until my father died in 1986, when I was clearing up the old home, that I found the continuous jib jamming cleat at the back of a cupboard in the garage. It was very tarnished by then and I put it in my garage thinking that it might be an interesting piece of history.

I moved house in 2008 and whilst clearing up my garage I came across the jamming cleat again and decided that I would have it cleaned up and mounted on a block

of wood.

I checked on the results of the Olympics and was surprised to learn that Paul Elvstrøm in F486 had won the Gold and an American, Ralf Evans, in F501 had won Silver. I had this engraved on one side of the cleat and '1948 Olympics F489' on the other.



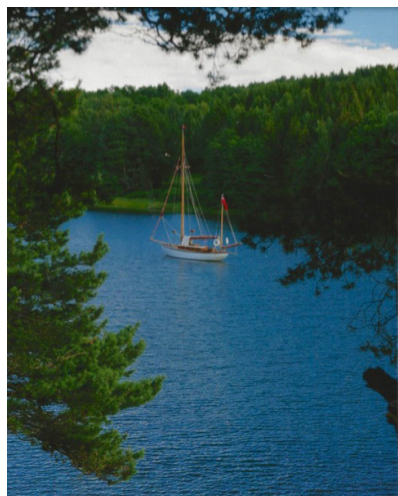
I presented this to the Firefly fleet for the National Championships at Felixstowe Ferry in 2011 as 'The Colin Whittle Trophy'. It was awarded that year to the crew of the overall winning Firefly. It was extraordinary to find that the first winner should be Jenny Vines. In 1954 I had sailed with Jeremy Vines, the father of Jenny's husband Ben, in the Firefly Schoolboy Championships held at Itchenor when we had come second to James Grogono. Itchenor was where the first Firefly was built.

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Peter Clay

## An Introduction to *Nirvana's* 91st Year

For many reasons 2016 turned out to be a very special year for our Deben based 91-year old yawl *Nirvana*.



We started the season in the Danish port of Roskilde in Seeland where we had been made so welcome on previous occasions. From there in stages we sailed up the Swedish coast and crossed to Norway.

I was eager to explore new waters, and hungry for more information about how the Norwegians built their replica Viking ships. Our project in Woodbridge to build a reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon burial ship was slowly making progress and we were well ahead with research, but I was keen to meet more Scandinavians who had been through the actual building process. It's a passion they are eager to share and during the total of 63 days I spent in Scandinavia in the summer of 2016 I

was able to gather much useful information.

During the spring and summer *Nirvana* had four different crew aboard. We spent some wonderful weeks enjoying the spectacular scenery of Norway's East coast, made visits to the Viking Ship Museum in Oslo, visited the famous Oseberg and Gokstad ships and the Fram Museum which happened to have a Shackleton exhibition on too. So far as I know this is the furthest north that *Nirvana* has reached in her 91 years.

However, I had another ambition that summer- to explore the 19th century Telemark canal and, as a result, I discovered one of Norway's least told stories. Most of us associate Telemark with "the Heroes of Telemark" – Anthony Mann's film about Nazi heavy water with Kirk Douglas and Richard Harris but there's another equally heroic story that we would discover in due course.

Ed. The full account of *Nirvana's* Scandinavian Odyssey will be published in the Autumn Edition

## Curlews on the Deben

I have to confess that my early interest in Curlews was of a musical, not an ornithological nature. When I was 18, I was lucky enough to be a Hesse student at Snape Maltings, which meant that in return for chair-moving and other dogsbody duties, I was given a free pass to all the concerts at the Aldeburgh Festival. The most memorable performance was of Benjamin Britten's piece of music theatre, 'Curlew River', based on a Japanese Noh play written in the 15th century which Britten saw during a visit to Japan and the Far East. The story is a sad one of a mad woman looking for her lost son, but it ends in redemption and it seemed to me then, as it does now, to be very mystical and intriguing like the bird itself.



It was not until I came to live on the River Deben that I became enchanted with the real call of the Curlew, rather than its reproduction conjured up by the flute in Britten's opera. In those days, I was a Londoner, and would not have known what a Curlew looked like. But now that I am a river dweller, and see the Curlew up close, I can tell you some facts about these most special of birds.

There are eight Curlew species in the world, the whimbrel, slender-billed Curlew, Eurasian curlew, long-billed curlew, little curlew, Eskimo curlew and bristle-thighed Curlew, but of these, the Eskimo and slender-billed are critically endangered, if not extinct. The one most commonly seen in the UK, and the Curlew under discussion in this article, is the Eurasian Curlew (with the latin name of *Numenius arquata*) of the family of Sandpipers and allies (Scolopacidae). They are very large, tall waders – in fact Europe's largest wading bird. They are about the same size as a female pheasant- some 50-60 cm long with a wingspan of 90 cm (a significant three feet in "old money") and they weigh between 770 and 1000 grams. Their average lifespan seems to be debatable – some sources say that it is as little as 5 years, others as between 10 to 20 years and apparently a 31 year-old Curlew has been tracked.

Their most memorable features are their very long, deeply downwards-curving bills which are pink underneath, and their resonating calls. Just to dwell on beaks for a moment – there are very few other river birds which have such long and downwards curving bills apart from the Whimbrel (anyway of the Curlew species) and perhaps the Snipe. Most waders have a straight beak and this includes the Knot, Dunlin, Sandpiper, Redshank, Greenshank and Godwit. The Avocet has another unusual beak, being upwards curving and very fine, but they can also be more easily spotted because they are black and white. The RSPB 'Complete birds of Britain and Europe' waxes quite poetic, as indeed it should, about the Curlew's

cry and says this: "Voice: Typical calls loud, full whoy, haup, cur-li, hoarse, throaty cu-cu-cew, longer slow, repeated 'cur-lew', song begins slowly, accelerates into ecstatic, rich, bubbling trill."

Curlews are mottled brown and grey with long fine dark lines down neck and breast, arrow shaped barring on flanks and a brown barred back. The head is fairly plain and this, as well as the longer bill, distinguishes the Curlew from the smaller, Whimbrel. When they fly, Curlews have a white wedge on the rump which extends up the back in a shallow "V". The flight pattern is strong and direct with slow beats, often in lines or Vs. Adults moult completely between June and November.

In winter, they can be seen with their beaks probing soft mud for crabs, rag worms and small shellfish but they can also feed from coastal rocks and in pastures for earthworms. In summer they eat insects, particularly the larvae of beetles and flies, spiders and worms.



During the spring and early summer, Curlews migrate to their breeding grounds – mostly in upland areas – raising their chicks in areas of rough pasture, heather moorland and wetlands. They tend to be site-faithful, and return to the same breeding ground year after year, with their chicks establishing their own nesting grounds close to where they themselves were fledged. During the breeding season, males

deliver a loud and impressive display call – a 'bubbling' song to attract mates and defend their territories. Like many wading birds, Curlews lay their eggs in a nest on the ground – known as a 'scrape'. There is only one brood per year. The male makes several scrapes and one is selected and lined by the female. The site is usually in the open on a mound or tussock, but is sometimes protected by vegetation. The 2-5 eggs are laid in April or May and both parents incubate the eggs for 27-29 days. The young are covered with down and feed themselves, roaming around with their parents for a further 32-38 days. The female often leaves before they fly. From July, they return to the coast – to tidal mudflats, saltmarshes and nearby farmland.

There is an interesting breeding pattern. The UK has resident birds that both breed and over-winter in the UK; migrant birds, which breed in the UK and overwinter in Ireland, France and Spain and even go as far south as South Africa;

and over-wintering birds, which come from Scandinavia and Russia to take advantage of the milder UK winters, then return home to breed in the summer. There are around 68,000 pairs of breeding Curlews in the UK – between 19 and 27 per cent of the global breeding population. There are around 150,000 birds in the UK during the winter, so with a globally-important population through the year, the UK is arguably the most important country for Curlews in the world.

Unfortunately, national bird monitoring schemes show that breeding populations (but not necessarily the over-wintering populations) are declining sharply. Curlews



were first classified as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List in 2008. The breeding populations have declined in a terrifying way - by 55 % in Scotland and 30% in England (between 1995 and 2012), by 81% in Wales (between 1993 and 2006) and by 82% in Northern Ireland (between 1985-87 and 2013). The RSPB and other UK's nature conservation agencies believe that the Curlew should now be considered the UK's highest

conservation priority bird species and it has set up a project to raise awareness of its plight and develop an understanding of the management practices required to reverse Curlew population declines through trial studies. It is working with many other bodies to target conservation efforts and, in a heartening example of international co-operation, it coordinated an international conservation plan under the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. This provides a framework for conservation action across the Curlew's range - including northern Europe and Russia as well as important non-breeding countries in Africa and the Middle East.

A significant amount of research has already gone into investigating Curlew populations and reasons behind their decline in numbers. The evidence to date suggests that declines are largely due to poor breeding success - studies from across Europe have found that in most cases breeding pairs are failing to raise enough young to maintain stable populations. Egg predation by mammals and birds has emerged as a key factor behind the poor breeding success. Levels of predation may have increased because of changes in farming and forestry.

As the greatest breeding numbers of Curlew are found in North Wales, the Pennines, and in areas of Scotland, there may be little that we can do in Suffolk to make a huge difference to the future of the Curlew. But if you are a land-owner who has, or once had, breeding pairs and would like to talk to someone about how you can help to save this precious bird, please contact your local RSPB.

(Photographs David Bucknell)



### The Re-incarnation of *Mist*

The story of *Mist's* reincarnation began, when John Krejsa 'JK' was in conversation with Albert Strange Association member, Mike Burn. Mike had seen an advert in *Classic Boat*, showing a photograph of 'this decaying boat': an Albert Strange canoe-yawl and thought that John might be interested. Cautious at first, John was encouraged by his wife Anne.

Originally built in 1907, *Mist* had been raised from Gare Loch, where she had sunk after a family tragedy had caused her to be neglected and, a rusted swivel on the mooring resulted in her being wound under the water. She was lifted in due course, but then lay neglected on the owner's barge.

Jim Hill, a local boatbuilder, who had originally helped raise her from the loch, managed to persuade her owner not to break her up for scrap; but, was then obliged to watch her steady decay over the years and she was eventually abandoned on a nearby beach. Unable to watch idly on, Jim arranged for a local floating crane to lift her and place her in an abandoned aluminium lifeboat, for greater protection from the elements.



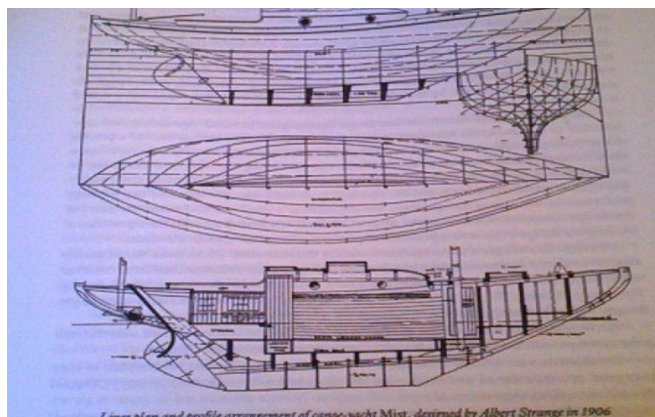
The Albert Strange Association was alerted when a dog-walker spotted her and put them in touch with Jim Hill.

A flurry of activity ensued. Members of the Association underwrote the costs of getting this historic boat moved within reach of a road. Jim built a steel cradle for her eventual recovery, whilst the Secretary arranged for the photograph and write-up to appear in *Classic Boat*, in the hope that a new owner would emerge.

She was trailed down on a low-loader to Melton Boatyard overnight, when the roads were quieter, and had arrived in the early hours, for all to inspect. John went down at daylight and with her shape intact, she was retained in her cradle and placed outside the Granary building. An appraisal by him, soon established that there was little left to preserve and realised a re-build would be required.

Original drawings from The Mystic Seaport, were obtained and the front bedroom of John and Anne's house became a drawing office. Meticulous analysis of her lines; number and thickness of planks, frames, deck beams, decks, rig and superstructure, took place over several months. It was clear that she had been lightly built and John decided to increase the thickness of her planks from five





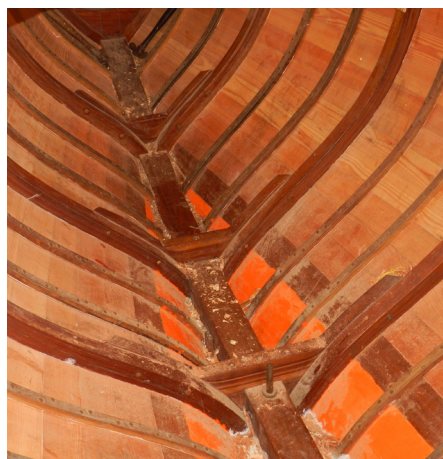
eighths, to seven eighths of an inch.

A centreline was made stem to stern and the boat held rigidly in place, supported either side and bow and stern. When finished, there was no difference in measurement on either side, equalling perfect symmetry - the importance of which only

dawned on me quite late into my years of struggling to make my racing dinghy go faster . . . !

Next, the construction of the 13 foot stem, laminated in IROKO hardwood, which John carried out in the Granary workroom, using epoxy glue for the laminations. He had made good the oak keel on top of the iron keel and the stem tapered onto that. The stern-knee and stern-post were similarly laminated and fixed into position. Laminating is a very laborious and time consuming process.

The IROKO frames were shaped in a mould, each one different and laminated in quarter-inch thick lengths to a depth of two and a half inches. Two smaller ones were fastened alternately to the IROKO frames; those were made from specially imported American White Oak, wet and pre-stressed, so that they bent into position cold. The IROKO frames were screwed and the oak frames clenched with copper nails as his wife Anne, held the dolly on the outside.



By March 2012, *Mist* was ready for the planking and Sqdn. Ldr. Bruce Chapple - restoring *Rock of Ages* in the Yard - suggested to John, that to cut down Larch trees from the Forest of Dean would be

best, as the trees there grow slowly to a height of thirty-five metres - taller and with fewer knots than those found in East Anglia.

A meeting was arranged with the Head Forester, who was keenly interested to know what would be the end result of the wood. John chose three trees with few knots, which were cut down and made into butts before going to Colney Weston

for cutting into planks.

The wood of the larch proved to be a beautiful red colour. Many months of shaping and planing followed: each plank being differently shaped. This completed, the decks were laid and the superstructure created. For the cockpit and the cabin-sides KAYA, a hardwood like Mahogany, was used. This was



sourced from a huge tree cut down in Cameroon, acquired by Jamie Clay, who is based in Tollesbury.

At this time, the 'Stem to Stern' Apprenticeship Scheme introduced Tim Smith, who spent two years with John, learning the ropes while making a very nice fore hatch for *Mist*. Tim is now working at Everson's cum Woodbridge Boatyard.

For the Masts, SITKA Spruce was sourced from Vancouver via a family

Firm in Salcome. The main mast is thirty two feet tall and six carpenters' trestles were constructed to keep the wood perfectly supported during shaping in the Granary workshop.

During this ten years of rebuilding, there was little time for digressing. An occasional visit to Plymouth with Anne, to see their son James, about sums it up. No matter what the weather, Anne tells me, John would either be in the shed, the Granary, or on *Mist*. What it took was total commitment and total support from family. Anne, with a friend, covered many miles by bicycle through much of East Anglia, as well as parts of Holland and France, for a little light relief !

And so, on 17th September 2016, some fifty people had gathered to watch the



launch of this very special boat, that had been pupating for a long time, in a simple white canvass 'cocoon', at Melton Boatyard. Almost ten years to the day since her first arriving there as a total wreck, *Mist* was gently lowered again, into water. But this time, on that bright and sunny Autumn morning, it was into the English water of the River Deben.

Champagne was passed round and every face among the group was smiling and exchanging their own stories of witnessing various stages of the rebuilding and what it takes to work with the dedication that John had done but in such a modest way. There has to be an ability to spend hours on your own, apart from anything else, his wife Anne was telling me.

## Simon Holdich

### OLD BOATS - *A'haberlin*

The professional boatbuilder Jamie Clay's very informative talk at the autumn open meeting followed nicely on the heels of the reference in the autumn edition of this magazine, to John Krejsa's restoration and launch of *Mist*. Jamie Clay's own boat, *Firefly*, and *Mist* are both canoe yawls, designed a century or more ago by Albert Strange. *Firefly* has been a fairly regular visitor to the Deben. Another Albert Strange canoe yawl, Peter Clay's *Nirvana*, is to be seen on the river or on her mooring at Methersgate when she's not off cruising in foreign waters, and until recently we had the very pretty Sheila at the downstream end of Troublesome Reach.

Odd, in a way, when you consider that Strange was head of the art school in Scarborough, far away to the North, and was most closely associated as a yacht designer with the Humber Yawl Club. So we're lucky to have these classic canoe yawls – beautiful, graceful objects, always easy on the eye – on the Deben. Like our other old, wooden boats, they add greatly, to my mind, to the charm of the river.



A surprising number survive into this GRP age, and there are still examples out there awaiting restoration...like the canoe yawl *A'bhirlinn*, built in 1929 to a Strange design or one at least heavily influenced by him.

She is 39' 6" overall, 29' 6" on the waterline x 8' 6" beam x 5' draught, built by Dickies of Tarbert. Her planking is of 1" teak on oak frames. She's pictured

afloat in 1938. In subsequent decades, she clocked up thousands of miles of blue water cruising, including Atlantic crossings. Then in 1993 *A'bhirlinn* (it just means "boat", I believe, in Gaelic) was tied up in Portsmouth harbour when a storm struck. As I understand it, she was leaned on by a bigger vessel and forced under,

her foredeck being ripped off with the anchor winch she was moored by. Royal Navy divers brought her back to the surface but she's not been to sea since.

Instead she's been lying ashore in East Yorkshire. (Picture of boat arriving and being craned off) My brother, a life-long member of the Humber Yawl Club and an experienced amateur boatbuilder himself, and I bought her with the intention of repairing her. However, for whatever reason - the demands of family and work,



advancing age - we never did get *A'bhirlinn* afloat again. Rather than see her lost, we are now hoping to give her away to someone who might succeed where we failed. She unquestionably needs a great deal of work.

If you've the skill and time and patience to do it, or the money to pay a professional boatbuilder to do it, or you know someone who has, do please contact:

[simonholdich@hotmail.com](mailto:simonholdich@hotmail.com)

Albert Strange on *Cherub III*  
c.1916



Wikipedia



# *Artist of the Deben*

## Nicole Harris

It could be said that my love of art started when I was about eight years old, at which time, with a friend, we took several buses to attend Wimbledon College of Art for children's art classes on Saturday mornings. I was always found to be drawing something on the dining table at home.

Later, after three years at Sutton College of Art, and afterwards at St Martins School of Art in London where I studied life drawing, I happily earned my living as a fashion illustrator in a number of London Studios, mainly in colour for catalogues, and in black and white for newspaper advertisements.

I met my husband Gordon, and together we took up sailing an Enterprise dinghy at our first club: the Thames Estuary Yacht Club at Westcliff. We spent nearly every weekend there, even though we were both still living in London. Eventually, Gordon had a fortunate career change that brought us to Suffolk; a county with which I immediately fell in love. Painting and sailing went on the back burner for a while as we brought up two children, and Gordon surged ahead with his new business of designing and building small yachts in the north of the county. We lived at first in Woodbridge and then moved to a barn conversion just outside Framlingham, where I had space for my own studio and gallery. I am still living there nearly 30 years later.



like standing looking down the Deben on a sunny day. Living here has given me my love of open spaces and the big skies that help to exaggerate them. I try to capture this in my work.

We joined Waldringfield Sailing Club in 1969, where I spent many happy weekends on the riverbank sketching the many changing moods of the river, and watching my children, and now my grandchildren sail. The sketch of Methersgate shown on the cover, was something I saw from the byroad on the way to Waldringfield. It has changed a little as the trees have grown. There is nowhere quite

I joined Peter Burnham's painting classes to kick-start my painting again, as I loved his watercolours, and his technique. I was asked to teach and ran a number of day and evening classes for adult students, plus occasional workshops, frequently in river-side locations, and sometimes in my gallery where we worked from photographic and sketch reference.

The mood and the atmosphere of a subject are, for me, the important things to depict, and all detail in a scene is to be merely suggested, or left to the imagination. Although I have also painted in oils and acrylics from time to time, my real love is with watercolours, because they have a brilliance and translucency that is not

easily matched in an opaque medium. I find watercolours the medium to best express my feelings about the landscape. I still cannot capture the wonderful



freeness of my favourite artist John S Sargent. His watercolours show his knowledge of the structure of everything that he paints, and puts down with such freedom and confidence. Hopefully, I have found my own way after years of experience.

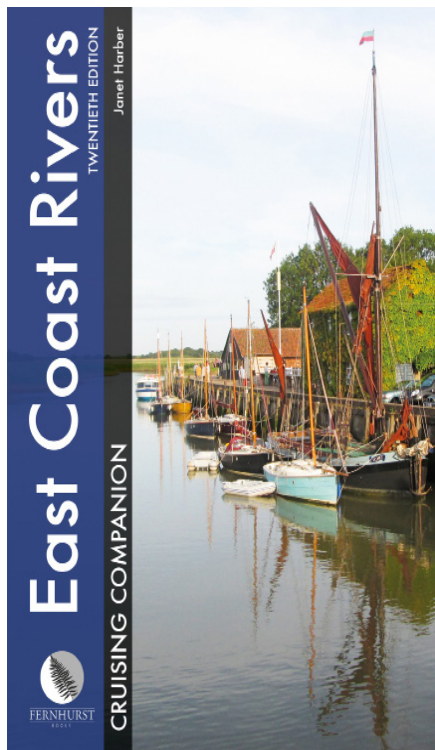


Over the years I have visited many different countries, and my collection of paintings reads like a travelogue. Painting flowers has been another passion of mine.

I have had my work in many galleries and exhibitions, including the Dorchester Hotel Exhibition, and the Fulham Gallery. My first successful One-Man show was in the Halesworth Gallery. I had my own Art Gallery at Framlingham for ten years, where I sold many of my, and other artist's, paintings to collectors from home and abroad, so some have gone to all parts of the world. I have not had an exhibition for a while, but I think I should, as I do not know what the children and grandchildren are going to do with all my works.







David Bucknell

## East Coast Rivers - Reviewed

The essence of the East Coast Rivers is in the phrase 'cruising companion'. To read this guide is to go on a journey with someone who is steeped in the East Coast Rivers and knows intimately its swatchways, creeks, mud and sand banks, and who is familiar with the history of the rivers and their associated literature.

Janet Harber takes you on a journey around the East Coast Rivers. Her experience, both as a child, sailing with her father Jack Coote, and as an adult, is steeped in the character, charm and history of the East Coast. The book is not just a guide but also a celebration of the interest and enjoyment to be found in exploring the idiosyncracies and contrasts of the rivers.

Janet introduces each chapter with references to literature and provides anecdotal quotes from authors who have enjoyed the rivers over the years, such as Edward Fitzgerald, Maurice Griffiths and George Arnot. There is a helpful bibliography at the end of the book. There are historical references and snippets of information, which will interest the reader and prompt the inquisitive sailor to find out more about the area he or she is visiting, and to make more than a superficial acquaintance with area.

The east coast is not flash or smart; it doesn't have the spectacular coastline the West Country but it has a charm and interest, which once you have encountered it is hard to resist. It has a commercial past and present combined with some charming and unusual landscapes. It has open estuaries muddy creeks sandbanks tides and all these dimensions are evoked in the guide.

As a companion it is well presented with clear chartlets and inserts. The presentation is not 'busy' or elaborate. Its style is crisp and sharp with helpful information boxes and frames. Above all it is beautifully illustrated with photographs that depict the rivers and harbours referred to, in ways that are characteristic; sometimes with an unusual perspective. The aerial photographs are particularly helpful and give you an entirely different perspective as a sailor. Janet also shares the benefit of her experience with some useful tips as to what to watch out for and so on.



(C) Sealand Aerial Photography Ltd./Fernhurst Books Ltd.

From my experience of many of the rivers and harbours, the guide is accurate and up to date in its description; and if we find any inaccuracies, as Jack Coote said many years ago, it is up to the sailor to help the editing team correct the guide. As much as I like Ramsgate, I might comment on my 'welcome' to the inner harbour.

Janet Harber's knowledge should come as no surprise to the reader, given the fact that her family have been involved with this guide for over 60 years and this is the 20th edition. Janet sailed with her father Jack Coote, who developed the first guides using his training as a commercial artist and his professional background in photography, and his friendship with Maurice Griffiths.

There is an excellent chapter on '60 years of East Coast Rivers', which tells the story of the guide and the family's involvement. Janet was involved in the research for the various editions and made many voyages with her father. She has continued his interest in photography and her brother in law was primarily responsible for the aerial photographs. While it is a history of the guide, the guide is a history of the east coast rivers over the last 60 years.

If you are sailing on your own, enduring the rain or a gale on an anchor, or in front of a winter fire planning your season, this guide will be an excellent companion.



Janet and her sister Judy in the 1950s aboard *Twunda*, dried out in Horsey Mere waiting for the tide to come back.

'East Coast Rivers - Cruising Companion'. is published by Fernhurst Books.

[www.fernhurstbooks.com](http://www.fernhurstbooks.com)

I would like to thank Janet Harber and Rachel Atkins of Fernhurst Books for their help in providing the illustrations for this review. DB

## Correspondence

Anne Whiting (née Heath) who lived at Old Maltings, near the quay at Waldringfield in the 1930s, has died. Her father Noel Heath was on the staff at RAF Martlesham, and Anne was sent to Felixtowe Ladies College (which she disliked) and Ipswich High School (which she loved). She was able to lose herself on the river Deben, sailing her beloved dinghy *Frolic* which won a silver cup in the novice race at the regatta, still much treasured by her family.

She used to sail with Batchy Carr on his sailing barge Edith Mary, which her father had helped to finance.



Anne continued to take a great interest in the river for the rest of her life, coming later for holidays, spent with Gwen and Janet Waller in Waldringfield, and was a member of the River Deben Association in recent years. Having married the distinguished potter Geoffrey Whiting in 1953, Anne spent the rest of her life, happily, but rather frustratingly, in land-locked Worcestershire.

David Whiting

Anne Whiting's 'Deben Reflection' was featured in 'The Deben' Spring 2015.

## Hounsfield bed

Hi  
Interested in reading your article re Hounsfield Bed, and its history.  
We still have one regularly used now by grandchildren, and they love it!  
Regards

Rani Pert





River Deben Association

## **Annual General Meeting**

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017

7.30pm

Woodbridge Community Hall

The AGM will be followed by a talk

### **‘The Three Lives of Bawdsey Manor’**

**by**

**Robert Simper**

Robert was born near the River Alde but has spent most of his life beside the River Deben or preferably on it. He is well known for his informative books on the British coast and particularly the English Estuary Series which began with the Deben River, in 1992. He is a founder member of the River Deben Association and has recently become its Honorary President.

Bawdsey Manor, the Victorian mansion overlooking the entrance of the River Deben was put up for sale last summer. Robert plans to talk on the three phases of its history. Its building by the millionaire Sir Cuthbert Quilter; the development of radar here just before the Second World War which played a major part in the ultimate victory; and the recent two decades as Alexander's Language School.