

HUNTERS' YARD

Newsletter of the Friends of the Hunter Fleet



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Editorial

As I'm sure most of you will know, that smiling chap on our front cover is Tom Grapes. He's seen here with his lovely wife, Pam, sitting on the bench which was presented to him by grateful Friends on the occasion of his recent notching up of 60 years with the yard. See inside for more.

If you glance across at the listing on the left, you'll see a new Yard Administrator has been appointed. Vikki Walker beat over 40 other applicants to land the post, and despite being with the yard for only a short time, she is making her mark, and will no doubt be a valuable addition to the team. You can read more about her inside.

Those with access to Anglia Television output may well have seen programmes in the *Hidden Broads* series broadcast recently. Hunter's Yard featured in four of the six or seven programmes, and although there was some repetition, the coverage was excellent, and acted as a major showcase for the yard and its ethos. Watching, I felt privileged to be a part of it all!

In this issue, as well as news from the Yard, you'll find several contributions from Friends far and wide. Do *you* have a story to tell, a memory to share, a point to make? If so, please do contact me.

Zoë

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The Chair Types...

Just returned from the Hellesdon High School sailing week with all pupils safe and well (only 7 fell in and some of those were either deliberate or not total immersions) and we had very hot days and very thundery and rainy nights. This global warming is proving to be a bit unpredictable!

AGM - 28th April 2007

The AGM was another heart warming gathering of over 100 Friends and the BBQ and subsequent sailing proved to be very enjoyable for all concerned so far as I could tell. Zoe has reproduced my report elsewhere in the Newsletter for those who could not attend and hear it delivered in person.

Help for the Trust

The Friends' Committee continues to provide funds for the Trust and we have a considerable balance in the bank for that purpose. This was queried at the AGM and there are several reasons for the current position. There is always an issue of timing of when to transfer funds to the Trust so as to maximise the possibilities for grants and bids from other funders. There is a need for a contingency fund equal to a year's running costs (not yet achieved) as well as a need to build up the endowment fund from which subsidised hirings for youth groups is paid. Also, we have several projects in progress which may, or may not come to fruition. Some of these require some delicate negotiations so we would not wish to prejudice them by premature announcements. These issues are fully debated by your Friends Committee and as soon as we are able we will keep you informed via the newsletter. In addition to previously mentioned expenditure, we have

recently approved funds for new industrial sized woodworking clamps and material for burgees.

Sailing Picnic 29th September 2007

The Committee has decided to stick to the usual formula for the Sailing Picnic again for the Autumn Event. That is, meet up at the Yard in the late morning, have a morning sail, moor up for lunch together at the EACC site opposite Thurne Dyke and then an afternoon sail before returning to the Yard. The one difference will be the inclusion of the water bus Princess Katherine which can accommodate about 80 people and has a toilet. This will take people from the Yard to the EACC mooring for the picnic and then return to the Yard at about 4.00 p.m. which will enable people to take part who may not wish to sail but nevertheless enjoy the picnic and the spectacle of so many Hunters boats sailing together. It seemed to work well at the Trust's 10th Anniversary celebrations last year and some Friends have requested that we repeat the exercise.

Tom's 60 years and still going strong

You probably know that the Friend's Committee presented Tom with a wooden garden seat as a 'Thank You' present for all those years of faithful service to the Hunter Fleet. I understand it has been installed in his garden and is already a well used fixture (although he is still down the Yard a lot of the time!).

The yellow posts at the end of the Yard Dyke

Thanks for respecting the yellow posts. From my admittedly limited experience to date this year they are being used as we hoped.

Hamilton's Broads Navigation Charts and Index

Following my piece - Calling all 'Wainwrights of the Broads' in the last Newsletter, Tim Munsey has kindly lent me his 1971 copy of Hamilton's Broads Navigation Charts and Index which gives a very objective overview of the northern and southern rivers as well as all sorts of useful information and tips on sailing. I cannot find out if it is still available. Amazon has a 1978 edition (which must be a little out of date!) and offers instead *The Complete Guide to the Norfolk Broads* plus *The Broads (Inland Waterways Maps)* as the modern alternative. I will check them out to see if they can claim to be the 'Wainwrights of the Broads'.

Yard Archives

We are looking at putting the Yard's Archives on the web as part of Norfolk County Council's 'Community Archive' project. Ludham Village is one of the pilot areas for the 'Community Archive' and the Yard's could either be a sub-set of the Village's archive or stand in their own right (any views?). In any event we will need to bid for funds for the necessary software and then we will need people to scan in the archives. Are there any volunteers out there who might be interested in helping?

Moorings at Ludham Bridge

I expect most of you know by now that there are moorings available again to raise and lower masts on the northern bank downstream of Ludham Bridge. This has been a problem in previous years. There is quite a hefty fine if you stay too long so best to time any trip to arrive with a favourable tide, waiting could prove expensive!

And Finally...

We will be back on Luna for a week in July with a new Friends' burgee (I left my old one on her at the end of last season as a sort of donation to the next hirer) and these new ones are lighter and fly much better. I can recommend them! Give us a wave if you see us.

Andrew Cowburn - March 2007

Membership News

June 2007

Membership is still maintaining its upward trend with a current figure of over 860, i.e. a net increase of over twenty Friends since writing this column way back in February. Growth has slowed recently which is understandable without a trusty Administrator at the helm but I have great confidence now that Vikki is in post that she will encourage all our non-Friend customers to sign up and there will be another Membership surge! I am still aiming for that magic 1000 figure before the end of the decade. This should be a realistic target, particularly with the extra publicity generated by the *Hidden Broads* series which has recently been on Anglia TV where Hunter's Yard was featured in no less than four out of the seven parts in the series.

There are still outstanding subscriptions for 2007 and therefore some of you will be getting my 'Final Reminder'. I hope that it's just a case of a mislaid form and we can continue to rely on your valuable support.

N.B. Will the 87 year old who asked for their subscription to be cancelled please let me have his/her name so that I can oblige!

Thank you all for your generous support, kind words and encouragement.

Jennifer Mack - June 2007

Friends write...

From Valerie Chandler

I have today received and read the newsletter. It is the only magazine I really enjoy reading - it is small, concise, and full of lovely Broads information and all the latest of the Hunter Fleet.

I am probably one of the oldest Friends. My father, born in 1890, sailed the Broads frequently as a young man with male friends. It was not until the 1930's that he finally persuaded my mother to try a cabin yacht holiday. Her memory of Broads' sailing was frequently changing sides in a day boat, getting cold, and no peace. We never looked back! The boat my father hired was *Belvoir II*, from Branford Bridge. The boat had a 2nd small well aft, where my mother sat in peace darning my school stockings etc, with the boom well above her head so no changing sides. She loved every moment of that holiday. My sister and I, and a friend, did all the work, my mother shook the mats on the bank each morning, which was her job for the day!

My father hired *Lustre* for our holiday in September 1934. Was she about two years old then, I wonder? Our holidays throughout the 1930s were spent on the Boards and in fact we were due to sail on September 3rd, at least that weekend, in 1939, when World War II started and everything was cancelled. My memory is that we thought we were going to be bombed non-stop in London. My feeling is that everyone cancelled everything until it was realised that this was a 'phoney war' situation.

On page 7 of the last newsletter, we are asked for tips on quanting. I can't believe it's a dying art! My father would turn in his

grave to know that most yachts now have engines. Where's the fun and adventurous spirit when you have to be back by 2.00pm at the end of the holiday, especially to Wroxham with tree lined river and little wind all that long haul?

My father taught us that the skill of quanting was NOT to get your arms wet. Having walked the deck with the quant on your shoulder - one hard tug, twisting to get the quant out of the mud, and then hand over hand action well below shoulder level to raise the quant out and back onto your shoulder. I used to love doing it as I felt really one of the crew, and useful.

I wish I was able to attend the various get-togethers. Norfolk is my favourite county. So, so many happy memories of holidays from early childhood in Sea Palling and sailing on the Broads. All the best to everyone for the coming season, and especially to Lucent!

From Douglas Harding

Tim Munsey asks for some advice for those unfamiliar with quants and quanting. My experience has been with the 22-24 ft long poles used on wherries. Years ago I pushed Albion for many miles.

I think it is necessary to correct a mistake that, it appears to me, just about everyone makes. Ask what a quant is for and you will be told that you push the boat along with it. You do not. You push the boat along with the soles of your feet. The quant is used to stop you going head first into the water. It is only when you realise this that you will see the importance of getting the angle of your body right.

The quant is taken to the bows and thrown, not too vigorously, at the bottom of the river. If you are too gentle it will resist your efforts because wood floats. The angle

of the throw and the distance from the boat will depend on what craft you are on but it has to be such that will keep the quant close to the side of the vessel but not close enough to rub as you go from stem to stern. Of course by throwing, I do not mean releasing the quant entirely!

Now back to the all important angle of the body. If you are pressing down on the quant, you make it difficult to release it from the mud when you need to. You are certainly not propelling the boat. Instead, as soon as the foot of the quant is secure in the river bottom, tuck the bott (the rounded end) firmly into the shoulder nearest the water, and then lean forward onto the quant. Lean as far as you can while still feeling secure. How much you can lean will depend on whether the deck is wet or dry and on your footwear. In other words, how good a grip you can get. I do not favour going barefoot. All this should have taken seconds, Now you are ready to walk to the stern at a steady pace. If you have the angle right, contact with the deck will be mainly through the ball of your foot - not the heel.

How strong do you have to be to manage this? I remember showing two men in their mid-thirties how to quant. One was a keen body-builder and it showed. The other was decidedly thin. The thin fellow quickly got

the idea while Mr Atlas just could not cope. The explanation is simple; the thin fellow realised that a quant 24 ft long is easier to handle if you hold it balanced in the middle and, when returning to the bows, it can trailed in the water rather than lifted out. When he was working the quant, his push was steady and constant rather than violent. A wherry cannot be pushed along in jerks.

So how strong? Now very. A reasonably fit person should be able to quant non-stop for hours. I am a small man aged 79 and I am confident I can still quant a 40 ton wherry a few miles. If I can, anyone can.

From Philip Bray

I was interested in the article by Robin Sermon in the last Newsletter and the damage they encountered at St Olaves. Of course mishaps will happen and the Yard staff are experts at temporary repairs to get the yachts sailing again with minimum interruption to holidays. Robin makes it all sound so simple but, of course, that is not the end of the story: in this case extra work on the chain plate fixings had to be done during the winter maintenance and a new jib-boom was made up and varnished to replace the spare in stock - ready for the next mishap! An awful lot of work goes on behind the scenes.

Regards and happy sailing to all.

PHOTOGRAPHS

We are always looking for good photographs of the Hunter yachts for the brochure and the calendar and we would be very pleased to accept any contributions. Different views and different areas (particularly the Southern Rivers) would be specially useful.

Try to avoid motor boats and fenders if you can!

For film photographers, a 6 x 4 gloss print is the best. For digital photographers, good resolution, uncompressed files are needed. A file of 1500Kb is ideally the minimum for the calendar to allow for cropping, etc but 600Kb is really the minimum that can be converted for the printer's use. Please send on a CD, either to the Yard or the Secretary, Philip Bray. Address on inside front cover.

Brochure photos are selected in October and calendar photos in January.

Meet Vikki Walker

If you've called the Yard in recent weeks, you may well already be aware of Vikki Walker. She was recently appointed to the post of Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust Administrator following Lynda's recent and sad departure. From all she had heard, Vikki knew that Lynda would be a hard act to follow, but the last thing on her mind is following. Instead, she's determined to create her own unique act, and she's started already, to the delight of those around her.

Vikki hails from New Orleans, though she left the States in 1972, and has lived and worked in the UK for thirty years or more. Before settling here, she spent some time in Germany and Holland, and in the course of her career has travelled all over the world.

When she saw the advertisement for Office Manager/Administrator in the local paper, she was already hunting around for a job closer to Stalham, where she lives, so it seemed the ideal opportunity. She applied, along with over 40 others, but in the event, the decision to appoint her was unanimous because not only is she a warm and friendly person, the ideal 'meeter and greeter' for callers and visitors to the Yard, she also ticks all the boxes in the qualifications stakes.

Vikki has extensive experience in marketing and administration, and also, having managed her own boatyard for many years, has wide knowledge of boats and boating too. Further, she has



worked for holiday companies, so she's well aware of the joys and pitfalls of the industry generally.

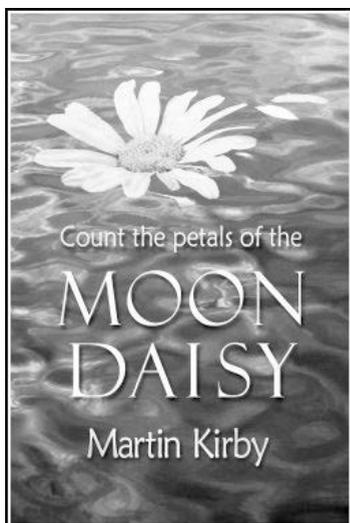
Like most people, Vikki has her own way of working, and she's already making plans to change a few things in order to improve efficiency in the office, and to make her job more enjoyable, though she says she's already loving it. She's clearly a people person, and is greatly enjoying working with the Yard staff, and meeting people coming in to sail.

By sheer coincidence, while I was at the Yard, Don, a young man from Nebraska came in following a two-hour sail with Rob. He was hugely appreciative and said he and his wife Anna-Marie, from Brazil, had enjoyed it immensely. That chance meeting brought it home to me that Hunter's is, in a sense, an international organisation. Welcome Vikki, I'm sure you'll fit in perfectly.

Zoë King

Count The Petals Of The Moon Daisy

Martin Kirby



The crimson sun has slipped away, and the shadow of night rises like water, drowning the colours of day. With the darkness flows the great flood of memory; of America and the dying, the crying until torn to the soul. A storm is coming. Eyes pinch tight.

Get to sleep, Jessica. Sleep now. Remember. Remember the rhyme ...

*Rest your head, my little one,
And count with me
The perfect petals of the moon daisy.*

*Close your eyes
And you will find
The lovely moon flower in your mind.
Count the petals, one by one,
Round and round the heart of gold
'Til it's done.*

*Close your eyes, my child, my sweet.
Count them all,
And then to sleep.*

In the cool light of midnight an armada of moon-silver clouds, lined to the curve of the world, drag shadows across the wetland toward the sand hills and sea. They are the vanguard of storm, and those that follow billow and merge into blackness as the anger grows, pushing waves through the hissing reeds and across the iron grey water ...

If you are going to write a novel, they say, write about what you know.

Count The Petals Of The Moon Daisy, my Norfolk novel, flowered in April, and within it are some of the most important things in my life with, at its heart, my county and the great wetland of the Broads.

It was bound to be, as was the need to weave within it a little of that wonderful place called Womack Water.

I have been writing for 27 years, for a great many of them as a journalist aboard the good ship *Eastern Daily Press*, but latterly as a chronicler of our wild and wonderful life raising our children and farming vines and olives in the mountains of Catalonia, Spain.

My first book *No Going Back*, about changing tack (some would say gibing) and trying to find new adventure and vital time for family, sails on, and other stories are almost done, but my first novel pays homage to home waters and the places we love.

Yes, Hunter's Yard is there, a key point on the main character's journey of self discovery, when both the beauty of the wilderness and a 19th century orphan's journal change her life.

Moon Daisy is several things - a rhyme that chimes back to childhood, a wild flower whose seeds were carried in the pockets of

paupers, and a journey back in time to the lost world of the water folk.

American violin virtuoso Jessica Healey is on the point of killing herself when a friend forces her to travel north east out of London, to spend a few days in a cottage on the fringes of the whispering reeds.

Reluctantly, she goes. The orphan's journal, kept when she was married to a wherry skipper and living in the same cottage, absorbs her. Jess stays and settles as the Norfolk wind blows to her soul, and finally she discovers the secret of her very being as the two women's lives, separated by a century, weave closer and closer... until they touch.

Just over ten years ago I wrote *Albion*, the story of the Norfolk trading wherry for the Norfolk Wherry Trust. It was one of the seeds of *Moon Daisy*, as were the wonderful happenings at Hunter's Yard in 1996, when the treasure that Percy created with sons Cyril and Stanley was saved.

It was my good fortune to record it, to tell the story of the founding of the trust. What vital days they were, what wonderful people I came to know. And since that time the yard has been a very special place for me and Maggie. We strive every year to find a few days to sail away, north invariably, shooting Potter bridge and finding peace and nature somewhere on Meadow Dyke or Horsey.



Author Martin and his wife Maggie Whitman 'researching' the book.

Parts of *Moon Daisy* were penned there by the light of the tilly lamp on *Hustler 3*, and by that same light we love to read to one another, talk and take stock of all we are thankful for.

I can honestly say as one who has crewed on offshore racing boats, sailed the coast and is never happier than when afloat, that there is nothing to match the magic of helming a Hunter, or cooking up a feast as she swivels on the mud weight as sunset.

It is history, beauty, place, privilege and, thank goodness, it continues for the benefit of all who find it. May that always be so.

***Count The Petals Of The Moon Daisy*, by Martin Kirby - Pegasus £8.99 ISBN: 9781903490297 www.mothersgarden.org**

In Recognition of 60 years work...

As reported in our last issue, Tom Grapes clocked up 60 years at the Yard on 1 March 2007. At the recent AGM, he was presented with a beautiful garden seat made of iroko, and with a suitably inscribed brass plate. The presentation was kept a complete secret until the day, and I'm told Tom was 'flabbergasted'. The inscription reads:

TOM GRAPES

In recognition of 60 years work

for Hunters Yard

from 1 March 1947

from The Friends of the Hunter Fleet

Sailing Soliloquy - The Broads and Beyond

Barry Mitchell

I arrived in England in 1944 by troopship from Mombasa to attend Gresham's School, Holt. I learnt my sailing on the Broads, hiring *Fairway* from Wroxham with my brother, a Naval cadet at Dartmouth, in 1946. In 1947, a party of us took out *Leander* and *Rover 2* from Chumley and Hawke in Horning. Over the next two years we chartered *Hustler* from Ludham. We rated her and *Clipper* the best of the hire cruisers on the Broads. It is interesting to read back the logs I kept. Victualling was difficult in those days of rationing but one dinner menu, and only one, read: 'Potage a Leander, Biftek Orlandais, Mistere au Chef, Fromage.' We seemed to live on Ryvita and syrup but were sustained by marvellous breakfasts of bacon, eggs, and ersatz sausages.



Leander and Rover II at Thurne Mouth 1947

These Easter hirings were the usual mixture of fine and foul weather. Superb sailing is recorded on Horsey Mere and Wroxham, where we were the only boat sailing. Of the few motor cruisers around, we mention with pride overtaking one towards

Horning. The plethora of motor cruisers found today must be a bit of a curse during the summer, but we found nothing but courteous handling from the few we encountered during our *Lullaby* hiring in March this year. I noted the mooring fee of one shilling back in the 1940s, somewhat different from the £6.00 we paid in Ranworth Broad for *Lullaby* recently.

With age, my memories of happy sailing days past are steeped in nostalgia and I was determined to return to the Broads sixty years later to introduce my Grandson and my good friend Deen Nathoo, both from Kenya, to the joys of these waterways. Hence we chartered *Lullaby* from March 24 to 30, 2007. We arrived on a foul day with the Mikado song in our hearts: 'A wandering minstrel I, a thing of shreds and patches...' We would have taken *Hustler* as in 1948 but felt we needed more space. We enjoyed a superb week and young Marcus and my crew Deen are both hooked and will surely be repeat hirers in the future.

I write in my house in Lamu on the Kenyan coast, 135 miles north of Mombasa in an atmosphere of the last outpost of Muslim maritime culture. Sadly, since the sixties, we no longer see the magnificent Arab dhows, the Booms, the Baggalas, and the Sambuks trading since time immemorial down from the Gulf, Muscat and the Hadramut on the North monsoon and back on the South monsoon. Alan Villiers writes of this in his superb book, *Sons of Sinbad* (Charles Scribner, New York, 1940). As I look

seawards to observe the numerous Jahazis, scudding by on the monsoon under their lateen sails, their hulls are remarkably redolent of the Royal Navy 32 foot cutter with square transoms and western lines. Today, below the house on the beach in the shade of a huge Indian almond tree, shipwrights are busy building and repairing Jahazis using the adze and bow drill and pit saw to fashion mangrove grown timbers from knees, ribs, and planks.

I arrived in Mombasa in 1957 on a loan service appointment from the RN with the Royal East African Navy. The naval base had on its complement a cutter, three whalers, and four RNSA 14 ft dinghies. African sailors keenly competed in the regular Wednesday 'Make and mend' races. In a navy strapped for funds to provide coal fuel for the Shakespearian class minesweeper HMEAS Rosalind, of which I had command, I found the best way to give my ship's company sea time was to arrange expeditions along the coast in the boats.



Lt Cdr Barry Mitchell coxes the Royal East African Navy cutter to Zanzibar, 1959

I suppose my imagination had been kindled for this type of sailing in the West Indies in 1949 on the Training Cruiser HMS Devonshire. A Kilimanjaro mountain course at the Outward Bound School, Loitokitok, introduced me to the precepts of the Trust which I wished to incorporate into our basic naval training with the Indian Ocean as our challenge.

I familiarised the crew with basic boatwork during banyans overnight into the head waters of Port Reitz, the creek adjacent to Kilindini Harbour. Lt Reitz was one of Captain Owen's officers in the HMS Leven engaged on the 1824 hydrographic survey of the East African coast. Owen hoisted the Union Jack over Fort Jesus and declared a British Protectorate, ostensibly at the request of Sheikh Mbarak bin Salim, a Mazrui Arab. Reitz, aged 23, was left in Mombasa to continue the survey of the coast, also as governor, with Midshipman



Royal East African Navy off Zanzibar 1959

Philips as his deputy. Reitz succumbed to cerebral malaria in May 1824, during a cutter expedition 90 miles south to Pangani. Malaria was a scourge on the coast in those days, more so than today because of the lack of medicines and failure to associate the 'East Coast Marsh Fever' with the anopheles mosquito. HMS Leven lost a third of her ship's company to malaria during the four-year survey of the African coasts.

If one has a sense of history, it is rewarding to relive those aspects of particular personal interest. I was determined to follow Reitz's voyage down to Pangani and to include also those fascinating islands of Pemba and Zanzibar. Likewise, I wished to take the boats north to Malindi to remember Vasco de Gama. He was cold shouldered in Mombasa during the very first European incursion into our waters in 1498. He took his Caravel, St Gabriel, further north to Malindi where he took on a pilot for his onward voyage to India. His navigational pillar built in Malindi still stands, five centuries later.

The East African coast is not the idyllic sailing area of, say, the British Virgin Islands. One has to contend with the monsoon from the south between April and October and from the north for the rest of the year. The East African current sluice to the north at 5 knots during the south monsoon dropping to a 1 knot northerly set during the other monsoon. The equatorial sun is a vicious consideration in an open boat on a European skin. I chose February 1959 for my Outward Bound expedition in the cutter following Reitz' route 90 miles south to Pangani and

then out to the islands of Pemba and Zanzibar. Our African sailors in the REAN were in the main recruited from up country tribes and not from the coast. This Expedition was remarkably successful in getting across the aims of the Outward Bound Trust in setting a standard of self knowledge, self confidence, self respect, and selflessness using the environment of the sea with which the up-country sailor had become more familiar.

In 1962, the REAN was disbanded and the assets disposed of. I remember the tenders being opened for our treasured cutter which went to the Union Castle Line representative in Mombasa. I saw it over the years, the familiar lines superstructured over, and engined, being used as a sport fishing boat. Thus my service sailing ended. As the Royal Naval Sailing Association Hon Liaison Officer in Mombasa, I keep my hand in racing my Osprey at the Yacht Club and cruising the coast in my J24.

Johari ya Barhara - Swahili for The Jewel of the Sea. Happy days indeed!



A tranquil evening -
Lullaby, River Thurne, March 2007

AGM of the Friends of the Hunter Fleet

28 April 2007

Chair's Report

Introduction

1. I am very pleased to again report another successful year for the Committee of the Friends of the Hunter Fleet. Membership continues to rise and the rate of growth has picked up again. Our 2007 Hunter Fleet Calendar has been as appreciated as ever and 2008 draws from the 10th Anniversary Celebrations last autumn. The Trust has again received substantial funds from us, which have been used to purchase more awnings, new sails, etc.

Committee

2. Since the last AGM, the Committee has met three times, in June and September 2006, and February 2007. Once again, we are very grateful to our Treasurer, Peter Wall, for both his diligent keeping of the books and also his hospitality in providing a venue and provisions for our meetings.

3. Philip Bray, our Secretary, has been as efficient as always in organising and recording our business. However, this is only a minor part of the many tasks he cheerfully takes on for the Friends including marketing of the 2007 Calendar, producing the 2008 Calendar, 2-hour sails, grass mowing, mole harassing, record photographer, slide show presenter and much more, including 'Special Projects' about which, more later.

4. Jennifer Mack remains our committed Membership Secretary and continues to

be a major factor in the continual rise in our membership numbers. Of course she is also a terrific ambassador for the Friends and the Fleet, as anyone who has seen our video and ITV's *The Hidden Broads* (recently shown on Anglia on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m.) will know.

5. We were very sorry to have lost Lynda Sharples as the NHFT Manager from effectively last November, due to ill health. She loved the job and it showed in her attitude to everything she did and to everyone with whom she came in to contact. The Trust tried very hard to support her through her illness and many volunteers from both the Trust and the Friends have given their time in the office to cover for her in the hope that she would be able to recover and resume her duties. In the event she chose to resign following expert medical advice and the Trust has again been fortunate to appoint a very able and efficient manager in Vikki Walker. Vikki has yet to enjoy the pleasures of one of the Friends Committee Meetings but I am sure that once she has given us her first report she will quickly settle down to helping us spend the Friends' money in the best interests of the Fleet!

6. Our other Committee Members are all equally committed to the Fleet and they are always available to step in and help when their skills are needed as well as roping in partners and other Friends to do the same.

Financial Support for the Trust

7. The financial aid to the Trust has continued this year as usual. The key contributions so far have been new sails, mattresses, awnings and the funding of the preparation of very accurate plans for the yachts prepared by Andrew Wolstenholme. This latter issue was first suggested at a Friends' AGM as one of the ways to try to protect the Fleet into the future. Now if the unthinkable were to happen and the whole Fleet were to be lost, the yachts themselves could be recreated. As ever, we still have plenty of funds available to do more.

Membership

8. Membership continues to rise and stands at approximately 835 (785 last year).

Newsletter

9. Our Newsletter Editor, Zoë King has continued to make an excellent job of producing a high standard of newsletter despite the difficult circumstance of being based for some of the year in Essex. Also, welcome back to Tim Munsey, our first Newsletter Editor, as an 'occasional roving reporter'.

Autumn Event

10. Many thanks to Jennifer and Philip for their considerable efforts in masterminding the Trust's 10th Anniversary Celebrations last September. It resulted in a sailing picnic *par excellence!* We will be back to the more conventional sailing picnic this year but will consider adding any of the features which went

down so well last year, such as a water bus for non-sailors, if we can justify them.

Volunteers

11. Philip Bray has again organised volunteer help for around the Yard with the willing assistance of Pat Bray, Les Gee and Nigel Law. The routine tasks such as grass and hedge cutting, boat cleaning, office assistance, the sale of videos and DVDs has gone on unabated. As ever, there is no shortage of these sorts of tasks so, any new volunteers gratefully received!

Conclusion

12. This is a wonderful Committee to have the honour to Chair. Everyone is well motivated and enthusiastic and they all pull their weight so there is little for me to actually do other than to thank them profusely and sit back and enjoy it all happening around me. I hope other Friends get some sense of that enjoyable feeling too!

Andrew Cowburn

April 2007

Bones up - Fertilizer down - Geoff Thomson

Towards the end of Harry Brittain's book *Notes on the Broads of Norfolk and Suffolk* written in 1887 is a chapter describing a sailing trip he made from Stalham to the Antingham Bone Mills at the end of the North Walsham and Dilham canal. Readers, who like me, know little of this ancient northern spur of the Broads might be interested in the following account.

Brittain hired a boat at Stalham and leaving at 7.30am 'following a capital breakfast at the Maid's Head' quickly progressed, passing the Stalham Broad ('rapidly growing up') and made good time to Wayford (Weyford) Bridge ('Wayfur the natives call it'). Here, he made enquiries as to how long it would take to sail to the Bone Mills and back. The reply that it would take all day to get there was ignored and, notwithstanding the six locks ahead of him, he decided to complete the whole trip and return to Stalham in the one day.

North Walsham and Dilham Canal was built in 1826 at a cost of £30,000; was 8 3/4 miles long and used 6 locks to raise it the 58 feet required. Its purpose was to enable 'small' wherries 50 x 12ft to operate from the River Ant to Antingham. Their main cargo was bones which were taken to the Antingham Bone Mills; here they were crushed and mixed with phosphate which had arrived as ships' ballast via North Walsham Station. The resulting fertilizer was sold to Fisons to whom it was delivered by wherry. This trade, amongst others, continued until 1893 when it was decided to close the upper 2 miles of the canal. However, in 1885 Edward Press had bought the canal for £600 and it was he

who saw the potential of the Broads regarding pleasure boating. He built five wherries and operated them from Spar Common (1 mile east of North Walsham). His wherry, Ella, was the last boat to leave the canal in 1934 when it was closed following rapidly decreasing use due to the enlargement of the railways and damage caused by the flooding of 1912 (7" of rain fell in one day). As the canal was never nationalised it didn't become the property of British Waterways and for some time its ownership was unknown.

Meanwhile, back in 1887, Harry Brittain joined the canal just to the north of Wayford where the spur to Dilham leaves to the west. A short distance further he came to the Tonnage Bridge and duly paid his toll. The first lock at Honing was another mile and it was here he acquired the vital crank for use on the remaining lock gates. Whilst here he admired Dilham Broad but noted that it was like Stalham 'fast growing up'. At the next lock, Briggate, he remarked on the proximity of Honing Station (Eastern Midlands railway to Great Yarmouth) and its associated bridge over the canal. Following the next two locks at Ebridge and Bacton Wood (Spar Common) he came to the final two at Swafield which proceeded the large sheet of water described by Brittain as the 'Broad' which narrowed to his destination at Angingham Ponds - the most northerly point of all the Broads. He noted it was noon and after lunching at the Barge Inn he returned to Stalham by 6.30pm

For the record, Angingham Bone Mills closed in 1935 and were demolished in 1958.

Hunter Merchandise:

Before ordering, *please check with the yard for p&p rates where not listed.*

T-Shirts:

Childrens £4.50

Adults £8.00

Polo shirts:

Childrens £12.00

Adults £13.50

Sweatshirts:

Childrens £10.00

Adults £15.50

Hooded Fleece £27.50

Crew shirt £37.00

(With 10th anniversary logo)

Embroidered badge £ 7.50

+ p&p 30p (10th anniversary logo)

Baseball Caps:

Childrens £ 4.25

Adults £ 5.25

Engraved glass goblets:

Large £18.00

Small £11.00

Friends Burgee £10.50 p&p 50p

Friends Lapel Pin £ 4.00 p&p 30p

Book - Hunter's Fleet

Soft back £8.00 p&p £1.50

Hard back £16.00 p&p

£2.50 - Signed by author, few remaining

David Dane Print £10.00

Signed, limited edition

Print, unframed £ 3.00

Print, framed £ 8.00

Mug £2.75 p&p £1.50

Tax disc holder £1.00 p&p 30p

Calendar (2008) £7.00 p&p 60p

'Heritage Boat-Yard'

Video £ 8.00 p&p £2.00

DVD £10.00 p&p£2.00

The 'Friends' and the 'Trust'

There seems to be confusion about the difference between the 'Friends of the Hunter Fleet', (the 'Friends') and the 'Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust', (the 'Trust').

When Norfolk County Council put the Hunter Fleet up for sale in 1997, a group of concerned people organised a public subscription and successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This enabled the Trust to be formed as a charity which purchased the Fleet from NCC. The Trust owns the boats and the Yard, and employs the staff who run them.

As a result of the public subscription, there was still much interest and good-will expressed towards the Hunter Fleet, so the Friends were formed to keep those people informed of progress and to enable them to continue to provide support. The Friends have their own constitution and Committee but their accounts are technically part of the Trust (in order to enjoy the benefits of being a charity.)

The Trust Chairman, a Trust representative, and the Yard manager are all co-opted onto the Friends' Committee, which takes a keen interest in the running of the Fleet. However, it is the Trust which is actually responsible for the Hunter Fleet's management.

Fly the Flag...



Please note that because only Hunter boats are allowed to fly the Hunter flag, which is blue with a plain central red-on-white stripe, the Friends' version which incorporates the international code flag F, can be flown on members' own yachts or attached to the starboard shrouds by Friends hiring hunter boats. The pin is the normal Hunter flag design. These items are available only to Friends. Orders for all merchandise (with cheque payable to Friends of the Hunter Fleet) to:

**Hunter's Yard, Horsefen Road, Ludham,
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