

HUNTER'S YARD



Newsletter of the Friends of the Hunter Fleet



Winter 2008 - What happens when you're not watching... John replacing planks on Luna.
Photograph by Philip Bray

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Editorial

Welcome to our March issue and to some excellent input from Friends, all of which is very welcome. I have started transcribing the journal from Miss Mollie Christopher but computer problems meant I was unable to scan in the photographs, so the journal's inclusion is delayed until next time.

However, the promised Log Book prizes are detailed, along with extracts from the winning entries and others. Because there are so many good entries, I'm also hoping to include some next time too.

My thanks to everyone who sent in material for this issue. It wouldn't be exaggerating to say I had 'an embarrassment', but it is all very welcome, so please do keep sending in your memories and thoughts for inclusion in future issues.

Our cover photograph this time will give you some idea of the kind of work that goes on in the sheds during the closed season. As Vikki has pointed out in her piece, the men work very hard to keep the fleet up to the renowned 'Hunter' standard. She has included a couple of small pictures but I felt this one by Philip deserved front page billing.

As you will see, our 'Friends' Chair, Andy, is stepping down this year after 10 years at the helm. I'm sure you will join me in thanking him for his devotion to duty during that time!

Zoë

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The Chair Types...

It is with some regret that I have dragged myself to the keyboard (late as usual!) because this will be my last 'The Chair Types...'. I have decided not to stand as Chair at the next AGM.

I have been in the post for over 10 years now and there have been three main concerns over that time. First and foremost, survival was very much at the front of my mind immediately after the Trust had been formed and clearly that has been achieved and the prospects for the future look as secure as they can be in these troubled times!

Secondly there was the Friends' support for the controversial issue of the building of a 'Millennium Boat' out of mahogany to pretty much the same specification as the other three 4-berth boats completed in the 1930's. *Lucent* is the brilliant result of that process and has demonstrated beyond doubt that the Yard is not just a maintenance facility but an excellent fully fledged Boatyard with the capacity to build anything from wood. However, that point now having been proved, I would have difficulty supporting the building of another mahogany boat to an 80 year old design. I would hope that if more new boats are to be built, the Trust would give consideration to building a new class of wooden boats which Percy Hunter would have built if he were starting out now, with all our environmental considerations and modern needs taken on board.

Thirdly, in the last few years there has been the increasing possibility that the Trust might acquire *Woodruff* which would have resulted in the need for capital funds for purchase and possibly considerable

additional funds for repairs. The Trust has decided not to go ahead with that project, so this third issue has now been resolved. I am disappointed at this decision because I feel that *Woodruff* is an essential element of the 'Hunter Fleet story', which only the Trust has the remit and capacity to preserve.

So, there being no particular projects in progress at present, now seems a good time to bring in someone new with their own ideas and enthusiasms to take the Friends forward.

'How to moor in style' feature - going straight to Video!

As with buses, I waited in vain for what seemed like an age and then two came along at once! Many thanks to Robin Webb and Christopher Bishop for responding to my final plea in the last Newsletter. Zoë is publishing one contribution in this edition and 'banking' the other for a future issue. While all this waiting was going on the Yard had decided to produce a video on how to carry out the basic tasks on the boat, rigging, reefing, etc and I think they will also include some content on coming in under sail. No doubt advertisements will be in the Newsletter as soon as the CD becomes available. Nevertheless, I am sure Zoë would still like to hear from you if you have any 'top tips' or 'salutary lessons' for her to publish for our benefit.

Back numbers of Newsletters

Several people have offered us back numbers of Newsletters when they have been clearing out/spring cleaning etc. but generally we have sufficient to meet the needs of future Friends. However, stocks of one or two issues are a bit low and I suppose stocks of other issues could become depleted if there is a run on them, so the

Committee has decided to be the 'receiver of last resort'. If you want yours to go to a good home, send them to Philip or Zoë. They will top up the stocks and recycle the rest. You will never know which were kept but at least your conscience will be clear!

Navigation on the River Ant

Bryan Read has been doing excellent work on behalf of Broads Sailors with regard to the Environment Agency funded bank raising and swale creation engineering scheme, which has been going on between Ludham Bridge and How Hill. On some of the bends the contractors have put in single piles (like the ones at St Benet's Abbey) in just the sort of place where you might hit them or failing that get your sheet caught up on them while tacking. As a result of his efforts, by the time the season starts, we hope that these potential hazards will have been mitigated.

AGM 9th May 2009

We should have quite a few boats available for sailing after the AGM as usual, although at the time of writing bookings are very healthy and all the pundits are saying that people are holidaying more in the UK this year so let's hope there are still some left by 9th May! It will be the usual format, a relatively short AGM, followed by a barbeque and then sailing.

As usual the whole Committee has to be elected at the AGM and at present there are no nominations for Chair so if you are interested or know someone who may be, please contact one of the Committee with a view to getting a nomination submitted. The main qualification is that the new Chair must be able to sign their name, (this is for counter-signing cheques produced by the Treasurer.) The rest of the Committee

do all the actual work!

Autumn Event 26th September 2009

It still looks like a Sailing Picnic is preferred at present. We are looking at a possible link up with the 'Wherry Yacht Charter Charitable Trust' and we will again hire *Princess Katherine* so that we have a refuge from inclement weather and river borne loos at our disposal on the picnic site! Booking Form in the next Newsletter.

And Finally

If you have been, thanks for reading this far! My very best wishes go to the Yard, Trust and Friends for the future.

Andrew Cowburn

March 2008

Membership News

I was rather concerned about the response my subscription renewal notice would get in these difficult times, but I should have known better! Well over half of you have already renewed with little or no deviation from the generous amounts given in previous years. It is most heartening that we have such a loyal bunch of Friends.

I am still wrestling with the banks over their errors in processing some of the reinstated Bankers Orders from last year but I hope to finally resolve the outstanding issues within the next month or so.

A follow-up Spring Subscription Reminder is enclosed for those of you who pay by cheque and have yet to renew as I can understand that the pre-Christmas reminder could easily have gone astray!

We have already welcomed several new Friends in 2009, even at this early stage in the year, so we are hopeful of recruiting many more during the season and if any of you know of a potential 'new Friend', I shall be only too pleased to send a form or

further information.

Your words of encouragement and valuable and continued support are especially welcome when the economic

outlook is so bleak. Thank you all!

With best wishes for an enjoyable season.

Jennifer Mack

March 2009

Friends Write...

From Miss FM Weaver, Byfleet, Surrey

I was most interested to read Brian Eady's article about *Swallows and Amazons Forever* in the November issue of the Hunter's Yard Newsletter.

Graham Cooper and I had a long chat about it once, and he told me that he'd overseen most of the filming with *Lullaby* - especially the sequence on Breydon Water, which he found quite amusing. However, Peter Markham evidently doesn't remember that episode with affection, according to the article. Graham also revealed that he was responsible for seeing to *Janca (Margoletta)*. Apparently, they had to repair her (jury rig) so she could be put back in the water. *Lullaby (Teasel)* had no such difficulties since she was already a 'working' yacht and had been since 1932.

I get the impression that Peter Markham was a rather long-suffering Producer, and no wonder, if he came up against so many problems. But it was definitely worth it, as I love the series.

Yours sincerely,
Frances-Mary Weaver

From Mr Trevor Boulton, North Shields

As a Hunter Fleet 'Friend', I always enjoy reading the Newsletter and am happy to see the fleet continue to flourish.

In the process of 'down-sizing' to a small cottage in the Borders, my wife and I are having to take stock of what is on our limited space of book shelves. Historic periodicals are once such thing. It would be a tragedy to simply put previous newsletters in the recycling. I therefore respectfully return the enclosed, in case they may be of some further use. Best wishes, *Trevor Boulton*

Many thanks indeed, Trevor. We discussed your kind gesture at our last meeting. The upshot was that while we have sufficient stocks of some back numbers, we are short of others, so would ask those of you who are considering parting with back issues to let us have first refusal.

Zoë

Hunter Fleet LOG BOOKS

2008 Season

As many of you will know, having introduced Log Books onto the boats last season, we set up a competition for the best entries. After discussion, we decided we should offer a prize of £50 for the best 'adult' entry, and three prizes (totalling £50 worth of book tokens) for the best 'child' entry.

Philip, Jennifer, and I had the task of adjudicating, and what a task it was! There were some terrific entries, and choosing winners, particularly in the adult section, was very difficult.

In the event, and after long reading and discussion, we decided to award the Adult prize to:

Catherine and Martin Jackson, who wrote about their adventures on *Hustler 2*, during late August, early September. The account is long and comprehensive, informative and engaging, and laugh-out-loud funny at times.

David and Liz Willey, who wrote and illustrated a piece about *Huster 4* and their trip in July were strong contenders for the prize, although the writer did apologise for the 'substandard artist's impression, and the poetry come to that'! **Jane Wilson**, who wrote and illustrated a superb account of her family's adventures in *Violet*, also in July, was another strong contender, but of course there was only one prize, and in the end, our decision was unanimous.

The 'childrens' section also gave us some superb entries, and we were all charmed by the one from 6 year old, **Jade Ross**. Jade had clearly gone to enormous effort, and is a very worthy winner of our First Prize of a £20 book token. (Joint) Second Prize of £10 book tokens go to **Eliza and Polly Woodhouse**, and 'Highly Commended' prizes of £5 book tokens goes to **Lauren Zehetener** and **Henry Bettley**.

Extracts from the Winning Entries

Sunday 31 August 2008 - Fleet log for the Hustler and Hustler 2 convoy

... so hoist sail and charge for the yard exit.

Ten minutes later we have passed 1½ moored yachts and the momentum of that first push off has been lost. The wind is now a stiff calm, so out with the quant. We pass a family of baby swallows perched on the reeds, undisturbed by our serene passage.

A little wind on the Thurne, so we eventually reach Thurne Mill, having tacked gently through each of the bankside fishing lines in turn. A very forgiving breed, the Norfolk fishermen, but we do say, "sorry" to each in turn, and ask how many fish we have lost them. ... we then meet 'Leading Lady' for the first time in the day. Her 'motorised tacking' is an odd way of making progress, and is too confusing for one day boat, and they kiss nose-to-nose with a gentle crunch of fibreglass. After a morning of light headwind and adverse tide, ... we skim past 'Leading Lady', who has switched off the motor as she tacks quite heavily

and slowly. A glance in the rear view mirror shows her catching 'Hustler' as the jam in a reed bed sandwich.

Lunch is called at St Benet's Abbey to discuss whether to aim for South Walsham or Ranworth that night. The abbey moorings are fairly cluttered with cruisers so 'Hustler 2' goes in first. We've seen how the French park their cars in Paris, and soon manage to clear a space big enough for the fleet to moor. 'Hustler' comes in to join us using the concept of parallel parking, but panics when the Commodore cannot get the reverse gear to work. The brakes also seem faulty. Apparently, the crew of 'Hustler' have moored at St Benet's in previous years. Further up, we can see the dredger still searching for the wreckage.

... Hustler leaves first (the supply ship have the lunch pots to wash) and are soon out of sight. Their 'E-type' quanting engine is phenomenal. 'Hustler 2' has the older 'M-type' engine which creaks and groans and keeps running dry, requiring frequent stops for lubrication.

Not coping well with the soft river bottom, Martin has the bright idea of pushing against some dilapidated riverbank piling. This works well until he reaches the stern and finds that the quant has jammed in the piling. Decision time! He can't keep hold of both boat and quant! He makes the right decision and lets go of the quant. Crew disagree - the quant may also be thick and wooden, but it IS useful.

... ultimate humiliation as we have to ask a passing cruiser to rescue the quant. The cruiser is very kind and helpful but the lady driver looks concerned at the task in hand. We then notice that she is still working from the cruiser instruction manual and is only on page 2 - check dipstick.

Catherine and Martin Jackson

Saturday 19th July

On Saturday We went to get are boat. Then we loaded are stuff onto the boat. Then we sailed to Ranworth. On the way I like the bit when it was windy I nearly fell off my seat!! I went to the sweety shop with Gwen.

On Sunday I woke evryone up at five o clock. I had a go at rolling with Mummy and Jasmine. Grandad and Gwen took me to the church to clim it. The view from the top of the tower was fantastic! I could see Lucent and Twilight.

Monday

We sailed to ludam bridge and we went under it. We tied up bhy the side. Me and Daddy went to the shop to bhy a fishing rod. When we came back me and Jasmine startid to fish. Then I went onto Grandads and Gwens boat. And got the log book out and rit some words.

Thursday We sailed to Horning. We had some supper at the Swon.

Friday We sailed to Womak Water for luch then we quanted. Daddy dropped the pole in the water, he nealy fell in. Then we sailed to the boat yard. The new boat was amazing! It was the best holiday I've had.

Jade Ross age 6

Saturday 16th August 2008

... On the way, I got out a packet of biscuits and I asked who wanted one. Polly and daddy did, so I gave them one.

Polly was at the bow, so I walked to the front and gave her a biscuit. On the way back, (I was going to give daddy one) I slipped and fell in!

Luckily, I had my life jacket on. I was too shocked to swim to the dinghy that was tied on at the back.

Daddy got the quant pole and told me to hold on tight. He pulled me out and I got dry and changed.

But, the biscuits were ruined!

By Eliza Woodhouse aged 8 years and 365 days. (My birthday tomorrow) (Leap year)!!!

The Journey Begins 19th July

We arrived at Hunters at 2.30 and set sail at c.3.00 which gave us half an hour to lose all our cargo. After the knots securing us to the bank had come loose plenty of times, we went down the R. Thurne to Potter Heigham... To sum up, we then had rain but we have no-one to blame but ourselves: we were the ones who came to Norfolk.

Henry Bettley aged 11.

3rd August 2008 Lucent

... We waited for a while then we set off to Ranworth and arrived just in time to have a tour around wherry Hather. I thought it was brilliant! Next morning I was lucky to see wherry Hather setting off for St Bennets Abbey, also we had a tour around wherry Albion. ... Then we set off to church tower and climbed to the top. We could see lots of boats including the two wherrys I saw earlier.

We had fun in the canoe as we were unable to hire a dingy.

Written by Lauren Zehetner age 8

Saturday 12th July

*Hail to thee, blithe Huster Four
awaiting crew and neatly moored!
Arrived late noon from southern parts,
we'll waste no time, set sail at last.
Along the sun-drenched dyke we glide
to catch the wind and ebbing tide,
And off to Thurne 'neath setting sun
- Hurray! Our holiday's begun!*

Wednesday 16 July

Sailed back along the river to Ranworth Broad. Enjoyed the visitor centre - much developed since our last visit - and climbed the tower of St Helen's Church only to find an old student friend at the top! Back to the trusty Hustler 4 for tea and cake and a catch-up chat; we arranged to meet up for a sail on Horsey mere on Friday evening. Good evening meal at the Malster's pub.

David and Liz Willey

How to Moor in (some sort of) Style

Robin Webb

Andy's request for tips on this subject has been given much thought, with the following results, for what they are worth.

1. The Cardinal Rule

Always be aware of what the current is doing. If there is no significant flow then forget it, but if there is then you must come in against the current, because if you don't, you won't be able to stop. It's alright for them wot's got an engine they just go astern at the last moment, but in a Hunter you can't do that. It gets tricky if wind and tide are opposed, but tide still rules. The answer then is to go upwind of the mooring; drop the sails, leaving the gaff raised a little way, and put sail ties on the main round the boom to prevent the major part of the mainsail breaking out. Then turn downwind and hoist the gaff sufficiently to make up against the current. Dropping the gaff and capturing the rest of the sail when the mooring is reached will complete a professional job.

2. Narrow Dead Ends with a Following Wind

Andy covered in the last Newsletter the easy ones like Horsey Dyke, where there is room to pirouette and drop the sails before entering the dead end channel. The only place which I can bring to mind where you don't have that luxury, and there isn't a windward bank to pick up either, is West Somerton. Here you have a long narrow winding channel which suddenly becomes dead straight and completely open for the last ¼ mile, and is not wide enough to turn. I know, I've proved it the hard way! At the

end is a tee-junction with short arms going off each way, and it is possible to turn there, providing that it isn't obstructed by moored craft. The real answer at Somerton is that you don't try to go there under full sail in a north-westerly if it is more than a light breeze. Apart from anything else it's a long hard quant getting back against the wind. If the breeze is only light then you can drop and stow the main on the move, and go the rest of the way on the jib. To slow the boat down when running, initially weave from side to side; if that's not enough then haul the mainsheet in hard. If she gybes it will only be quite mild. The next resort is to trail a bucket over the stern on a rope. Finally, at panic stations, on the Hunters you have a very powerful waterbrake because the rudder will go to 90° and beyond. If the tiller is slammed hard over, the boat will not have time to respond and turn far, and going beyond 90° will cancel any turn which does occur. I had a graphic demonstration of this some years ago, actually in the dyke at the Yard. One of the Hustlers or Woods (I forget which) came into the dyke under full sail on a beam wind, and I watched in horrified disbelief as the young lady at the helm bore down on Vikki's office at a brisk walking pace. At the very last moment she slammed her helm over, the boat turned through 90 degrees and stopped dead just outside the sliding doors, without touching the sides. It was beautifully done, but I don't think I would like to try it!

3. Mooring on a Windward Bank

But, I hear you say, that's the easy one! It is,

but not if it is done by coming dead into wind with the sheets slack, and trying to judge it so that the way all comes off just as the bank is reached. This is likely to result in either thumping the bank, or stopping short (didn't it Andy? (August 2008 Newsletter)). In the former case, back the main fully to slow the boat, or use the rudder as above if the situation is desperate! In the latter case you can be in all sorts of trouble trying to get the boat moving again and back under control. No, the way to do it is, taking account of wind and current, to balance the boat on the two with the sails just drawing enough to slowly close obliquely with the bank, and then let the sheets go as your crew steps ashore.

4. Yarmouth Yacht Station

Here above all places, unless you manage to time it to arrive exactly at slack water (which is unlikely as, depending on conditions, this can be anywhere between one and two hours after the tide tables say it will be low water) you absolutely must come in to moor against the current. Even at Neaps, the ebb here runs at 5-6 knots, so to be safe you should aim to moor at the start of the Yacht Station heading, where you are well clear of the bridges. There is only a

limited number of places where a Hunter can be moored, and those are where there is a ladder, or alongside a moored craft. Anywhere else and there is nothing to get hold of, and you cannot get ashore because the heading is about 10 feet above water level. Remembering that you will be blanketed by high walls and buildings, if the wind is anywhere between east and west through south, and a reasonable strength, you can come in under sail, but if it is light or there is north in it then you should resort to 'drudging'. This ancient art used to be regularly practised in the days when hardly any sailing craft had engines, but these days is rarely seen. Just before reaching the Yacht Station, turn upstream, put the mudweight out over the bows on a long line (remembering to make it fast!) and drop the sails. Then partially lift the mudweight to move down river on the current, and use the rudder to edge across the stream to the mooring.

5. At all Times (Except at Yarmouth where the current is too strong)

When in doubt drop the sails before attempting to approach the mooring, and quant in.

Ancient Mariner I

Items funded by 'Friends' in 2008

Items bought and paid for:

Two rudders

Major repairs to *Lullaby* in 07/08

Blocks for topping lift modification to provide a 2:1 purchase

Roll of lino to renew deck covering

Two awnings 2008 (Friends have agreed to fund two new awnings annually)

Oak Log for replacement ribs

Pillar Drill

Washing/drying machines

Log-books for boats - for customer use

Topsoil for levelling after dredging work

Flotex Carpet

Two toilets for boats

Two awnings for 2009 (*Wood Avens*, *Wood Violet*).

(Funding has been agreed for other items yet to be purchased.)



From the Yard Vikki Walker

Hello from the Yard...

It feels like spring is finally in the air and we are nearly at the start of our 2009 season!

When winter is here, as most of you know, all the 'lovely ladies' come into the sheds and the noise of machinery rings out loudly as they get their makeovers to be ready in time for the new season and their eager sailors.

The bookings are still going well so far considering the current financial climate with bookings up slightly from the same time last year.

The guys have been very busy with some extensive work on *Hustler 2* and *Luna*. *Hustler 2* had her hull completely stripped and lots of planks replaced, with *Luna* having similar work carried out. It amazes me how quickly the guys manage to get all this work done without compromising on the quality. And everything's so meticulously done too. 'Arguably the best boat builders in the world,' says Vikki, stealing from the Carlsberg advert.



It was so fascinating to watch Tom put *Hustler 2's* name back on her transom. You can tell he's been doing that for a lot of years. He had her name etched back on and the gold and black painted on so fast I couldn't keep up with him. Then on popped the burgees and 'hey presto', she was done and waiting for the many coats of varnish to finish her off. It's the first time I've seen him doing the sign writing so I was very surprised at how quickly he had it done. Wow! Does experience count or what?

We don't want to talk it up but... We've been so lucky in this year, so far, I add quickly and touch wood, because the water has only been in the sheds once, from the back door to the front door and it was at a weekend so we even got away without needing wellies! How good is that... lucky or what?

However, we have had a little bad weather recently which resulted in a power cut for a short time one day and I have to tell you that the guys didn't even stop getting the 'girls' ready then.



They simply lit the lamps from the boats and carried on varnishing, as you can see in the photo. (Although the power came back on the very minute I took the photo!) So you see, that's what you call total commitment to getting these 'lovely ladies' ready for all to enjoy!

We had a little fun last Sunday, February 1st; our Yard was used as a clue in the BBC Radio Norfolk's *Sunday Treasure Quest* show. David Clayton is the DJ and Becky Betts is sent on her way using clues left at each site with people ringing in to the show to help them find their way to the next one.

We were clue number 1 for Becky to find her second clue, which we had taped onto *Lullaby's* bow. We thought that was the best place because *Lullaby* is the first boat at the top and can be seen from the open door. The clue they used for her to find us was: 'Ned was against the machines, and sounds like this could be his place, three feet of a man chasing game, leads to a soothing boat from birds and rivers'. They were sent to How Hill at first but then a guy called Alan phoned up and sent them straight to us. Ian was kind enough to pop in too and got to give a brief bit about the story of *Lullaby* as *Teasel*.



I have to say that even Becky enjoyed the smell of cut wood and fresh varnish in the

sheds as she and Ian (her driver) admired how beautiful the boats look. They really are looking great and are nearly ready for launching, around the middle of March.

This year *Wood Avens*, *Luna*, *Woodcut 1*, *Brown Bess* and *Buff Tip* all have new awnings. These have all been donated by you good people, 'The Friends of Hunter Fleet' and we do thank you very much for your generosity. These much needed things are just some of what your donations are used for.

I believe Zoë will be printing a list of the things that have been purchased for the Fleet during 2008 and so far this year, so you will know where your money is going. But ALL of us want ALL of you to know that the things that are bought for the boats are so very much appreciated by us here and everyone who uses them. It helps to keep the Fleet looking and sailing their best. Thank you all!

The season starts on the 28th March for most of the cabin yachts and 18th April for the half-deckers so not long to go now. We are hoping for some sunshine and fair winds this year (the whole year, not just the end of it please!)... for a nice change! I've been here two seasons now and both of them have been for the most part wet with either no wind or far too much wind.... So, so that I don't have to start taking it personally, let's have some nice weather this year please!

From all of us here at the Yard... Bye for now, see ya'll soon!

Stopping! - Nick Balls

On a windy day under full sail, going up the Ant high above Barton towards Hungate mill, Old *Meadow Brown* simply flew along. As she rounded the next bend, it didn't occur to me that this particular reach was 'in line' with the strengthening wind. Suddenly the protection of the trees was gone. Increasing in speed and now on a dead run I realised far too late that I and the boat were in big trouble!

You may know that when a White boat reaches maximum speed, she starts to 'yaw' about. This is exactly what happened. On this narrow river and with no possibility of turning up into the wind, I simply clung on and prayed that nothing would come the other way! We shot around the next bend and with extreme speed I grabbed the one opportunity I would to get to turn her.

A White boat will never let you down and she shot around incredibly fast in that narrow reach, but not quite fast enough. The boat, the sails and I disappeared into an enormous bank of brambles, my mind screaming *No!* thinking of the possible steel piling lying hidden beneath the bushes.

She stopped and in an instant I had the sails down and a rope around the reeds. Time had stood still and now I sat shaking in relief, the collapsed sails tangled around me along with the twigs and branches I'd just crashed through. Another lesson learnt! It was not as if I was any kind of novice.

Stopping is something you definitely need to practice. Don't be embarrassed and always remember to leave a 'get out clause'. Give yourself enough room to make another attempt. If after several tries it's still

not working, think of some other way.

Early efforts will have you lowering the sails in open water and rowing back. A good idea, but it's always a lot harder than using the wind to your advantage. Learn in nice conditions. Never be afraid to admit defeat. If you're finding it hard, something is probably wrong and you need more practice. (You can never get enough.) The rewards are great, there is nothing quite like good boat handling to give you a buzz.

A useful plan is to practice 'stopping' where the reeds are good and wide with no iron piling around. You could also try rounding up to a buoy. The plan is normally to turn up into the wind on the windward bank and as the boat slows to a stop, so you reach the bank. First thing to realize is that boats are only under control whilst they are moving. Rudders work by water passing across the blade, so with the boat stopped the rudder has no effect. This can be that horrid moment when the wind catches the jib - just when you thought all was well, it all goes to bits. That's when your 'get out clause' comes in handy.

Practice slacking off the mainsheet and watch how the boat's speed and direction can be controlled. Try sailing in open water without the use of the rudder. This is really quite a simple matter and while you will at first need plenty of room it shows just how much control comes from sail angle. Listen to what people tell you but don't be afraid to try out new things. Above all, know there are a thousand ways to sail.

Experimentation and practice are always the key. Above all be humble and *never* imagine you know it all. You don't!

Norfolk Nostalia

Mick Rodger

Mick Rodger of Thirsk, North Yorkshire, is a 'recent convert' to the Hunter Yard, and he kindly sent this piece to illustrate his lifelong association with the Norfolk Broads.

November 2008

On a beautiful, almost windless autumn morning, I sailed, drifted, and rowed up to Potter Heigham Bridge in *Brown Bess*. Exhausted by these efforts I tied up just below the bridge and ate my take-away fish and chips in the sun, watching the swans bathing themselves. Reinvigorated, I set off back downstream hoping that Thurne Mouth would provide a little more wind, as it usually does. And it did. A steadily increasing breeze took me past Thurne almost to Acle before I turned and ran back up to Womack Water. And I have to admit that with a now quite fresh wind blowing straight into the dyke, I chickened out, dropped the lugsail, and blew back to Hunter's Yard under a bare mast. Well, the last time I sailed on the Broads was more than thirty years ago and I didn't feel like taking chances! But this all too short day brought back a fleet of memories, mostly visual in character, and I thought I would write them down before the synapses finally snap.

1970

Sailing with my wife aboard a *Gay Lady* not that long after we got married, in company with a similar couple aboard *Peggy*. The only difference between us being that I had sailed before, and they had not. They had many minor disasters, but they were

unbreakable, and my abiding memory is that whenever trouble struck and we temporarily lost them, we would turn back to find them perhaps run aground, or stuck in the reeds on a lee shore, but always with the cabin roof lifted and the kettle on!

1964

Probably aboard *Sabrina* with a great friend, (later my Best Man) and his elder sister. A fairly hair raising holiday because *Sabrina* was so fast that life was all about overtaking other sailing boats. The memory is of repeatedly aiming *Sabrina's* bowsprit into the slowly widening gap between someone else's transom and the bank, and hoping like mad one had judged it right!

1963

A tale of two boats, my girl friend at that time had managed to track down *Viking*, (see 1946) although now changed into a two berth cabin yacht, and we were sailing in company with four friends aboard *Summer Breeze*(?). A rapidly freshening wind persuaded us to hang off a convenient windward bank and put in a couple of reefs, but while we did so we became conscious that our accompanying friends were still nowhere to be seen. Back under sail we went back and found them moored up safely but untidily and with a mutiny in progress. The wind was proving too strong for them and with fading confidence they had decided to stop sailing. We brought *Viking* up alongside and helped them sort out their boat. Two of them volunteered to come with us for a sail into South Walsham Broad.

This brings the memory of one of the most rewarding sails I have ever had. With the extra crew, a couple of strong men on each jib sheet, a girl on the main, and lazy me at the helm. We had an exhilarating beat up Fleet Dyke, roared around the broad a few times and fairly tore back out to the main river.

1959 and 1960

Before I was rich enough to hire a boat with a cabin and bunks and a cooker, I hired the lovely *White Myth* half deckers from Herbert Woods at Potter Heigham. With a couple of friends from school camping aboard, we were sleeping on the floor boards and cooking on a primus. I still remember, after a rather wet day, standing on the bank of the dyke up to Heigham Sound, enjoying a dry spell in the evening, the mast silhouetted against the darkening sky and the glow from the primus lighting up the awning.

1958

There have even been occasions, but not many, when power has supplanted sail, and for reasons I cannot remember I found myself on a cabin cruiser with my parents and my brother's fiancée. What I do remember is that I managed to hog the driving seat most of the time, and I did get *Charmaine* through Potter Heigham Bridge, and that *Charmaine* had a rather good extra cockpit right in the bows with a seat right across it so that from the helmsman's seat, I had a fine view of the backs of heads!

1957

My sister and two brothers were all older than me, so now my memories are moving

back into family holidays and this one was on the six berth *Happy Times* as one of the largest of Blakes hire yachts. One striking memory is of the moment my sister's fiancée was hit by the boom in classical fashion, and the other is of the moment on Oulton Broad when in a heavier gust of wind, the tiller swung up in my hands as it became disconnected with the rudder! We managed somehow to motor to the nearest yard when a crucial nut was re-tightened.

1947 - 1956

Many family holidays, mostly aboard *Leading Ladys*. I learnt to sail solo in the lugsail dinghy we always towed. I learnt that if you wanted to stay dry through a day of continuous drizzle (before Gortex) you couldn't beat a plastic 'Pacamac'!

1946

Here is where it all started. I was five and the war had just ended. There was no petrol for motor cruisers and we used one, the *Puma*, as a houseboat, towed out to a mooring by a boat from the yard. And for sailing, a big beautiful half decker called *Viking*.

Unfortunately, I was too small to see over the side coamings and my memories of this holiday are limited to two, a view of varnished planks and a dislike of the way it all tilted over when sailing. I seem to have got over this now!

Mick Rodger

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(Clothing sizes - Adult: XL, L, M, S.

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Postage and Packing: Gift Vouchers, Calendars, and DVDs, please add £1.00

All other items, please add £2.50.

The 'Friends' and the 'Trust'

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

When Norfolk County Council put the Hunter Fleet up for sale in 1995, a group of concerned people organised a public subscription and a 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* organisation was 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 Administrator 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 member's 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, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 5QG

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