

HUNTER'S YARD



Newsletter of the Friends of the Hunter Fleet



The Three-Rivers Race - June 2010
Tim, Ian, and John at Potter Heigham Bridge

Picture by Philip Bray

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Editorial

Welcome to Friends old and new.

After THREE years of trying, I am delighted to tell you that I am moving house. The Natural England report that talked of flooding six Broadland villages had a disastrous effect, whether or not it was 'only a proposal'. However, it has now been quashed, and common sense is returning to the local housing market.

That said, I am moving only four miles or so away from Hickling, so will continue to produce the magazine until at least the end of the year.

Inside this issue, you will find a number of references to the 2-day sail, which proved hugely popular and will no doubt be so again. Part two of Brian Hackett's article about sailing Hunters also appears, along with details of the forthcoming visit to the 2010 Enkhuizen Classic Boat Fair. That information comes from Will Hoedeman who is organising the trip.

You may remember that a while ago, I featured a picture by Will's daughter, Sophie. He tells me Sophie has just had an exhibition of her work at the Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh.

Good to see some new names in this issue. Do remember, this is *your* newsletter, and I'm as keen as ever to include your sailing news, so please do contact me, but for the moment, by email only.

Zoë

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The Chair types...

This year, the weather for the AGM was both cold and wet. Only one crew was brave enough to set sail, and I was not brave enough to be one of them. Instead, Jean and I concentrated on congenial conversation and enjoying the barbeque which was as excellent as ever and even more welcome than usual as a means of warming up.

One personal highlight of the day was meeting up with my old friend John Buckingham for the first time since 1970. John, one of the original Norfolk Schools' sailing instructors, sailed with Frank Dye, in *Wayfarer No 48*, across the North Sea from Lowestoft to Norway. I seem to remember him describing the epic as being quite a straightforward job of sailing due East till they sighted the Esbjerg light then turning sharp left and planing up the Danish coast till they sighted Norway. A tough and taciturn man, I met him again a month or so after the AGM, this time in Wells, at Frank Dye's funeral.

Towards the end of May we had a heat wave. Not wishing to waste the opportunity, Jean and I duly set out to have a little cruise in *Sapphire*. Having enjoyed a pleasant lunch at Ranworth, it didn't take too long to sail to Wroxham Broad, where, after the frustrations of all the trees, especially just at the lower end of Salhouse Broad, we had a glorious time just reaching up and down Wroxham Broad. Standing on the cabin top to stow the mainsail, I slipped and did not need telling that I had hurt my back, yet again. I really must tell Colin Buttifant to use a stickier polish. One short cruise under power allowed the back to get a bit better and a couple of days later we were delighted to see Neil Hopkins and Philip Bray with their first crew to enjoy a Skippered 2-day

sail. Naturally we joined them for an evening meal at the Horning Swan. It was a great experience for Jean and I as the conversation and enthusiasm simply flowed. It shows great promise for the continued success of this innovation of Neil's.

The lads at the Yard, Ian, Tim, and John had a go at the Three Rivers Race in the *Rebel*. Much thought went into the preparations for mast lowering as this is a crucial element in that race. I have not yet spoken to them about their experience but simply to finish is a triumph. I did see them near Thurn Mouth when Ian shouted a brief account of what they had done so far. To me they seemed to be going well, at the time. I understand they finished above half way, which, in that hotly contested fleet, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the event was a triumph indeed for a hire boat with borrowed sails. In my experience, people do not buy expensive new sails until they need to, and they do not lend out their best; all in all a very good show. Congratulations to the Hunter's Yard team.

You do meet some very nice people on the Broads. Just before the middle of June, Jean and I took advantage of a fairly promising forecast to make a little trip to Hickling. The plan was to motor to and through Potter bridge, then sail to Hickling. Mooring in Potter for lunch, it became increasingly obvious that the wind was much too hard for the likes of us so we reluctantly decided to motor the rest of the way. Just before Martham, we overtook *Wood Anemone*, reefed right down, beating towards Kendal Dyke. Not too long after we had safely moored in the Pleasure Boat dyke, *Wood Anemone* sailed in. Giving them a hand moor up I discovered that Skipper and crew

were both from Norfolk but living in London. Not only that, both had attended Hillside Avenue Primary School, when Ted Barbour was headmaster. Ted was another Norfolk Schools' sailing instructor in the sixties and seventies. After a tea break, off went *Anemone* for another sail on the Broad. I do admire such genuine sailing enthusiasm on the part of such lovely people.

On the following day, the wind being more friendly, we hoisted and enjoyed a splendid sail across Hickling Broad, turned up Old Meadow Dyke with a following wind and had another little sail around Horsey Mere. Wishing to moor up in Old Meadow Dyke for lunch and dog walk, we stowed sail on the Mere and switched on the motor. Our attention then focused on a sailing vessel lying to a mud weight which appeared to be having trouble hoisting its mainsail. We motored over and enquired if we could help. The offer was accepted, so we tied alongside. Both skipper and crew admitted that it was some twenty or thirty years since they last hire on the Broads and that they were a bit rusty.

The problem was soon solved but in the process a shackle bow went overboard and the only spare that I had on board was on the small side, but I did have a shackle bow without a pin and, for the first time in sixty odd years of sailing, my orphan shackle bow fitted their pin. I wonder how often Graham has had that experience. We later watched the pair sailing happily around the Mere making up for lost time. We did, of course put in a word for Hunter's Yard before leaving them.

Les Gee

July 2010

Membership News

We are only half-way through the season but we have already signed up over 40 new Friends, bringing our total to 885. There are still some overdue subscriptions and we have sadly lost members since the last Newsletter but I am hopeful that we shall be within sight of my aim of having 900 Friends by the end of the year.

May I draw the attention of both new and 'old' members, to our website where there is a large section for Friends. The four headings are:

Past Newsletters, News & Events, giving general information and/or advance warning of forthcoming events, a downloadable *Application Form*, (to encourage family and Friends to join!) and a *Members Page* with the facility to view the current Newsletter; this needs a login password, which is 'Percy' for the remainder of the year.

In addition to the existing Spring and Autumn social events for Friends, a third one, *Skipped 2-Day Sails*, was successfully trialled in May and will be repeated next year because of its popularity. Neil Hopkinson's account of this year's event and details for 2011 appear inside.

As is usual at this time of the year, those of you whose subscriptions are still outstanding will be getting a 'Final Reminder' from me with this Newsletter. I hope that the lapse in payment is merely an oversight and that we can continue to rely on your valuable and generous support.

Wishing you all a successful second half of the season and I look forward to seeing you at the Autumn Event in September.

Jennifer Mack

June 2010

2-Day Skippered Sails in *Huster 4* and *Hustler 5*

Neil Hopkinson

You will I am sure be delighted to hear that the first week of 2-day skippered sails in May was a complete success. The weather was delightful with sunshine throughout and it stayed dry except for a sprinkle of rain on the Thursday afternoon. The wind varied from an absolute calm, during which I quanted much of the way from Horning to Ranworth Dam, to us needing a reef as one of those beautiful steady sailing winds blew us all the way to the yard almost without a change in direction or strength. One of the most enthralling moments was when we heard bitterns booming as we sailed down the Bure between Horning Church and Ranworth Dam.

The Friends who joined us all had a wonderful time, some of them getting to grips with the sailing whilst others enjoyed the view and the river, leaving the sailing to

myself and Philip. Four of them have already booked for 2011.

For 2011 we will be running the sails on the Ant during the week of May 21 to 27, so that you can enjoy the delights of Barton Broad, Toad Cottage and the nature walks at How Hill as well as passing under Ludham Bridge on the way.

Our night's stop will be at Neatishead and we will sleep at The Regency House Bed and Breakfast which is only a short walk away from the public Staithe at Neatishead. Once moored and settled in at the Regency, a meal and a pint will be taken at either Ye Olde Saddlery Restaurant or The White Horse Pub.

If you would like to join us in 2011, please give me a ring on 07930 910870, or 01455 203167 or email me:

neil@impalaadventures.com.



Picture by Neil Hopkinson

Bags Me Go Next!

Sam Bryan

I have just returned from one of the first 2-day skippered sails run on behalf of the Friends (24th/25th May). What a brilliant idea; absolutely superb in every way. Whether you want 'hands-on sailing experience' or just to sit and watch the various aspects of river life drift by (or whoosh by!) this is for you. In either case you can be assured you are in safe hands with your skippers.

I should say that I had been on a yacht about 50 years ago. Three years running I was one of a group of young men who knew very little about sailing other than it was a way to get to one pub from another with reduced risk of falling down.

Last year my wife and I took a two-hour skippered sail with Hunter's Yard and all the pleasures of yachting came flooding back, (minus the long discontinued need for alcohol). We joined the Friends, and having returned home I attended a 2 day RYA Start Sailing course run at a reasonably nearby reservoir and based on dinghies.

As soon as the two-day sail advertisement appeared in the newsletter, I wanted to participate. Our trip comprised *Hustler 4* skippered by Philip Bray, with Neil Hopkinson at the tiller of *Hustler 5*. Both are experienced and knowledgeable sailors and excellent Ambassadors for the Friends.

I was in *Hustler 4* with two other crew and Philip encouraged each of us to sail single handed. Gentle guidance was available on request or offered where conditions required. There were obvious occasions

where the skipper took command; he also managed each departure and mooring.

Both yachts set off from Hunter's Yard on the first morning; a late lunch at Cockshoot Dyke being our objective. The weather was glorious and the wind was kind enough to stay the pleasant side of frisky. After lunch we had a stroll down the Boardwalk. Returning the same way, some of the joint crews disappeared into the undergrowth at discreet intervals. I was informed these individual diversions were used to commune with nature.

The afternoon was spent passing slowly through Horning in a series of much compressed and decidedly lopsided ZZZs. This was me at the tiller with my 'performance in charge' more reminiscent of the small silvery fish than one in control of a stately yacht. Philip negotiated the bend by The Swan and we sailed down to Dydall's Drainage Mill and back before mooring for the night courtesy of The Horning Sailing Club. The clients were booked into B&B at The Swan, all inclusive in the very reasonable cost of the Course. Prior to sleep however, the whole Company (7) shared an evening's good food and company at The New Inn.

The following morning we tiptoed carefully among numerous young geese and their spoor and rejoined our skippers and their craft. When ready, we set off for Malthouse Broad with the mooring adjacent to the Norfolk Nature Information Office as our intended lunchtime stop.

This pre-arranged mooring was with kind permission of the Warden. Wind strength had been increasing during the morning and Philip decided that whilst stopped for lunch we would take in a reef. With restricted access to the mooring plus the unfavourable and varying wind, our first landing was tricky but *Hustler 4* managed the operation with a fair measure of dignity remaining. Having had lunch and departed with difficulties similar to those experienced earlier, Philip considered our first attempts of such educational benefit to the crew members that he had us land and leave a second time.

Having gained maximum benefit from these operations, we recommenced sailing ordinaire across Malthouse, into the Bure and towards Thurne Mouth. The wind strength along the Thurne towards Ludham was such that Philip took over the helm. (The crew shut the cabin windows and held on).

I can't remember exactly at what point Philip introduced us to yet another extraordinary display of his sailing ability. The simulation exercise consisted of turning a large number of very tight circles whilst each crew member leant out, trying to rescue an imaginary man overboard. (Actually, Philip's Hunter cap had blown off.) Eventually, the mop handle was used to lance the wayward headgear and it was flipped inboard. This also proved a convincing demonstration of a Hunter cap's ability to float because it kindly kept its peak above water for a good time and then floated visibly just below the surface.

Important Note - Please continue to wear your lifejackets, buoyancy aids etc, as normal. The caps ain't that good.

All too soon we arrived back at the Yard where our accumulated experience allowed us a smooth and controlled docking with myself nonchalantly stepping ashore with the bow rope. Text book stuff I thought, and a very fitting end to two memorable and extraordinarily rewarding days.

The title of my article refers to an expression from my first childhood. Saying "Bags me" anything before any other of the party was supposed to give the claimant the right to his request being granted. Hence, "I bags a go on one of the next 2-day skippered sails."

Whilst referring to terminology, I beg to be excused if my use of any sailing terms or place references are incorrect. I can only claim ignorance or stupidity, I leave you to decide. Before I finally close I must say again an enormous "Thank You" to both skippers for their time and patience, with special thanks to Neil Hopkinson for organising the event. Many, many thanks to you both and to Hunter's Yard. Good sailing to you all.

The Guinea Pig's Trip

Geoff Nettleton

Hustler 5

Skipper - Neil

Crew - Chris, Diana, Geoff

Kick off scheduled for: 10.00am

Kick off actual: 11.00am... after I'd gone to Stalham for additional diabetic tablets to replace those lost en-route from Otley.

We did not picnic at the usual place, we did not come back from the usual place; we went on into the 'wild blue yonder'. Though we did not see him until afternoon, or to be more precise, the lunch break, Philip followed us from the yard in his own boat.

Lunch was sandwiches, bought as packages by Chris, Diana, and myself, with the skipper having a whole array of food from home in the coolbox. Lunch break also saw my left foot go for a paddle down a

rabbit hole or something while mooring.

Chris had driven (nil nautical terminology in *this* article) in the morning and had an easy time of it; Diana and I taking the afternoon shift had a much harder time, doing zig/zaggy things with no wind, against the time/tide and avoiding the big blue/white things with the dreaded diesel in them. Passing *Southern Comfort*, the boat, not the drink, was easy, as *he*, i.e. its skipper, *knew* what he was doing.

This is not Horning, say I. My last visit there by boat was the other way from Wroxham, but in due time, the Swan hove into view and we went past it for an extra half hour en-route to Wroxham. Philip checked us (aren't mobile phones handy?) to say dinner was ordered for 20.00 hrs, and



Picture by Neil Hopkinson

that he, Les, and Jean would be joining us. Good dinner, good company, and good bed and sleep at around 22.30hrs.

Sunday dawned with the brilliant weather of Saturday, and the 10.00am kick-off was actually 9.50. Breakfast had been 'continental'. Would have preferred a full English from a hotel of the Swan's standard, even expected it.

A gentle sail to Ranworth and the zz up the (old local nautical term I've remembered) CUT, but we are promised by our intrepid leader a straight run back. Food had been bought prior to leaving, and after a few turns round the Broad to show off our sailing ability (or not), we dropped the mud weight and drifted around eating lunch. Toilet stop + ice cream stop after

quanting to the staithe saw us depart for the alleged 'straight run' back. The tide had turned, the wind had turned, and every man and his dog had turned up, including the local water type tow truck with a dead diesel in tow.

Thus, any relationship to straight was purely a figment of our leader's imagination. Tea was taken near to a picnic spot and a gentle run home got us to Philip and the Yard at around 19.00. (Special arrangement by Philip - thanks very much.)

I ate, filled up the car at Acle and eventually got to Sleaford for Travel Lodge bed prior to coming home via the Tramway Museum at Crich.

An excellent three days - ROLL ON May 2011. This is the way to do it!



Picture by Neil Hopkinson



From the Yard Vikki Walker

Hi again and a big howdy folks! Finally the season is here and the want for nice weather has been granted. A big thank goodness for it too she shouts! However... what the heck is it with us in this here country? We moan if it's wet and cold and then when it turns dry and warm we moan about that too!

All joking aside, this weather has helped with the bookings no end as you can imagine. The cabin yachts are doing great, already 76% booked, the figure we finished at last year so all things being equal we should be on for a good booking year after all. The half-deckers are doing better too at a whopping 41% already! Last year they only managed 36% in total. So, I say... may this weather carry on please!

We are lucky to have so many supporters who really love our 'ole gals' and keep us going here. So we here at the Yard would like to say from the bottom of our lil cotton socks - A HUGE THANK YOU to every one of you wonderful people for all your support, it is so very much appreciated.

The boys have been keeping very busy working their behinds off on the new quay heading and they've done a great job of it, I'm sure you'll agree. But then again, you just wouldn't expect anything other than a great job from the Hunter lads now would you? The Island area is now complete so they have moved on to the left hand side as you look out of the shed. I think the plan is to do the entire quay but this will take a bit of time though and possibly won't get

finished this season. Still, you never know...



Thought you might like to know a bit about the RYA school. It is set up with me being called the principal, mainly because I do all the bookings - Neville Khambatta is the Chief Instructor - Tim and Ian are now Senior Instructors, after completing their course earlier this year - we have Tony Southwood with us as an Instructor and Jimmy James who is not only an Instructor but is also stand in as a Senior Instructor should we need him. We are also grateful to have a few other Instructors who are keen to work with us as and when needed. And the classroom is in the far shed in the corner near the slipway and fits in very nicely without being unsightly. The courses have started now; the first was in May, albeit a very small group. It was very successful with everyone passing. In my opinion the small course was a nice way for the Instructors to 'cut their teeth'.

Our August course only needs one more

person to be fully booked. We're hoping to give that place to Stephen Pullinger from the EDP for a trade of him writing about his progress each day in the paper. Let's hope he keeps to that, that kind of coverage would be great for us in many ways! *Anglia Afloat* said if Stephen did that they would do a full write up on it in the next edition.

So with all this going on we are hopeful that the school will be successful enough to stay in place here. The aim is to get folks who can't sail out in our boats. This will give them the training they need and will go a long way to keep our ladies safe when they start taking them out. However, it's not limited to that, we even have folks who can sail but have no qualifications coming on the courses too so they can get 'the paper'.

Our Hunter's volunteer team of folks are doing a grand job, as always. Our gardening team have been busy on the grass and hedge cutting as well as starting to weed around the front of the building. Pat Bray has done us proud with her wonderful hanging baskets again this year and Philip has even set up a watering system so they will stay beautiful and not be forgotten or left thirsty on Sundays.

I'm sure everyone would join 'us lot' here at the Yard in saying a big thank you to Peter Wadman, David Beckley, Philip & Pat Bray for their help and generosity in giving up their time to keep 'us' (Hunter's) beautiful!

The volunteer skippers have been busy on the 2-hour sails too with 73 bookings so far this year, it would've been more but we've had to cancel a few with no wind at times. Last year the total was 62 so again the weather is playing a part in doing better this year.

Now that *Lucent's* finished the guys have a bit more time on their hands, when they're not busting a gut on the quay heading amongst other things that is, to do other projects. So in order to keep the traditional boat building skills going during the summer months the Trustees have agreed to take on private work to keep the boys' hands in. Below is one such project, it'll take longer than the summer but they will put it on hold for the winter and start again. It's already been causing interest from our visitors so has turned out to be a good idea. People do like to see boat building work going on here at the Yard.



And now for a bit of fun... can you guess who it is yet? (Rolf Harris accent please.)



And on that note, it's bye-bye from the Yard, take care now, see y'all again soon!

Vikki

Not all of us started on Hustlers!

Ian R Cartwright

It's not everyone who has the good fortune to start to sail in a Hustler. Some of us took very seriously the admonition in the Blake's Catalogue that Hustlers were only for the experienced yachtsman, and by no means to be entrusted to learners! Which is why, after several years of pleading, my father (who had never sailed before either), finally submitted and came with me for a week on *Whippet 2*, in 1957. For those whose memories don't go back that far, perhaps I should explain that Whippets were about 18 feet long, gaff rigged and so small inside that the loo was between the two bunks. They were also too small to have a quant. Instead, a pair of oars was 'provided for your convenience'. The trouble was that there was nowhere to sit to row! Ernest Collins let them out; there were twelve of them, the last six of which were fitted with a bracket to hold a Seagull outboard at 30s per week extra. Oh, yes, and the headroom was 4'6" with the roof up. There's a lot that was not written in the log, mostly from embarrassment (I suppose) and not wanting to record for all time the depths of our combined ignorance. Dear Reader, feel free to let your imagination loose to fill in the lacunae.

Anyway, verbatim, with later artistic explanatory interpolations:

July 20th 1957. Saturday

18.30 Arrived at boatyard, and began stowing gear.

19.40 Finish odd jobs etc.

22.00 Dad phones Mum. Cost from Wroxham, 2/3d

July 21st.

04.30 Wake up. Dad goes to sleep again, but his snores unfortunately kept Ian awake. We set sail about 10.30 - we were moored in a dyke parallel to the river, and it was one of the happiest moments of my life when, having hoisted the sail with the assistance of a yard-hand, I pushed off and broad-reached out of the dyke, gybed round on entering the river and stopped at the staithe for Dad to get on - and headed downstream. There was very little wind through Wroxham village, and when at last we got into the wind, it was against us. Altogether we went into the reeds four times. (Optimist. We hadn't got the hang of steerage way, so we spent much time drifting slowly from bank to bank with the tiller hard over!)

We finally arrived in Horning about 4.30. We had tea while tied to a boatyard staithe there, and cast off about 5.30. By then there was quite a strong breeze. We went downstream about 150 yards below Percivals' Yard, and then turned back, tacking against the breeze. About 6.20, we tied up in front of *Mayfly*, who had moored opposite us at Wroxham. (At what was then Southgates' Upper Street Yard, now dykes and bungalows. In those days, all the toilet paper at that yard had 'Manchester Corporation' printed on each sheet!)

Later, we walked to the village (about one mile).

Dad caught a fish at Wroxham, about 8.30.

10.00pm. Went to bed. Breeze fairly stiff,

about NW. So ends this day.

Breakfast Bacon and eggs. Dinner Sausages

22nd July, Monday.

Breeze fairly stiff, so we did not move until about 12.30. Walked into the village to get provisions. Spent 10/1d

12.30 Set off upstream. About a mile and a half up from our moorings, we stopped for lunch.

2.00 Cast off, heading toward Salhouse Broad. On the way, fell in with *Primrose*, who was tied up behind us at Wroxham. She came with us to Salhouse Broad, where we arrived about 6.30. Wind very light. We rowed very little. *Whippet 2* sails pretty well both on and off the wind, and makes good use of light airs. (I had learned that sentence from a book, and wasn't going to waste it, regardless of its accuracy or otherwise!)

Moored on Salhouse Broad about 7.10. About 8.30., Ian caught a roach while moored on Salhouse Broad.

A man came round in a boat, charging for moorings and fishing. Charge Mooring, 2/6d; Rod 1/-

Menu Breakfast - Egg and sausage; Dinner (night) - Steak and kidney pie and potatoes.

About 9.30, went to bed. By this time there was no breeze at all.

July 23rd. Tuesday.

Got up about 7.15. Breeze fair, from West. Breakfast - bacon and eggs.

Cast off 9.15. Tack W to say "Good morning" to *Primrose*, who sailed with us yesterday. We then sailed down to Horning. We both went in the reeds once. Arrived at Horning about 1.30.

Moored at Banham's staithe and went shopping. Cost 7/4d. Cast off at 2.15 and arrived at Ranworth about 5.30. (after peeling the potatoes in water dipped from Ranworth dyke.) Dinner menu Steak and kidney pie.

Went to bed about 10. Slight rain. Very little breeze; what there is, is from the West.

24th July Wednesday.

Dad caught three fish before breakfast. Breakfast menu bacon, eggs and beans. Stronger breeze than yesterday evening, but still barely noticeable.

Cast off 9.50

Take about 2 hours to get to Horning Ferry, but then at least an hour to reach The Swan.

Call in at Black Horse Broad, but Dad says it is too windy (it wasn't, but he panicked when I gybed accidentally (and vigorously, I recall! I don't blame him! Don't forget he'd never sailed before either.) Sail slowly up to Salhouse Broad, rowing much of the way. Arrive there and moor alongside *Primrose* about 6.20.

Then it starts to rain.

Money spent at Ranworth 6/- approx.

Dinner menu casserole steak and potatoes.

The log ends there. My recollection was that we were still speaking to each other just and that the following day we sailed to Horning (again!) and then back up to Wroxham and went home. I do have a photograph of me and a rather attractive girl from *Primrose* but she came from Barrow in Furness. That was even further away than it is now; we exchanged Christmas cards once, and that was it!

Sailing with Hunters - Now and Then...

Brian Hackett

2009 *Rebel Reveller*

Many years have passed since I last sailed a Hunter yacht. In the intervening years, I have learned it is better to hire than to own. My old friend Bob now owns a classic yacht on the Tamar, and lovely though she is, a lot of his life consists of scrubbing and scraping. I have hired many yachts, most recently in the Mediterranean, which is a little warmer and slightly more spacious than the Broads.

This year though, we hankered for a return to home waters, and the testing waterways of Norfolk. Unfortunately in recent years, my wife Lynne has begun to harbour silly ideas. She believes beds should be comfortable, showers are enjoyable, and being woken at dawn by Canada geese isn't. I know, but what can you do?

In search of compromise, we agreed we should hire a cottage and one of Hunter's half-deckers, now available again. We would invite the family and keep the yacht at a riverside mooring, for instant access when the mood took us. Our last Mediterranean trip had been to the Croatian islands, a wonderful place for sailing, but getting into our bunks at night was like slipping into a pizza oven; hiring a cottage would give us all the delights of sailing with a comfortable night's sleep.

Thus it was that I made my first blunder.

I found the search for a cottage with a suitable mooring harder than expected, and finally settled on one way up the Bure at Wroxham, and the head of a dyke. We hadn't been to the Broads for a number of

years and I'd forgotten how wooded the upper Bure is - not a great place for a yacht without an engine.

Our holiday took place during Wimbledon fortnight, when summer briefly kissed our islands. We arrived at the boatyard in hot sun, with just a light breeze blowing. It was wonderful to see the yard just as I'd remembered it, looking a picture.

As we entered the office, Vikki asked if we were returning customers, so I told her I'd been previously at the age of 18, adding that I doubted these days if such precious craft would be entrusted to four teenagers, remembering our antics of 1967. She replied to the contrary, that young people were very much encouraged and treated the yachts better than some older customers.

Trying my best to look like a responsible older customer we went out to find the Rebel, and soon set off to sail her to Wroxham in a pleasant light easterly. "If this wind holds we'll be there in no time," I said. It didn't, and we weren't.

We had a fine sail to St Benet's Abbey, where we stopped for a champagne picnic. Top of the bill for me were the whelk and mayonnaise sandwiches. The rest of the party looked elsewhere. The mooring at St Benet's was not as I'd remembered it, with evidence of dredging and orange plastic tape everywhere, but lunch was enjoyable.

We stopped briefly at Cockshoot Broad, then shortly afterwards we fell in with a Friend of Hunter's Yard who sped around us in a dinghy taking pictures, much to my gratification, until I realised we still had a fender out! Bob is a stickler for these things,

and if the pictures ever come to light he may do something nasty with a marlin spike.

We sailed on through Horning, with the wind now very light, and against us. Only a yacht as fine as the Rebel would have got us up Horning Reach in those conditions without recourse to a paddle; she's one of the finest 'sailers' I've ever known.

As we rounded the bend, a group of Rebels came racing out of Blackhorse Broad, a splendid sight, but not long after, the wind died away completely as the trees grew dense along both banks, and the paddles came out.

There were five of us on board and we took turns but it was hard work. Passing cruisers offered helpful suggestions - "Why don't you turn your engine on?" A day boat full of jolly gents in suits and boaters came by, intent on rolling it over by hanging off the cabin and rocking it hard. They paused to admire the Rebel, then set back to work.

By the time we reached Wroxham Broad the novelty of paddling had worn off, and it made it all the sweeter to turn from the river and swoop across the Broad with some wind in our sails again. We crept into the dyke and mooring in the early evening.

There she stayed the next day with no breath of wind to disturb the sails of the windmill in the cottage's garden. Knowing old gentlemen said it was a long time since a Rebel had been seen at Wroxham, kindly refraining from saying, as old gentlemen will, that it was long time since anyone had been daft enough to take one there.

Next day there was no wind again, so we decided to have another champagne picnic at the coast. Not a good idea. There was a thick mist over the coast and it was cold and miserable. In search of a suitable picnic

spot, we found our way to Hickling Broad, where Sam, our elder son, suggested we take out a half-decker. It didn't seem right, hiring a half-decker, when one already had a hired half-decker, but hey, we were on holiday.

After a picnic by the Broad, Sam took the helm of *Silver Tip* and we had a delightful afternoon on the Broad, followed by a drink in the Greyhound's delightful beer garden.

That experience told us what we needed to do - get the Rebel back down to where the wind was!

So we set off next morning, paddling down the Dyke with a hopeful jib set. There was just a tiny breeze on the river, but Rebel made the most of it and we didn't touch the paddles again. We took lunch moored to the sad, boarded-up pub at Hickling Ferry, and set off in the hope of a swift sail home. It didn't quite happen like that though, as the tide turned and the wind fell away. As we crept along, the Wherry Albion stormed up behind us. I made airy remarks about them picking up the wind above the trees, and did a bit of casual sail trimming but they were really strolling along. Only after they had passed and we had borne their jibes stoically, did we notice the little rubber dinghy pushing them along with its outboard.

Once past Cockshoot, we found the wind again. We had lovely sail along the Bure and found a beam wind on the Thurne, in the warm evening sun. By the time we made the yard everyone had gone home, but we were back where we needed to be.

The following day, a fine, good sail to Acle and back finished off our holiday in style. Next time, we'll know better and stay where the wind is.

Hunters Go Dutch 2010

Hunter's Yard will go overseas again in November to follow last year's very successful and enjoyable weekend trip to Holland for the annual Enkhuizen Classic Boat Fair (Beurs Klassieke Schepen). This is a brilliant event, a must for all who love wooden traditional boats and sailing. And one result was an invitation to write about Hunter's sailing for the magazine *Spiegel der Zeilvaart*, the Dutch equivalent of Classic Boat magazine. The June number has Hunter Boats on the cover, as well as several pages about the boats we sail and the waters we sail on.

See www.spiegelderzeilvaart.nl (follow: 'Inhoud' then 'Vorige Maand' to find June.

This year Hunters Yard (Vikki, yard staff and Hunters' Friends) will 'Go Dutch' and exhibit at the Boat Fair, a 3 day event from November 5th-7th. Hundreds of traditional boats of all types will be there, as well as a full daily programme of film shows, free sailing opportunities and every variety of wooden boat construction and maintenance represented. For more see (also in English): www.klassiekeschepen.nl

It is held right in the centre of the historic harbour area of the lovely ancient town of Enkhuizen, some 40 kms north of Amsterdam, adjoining the Zuiderzee now called IJsselmeer after the sea dyke closures.

This year again I will be organising a long weekend trip, centred on visiting the Enkhuizen Classic Boat Fair, but with other attractions attached. These could be day

visits to nearby Amsterdam, Volendam, Alkmaar to name a few options.

And apart from traditional boating days the evenings and nights can include accommodation

on a comfortable traditional schooner, normally on holiday charter cruises to the Baltic, Brittany or Norway. An outline of costs would be approximately:

3 nights' onboard accommodation inclusive all meals: £120

Travel Harwich-Hook ferry plus train in Holland: £130

Of course you may wish to extend your stay, or make private travel arrangement, but bookings for onboard accommodation in Enkhuizen harbour, right where the Fair is held must be made by end August to ensure the Hunter's party can stay together as a group. Please therefore express interest as soon as possible, but latest by August 20th. Full details and booking information will then be sent.

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