



# HUNTER'S YARD

Issue 2 - Spring 2024



Hunter's Yard is the home of the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust. The Trust has in its care the last remaining traditional fleet of Norfolk Broads hire yachts. Our purpose is to *'Advance the education of the public by the provision of facilities for sail training and to maintain, promote, restore, conserve, improve and develop historic and traditional sailing and other craft relating to the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads for the public benefit'*.

## The fleet takes to the water for 2024

By the time you read this the cabin yachts should be back in the water. Launching was scheduled for the first week in March.

We anticipate some challenges from the continuing high water. It takes about a week to get them into the water and then two weeks for rigging and fitting out. The first hires start March 30th and the whole fleet is booked out for that week with just



four Hustlers available in the second week. Work has now started on the half-deckers. Valiant Rebel is having some planks replaced and all get varnished. They start hiring out from 20th April.

## Fish monitoring

A fish 'receiver' has been placed in the water at the top quay heading by the Environment Agency. The size of a Pringles tube it will monitor the

movement of the Bream and Pike population, their resistance to climate change and saline incursion. The research is being done by Bournemouth University. We have asked if they can share data with us to put in the newsletter, so watch this space.

## 3 Rivers Race - Hunter's team set to win?

For the first time in some years we have a team entered into the 3 Rivers Race. Ezra, Guy and Guy's daughter Grace are expected to lift a trophy (by us at any rate as we'll be covering their work while they are having a nice time out on the water). Described as 'Europe's toughest inland sailing race' it is run by Horning Sailing Club and sponsored by Yachtmaster Insurance Services. The race covers 50 miles over 24 hours and includes the requirement to shoot three bridges - described as the 'ultimate test of skill.' Our team is in Hustler 4. Last year Hustler 5 under Paul Piggins lifted a trophy and we have seven boats overall in the 2024 race. We hope to bring you a picture of our trophy in the next newsletter (!).

[www.huntersyard.co.uk](http://www.huntersyard.co.uk)



HUNTER'S YARD



Family Sailing - special rates in the school holidays

We have a new family sailing rate this season with 20% off normal prices in the school holidays for families sailing with children under 18. This is designed to keep the children coming back as they grow older and also to help out a bit with holiday costs when the cost of living is such a challenge for many families. To book either call the office or book through the website and use 'family' in the coupon box.

Wildlife and bat walk

We have seen goslings in February and have a couple of resident swans. Unfortunately, we don't seem to have seen so much wildlife this year but have had the occasional visit from the otters, a couple of appearances from the kingfisher (the two special kingfisher perching poles are put out each winter to encourage them up to the yard), herons and a crane - and a few ducks which, for some reason, prefer the puddle in the car park.

The Friends are organising a bat walk for Friday 28th June. This will take place from the yard. If you would like to join in, please let us know.

Arthur Ransome Cruise in Company - a great family adventure!

**A RANSOME CRUISE IN COMPANY**  
on the Norfolk Broads | 03rd – 10th August 2024

**Sail the waters of Coot Club & The Big Six**

Hunter's Yard own 2, 3 & 4-berth cabin yachts available for hire including *Lullaby*, the Teasel from the Swallows & Amazons film. Bring your family and experience sailing on the Broads with over 200km of navigable waterways that was the picturesque setting for some of Arthur Ransom's famous novels.

Original dinghies *Amazon* and *Titmouse* are also available to sail.

Come for the entire week or just part of it from Saturday to Monday or Tuesday to Friday and visit Horning, Ranworth, Potter Heigham, and Kendal Dyke (where Dick fell in!)

You will be accompanied by an experienced Broads sailor to assist at the bridges where we have to lower masts, to arrange moorings and to book evening meals as requested.

We ask that all crew have a basic level of dinghy competency, or a member of the party who is confident to skipper the cabin yacht. The cruise is not a learn-to-sail holiday, but we can provide an instructor if you wish.

Call Dan or Martin on 01692 678263 to find out more, or visit [huntersyard.co.uk](http://huntersyard.co.uk) to book!





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The Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust is a charity registered in England & Wales under 1052303

The Arthur Ransome Cruise in Company takes place 3rd - 10th August, 2024. We'll have an experienced Broads skipper leading the cruise and helping to arrange moorings and book evening meals as desired. We'll be visiting Horning, Ranworth, Potter Heigham and Kendal Dyke and you are welcome to join for the whole week or just part of it. Amazon and Titmouse will be available, too, as part of the cruise. Please get in touch to know more.



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Museum of the Broads



Just a couple of miles away from Hunter's Yard lies the Museum of the Broads. This is a fantastic place to visit and is well worth a morning or afternoon out from your holiday boat hire. You can get there by boat, too, as it lies at the top of the staithe at Stalham and there are visitor moorings nearby. There are over 6,000 items in the collection illustrating life on the Broads over the last one thousand years. Included are many boats, as well as old holiday hire brochures featuring classic boats (and vintage prices!) from years gone by. They also have a very beautiful steam launch, as well as an eco-friendly electric launch, to take visitors out on. Falcon, the steam launch, was built in 1894 by Simpson

and Strickland (a famous boatbuilding name) in Dartmouth for Sir Edmund Lacon, the owner of the Great Yarmouth Lacon's brewery. Originally a pleasure boat on the Broads, Falcon was requisitioned by the Royal Navy during WW1; in WW2 she towed naval boats to Great Yarmouth. She was donated to the museum in 1997 and restored by the museum volunteers who also brought her steam engine back to life. If you are holidaying at Hunter's without a car, we can always drop you off at the museum and collect you.

[www.museumofthebroads.org.uk](http://www.museumofthebroads.org.uk)

Hunter's joins Wooden Boatbuilders Trade Association

In February, Hunter's was elected an affiliate member of the Wooden Boatbuilder's Trade Association. The association's aim is to establish a high standard of service and workmanship in the trade on which customers can rely. Affiliate members are those who are not engaged in the trade, but have connections with it in some other way, for example through education. While we do repair boats for customers (as well as our own fleet) this seems a good category to be in, particularly as we hope to establish a boatbuilding apprentice programme in late 2024/early 2025.

Yard work for private customers

This is Rebel Maid which needed fairly extensive work on her planking and ribs last summer. Her owner wants to get a bit of racing in this year and then may return later in the season for a bit more work.

If you want any work done, do get in touch to discuss what you need. We'll do a survey first, work up a plan and budget and, if you give the go ahead, get on with the work. Of course, one always finds surprises, so we'll keep in close touch with you.

We are sensitive, too, of the differences between getting a boat back into the water perfectly able to sail or row and of a pristine restoration. Basically, we'll work round your requirements. We regularly make masts and spars for our own boats so if you need something of the sort, get in touch.



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## Rebel Maid R4

*"When we launched our Rebel R4 in the Spring of 2023, we came to realize that she was not as watertight as she should be, leaking through some of the seams.*

*Whilst sailing at Horning Sailing Club, Ezra, who is one of the Hunters' boatbuilding team, offered to have a look and make suggestions on a possible solution. We hadn't realised until then that Hunters took on private repair work.*

*The outcome was that he arranged for us to deliver her to Hunters Yard to be slipped out into the shed for assessment and agree the necessary repairs to be carried out.*

*We are delighted to say that the boat has been skilfully repaired using matching timber with great care and attention to detail, fitting planks and timbers.*

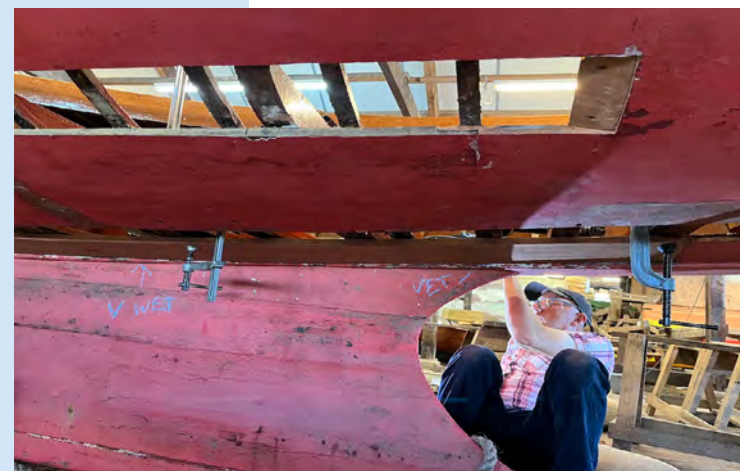
*We were also pleased that we were kept informed during the repair process and were always welcomed on the several visits we made to look at the progress.*

*Without hesitation, we certainly would use Hunters again and recommend them to others."*

Kevin and Jo Edwards

## Wooden boatbuilding on the endangered list

Traditional wooden boatbuilding is on the 2023 Red List of endangered crafts published by The Heritage Crafts Association. The Association identified a number of features that put a craft on the Red List, including the numbers active in the craft, ageing workforce, training



(or lack of access to it) and consequent loss of craft skills, and small business issues (these will be familiar to many self-employed people from varied backgrounds). Also included on the list are fender making; oar, mast and spar making; and sail making with specific reference to hand stitching. Plane making is on the critically endangered list.

The Hunter's

Fleet of largely 1930s yachts is entirely reliant on the craft skills of its trained boatbuilders and we have four in the yard, including Ian our foreman who has been here for over forty years. As a heritage site we think we have a responsibility where we can to play a part in ensuring these skills are kept alive and well. Our boatbuilders keep their hands in on maintaining the fleet but also doing work on customers' boats during the summer to an extremely high standard. We only work on traditional wooden boats - employing exactly those skills that have been identified as endangered on the Red List. Hunter's has been around nearly



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one hundred years and, to help ensure it is here for many more years, we hope to start an apprentice programme in late 2024/early 2025. Through this, we can develop future generations of trained, wooden boatbuilders. It is not a small challenge but with careful planning and the right levels of resource, we think we can do it.

## Wherries on the water

Did you know that the wherries Albion and Maud are just next door to the yard? They have a special offer for Albion for Hunter's hirers if you fancy a trip out on a bigger boat.

The Trust writes: *The wherry Albion was built by William Brighton on the banks of Lake Lothing, near Lowestoft, in 1898 for the Bungay Malsters WD and AE Walker. As well as being the oldest trading wherry afloat she is also unique, being the only carvel trading wherry built; all the others were of clinker design.*

*Jimmy Lacey was Albion's first skipper, with his young nephew Jack Powley as mate. In 1900 Jack became skipper, a job he held for some 20 years. In the early 1930s she was sold to the General Steam Navigation Company and named the Plane. George Farrow became her skipper and she traded on the Norwich river until the Second World War. During the war she was stripped of her gear and used as a lighter at the Colman factory in Norwich. It was here that she lay when the Trust took her over.*

*In 1949 a small group of far-sighted local enthusiasts set up the Norfolk Wherry Trust to preserve and keep sailing actively on Broadland waters one or more examples of the trading wherry. Albion was one of a few which survived and seemed to offer the best option for preservation. She was surveyed, repaired and a new sail fitted. Her maiden voyage for the Trust took place on 13 October 1949.*

*For several years Albion carried on trading but cargoes became difficult to come by and were uneconomic. It was then suggested that she should carry passengers. She went through a number of iterations of internal fittings, initially rather basic, being aimed at scouts and school children (!) ending with her current configuration which we claim makes her the most luxurious trading wherry in the world !*

*Much as with Hunter's fleet you can experience the beautiful scenery and wildlife of the Norfolk Broads aboard a traditional vessel and can, under supervision, take the helm, control the mainsheet and if you wish, help raise Albion's magnificent black sail. All of which you will be familiar with, albeit on a somewhat different scale, aboard Hunter's yachts. You can of course simply sit back and relax !*

*As a result of our new collaboration with Hunter's Yard both organisations are offering discounted sailing experiences with the other group.*

*We have two options for sailing on Albion, firstly you can charter Albion for a day (or more) for a party of up to twelve passengers of your choosing. Secondly you can join a "Day Cruise" whereby you can join a party of other travellers who have booked places on that trip. Whichever option you choose a day usually starts around 9am and finishes around 5pm depending on wind and tide.*

*As we're sure you know Albion is based adjacent to Hunter's Yard and most trips start from our base. Occasionally we are on the Southern Rivers to vary the scenery ! Our offer*



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applies to the day cruise option, there are six coupons (code HYDCD24) which will provide a £10 discount for a booking of two or more people during the 2024 season on a first come basis. Once all six are claimed the coupon becomes invalid. The booking must be made through our Online Booking System (see below) and the coupon is applied at checkout. (This coupon can only be used for day cruises and cannot be used in conjunction with any other coupon codes).

If you would like to join us and be more involved as a volunteer to either crew Albion, help with her maintenance or with other aspects of our operations we will be pleased to hear from you.

Website:- <https://wherryalbion.com/>

Booking System:- <https://sail.wherryalbion.com>

Archive:- <http://archives.wherryalbion.com/>

Facebook page:- <https://facebook.com/NorfolkWherryTrust>

### The Wherry Yacht Charter Charitable Trust

There are just eight wherries now left on the Broads - Wherry Yacht Charter, whose base is in Wroxham, has five of them, all three Wherry Yachts, being the sisters Norada, Olive and White Moth and two of the three remaining Pleasure Wherries, Ardea and Hathor.



The third Pleasure Wherry, Solace is privately owned and the remaining two are the former Trading Wherries, Albion and Maud which live next door to Hunter's Yard.

WYC's wherries were all built between 1905 and 1927 as wherries to carry passengers – each has cabins, some have pianos in their saloons and all have fascinating histories.

They have been restored and are available for scheduled sailings and charters, by contacting [www.wherry-yachtcharter.org](http://www.wherry-yachtcharter.org)

Many people rightly associate the Trading Wherries with being the goods lorries of their day, but as the railways became more commercially attractive to carry goods, the Wherries evolved to meet demands from the growing number of visitors coming to the Broads for recreation.

WYC's wherries were purpose built as huge pleasure craft, on the model of their working forebears. Hathor, known as the Egyptian Wherry, was built by the Colman family (of mustard fame) in memory of their young son, Alan, who died in Egypt where he had been sent to recuperate. Built in 1905, she has a superb Egyptian themed interior with polished sycamore panelling and inlaid hieroglyphics. An Arts & Crafts oil lamp hangs from the saloon ceiling and inlaid lotus flowers of teak decorate the cabins.

Ardea is the largest pleasure wherry ever built at 62ft and 32 tonnes. Completed in 1927 she is described as the Rolls Royce of wherries and her beautiful saloon features a specially built original piano and easy chairs in front of fine panelling. She can take 12

passengers for day sailing and up to six overnight. These stately craft give an intimate insight into Edwardian boating in style on the Broads. The work of WYC, which was formed in 2002 with the aim of restoring and sailing its Wherries has gradually brought these great craft back into everyday use. They are a unique piece of Broads heritage and if you haven't managed to get out on one, well worth the experience.

We'll feature a bit more on the Trust in our next newsletter, including their work in taking care of the boats and the ways in which WYC aims to Keep History Sailing. The Trust welcomes new Volunteers and anyone with an interest is welcome to contact Judith Keogh at [jk@wherryyachtcharter.org](mailto:jk@wherryyachtcharter.org)

You can find details of WYC's Schedule Sailings and Charters on their website at [www.wherryyachtcharter.org](http://www.wherryyachtcharter.org)

### Member of a sailing club?

Can you put this poster up on your sailing club board? We need to boost hires and want to get to those who already sail keelboats but would like to experience the beauty of the Broads and, of course, Hunter's boats. I know we should have airbrushed out the fenders hanging overboard on the boat in the poster but didn't think of it in time! So don't feel you have to mention it to us! If you could get us into your club newsletter, that would be good, too. Just send your address to us and we'll send you a poster for the club house.



### Nancy Blackett

Nancy Blackett is the original of the 'Goblin' in Arthur Ransome's *We Didn't Mean to go to Sea*. In the book four children drift out to sea in the boat and have to sail her across the North Sea at night, in a storm. Arthur Ransome moved to Pin Mill in Suffolk, on the banks of the River Orwell, bought the boat he renamed Nancy Blackett and came up with the plot for the book.

Eventually, as so often happens, the boat fell into disrepair until it was found by the late Mike Rines, a well-known figure in Woodbridge on the banks of the Deben estuary, in Scarborough Harbour. She was holed below the waterline and in a pitiful state. Mike bought her, returned her to the Orwell, and spent two years restoring her to the style Ransome would have recognised. The Nancy Blackett Trust maintains the boat for anyone who is a member to sail - children or grown-ups, short trips or longer cruises, helped by a qualified skipper with DBS clearance. Nancy Blackett can also be seen at open days and maritime festivals each summer.

You can support the future of Nancy Blackett by becoming a Friend for a small annual subscription of £25. You get the chance to sail, enjoy social events, a regular newsletter and of course the pride the comes from helping to preserve a piece of our literary and maritime heritage. To join, email [info@nancyblackett.org](mailto:info@nancyblackett.org) or go to the website.



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**Become a Friend of Hunter's Yard and get special access to the half-deckers**

For just £25 per annum you can become a Friend of Hunter's Fleet. You'll join over 900 other Friends who take a special interest in the doings of the yard and of the Trust. Friends get special access to the half-deckers in the season - this allows them to hire the boats at short notice at a special Friends' rate, perhaps because it is a fine day and they decide they want to get an evening sail in or decide late Friday or Saturday that they would like a boat for the weekend. Friends also get a special rate on merchandise - there is an excellent range of clothing, mugs and caps.

The yard also hosts a social event for Friends a couple of times a year with barbecue, refreshments and sailing. A newsletter goes out to Friends about four times a year.

If you would like to become a Friend just contact us on 01692678263

#### **Skippers wanted**

We are building our roster of keelboat skippers to help out with our schools and youth sailing programme. Skippers are paid £95 per day. We always need volunteer skippers, too, to help out with the 2 hour sails where we take visitors for an experience sailing a classic boat and seeing the Broads wildlife.

Volunteer skippers get to use the boats when they are not booked out as a small thanks for their help during the season.

If you would like to help out, please get in touch with Martin or Dan in the office.

# **THURNE MOUTH OPEN REGATTA**

AN EAST ANGLIAN CRUISING CLUB EVENT

**SPRING BANK  
HOLIDAY WEEKEND**  
Friday evening 24th to  
Monday 27th May 2024

**Free Live Music from 8pm**  
**Saturday – Rum Dogs**  
**Sunday – Cutting the Mustard**

**Licensed Bar from 11am**

**Food available all weekend**  
but evening meals must please  
be pre-ordered via the  
EACC website - address below

**ALL  
SPECTATORS  
WELCOME**  
...  
**FREE FIELD  
CAR PARKING**  
**FOLLOW THE SIGNS  
IN THURNE  
VILLAGE**

**Racing begins:**  
Saturday 10:00  
Sunday 09:45  
Monday 09:45  
with the  
Cock of the Broads  
at 11:30

**Full details & pre-entry  
for competitors on  
EACC website**

For all the latest information, race pre-entries & evening food orders go to [www.ea-cc.org](http://www.ea-cc.org)

## **THE BEST ON THE BROADS**



[www.huntersyard.co.uk](http://www.huntersyard.co.uk)



## **Upton History Group**

**in conjunction with**

## **Wherry Maud Trust**

**Present**

**Upton Celebrates Maud's  
125th Anniversary**

**On**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**The first in a series of events  
celebrating Maud's 125th**

**River End of Upton Dyke in the afternoon**

**Visit Wherry Maud (Weather Permitting)**

**2.30pm to 4.30pm**

**At Upton Village Hall in the evening**

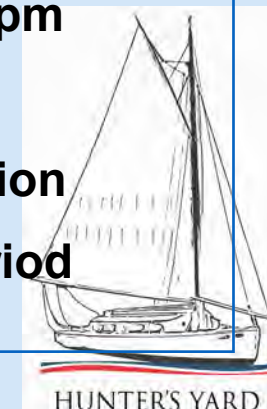
**Free Talk and Exhibition of Photos**

**Viewing the Exhibition - doors open at 6.30pm**

**Talk begins at 7.30pm**

**Telling the fascinating History and Renovation  
of Wherry Maud at Upton over a 15-year period**

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# SAIL A KEELBOAT ON THE NORFOLK BROADS

- Experience 200KM of exciting river & broads sailing
- Classic 1930s cabin yachts & half-deckers with impressive performance
- Spend time exploring an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

WEBSITE



VISIT OUR

Hunter's Yard is home to 22 classic 1930s mahogany yachts, renowned for their fast sailing performance and for their comfort as homes on the water. Our cabin yachts are available with 2-4 berths, electric inboards, and everything else you need for a great holiday.

Call Dan or Martin on 01692 678263 to find out more, or visit [huntersyard.co.uk](https://huntersyard.co.uk) to book your holiday.



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