

# Wood & Water

News from Hunter's Yard - Home of the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust - Issue 5 Spring 2025

*Step Aboard & Sail Into History*



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## Editorial

**T**ime moves on so quickly in the 'real' world, this already being the fifth edition of a newsletter from Hunter's Yard.

However, at the yard, the yearly cycle continues virtually unchanged decade after decade; boats out being sailed, being returned and sent out again, followed by a winter of maintenance and then the spring launch.

It is the historic and ongoing commitment of the skilled workers at the yard, the people who passionately fought so hard to create The Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust back in 1996, the Association of Friends that has worked since then to raise funds, and everyone else who has brought us to today, the custodians of a unique fleet of lovely boats and their extraordinary home.

I hope that this newsletter interests you by bringing news of activities at the yard and afloat and, as you can see from this edition, it has been named 'Wood & Water' to recognise the two essential elements that make it all possible

This bumper first Wood & Water, and future issues, will look beyond the yard, into the special glory that is Broadland and our wider, wonderful Norfolk, including articles about local villages, endangered heritage skills, wildlife, environmental matters and anything else that might help to encourage you to visit, explore and enjoy, not just sailing from Hunter's Yard of course, but everything that is so special and unique about our "wet wonderland" and county.

It would be great to hear from you; your stories about the yard, Broadland and Norfolk, your thoughts about what we do and how we do it, or what you would like to see in this newsletter.

Thank you.

Your Editor

Email the Editor

Norfolk Heritage  
Fleet Trust

Association of Friends

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



## Skipper's Briefing

A dozen skippers gathered at the Yard for their pre-season and RYA course briefing from Ezra Bailey, Chief Instructor (above) and Martin Whitaker, Yard Manager



As you can imagine, safety is paramount.

The briefing included operating policies, fire safety, Person Overboard procedures, instructional issues, safeguarding, health and safety matters, limits on range from the yard and RYA policies related to the courses available.

This was followed by practical reminders on how to launch, equip and recover the rescue boat, and rigging both cabin yachts and half-deckers.

As one of the primary Objects of the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust is education, there was also discussion about the management of groups of young people in and around the yard and on the water.

Skippers are used during RYA courses, 2-day skippered sails organised by the Friends Association and 2 hour, half and full-day sails.

More details of these are on the Hunter's Yard website





## The Museum of The Broads

**Bringing the Stories of The Broads alive!**

### Trustee Vacancies



#### Treasurer of The Museum of The Broads

The Museum is looking for someone to take on the role of Treasurer. This role sits as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Museum. The role would ideally suit someone with accountancy experience.

This is a voluntary role.

#### Principal Function

To maintain an overview of the Museum's financial affairs and to ensure that proper financial records and procedures are in place. Also to submit annual reports and accounts within required deadlines to Companies House and the Charity Commission

#### Duties

- Oversee, approve and present budgets, accounts and financial statements
- Ensure the Museum has an appropriate 'Reserves' policy
- Ensure appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place
- Liaise with the Operations Manager and Volunteers Manager about financial matters
- Ensure the existence of an appropriate investment policy
- Ensure the Museum's compliance with current legislation
- Oversee the preparation and disclosure of the accounts in the form required by funders and relevant statutory bodies (eg HMRC, Charity Commission, Registrar of Companies)
- If external scrutiny of accounts is required, ensure it is carried out in the proper manner and any recommendation implemented
- Make a formal presentation of the accounts at the Annual General Meeting in a coherent and easily understood manner

#### Chair of Trustees of The Museum of The Broads

Our current Chair is retiring after 2 terms in the role, so the Museum is actively looking for someone with the right experience and credibility to take on this key role in the organisation.

This is a voluntary role.

The Museum is on an upward curve since reopening after Covid, with visitor numbers growing each year.

We now need someone to lead the team of Trustees which is shaping the changes the Museum has in mind for the next five years.

#### Principal Function

To provide effective leadership for the Board as it fulfils its governance duties and responsibilities towards the organisation.

#### Duties

- Chair Board Meetings.
- Monitor the agreed business plan and progress towards targets.
- Monitor that relevant policies are applied as appropriate.
- Ensure that the composition of the Board and the skills of its individual members are periodically reviewed, and that action is taken to address succession planning and to remedy any perceived gaps.
- Ensure that the Board receives professional advice if necessary.
- Lead on the appointment of salaried staff.

If you are interested in applying for either of these roles. or would like more details, please contact: the Volunteers Manager at The Museum of The Broads - [volunteersmanager@museumofthebroads.org.uk](mailto:volunteersmanager@museumofthebroads.org.uk)

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

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



**M**arch 10th - A very big day in this year's flow of things at Hunter's Yard, with the launching of the fleet after its winter maintenance.

Having been stripped of all moveable items before being taken into the sheds, the boats have to be re-rigged

and equipped again. Masts, gaffs, all running lines and halyards, fenders, drawers of cutlery and crockery, water bottles, gas bottles, boat covers, crutches, bedding, quant poles, batteries and so on. All have to moved out of the sheds to each boat, matching every item to its 'owner'.



The yard team, following an age-old process, move each boat from its position in the sheds, onto a greased 'way' with a 'slider' in the 'way' and under the keel.

No hydraulic hoists, no jacks, just a a bit of old-fashioned

common-sense physics and some bits of wood.

You can find some videos at: <https://www.youtube.com/@huntersyard1>



Two masts fitted...twelve to go









## A Hunter's Skipper

There is an evocative sight that stirs the hearts and minds of even those who do not sail on our beautiful waterways: The Broads. Countless pictures are taken each season to grace many a wall or album, not just on our shores but worldwide.... The source of this wonder and delight are Percy Hunter's Ladies: beautiful, traditional gaff-rigged sloops that were designed and built here at Hunter's Yard, Ludham.

Skippering these boats is a great joy and a responsibility that many aspire to. They sail when others are struggling to make way and keep moving on the water when many others have lost way completely.

I have been in the fortunate position to skipper for many years. It is a pleasure that I never tire of and never will. As you step aboard to take the cover off and get her rigged for sailing, she comes alive. The sails fill expectantly, she tugs restlessly at her mooring lines, eager to venture again as she has countless times before for almost 100 years.

Taking the helm has a spiritual feeling as you both become one, taking her out to explore the rivers, harnessing the wind and tides on your way to exciting and challenging sailing.

How did I get to be a skipper I hear you ask.

Well, its roots are from a time in the distant past at Geldeston Lock. Here, when I was eight, I sailed for the first time in a Mirror dinghy that was the tender to Sparkling Foam which my parents had hired from Jack Powles boatyard in Wroxham for two weeks of bliss on The Broads. My father showed me the ropes,

including the importance of not gybing, and off I went oblivious to any potential problems or dangers out on the water. After a short while I ventured away from the shelter of our mooring to go further out into the river. I had not noticed but here the wind was stronger, so when a gust hit me, it was a bit startling. I turned around as quickly as I could to get back into the shelter (gybing unknowingly). I stood up to move to the windward side of the boat and the boom missed my head by a whisker! The boat heeled over so that the lee rail was under the water, and she half filled!! I didn't capsize which was

completely by luck I know. When I was safely back at Sparkling Foam my father, a commander in the Royal Navy, was completely unconcerned. I can remember him smiling saying "A good lesson learnt Neil". My mother on the other hand was a little flustered as I could have been knocked overboard by the wayward boom and died! I like to think that I instinctively did the right thing.

During these childhood holidays I can remember seeing beautiful wooden yachts sailing. There is something very magical when you see sails seemingly heading across fields as they sail on a distant bend in the river. It is a Broads thing which I have not noticed anywhere else and decided that one day I would like to be able to sail them myself.

The Boards has a special place in my family's life as we were privileged to spend our two family holidays a year here. My sailing knowledge and experience grew as did my love for these magical waters. I adored watching the brown hulled sloops with tan sails glide through the water and my passion for these eastern waterways and everything about them grew stronger with each visit. My parents would often leave my siblings and me at our grandparents home in Gedney Drove End whilst they hired a Hunter boat for the week.

As I grew older, life got in the way, and I found myself not able to visit the Broads for many years. I sailed in the Solent instead; fun, but it doesn't have that special magic of the secret dark waters of the Norfolk and Suffolk rivers. Some years later my wife and I hired a boat (with an engine and no sails) and we found ourselves cruising down Womack dyke. As we followed the water's course around a bend appeared a magical

sight, Hunters Yard. To find that the Yard was still up and running, the boats looking even more beautiful than I remembered, was pure joy.

In excited anticipation we moored at Womack Staithe, walked down Horsefen Road to the Yard. As is always the way, we were welcomed and allowed to just look and soak up the history that seeps out of every inch of wood, blocks and canvas here. We soon found ourselves on a taster sail with Sally Jones, just to see if we could be trusted with one of these precious boats. The sail was supposed to last for two hours, ours was closer to four because we sailed to Ludham Bridge for a bit of mast down practice. I seem to remember that Sally got into trouble (slightly) for her generosity. We have remained good friends to this day.

I doubt that you will be surprised to read that from that day onwards I became a volunteer at the yard. One thing led to another and a year later I found myself running skippered sails for the Friends of The

Hunter Fleet as well as two hour and “help a hirer” sail. I have even become an RYA Keelboat Instructor and now enjoy teaching people for a week at time how to sail these exquisite sloops. It is always a pleasure

helping people start their journey, watching as they become bewitched by these sloops. We at the yard are always looking for skippers to help with a whole range of events from introducing school children to the boats, day sailing and taking friends who can no longer handle a boat out on the water at our Friends AGM and Autumn Picnic.

If you would like to join our team, then get in touch with Martin at the yard. You will have the opportunity to work with and become entranced by these beautiful gaff rigged sloops for many

years to come.

### **Neil Hopkinson**

Skipper, RYA Instructor and Chair of the Association of Friends of Hunter's Yard







A

Spring dawn on the dyke, boats wrapped up and waiting for their next adventure, leading to unforgettable memories and experiences. Year after year, our guests return and often book their favourite boat again. Reacquainted with an old friend.







## Talking tours...

**P**aul Dickson has been a tour guide in Norwich for the last 11 years, but has also expanded his business to offer tours in The Broads and Cromer. Here he explains why he became a guide and talks about some the tours that he offers.

“I have always loved history, devouring Ladybird history books from a young age. I was one of those annoying children who could recite the names and dates of all the Kings and Queen’s of England and Britain. My love of history eventually led me to study modern history at Durham University and, after a spell in the Royal Navy, landing a regional job with the National Trust in the North East doing marketing and communications work.”

I moved to Norfolk in 1988 to do a similar job for the National Trust in East Anglia, based at Blickling. After 10 years, I decided to go freelance and spent the next 20 years doing PR work for tourism businesses in the county, including Fairhaven Woodland and Water Garden, Wroxham Barns, Thrigby Hall and the Sainsbury Centre.

One of my clients was the Maids Head Hotel in Norwich. The hotel has a fascinating history and I soon became involved in researching its history and leading guided tours.

I really enjoyed meeting people on the tours and revealing the stories of the hotel. So, in 2013, I took the opportunity to train as a City of Norwich tourist guide. The course, run by the City Council and Visit Norwich, lasted nearly a year with regular lectures, practical sessions and written exams. Norwich has a long and layered history and doing this course gave me the opportunity to delve into many aspects of the city’s story. I continue to learn something new about Norwich every day. I was initially trained to do a general tour of Norwich, but then explored special themes like City Hall and the Guildhall, Tudor and Stuart Norwich and Merchants and Markets. Once trained, I decided to develop my own business - Paul Dickson Tours, initially expanding on tours from the Maids Head Hotel.

This led to Shardlake’s Norwich. I had shown CJ Sansom round the Maids Head when he was researching his novel Tombland. I read the book as soon as it was published in November 2018 and started putting together a tour. Shardlake’s Norwich launched in 2019 and, as well as celebrating Tombland, covers the story of Kett’s Rebellion, and features magnificent views of the city from Kett’s Heights.

At the same time I became involved in the National Park Collection, a project to develop experiences throughout the English National Parks. My initial contribution in the Broads was Rails, Trails and Sails, which takes the train from Norwich to Reedham and explores the area, looking at the story of the railways and wherry



building, along with visits to Reedham Church and Humpty Dumpty Brewery, before returning to Norwich.

I did PR work for Fairhaven Woodland and Water Garden for many years and added two tours which start and finish at the garden: Fairhaven Garden, St Benet’s Abbey and South Walsham Marshes, during which we





view the Abbey from the other side of the Bure and Fairhaven Garden and the ‘Cathedral of the Broads’, which goes to Ranworth and includes a climb up the church tower, with magnificent views of the Broads landscape.

Working for the Festival of Architecture in Norwich and Norfolk led me to create a tour celebrating the architectural legacy in Norwich of Edward Boardman and George Skipper – the great Victorian/Edwardian architects. This evolved in 2023 to a tour in Cromer looking at Skipper’s work in the town, where he was architect for seven hotels and many private residences. The Skipper tour was followed in 2024, thanks to Cromer Museum’s invitation, by The Birth of Poppyland, covering the story of Cromer’s evolution as a tourism destination from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries.

Back in Norwich, I was approached by Richard England from the Jenny Lind Children’s Hospital, who asked if I would create a Jenny Lind and Norwich tour to celebrate the 170th anniversary of the hospital, which was last year. Richard provided background information about the story of the ‘Swedish Nightingale’s’ fundraising concerts in Norwich and the foundation of the hospital.

The tour is in my 2025 schedule and includes visits to the old Bishop’s Palace at Norwich School, where Jenny Lind stayed with Bishop Stanley, Norwich Cathedral to view the Stanley memorial window, Norfolk Heritage Centre at The Forum to see concert programmes and other memorabilia, and the site of the first hospital on Pottergate.

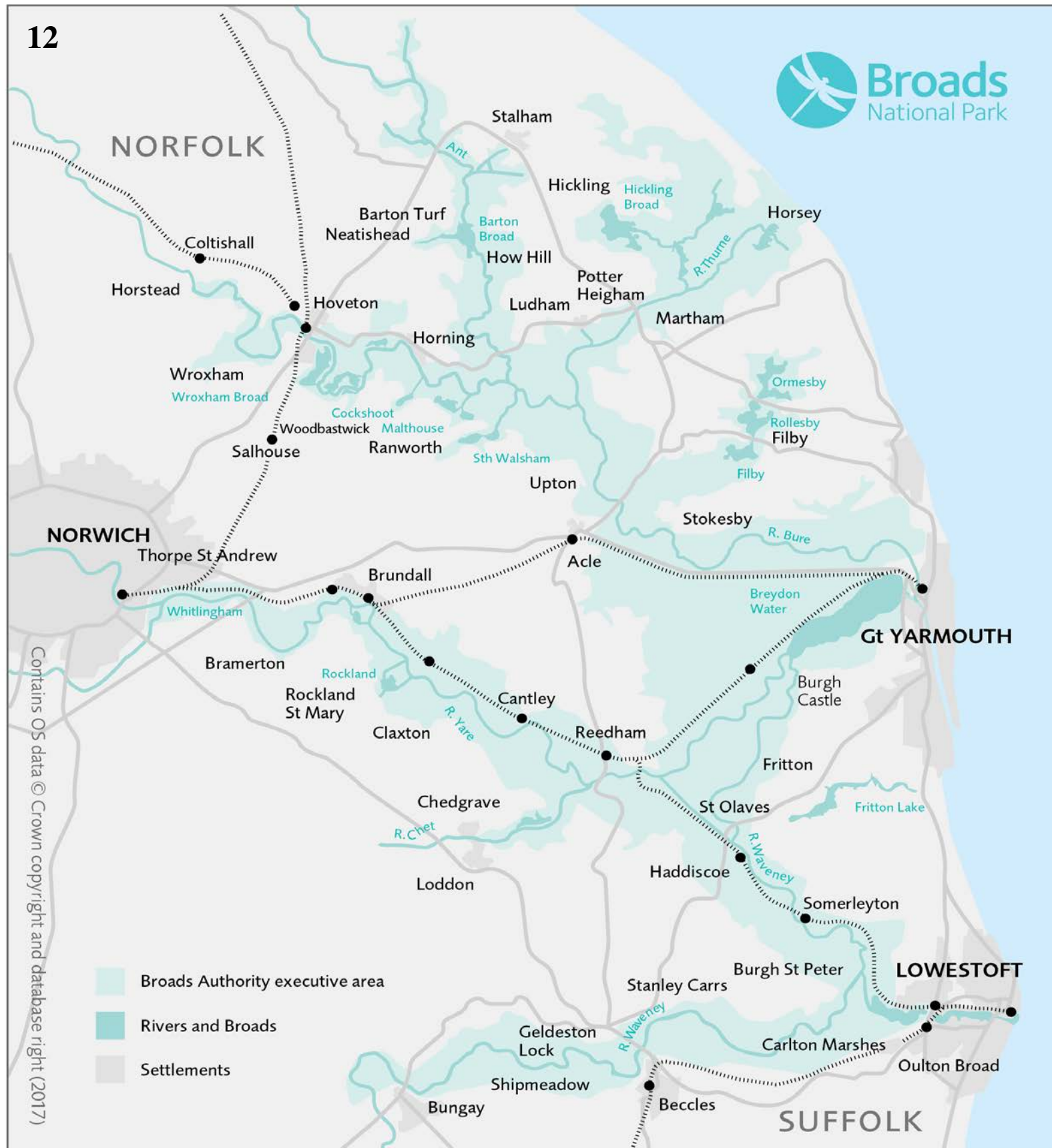
My new tour for 2025 looks at Victorian Norwich, a story of great wealth, but also poverty in the city. The tour covers the growth of Colmans, Norwich Union, Caley’s Chocolate and the shoe industry and the story of libraries and newspapers and the many Victorian buildings in Norwich. We also talk about the poor living conditions in the courts and yards and the gradual improvements in sewerage during the second half of the 19th century.

So far, I have developed 21 tours in Norwich, the Broads and Cromer and try to add a new one every year. Let me know if you have a particular theme that you would like me to cover and I will see what I can do!”

To view the full list of tours offered by Paul Dickson see [www.pauldicksonstours.co.uk](http://www.pauldicksonstours.co.uk).







[www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk](http://www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk) | [www.broadsauthority.gov.uk](http://www.broadsauthority.gov.uk)

The Broads National Park offers a perfect blend of adventure, relaxation and stunning scenery, making it loved by visitors of all ages. Find great days out, special events to enjoy and idyllic places to stay in this truly unique landscape - start planning your Broads getaway today.

Each year The Broads Authority produces a visitor magazine called Broadcaster that is full of information and advice, including ideas for days out, tips on water safety and news from the Broads. It contains everything visitors need to know to have a fantastic time here in the Broads, whether they are exploring by boat, bike, paddle or on foot.

You can read this year's edition online [here](#):

You can also pick up a printed version at the Yard

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



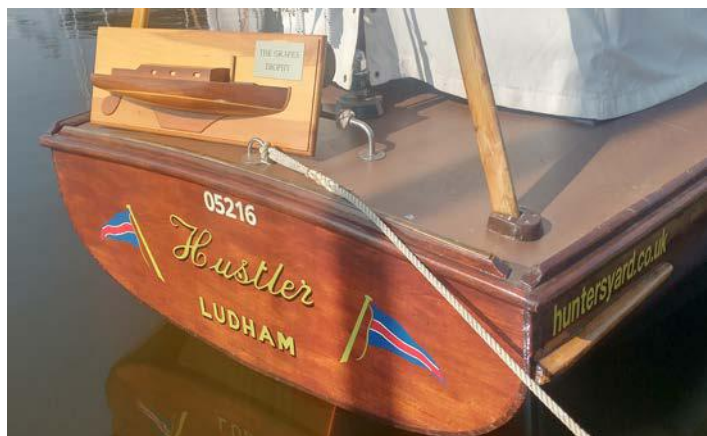
## The Grapes Trophy, in memory of Tom Grapes 1981 - 2024

When Ian sat down on his wooden stool at the stern of one of the yachts a while ago, to repaint the name and Hunter's Yard pennants during the usual winter maintenance period, he was following in the footsteps of his father, Tom, who worked at the yard for more than sixty years, and had done exactly the same. Between them, the Grapes have given more than a century of service to Hunter's Yard.

Sadly, Tom died last year but his presence has been commemorated by the creation of a new trophy which will be competed for during the annual Three Rivers Race which takes place on three Norfolk Broads rivers in June each year.



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It has been called 'Europe's toughest inland sailing race'.

The beautiful 'half-hull' mounted wooden model of Hustler, was made by Graham Cooper, (Yard Foreman at the time), and presented to Tom to mark his retirement. Ian has kindly given it to become the 'Grapes Trophy'.

It will be vied for during the Three Rivers Race by boats from Hunter's Yard and awarded after this year's race, having been approved as a race award by Horning Sailing Club, responsible for its organisation.

## The 3 Rivers Race

16th / 17th June, 1961 - The first three rivers race

42 boats started in a brisk breeze, but overnight conditions turned to gale-force winds. First home at 11.30 p.m. on that moonless night was a Yare and Bure One Design 'Brimstone' helmed by Hugh Tusting, who had to hail a sleeping race officer for a finishing bell!

In those days there was no radio contact and only 3 safety boats. Competitors had to jump out their boats and run along muddy banks to mark their passing of a turning point. Nowadays safety is very much at the forefront of the organisers' minds, but the Race is every bit as exhausting and exhilarating for the participants and as thrilling for the hundreds of spectators.

The race course covers over 50 miles, starting and finishing at Horning Sailing Club and comprising 3 different rivers: the Bure, Ant and Thurne. During the race the competitors must navigate three bridges at Potter

Heigham and Acle. The lowering of masts is the ultimate test of skill and makes for fantastic viewing throughout the race.

From their individual start each competitor has up to 24 hours to complete the course. Many sail through the night, returning for full English breakfast some time in the early morning!



Not a lot of room!





*'I am the last one  
on the Broads  
cutting reed by hand.*

# THE LAST ONE IN BRITAIN

*I should think'*

Every winter, **WALLY MASON** returns to the marshes – as much a part of the landscape as the rivers and birds he loves so much

WORDS: Rowan Mantell PHOTOS: Denise Bradley

Wally was just five years old when he cut his first bundle of reeds on the Broads. 'My dad gave me a little willow stick and put the blade of a little knife in a notch at the top. That was my first cutter. I could cut two bunches of reeds in a day,' said Wally. That was more than 70 years ago and Wally is still cutting reeds on the Broads.

'I still make my own hook or cutting tool. Now I cut about 40 bundles of reeds in a day,' said Wally, of Rockland St Mary, between Norwich and Loddon. He was born here too, close to the river, at the start of the 1947 reed-cutting season.

His Norfolk accent is as broad as the wide wintry skies he labours beneath. 'I love coming down here in the peace and quiet,' said Wally. We are out on Haddiscoe Island, that expanse of river, marsh and grazing meadow where water, land and sky bleed together to a soundscape of wind-blown reeds and birds.

A buzzard stoops low, perhaps following prey through the reeds. 'Isn't that marvellous?' exclaims Wally. 'You see short-eared owls, lots of otters, bitterns. And you hear their boom. 'Hearing the bitterns boom makes you feel good. I used to hear nightingales, but everything is disappearing. I haven't seen a chaffinch for years, even thrushes are rare. There used to be so many chaffinches and thrushes.'

Every year, from December until early May, when the weather is right, he treks down to the marshes to cut reeds on patches of riverside land at Rockland or Haddiscoe, where he takes a series of tracks from the main road, deep into a landscape of drainage dykes, reedbeds and old windpumps, stark against a wintry sky.

He learned his craft from his father and passed on the skill, of how and where and when to cut and bundle Norfolk reed, to his three sons, Drew and twins Lee and Luke. They are all in their thirties now and he and his wife, Lorraine, have six grandchildren too. 'I am the last one on the Broads cutting reed by hand. The last one in Britain I should think,' said Wally.

He hopes the reed-cutting tradition will continue through the generations but is not ready to hang up his home-made cutter yet. 'Every year, I always come back to it. I have done different work, mainly farm work, and I can't wait to get back to the reeds,' he said.

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Norfolk Magazine - From the January issue 2024





Reedcutter Wally Mason  
and his thatcher son, Luke

The season starts when that year's green reeds of summer have turned pale and brittle. Wally works around the weather and the tides. He can't cut in the rain, or when the water is high. 'I cut reeds while the sun shines!' he said. He stops each year before the birds nest. 'I'm glad when it's finished each year, and I can't wait to get back to it,' said Wally. 'Out here, you are living; you have time to think and look and listen and live. You are in the middle of nature.'

'Every time I see the marsh harriers and kites I still have to stop and look. I like seeing the little birds too, the kingfishers, the blackbirds. 'One of the loveliest things to see is a murmuration.' For 70 years Wally has cut reeds with a simple blade, tied to a pole. 'When I started there were still wherries carrying sugar beet on the river,' said Wally. 'We would brew up river water for tea. It's the best cup of tea you could have in your life!'

He left school at 14 and, a year later, worked through one of the coldest winters on record. 'The rivers were frozen. The ice was two-feet-thick and it lasted for around two months. When it started breaking up I went out cutting because we needed the money. I was rowing along the river when my boat reared up on to ice like an iceberg. I thought I was going in and under. I have never been so frightened! 'You can also get tipped out of your boat if something comes along too fast, and you can lose a day's work, all the cut bundles.'

But in the spring the boats bring company too. 'Every cruiser that comes by, they all take pictures, so I don't know how many pictures I'm in, hundreds and thou-

sands I should think,' said Wally. 'Sometimes they throw me a can of beer!' These floating passers-by might not know they are seeing Britain's last traditional reed cutter, but they recognise and appreciate the timeless atmosphere of the scene.

Norfolk reed has been prized by thatchers for centuries. Now it is often cut by machine but Wally insists the old ways are the best – especially on the precarious riverside patch he is cutting.

Springing over a low bank and into the marshes, nimble as a water deer, he wades through rustling head-high reeds and lifts his cutter, swinging it low through stems which fall into a long, neat bundle against his body. 'I'm the last one to do it by hand,' said Wally. 'Cutting by hand is cleaner. You can shake all the debris out as you go, as you gather them into a bundle. 'And Norfolk reed is the best. Thatch made with Norfolk reeds can last 70 years.' Wally's reed has been used to thatch houses, barns and churches all over the country, and this autumn he was thrilled to supply reed for a beautiful old house in his own village of Rockland St Mary.

Thatcher Gary Stokes, who runs GJ Stokes of Rockland St Mary, has been thatching with Norfolk reeds and sedge for more than 25 years. And one of the skilled thatchers who works for him is Wally's son, Luke. Wally now sees some of his reeds shining golden from the newly-restored roof in the main village street.

'I go up and down that street and it makes me feel a proud man,' said Wally.





## FOR SALE - LADY HARRIET

**1997 Herbert Woods Lady  
32' River Cruiser Class #341**

**Proceeds from the sale of Lady Harriet will go to the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust at Hunter's Yard and support its work introducing young people to the challenges and excitement of sailing and the Broads heritage.**

### General Specification

#### Builder:

Herbert Woods on a Landamores hull

#### LOA:

10.97m (36ft 0in)

#### LWL:

9.75m (32ft 0in)

#### Beam:

2.90m (9ft 6in)

### Extensive refurbishment in 2024 by Hunter's Yard, Ludham including;

Spars and bowsprit stripped varnished

Tiller stripped and varnished

New white canvas sides to lifting roof

Cabin sides stripped, repaired and varnished

New cabin floor beam fitted with floor boards replaced and new Floatex carpet

New boom crutches made

Rubbing strips repaired

Cockpit and coaming extensively rebuilt

Cabin roof re-painted

Lady Harriet is a pedigree Broads cruiser and a past winner of the Southern Rivers Navigation Race.

Well set up and newly refurbished by Hunter's Yard, Ludham in 2024 for its long-time owner whose family, now grown up, no longer have time to sail her. With her new lifting cabin top canvas, she has a light and airy interior with plenty of standing headroom. The GRP hull and decks offer low maintenance and the extensive refurbished bright-work make this a delightful looking cruiser. A full height shower compartment and good berths make for home-from-home comforts while the well-equipped galley will keep the family in hot food out on the water. As well as sparkling sailing performance her easy rig promises more relaxed sailing when the mood is right.

Laying at Hunter's Yard dyke, Ludham and available for inspection through Topsail Marine Tacht Brokers **only**. Please click the logo above for full information or visit Topsail here

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





## Donations and Legacies

Not everyone knows Hunter's Yard is part of the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust, a charity set up in 1995. The mission of the charity is to maintain the boats and yard and use them for educational purposes. All our income goes to fulfil these two aims.

This year we will introduce over 400 young people to sailing on the Norfolk Broads. These are largely young people who might not otherwise get to know the

Broads, let alone a sailing boat. We hope that some of them, with our help, will develop a lifelong passion for sailing.

Every penny counts and plays a critical role in keeping the boats and yard going and, really importantly, getting young people out sailing.

If you would like to make a donation or consider a legacy, more information can be found on the Trust website at: <https://nhftrust.org.uk/>

## Skippers wanted - volunteers

Being able to offer a skippered 2hr, half-day or full-day sail through the season for visitors is a really important part of what the yard does. We always need volunteer skippers to help us out on these sails. In return, you are welcome to use the boats at quiet booking times. Our regular skippers find these sails quite good fun, often meet interesting people and get great delight in introducing potential sailors to the joys of the Broads. If you are local and have the time, do let us know as we would be pleased to put you on the roster.

## Skippers wanted - paid

We are looking for paid skippers to help out with our youth sailing programme and RYA courses. Our youth expeditions last from a couple of hours up to a week. RYA courses are usually a week long and we also do introduction to cabin boats for hirers where we skipper them during the day with some informal tuition, leave them moored up at night and return next morning. You meet great people, get out on the water and can have a lot of fun. If you would like to be put on the skipper roster, do get in touch - we would love to hear from you!

## Young sailors? Special rate

Making it easy for the younger generation to get out sailing, we have introduced a special rate. All season, under 26 age crews get a 20% discount and we hope that will give them the chance for a break from work or before going on to university. If you have family that qualifies, do tell them. .

## Spring offer

19th April - 2nd May, 20% off Low Season prices

## Family offer

July and August, 20% off when one crew member is under 18

## Been coming to Hunter's for years? Let us know your story for the archive

Group or individual - we would love to hear your tales. In the office we regularly find ourselves welcoming hirers who started sailing here 'sixty years ago.' It is quite humbling knowing that you know the yard more than we do and we are keenly aware that we are caretakers of the yard for you and future generations.

We recently welcomed a sailing group from Kent returning for the first time in 40 years having met at the yard as children. They had such an enjoyable time they plan a bi-annual reunion, and we look forward to seeing them in 2026.

If you have been coming for years, send your story and we'll add it to the Hunter's archive for future generations, and if you have photographs, even better.



## Featured this time:

### Neatishead and Barton Turf

If you are visiting Barton Broad there is more than excellent sailing and lots of wildlife, including otters and bitterns.

Neatishead village has a great deal to offer the visitor. The White Horse Pub is a Brew Pub and offers a wide range of beers. It has three cosy bars, a restaurant and a garden for warm days. It has a tempting menu and also provides a takeaway service if you want to eat on your boat.

The pub has a traditional feel with a fire in winter and is very popular with locals and visitors alike. Dogs are very welcome in the bars

The White House Stores is a community shop with a wide range of delicious things to buy. Much of the produce, including cheeses, pies, ice creams, gourmet biscuits, vegetables and bread are local. Indeed, artisan sourdough bread is available on Wednesdays and Fridays. Barista coffee and hot chocolate is available with a terrace to sit and watch the world go by as you enjoy it. The shop is licensed and also sells beer, wine and spirits and newspapers. Open seven days a week from 08.30.

Also in the centre of the village is the Regency gift shop. A treasure trove of lovely things to treat yourself or buy as presents. Should the weather be chilly, they offer warm socks and gloves as well as fleecy slippers and even hats! A wide selection of cards and original ceramics and lots of things to buy and take home for friends and family.

The centre of Neatishead is easy to reach by boat. Neatishead staithe at the top of picturesque Lime Kiln dyke is only five minutes walk away. It has electric charging points and even a children's climbing wall.

Gayes Staithe has more moorings and is about ten minutes walk from the village. There is also usually the opportunity to buy home made fudge on the way! In addition there is a public toilet block about 150m from the staithe in the signposted

## VILLAGE SHOP

Enjoy your day even more with a visit to our village shop

Only 5 mins walk from Neatishead Staithe and 10 mins from Gayes Staithe



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### OPENING TIMES:

**MON-SAT 8.30 TO 5.00PM**

CLOSED FOR LUNCH FOR 30 MINS BETWEEN 12.15-1.00PM

**SUNDAY 8.30AM TO 12.00PM**

WHITE HOUSE STORES COMMUNITY SHOP IRSTEAD RD, NEATISHEAD, NR12 8BJ  
what3words location ///splendid.otters.flinches

small carpark

A third option is to moor at Barton Turf on the moorings known as Paddy's Lane. This is a longer walk of 15-20 minutes with the chance of spotting deer along the way. On summer evenings you may also be able to watch cricket on the lovely tree surrounded pitch

### Shower news at Hunter's Yard

An odd thing perhaps to provide news about, but for those visiting the yard after a week's sailing holiday on one of our fleet, or a day's RYA coursework, a good shower will be welcome.

Well, the gent's showers have been completely refurbished over the last few months.



## Do you love coming to Hunter's Yard and The Broads? Become a Friend.

There are over 900 Friends and they play a vital role in supporting the yard and the Trust. Local Friends help out at the yard through the season, getting the yard ready in the Spring and putting it to bed in the Autumn. There are regular newsletters and two Friends' gatherings at the yard each year (which raise additional funds for the Trust) with skippered sailing

## Special booking access for Friends

If you are a Friend, you have special access to the half deckers at short notice and at a special Friend's rate. So, if the weather is looking good on Friday afternoon and you suddenly fancy booking a boat for the evening or the weekend just give us a ring and we'll see what is available.



laid on, barbecues and refreshments. These are very convivial events. Other events are being organised this year including a 'Bat walk' and Stargazing with an expert guide to the heavens

Friends also get special rates on the cabin yachts in Friends week and, for older Friends who perhaps aren't able to get out on their own anymore, there is a week-long skippered sail in the season.

We welcome all those who have an interest in supporting the fleet and Friends contributions all go to support Trust projects at the yard such as the installation of electric motors, or providing skippers for various educational or other sailing activities.

If you feel you would like to support the Trust by becoming a Friend, please visit us at;

<https://friends.huntersyard.co.uk/>



## **Gift vouchers are available from the website**

For two-hour , half-day or full-day skippered sails, or vouchers for any purchase of hiring or merchandise at the yard, you can visit the website and look under the 'Shop' tab

## **Merchandise**

There will shortly be a chance to buy your souvenirs of time at Hunter's Yard online in our new shop - Please check the website for news.

All manner of clothing, mugs, books, caps and other items will be available to buy on-site or online

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## **Nearly last but most definitely not least, our new Trustees**

After a very careful selection process, five new Trustees have been named for the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust, to manage and steer the affairs of the charity that runs Hunter's Yard. There will now be ten Trustees

### **Three Trustees are retiring.**

Alastair Drew the finance director of Alan Boswell in Norwich who has been Vice-chair for nine years and as an accountant can read a balance sheet and could explain it to the Chair!

Maddie Coupe brought her knowledge of the workings of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, where she now has a senior role, to help the Trust as it applied for grants. She was always scrupulous in her professionalism but still able to keep the Trust moving in the right direction.

Kristian Nelson, a solicitor with Birketts in Norwich brought his knowledge of the legal minefield to the table and ensured that the Trust always stayed on the legal straight and narrow.

"Everyone is very grateful for all they have given. Thank you, all three of you"

Neville Khambatta, Chair of Trustees

### **The five new Trustees are:**

Bob Neate : An accountant living in north London with a bungalow close to Potter Heigham

Roger Long : A current 'Friend' who is a practicing solicitor living in Wiltshire with family in Norwich and Neatishead and the owner of a White Boat.

Ian Patience : Broads sailor, resident in Upton, a member of NBYC and a past chief Instructor

Dominic Chessum : A management consultant with experience of fund raising and making grant applications.

James Jack : He runs the IT company which has created our website which he continues to develop with us.

Their selection will go before the Trust AGM for confirmation.

We look forward to their involvement and wish them the best of luck.





## Wooden boat workshop

Saturday 29th March saw a new type of gathering at Hunter's Yard.

Not a school group, volunteer group or happy hirers, but more than 30 enthusiasts of wooden boats who came to Ezra Bailey's 'Maintain your wooden boat' event.

Senior Boatbuilder at the yard, Ezra covered;

- Varnish and preparation with demonstrations
- Materials and product selection
- Woodworking tips
- Keeping up to date.

A look around the fascinating buildings and boats was included, together with refreshments.

An excellent event with great feedback. Great work Ezra.

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## Social media 'star' wanted

As Hunter's Yard and The Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust develops its social media side, we are looking for a local volunteer with the skills, knowledge and time to help us.

Working from home, but welcome to visit the yard for stories, photos and video, we need someone who can steadily 'feed the beast' that is the social media machine. Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Bluesky/X and Youtube are channels we would like to develop.

Interested to know more, give Martin a call at the yard on 01692678262 or email: [manager@huntersyard.com](mailto:manager@huntersyard.com)

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



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- Experience 200KM of exciting river & broads sailing
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