



HUNTER'S YARD



Issue 3 - Summer 2024

Dare You Take Part?

Europe's toughest inland sailing race



The famous Three Rivers Race runs over 24 hours on a 50-mile course on the Norfolk Broads.



The race, run since 1961, usually takes place on the first weekend after the Whit-sun Bank Holiday. A cooked breakfast is provided at the finish line.

Starting and finishing at Horning Sailing Club the course takes in three Broads rivers; the Bure, Ant and Thurne. Competitors have 24 hours to complete the course, sailing through the night, although the very fastest boats are known to do it in seven hours. During the race, bridges at Potter Heigham and Acle must be navigated. In the words of the organisers, the lowering of masts is the ultimate test of skill and makes for fantastic viewing throughout the race. This year was the 63rd race, sponsored by Yachtmaster Insurance and attracted 119 entries.

Book a boat now for the 2026 race (not a typo)

We are fully booked for the 2025 race. Sorry to disappoint, but we are already taking bookings for 2026 so get in touch to reserve a boat.



2024 Race Results

Full race results for yard boats were:

Position	Boat	Skipper	Time
42	Hustler 5	Neil Herring	13:38:38
44	Hustler 2	Steven Tupper	14:08:57
46	Buff Tip	Will Akerman	14:22:17
50	Hustler 4	Ezra Bailey	15:17:49
51	Hustler 1	Chris Jobbing	15:36:45
55	Sundew	Peter Mizuro	16:10:08
60	Wood Rose	David Smith	17:18:14

The yard had eight boats in the race, with only Woodcut 2 among those unable to finish the course due to the high winds. Our own yard team comprising Ezra, Guy and his daughter Grace finished 50th in the field. Winds were unusually high this year making it a particularly challenging race. Neil Herring in Hustler 5 lifted the NBYCo Trophy (leading Hire Cruiser on handi-cap) finishing in 13:38:38. David Smith in Wood Rose won the Lysander Trophy in 17:18:14.



www.huntersyard.co.uk

HUNTER'S YARD

Autumn sail? Short break?

There is still availability in September through to the second week in October if you fancy a late season sail. This can be the best time of the year - motor cruisers are fewer on the rivers, the weather is kind and there is a stillness to the evenings that foreshadows the coming winter. Moorings are more plentiful and broads empty inviting you to put the mud weight down and swing gently at anchor.

We've noticed a trend to more short break holidays in the last year or so and we think we are the only yard offering two-night hires so you can fit a break round work and the weekend. Keep an eye on the weather and give us a call.



Young sailors? Special rates apply.

Making it easy for the younger generation to get out sailing, we have introduced a special rate at certain times of year. Through to the end of the 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 uni. If you have family that qualify, do tell them. Autumn is a great time to sail on the Broads.

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 (with the exception of Yard Foreman, Ian, who has been here 42 years) 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.

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 have introduced over 500 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.



HUNTER'S YARD

www.huntersyard.co.uk

If you would like to make a donation our bank details are:

The Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust -

Sort code: 60 07 47

Account: 67098614

Please put 'donation' in the reference field. And, if you feel able, do let us know you have made a donation; we would like to send you a word of thanks.

<https://nhftrust.org.uk/>

Skippers wanted - volunteers

Being able to offer a 2hr 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! (No, of course you don't have to wear a 'Captain' hat....but if it floats your boat!)



Places to stay - It isn't all about the sailing - there are great places to visit nearby and you or the family might want a change from overnighting on the boats. We recommend the following:

* *Dairy Barns B&B - Hickling* - Tell them you are a Hunter's customer, and you'll get a 10% discount when booking direct with Dairy Barns. Have a look at the Dairy Barns website - you'll want to book them for a weekend break immediately!

* *Regency Guest House - Neatishead* - Just a few miles away from the yard lies the beautiful 18th century Regency Guest House in Neatishead. Conveniently situated between the Broads and the coast its five cosy, well-appointed rooms offer a great place to stay, and the owner is a Friend of the yard. Just a short walk away is the village pub where lunch and evening meals are served and free public mooring are just five minute's walk.

* *Hickling Campsite* - Fire braziers, raspberries, and apples to pick on site, low light pollution, welcoming owners, near Hickling Broad, and a haven for wildlife in the care of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. What could be better? Generous, flat grassy pitches for tents are complemented by a choice of shepherd huts and other glamping options. The recently opened 'Hickling Hut', the on-site shop features fresh local produce and fresh coffee help to make this a great place to stay.



HUNTER'S YARD

Places to Visit

Just next door to the yard you'll find Albion and Maud, the last working wherries still sailing on the Broads. Check out their websites for opening times and to book a trip. It is a more stately way to sail than in a Hustler but these enormous beasts, the HGVs of their time, give you an idea of how trade was carried out before the advent of the motor car. <https://wherrymaudtrust.org/> <https://wherryalbion.com/>

And just a few miles away you'll find The Museum of the Broads in Stalham. This is one of the great museums of Norfolk. As well as a working steam boat that takes passengers out on the water, the museum houses over 6,000 items that introduce you to the Broads story. Housed in a former boatyard, right on the staithe, it also has a visitor mooring if you are arriving by boat. Events for children run through the season, too, so it is a great place for a family outing.

<https://www.museumofthebroads.org.uk/>

Richardsons Boating - Stalham

Just next door to the Museum of the Broads is Richardson's Boating Holidays. If you fancy a change from sailing, their day boats, electric and diesel, make a great day out. Seating from six to eight passengers you can chart your course for the day, close the canopy against the weather, or voyage to a favourite picnic spot.

Arriving at the Yard by train or bus? Give us a call.

We have noticed that more hirers are using public transport. If you give us some notice, we can pick you up from the local station or from the bus stop.

There is a branch line from Norwich to Wroxham station and a bus stop in the village. We want to make your holiday as easy as possible.

Provisions

If you are a meat-eater, there is an excellent butcher's in the village. During the winter, Friday lunchtime often features a bit of a fry-up in the yard and the sausages and burgers all come from Ludham Butchers. They also stock eggs and local apple juices.

For other items Throwers convenience store is, as it says, very convenient for the yard and has a post office and daily newspapers.

For supermarket shopping you are welcome to have your shop delivered to the yard before you arrive. We'll unpack it and put it by ready for you, with the cold stuff going into the fridge. If you can remember to tell us it is arriving that would be great but we are very flexible and often find ourselves unpacking mystery shopping!

Gift vouchers

Remember that a Hunter's Yard gift voucher makes the perfect gift. We can (shortly) send you an e-version or an old fashioned, but elegant, card. We are just having new cards made so look out for the designs which will go up on the website in due course.



HUNTER'S YARD



www.huntersyard.co.uk

It's great to hear from you!

It's always nice to hear from our hirers and receive feedback on the boats and our services.

All the commitment, long hours and pure hard work by the yard staff, the time given by our volunteer skippers, Friends and Trustees have paid off when we get letters of thanks.

We hope that you will return time and again to enjoy the wonderful experience of wooden boat sailing on the Broads in our remarkable and unique fleet.

With luck, and great deal of hard work, children and grandchildren will be able to continue the 'Hunter's Journey' for many years to come.

Dear Martin,

As promised a review of our day with you which I hope you will be able to use. Thank you again for a lovely experience.

I confess that having not sailed since childhood and facing a stiff fresh wind, I was a little daunted at the thought of the day's sailing now with my own family (including dog), on the Norfolk Broads that my sister had gifted my 11 year old son.

I needn't have worried. Hunter's yard provided good instruction on the operation of Brown Bess, a beautiful, stable and easy to sail wooden half decker with a balanced lug rig which they helped us put reefs in before we ventured out in view of fresh winds. They provided us with life jackets and, sensitively, a radio for direct communication with them should we experience any difficulty.

We were fortunate to have a sunny day and our enjoyment and confidence sailing increased steadily as the day progressed. My son who had not sailed before was quickly happy to take the helm, steer and turn into the wind.

We had brought our own tent with us for our overnight stay, and found easy mooring near a pub, choosing this option over the available boat cover camping awning and mattresses for sleeping on board as the weather forecast overnight looked unfavourable.

The pub provided good food and facilities that made the overnight camping experience a pleasure - and we quickly settled into reminiscing there about the day's sailing like 'salty old sea dogs' or 'pirates' as my son preferred.

We returned Brown Bess the following morning, where Hunter's yard team were available to help with fitting the sail covers, tea and chocolate bars (did not have thought as far ahead as breakfast).

We would all recommend Hunter's Yard and Brown Bess as a 'Swallows and Amazons' type family experience ideal for building confidence in sailing - thank you to the team there - here some pictures from the day.

Simon

Dear Hunter's Yard,

Having rented Hustler 1 and had such a wonderful time I wanted to write to thank you.

Hustler 1, and indeed the rest of your fleet of traditional Broads yachts, is such a beautiful craft. To be able to sail such a magnificent, vintage yacht, one which is nearly 100 years' old and has been restored, maintained and polished so lovingly is an absolute privilege. And yet, although she is nearly a centurion, she sails beautifully and the fact that she regularly wins her class in the iconic Three Rivers' Race proves that the old girl is no slouch.

She is ideally suited to sailing on the Broads. Although she has been fitted with some of the creature comforts that we require in the 21st century - cooker, heads and even a quiet, ecologically friendly electric motor - you have carried out those modifications so discreetly that they do not detract from her beautiful lines.

Congratulations to you all at the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust. Without your hard work and dedication we may have lost these majestic yachts.

We loved our whole experience and we will be back.

Keep up the great work!

Nick

Please don't forget that the Hunter's Yard only exists because of the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust. The Trust is a charity, with the yard, fleet and education at its heart.

It's not long really until our Centenary in 2036, so please keep supporting us with your much valued visits.

Thank you



HUNTER'S YARD



Do you love coming here? 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. Currently the Friends are scoping out some landscaping as you approach the sheds from the car park; this will hide the bins and make the area more welcoming.

There are regular newsletters and two Friends' gatherings at the yard each year with skippered sailing

laid on, barbecues and refreshments. These are very convivial events. 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.

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

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.

Much valued Friends

All Friends of the Hunter Fleet are valued, but there is quite a number who have been Friends since the very start and will remember this cover of the very first edition of the newsletter.

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/>



HUNTER'S YARD



Trust is Launched

£200,000 lottery grant

Safeguarding our Heritage

Bryan Read, Chairman of the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust, writes:

From the day that the Norfolk County Council Education Committee announced that they were considering disposing of the County Sailing Base at Ludham, the support from all those who knew the Yard and the Hunter boats has been overwhelming. Many were those who had sailed on the boats, others had seen and admired the distinctive mahogany hulls from the bank and had recognised their quality and breeding.



Paul Heiney and Bryan Read at the launch

www.huntersyard.co.uk

Greg Jones writes: The Swans will celebrate their 75th anniversary at Hunter's in 2025

The SWAN Norfolk Broads Sailing Expedition is an annual Scouting event for over 13s held each Easter since 1950. Scouts, Leaders and Instructors come from all over the country. This year 68 members came from Cambridgeshire, Shropshire, mid-Wales, Sussex, Hampshire, Cumbria, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. The expedition was started by Geoff Keighley when he was a Scout Master in Shrewsbury looking for an adventurous activity for older Scouts and Senior Scouts. As members have moved around, they have brought a long contingent of Scouts from various parts of the country.

SWAN has developed a 4-stage training scheme enabling progression from Galley Boy, through Senior Galley Boy, Mate and Senior Mate to Skipper (which also requires technical assessment and Scout Association training to gain a Scout Association Adventurous Activity Permit for Yachting on The Norfolk Broads).

The SWAN 74 Sailing Expedition was held from Friday 29th March to Saturday 6th April 2024. The group took over the 14 Hunter cabin yachts plus two from Swallowtail Boatyard and one from Eastwood Whelpton on Saturday for a week exploring the Broads, concluding with a gathering in Ludham Village Hall on the Friday for songs, presentations and fish and chip supper at which Martin and Aggie from Hunter's Yard were guests.

This year the fleet visited Upton Dyke, Paddy's Lane, Richardson's at Stalham, Salhouse Island, Upton Dyke again, then Cockshoot Dyke before returning to Hunter's Yard, with some making excursions to South Walsham, Ranworth, Gayes Staithe and Wayford Bridge. Due to the high-water levels causing reduced clearance, Potter Heigham and Wroxham Bridges were not attempted. Yarmouth was in the plan but curtailed due to strong winds.



Pictured are SWAN 74 first year skipper Harry Neal (left) who was presented with the SWAN first year skipper's trophy by SWAN 74 sailing manager Peter Mizuro (right). The SWAN Expedition trophies for Galley Boy, Senior Galley Boy, Mate, First Year Skipper and Most Improved are nominated by members of The Expedition and chosen by a panel of staff who review all the nominations. The First Year Skipper's Trophy was introduced in 2005. From 2022 it has been a half model of a Hustler made by Graham Cooper (1946-2019) when he was chief boat builder at Hunter's Yard. It was given to SWAN by Ian Grapes, Graham's colleague and then successor as Chief Boat Builder at the Yard. Graham made the model for presentation to Josie Webb when she retired as administrator from what was then Norfolk County Sailing Base (before it was sold by Norfolk Council to the current trust). When Mrs Webb died her family didn't want to keep the model. Ian saved it and turned the plaque over. Mark Royle arranged for plaques to be added to record the winners (including those presented with the previous trophy).

The trophy has been presented since 2005 as follows:

2005 - Mary Jones and Matt Mayers	2006 - Dan Hustwayte
2007 - Struan Barr	2008 - Calum Barr
2009 - Edward Trafford and Jake Ward	2010 - Tom Rowlands
2011 - Michael Ruddlesden	2012 - Emily McLean
2013 - Llion Preston	2014 - Rob Haycock
2015 - Chester Oliver/ Lotte Wood	2017 - Sol Ashley
2018 - Maddie Royle	2019 - Peter Mizuro
2022 - Reid Jameson-Potts, Lucy Royle, Francois Vam Cauwenbergh	

The SWAN 75th anniversary will be celebrated with a reunion and party at Hunter's Yard on Monday 23rd August 2025.

www.huntersyard.co.uk





No excuses needed for a lovely picture...with Hunter's Yard at the centre of course!

Nor do you need much of an excuse to visit Norfolk. We may be 'flat' (though Beacon Hill, near East Runton, our highest point at 344ft above sea level might surprise you), we may have a modest population (a bit under 1 million) spread over a huge county and we may not have many trunk roads (a few too many for some), but it is a county dripping with history, an extraordinary abundance of varied wildlife and some of the 'biggest' views you can find. Becoming a 'local' is said to take many decades of residence. For some, it's 30 years, for some 50, and others...well, let's say that you have to be born here and never leave.

A few facts:

- * King Uffa made Norwich a Royal City, and established a Royal Mint by 575CE and the city was second only to London in importance during the mediaeval period
- * Norwich cathedral has the second-tallest spire (after Salisbury) but has the largest collection of ornamental roof bosses in the Christian world.
- * The Norfolk Broads is the largest area of protected wetland in Britain and is home to a greater variety of rare wildlife than any other National Park in England and Wales.
- * Britain's rarest butterfly the Swallowtail can only be found on the Norfolk Broads. The only butterflies in Britain to come from the Papilionidae family. The caterpillars feast on milk parsley, which grows in abundance on the Broads
- * Sandringham House, the King's Norfolk residence is the only royal 'palace' in England owned privately by the sovereign, all others being the property of the Crown.
- * The Round Table, now a global international non-political and non-religious organisation was founded in Norwich in 1927
- * Worstead cloth was named after the village of Worstead which, together with North Walsham and Aylsham, formed a manufacturing centre for yarn and cloth in the 12th century
- * Norfolk's coast was the first area of Britain settled in by prehistoric mankind, roughly 1.2 million years ago. In fact, the earliest evidence of mankind found outside of Africa was discovered in Norfolk: 850,000-year-old footprints at Happisburgh!
- * All Saint's Church in Burnham Thorpe still has an altar, lectern, and rector made from Lord Nelson's HMS Victory timber.



HUNTER'S YARD

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Hi there.

My name is John and I'm 13.

A few months ago I had an idea to build a model sailboat. I fell in love with sailing last Easter, when I came to Norfolk for a holiday on the traditional wooden yachts that are frequently seen on the broads. This amazing experience developed my desire to sail more often than only once a year. I was looking at sailing dinghies, but realised that for me, the cost was too great. So, just before Christmas, I decided I would build a model sailing yacht, based on the wooden yachts on the broads.

First of all, I started the design. At this point, I had absolutely no clue how to, but started anyway. First, I started on the top view. This was a complete guess on what the boat looked like, as there was no photos of a top view of this boat. Next, I drew the side view. This was more easy because I was getting all the proportions right by measuring a photo, and then scaling it up to the right size. I did try to make my own table at one point, but decided it wouldn't work.

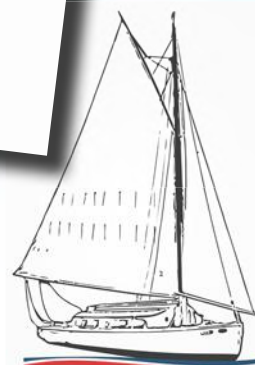
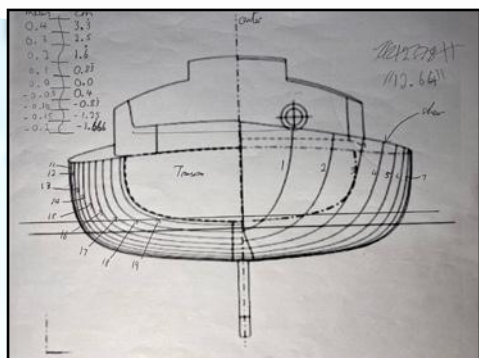
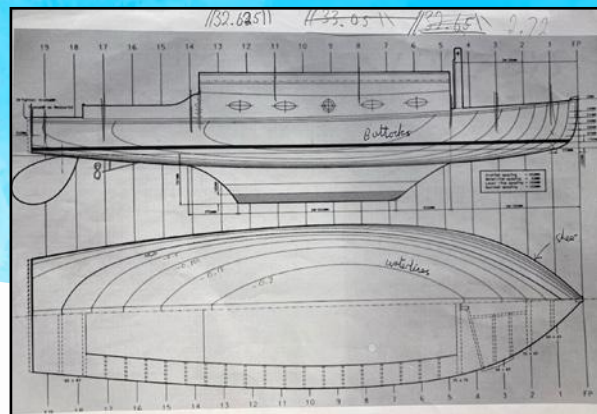
But there was one problem. What does the boat look like underneath the water?

This was when I realised I needed photos from a boatyard on the broads. The photos would tell me the keel design, hull shape and would help me massively. So, I emailed four different boatyards, and luckily I found Hunters Yard. They helped me out so much, not just sending a photo of a boat out of the water, but sending me all of the measurements and drawings. These drawings weren't for measurements, but for reference about what different words mean and what techniques are used to measure a boat.

At first I copied out the table of offsets, which is basically all the measurements put on paper. Some of the numbers were blurry and I thought it might help if I wrote them down larger. Then I learnt about what the numbers on the table refer to, and how they relate to the real boat.

Now I have started to draw out the frame of the model yacht. The frame will basically be made up of cross-sections of the boat, and then the planks will be fitted around that. But before making the real frame, I will be making one out of cardboard to see that nothing has gone wrong.

That's my project so far, thanks for reading. Special thanks to Martin from Hunters Yard for emailing me the table of offsets that makes this project possible! I will be in the newsletter again, so look out for more info on my progress.



Hunter's Yard has been around since before the Coot Club started having their adventures on the Norfolk Broads.

Only very slightly before – Percy Hunter with his two sons started his boat-hire business in 1932; Arthur Ransome started writing Coot Club in 1933, to be published for Christmas 1934.

Percy began his yard by digging the dyke from Womack Water to where the land was firm enough to support the large boatshed he would build, and which is still the heart of the business. (It's off the Thurne, the 'Potter Heigham' river, rather than the Bure, the 'Horning' river where most of the northern-rivers action in Coot Club and The Big Six is located.)

Hunter's was always a hire fleet, and is still based on its own-built mostly 1930s varnished mahogany yachts. Today, the yard looks very much as it did in the 1930s, so when the BBC wanted a yacht to play the Teasel in its 1984 adaptation of Coot Club and The Big Six, it turned to Hunter's – and used the yard itself to stand in for 'Rodley's' boatyard. But the journey to its present 'time capsule' status has not been straightforward or easy. Following Percy's death in 1964, keeping the business going became an uphill struggle for his sons Cyril and Stanley, and it was put up for sale in 1966.

Sailing base for county schools - Mercifully, at about the same time, Norfolk County Council decided to create a sailing base, and its Education Authority took over the yard. For the next three decades, it provided sailing experience for the county's school children, while in the summer holidays, continuing to welcome the various youth groups that had been regular customers.



However, in 1995, the cash-strapped council decided to dispose of, and probably disperse, the yard and its boats. The move provoked outrage in the county, and funds – around £300,000 – were raised to save it, and a charitable trust, the Norfolk Heritage Fleet Trust, was created to take

The historic home of Ransome memories

by Peter Willis, with Neville Khambatta



over and run the yard and its fleet of historic hire boats.

It was the culmination of a huge campaign to save the yard and the fleet of yachts from coming under the auctioneer's hammer. However, not many people realise that this was the second time there had been a public campaign to ensure that Hunter's Yard survived in its entirety. The first occasion had been in the early 1980s

when Norfolk County Council found itself having to reassess its spending priorities and two of its sites – Hunter's Yard and the How Hill nature reserve – found themselves facing closure. A campaign was launched to save the yard and succeeded. As a result it was How Hill which the County surrendered to the How Hill Trust in 1983.

Lottery Fund steps in - The 1995 campaign to save the yards was led by the Eastern Daily Press and donations came flooding in – but would they be enough? The newly-created trust under its chairman, Bryan Read, approached the Lottery Fund, applying for between £100,000 and £125,000. But when representatives of the Lottery came down to inspect the Yard they were so impressed by what they found at the end of this little road in the heart of Broadland that at the end of the visit they told Bryan that the application was inadequate, and recommended the trust apply for the whole cost of purchasing the yard from the County.

With the enhanced Lottery Grant and the donations already made, Hunter's Yard was saved and a surplus was placed on reserve for the future. So the Trust was born, and the fleet of varnished boats survived to sail the waters they had been built for – but with a new clientele who had always wanted the chance to sail a 2-berth Hustler, a 3-berth Wood of one of the three 4-berth Lullaby class.

While the yard had been owned by the County only a very few private holiday makers had been able to hire the boats, and many sailors thought they couldn't hire them because they 'belonged to Education Department' but now anyone could hire one. The first twenty years of the Trust went swimmingly, the groups still came year in year out, the number of

families and individuals renting a single yacht increased and all went well.

As the century drew to a close and a new one dawned the Trust celebrated by starting to build another Hunter boat – the first new yacht for over 50 years. Lucent joined her 4-berth sisters, Lullaby, Luna and Lustre early in the new century.



from friends, customers and well-wishers.

“The other ‘solution’ came from the National Heritage Lottery Fund which created a resilience fund for Heritage charities to apply for. These two funds brought us out the other side of Covid and

lockdowns, able to continue doing what Hunter’s has always done... hire yachts to sail the Broads.

Back in the late 1900s the bulk of the yard’s income had come from group hires – school parties, adult groups and youth organisations. They would return year on year, hire the same boats, sail for a week and then go home having booked their boats for the same week the following year. But after around 20 years, explains the trust’s current chairman Neville Khambatta, a long-time member of TARS, “We began to notice a change. The groups were getting smaller, then one or two stopped coming. No matter, there were plenty of families, the pattern of hire changed – more short breaks, long weekends – but all was still well.”

The ‘silent quants’ - This was also the time when we began to fit electric engines to the hire fleet. Silent quants some call them! Whatever you think about fitting engines to such unique boats, they are silent, there is no vibration and they do make it both easier and safer to pass under the bridges.

Our first chairman had retired a few years before covid struck and everything changed overnight. Unfortunately at the same time the new chairman had to resign for health reasons and,” explains Neville, “I found myself in charge of a Trust with a dyke full of yachts which were not allowed to sail and customers who weren’t allowed to travel!” It has been said that there are no problems, only solutions... When the Trust had come into being they had created ‘The Friends of the Hunter Fleet’ and it was one of the Friends who came up with the first solution. A ‘Just

Giving’ page was started. By the end of lockdown Hunter’s yard had received over £30,000 in donations

“There were still problems, the groups have declined still further, but last year saw 400 Norfolk school children coming back – just for a day, but coming to sail on their Broads; to discover what is in their back yard and this year will see even more primary school children experience sailing in the yard’s half-deckers thanks to the generosity of four local charities and the Heritage Lottery Fund who have given us grants to make it happen.

“When The BBC filmed Coot Club and The Big Six using Lullaby as the Teasel, one of our dinghies became Titmouse for the film. She was restored by one of our boatbuilders a while ago but was rather lonely, a little white dinghy in a yard full of varnished yachts... until last year when she was joined by her cousins from another film, Swallow and Amazon. “I like to think that she isn’t on her lonesome any more, especially when Swallow and Amazon have had time to get back to being as slick and span as Titmouse is.” And it turns out Neville’s own boat has a Coot Club connection too – it’s one of the “White Boats”, Yare and Bure One-Designs like Flash, owned by Mr Farland and raced by Port and Starboard.

Unique survival “Hunter’s yard is a unique survival on the Broads and on the British yachting scene,” says Neville, “something we hold in trust for future generations.” For Swallow and Amazon, Hunter’s Yard, with its expertise in traditional wooden boatbuilding (a rare, even endangered craft these days) plus hire-fleet experience, working with young people and a strong Ransome link, could hardly be a better home.

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Signals - May-August 2024*



HUNTER'S YARD

AI - Good or bad?

Just for the fun of it, the following text was put into an AI engine to see what it came up with.

"Sailing classic gaff-rigged wooden yachts on the Norfolk Broads, based at Hunter's Yard, Ludham"

About a second later, this was the result. Rather impressive, (though a bit lyrical), and pretty much spot on. Will we ever need to be creative again?

"Ah, that sounds like a wonderful topic! Let's generate some text about sailing classic gaff-rigged wooden yachts on the Norfolk Broads, based at Hunter's Yard, Ludham" said the site...

Text: *Sailing on the Norfolk Broads is an experience unlike any other. The serene beauty of the waterways combined with the classic charm of gaff-rigged wooden yachts creates a truly enchanting atmosphere. At Hunter's Yard in Ludham, sailors embark on unforgettable adventures, exploring the stunning landscape and immersing themselves in the rich history of these elegant vessels.*

From the moment you step aboard, the craftsmanship of these wooden yachts is evident. The gaff rigging, with its distinctive triangular sails and traditional lines, harks back to a bygone era of sailing. As you hoist the sails and glide through the water, the gentle creaking of the timbers and the sound of the wind in the rigging create a symphony that resonates with the soul of any sailor.

The Norfolk Broads offer a diverse range of sailing experiences, from tranquil journeys through peaceful reed-lined channels to exhilarating races on open waters. Whether you are a seasoned sailor or a novice, there is something for everyone. The Broads are a haven for wildlife, and as you navigate the waterways, you may encounter graceful swans, majestic herons, and elusive otters, adding a touch of magic to your voyage.

Hunter's Yard, nestled in the heart of Ludham, is the perfect base for your sailing adventures. With its rich heritage and knowledgeable staff, the yard is a hub of nautical expertise. You can learn the ropes from experienced sailors, join in on regattas and events, or simply relax and soak in the vibrant sailing community. The camaraderie among fellow sailors is palpable, as stories are exchanged and a shared passion for classic yachts is celebrated.

In the evenings, after a day of sailing, you can moor your yacht in one of the idyllic spots along the Broads. As the sun sets and paints the sky with hues of orange and purple, you can unwind and reflect on the beauty that surrounds you. It is a time to appreciate the simplicity and elegance of gaff-rigged yachts, a time to connect with nature, and a time to create memories that will last a lifetime.

Sailing classic gaff-rigged wooden yachts on the Norfolk Broads, based at Hunter's Yard, Ludham, is a journey back in time. It is a chance to embrace the traditions of sailing, to reconnect with nature, and to experience the joy and freedom that comes from gliding through the water under the power of wind alone. So, set sail on the Broads, and let the adventure begin"

Feedback, ideas and thoughts

Your thoughts on the newsletter, our fleet, service, website and facilities are always appreciated and we are very keen to hear from you. We are constantly trying to improve what we do and how we do it. Constructive criticism, suggestions and ideas are welcomed.

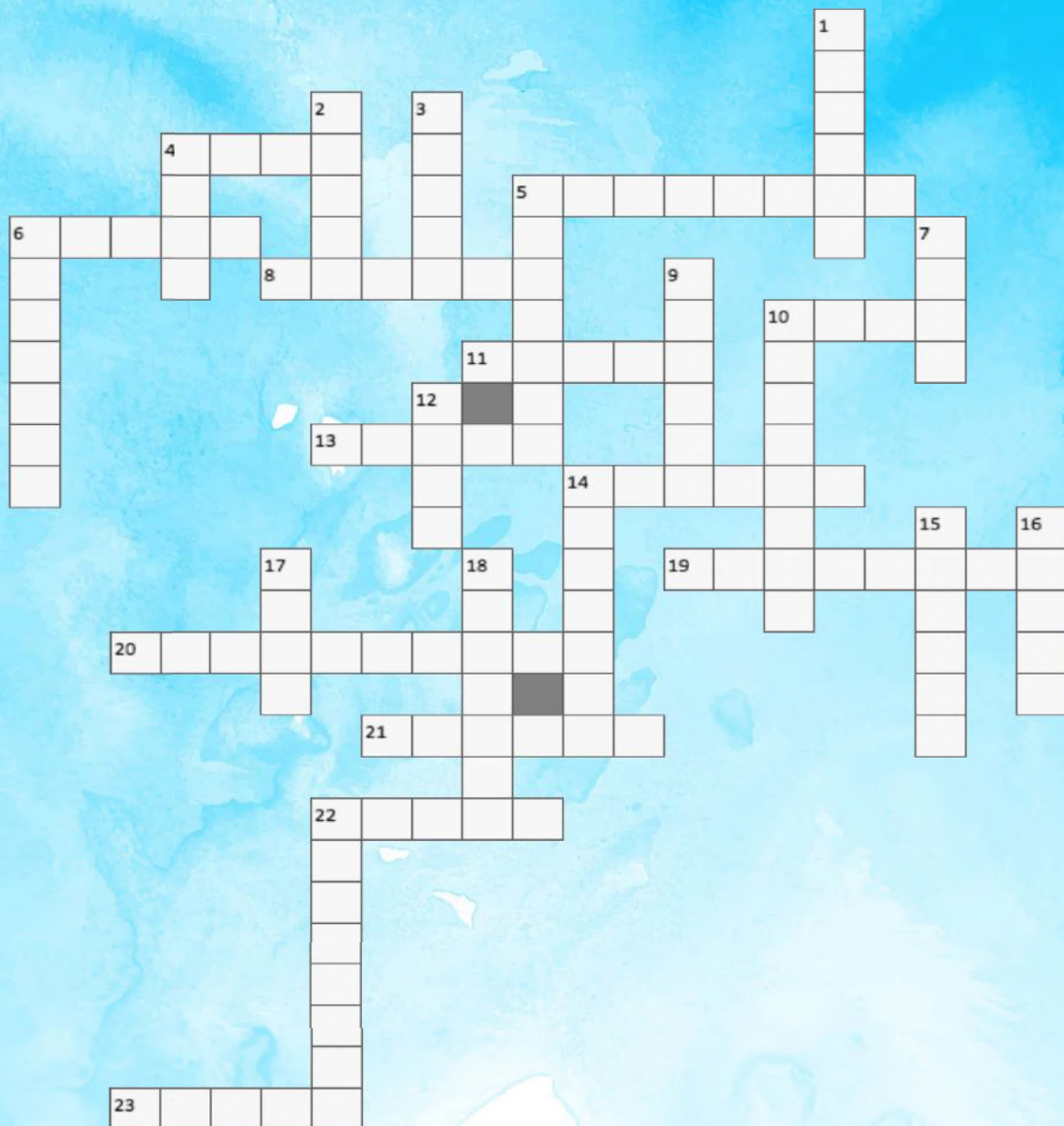
Please email Dan or Martin at the yard on info@huntersyard.com



HUNTER'S YARD

www.huntersyard.co.uk

A bit of nautical fun - No prizes!



Across

- 6. Sail part or sucking creature
- 8. A cushion used to protect a boat from impact.
- 10. The forward edge of a sail.
- 11. Boat 'without a cause'
- 13. A device for securing ropes.
- 14. What a Simpson might sail 'on'
- 19. A small window in the side of a boat.
- 20. A 'shocking' way to quickly reduce sail power
- 21. Supporter of Hunter's Yard
- 22. The lowest compartment on a boat / Drivel
- 23. A one person-power propulsion device

Down

- 3. Hook for mooring
- 4. The direction a boat is sailing relative to the wind.
- 5. The flow of water in a particular direction.
- 6. A song for children
- 7. Angled spar
- 9. Small but powerful control lever
- 10. Old alternative for Port
- 12. The very foundation of a yacht
- 14. Classic Norfolk sailing dinghy and the Broad's shyest bird
- 15. The 'highest' bridge
- 16. "Father of the Hunter fleet"
- 17. Very fast now but once used for wildfowling
- 18. Wind-powered leisure activity
- 22. Pole extending from the front of the boat



HUNTER'S YARD

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 to book your holiday.



HUNTER'S
YARD

huntersyard.co.uk | @huntersyard | 01692 678263

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