

BECKSIDE NEWS

Winter 2012/3

The Newsletter of the Beverley Barge Preservation Society Charity Reg 1091733

Happy New Year to all members.



As I write this newsletter the River Hull has been about a metre higher than usual, and the flood barrier has been in place across the Beck for about the last month, curtailing any usage of the Society Boats, and the Sun at the shipyard has been cut off. Despite this work has been undertaken on Syntan and we have had a number of visitors. Bearing in mind that we were told that we were in a state of drought at the start of the year the fact that virtually all of our events during the year were affected by poor weather can only be put down to experience. Let's all hope for normal weather this coming year.

St Mary's School Visit

Part of the aims and objectives of the Society are "the education of individuals about the barge, Beverley Beck and the Inland Waterways" As part of this, over the years we have had a number of visits from schools, playgroups and brownie / guide packs. The latest of these were visits over two days from St Mary's School in Beverley. A total of 4 groups visited over the two days half looking at the Beck whilst the other group looked around Syntan and then swapping over. This fitted with parts of the curriculum looking at transport, and both participants and the Society volunteers enjoyed the experience as always.

The Society is always willing to make arrangements for such groups to visit the vessel (although unfortunately the vessel can't move) and if you know of a group who would enjoy a visit with a chance to also see some of the artifacts of the Society please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate them.

Remembrance Sunday



At 11a.m. On Sunday 11th November a group of members of the society were in Mermaid just to the south of Weel on the River Hull. Here they observed a minutes silence prior to casting a wreath into the waters in memory of those associated with the Beverley Barges who gave their lives during the two World Wars. The ceremony was enhanced by John Whittles performing the last post at the end of the silence.

This is the second year where Mermaid has been used for this service, which is much more practical than using Syntan with the trip to the Humber that this entails. Our only regret is that we failed to gain any media coverage for this simple but important reminder of our expression of gratitude, and so pictures taken by Brian Holmes during the event is published for information.

Update of Website

Jenny Pinchbeck and Pat Hardwidge have agreed to spearhead our updating of the website and will start on this in the New Year so that it is ready for the next season. They will be reviewing the current content as well as adding updated or missing items. There are two ways in which we would like to involve members in this process, firstly by asking that if you have suggestions about how we can improve the website or wish to be involved in this update please let us know, but also as the revised website goes live if you could provide feedback on it. We are also looking at providing a members area on the site so that details of trips and manning rotas etc can be more easily available to members. Hopefully there will be more on this in the next newsletter.

Christmas Meal on Syntan

Just before Christmas the Barge was decked out for the Christmas meal organised by Mrs Usher-Bacon for her Group. 19 people attended the event where they were served by an outside caterer who had set up his kitchen under a gazebo on the bank side. It was good to see a return booking from satisfied customers and again those attending appeared to have had a good time.

Winter Maintenance

Syntan

Following last years major repair at repainting in the dry-dock there are no major works planned for Syntan this year. This does not mean that a number of jobs have not already been completed led by Dave Tullock and ably assisted by other volunteers. So far the engine room has been tidied and repainted with additional storage fitted, better piping to the generator installed and the heating system upgraded with an additional outlet and protection for the heater exhaust. We are grateful to Don Swindell for his work on the latter. Members have also been adressing the leaks on the Gardner engine.

Syntan will still need further painting once the weather improves as Spring approaches but we are happy to have achieved so much so early in the closed season.

Mermaid

There has been a great deal of discussion regarding the need for a toilet on Mermaid. During the back end of last season she did a number of trips for Dave Sharwood's history group up the River Hull to North Frodingham. These trips took in excess of 5 hours and it was felt that these trips were too long without some sort of toilet facility. To this end a number of ways of incorporating a cassette type toilet on the vessel were considered, along with the knowledge that the timber floor in the front cockpit which was rotten was going to have to be replaced. Solutions included moving the front cabin superstructure forward to either enclose the front cockpit or even further forward, or incorporating a toilet in the current cabin (or even in the back cabin alongside the engine!)

Following a great deal of discussion across two meetings it was decided that :

The superstructure would be retained as existing with a new floor to the inside and the deck to the cockpit to be plated along with covers for lifting eyes etc, and that the vessel would be marketed and used for short trips on the understanding that there were no toilet facilities available on board.

This work will be completed before the start of the new season when it is hoped that Mermaid will be used for trips on the Beck and for short trips up river on the River Hull, for example to the end of the Leven Canal.

Progress on MV Sun

The progress on Sun has not been limited by the willingness of volunteers but by two external matters hampering progress. The work to fit a new reverse band to the gearbox and additional work to the front cabin have been complete but until the superstructure is fitted a pause in construction is necessary. This has further been enforced by the high waters in the River Hull, covering the bank at the shipyard and effectively meaning all boats moored along there have become islands. It is hoped that once water levels return to normal that we will hear that work is starting on the superstructure and we will be able to once more access the vessel, and the fitout will then continue.



Events for 2013

Throughout the Winter we will be preparing the Society's vessels for next year. We will also try to pre-plan the use of the vessels in order that we can involve more members of the society in the running of the boats. Three strands of this planning process are envisaged.

- Shore Crew Training. - We would like to have Syntan open on berth more often, possibly each Sunday when on station during the season. In order to do this we know that we need to carry out familiarisation training so that we have sufficient volunteers involved so that this does not become too much of a chore, and that they have the knowledge to operate the generator or heating system. We will therefore be attempting to write an instruction book for each vessel, and undertake training to allow specific knowledge to be gained.
- Event Planning – The Society is aiming to plan visits to Festivals at the earliest opportunity to ensure that we are able to provide ample qualified crews, without unreasonable expectations on members time. This will be done by the completion of Year Planners and a centrally held diary on Syntan.
- Creation of a Volunteer Register. This would be held centrally on Syntan, but would enable Officers, particularly skippers of vessels to access information about members showing anything they would like to be considered as a volunteer for. This would also ensure that we had up to date contact information for our members (telephone and e-mail as appropriate)

BBPS in the news.

Barry Freeman our press Officer does his best to keep the profile of the Society high. Over the Summer we have featured in the following publications.

Foss Society Newsletter- front and inside page coverage of the visit to York and trips along the Foss in the Mermaid

Yorkshire Post- coverage of art exhibition including a picture of Mermaid.

Membership Renewal and update of Member Information

Remember that your membership runs from 1st April each year whenever during that year you joined the Society. We will be sending out renewal forms with the next newsletter due to be published at the end of March 2013. Your membership not only entitles you to receive the Newsletter and be involved in the decision making through the Members Meeting, but also allows us to demonstrate the broad spectrum of people involved in or interested in the activities of the Society.

Meetings and Trustees Meetings.

The members meetings for the next three months are to be held on January 10th and February 14th with the Trustees Meeting being on March 14th. The April Members Meeting will be on 11th April. All meetings are held on Syntan and start at 7:30 p.m.

Other Contacts

The Society's registered office is MV Syntan, Crane Hill Wharf, Scaife Mews, Beverley HU17 0GG

e-mail on info@beverleybarge.org.uk

website www.syntanbarge.org.uk

Chair Iain Campbell

Deputy Chair and Syntan Skipper Tony Hardwidge

Treasurer Brian Holmes

Contributions

If you wish to provide an article for inclusion in the newsletter, please submit it (preferably in Word .doc format) to the editor by e-mail at info@syntanbarge.org.uk along with contact details or in written form to the Syntan postbox on Crane Hill Wharf or by post to Beverley Barge Preservation Society, MV Syntan, Crane Hill Wharf, Scaife Mews, Beverley HU17 0GG.

Please note that the views contained in this newsletter are those of the contributor and may not be the same as those of the Society. The Society also retains the right to edit, expand or otherwise change the content of any article submitted prior to publication.

