

Beckside News

SPRING 2015

The Newsletter of the Beverley Barge Preservation Society.



The 2015 season is rapidly approaching and so thoughts have moved to the long overdue production of a newsletter for members and others interested in the activities of the Society. We have moved to an interesting state. Although small amounts of work are still needed on the boats (boats always require some work!) all three boats are substantially complete and operation is now the priority for the Society.

The roles of the 3 vessels are different:

Syntan - Mainly a static resource as a museum and meeting place. We are hoping to undertake a maximum of 6 trips in the coming year down the River to the Old Harbour and will be encouraging local schools to bring classes to visit her on her mooring. We will continue to open Syntan each Sunday from April to September between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Sun - Mainly used as a trip boat on the River Hull north of Beverley, with mixed length trips from the Shipyard and occasionally from Cranehill Wharf. When on the Beck whilst events are taking place the Sun may be used as a floating cafe.

Mermaid- Mainly used for short trips on Beverley Beck but also by arrangement on longer trips on the River Hull. This boat is also our training boat

2014 Highlights

First trips for Sun. As with our previous boats there has been an element of trial and error in working out the design and use of Sun. Early trips last season revealed the potential, and as more facilities became available and more trips were undertaken so the true potential was revealed. We are currently taking bookings for trips on the vessel, of varying duration. Trips undertaken last year included a birthday, river inspection and an art group.

Raft Race. The move to July for this event was rewarded with better weather. The Society used Mermaid as a safety boat during the races and taking trips between runs, Sun made her first appearance as a cafe and Syntan was used by the organisers and judges. For details of the proposed 2015 event see below.

Humber Keel and Sloop – Ferriby. The only significant journey made by Syntan last year was the trip to Ferriby sluice for the first part of the Amy Howson centenary celebrations. Despite slightly fresher conditions than desirable the outward trip proved enjoyable for all concerned. The first day of the open days at Ferriby had glorious weather, we had a large number of visitors and gained a few friends. The same could not be said for the second day when the weather was atrocious and we had very few visitors. Our trip back to Beverley on the Monday was ideal despite continuing high winds and the tide behind us, allowing a quick trip back to Hull despite a slightly late start.

Humber Keel and Sloop – Beverley. The second part of the celebrations were held in Beverley at the end of September. Here the weather was really kind, and along with the Society's own vessels we were blessed with both of the Humber Keel and Sloop Society vessels; Daybreak a fully rigged Humber Keel visiting from the Thames, Evangeline, a former Hodgsons' vessel and Raleigh from further up the River Hull. A number of smaller vessels from the boatyard on Beverley Beck, Hull Bridge and Bethel Bridge contributed to filling the Beck. In addition there were demonstrations and samplers with the Canoe Club and Model boats. The most heard comment seemed to be "When can we do it again?"



Vessel updates

Syntan has undergone some internal redecoration during the winter and will receive external attention once the weather improves. Due to Dave Tulloch's hard work Syntan is in good general repair although some internal redecoration has been carried out over the winter. Some external painting will be done after the World Barge Pulling Championships later this year.

Further enhancements have been made to Sun including the installation of the old generator, and it is hoped that a disabled lift will be installed shortly. She is also due painting works to be carried out before the season really kicks off.

Mermaid is currently being repainted back into her old Gardline colours and is to have larger windows installed in the front cabin. The local branch of the Inland Waterways Association have approved a contribution towards re-upholstery in the passenger area, following on from their grant for life-jackets last year. In addition we continue to have support from Kintecho over provision of a spring starter mechanism for the vessel

Trips 2015

After a great deal of hard work, the possible cruising dates for the vessels have been prepared and a new internal booking system introduced. Initial contact will normally be with Brian Holmes who will check preferred dates against the database, advising on possible trips. These will include trips turning at Arram Beck and Aike Beck as well as full trips to Struncheon Hill (Hempholme) Lock. During April we met with the Warden at Tophill Low Nature Reserve to see if we can develop mutually advantageous trips. In addition some public trips catering for groups less than 12 in number combined into a 12 strong party are planned for the following dates.

- Saturday 9th May Sun travelling upstream departs 9:30 a.m
- Thursday 9th July Sun travelling upstream departs 10:30 a.m
- Friday 4th September Sun travelling upstream departs 9:30 a.m
- Monday 19th October Sun travelling upstream departs 9:00 a.m

If you wish to be involved in crewing the vessels please let Iain Campbell know as soon as possible with indication as to availability and how often you would be able to undertake crewing duties. Thanks to those who have already let us have this information.

Other Activities 2015

The World Barge Pulling Championships

Due to difficulties in being sure that all of our permissions would be in place in time this event has been postponed from its original date of 4th May, and will now take place at the end of September.

Teams of up to 4 people will pull Syntan, weighing in at about 64 tons, along a course of about 230 metres along the Beck. A maximum of 8 teams will take part with the fastest time winning. There will also be a Raffle, Sun open as a cafe and other events taking place during the day.

Come and lend your support, or if you feel you could field a team contact Brian Holmes at info@syntanbarge.org.uk. More details are available on our website. We are grateful to Teamac Paints for sponsoring this event.

NURSES Raft Race

The Nurses Annual Raft Race is scheduled for 25th July. Once again the Society will be supporting this charity through the provision of safety boats, etc. The Society will also hope to have Sun open as a temporary café.

Pocklington Canal bicentenary

It is two hundred years since the Pocklington Canal received its Act of Parliament to enable construction over the following couple of years. They have launched two events to coincide with this, firstly a £250,000 appeal to extend restoration for navigation above the current limit at Melbourne, and secondly a small boat gathering to be held on the weekend of 25th to 26th July.

Membership & Meetings

The Society memberships run from April to March each year so renewals are due now. The cost of membership is £6 per year (£1 for junior members), £12 for couples or £15 for families. The Annual General meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 9th July on Syntan.

Syntan in the Cinema?

Syntan was recently used as a set for the film ID2 - Shadwell Army. The vessel was temporarily converted into a live aboard for one of the characters, and filming on board (and externally) lasted a whole day. Brian Holmes even managed a walk-on part (man with dog!), so he is hoping his performance will make it to the final film currently due out in December, then who knows, maybe a BAFTA nomination.



River Hull Consultation

The last twelve months has seen some movement on the issues surrounding the profile of the River Hull and the problems pertaining to the wrecked vessels therein. Funding for this work seems to have been found because of the likely level of compensation claims if flooding resulted from the river. So far a survey of the River Hull between the Deep and Hull Bridge Tickton has resulted in a wish list of proposals for the river; 3 items particularly impinge on the Society.

Removal of wrecks - there is an acceptance that the sunken vessels in the River affect the flow and that in addition some dredging and returning the river to its original profile would mitigate future flooding. It has yet to be fully investigated what effect this would have on navigation in the upper river.

Installation of a flood gate at the mouth of the River Hull; the installation of mitred flood gates to replace the existing flood barrier near the Deep is proposed in the longer term. This would allow higher tides from moving up the River Hull than the existing barrier, but would not be a lock so would still close the river when in operation.

Finally the possibility of an Act of Parliament to establish a Navigation authority for the portion of the river which is currently free. Whether this would be the Canal and River Trust and whether it would be applied to the portions of the river currently controlled by Hull City Council or the Driffield Navigation Trust remains to be seen.

Access to the full report can be found on www.eastriding.gov.uk/riverhull

Deaths

Early 2015 has seen the loss of two long standing supporters. Bob Huntsman, a founder member died just after Christmas. Bob was a long time member of the local branch of the Inland Waterways Association, and was the owner of Water Deer, our neighbour when Sun was at the Shipyard.

Jim Gillyon died just before Easter, a real loss to all who knew him. Coming from a barge owning family Jim had experience of operating barges in the UK, on the continent and in Africa. His quiet teaching methods with never a raised voiced underlay the skill he had and he was always willing to pass on these skills to those who would listen. The world is poorer for his passing, whether it be in the maritime or musical world.



How can I be involved?

You can be involved in the Society in a number of ways:

- Attend Members' Meetings: These are held on the second Thursday of most months, except March, June, September and December when there are Trustees' Meetings. They are held on board Syntan starting at 7:30 p.m. These discuss the ongoing programmes for the Society, plan maintenance and operation of the vessels, etc.
- Help with promoting Syntan as a visitor attraction: We have Syntan open each Sunday during the Summer and we need a minimum of two members each week to open up and act as custodians of the vessel during its opening hours. Training can be provided if you are interested in this.
- Assist with maintenance or improvements to the vessels: Boats always require work to them. Bring your skills to us or get involved in learning new ones. There are usually work crews on Friday and Sunday Mornings.
- Crew the vessels: Whether you are highly experienced or a novice, we can use you to crew the vessels. These turns may be any day of the week, and either on the Beck or on the River Hull. You would always have a qualified skipper at hand to assist and run the boat. If you are interested in this please let Iain or Jeremy know through the info@syntanbarge.org.uk e-mail address, letting us know your experience (if any), availability and any preferences for crewing a particular boat.



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website www.syntanbarge.org.uk