

# Maud Matters

Covid 19 has prevented us from making trips and holding other events since March and we are all missing sailing on Maud.

We are fortunate to live in an area where the spread of the virus has been well contained. Our thoughts go out to those who have been more severely affected. The important thing for us is to stay well, stay optimistic and prepare ourselves for when we are all able to resume normal activities.

As restrictions have been relaxed this month, we now feel able to resume training trips, of course with appropriate safety measures in place.

This newsletter will be shorter than usual but we hope that you will still find it interesting.

## Your wherry needs YOU.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.

### Our patron, Sir Richard Jewson KCVO JP writes:



The totally unexpected events of the past six months have proved a testing time for us all.

We had to abandon our plans for sailing on Maud and we learned to enjoy home-based activities instead. I do hope that it has given the majority of you an opportunity to slow down, rest and recuperate, maybe learn new skills and enjoy some of the warm weather we have had. Our beautiful East Anglian landscapes have certainly been at their best and, as I write, the crops and our lawns are now benefitting from some much-needed rain.

Now, at the beginning of July, relaxation of restrictions means that we can hope for a return to some of our normal wherry activities quite soon.

I am heartened to hear that so many of you have renewed your membership. Your financial support is most important for the Trust in a year when there is little other income to cover regular costs such as mooring, river tolls and insurance.

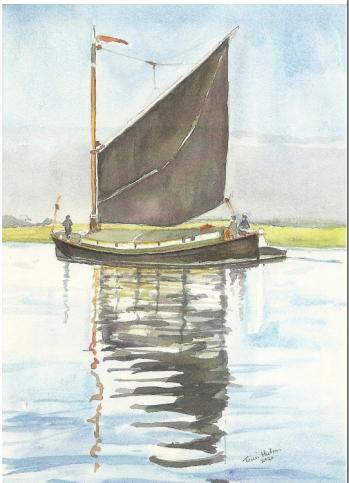
I echo the above message from your trustees: keep safe and optimistic until we can all meet again.

**Wherry Maud Trust**  
Reg. Charity No. 1161285

**Newsletter No. 10**  
**July 2020**

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*new card from Trish Turner  
— see page 7*



## New life in the shed at Womack

One baby swallow caused us some anxiety as it must have fallen out of the nest onto Maud's hatches. The parents were feeding it regularly and, for a couple of weekends, we had to avoid disturbing it while doing some painting. We are happy to report that by the first weekend in July it was able to fly and left its temporary home on board.



## A big step forward for your Trust



Photo Mike Barnes

In our financial year to the end of February 2020 we were surprised and delighted to receive a substantial donation. As a registered charity, we are committed to future proofing Wherry Maud Trust and decided that a major risk for our operations would be a sudden need for a replacement mast. We have no reason to believe that our current mast needs replacing but finding timber and having a mast shaped takes a significant amount of time. Trustees concluded that the money should be used for the purchase of Douglas Fir timber from which a new laminated mast could be constructed. You will probably realise that Albion is now sailing with a mast so constructed and it has proved successful.

Our Trustee Mike Barnes is in charge of the project and, from timber merchants in Lincolnshire, sourced a very good log on our behalf.

We duly purchased it and had it sawn into the correct sizes for future lamination. It is now in storage. Thus, we are able to ensure that we have timber ready and know approximately how long it would take to step a new mast on Maud.

Of course, we already have oak planking in stock for the next major work on Maud's hull (see Diary Dates on page 6).

## Associate Membership

As we go to press we are delighted that 195 of you have chosen to renew your subscriptions this year. We appreciate your support through this difficult time.

If any member has been hesitating about renewing then please do reconsider.



## Maud's trips and other events from January to June 2020

On 25 January we held our **members winter lunch** at a new venue, the refurbished Lion at Thurne. It was a great success with a friendly atmosphere and excellent food.

Also in January there were performances of the play "**At the Turning of the Tide**" at the Maddermarket Theatre in Norwich. The publicity shots for the play, set at the end of the trading wherry era, featured Maud with actors and actresses on board. It drew in a full audience on several nights, many of them wherry enthusiasts and even wherry skippers.

**We are glad to report that, on the 8<sup>th</sup> February, we were again the first wherry to sail this year.**

We had an amazing response to our invitation to members to come along for a "try crewing" session on the morning of 8th February. Skipper Jeff Stamps again led the session and generously imparted knowledge he had acquired during the eight years or so that he has been a wherry skipper. You will remember that he became an authorised Wherry Maud Trust skipper in 2017.



A group of trainees learning how to reef the sail. Photo: Linda Pargeter

Some existing crew members came along to learn more and several people who had never crewed before had a "taster" and expressed interest in doing further training. Most of the session took place on Womack Broad and, as the wind had eased by the end of the morning, Jeff decreed that Maud could go for a short sail.

On that day, with light and manageable winds, it was the turn of the trainee skippers to practice. The Trust now permits trainee skippers to take Maud out on training trips with qualified crew if no other members are on board. In the morning trainee skipper Eamon Green took the helm for manoeuvring Maud under quants up to Womack Staith and back to base followed by a short sail on the Thurne. He was under the watchful eye of Jeff Stamps as there were ordinary members on board. After lunch trustee and trainee skipper Neil Thomas enjoyed the opportunity to sail Maud to St. Benet's and back with six qualified crew members to assist him.

Little did we know that that sail would be the last until July when Norfolk Wherry Trust and Wherry Maud Trust have both resumed crew training trips.



## Virtual Events Poems for Maud

In April, with the country in lockdown due to the pandemic, one of our trustees had the idea of asking members and some celebrities to submit a poem for our newly re-vamped website. It proved to be difficult to contact celebrities but a few kindly ones helped. You will probably have seen the contributions from Larry Lamb, Paul Martin and Olly Day on wherrymaudtrust.org.

We were surprised and extremely pleased to see the variety of poems submitted by members. We include extracts from three of those here for those members who do not use the internet. They illustrate three phases of Maud's life: the sunken wreck, the first sailings of her as a restored boat; and her new life with human "cargo".

### The Wherry "Maud" by Pete Tibbets

There was an old wherry named "Maud",  
Who was sunk in the mud and ignored.  
She protected the banks  
With no word of thanks  
And she dreamed of being restored.

### Wherry Maud (Restored) Landscape Voices (Of Rebirth) by Alistair Amery

Hear the waters in excitement whisper,  
Calling across the Broadland landscape,  
"She comes!"  
"She comes"  
"She comes again"

#### Maud calls

"By magician's healing hand, I return"  
In sculptured miracle  
"I am whole again"  
"I am whole again"

### Song of Maud by Andrew Harrowven (with apologies to Hiawatha)

O'er the water floating, drifting,  
Through the shining mist of morning,  
But low dark Maud, with long quant plunging,  
Rising, sinking in the water,  
Dripping, flashing in the sunshine;  
And within her came a people  
From the distant land of Ludham,  
From the farthest realms of Horning,  
With their guides and their companions.  
And the joyful eager tourists,  
With their hands aloft extended,  
Waved and waved in sign of welcome,  
Waited, full of exultation,  
Till the Maud, wet quant extended  
Touched upon the black peat shore,  
Landed by the reedy margin,  
Ready for another tour.



## Flickr Photos

Since the Trust was set up in 2015 we have not had a way of sharing with you all the photos that members send in to us. It seemed an appropriate time to remedy this. We selected Flickr as it is quite easy to use. We now have albums for each member who has submitted photos, and collections for most years since the Trust began.

Again, for those people who do not use the internet, here are a couple of photos from Flickr.



Drama of crossing Breydon. Photo: Roger Hewins



Returning to Womack at Dusk in March 2019. Photo: Keith Davies



## Diary Dates

We will not be lifting Maud out for her three-yearly maintenance this year. She is in good condition and so we have postponed the work until 2021.

Wherry Maud Trust is unable to hold the **Art & Craft Show at Ranworth** on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Ranworth Village Hall is not open for bookings in August. Failing another opportunity the next show will be at Ranworth in May 2021.

Maud will take part in **Heritage Open Days** in September. We are planning for Maud to be on display on **Sunday 13 or Sunday 20 Sept** at a mooring near Womack, with external viewing but no entry to the hold or cabin.

Wherry Maud Trust has been fortunate as a volunteer has come forward to create a digital tour of Maud for use on the HODS website and in our pop up museum.

The possibility of holding a **Film Night** at the end of October is under consideration. It will depend on government restrictions for such events and the availability of a village hall.

Provisionally our **Archive Afternoon** will take place at Acle on **Saturday 21 November** with a speaker from the North Walsham & Dilham Canal Trust. We will send details nearer the time.

In March we started negotiations with Waitrose to play/sing Christmas carols in December again. It is obvious that playing wind instruments inside the store is not going to be possible but we have just put forward an alternative option. We will let you know if it is accepted.



## Pop up Museum for WMT

In Newsletter No. 9 we said we would be creating a pop up museum and taking it to shows and riverside events.

Due to Covid 19 that has not been possible this year but we are hoping that there might be a possibility during this coming winter of using some of the material gathered to date.

The project actually had 3 sections. The first was to have made the photo cut out boards that we unveiled in June 2019. The second section was to create hanging photo boards in the hold of Maud to show her “timeline” to visitors. The boards will display photos that illustrate the history of her working life.

Work on the third phase is underway. We will soon be buying a pop up gazebo to house the museum. It will have to be sturdy but as light as possible so that it can be transported and erected easily. We have purchased a DVD player on which we will play the Virtual Tour of Maud video. Lastly we will be setting up displays for the interior of the gazebo.

We look forward to attending events with the completed museum in 2021.



## Meet the Skipper

Bill Housden is very much in demand as he volunteers as a skipper on Maud as well as Albion and the Wherry Yacht Charter vessels.

He provided the following resumé of his time on wherries:

*"In January 1990 I went to work for the Broads Authority and soon after that volunteered for a trip as the tea boy on Wherry Yacht Norada. The sailing was from Waveney River Centre and the skipper was the late Barney Matthews who owned Norada. Barney, in partnership with Peter Bower, ran Wherry Yacht Charter in the days before it became a charitable trust.*

*In very little time, I became an active crew member and in particular thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of learning to quant on board the pleasure wherry Hathor. Her masterful skipper, Peter Bower, gave clear instruction and taught me a skill that has stood me in good stead for my future wherrying. In Peter's eyes, I was an ideal apprentice, having no prior knowledge of sailing and being willing to accept his methods.*

*Quanting is not as simple as people think. Perhaps the most important thing is how to use the quant to best advantage when tacking. You need to plant the quant in the correct position and to use it at the best angle in order to push the wherry through the wind. Straight shoving is another skill not to be underestimated. With average fitness and a good technique you can get into a rhythm that enables you to quant for long periods of time.*

*After a number of years crewing Hathor and the wherry yachts, I was fortunate enough to be allowed occasionally to take the helm. I had no prior sailing experience but through the watchful eye of Peter and him repeating that the key to being a good skipper was 'concentration, concentration, concentration'. I was eventually deemed ready to skipper a wherry. Much of my early training and skippering was on WY Olive and, whilst I don't have a favourite, she is definitely in the running.*

*In addition to skippering for Wherry Maud Trust I am a skipper and trustee of Wherry Yacht Charter Charitable Trust and a skipper for Norfolk Wherry Trust. I am fortunate in that I have skippered seven of the eight remaining Wherries, although I'm not sure my wife sees it that way... "*

Bill's modesty prevented him adding the following information:

Bill keeps himself very fit. He has been known to cycle from Norwich to Wroxham, run to How Hill, sail a wherry back to Wroxham and then cycle home. I wonder if any other members could emulate that?



## WMT Merchandise

As you will be aware it has not been a good year for sales of merchandise but we are adding new stock as we plan ahead for this autumn and for 2021.

Eddie Perkins, the woodturner, has kindly made up some more stylish pens, key fobs and light pulls out of wood taken out of Maud's hull during recent refits. You may have seen the Facebook photo of Linda scraping mastic off pieces of old planking to prepare them for Eddie? We have not yet collected them from him and so cannot show them to you here.

Trish Turner, Maud crew member and artist, has produced some new greetings cards from one of her paintings of Maud (see front cover)



## Archive

We have all had more time to read recently. It would be nice to hear from members who have tracked down and read any of the books discussed by Chris Crowther when he talked to our November 2019 meeting.

Recently we have set up a group of interested individuals who will be working to continue Martin Carruthers' work of digitising the Pargeter collection comprising slides, photos, video, documents etc. The collection is largely Maud-based but there are records of other wherries as well. It is hoped that eventually the archive will be available for interested individuals to search.

We are seeking information about the large brick storage barns, two of which are situated at Beighton and Cantley. One story was that they were built in the 1920s with materials imported from Holland and brought up river by wherry. That seemed rather unlikely and Trustee Mike Barnes was able to provide the following background information relating to the construction of a similar huge barn in the Reedham area:

“Dutch investors bought a substantial interest in local farming estates in and around Reedham & Cantley around 1912, notably with the intention of setting up a huge processing facility that we all now know as the sugar beet factory at Cantley.

The Dutch investors bought out whole farming estates, that is to say; large expanses of farm land made up of many individual tenanted farms that were nonetheless in the ownership of a single landlord/freeholder who had whole control and the ability to sell as one lot, and this adequately summed up the disposal of the Reedham Hall Estate.

..... a much grander new Reedham Hall had been erected nearby in the Victorian era, just to the north east of the village on the Halvergate Road, and this formed part of the disposal to the Dutch ..... This somewhat nouveau riche and presumptuous centre of the farm estate, was not of the slightest interest to the Dutch investors, and they demolished it in short order to be replaced by the huge Dutch barn that stands there today, as part and parcel of their overall beet processing operation. Since it is so closely similar to the other large barns in the area built around the same time, I am inclined to think that they all formed part of the same Dutch business plan ..... I very much doubt that these were constructed from locally produced brick. I think all the materials were likely to have been sourced much more cost effectively in bulk from elsewhere, but given that they were built in the 1920s, I have to say that I doubt the materials were bought in by wherry. It would have been much more efficient to have brought them in by rail as the rail connections throughout the subject area, were by then so much more comprehensive and efficient.”

The above is of peripheral interest to those researching Maud's history as she, of course, did carry building materials in her early years, and also carried sugar beet to the Cantley factory in the 1930s.

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## Talks about Maud

Sadly, we have not been able to talk face-to-face to any groups since a busy time at the beginning of March when we had three bookings within the space of 10 days. Nigel spoke to the Stalham Old Boys Association on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Linda spoke to Ingrebourne Probus in Essex on the 4<sup>th</sup>. The third talk was to Smallburgh & District WI on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The talks are important for several reasons. They educate others about wherries and they generate income in the shape of donations and new members.

Zoom meetings are now becoming popular. When we talk to a group via Zoom we still fulfil our aim of educating the public about wherries in general and Maud in particular, but do not generate speaker fees. Occasionally though we do recruit new members.

Recent Zoom talks have been to Gissing Residents and to South Walsham Bellringers.

We have bookings for two “normal” talks in November, to Norfolk Military Vehicle Group and the John Lewis Retirement Club. We are hopeful that they will be able to go ahead.



## An interesting survival

The Humber keel, Comrade, is operated by the Humber Keel & Sloop Preservation Society. Keels and wherries were both cargo vessels designed and built specifically for trade on our rivers and there are parallels and differences between the two vessels.

Comrade was built in 1923 some 24 years later than Maud and, unlike Maud, is of steel construction. Her hull length is 61ft-6ins (18.75m) and her beam 15ft-6ins (4.72m). That is not dissimilar to Maud's 60ft 6ins (18.44m) and 16ft-9ins (5.11m). There the similarity ends because Maud was built to carry 40 tons on shallow rivers of Norfolk and Suffolk while Comrade was built to carry 100 tons on the much deeper Humber between Wakefield and Hull.

Research has been unable to prove whether Comrade was built to sail but it is likely that she was first built as a lighter. In 1929 she was rigged for sailing but in 1933 an engine was fitted and Comrade continued to carry cargo under engine until 1975. It is not known when she was de-rigged.

Maud, of course, was built to sail and did so until around 1919. At various times after that she was fitted with two different engines or used as a dumb lighter. She was no longer in use by May Gurney by the early to mid 1960s.



Comrade went straight out of commercial use into a trust. She was purchased by the trust on December 16<sup>th</sup> 1974 and finally re-rigged for sailing on August 13<sup>th</sup> 1976. We are sure that you will want to read more about her voyages and other activities since restoration on the website <http://keelsandsloops.org.uk>.

The Humber Keel & Sloop Preservation Society also operates the sloop Amy Howson.



## Obituary



We are sad to report that our member Juliet Parke passed away after a short illness in March. She was 82. Her death was not Covid related.

Juliet was an enthusiastic member who sailed on Maud once only but attended lunches and meetings regularly with her son Jonathan who is also a member. When they came back from the trip in September 2016 Juliet said to Jonathan "I wish I'd done that before". Our thoughts are with Jonathan.

We send our condolences to Jonathan.



## Social Media, and Website



Our FACEBOOK page, [www.facebook.com/wherryMaudTrust](https://www.facebook.com/wherryMaudTrust) is updated regularly.

**flickr** Some details of our Flickr page are above, under Virtual Events. By the time you receive this newsletter we will have added more photos and perhaps another video.

Our website <https://www.wherrymaudtrust.org> normally carries a list of Upcoming Events. By the time you read this newsletter we intend to have updated that list to include one or two events we are planning as we gradually come out of Covid-19 lockdown.



## Contact us

- To book places, volunteer, give feedback or give suggestions for events, trustees can be contacted by email: [events@wherrymaudtrust.org](mailto:events@wherrymaudtrust.org)
- For membership matters please email [admin@wherrymaudtrust.org](mailto:admin@wherrymaudtrust.org).
- Alternatively text Linda on 07990 523131 or call 01379 677666. Messages can be left on the answerphone and Linda will return your call.

**Please note:** Trustees will always endeavour to keep to timetables of events but sailing is dependent on availability of skippers, weather conditions etc. However last-minute cancellations will be kept to a minimum.