

# Maud Matters

At the beginning of this very important year for Maud we welcome those new members who joined in 2023 and thank members who have been with us longer.

Your trustees intend to make 2024 a special year as we will be celebrating Maud's 125<sup>th</sup> year. Look out for the usual trips and a tour of the southern rivers as well as some new events leading up to August when Maud will be at Burgh Castle for major maintenance.

Without our faithful members Maud could not continue sailing. Thank you all. We wish you an enjoyable 2024.

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## Message from our Patron

**Sir Richard Jewson KCVO JP has sent us the following message:**



Sir Richard on board Maud, 2023. Photo: Neil Thomas

The main theme of my letter to you last summer was generosity. I spoke of the generosity of WMT members and trustees who give their time and money to the trust enabling it to maintain and sail Maud. They have to be inventive and hardworking and I congratulate them all on their devotion to the varied tasks they undertake.

It seems that the volunteers have increased their efforts further since July. The events season lasted until the end of October with trips on Maud, viewings of the Pop-Up Museum and other successful events

such as a games afternoon and quiz. Keen amateur photographers captured many unique moments while Maud was sailing, as you will see in some of the articles below.

A generous bequest enabled the trustees to purchase an oak tree for use in future restorations of Maud. In November the tree was felled and converted into planks in the woodland where it fell. Due to its size, it was impossible to take it to a sawmill. The planks were then put into local storage until they could be moved nearer to the Broads. Naturally volunteers could not help with the specialist work but teams of about eight volunteers had to stand by until they were needed to move the planks as they came off the saw. I was fortunate to be able to go into the woodland, view the work and talk to those volunteers. Three members who are film makers spent many hours on site producing footage of felling and sawing. This will be incorporated in a documentary of the whole process from standing tree to planks in Maud's hull.

Now we are all looking forward to a year of celebration in 2024 as it will be Maud's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A tour of the Broads is being planned, visiting places that were significant in Maud's working life. This will be a great opportunity to showcase Maud and her part in the transport history of our beautiful area.

I wish you all a successful year.

Wherry Maud Trust  
Reg. Charity No. 1161285

**Newsletter No. 17**  
**February 2024**



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## Norfolk Oak for a Norfolk Wherry - an update

Those of you who came to the Archive Meeting in November will have seen the video of “our” oak tree while it was still growing in woodland at East Tuddenham near Honingham. They will also have seen a selection of photos taken by our trustee Nigel Gutteridge of the felling of the tree and converting it into planks. The photos show that many members volunteered to stand out in the cold and sometimes wet conditions waiting for each plank to be sawn and then helping to lift it onto a trailer. We estimate that volunteers spent at least 180 man hours on site.

Once the tree was felled Mike Barnes took the opportunity to determine its age using tree-ring dating or dendrochronology – each ring in a tree’s cross section represents one year of growth. Mike counted 183 rings, meaning that the acorn must have germinated between 1840 and 1845.

Some of that oak will be used this summer for repairs to Maud’s hull below the waterline. The Buttifant team from Swallowtail Boatyard have been engaged to replace two planks on the starboard side adjacent to the “hog”. For the layman the hog is Maud’s backbone that runs all the way from bows to stern.



Sawing in progress. Photo: Nigel Gutteridge

On site at East Tuddenham were the members of our film team: Graeme Taplin flying his drone and Roger Hewins and Nicki Darrell on the ground using more traditional photographic equipment.

In August the Buttifant team will travel to Burgh Castle to do the boatbuilding work, because the yard there is the only one with a dock and hoist large enough for Maud to be lifted. While Maud is on the yard for repair the film team will record planks being shaped and inserted into Maud’s hull. The on-site filming will then be complete and the team will put it all together to create a video of the story of the oak, from tree to wherry.

## Associate Membership

In this, our first full year since the pandemic, we gained 97 new members and our total is now 350. Each year understandably we do lose a few people. In the current economic circumstances, there are always some who are forced to reduce the number of charities to which they subscribe. Our doors are always open to welcome people back. By keeping our subscription low we hope to be affordable to most and to give all our members the possibility of sailing on Maud or attending another of our events each year.

As you may already be aware, membership confers the right to book trips. There is no charge for Maud trips while other wherry trusts charge a minimum of £45 for a day trip. Instead, we suggest to our members that they put an appropriate donation in the box when they sail. Donations fund the running costs of the trip and contribute to the cost of overheads, enabling us to keep Maud sailing.

## Defibrillator

In January we have taken delivery of an AED, a defibrillator that we will carry on board. We hope never to have to use it but feel that it is a necessary precaution to take. This is another purchase using the money received from our recent legacy.



## Education - our members fulfilling one of our charitable aims

We have two members who are telling young people about Maud and wherries in general. They have both contributed short articles and photos for this newsletter.



### Broadland High

In our summer 2023 newsletter you may remember that we had a visitor from Broadland High, where they have recently reintroduced a house system using the names of some of the remaining Norfolk wherries as house names. That visitor was Simon Laycock and he became a member on the spot.



Mural: Simon Laycock. Maud is the wherry at bottom right.

Simon is the Vice Principal of Broadland High. He has been in touch to say: “The students seem to have really taken to the new house system and have shown a real interest in each of the wherries. Sports day at the end of last year was a fantastic event, with banners and costumes in house colours. Over the last few months we have run special house assemblies to explain a bit about each of the wherries, to celebrate student achievements and promote enrichment activities. I’m proud to say that Maud led the house point tally for much of last term, but Hathor currently has a very narrow lead over us! Over the Spring and Summer terms we hope to give some students the opportunity to visit one or more of the wherries and report back to the rest of their house.”

### Art Workshops in schools

In the last couple of years Sara Edwards and her husband Graham have become members of WMT. Sara is a descendant of the Yaxley family who were wherry skippers. She is an artist specialising in bright contemporary landscapes and below is an example of her work. Yes, the wherry in the centre is Maud.

Sara puts on Art Workshops in her studio at Framingham Earl and has recently been going into schools to run workshops to teach children drawing and painting in acrylics. She tries hard to spread the word about wherries. Sara shows the children one of her pictures and asks if they know the special name for the boats with a big black sail. There are some great guesses but very few know the term “wherry”. Sadly, she reports that very few adults respond correctly to that question. Sara goes on to explain what wherries were used for. She asks questions to find out what they know about the Broads and if they know where the scene is set. In Sara’s own words “It is a small part of the Art Workshop but I feel an important link with Norfolk Heritage.”



Maud, centre: Sara Edwards



## Maud's journey back from the Yare at the end of July

As predicted in our last newsletter the return from the southern rivers to the Bure took place in two stages: Thorpe to Cantley on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July and Cantley to Ludham on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July.

On both of the above trips Jeff Stamps was skipper, helped by trainee skippers Eamon Green and Mal Duffield. The trip from Thorpe to Cantley was pleasant but the trip from Cantley across Breydon and up the Bure to Womack was remarkable. The wind was fair and Maud was able to sail nearly all the way, including raising just after the bridges in Great Yarmouth. Linda was very disappointed to have missed it. Here are some excerpts from emails sent after the trip. *The first is from Debbie Meynell:*

“.....a magical day. It was my first trip on Maud and initially I was a little daunted about such a long day on the water, what would I do? But there wasn't a dull moment—either something interesting, exciting or even calming was happening all the time and it went in a flash.

There were many special moments but for me seeing a Bittern in flight, gracefully going past the boat ... was just unbelievable. Watching Simon using the quant to take Maud round the head of the island on Womack water, such a skill. Bacon butties were gorgeous, and how Nicki managed to make them and coffees on the go was astounding.

Everyone, crew and members, were friendly and shared information about the broads and beautiful Maud. Such a special day. Thank you.”

*And the second extract from Simon Crutchley's email:*

“Well, what an amazing trip...first of all seeing the Cantley sugar beet factory close up, such a serene trip down the river towards Breydon, going past all the various mills in various conditions, and being told by one of the crew the history of the rivers and the names of the inlets and the work each mill did .... absolutely enthralling. The bird life along the river with little Egrets, Swans and waders in all sizes both in the air and skimming the water's edge. Members were allowed to steer the boat along the river, a treat for some as it was their first trip on the Maud. Going down alongside the Acle Straight was really weird for me, as for 23 years I was on that road, and the serene quietness of the river with the traffic noise was unusual ...When we got to Breydon, this was an absolute dream for me, as the last time I had gone on a boat trip across Breydon the weather was atrocious and the only dry person was the Captain under his cover! This day, the weather was stunning, sails were full, and we could see flocks of Golden Plover, Curlews by the dozen, a few Knots and Sanderlings on the mud flats unworried about this huge black sail going past them....and not forgetting the bacon sarnies and coffee and cake that was coming from the hatch in a continuous run.



Crossing Breydon. Photo: Adrian Wincup

Passing at the back of Caister Road we saw families and kids waving madly as we passed through Yarmouth whilst they were busy crabbing. We went under Acle Bridge and the Reedham ferry was open with people waving from every vantage point... Thank you all for the chance to be on this trip, it was on my Bucket list since I joined the Maud trust.”

Our grateful thanks to Debbie and Simon for sending their memories of the trip.

## Maud's trips from August until the end of October

Our first trip in August was on the 7<sup>th</sup>. It was planned to be a morning trip, returning at 2pm but it ran late and did not arrive back at base until around 4pm. Nevertheless it was enjoyed by all including two or three people who had not sailed on Maud before.



After the 19 August trip. Photo: Linda Pargeter

On Saturday 5 August we were obliged to cancel our visit to Stokesby Fete due to Storm Antoni and a terrible weather forecast. Later we heard that only the beer tent survived the torrential rain that day.

A family of four new members, Claire and Henry and their two children, had joined when a friend of theirs told them about the wherry. They enjoyed a trip to Ranworth on 19 August, Henry accompanying the children in the morning and Claire swapping with him on the return from Ranworth to Womack. Henry collected them from Womack and so does not appear in this end-of-day photo.

A first for Wherry Maud Trust was taking Maud to South Walsham Broad for a joint event with the Fairhaven Garden Trust over the bank holiday weekend. The staff there were extremely welcoming and we put up the Pop-Up Museum gazebo there for the three days – see under Pop-Up Museum events below. That entailed short trips to and from South Walsham on 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August.

The weather was changeable that weekend. Although the skies threatened rain at times, as evidenced by this photo, we were very fortunate that it held off, only raining on one day just after we had packed up the museum.



Maud at Fairhaven (South Walsham inner broad). Photo: Roger Hewins



We had a busy September, starting with a routine day trip on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> and a sail up to Horning and back with Albion on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup>. We then headed up the Ant for a tour lasting until the end of the month.

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September Peter Johnson was our skipper for the trip up the Bure and Ant to How Hill. On that occasion we had four new members on board. We had arranged to have Maud open at How Hill on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> for Heritage Open Days. We were moored next to the pleasure wherry Hathor and the two wherries attracted a lot of visitors. The weather was sunny which always helps.

An early morning trip with Neil Thomas as skipper on Sunday 17 September enabled us to arrive at the Museum of the Broads at Stalham in time to erect the Pop-Up and be open for visitors by around 11am. This was again as part of the Heritage Open Days.

On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, with only crew and four members on board, Maud sailed from the museum at Stalham to Sutton Staithe where our member Rob Frearson owns the boatyard. He welcomed us warmly, we were able to moor against the quay heading and on the following morning unload the Pop-Up museum.

Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> September saw the end of our tour of the River Ant with our sail back to Womack taking most of that day. We had a good sail around Barton and *Simon Crutchley* took lots of photos of boats and wildlife (two of his pictures, below).



Sailing from base at Womack resumed. On October 7<sup>th</sup> there was a pleasant day trip to Ranworth with two new members on board.

A further members' trip took place on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October with Neil Thomas as skipper.



We had plans to continue sailing in November but the weather had other ideas, and so 28<sup>th</sup> October was Maud's last trip of 2023.

*Hilary Edmondson* took this superb photo to commemorate the trip.



## Pop-Up Museum events in August and September



*Photo: Roger Hewins*

The Pop-Up was open to visitors for three days running over the August Bank Holiday weekend at the Fairhaven Staithe at South Walsham. Maud arrived at midday on the Saturday, and, as predicted, the water was rather shallow so it was not considered sensible to try and moor Maud to the bank. The gazebo and displays were quickly unloaded into the tender and ferried ashore to be set up. The Pop-Up was in a pretty spot by the thatched wet boatshed and near the refreshment hut. Boat trips would depart from the staithe at regular intervals and so we were almost guaranteed a good footfall.

During the weekend we enrolled one new member, sold £74 worth of merchandise and received £24 in donations. This was made possible by a very small but enthusiastic band of volunteers without whom we could not have attended. Bank holidays are not the best time to ask for help.

At How Hill on the 16<sup>th</sup> September we had an exceptional day. Visitors were encouraged to stay around and spend time looking at Maud and Hathor because they could also enjoy coffee and home-made cakes sold at the Wherry Stop Refreshment Centre staffed by Wherry Yacht Charter volunteers. We must park our gazebo next to theirs on future occasions!



*Photo: Simon Crutchley*

During the day we gained two new members, sold more than £100 worth of merchandise and had donations of £55 in our donation boxes.

The Heritage Open Day at the Museum of the Broads on the following day was successful in a different way. Although we did not recruit any new members or sell a lot of merchandise we had interesting conversations with visitors and local people and made some useful contacts.

While at the museum we had agreed to have Maud open on two further dates, Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September. By that time strong winds and rain had made it impossible to have the gazebo erected for the Pop-Up. Instead the curator allowed us to put up the contents of the Pop-Up in their entrance hall. For most of the time we managed to allow those who wished to do so to look over Maud, although we were slightly hampered by the weather and having few volunteers on site. In spite of that we gained three new members and received donations of £114 plus two paintings. One of the paintings is a large oil by G Colman Green, the author of the 1953 book *The Norfolk Wherry*. We would be happy to show it to any member who is interested in the artist, who studied and was a friend of Sir Alfred Munnings. At present we have decided to keep it in the Wherry Maud Trust collection. The other was a small oil of a Thames barge. It will be for sale at our Art Show in May.

Moving on, we had Maud open for visitors at Sutton Staithe with the Pop-Up Museum alongside on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September. That was to be the last viewing in 2023. Only five volunteers were present, and it was only possible to staff both the Pop-Up and Maud because they were so close together. In future we will try to have at least six people so that each can have a minimum of a short break to eat their sandwiches and have a coffee. We had a steady stream of visitors and were pleased to gain four new members, to sell a few items and receive a modest amount of donations.

The Pop-Up has been in storage since the end of September. The trustees continue to seek opportunities to take the museum to events both by the river and at other venues in 2024.

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## Social Events in October and November

For the first time we held a Pick 'N Mix social event at Upton Village Hall. It was to be board games in the afternoon, followed by teas, coffees and biscuits and then a quiz with fish and chips to follow. Members could choose whether to attend all parts or just the quiz. This turned out to be a bad choice of date as there were several quizzes during October and some members reported that they were "quizzed out". In spite of that clash 29 people took part in the quiz.

We would appreciate learning from members if that type of event would be well supported in future. **All alternative suggestions for other autumn/winter social events will be considered by the trustees.**

The November Archive Afternoon was popular. Claire Penstone-Smith talked to us about the staithe of Barton Turf, Irstead and Neatishead. Most of the audience knew at least one of those staithe but many were only known to the amateur local historians among us. We will look for the remains of those staithe when Maud takes us to Barton Broad in future, perhaps during excursions in the tender.

Claire showed one photo of a wherry that she would love to identify (see right). If you can spot any clues as to the name or location please do get in touch with Linda. Do look closely at the winch. It is entirely different to Maud's winch.





## Plans for 2024

We plan to re-start trips as soon as possible. Weather permitting, we may have had a first trip of the year before you read this newsletter.

Once our plans for other events are finalised Alison Prendergast, our new Publicity Coordinator, will be looking at our schedule to assess the best way to publicise each event.

Regular trips should begin at the end of March or in early April and our usual members' meeting will be on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April – please put that date in your diaries now.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of May we will be having our Artists & Makers show at Ranworth. Hilary Fett has agreed to curate the show for another year and, with her input, we are confident that it will be as successful as in 2023.

Two visits to Maud at Womack have been booked for May and dates for the Pop Up Museum are under consideration. Do get in touch if you know of any local events where we could take the museum.

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## Maud's volunteers for non-sailing events

**If you have not volunteered with Wherry Maud Trust until now there will be lots of different ways to help in 2024. You do not have to make a regular commitment but help at peak times is very much appreciated.**

### Raising money through social media

Is there a member who would be willing to assess fundraising opportunities sent to us by Give as you live? None of the trustees has expertise in this area and would welcome some help.

### Taking photos

Several of our social events recently have not been recorded in photographs. The trustees are often too involved in the proceedings to use their cameras. Are there a couple of members who would be willing to fill that gap?

### Major maintenance in August/September

Why not spend some of your holiday having a very enjoyable time with a nice bunch of people at Burgh Castle? We will need a number of volunteers to give practical help with emptying the hold, cleaning and painting etc while Maud is out of the water. It is a beautiful spot with views across Halvergate and a pub next door. You will receive an invitation nearer the time.

### Other ways to help

Showing people over Maud when we have viewings  
Staffing the Pop-Up Museum  
Helping with social events  
Joining our baking team  
Working on a project for the Trust Archive

Once again, our trustees extend their grateful thanks to all the volunteers who make our trust such a successful one.

If you are not sure whether your name is on one or all of our volunteer lists please do email Linda [admin@wherrymaudtrust.org](mailto:admin@wherrymaudtrust.org) and put Volunteering for Maud in the subject line.

### Congratulations to our crew member Dom

We are happy to report that Dom D'Alessandro's wife Chiara gave birth to their first child, a little girl called Gemma, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July last year. Dom sent in this photo of Gemma:

Belated congratulations to you both. We look forward to meeting Gemma.



## Maud's crew and their Training during the second half of 2023

While the weather was still relatively good Training Coordinator Jeff organised some sail training days for the crew. There are naturally differences in how different skippers handle the boat, so it is essential for our crew to have practice sailing with each.

On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October Neil Thomas, supported by Nigel as mate, took out a small group of trainees, and on the 21<sup>st</sup> October Jimmy James, took out a slightly larger mixed group consisting of some experienced crew, trainees and one newbie, Trevor Ellis, who has now joined our crew training programme. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> October Neil Case took five people out for the day. Unfortunately, bad weather prevented the fourth training day from taking place.



People wishing to train as crew must realise that a certain level of physical strength and stamina are necessary on a large wooden boat like Maud. In the photo (left) you can see Simon P and Jeff demonstrating raising sail with two people on the winch.

In 2024 a further six crew members will be either renewing their First Aid qualification or taking it for the first time. Two of the renewals are booked for late January. We aim to have all crew qualified shortly.

A further Man Overboard course with an external trainer is being organised by Jeff for the spring when the water is slightly warmer.

The trustees are extremely grateful to Jeff for continuing to shoulder the responsibility for training.

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## Obituaries

### Sue Day

Sadly, our member Sue Day died in the hospice at Beccles on Sunday 22 October. At her funeral and during the subsequent wake in Oulton Broad we discovered many details of Sue's life that we had not known previously. Her great love in life was horses and she was well-known in the horse world.

She had taken part in eventing in her early days and later became chair of the Horseboating Society, set up in 2001 to preserve and promote horseboating on the inland waterways. At one point she owned four horses of her own. Just before her death she re-homed her beloved "Bilbo Baggins", one of the last surviving UK canal horses, to Horse Sense Wirral, where he will be looked after for the rest of his life. Sue arrived at the crematorium in style in a hearse drawn by four beautiful grey horses.

Sue's last trip on Maud took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September.

### Bill Horne

Few members will have met Bill as he only became a member in 2022 after his friend, David Timson, gave him a gift membership. When he took out the membership David explained to us that he wanted Bill to experience Maud while he was well enough to do so. Bill came on his first trip with David on 31 July that year and had one further trip, from Surlingham up to Norwich, in July 2023.

**David wrote this tribute to his friend.** "Bill came to Tibenham over 6 years ago with his family and made a big impact on many people with his friendship and helping hand to those who needed it. An outgoing gregarious friend who it is my pleasure to have known. We still miss him, a huge loss."



## How to come Sailing on Maud

Under Upcoming Events on our WEBSITE [wherrymaudtrust.org](http://wherrymaudtrust.org) you will find a list of trips that we have planned. **Please do look at the list and book early for trips to avoid disappointment.**

Where places are still available a couple of weeks before the trip, we will fill them by emailing members.

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

## Talks about Maud

We have only two talks firmly booked for 2024 although there has been contact with two more groups. Talks are listed on our website under Learning More. There may be one near you so do look at the list.

Please do give our contact details to any of your clubs or societies who have not yet booked a talk about Maud. Our talks are popular with a wide variety of clubs and societies from those with specific interests such as archaeology and classic vehicles, to Rotary and Probus Clubs, U3A groups and Women's Institutes. In the past we have travelled farther afield but now only accept bookings from Suffolk and Norfolk.

Email Linda on [admin@wherrymaudtrust.org](mailto:admin@wherrymaudtrust.org) with details and she will make contact.

## Trustees

As we have had so many new members since our last newsletter, we will repeat the details of our trustees. We currently have four trustees. They are very "hands-on" and you will meet them when they are crewing on Maud and at other events. They are Malcolm Duffield who was elected as a trustee in March 2022, and three of the original trustees who continue to serve: Neil Thomas, Nigel Gutteridge and Linda Pargeter.

Nigel  
(from WMT  
archive)



Malcolm  
(by Nigel  
Gutteridge)



Linda  
(from WMT  
archive)



Neil  
(by Simon  
Crutchley)



## Social Media

Have you looked at our YouTube channel recently? <https://www.youtube.com/@wherrymaudtrust>

We recommend the video of Maud's return to the Bure on the 28<sup>th</sup> July "Crossing Breydon Water/Instant Films" and the film released only a month ago "Maud's First Voyage" that shows the preparations for Maud's first sail at her recommissioning party on Wroxham Broad 25 years ago.

If you would like to share your videos on the channel, then please Direct Message our Facebook Page or email [admin@wherrymaudtrust.org](mailto:admin@wherrymaudtrust.org).



Our FACEBOOK page, [www.facebook.com/wherryMaudTrust](http://www.facebook.com/wherryMaudTrust), is updated regularly but due to malicious posting on our page we have had to restrict posting only to admins of the page. If you have photos/videos that you wish to post on the page, please Direct Message the page and an administrator will make the arrangements to post on your behalf.

Our other WMT social media account is: <https://www.instagram.com/wherrymaudtrust> and of course our website has regular updates: <https://wherrymaudtrust.org/>

## 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.



Maud on Barton. Photo: Simon Crutchley