

# Golden Chaffcutter Thames Sailing Barge Trust



Issue 151

[www.bargetrust.org](http://www.bargetrust.org)

April 2024

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**Raising the rigging on Centaur and Pudge—Picture by John Guiver  
Possibly the first time both barges have raised the rigging at the same time.**

## From the Helm

I must start my last 'From the Helm' with a huge 'thank you' to everyone who gave up their Easter weekend to help with raising the gear on both Pudge and Centaur. It was a job well done and, assisted by helpful weather was completed in just two long days. We wanted to get both barges rigged before Peter Boss's funeral to honour a dear friend and longtime supporter of the Trust who died at the end of February.

Summer and the sailing season are not far away now....even though the weather does not appear to have read the same brief! Bookings for charters are

already coming along well but the public sails are proving a little slow which is often the way in the early part of the season. The non-sailing activities are starting up for the summer too, as the first Children's Day for 11 April is nearly fully booked; there are two scouts visits this month; and we are already looking ahead to the Open Days for the May Bank Holidays on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> May. Thanks in advance to everyone who is giving up time to help out at these events.

On Saturday 27 April we have the AGM followed by the Fitting Out Supper in the evening

when we shall be presenting the remaining awards, deferred from the Laying Up Supper. I look forward to seeing some of you at one (or both) of these events.

It's been an honour to be Chairman of the Thames Sailing Barge Trust. I shall continue to help out where possible and enjoy sailing as much as I can! Thank you for your support and encouragement!

*Penny Baines  
Chairman*



**Trust Open Days 5th & 6th May**

# Dates for your Diary



## Working Parties

The Thursday Group are continuing to work on Pudge throughout the year.

Anyone interested in getting

involved please contact John Rayment on 07587 141054. No specific skills needed.

## Centaur Weekend Working Party

April  
20th & 21st

## Events

### Fitting Out Supper

Saturday 27th April  
Maldon Little Ship Club

### Annual General Meeting

Saturday 27th April

Maldon Little Ship Club  
(See page 11)

## Children's Days

Thursdays 11th April, 30th May, 1st and 15th

## Open Days

5th & 6th May, 2nd June and 21st September

## Art Exhibition and Sale

2nd October to 22nd October  
Maeldune Heritage Centre, Maldon  
(Full details to follow)

# Membership Information

Unfortunately the Trust has lost around 20 members who for one reason or another have not renewed their membership. If you are aware of anyone who would like to support us then please give them our contact details.

The Trust welcomes the following new members:

**Ian Montgomery of Thorngumbold, East Yorks**

**Timothy Jarvis of Burnham on Crouch**

The Trust has a life membership category and we are happy for members to upgrade their membership at anytime. If any members would like to consider upgrading then please contact the membership secretary.

If you have any questions about membership, please contact the membership secretary, John Rayment at: 25 Repertor Drive, Maldon, Essex CM9 6FQ.

Tel: 07587 141054 or at: [membership@bargetrust.org](mailto:membership@bargetrust.org).

Membership rates for new members as from 1st January 2024:

Full Member: £37.50 pa  
Pre April 2018 Concession: £30  
Joint Membership £55 pa  
Joint Concession £45 pa  
Corporate Membership £360 pa  
Life Membership £600  
(Concession [65+] £400)  
Joint Life Membership £900  
(Concession [65+] £600)

*John Rayment*

## Annual General Meeting

**Saturday 27th April**  
**3:00 pm**

### Agenda on page 11

**All Members welcome**

**Thames Sailing Barge Trust Educational Resources**

One of the objectives of the Thames Sailing Barge Trust is to educate members of the public including children about the Thames sailing barges and provide resources to schools and other organisations which they can use to help develop skills.

On our website you will find the learning resources we have developed and used in local schools and with local groups. They have been designed by local primary school teachers and are in line with the National Curriculum for Primary Schools (2014).

We hold Children's Activity Days during the sailing season where children are welcomed on-board to learn about the barges and take part in a variety of activities, on and below deck. The Trust are also happy for local groups to come and explore our sailing barges.

As well as lesson plans we have resources you are welcome to book to help deliver the lessons on Tugs & Pulleys and Water Resistance. The Trust are also willing to provide someone to come and talk to children.

**Resources available**

- English KS1
- Geography KS2
- History KS2
- Science UKS2
- Local History
- Activity Book

All resources are Free to use

For more information visit  
[www.bargetrust.org/educational-resources](http://www.bargetrust.org/educational-resources)  
or email [education@bargetrust.org](mailto:education@bargetrust.org)

The Thames Sailing Barge Trust is a registered charity number 1102840.  
A company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales no. 04726591  
Registered Address: Handful House, Walden Close, Great Totham, Maldon, Essex CM9 8JJ

## 100 Club

The results for the September/October and November/December draws of the 100 Club are below.

### January/February

**1st David Orchard £50**  
**2nd Edward Rose £20**  
**3rd Gareth Jones £10**

### March/April

**1st Brie Back £50**  
**2nd Mick Nolan £20**  
**3rd Gill Cotter £10**

If you would like to become one of the Club then please contact Terry O'Sullivan on 01621 788276 who will be happy to provide you with details.

Shares in the Club cost £1 and can be purchased in multiples of 12.

Thank you for your support by helping the Trust raise funds in this way.

*Terry O'Sullivan*

## 2024 Barge Match Dates

The dates for 2024's Barge Matches have been announced and these are as follows.

1st June—**Medway Match**

8th June—**Southend Match**

15th June **Thames Match**

29th June **Pin Mill Match**

13th July **Blackwater Match**

10th August **Swale Match**

14th September—**Colne Match**

The Trust will be looking to have representation at these matches and details of sailing opportunities will be published on our website .

## Letter to the Editor

I was interested (and delighted) to see my 1953 photo of *Centaur* appearing on the back page of the latest "Golden Chaffcutter". I thought it might interest our members to hear something of the provenance of the photo. I took this photo of *Centaur* sometime during the summer of that year when she was berthed at the South Quay of Whitstable Harbour waiting to discharge a cargo of grain.

Born in Whitstable in November 1942, by the age of ten I was armed with an old Brownie Box Camera and I and one or two friends used to spend many hours on the quaysides of the harbour, all of us with a particular love of the local (and visiting) barges. In those days Daniels Bros had three sailing barges (no engines) and these were *Ardwina*, *Colonia* and *Savoy*. Daniels also had the auxiliary *Kathleen* and the motor barges *Azima* and *Vicunia*. Also regarded as local were the three barges owned by Cremers of Faversham, then known as the Faversham Freightage Co. These were the sailormen *Esther* and *Pretoria* and the auxiliary stumpy *Edith*. The tenth "local" was the auxiliary *Major*, owned by Anderson.

Visiting barges were common, although

mainly auxiliary or motor barges. When *Centaur* arrived one day with grain it was not long before the camera came into use to take this shot. If I'd known then that the barge would still be active seventy-one years later, I would have probably taken more indeed, I wish I had. There are some interesting features in the photo. Firstly, the name panel displaying her name on the bow rail is clearly not Cann's original but was the one she had all the time she was in the ownership of Francis and Gilders of Colchester. (In actual fact, by 1953 F&G barges were controlled by the LRTCo but still flew the familiar gold and purple bob of Francis and Gilders). Secondly, her mizzen was reduced in size owing to the loss or shortening of the mizzen sprit, resulting in a rather squat look. What the sail looked like when set I don't know, but as far as I know she continued with that same mizzen rig right up until she was stripped of her gear to become a lighter in 1955. In the background is the harbour's East Quay with Brett's asphalt plant over on the right. On the left of the photo, you can just see the stern of *Colonia* at the North Quay where she has just finished discharging a grain cargo. The motor barge lying outside *Centaur* is the *Eureso*, owned

by the Greenhithe Lighterage Co, whose two motor barges were regular visitors to the harbour. *Eureso* was a small round sterned barge (not an ex-sailorman). The barge lying astern of *Centaur*, with her topmast struck is Wakeley's auxiliary *P.A.M.*, in with sand for Bretts.

*Centaur's* visit turned out to be a bit of a puzzle for us as, although barges came and went with freights of grain, discharging wheat, barley, oats or maize at the North quay, *Centaur* stayed in her berth for a good three weeks, presumably "on demurrage" before moving across to the grain elevator. This sometimes happened when a cargo was not needed straight away or sometimes when it had been re-sold, in that case involving a different destination. However, we never found out what the reason for the delay was on this occasion.

Other visiting pure sailing barges in the mid-1950s were *Anglia* (Paul's), *May* (Cranfields), *Felix* (just purchased from Cranfields by Laphorn, but still under sail alone), *Verona* and *Veravia* (both Shruballs' and quite regular visitors), *George Smeed* (F & G) and in 1954,

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

*Nelson* and *Westmoreland* came in light to refit for the barge matches that year. The latter barge continued to come in every year around April for that purpose until around 1960. Following the loss of Daniels last sailing barge, *Colonia*, in October 1956, things went a bit quiet on the sailorman front until Cranfield's *Venture* made two vis-

its under sail alone in November 1959 and August 1960 respectively. This barge became the last but one to trade under sail alone, finishing around April 1961.

Last of all was *Cambria*, which brought cargoes of grain to Whitstable in November 1963, October 1966 and August 1968. On 31 August 1968 I watched *Cambria* leave Whitstable har-

bour for the last time, unaware at the time that I was witnessing an historic event - the departure of the last vessel to bring a cargo into Whitstable under sail alone, thus bringing to a close the involvement of sail in the harbour's 136-year history.

Barry Jackson.  
20.2.2024

## Peter Boss

Peter's connections and involvement with sailing barges in general and TBSC/TSBT in particular were deep and permanent and with the help of Pat the following is something of an account of that involvement.

In 1969 Peter and Pat were invited on a charter aboard *Marjorie* with skipper Jimmy Lawrence in command. Peter and Jimmy hit it off immediately and Peter was appointed mate for the week and I guess he had got the bug!

In 1973 he joined the then Thames Barge Sailing Club but as yet not taking an active role as he had already developed many barge connections such as with Bob Wells and Mick Connell on *Beatrice Maud*, Alan Reekie on *Ironsides* and Pat Law of Felix, in addition he sailed for Albert Groom on several of what was known and the Albert Groom fleet. A great deal of sailing was also aboard *Vigilant* where he and Pat became good friends with Mick and Margie Lungley. Indeed, a purchase of a third share of the *Vig* was at one time under consideration but did not materialise.

A chance meeting with Barrie Lawrence, then Club Commodore, resulted in Peter being persuaded to take an active role and he began sailing as a regular mate which he was lucky enough to do with some of the retired ex professional skippers, in particular Vic Wadhams who was the Club Skipper.

There were no MCA regulations in those days, one being judged by one's peers. Came the day when *Centaur* was due to make passage from Hoo to Silvertown for blocking and the skipper did not appear Vic said to Peter, "you had better take her then" which he did

without a problem. When Marine Coast-guard Regulations were introduced, Peter was given his skippers ticket under Grandfathers rights which he was always very proud of.

I first met Peter in about 1979 when we were both serving on the general committee, he being responsible for crewing arrangements as I recall. His deep and lasting commitment to the Club



was quickly evident to me. He later became Rear Commodore, a post he held for some 18 years with the overall responsibility for the maintenance and general running of our barges. and he applied his organisational skills and talents to the full. I remember the occasional crisis meeting at 4a Rose Road with Barrie Lawrence in attendance when we were unsure of the way ahead - Peter providing clear and positive contributions as always.

By the early 80's it was clear that major

restoration work was needed on *Centaur* but options for funding opportunities such as Heritage Lottery Fund did not exist so Peter set about producing plans and costings for the work which was undertaken at Pin Mill by the late Joe Dunnett in conjunction with a team from the membership who attend on alternate weekends to further the work according to the famed "clip board" which he had thoughtfully prepared with tasks for all according to ability. Indeed Peter earned the title of Captain Clip Board well before the project was completed. This team included skilled members such as Robert Dudley and Tim Jepson which meant that a portion of the shipwright work was handled in house along with the more basic tasks of crud clearing, moving timbers and the many general essential maintenance tasks. Throughout the project Peter was supported by Pat who in addition to her other tasks ensured that we were all fed and watered (the sausages are well remembered Pat!)

Over a long period the project was worked on and delivered in time for *Centaur's* centenary in 1985, a huge testament to Peter's forward planning and outright determination.

There were difficult times to overcome such as the occasion when Peter, attending a senior management meeting at Fords, received a note from his clerk which simply read "your barge is sinking". Thankfully, assistance was to hand but it demonstrates the all-consuming responsibilities of the project.

By 1985 *Centaur* was sailed to Maldon in time for centenary celebrations. Peter skippered her to a number of Match successes in that and the following seasons.

Not content to rest on his laurels he turned his attention to Pudge again plans were drawn up and costings prepared for essential work to be carried out, this time by the late Rick Cardy over at Maylandsea with Peter once again leading support teams at weekends.

I am quite clear that we can say that neither Centaur nor Pudge would be in commission and sailing now were it not for Peter's truly massive efforts over many years in respect of a cause so close to his heart.

Whilst all of this was going on Peter continued to plan sailing seasons, find crews, and attend to the day to day needs of our barges. He introduced a third hand scheme, which of course continues today, and took a goodly share of skippering duties himself, always encouraging our members and guests to get involved whilst the barge was underway. All in all, a total commitment.

Peter continued to support working winter parties down at the quay, often taking projects home to work on in his garage.

When the time came to come ashore as we say he had been elected a Vice President and was subsequently appointed our President, a post he richly deserved and held until recently when he himself decided that the time was right to stand down.

In summary it is right to say that the organisation we have today owes so much to our friend lying here and I thank him for all of his endeavours over the years and salute his memory.

Brian Dawson  
President

## Barbara Cole Donation of Photographs

The Trust has been donated a collection of photographs and documents from the family of the late Barbara Cole who passed away at the age of 93 on the 8th June 2023.

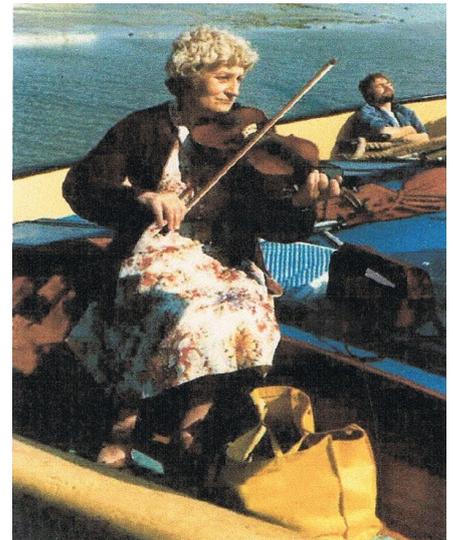
Barbara sailed regularly with the Club and kept diaries and pictures of her trips which happened in the mid 80's.

Barbara was also a musician and sailed with the musicians Bob and Mary Bryan

and Roy Emmins.

We would like to thank Maggie Webb for arranging for the Trust to have these photographs and other documents which will be placed in our Archive.

Picture of Barbara on Centaur in May 1987



## David Kempton 1938—2024



It is with great sadness that we report the death on the 4<sup>th</sup> March of David Kempton a member of the Trust since 2011. David was for many years a regular team member of the Thursday Group

which looks after Pudge, travelling regularly from his home in Loughton.

David was a keen sailor and after he had retired, he came back to Maldon where he had previously sailed with the Maldon Yacht Club, to join the Trust and help with the maintenance of Pudge.

A quiet man, David was a conscientious worker and a valued member of the group. He also helped at Open Days and when we were holding events in London would come along and support the Trust. David spent much of his working life working at the Palace of Westminster and was in charge of furnishings which included being involved with the State Opening of Parliament. He also used to help the Speaker of the House, Betty Boothroyd with her Christmas tree. David also helped in the setting up of embassies around the world.

David supported his daughter Anneke

in learning to sail and she also became a member of the Trust in 2013. She and David enjoyed sailing trips on Pudge and Centaur.

Unfortunately, over recent years David had dementia and was unable to join us on the Quay. However, his family have told us that he always enjoyed seeing the Golden Chaffcutter when it arrived on his doorstep and was kept up to date with what the Trust was doing.

David's family have kindly arranged for donations taken at his funeral to be passed to the Trust and we have thanked them for this generous thought. Myself and John Harriss attended the funeral on behalf of the Trust and the Trust's ends its sincere condolences to all his family.

John Rayment

## Pudge Update

It never fails to surprise me how the job list for the barges never seems to get any shorter, despite the countless hours donated by our amazing volunteers.

Since the last newsletter, the winter cover has come off, thankfully surviving the seemingly endless bouts of strong wind this winter.

Much of the painting has been completed. The engine has been serviced and recommissioned. The sails are dressed and the sailing gear has been rigged and wound up into place. The seating in the saloon has been tweaked and the mate's scuttle repaired and replaced. Canvas covers have been sewn for our deck equipment, and lots of other tasks diligently undertaken too.

With the new bobs flying proudly in place at the top of the masts, there's a great sense of achievement and a feeling that we're almost ready to enjoy another summer of adventure.

Then comes the realisation that we still need to get both barges through the dry dock, and the legal paperwork all

needs to be submitted for the year. All the life-saving equipment must be aboard. The decks need painting. The wheel needs reinstalling, the handrails need to go back, and so the new list grows and grows...

It's here I turn my thoughts and thanks to the great late Peter Boss. Thankfully, Peter documented exactly what we have to do to the barges each winter, and how to do it - priceless piece of guidance and a comfort blanket to help us maintain the very high standards adopted by our predecessors.

As a mark of respect for all the years Peter was a steady hand at the helm, we have followed the tradition of dulling down some of the brightwork, by adding a bit of black paint into their normal colours. This is a custom of old used to mark the passing of an owner or skipper, and very fitting for Peter, without whom, Centaur and Pudge would probably not have survived to be enjoyed today. Thank you for everything, Peter. You'll be missed by many.

*Mick Nolan*



**Picture—Pudge's gear being raised**

## New Trainees Run The Rigging For The First Time

Many of our new sailing barge trainees joined in on the rigging out weekend. Despite some having never been on a barge under sail; their enthusiasm led them to be willing and capable hands. All present soon got the hang of splicing, whipping and seizing.

The befuddling network of ropes, wires, and sails that make up a barge's rigging didn't stop them from diving in

and getting their hands dirty. I remember being completely baffled the first time I saw the woven mess of ropes on deck during rigging out, a lot of it still confuses me! It was wonderful to witness our new trainees listen and learn from the skippers; and watch the cogs turn as they pictured the task we were setting out to achieve. Later in the day, they soon discovered that the hardest cogs to turn were those of the windlass to raise the mast.

The beauty of boats and sailing is the everlasting opportunity to learn. One of the great secrets of being an excellent skipper was revealed during the weekend. On Friday evening we were informed by one of our skippers that lifting a barge's rigging was an easy task and that he could do it with just one

hand. The next day, they realised this was tall tales over a tall pint as they sweated and puffed over the winch handles. Once the mainmast was set, the mizzen was rigged to the topsail sheet which led to a mast case winch. Now here came our Herculean skipper to fly through the task, exclaiming "I said I'd wind up the mast one-handed! I just never said which mast!".

All in all, it was a successful weekend with many new skills learned. Our trainees are even eager to hone their newfound knowledge helping other barges rig out, like the Cambria. The future looks bright for these new additions to our team, and I am sure they are excited to reap the benefits of their hard work on their training weekend next month.

*Alanna Cameron*



## Centaur Update

Sail dressing is always a job that I hate, it can only really be done in March when the weather is suitable, warm with a moderate breeze low humidity and no cars parked where we want to work. Our working weekend in early March had ideal weather conditions and the bit of the Hythe that we wanted to use was amazingly clear of cars so a barrier was put up and then we waited for volunteers to turn up. Slowly people arrived and eventually there was enough of us to man handle the mainsail across to the Hythe and



***Centaur and Pudge's rigging being raised in unison***

stretch it out on the concrete. By the end of the day, we had done all of Centaur's four tan sails and part of Pudge's mainsail, a good day's work. Our sail dressing always interests the general public who are walking on the Hythe and we are constantly answering questions about why we do it and what is the stuff we are putting on the sails, it is quite nice to stop for a few minutes to talk to them as it gives you a rest from pushing a broom around which is quite hard work after a while.

We managed to get both barge boats ashore this year thanks to a very high tide, they almost floated over the edge of the concrete. Centaur's boat which we built 26 years ago in the lighter, has needed some work to the timber gunwale capping for a while, but there has never been time to devote to it due to other more pressing jobs. With the boat ashore and a fairly light work load on Centaur this winter it was an ideal time to remove the gunwale capping and make up patterns from the remains.

We had some Iroko timber left from the saddle chock replacement a couple of

years ago and with a new blade in the table saw we were able to produce planks suitable for the job. These were shaped up using the patterns and fitted to the boat, a job that took quite a few hours of work, new rubbing strakes will also be fitted.

It was very sad to hear of the passing of Peter Boss. He devoted much time and energy to the barge club and later the Trust. I worked with him for some 20 years on the Centaur before he had to transfer his efforts to the Pudge as she was going to Maylandsea for Rick and Kevin to carry out a very extensive rebuild. Our first major job on Centaur being the complete rebuild of the cabin top to replace a broken deck beam and rotted deck planking, this was in 1987 and a few years later Peter organised the supply of several tons of pitch pine timber so we could redeck her. Peter was a great organiser and always had his clip board handy with all the job notes written down for the work party, as a result he got dubbed "captain clipboard" by one of our members. By 1982 our winter berthing at the London docks was coming to an end as the

docks closed, so Peter arranged to get the barges brought to Maldon, the lighter being towed round in stages by Peter Carey who owned a motor barge, Maldon has been our permanent base ever since and it has to be said a vast improvement on the London docks during our winter layup period.

We had a working weekend prior to Easter and made a start on the rigging up. The new forestay was slipped over the mast, a rather messy job as the stockholm tar was not fully set. The mainsail was lifted over

from the lighter and pulled into position over the end of the sprit, and shackled to the mast and the brails rove, not easy when you cannot see what is happening under the heavy sail.

Over Easter we bent on the topsail had a check round and then hove up the mast, followed by winding up the topmast. There were still a few hours of daylight left so the foresail was bent on and the mizzen mast stepped and the sail bent on. Doing the rigging out over 2 weekends certainly helps ease the work load and gives more time to check things over, there is always the unsettled weather around Easter to contend with as well.

We now have 2 rigged barges. the next stage is to go into the dry dock for a scrub and paint up ready for the start of the season.

*Tim Jepson*

## Sail Repair Workshop

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of February the TSBT was privileged to have a visit from Steve Hall from North Sea Sails. He headed over to the barges in Maldon from his sail loft in Tollesbury to deliver a lesson in sail repair to trust skippers, mates, third hands and those on the training scheme. Steve learnt his trade from

Jim Lawrence one of the best and most respected traditional sailmakers of recent times. Though he eventually left the company Jim founded to set up his own business, many people believe that Steve is the true inheritor of Jim's skill, attention to detail and traditional techniques. Subsequently, many of the

sails that the current fleet of barges are using have been made by or worked on by Steve.

However, as many of his contemporaries are ceasing to make barge sails or - as is with the case with James Lawrence Sailmakers - businesses are sold

to larger firms that can't cater to the specifics and idiosyncrasies of a barge rig, Steve is concerned that he won't be able to make new sails and keep up with repairing old ones. Preferring to dedicate his time and expertise to producing new sails, Steve is keen to teach the current barge crews the skills needed to repair and maintain their own sails, something sailors of the past would have had to have known.

The masterclass took place on Pudge's forehatch, under her winter cover, that kept out the wind, but let through enough light for us to thread our needles. It was well attended, with over 20 people turning up to pick up new skills and re-sharpen those half forgotten. Some people brought their own equipment, but after raiding every rigging

box we could find and with Alanna Cameron lending more from the Pioneer Trust, everyone was ready to begin.

First Steve showed us how to stitch a 'sailmaker's herringbone', this allows you to mend a small tear in a sail quickly and avoid it becoming bigger, the proverbial stitch in time. Everyone was then given a piece of fabric from an old sail that had suffered UV damage and been stored in the lighter for many years and no longer usable for repairs or covers. With gusto we reached for our knives and slashed a 'tear' to repair. We helped each other to remember what we had just been shown, with the calm and encouraging eye of Steve watching over us and offering the odd word of helpful advice

when needed.

Next, we were shown how to sew a patch over a larger hole and again got the chance to try it for ourselves. Finally, after spotting that the foresail boltrope gaiter had some chaffing, Steve showed us how to repair this. All in all, it was a great day, not only was it fun and we all learnt something new, but it was inspiring to have a true craftsman pass on their knowledge. We all left with a piece of old cloth, sufficiently repaired, to remind us how to maintain our barges' sails in the best condition and keep us sailing into the future.

*Chris Martin*

## Ken Beard

The Trust were informed in early March of the death of Ken Beard who joined the Trust in 1976 and became a Life Member.

Brian Dawson our President remembers

sailing with him some 20 years back. He was usually one of the first to respond to any appeals for help Brian recalls. Ken lived on the South Coast.

Ken kindly left a legacy of £1000 to the Trust in his will and the Trustees have passed on their condolences and thanks to his family.

## John Bannister Barge Master

The Trust has recently received a legacy from the estate of Mrs. Christine Emmorey. In her will she mentioned that the legacy was on behalf of a John Bannister who was a bargeman. Unfortunately we had no other information but some research with the help of Geoff Pugh a genealogist and the SSBR has helped us identify who John Bannister was.

John Bannister  
Barge Master  
Born 1851 Southchurch, Essex  
Died 1928 Orsett, Essex

He was the Great, Great Grandfather of Christine and the son of John and Sophia Bannister (Benson) and eldest child of 11 children (8 brothers and 3 sisters). Along with John, two of his brothers were also Bargemen. Their father another John Bannister was a Lighterman/Bargeman.

The 1915 Merchant Navy Crew List shows that he was the Master of the barge IREX at the age of 63. IREX reg no 94577 - Registered Roch-

ester built by Gill & Co and launched in October 1889. Her registered tonnage was 44 and she carried 100 tons of cement. Built for William Morgan of Halling then A.P.C.M. Dimensions 76'4 x 17'7 x 5'9  
PLA No. 13455  
1900 - 1932 operated by Associated Portland Cement  
1945 was a houseboat and register closed

The Merchant Navy List also shows that in 1915 he was mate on DOROTHY with William Bannister (Master) his brother.

DOROTHY reg no 110116 - Registered London built by H Shrubsall of Limehouse and launched in May in 1899 Initially owned by H Wills of Gravesend, then the Tollhurst Cement Co., B.P.C.M, A.P.C.M  
Dimensions 80'0 x 17'6 x 5'6

PLA No. 11365  
1912 - 1920 operated by Tolhurst Cement Works  
Sold October 1930 to W. Cory & Sons Ltd for £180. 1933 owned by The Stuart Sand & Gravel Co. Thamesmouth. 1946 Broken up by HM Government after being used as a minespotter.

*John Rayment*



**Irex Nov. 1931**  
**R Stimson, J & M Clarkson Collection**

# Annual General Meeting

The 20th Annual General Meeting of the Thames Sailing Barge Trust and TSBT Sailing & Charters Ltd will take place on Saturday 27th April 2024 at Maldon Little Ship Club.

The notice for the AGM is on page 11 along with a Form of Proxy and a Proposal Form for any member who may

like to join the Trust Committee.

During the meeting a talk will be given regarding changes in the way the Trust is managed and this will be a good opportunity for members to ask questions.

Minutes of the last AGM and Accounts

for the financial year will be circulated via email to those members for whom we have an email address. Other members can obtain copies by telephoning John Rayment on 07587 141054

## Chairman's Report

2023 was a very successful season for the Thames Sailing Barge Trust. We have benefitted from having two barges sailing for the first time for five years and Pudge had a pretty full programme of charters as people wanted to try out the new facilities. They must have liked what they saw as many are booked again for this season too. Centaur still has her loyal supporters as well with some charterers opting for the more traditional shared cabin experience which she offers.

I can now report that the Pudge Project is complete. The Heritage Lottery Fund has released the last of our grant as we have completed all the required community outcomes. Having said that we are still making adjustments as we learn to live and sail with her but they now fall into the category of ongoing maintenance. She is a barge we can be proud of and thanks to everyone who has given skill, time and effort (I could have said blood, sweat and tears!) into making her a barge fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It was really good to be able to join in with the barge matches again. Centaur only sailed in the Blackwater match but Pudge competed in the first four – Medway, Blackwater, Pin Mill and Thames – and even picked up some silverware for her efforts. Overall for the season's racing Pudge came 4<sup>th</sup> and Centaur 12<sup>th</sup> out of 15. It sets a high standard for this coming year - good luck!

But it wasn't just sailing, as open days, children's days, the pop up shop, outside talks and social events all contributed to a very successful year. Thank you to everyone who has given time to sail or help out at these events and well done! Over the year we have benefited from a number of bequests from members who have remembered us in

their wills. We also were honoured to receive a Restoration Award from the National Transport Trust along with a donation of £1000. Apart from the financial assistance, such awards raise our profile nationally and recognise the hard work and professionalism of our volunteers and shipwrights. All these various factors come together to fund and publicise the Trust. Our Treasurer, Keith Foster, will present the full accounts to the meeting.

Knowing how long these things take, and with the experience we have gained from the Pudge Project, we are now turning our sights to an even older 'lady' as we consider how we can best preserve Centaur. Knowing what we do of the timescales involved in such projects we are starting to investigate the funding process. We are pleased that Chris Martin, one of our new skippers, has agreed to head up an enthusiastic team to run this project. It is early days yet but we will keep you informed of progress!

Sailorman has been needing some attention this year and must go into dry dock for her 5 year survey. However events have conspired against us. It is so long since she was last moved, the mud has built up making her berth unusable for any other barge. We need to dredge while she is away so Pudge or Centaur can come alongside when she is in dry dock. We originally planned to do this in August but it has now been put in the programme for 2024. She is not part of the sailing programme but she is a vital part of our working operations being part workshop part store.

In my report last year I boldly promised plans to share responsibilities more widely! I have been on a steep learning curve and discovered these

things take longer to put into action than I thought, even when there is so much will to make it happen! However with the advice of a past committee member, Chris Harvey, the support of the Trustees and the committee, and the willing participation of many members, we've started the wheels turning. David Gibson will give a short presentation to the AGM on the plans for the way forward. We have two new Trustees standing for election, Chris Martin and Alan Coday, and Alanna Cameroon, who is now in charge of the training scheme, is joining us on committee. It's all part of the process and we welcome their involvement.

I am standing down as Chairman and Trustee at this Annual General Meeting and would like to thank my fellow Trustees and Committee members for their support throughout my time, but I also wish to thank all the skippers, mates, third hands and trainees who actually sail the barges as well as the membership for their encouragement and friendship. I couldn't have done it without you all!! It's been an honour to be Chairman of the Thames Sailing Barge Trust and I will enjoy continuing to help out where I can and sailing as much as possible. Thank you!

Penny Baines  
Chairman

# 2024 Sailing Programme

Date	Barge	Nights on Board	Boarding	Return	Description of Cruise	Price per person
<b>May</b>						
17th to 19th	Pudge	2 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Maldon Sunday Late Evening	Weekend Cruise in Company with Centaur	£225 per person
17th to 19th	Centaur	2 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Maldon Sunday Late Evening	Weekend Cruise in Company with Pudge	£180 per person
24th to 27th	Pudge	3 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Maldon Monday Evening	Bank Holiday Weekend Cruise	£320 per person
30th May to 2nd June	Pudge	3 nights	Queenborough Thursday Evening	Queenborough Sunday Late Evening	Medway Barge Match	£320 per person
<b>June</b>						
6th to 9th	Pudge	3 nights	Queenborough Thursday Evening	Queenborough Sunday Evening	Southend Barge Match	£320 per person
7th to 9th	Centaur	2 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Maldon Sunday Afternoon	Weekend Cruise	£180 per person
10th to 13th	Pudge	3 nights	Queenborough Monday Middy	Queenborough Thursday Afternoon	Tower Bridge Experience	£340 per person
13th to 16th	Pudge	3 nights	Queenborough Thursday Evening	Queenborough Sunday Evening	Thames Barge Match	£320 per person
14th to 16th	Centaur	2 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Maldon Sunday Evening	Weekend Cruise	£180 per person
26th to 30th	Centaur	4 nights	Maldon Wednesday Evening	Maldon Sunday Evening	Pin Mill Barge Match	£350 per person
26th to 30th	Pudge	4 nights	Maldon Wednesday Evening	Maldon Sunday Evening	Pin Mill Barge Match	£400 per person
<b>July</b>						
5th to 7th	Centaur	2 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Maldon Sunday Afternoon	Weekend Cruise	£180 per person
12th to 14th	Pudge	2 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Maldon Sunday Evening	Blackwater Barge Match and Sunday Rematch	£225 per person
26th to 28th	Centaur	2 nights	Maldon Friday Evening	Malden Sunday Evening	Weekend Cruise	£180 per person
<b>Full details and booking of each cruise is available on the Trust's website at <a href="http://www.bargetrust.org">www.bargetrust.org</a></b>						

# Annual General Meeting Notice

**Thames Sailing Barge Trust & TSBT Sailing & Charters Ltd**

**20<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Agenda**

**To be held on Saturday 27th April 2024**

**Maldon Little Ship Club, Hythe, Maldon, Essex**

**Commencing at 3:00 pm**

1. Welcome from Penny Baines, Trustee and Chairman for the Meeting
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the 19th Annual General Meeting held on the 29th April 2023 (these will be emailed to members for who we have emails Those without can obtain a copy by contacting John Rayment on 07587 141054)
4. Matters Arising from the of the 19th Annual General Meeting
5. Presentation and adoption of Annual Report by Penny Baines (Chairman & Trustee)
6. Appointment of new Chairman
7. Presentation and adoption of annual accounts for Thames Sailing Barge Trust and TSBT Sailing & Charters Ltd to 31st October 2023 by Keith Foster, Treasurer (these will be emailed to members for whom we have emails. Those without can obtain a copy by contacting John Rayment on 07587 141054)
8. The following Trustees will be retiring at the AGM in line with the Trust’s rotation rules. Penny Baines, David Gibson & Lee Shepherd. David Gibson is happy to be re-elected.
9. Election of New Trustees
10. To propose and elect members of the management committee (see voting form below)
11. Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts
12. Presentation on new Governance Structure of the Trust
13. Any Other Business

***Attendance at the meeting, is open to all Trust members.***

.....  
**Form of Proxy**

If appropriate, please complete, detach and despatch to TSBT, Handsel House, Walden Close, Gt Totham, Essex CM9 8UJ  
I .....a Trust member **will not** be attending the Annual General Meetings on the  
26th April 2024 and therefore appoint ..... or in his/her absence, the Secretary to vote  
on my behalf on any resolutions put to the above meetings.

Signed.....Dated.....  
.....

Proposal for becoming a member of the management committee of the Thames Sailing Barge Trust

I..... would like to be considered for election as a member of the management  
committee for the Thames Sailing Barge Trust.

(Members can elect for any of the committee positions)

Registered Address: Thames Sailing Barge Trust, Handsel House, Walden Close, Great Totham, Maldon, Essex CM9 8UJ

Registered Charity Number 1102840; A company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales no. 04726591

Visit our web sites  
[www.bargetrust.org](http://www.bargetrust.org) &  
[www.thepudgeproject.com](http://www.thepudgeproject.com)

Newsletter produced and edited by John Rayment. Your comments are welcomed about the newsletter. Email or write to the Editor or Trust.

Deadline date for articles for the next issue should be sent to John Rayment by the 5th June 2024



*A new recruit to the Weekend Working Party,  
Amos Martin helping with dressing Centaur's sails - Picture by Chris Martin*

**CONTACTS**

**Chairman— Penny Baines**  
[chairman@bargetrust.org](mailto:chairman@bargetrust.org)

**Secretary—David Gibson**  
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**Treasurers—Keith Foster**  
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**Membership—John Rayment**  
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**Charter & Sailing Secretary—David Gibson**  
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**Newsletter—John Rayment**  
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**100 Club—Terry O'Sullivan**  
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**Training Managers—Mick Nolan & Alanna Cameron**  
[training@bargetrust.org](mailto:training@bargetrust.org)

**Working Volunteers Liaison Thursday Group—John Rayment**  
07587 141054

**Weekend Working Group—Tim Jepson**  
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