

TRAINEE BLOG: BELINDA CREE

AUGUST 2020

SUMMER CONTINUES

I was mis-sold the “English summertime” - it’s hot here! Too hot!

It’s been a strange month for me, I’ve been primarily working onboard preparing the boat for some potential day sails later in the month. The current restrictions mean that it is possible for us to sail with groups of people, usually all from the one social bubble, as during a day-sail: everyone is on deck all the time (out of doors); and it’s possible to socially distance most of the day.



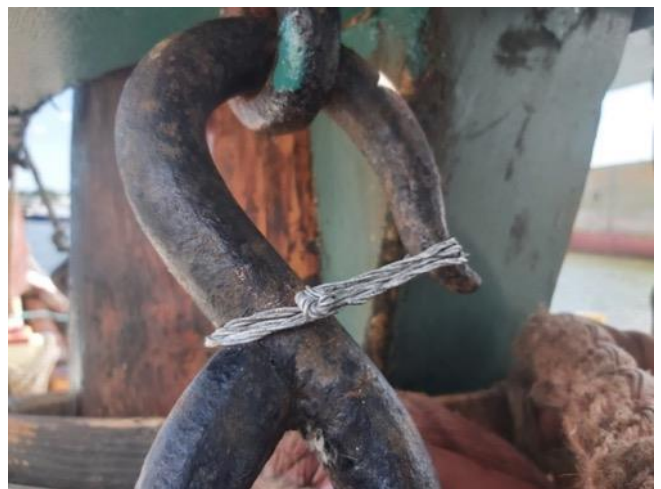
Replacing the lifelines that go around the tops of the bulwarks. I kept this old splice close by for inspiration!



This is SOME of the paint I chipped off the engine plate in the middle of the deck. Then I treated the rust and repainted.



I was quite interested in this, swinging the compass in Lake Lothing. (Felt like the boat equivalent of going donuts in a car park)



Mousing a hook. This seizing wire can prevent the hook from bouncing out of its spot. Quick and easy to do!



An example of the paintwork we've been doing on the topsides.



Unfortunately this roller has seized – it's part of the original fishing gear.



One coat of varnish on the main hoodway steps – still need to put the metal plates back on.



With the possibility of some day-sails in mind, I decided to give the name at the helm a little makeover. It didn't take long but it did make the whole area look a bit better.



Caulking the deck with Mike & Io.
Here we're doing a few short seams around some pieces of the deck that Isaac recently replaced. I enjoyed getting to pass on some of the tips I'd learnt at IBTC last year.



A before and after of the benches in the barge. You might be able to see that even the walls were lighter – I cleaned them too. This wasn't the finished article but that was the progress after one very dusty afternoon.



Oiling the shrouds with a Stockholm tar/linseed oil mix.



Painting the seizings on the shrouds



Io, bravely tallowing the main mast!



Mike, tallowing the mizzen mast



Too keen with the chipping hammer



Cleaning the barge, with a new power washer.



A small thing, but I refurbished the tea tray

As you can see it's been quite a mix, but mainly sanding, painting and cleaning. But I've also got to do some more heritage-specific things like repairing the ratlines, and oiling the shrouds aloft.

One of our current projects is putting a concrete-mix on the surface of the barge. So, this month I've spent a good couple of days lifting bricks and sheet metal off the barge, cleaning it, brushing it - and then eventually taking a blowtorch to it in an attempt to get the world's-thickest-paint-stain off!

Unfortunately, the evening before our first day sail with customers I got hit up the face with a rope and hurt my neck when my head snapped back. It was a rough 48 hours, I was sick and feeling very out of it so I went to hospital where the doctor confirmed I had a severe concussion, but there were no new major bleeds on my brain, so an overall win. However, I've already suffered a traumatic brain injury before, giving me post-concussion syndrome. Hitting your head once isn't recommend, hitting it twice is even less ideal.

So, it was quite stressful to feel like I was back in square 1 again in terms of my recovery from that, and the concussion made my PCS symptoms much more apparent and difficult to manage. It's been just over 2 weeks though and I feel like I'm almost back to 'normal' - but my neck is very sore.

I wouldn't usually go into detail about that kind of thing, but I think it's important to include - because it gives a lot of weight to the next bit. We've just had another day sail, and this one went off without a hitch. Between dislocating my kneecap and getting a concussion - I have really got to make use of the limited sailing we've got to do this season.

So this meant a lot to me, and I felt really comfortable the whole time - leading the guests in raising the mainsail was a highlight. I also loved talking to them about the boat, and even talking through the buoyage we could see on the way back to some of the casual-sailors on board.

Hopefully we'll have another 4 day-sails in the pipeline for September!
But in the meantime, here's some photos from Friday 28th



At least 2 people commented how happy I looked, which makes me wonder how I come across to them the rest of the time...



Day sails mean guests can stay on deck all day, and sit in their social bubbles. We also have a good supply of hand sanitiser on the go



Chatting with the guests after lunch



Flaking the new main topsail



So clean and shiny! This was the first time raising this topsail – I don't think the stitching will look this white for very long. It fits perfectly – but we've identified so tweaks to make before it's next outing.

< Letting my family know I'd had a good day. That's 'I love you' in British Sign Language