

## August 2020 blog

To kick the month off, I had a bamboo lug split on me whilst commuting to the quay for some supplies.

I didn't even know where to begin with replacing a piece of bamboo. So I decided that wadding out the cap fitting with twine and a partial seizing with a bit on nylon line. So far this has worked nicely and hopefully should prove a solid repair for the meanwhile.





Our main mission of the month was to find our way to Pin Mill on the Orwell river in order to scrub off on the blocks.

Our sail up there took us past Felixstowe dock and Harwich. I like to think that maybe a merchant sailor could appreciate the moment an engineless barge sailed into one of the longest standing commercial ports. It definitely crossed my mind.

There was another penny drop moment for me as we tacked up the river and had a conflict on whether to keep the jib flying as we set our nav lights. The sail that followed was exceptionally peaceful and welcomed after our long day up the wallet. Dropping our anchor under sail, we all enjoyed the sail under night sky up the Orwell.



The next morning we had to face the mud. After making our way over to Pin Mill we started to dig away at all of the mud on the blocks. The mud was like slurry and was near impossible to shovel conveniently.

We scraped the mud aside and brushed up the floor clean. We then took the barge over to the blocks with the help of a local work boat to get us into place. In the next tide we scraped, scrubbed and painted the bottom in one tide, finishing the rest where the blocks were resting on the next tide. We were clean and slippery.



Our sail back was swift. Sailing fully canvased with winds I had no idea barges could sail in. This was an educational sail for me. After we sailed onto our mooring back at colliers reach, the Thistle and Hydrogen greeted us back as they left.



I spent a weekend on the Hardy, a 1910 Cutter built on the river Itchen. Our mission was to race the Swale match, however this race was cancelled and we were pinned in our anchorage. Although the trip was not a waste.

Our first stop was to anchor at the Pie Fleet. I took this opportunity to land at Brightlingsea so I could have a look around and the Pioneer Sailing Trust shed. A natural symptom to this was meeting my fellow trainee once more and having a catch up. It was also just a hint of luck that we were both setting off to the Swale the following morning, so we had a chance to watch them shoot right past us – we caught up with them again after they switched their motor off.

We had to deal with some pretty fierce winds in our anchorages, however we did manage to squeeze in a fair bit of sailing around the edges.

My largest achievement of this week was learning and earning the trust to operate the paraffin stove independently. Earning the trust was admittedly the hardest part. The Hardy is a very sudden jump back to a past reality as we are all relying on the cutting edge of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which is why we do it anyway.

