

March - April

26th March

This week we lowered down the mainmast, so we could do a bit more painting on spots that needed it, slosed the rigging with boiled linseed oil and tar, and bent on the mainsail and topsail, including setting up the brails for the mainsail.



Great view from the topmast!



Helped ex-SHTP Tom at TS Rigging with one of the rolling vangs for Blue Mermaid— did a Liverpool splice (top left), served over it, and did a wire seizing on one of the eyes that was too big (top right and bottom).



Had the chance to use the braid-on-braid splicing skills I learnt at IBTC, what our instructor Rob taught us—‘Just follow the instructions and don’t think about it too hard’—still holds veeery true. It’s black magic.

27th March

Yesterday we finished setting everything up to raise the mainmast, reeving halyards, tacks, sheets etc, and we wound her up at the end of the day!

Exciting to be winding up for (hopefully) the last time before sailing.



28th March

Date set for day skipper practical!

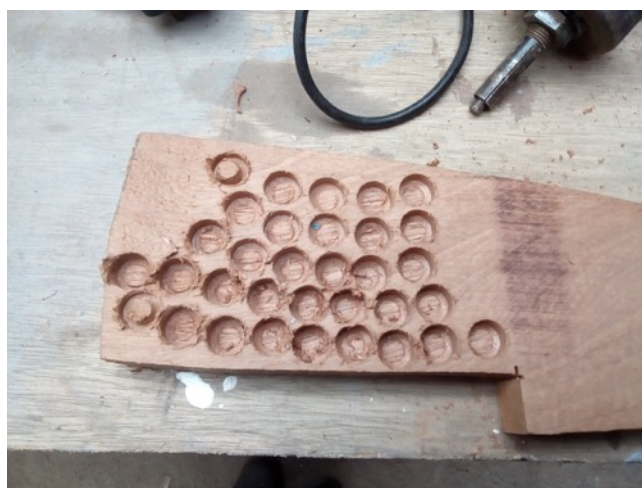
Spent most of the day painting/preparing to paint more sunshine yellow

We had a visit from a representative of the Worshipful Company of Weavers, who are interested in making up traditional flax fabric for sails, it didn't happen quite in time for our first set, but it's a possibility for the future. Would be interesting to see what they would be like to work with.

3rd April

Blue Mermaid is VERY yellow now, me, Oli, and volunteer Dan spent all day painting and got loads done.

I learnt how *not* to mix 2-pack paint, an important life lesson, and we're edging closer to having her ready to sail.



Left: Thwart knees in progress

Right: Drilling plugs

Yesterday I went to Stebben's yard to help Stretch with the barge boat. Finished off the thwart knees, screwed them in, plugged the holes, and sanded them down nice and smooth. So exciting to get to use some of my new woodworking skills!

14th April

Just finished Day Skipper practical and my theory exams.

Day Skipper went well, I passed, and managed to go the whole week without crashing into anything or running aground so a *definite* win.

Right: The little yacht I spent 5 days on for my day skipper practical.





Left: Steering us past the Ross Revenge, aka Radio Caroline in the Blackwater.

It was super fun too, we anchored up near a little group of seals chilling on a sandbank for one night, and had some proper weather, a nice force 7. It wasn't as bumpy as I expected for the size of the boat but it still meant we didn't quite get to Ipswich.