

Jenna March blog

Moved to Maldon! The first few weeks have been quite a mixture. I met all the TS Rigging crew, they're on the same yard as Sea-Change Sailing Trust, and they're lovely and incredibly knowledgeable, so that's been great. Was also introduced to Jet, the yard's resident dog.



Caption: Such a charmer

Sea-Change also has a smack called *Sallie*, and we moved her down from her mooring and tied her up next to *Blue Mermaid*. That meant I could start work cleaning her up and painting her.



We took *Blue Mermaid's* topsail down to James Lawrence Sailmakers as well, to get the Maldon Little Ship Club's logo painted on it, had a little look around the sail loft, and got to meet Jim Lawrence himself, not at the sailmakers, but we popped in to visit him at home and had a nice little chat over cups of tea. He offered to teach me some sail repair techniques too, as I missed the sailmaking week at college.

Sallie sitting on the mud next to Blue Mermaid



Caption: James Lawrence sailmakers

We dropped in on Pioneer Sailing Trust, so I got to see Josephine and all the work she's doing over there. Then we visited one of the churches in Brightlingsea that has a memorial to people who've died at sea. Unfortunately it was locked, but it was still impressive from the outside, and the graveyard was absolutely beautiful in the late afternoon sun.



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This week, I've been making fenders for *Blue Mermaid*, starting off with drilling holes in tyres with a hole saw, then splicing lanyards onto them and whipping the ends.

The rope for the fenders was so tightly twisted that splicing it felt closer to wire splicing than rope splicing. The first few I did were pretty messy, but once I started using wire splicing techniques, being very conscious of the twist of the strands and using a mallet to fair it up as I went along, everything got much better!



Caption: Blue Mermaid soaking up the sun

We also visited Heybridge Basin, where the Trust's little sailing dinghies are. They needed to be moved from the pontoon where they were into storage, so I got to paddle one across, towing another one behind me. Managed to get away with dry feet but a wet bum.

This week the new first mate Oli started. I oiled the shrouds and any other servings I could find on *Blue Mermaid* and *Sallie* with a mix of Stockholm tar and boiled linseed oil.

We bent on the mizzen! As *Blue Mermaid* is all shiny and new, this was her first ever sail to be raised.



[Oli went climbing so we could lower the topmast in preparation for lowering down the mainmast.]

Apart from all that, I've been doing whippings wherever needed, greasing blocks, lots of varnishing, made some boathooks, almost finished knitting a jumper in my spare time, and started a Day Skipper theory course.

