

SHTP2 Blog - January 2020, Jess Clay.

# Back to Business.

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The Christmas break was a whistle-stop tour of the UK, visiting friends and family - so much fun (and food!) I was glad to get back to sleepy Lowestoft for a rest but it was straight back to business!

It has been an incredibly busy month, completing many short courses at IBTC from spar making and planking to lofting and pattern making. These 2-3 day sessions have been packed with useful and fascinating information and practical hands-on learning.

We've also been out and about on various group trips (#SHTP2onTour) and social events including the College Quiz! I'm so grateful to be part of this team, and with only a couple of weeks left until we go our separate ways to our placements, I think we've really made the most of our time together this month. We've worked hard and played hard, I've hardly stopped laughing!

The first session of the year was spar making. Maynard explained how to turn a square timber into a consistently round pole using a 'spar gauge' and the 7:10:7" ratio - this divides the four sides into eight, and then into 16 etc. until you're left with a satisfyingly round pole. The same technique







can be applied to make any spar, from a broom handle to a bowsprit or a mast! We made our own gauges and then used them to make boat hooks.

Next up was the much anticipated power tool day! I think Rob booked out pretty much everything with a plug attached from the stores and after talking through safe operating procedures we all got to have a go, from an angle grinder to an electric hand plane, discussing appropriate usage and the pro's and con's along the way. Later we took a trip to the machine shop to have a go on the big toys! The radial arm saw was a personal favourite.

After the excitement of power tool day, we took it back down a notch and got to grips with the humble adze. We had a variety of different adzes to try (who knew there were so many?) It didn't take long to get the hang of them and once we did, they were surprisingly effective at removing material. By lunchtime The Cabin floor was ankle deep in wood chippings and frankly, wielding an adze for 4 hours was quite enough. So we tidied up and commandeered a project dinghy ready for the pattern making session the following day. The little dinghy needs a lot of work before she'll be back on the water. Restoring her is out of the scope of our course, but she's

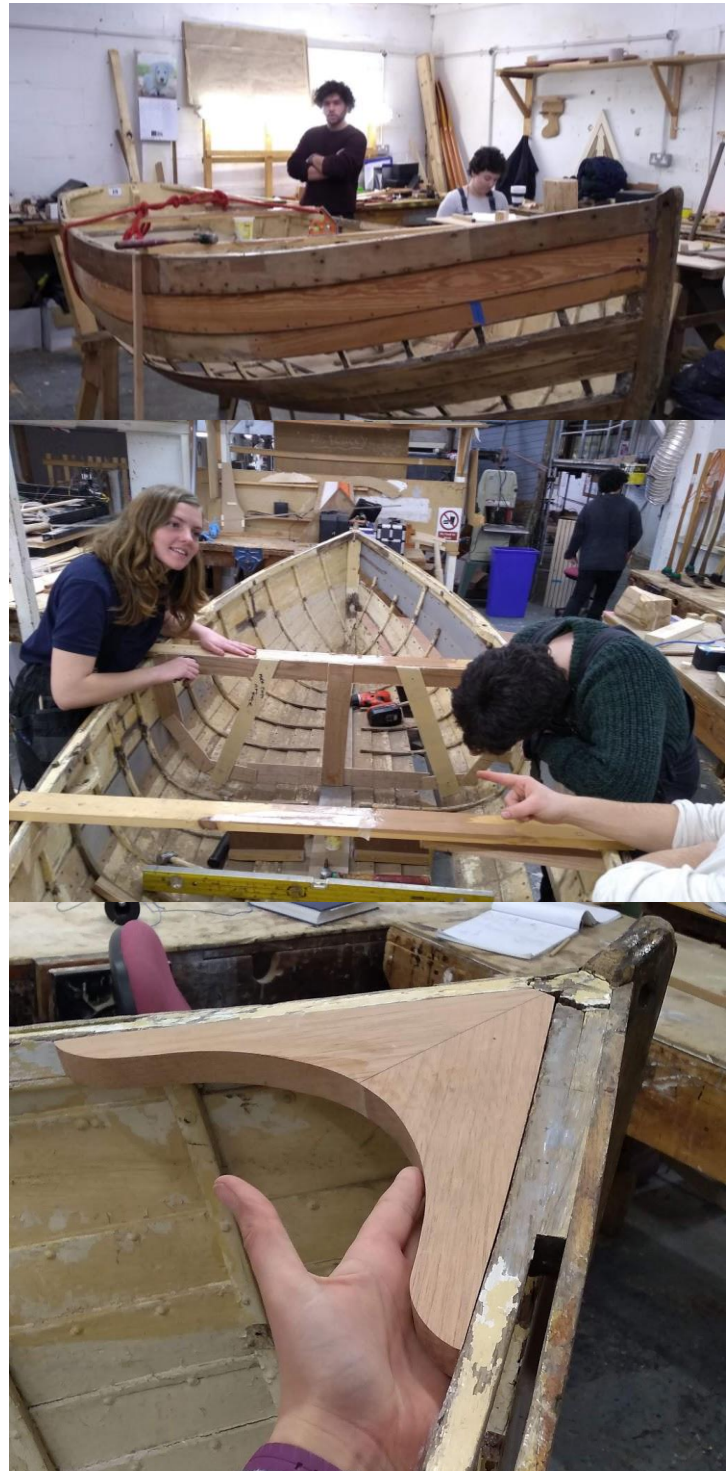


perfect for us to practice new skills on, and while she's no Tall Ship, I've grown quite fond of her!

We started by reattaching the keel, garboards and hog, which were all loose and caused the boat to flex. Then we could start creating the patterns for some bulkheads. The patterns were made from scraps of plywood, hot-glued together to fit loosely inside the boat. We made spiling boards and used them to transfer the internal shape of the clinker planks onto the pattern. The pattern was then removed from the boat and laid onto the bulkhead material, and using the spiling boards again, the lines were redrawn and the resulting shape was cut out with a jigsaw. The bulkhead fit nicely into the boat!

We made a floor piece for the bow out of thicker wood. This was a more complex shape as the bow is much more bevelled. Maynard showed us how to find the angles of the bevels, using an adjustable bevel gauge (made from old hacksaw blades!) and a bevel board.

In my spare time, I made the dinghy a new breast hook, starting with a plywood template, then scarphing and gluing hardwood so that the grain ran the correct way and I used the beveling techniques to fit it snugly into place. I'm pretty happy with it.

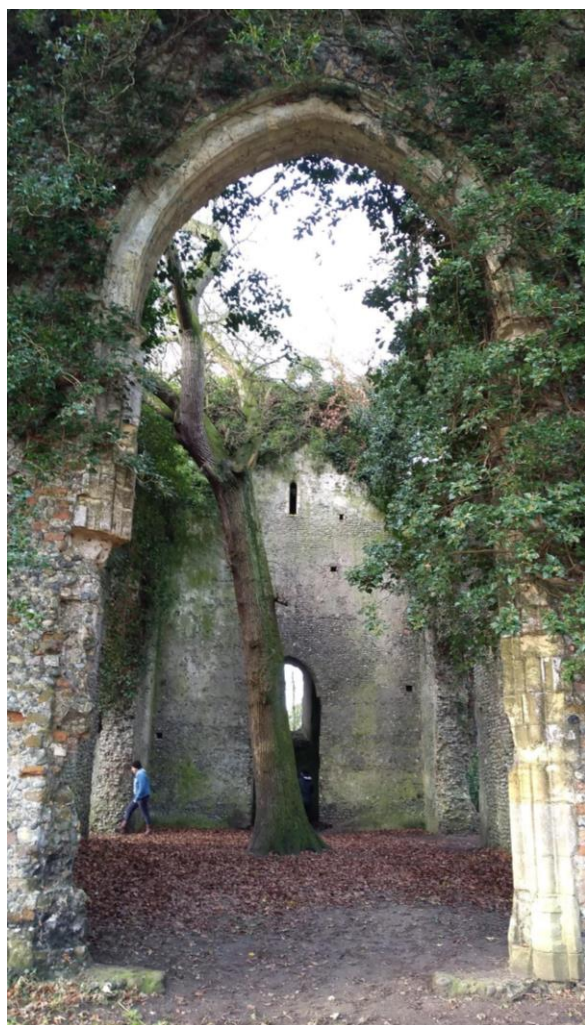




Other short sessions included an introduction to lofting, roving, boat plumbing and electrics, wire work and rigging, engine maintenance and planking repairs. I got a lot out of these sessions, they were engaging and very hands on. IBTC also provided us with a huge folder of course notes which is an amazing resource for future reference.







The first of our group outings was to Ludham to visit the Norfolk Wherry Trust. We had a tour of the “wet shed” - a boatshed built over the water and the 2 Wherries inside: *Albion* and *Maud*. Both boats are over 120 years old and are the only surviving Norfolk Trading Wherries. They reminded me of working Narrowboats, with their bright paintwork and boatmans cabin, only much, much bigger!

They have tilting masts and a large, loose-footed black sail. Interestingly, *Albion* is carvel planked whereas *Maud* and most of the other Wherries were clinkers. They were the freight transporters of their day, carrying everything from sugar beet to ice and even paying Edwardian holiday makers!

On the way back, we stopped to see a derelict 15C chapel in the woods... Maynard told us the ‘leg’ end of a witch who was buried alive in the middle of the chapel. An oak tree sprouted from her wooden leg, leaving the building in ruins! Spooky!

We were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to attend the ASTO (Association of Sail Training Organisations) Conference in Southampton. We attended seminars and workshops on a wide range of subjects, from diversity to mental health to finances. It was also a great chance to catch up with friends within



the sailing community - including fellow trainee Bronwen and previous SHTP2 trainee Matt - and to network with industry professionals.

The following day we headed over to the historic and beautiful shipbuilding village of Bucklers Hard. Originally established as a free port for the sugar trade, Bucklers Hard became famous for building battleships for Nelson's Navy, and later played a part in WWII as a training centre. It's a fascinating place, and one I'm no stranger to as it's also the home of Pilot Cutter *Amelie Rose* and her skipper (and good friend) Nick Beck. Nick showed us around the grounds and spoke to us about the old boatyard and pointed out the different species of trees planted for the construction of ships in the 17-1800s.

After lunch at The Master Builders (once the home of master shipwright to Nelson, Henry Adams) we were given a tour of *Amelie Rose* - a replica 19th Century Isles of Scilly Pilot Cutter, built in 2009 by Luke Powell. We had a fun Q&A session with Nick on the topic of historic vessel conservation vs replica builds, and all agreed that the skills needed to keep old boats on the water are no different to those needed to maintain new traditionally built boats.





## **Pupdate - Shipshape dogs, January.**

**Missy Boo, *Amelie Rose*.**



Enjoys long walks along the river.

Loves eating, and sticks. And eating sticks.

Also loves raw vegetables - broccoli stalks and sprouts are a favourite.

Once disem'bark'ed on the wrong (wet) side of the boat.

Has her own private bunk - in the pilot berth no less.

Very good girl.