

## Teymour

### About me

So here I am in Portsmouth with my big 90L duffel bag after a 6-hour journey from Essex, about to begin my long-awaited journey as one of the lucky trainees selected for the Shipshape Heritage Training Partnership (SHTP).

A bit of backstory about me: I've gained quite a bit of experience already about the operations of historic vessels from being very involved over the past few years with the former Trinity Sailing, making my way up the ranks this year being relief first mate on all three vessels. I've also got a lot of rigging experience having learned from my colleagues at Trinity Sailing and also working as a casual rigger with the rigging team at National Museums of the Royal Navy (NMRN).

I first heard about the Shipshape project during its first iteration in 2013, when I was doing my Duke of Edinburgh residential aboard the gaff cutter *Golden Vanity*. The third hand was on the training programme and introduced me to the maintenance aspect of traditional vessels, Most people don't think about how much work goes into the upkeep of traditional vessels and that being crew doesn't just involve getting the teams from A to B safely, handling all the sails and using the various systems on board, but also making sure the vessel itself is healthy. Ships are living and breathing objects that require a lot of love and attention, and I (who hadn't really sailed before yet alone been on a traditional vessel for 10 days) certainly didn't know anything about it. However, I quickly got very interested, learning all the basic knots and doing lots of brass polishing :) , which is plenty to learn on a first voyage on these types of boats. During that week we also learned a lot about navigation and, overall, how these boats run. I had such a blast that I came on a trip once more with Trinity as a paying trainee aboard *Leader* in the Tall Ships races 2014. After that I became a volunteer, and that was the beginning; I was hooked into traditional boats and my passionate hobby started. I became an avid volunteer working on the boats as much as I could with restraints from uni schedule and availability aboard the vessels. Then I decided to drop my path to become a computer programmer and pursue my career within the sail training and traditional boat world.

Enough of that tangent, back to my point about finding out about SHTP and more backstory. During my time at Trinity I met almost all of the Shipshape trainees of the first iteration, and was completely in awe of them: how confident, competent and content they were with what they were learning and the path they were taking in life. My plan would have been to go straight from college to do Shipshap. However I realised it was a course that was not always available due to funding, and so went to uni. After I left university in 2018 and found out that they had funding for another round of training, I immediately got very excited and thought that I had the chance to kick-start my future in the industry. I applied too late that summer as they had already got all their trainees, unfortunately, so I decided I will bide my time and reapply next year. In the meantime, I worked in a shipyard on the East Coast and alongside the NMRN rigging team. I managed to get my application through in March and went through the application process over the summer while working in the industry with Trinity Sailing, Bark Europa and NMRN, learning as much as I could from the people around me. In July I got a call from Becky, the Shipshape course co-ordinator with news that I had been

accepted on to the course and doing my placement with *Jolie Brise*. I was over the moon, ecstatic! Finally after dreaming for years about the opportunity to be on the course I was now finally on it, with the chance of a lifetime to meet and learn from some of the best people in the industry. The worst part was now waiting until October to meet the rest of the trainees and begin the journey.

### **October**

Back in Portsmouth we met everyone in Boathouse 4 within the grounds of the NMRN, a place I was familiar with since I had worked on HMS *Warrior* as a rigger previously. In a conference room inside Boathouse 4 we introduced each other and got to know all the details of the training programme we have all signed up for. Needless to say we were all itching to get the following weeks started. The next morning we had a networking day with all of the project's partners and special guests that are involved with NHS (National Historic Ships) and SHTP (Shipshape Heritage Training Programme), along with some fantastic presentations by the first year SHTP trainees, all of which we met the night before during a social for getting to know Portsmouth. After the presentations there was a very interesting talk hosted by the NHS about the sail training industry.

Following our few days in Portsmouth we landed in Falmouth, our new home for the week, where we did our First Aid, Personal Survival Techniques and Powerboat 2 qualifications as well as catching the Falmouth oyster festival. We had a blast in Falmouth, achieved a huge amount, and learned a lot about each other since we were all living in the same house. Alas, our time came to an end and we went off to Plymouth.

In Plymouth we all joined up with the crew upon the *Lynher* barge and began another week of excitement. Aboard the *Lynher* we had a day sail on the barge, and learned about its heritage and its value as an operational vessel in that local area. In the days following we sailed dinghies, (although didn't do much of it since the wind went on holiday), went swimming, plus we did lots of rowing and also learned how to single oar scull. Although those are most of the practical things we did there, Dom the skipper also taught us a great deal about sail theory and also spoke a lot about the conservation of historic vessels and all about his personal experiences with restoration, reconstruction and operating such vessels like the *Lynher*. We had a fantastic time on the barge and us trainees did a lot more bonding. For me, at this point, I felt like our group of trainees have become a unit, a team, maybe even a family....



Now, after our time on the *Lynher* we now go to our next step, Brixham.

Brixham is one of my favourite places to be in the UK; I've spent loads of time there over the years since that's where Trinity Sailing was based. We were staying aboard *Provident* one of their vessels which I am very familiar with.

It was both sad and fun being back in Brixham; going to the

usual local drinking establishment until the early hours and seeing lots of friends was great. However, we were there for a reason not just for fun. We did our short-range VHF certificate, had a chat with Victoria from National Historic Ships about vessel conservation and we also went to visit Brixham's local heritage museum since it was one of the UK's thriving and busiest fishing ports, filled with over 300 trawlers at one point. It's mind-blowing going now to see the town and trying to imagine 300 trawlers in the harbour. Also we went for a day sail on one of the last operational Brixham trawlers left, *Pilgrim of Brixham*. It was a great day, with a fairly strong easterly breeze. There was quite a bit of swell built-up in Torbay, and we had a few seasick casualties; however we all got back safe and sound after a cracking day sailing.

After that action-packed three weeks it was time for us to go home for a few days' break. For on November 4th we were to start our new adventure in Lowestoft, attending the International Boatbuilding Training College.