

West Wales Maritime Heritage Society Newsletter September 2011



West Wales Maritime Heritage Society Your Roving Reporter Sept, 2011

Summer or winter, the work goes on in the Front Street yard. There are normally four or five small two or three man teams, each working on a different job.

Quest had a few areas of rotten wood, and these are being cut out and restored. The foredeck is missing at the moment. This will be replaced, and a small floor installed below it so that kit can be stored there out of the way. The rear deck also has been replaced.

Undine's bow planks were easing out, and to get at the problem the foredeck was removed. Strengthening aprons have been put in to secure the planks at the stem, and the cross beam of the foredeck has been renewed. Now the actual foredeck has been rebuilt. The drop keel has been difficult to lower for a long time. The trouble was found to be a build-up of mud in the casing. The keel has now been removed, cleaned off and is now away for galvanising. Once it has been reinstalled, *Undine will be ready to sail*.

The Stewart Turner inboard engine which has powered *Undine* intermittently for years has really been pensioned off. When working, it drove her along at a fair pace, but since we replaced its gear box it has resisted all attempts to get it going satisfactorily. For want of expertise to restore it to its former glory, we have given up on it. For the immediate present we are fitting an outboard bracket.

Supporter, the glass fibre dinghy which we bought a year or so ago, simply to support our fleet when afloat, has been completely restored with new timber thwarts and transom throughout.

General Picton, our Trinity House pulling boat, which has a small lug sail to get it going when the wind is in the right quarter, is such a solid old girl that we rarely need to do much more than give her an occasional coat of paint, but she is having her floor boards looked at this year.

Linnet, the little ten foot dinghy, built in Kenilworth, that was given to us a year or so ago, came with its keel and centre board and casing missing. We have painstakingly rebuilt these and now she is ready to go, with rigging and sail from a Mirror dinghy. The picture above shows one of our members working on *Linnet* in the early stages of restoration

Duckling is an eight foot cold moulded dinghy, built by Fairey Marine, initially to fit on the coachhouse of one of the full-size yachts, but she then had a mast and gunter sail added. She has appeared on the Pembroke Castle pond.

Tern, the other Pembroke One Design which we have, (*Undine* is known as a Pembroke One Design, but it is quite a variation of the original), we have had for years, but we refrained from attempting a rebuild, as we were not sure how to go about it. Now we have two hardy, relatively new, members, who have set to with a will and are doing a marvellous job of replacing planks, before virtually redesigning the hull interior.

Activist is our most recent acquisition. A 26 foot two-masted open "dinghy", it was built in the 50's for the Outward Bound School at Aberdovey, and had been languishing for about ten years on the hard at Aberystwyth. We have all the sails and spars for her, but have so far only started to remove damaged planks and build new, heavier frames to firm up her hull. We aim to make it our next big project.

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Finally, there is **The Tenby Lugger**. It is supposed to be the last surviving example of this once ubiquitous work boat. After doing some work to restore it, the Museum of Wales gave it to us. We hope to make it the centre piece of a project to establish a Maritime Heritage Centre in Pembrokeshire, preferably on the Haven.

You can see that quite a lot of work goes on, on a Monday. We often have fifteen people around the table at coffee time. I have not named any of the members who are slaving away on the various projects, as I would be sure to miss out somebody. But this does give an idea of how the Society justifies its existence. You don't have to be skilled to join us. A lot of us are learning as we go along.

But the activities of the Society extend much farther than just restoring old boats. In addition to getting out on the water for such events as the annual Pembroke River Rally, and the biennial Seafair Haven, we set up exhibitions at events of a maritime flavour, we give talks to local societies on maritime matters, we have sent delegates to events in Ireland and Brittany, and we liaise with other sailing societies in the U.K. Many of the boats we have restored are entered on the National Register of Historic Boats in Falmouth and each one has its official number on the register.



This picture appeared in the Milford Mercury, recording the occasion when Rev. David Reed, Chairman, and David James, Secretary, took a class of primary children from Hubberston Church in Wales School to Milford Docks, to show them the Trinity House pulling boat, which has been restored by the Society, and also the replica Tenby Lugger which is being built by apprentices from Pembroke College.

To keep up the good work we do need new members, to do a variety of tasks, such as:
Helping in the yard..... Basic woodworking skills are all that is needed.

We also need people who can keep engines going...

Crewing boats when on the water.

Record keeping, both data base and photographic.

Setting up a technical record of our boats, in line drawings and measurements.

Writing a regular item for local newspapers.

Preparing displays with photographs and captions.

This newsletter is being sent to members only, but it could be casually left around where others could see it, and perhaps be inclined to join us.

Tony Ward

**P.S . If you are online and have broadband, please let us know your email address, then we can save the postage. Our email; wwmhs@hotmail.co.uk
Keep looking at our website www.wwmhs.org.uk and blog <http://wwmhs.blogspot.com>**