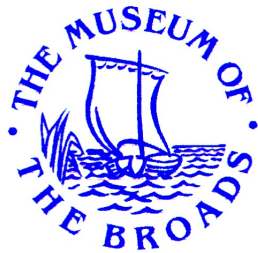


Reedlighter

Spring 2004 Issue Number 18

www.museumofthebroads.org.uk



**The Museum Of
The Broads
The Poor's
Staithe
Stalham
Norwich
NR12 9DA
01692 581681**

E-mail: motbroads@stalhamfk.fsnet.co.uk

2003 Opening

**Easter to end of
October
Monday to Friday
11 am to 5 pm**

**Also Saturdays
and Sundays in
school holidays**

Directors

**President
Robert Paul
Chairman
Pamela Masters
Diana Cornell
Financial Director**

Chairman's Report

Almost as soon as the doors of the Museum were closed for the winter months, after a very successful year, our team of maintenance volunteers attacked the museum display areas with a vengeance. The object, to make room for the arrival of our new acquisition 'Maria' which is due to arrive at the Museum at the beginning of March. The 27ft. lateener, 'Maria' is going to take up a lot of space, both in length and height. Our energetic workers have cleared space and reorganised the displays, enhancing the look of the Museum. The entrance and shop area have also received a make over creating a more inviting welcome to our visitors.

Meanwhile the application for Lottery funding has been put together by other members of the Museum team. The numerous forms and documentation were finally delivered in January. There is still more work to be done towards the application, regarding the additional funding, which is in progress. If the funding is approved it will enable the museum site to be secured and provide a new building to house the 'Maria' as the centrepiece of the museum. The extra space will also incorporate a café, office and a storage area whilst enabling us to create more attractive displays for our existing artefacts.

A warm welcome for a new member to the Museum - our financial director. David Talbot of Martin & Acock Chartered Accountants has agreed to come on board. David sails a white boat at the Norfolk Broads Yacht Club and is keen to help us keep the museum afloat.

Our congratulations to Jennifer Mack who was married to Keith Fawcus in February.

We wish them every happiness.

We look forward to a new season of events. We start in April with a night of archive films presented by David Cleveland. In May the Boat and Fishing Jumble. The Watercolour Challenge, the Annual Rally of Brooke Launches and the Jazz Concert in June. In

**Cover
Price
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August the Model Boat Display and an Art Exhibition in September.

We look forward to seeing you at the Museum.

Pamela A Masters

Moving with the times!

The museum has had a presence on the internet for several years, with a page on the NorfolkBroads.com website which has given internet users a taste of what the Museum offers to visitors. However the content was static and did not reflect the current dynamic and eventful times at Stalham Staithe. So when Trevor Bone, volunteer and committee member, offered the services of his son Peter and his partner Rachel who is a designer, the committee did not hesitate in giving support. Anita Turpin is guiding them through the process and both she and Trevor are involved in lots of ways including providing the content.

Not only will the website give potential visitors a taste of what is on offer, but it will also allow an opportunity to create a new means of communication between all sorts of people for whom the Museum is a special place to visit and support. That includes the Friends of course! The website can keep everyone up-to-date on developments and events.

In addition to the information and news pages there will be pages specifically for Friends and Volunteers which will reflect what you want to see on the website. There are lots of possibilities for the way this can be done so now is your chance to let us know what you think would be appropriate to include. Please contact the web-editor Anita Turpin, preferably by email anita@horning.demon.co.uk or by writing to her at the Museum.

The new website will be launched in early April and the new address is www.museumofthebroads.org.uk. Please be patient as the basic website will go live initially and other pages will be added as soon as they are ready. Just add the address to your Favourites and keep checking for new developments! On the website you will find the new email address for the Museum, but please note the old email address will be in use until then. Please share your thoughts about what the website can do for you and other Friends and Volunteers. All your contributions will be most welcome. Between us all we can make the website reflect the atmosphere of the Museum - dynamic and eventful!

Anita Turpin

**We would like to express our sincere thanks to
Navigator and General Insurance
for their sponsorship of the Museum Brochures not only in the past
but for their continuing support this year**

Opening Time

The wonderful Time Line exhibit at our Museum was designed by Liz and Anita in what might be called Javanese style. In the way that President Sukarno worked the crowds thus, "Indonesians, will you accept fifty percent independence?" At the reply "No!", he offered, "Will you accept ninety percent independence?", so Liz and Anita reopen the Broads for leisure after World War 2, in 1945.

However, my log describes two cruises in 1944. The first, in June, left Hoveton with orders from Mrs. Smith not to pass Homing. But we were invited to dine at Sutton Staithe. Was the restraint military, or did she seek to protect Sabrina 5's planking from the moored sleepers and such stuff (intended to frighten Domiers) that students were sure to ram? By Cockshoot we had passed Welcome and chased a Westward which encouraged us to turn up the Ant. Sutton Broad was completely overgrown with reeds, but some were scruffy, hinting at a channel to a dinner without coupons. We quanted through.

A Leander based at Chumley & Hawkes took us with a Mayfly, a Perfect Lady, Souriya and Bessie Bell to Potter Heigham in September. We moored above the railway bridge. I had been to the Pleasure Boat with my parents prewar and remembered their ploughman's almost black pickled onion. But to cater for a couple of days we called at A.A.Francis' store before meeting a Beryl and Winsome at Hickling. The Domier-stoppers had not prevented May Bee and Tantivy 2 from reaching Horsey Mill. More sinister were the wire and the warnings about mines alongside the path to the beach, surely justifying Anita and Liz in denying that the place was accessible.

Bill Gage

Holiday Letters - XIII.- The Daily Graphic Sept 11th 1890

(By Our Special Commissioner.)

The Norfolk Broads.

Or part of them - for no man may wander from Surlingham to Breydon Water from Ormesby unto Hickling in a single letter, or, unless it be salad days and a long vacation, in a single holiday.

The Broads are a discovery of late years so far as the tourist is concerned, and he has brought with him new and improved methods of exploiting them. You may now go by little railway journeys from Staithe to Sound, from Water to Decoy, by a small draught steamer, which starts from Yarmouth and fills the quiet air with the music of the tripper and the smoke of the furnaces, and which fills the heart of the fisher and the loiterer with a lofty rage. And you may go by cycle or on foot, as the roads take you.

But unless the holiday is spent on the "wherry" or yacht, the true feeling and spirit of the Broads will be missed. Big barge-like boats are the Norfolk wherries, with a roominess which was originally designed for convenience in carrying cargo, but which now appears to have been specially intended to give to a week or a month's voyage the appurtenances of material comfort.

The yachts are not so large, but their big jibs make them travel a bit faster, and for the bachelor they provide that pleasant discomfort known as "roughing it". Both have masts which may be lowered to pass under the low stone bridges (one of which, on the way to Barton, is so low that the boat may hardly pass under, even with the mast down); and to each of them there is a skipper who knows all about everything, from the cooking of the breakfast to the history of the churches and the probable direction of the wind to-morrow. And on these boats you may learn the true life of the idler. By day, the big sails of the boat catching every lazy breeze, you glide along the narrow dykes and rivers with no incident but the passing of a wherry or the occasional disturbing of an eel fisher and with nothing to do but watch the distant windmills and churches, or wonder at the beauty of the dark olive greens on the shadows, under trees which dabble their branches in the waters. The baldness of the conversation of your companions will never come home to you with such convincing force as now, and life would seem to hold or need nothing else but the bubble of water against the tiller, the sedges and the water-lilies, the sky, and the ever-changing shadow of the white sail above. This is, when the wind's behind, a happiness that cannot last all day, for here are the rivers which are comparable to the historic Meander.

Horning

At Horning there is a church perched on a hill, which the river is loth to leave and curls around lovingly. A church is always an event, and I remember while going from Acle to Horning, when the church first came in sight, I asked the skipper its name.

"Horning", said he shortly; and after acknowledging the introduction, I once more sought my cushions. The church was then on my right. An hour later we saw another church, on the left, something like the first.

"What church?" I heard someone ask.

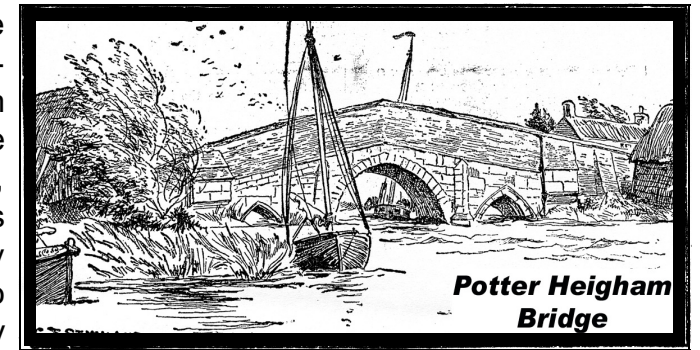
"Horning", said the skipper, without blushing. Horning Church looked down benignantly on us all morning and noon, saving many questions. And when the sun said good-bye to our day, the tower which stood clearly black against the salmon pink and golden sky, was still (so we were assured) that of immutable Horning. At Horning Ferry the children have a peculiar way of attracting the attention of a passing yacht. You may always find a little crowd of sturdy young Norfolk, where the cart road leads to the water's edge, alternately flinging stones, and singing a melancholy chant which runs:-

**Old John Barleycorn,
Old John Barleycorn,
O-old Joh-o-n Barleycorn,
John Barleycorn!**

At any rate that is the impression which the visitor brings away with him, and he will find himself humming this ridiculous little ditty long after. Sometimes it may even mingle incongruously with the roar of Fleet Street.

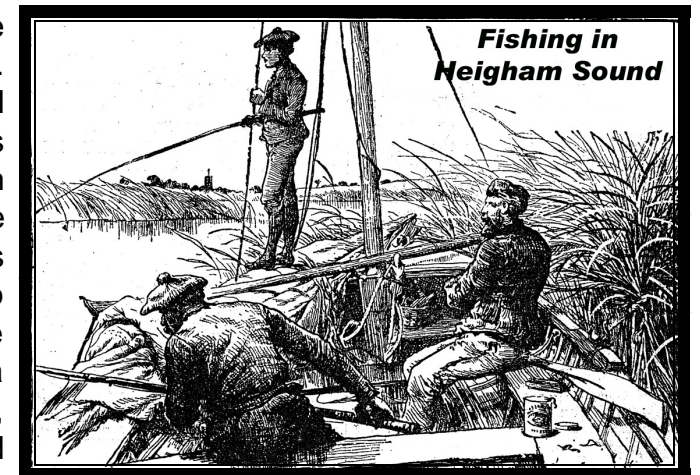
Potter Heigham

There are, so to speak, anchorages on the Broads, where the boat will stop for the night - Acle, Potter Heigham, Horning, Wroxham among them. Inns which, somehow, people have got into the habit of calling "hostelries", are here, and here, unless your tendencies are revolutionary, you must stop. Very pleasant little places they are, though who can tell how long it may be before they become "replete with every modern convenience". At Potter Heigham (we were taught to call it Pot o' Ham) one night, I remember, a lot of yachts were there which had on board large parties of ladies. And in honour of an occasion which it was felt should be festal some of the boats were decorated with Japanese lanterns, and well into the summer night the sound of laughter and voices imperfectly accompanied by the banjo made golden music in the darkness. Usually silence and sleep fall early upon villages and yachts alike, and at eleven o'clock the strayer upon deck may drink in the beauty of the short summer night, with nothing to interfere with the current of the soul except the lapping of the slow river stream. And very quickly the heavy "daeg" which bedews the hatches and awnings will drive him to his cabin and dreamless sleep, to wake again at sunrise in order to fulfil the duty and pleasure of bathing and fishing.



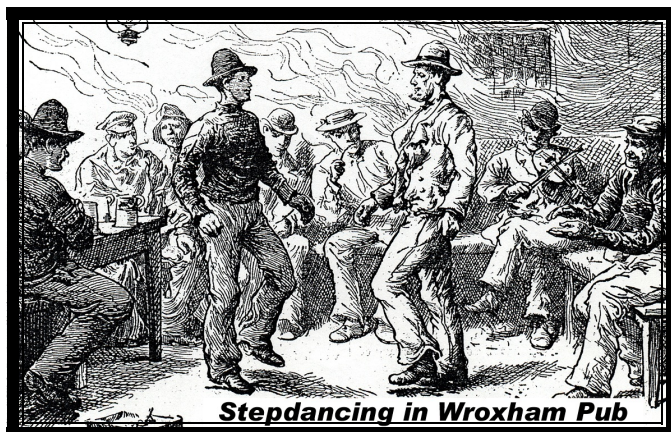
Horsey Mere

While packing for the Broads I was told to be sure to include fishing gear. This is mistake. All fishing is a delusion, and the skipper will provide materials if the souls of his guests burn for the pastime. Another delusion in which the stranger is encouraged by the natives of the county at the beginning of his voyage is that he has only to dip his line into the water to bring out fish. In point of fact, the Broads are over-fished, and I have seen a whole row of people sit for hours on a wherry, with patient lines dangling in the water and without a nibble with wish to bless themselves. I myself have spooned all day for pike, and have added nothing to the commissariat except an assortment of sedge and water lily leaf. A boatman will bait a place in Heigham Sounds for you - and you will be sorry you came. Or you may try Horsey Mere, and find that the solitary board which at length your curiosity tempts you to inspect contains a warning that "Fishing is Strictly Prohibited." Sometimes the blood is curdled by the discovery that "trespassers will be prosecuted." I regard this as a candid confession, for few people have been to the Broads without catching fish - "well, they couldn't say how many, for they always made a practice of weighing the catch by the stone." And really nobody ought to want to waste time in fishing. There is plenty to take up a day which is spent in the pilgrimage to Horsey without that kind of labour. And while you are here you must land, and stand upon the sand dunes, whence you may see the great North Sea and its ships on the one hand and the placid Broad, with a little lateen-rigged cockleshell, on the other.



The Villages

Nothing is more delightful than the villages; nothing so pleasantly calm as the life in them. Coltishall, Acle, Potter Heigham, even Wroxham, now getting plethoric and important in the season, are as old fashioned as the signboards on their inns. Here you may stop and scarcely ever see a paper, and here, at some of those inns, make discoveries in village life that you never dreamt of. It was only when I went to Horning that I found that skittle alleys were a privilege for which a special application was needed; at Acle that I discovered a little bar-parlour which had a ceiling of vine leaves and grapes, for the vine had thrust its way inside; and only at Wroxham that I gathered how the Broad skipper, passed his moments of leisure. We were staying at a little inn at the time, where they had the most primitive ideas as to making-out bills, and one Saturday night heard from the little parlour which was set apart for us the notes of tripping music and the shuffle of feet. Outside we found ranged round the little tap-room a perfect galaxy of blue-jerseyed, brown-faced skippers, who were gazing with much satisfaction at a pas de deux performed in the middle of the floor. Beer there was for all, and it was served out of a can whose contents were apparently common property. A flickering gas jet lit the scene and shone on the red and shining faces of the dancers, whose heavy boots rattled on the bricks in a perfection of time and grace which appeared to be quite independent of any effort on the part of the performers. Presently, the music, which had been getting faster and faster ceased, and the two artists retired to their seats, perspiring but happy. There was no applause, and presently, without ostentation, two others took their places; and so they spent their evening with a general content whose signs were evident on their honest, healthy faces. At the end a collection was made for the musicians, who came and solemnly shook hands with us, assuring us that their music was all by ear, and one of them adding, with some pride, that it was rather the sweeter for that reason.



Conclusion

There are many other places on the Broads; there are many other ways of spending your holiday among them which I may not stop to indicate. Go there, and you will come back browner and wiser, healthier and hungrier. I remember, in this last connection, that when I first started out from that landing place at Yarmouth - surely the worst in the kingdom - that it was with an impression that I could not eat canned lobster. One of my companions had a horror of marmalade.. As pots of these two things seemed to constitute the whole of our stock of provisions, it appeared likely that we should starve. But by the end of our trip both of us would willingly have eaten lobster with marmalade. There are many things to be seen that I have not mentioned - ruined abbeys (by the way, the Bishop of Norwich is the only Abbot in the kingdom; his abbey is ruined St. Benet's), churches, old houses, and antiquities in general. But, these you will find for yourself; and once having been to the Broads you will go again. As in the case of Private Ortheris—

***If you've 'eard the East a callin',
Why, you won't 'eed nothin' else.***

Winter Maintenance - more like winter re-build!

Two main influences have directed our winter efforts towards the Museum's future well being. Firstly, the transferral from Great Yarmouth Maritime Museum of various Broads related artefacts, including two sailing dinghies, of 1901 and 1904 vintage, two large wherry models, plenty of boat engines, and of course *Maria*, still to arrive.

So internal planning of the Boat Shed has been a priority for all of us. Initially the workshop and store were torn apart and contents redistributed to the new workshop and museum store, which we built last year. What a delight it is to have a proper workshop! With power, light and space so there is no stopping our team now.

Thanks to Mike, John and Trevor for the lion's share of this, and Mike and John have also undertaken building frames for boat and engine displays (but that's another story), and the airborne lifeboat is ever present. Those entering the boat shed when we reopen will notice much more use has been made of wall displays, to save floor space, which has been the handiwork of Alan and Barry. Great they are at ladder work and successfully fixing 'things' to vertical surfaces and hanging acres of netting, and will later progress signs, one of our weaker areas. Working away in the Marshman's building Gordon has been pressing on with refurbishment of the clinker dinghy, and very smart it is, whilst Robin has adopted the two outside windmills, giving them a complete refit before their summer season. Dave, with refurbishing the 'play yacht' as a pre-season aim, has started work on masts and spars. This influx of new items has kept Liz happy with accessing and possibly de-accessing some items mainly due to duplication, with the able support of Anita.

Off site, but nevertheless an important member of our team, Terry has completed the rebuild of the *Maria* model, very fine it looks, and has now turned his skills to rebuilding the two ex Yarmouth wherry models, which will hang alongside *Volunteer* to give a 'river' look.

So the second main influence is the rebuilding of the shop and reception area by John and Trevor. Yes, we have fiddled here before, but this is a most professional complete rebuild, somewhat restricted in space although great things are being achieved. We have high expectations for the delight of our future visitors and customers.

So plenty achieved, plenty still to do. Anxious faces saying only seven Wednesdays until reopening. Yes, but we will do it. Many thanks to all our Winter working team, great effort, great team work, excellent results so thank you all for coming in through the wet, wind, snow and cold and for achieving so much.

Nick Wright

Falcon Progress Report

Falcon has spent the closed period under covers on the Museum forecourt waiting for her boiler which is due soon. Final painting and varnishing will be carried out after boiler and engine refit in the spring.

1. We have taken delivery of the boiler's accessories. It is still planned to take boiler and engine with the new mounting plate to the Bure Valley Railway at Aylsham who will assist us in mounting them on the plate and make all pipe connections. They will then return it to the Museum ready for fitting into Falcon in the spring.

We still require people to help with the operation of the launch to carry passengers in a programme to be decided. We will require a crew of two, one to operate the engine/boiler and a helms person, of either sex.

If any volunteers would leave their telephone number on the Museum answer phone or with Enid, I will get in contact with you.

Trevor Bone

MUSEUM OF THE BROADS

EVENTS FOR 2004

Friday 2nd April

'Views Through the Reeds'

**Film Night Archive films of Broadland
David Cleveland of the East Anglian Film Archive.**

Tickets £5.00 – Concessions £4.00

7:00pm

Sunday 18th April

Morris Minor Owners Club Rally.

Sunday 9th May

Boat and fishing Jumble

Stall £5.00 Entry 50p

8:00am – noon

Sunday 6th June

Watercolour Challenge

£5.00 entry to competition – normal Museum entry charge

10:30am – 3:30pm

Saturday 26th June

**Annual Rally of Brooke Steam Launches
at the Museum in the afternoon followed by:**

Riverside Jazz Concert with Luminiere

Rouge Jazz Band

7:30pm – 10:00pm

Saturday/Sunday 21st/22nd August

Model Boat Display in the Museum and on the River

11:00am – 4:30pm each day.

Saturday/Sunday 25th/26th September

Weekend Art Exhibition