



The Never Setting Sun



Smack Dock Soundings

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Dawn and Sunbeam CK328 in St Lawrence Bay, Blackwater Match 2012.

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The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of the CSPA or its committee.

From the editor...

After the 'wettest drought on record' in April and a pretty unsettled May, the summer sailing season beckons and the Brightlingsea smack contingent are fitted out and looking smart. Hopefully the races will be well attended by working boats from all round the coast- it's always fun to catch up with those you haven't seen since the ...Regatta last year. Love or loathe racing, having committed to attending a particular match does tend to concentrate the mind on getting one's boat out in a way that the vague intention of going for a sail doesn't seem to, and the east coast would be a poorer place with no large groups of tan sails thrashing round the buoys on a regular basis.





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Shanty Night – Ann Berry

The Committee is very pleased to say that the Shanty Night on April 14th “went down a storm”. Watching a beautiful sunset over the river (those who weren’t queuing at the bar) over eighty people berthed for the evening in the comfortable surroundings of the Sailing Club. While the guests enjoyed a peg or two or three, the music struck up and the entertainment, provided by local and well-loved musicians, bobbed along to the obvious enjoyment of all the old salts on board.

Heaped platters of French bread and succulent fruits de mer, along with side salads were soon seen off, and when song sheets were distributed there was much laughter and banging on the table- especially from one corner of the room (you know who you are). Rolling gales of laughter accompanied Jim’s monologues – we can never tire of your songs, jokes and stories, Jim.

The evening raised nearly £300 towards an outing on the *Pioneer* for Brightlingsea’s 4Youth group. And the Committee’s thanks go to Judy Lawrence and everyone who lent a hand in any way whatsoever.

Help wanted...- Penny Youll

I am part of the U3A (University of the Third Age) in Brightlingsea. We are working with the Pioneer Sailing Trust to find out - and then recreate - the kind of clothing which the oyster dredgermen would have been wearing in the end of the nineteenth century. We are interested in everything - underwear, weather gear, boots etc..... The *Pioneer* would have been dredging off Terschelling in the late 1880's.

We would be interested in any contacts, information, books, personal accounts, old photos etc of the period which you might have. I'm on 01206303345 for more information.

A Colne River Policeman remembered – Malcolm Moss-Ward

I was very interested to read the article about the river police in the Spring 2010 edition of Smack Dock Soundings, which mentioned Sergeant Elijah Ward (1886 - 1960). Elijah was my Grandfather’s brother, making him my Grand Uncle. In this rather contrived photograph, my Grandfather is standing next to the Sergeant, who I believe is his brother Elijah. I do not know the identity of the other two officers.



My Grandfather, Edward William Ward, was the son of a Lowestoft fishing skipper and born in the town on 28 June 1900. He left school at age 14 and immediately went to sea. During the First World War he served with the Royal Navy Reserve on the Dover Patrol, minesweeping. After WWI he returned to fishing and by age 22 he was a skipper of a steam drifter sailing out of Lowestoft, where the family lived.

In 1926, unable to get coal for his vessel due to the General Strike, he gave up fishing and joined his brother Elijah in the Colchester Borough Police River Section. During the Second World War he volunteered for service in the Royal Navy and in 1942 was accepted in



the rank of Skipper RNR. I don't know all the details of his service, but understand he served at Loch Alsh where ships' crews were worked up before serving as convoy escorts. The photograph below was taken in 1946, just before he completed his war service and returned to the police.



After WWII, when Grandfather returned to police service, I understand the river section had been disbanded, but he continued to serve at Brightlingsea and retired in 1952. Ted, as he was known, had four brothers who went to sea as fishermen, and a step brother who became a Vicar. One brother went down with the *Lusitania*, and another was lost when his trawler brought up a mine that exploded when it hit the boat's hull. His wife Mary Ann Harper also came from a family with strong connections to the sea; before their marriage Mary was employed as a net maker at Lowestoft and at least three of her brothers went to sea - her youngest brother George was exceptionally successful as a fishing skipper and was several times the year's 'Top Skipper' at Lowestoft.

Older readers will remember the Brightlingsea Gas Works and the Manager, Mr Huggett. He had a motor boat of about 18' long and used to go out with a trawl net, taking my grandfather as crew. I don't know how successful they were but I can remember my Grandmother making and repairing his nets when in her sixties. The speed and dexterity of her fingers was something to behold.

My Grandfather had four children, my aunt Joan who went to Canada and is now

deceased, my late father also called Edward William who was a naval engineer, my aunt Pauline who lives in Canada and my Uncle Malcolm who was also a policeman and now lives in Ipswich. Grandad died in 1979; my grandparents are buried in Thorrington Churchyard. At the time of his death the cemetery at All Saints was overgrown, and for that reason Grandfather stipulated he wished to be buried at Thorrington. He would be pleasantly surprised to see All Saints as it is now.

I was born in Lowestoft in 1946 and lived in Brightlingsea from 1955 until I joined the Royal Marines on the day I left school (23 July 1963). Maybe some of you readers will remember me as Malcolm Ward. In 1967 I transferred to the Royal Navy and obtained a short service commission. When I left the service in 1978, I married a Naval Nursing Sister and became a policeman, but on land- in South Yorkshire. My eldest son who is also called Edward has followed the family seafaring tradition by becoming a navigating officer in the Royal Navy. After serving on various war ships, Iraq and Afghanistan he is now at the Royal Naval College Dartmouth where he is involved in training young officers.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone who remembers me:

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Duck punts for sale

The Pioneer Trust has a few duck punts for sale which were built in 2010 by Shaun White and Brian Kennel. It was done as a training project with young people in the Princes Trust, but they are of very good quality. There are no rigs for them, just the hulls. Asking price is £400 each.

Please help me keep this newsletter up! If you go to any of the races, scribble a few notes or take a quick snap. Anything at all gratefully received... My contact details are on the front page. Don't be shy if you're not a writer, I can polish up the roughest notes! Next issue is due out end of September.