

KING'S LYNN WORFOLK BOAT TRUST



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BADEN POWELL IS BACK ON THE RIVER



Furling the mainsail with new volunteers taking it all in.

It's good the Baden Powell is back at the pontoons, to add to the historic maritime footprint of King's Lynn's South Quay. For almost a thousand years this was the centre for the town's international sea trading, under the watchful eye of the Custom House on the Purfleet from 1717. The new docks were opened in 1869 and extended in 1883.

Paul Richards adds that there would have been up to 200 ships in the river on some days, and that chains were laid between wooden buoys so ships could moor without getting tangled up. The last of these wooden buoys is now at True's Yard, where there is a new exhibition over the summer to mark its thirty years anniversary. 'They that go down to the sea in ships' is a collection of local maritime art, including a drawing of the Baden Powell. Worth a look-in Tuesday to Saturday 11am-3pm until 28 August.

Before the docks were operating, ships' captains would report to the Custom House on arrival to sort out their landing and trading fees, using the ladder to the back door, still to be seen in the Outer Purfleet. George Vancouver (1757-1798), early navigator of the Pacific coast of

North America, who left his name in British Columbia, grew up in Lynn. His father John Jaspar Vancouver was the 'Customer' in charge throughout George's boyhood, and his brother John took over the job when their father retired.

READY FOR ANYTHING

One of the last procedures carried out in the King's Lynn Docks before Baden Powell got clearance to come out into the river called for 12 heavily-built men to line up along one side of the deck and jump up and down – to see whether the boat would stay afloat. It needed a few sandbags to augment the available line-up of volunteers to get to the proper weight, but the test was a success. So if a bulky football team apply for a sail there will be no worries. Though of course that wouldn't fit within our maximum number of passengers rules.

PONTOON NEIGHBOUR

Fishing has been a Lynn industry as long as the town has been here. Now a local fisherman with a well-known name and extensive knowledge of The Wash has started up a new summer business, King's Lynn Fishing Trips, taking anybody who wants to fish locally out for a sea trip. He is James Castleton, from one of Lynn's famous fishing families. He supplies crew, rods, bait and everything needed for a local fishing experience, with a variety of birds and seals for company. We wish him every success in his enterprise.

NEW VOLUNTEERS

We had new volunteers to introduce to the Baden Powell at the South Quay pontoons soon after the boat came out of the docks. There were two sailings on July 9 when a group of newcomers took BP out to tackle the intricacies of arranging the sails to take the best advantage of available winds. Once all the training is done we'll be ready for passengers. Keep checking the website for the start date.

There are three new skippers too, so we won't be short of advice wherever we are. They are Charlie Batchelor, who spent much of his career with roll-on, roll-off vessels trading in larger ports; Mark Charnley, who first went to sea at fifteen, and worked his way up to become a deep sea master mariner, then a marine pilot in London and Felixstowe; and retired fisherman Dave Cooper, who knows The Wash and its shifting sandbanks.

Ken Hill

Many thanks to our sponsors, local companies and many enthusiastic local

people.

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