

TOP TIPS FOR THE YEAR

I don't think that anyone could have missed the windy weather that cut through the country towards the end of the sailing season – we heard of a Norfolk Oyster on the south coast that was flattened by a tornado and here in Norfolk the moored boats took a real pounding out in the pit – the way that the wind and waves tossed the boats about caused many boom gallows to come loose and wash out to sea, the booms on these boats were then free to swing violently, they ripped covers and broke shackles. To avoid this from happening please remember to pull the main sheet tightly into the jammer and then tie two half hitches around the sheet above the lower block. Also to prevent the mooring rope from fraying on Norfolk Gypsies and causing damage to the rubbing strakes, lash it down into the bow roller with short pieces of 4mm rope.



IDEAS FOR CHRISTMAS

Owners of Norfolk Range boats should look at **Neil Fosters Water Front Yachting Company** for the **2014 Calendar**. It contains pictures of Norfolk Oyster's and Norfolk Gypsies sailing in the regatta, a lovely memento and stocking filler. You can view the Calendar and order a copy via Neil's website: www.wfyachting.com

Security cover for outboard engines

These specially designed hardwearing PVC covers are embossed with the police logo and have proven an effective deterrent against outboard theft. They work because the engine user takes the outboard hood away from the boat and secures the protective cover over the top of the engine. The engine covers vary in size and start at £15.00. To order please contact the office.

Gift vouchers

We are now offering vouchers of any amount so that you can help a loved one or friend with any part of the servicing of their boat or it can be redeemed in our chandlery. Please contact Richenda or Rebecca who will take payment and arrange for the voucher to be sent.

We would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and hope that 2014 brings blue skies and fair winds for you all.

NORFOLK GYPSY AND NORFOLK OYSTER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2013

This year's regatta was a successful weekend event with almost 30 boats entering. The practice day was great fun with a stiff breeze and the occasional shower. At the briefing on the Saturday morning the conditions were almost perfect but the forecast was for strengthening winds. With everyone's safety in mind I agonised over if we should race. It was a tense hour of deliberating and conferring with James Cowan and Charlie Ward: we eventually made the difficult decision to cancel the race. Thank goodness we did as when the tide started to flood the wind increased to such a level that many of the dinghy sailors and windsurfers that had been brave enough to venture out were completely overpowered and flattened.

The fish and chip supper went ahead on the Saturday evening as planned and this was a lovely evening with everyone in high spirits despite the lack of sailing.

The next day we met again for the briefing and the conditions were perfect but the forecast was for the wind to drop. It didn't and the race was fun with two laps of a course that started in the upper harbour and stretched down to the end of the point. It was a great race with lots of banter between the boats and some good-natured ribbing. The prizes were presented at the informal drinks party held at the Morston Anchor and included the following:

1st place Norfolk Oyster Mike Shallow in 'Pearl Fisher'	1st Place Norfolk Gypsy John Rodwell in 'Ariadne'
2nd place Norfolk Oyster Lucy Cannon in 'Annie'	2nd Place Norfolk Gypsy Stuart Farrow in 'Enchantress'
3rd Place Norfolk Oyster Louis Clabburn in 'Calypso'	

Dates for the diary 2014

Morston Regatta
2nd August 10.00am bank start at Blakeney

Blakeney Regatta
16th & 17th August 10.15am & 11.00am
bank start Blakeney

Oyster and Gypsy regatta 29th & 30th August

ANNIE



Having spent the whole of her life with me here at the boat yard, it is with a heavy heart that I let you know that Annie is no longer with us. We all miss her and more than we could've imagined – she was definitely this mans best friend.



NeilThompsonBoats
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MOORINGS

Issue 7 Newsletter from the Neil Thompson Boatyard

A SHARP INTAKE...



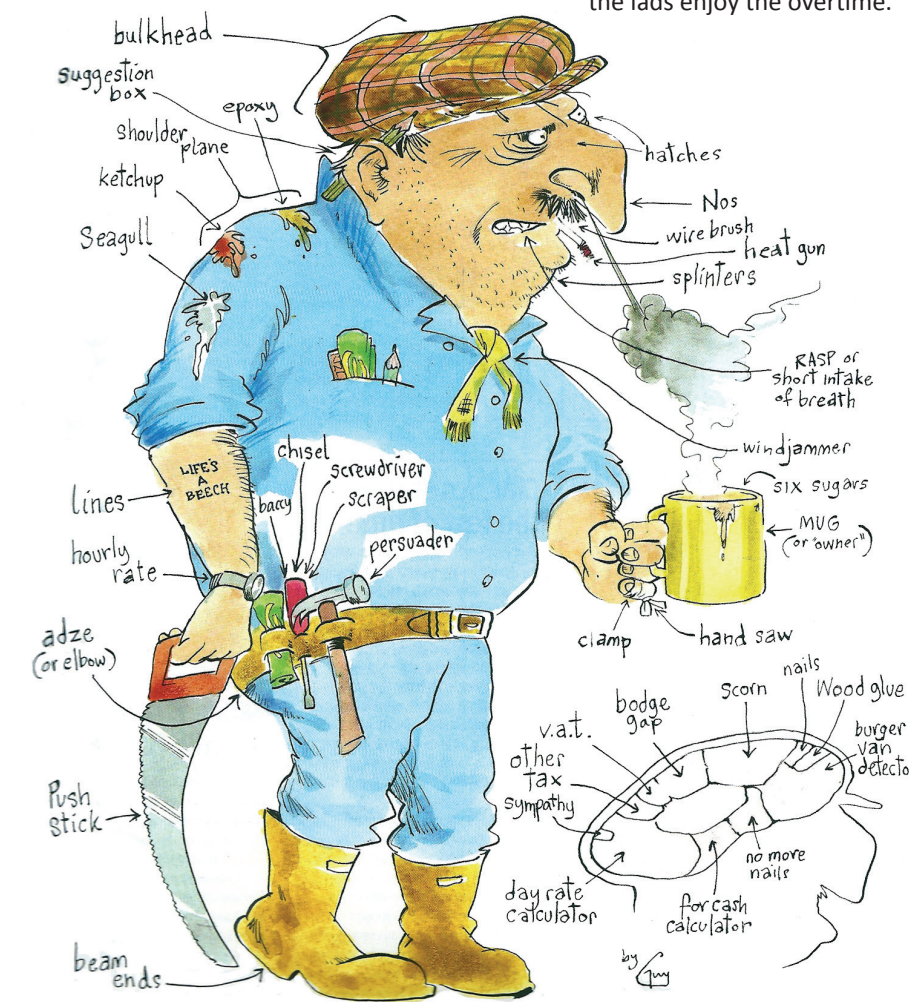
Stereotypes should be a thing of the past in today's high tech, social media obsessed, multi-cultural society. Whilst stereotypes can be negative, the cartoon drawing of the stereotypical boat builder, in November's issue of Classic Boat Magazine did make me laugh.

Chenda has told me that I use the sharp intake of breath regularly, I am not sure what induces that deep inhalation for other boat builders but for me I would like you all to know that it is down to the internal monologue that is constantly blathering on, trying to work out how to fit more work into an already packed schedule – that breath gives me time to shift the load, do the quick mental calculation on when, how and by whom. The one thing that I noticed in the diagram of the brain that was missing was the space for 'No' – it seems that boat builders do not have the capacity to say 'No'. I wonder if for me this is because I started the yard with nothing more than a small toolbox, a big dream and a hunger for work that has never left. I know that when a big job comes into the yard, like the 28ft Southerly that suffered extensive fire damage, I can't wait to get going with it, to add to our catalogue of services offered and experience and expertise.

I am also very conscience of how much I love boats, not just working on them but using them. When you come into the yard and talk to me about your boat, the boat that you love so much you've not only

named it but had that name sign-written on the stern, when you ask me if I could do that job for you, so that you can get out on the water with your family and friends, to feel the boat under sail or to go blasting through the water at 25 knots with your first born

hanging off the end of a rope, knowing how much that would mean to me if I were you, the customer – then how can I say No? I don't like to stand still so as long as it's not too close to a month either side of Easter we always find the time from somewhere and the lads enjoy the overtime.



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FROM THE YARD

NORFOLK EXPLORER

We are now finishing the first Norfolk Explorer and she's looking fantastic, we know this Gentleman's Launch is going to be an exciting edition to the Norfolk Range. We have taken a couple of orders already and will be starting on hull number 3 before Christmas, these boats will be ready for delivery early in the new year. Please contact me if you are interested in the Explorer and would like to come along to the official launch next spring.



Chris busy on the new Explorer



HONDA MARINE

We have built a showroom to display our Honda outboard motors and accessories and will be opening a chandlery this spring, we are planning to coincide the opening with the launch of the Norfolk Explorer in order to gain maximum press coverage. If you would be interested in attending the opening then please contact the office and let Richenda or Rebecca know and an invite will be sent to you.



BROKERAGE

The demand for our brokerage skills continues to grow with boats now coming to us from all over the EU to be sold here in Norfolk. Equally we have also had visitors to the yard from various places within the EU and boats we have sold have gone to Holland, Denmark, France, The Czech Republic, Ireland and Scotland – it really has been an amazing year and we hope to continue to expand this side of the business. We have sold speedboats, fishing boats, tenders, racing dinghies, traditional sailing boats and lots of Norfolk Range boats including two Norfolk Smugglers.

Only last week we sold one Norfolk Oyster, two Norfolk Gypsies and took an order for another new Norfolk Explorer – traditionally this time of year is slow for boat sales but our yard seems to be bucking the trend.



HONDA TRAINING

Ashley, Tim and I are now fully trained Honda technicians after attending a special course hosted by Honda at the Honda institute. This was an extensive three-day course where we were all put through our paces.

I was inspired and impressed by the Honda philosophy. When Soichiro Honda first started building outboard engines he vowed never to build a two-stroke engine, as “products that are used on the water should not pollute the water”. With this in mind he dared to be different and refused to copy other manufacturers. He was innovative and forced his team to think out side of the box, in doing so he managed to create well-engineered and lightweight outboards.

Honda is now the world's largest manufacturer of engines. The Institute had everything from Robots to Formula 1 racing cars. The three of us were blown away by the training facilities and the whole experience made me realise what an asset and honour it is to be an authorised Honda dealer – the engines are not only a joy to own but to work on too.



Learning the ropes at Honda



Ash dreaming again.

MAINTENANCE ADVICE

What finish should I put on my woodwork?

This is a question that I am often asked and I have had lots of experience with them all. It is fair to say that all finishes, if applied correctly and maintained, will look beautiful. Here is a simple breakdown of the **PROS** and **CONS** of each.

Oil, teak oil

PROS This gives a natural finish and is not slippery to stand on if only the penetrating primer oil is applied. This is my preference for all wooden surfaces that are likely to be stood on. It does not form a seal over the wood and so the wood can breath and dry out, the oil nourishes the wood and reduces the likely-hood of rot. This can be given a deep gloss finish if the gloss coat is applied over the primer.

CONS The wood will discolour over the course of the season and will need sanding back and fresh oil applied annually.

Varnish

PROS Varnish looks lovely and provides a deep lustrous gloss, by far the shiniest finish of all products that are currently on the market. It offers great UV protection for the wood and, when applied correctly, will form a good waterproof barrier over the wood.

CONS The hard surface is easily damaged, these cracks will then allow water to seep in and trap moisture leading to rot and discolouring of the wood. Varnish is also very slippery when wet making varnished surfaces very dangerous to stand on. It takes a lot of work to maintain a quality finish, and any contamination in either brush or sandpaper will produce a mottled finish. Varnish is also a nightmare to remove from gel coat surfaces if spilt. You will probably not notice any spills until the sun bleaches them at which point they will become horrid yellow stains on the boat which are tricky to remove. Varnish is also susceptible to frost damage.

Hybrid oil/varnish or Woodskin®

PROS This provides a semi gloss finish and is flexible. It allows the wood to move and breath but you should be careful to not allow the coats to build up. Woodskin is less likely to crack than varnish, if the wood is knocked it will flex with the impact so offers good waterproof protection, it is more likely to wear on well used areas, such as seat batten and rubbing strakes leaving areas of wood exposed. These areas are easier to maintain than varnish, and if spilt on the gel coat it can be seen and easily wiped away if still wet.

CONS This can be slippery when wet. It becomes less breathable over time and will trap moisture leading to rot. Woodwork treated with this annually will need to be stripped back if the coats build up and the wood starts to look opaque.