

## BOATS IN THE BAY 2015, ST.IVES

**A warm welcome awaited the *Barnabas* as St.Ives celebrated it's 10th annual Boats in the Bay last weekend.**

True to their word, and despite an unsettled, blustery forecast, the venerable lugger *Barnabas*, skippered by the equally venerable Adam Kerr, sailed from Newlyn last Friday to join proceedings. She was paying a courtesy visit to her home port, where she was built in 1881, following her epic round-Britain voyage to the Shetlands in a recreation of the annual summer migration of the Victorian drift-netters.

Arriving in record time, she was already off the Head by the time the welcoming flotilla of jumbos, punts and picarooners could get out of the harbour to meet her. The fleet sailed in company across the bay awaiting the tide to allow *Barnabas* to enter the harbour.

Once ashore, crews had a chance to dry out in the warmth of the Shore Shelter which had been erected over 100 years ago for just such a purpose.

Following the customary fish BBQ reception, courtesy of Matthew Stevens and Sons and the Seagrass Restaurant, William Thomas, a relative of the original owners of the 'Barny', gave a welcoming address full of fascinating detail and anecdotes. Mayor Linda Taylor then formerly welcomed the *Barnabas* on behalf of the town, congratulating them on their achievement and acknowledging the work of the St.Ives Jumbo Association who organised the event.

Owing to the tide, sailing did not begin until 3pm on Saturday. First out was another key visitor this year; the sailing pilot gig *Endeavour* from Mevagissey. This was the first time since Boats in the Bay began in 2006 that one has been able to attend. The organisers, keen to encourage sailing among the few gig clubs that have boats with a rig, hope that Boats in the Bay may yet become an annual event for these sleek craft. *Endeavour* sailed from Hayle Bar back to the harbour in a matter of minutes achieving speeds in excess of 10 kts.

They were followed by the jumbo *William Paynter*, helmed by *Barnabas* skipper, Adam Kerr enjoying his first sail in these lively luggers. All six boats that Jonny Nance has built for St.Ives since 2006 took part: the two jumbos, both sailing punts and the two replica punts which were used for the scully race.

Meanwhile the Community Choir lead by the same William Thomas drew a large appreciative audience outside the Shore Shelter.

Activities afloat concluded with a scully race within the harbour with mixed local and Mousehole crews. The white punt won.

Since Boats in the Bay began, the day has been rounded off with a traditional 'shout' led by *The Cadgwith Singers*, held at the Castle Inn and fuelled this year by Jumbo Ale - that special blend of skills - brewed and donated by St.Ives Brewery. This has been an attempt to reintroduce pub-singing which had all but ceased in St.Ives despite the fact that the late John Barber, who wrote so many popular local songs, was a native of the town.

The experiment has paid off, for this year the Singers were almost overwhelmed by the home-grown '*Bamaluz Bootleggers*' who happily include some of John Barbers songs in their repertoire. They also struck up outside the Sloop following the scully race, so, thanks to Cadgwith, the 'shout' is alive and well once again in St.Ives.

"It's a big deal for sailing vessels to attend our events." explained the principal organiser, Jonny Nance. "From a modern yachtsmans point of view, St.Ives has a very limited appeal with it's exposed and drying harbour on a stretch of coast offering little shelter. Though only 9 miles by car, Newlyn is 40 miles by sea. The decision to sail is not one *Barnabas* would take lightly so I'm delighted that the town was able to respond appropriately to their gesture. I knew we got something right when, on taking their leave, one of them remarked that it had been 'better than Brittany'. If you're lucky enough to have participated in a massively funded Breton traditional sail festival you will know that this is praise

indeed! By contrast, there is no budget for Boats in the Bay. Instead, we are extremely grateful those local businesses and individuals whose goodwill and generosity have supported us these last 10 years."

Taking a step back and looking at the big picture, perhaps the most significant development this year was a full-page feature on the Jumbo Association in the Daily Telegraph which was timed to coincide with Boats in the Bay. Astonished newsagents swiftly sold out as the jumbo faithful (some, for the first time in their lives) bought themselves a copy!

Owing to the weather, the Barnabas has extended her stay in St.Ives this week and is expected to sail next Saturday.

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