

# IWAI - Inland Waterways News

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## The Boats

### Schollevaer

#### David Beattie

**Schollevaer**(which means "cormorant") was built in 1913 in Leiderdoorp for a member of the van Vollenhoven family, who are related to the Dutch Royal family. Before then, Dutch pleasure barges had not copied work-boats but had been designed for pleasure per se. **Schollevaer** and her sister ship **De Blinkert** (built in the preceding year for the same family) were novel because, though built for pleasure sailing, they were copies of the existing Lemsteraak North Sea herring fishing barges (**Lemsteraak** means "sailing barge from Lemmer", a fishing town in Friesland).

The Lemsteraaken are still reckoned to be the fastest and most sea-kindly Dutch sailing barge design for their size; they race as a fleet in the Netherlands every summer. Several un-converted fishing Lemsteraaken remain and new pleasure versions are built regularly.

In 1927 **Schollevaer** was sold to Burnham on Crouch to a Mrs Elizabeth Markham. She caused some amusement to the van Vollenhovens when she arrived to collect the vessel with her butler as sole crew. I am privileged to have copies of the relevant van Vollenhoven records, which were given to David Wheeler, the previous owner.

**Schollevaer** passed through several owners before being acquired by Captain Richard England who, having worked in coastal trading schooners during the 1930s, served in the RNR during World War II. **Schollevaer** spent the war in Chatham and later on Hartlepool, where she was used by the Admiralty as a boom tender. She features in England's book **Schoonerman**.

After the war, England sailed up the English east coast and through the Forth and Clyde canal. He sold **Schollevaer** in Co. Down in part exchange for the **Nellie Byewater**, a Co. Down trading schooner.

By the early 1950s **Schollevaer** was on the Shannon, in the ownership of Dermot O'Clery. Syd Shine remembers her sailing up to about 1956. When I visited Creaghduff House last year to celebrate 75 years of SODs, Alison Cooper produced the original bowsprit out of a hedge and it was used as a pattern for the re-rigging!

By the 1960s **Schollevaer** was in the ownership of Barney Loane (Pilot in Dublin Port). He lived on her in the Grand Canal Dock and, following his retirement, on the River Bandon near Innishannon.

David Wheeler bought her there in the late 1970s and, with Barney and Syd Shine, worked her (pumped her, more like) back to Hazelhatch via the Barrow. There David, assisted by many people but particularly by Teddy Knight, stripped her out, turned her upsidedown and re-bottomed and re-engined her. She then had a number of adventures including a fire - she is so secure it took an angle grinder to admit the fire fighters - and starred in the television series **Waterways II**.

I bought her from David in 1993 and since then have continued with renewal, while researching her rig and sailing requirements. As no plans exist, the re-rigging was undertaken with the assistance of some photos of her sistership **De Blinkert**. We visited the Netherlands with measuring tape and callipers; we were greatly assisted by Rens Willet, a Dutch shipwright whom I had met through his work on **Dunbrody** in New Ross.

Douglas Fir was acquired through Forrestals of Ferrycarrig and turned into a mast and boom by Tony McLoughlin, shipwright of Tramore at the **Dunbrody** (Ross) shipyard - by kind permission. Leeboards were made by Peter Sijperda in Friesland. The mast was collected by water from New Ross, the leeboards were fitted in Lowtown, the rigging was measured up and fitted. Running rigging was made up - over 1 km! - and sails were expertly made by Watson and Jameson. Jimmy Furey of Leecarrow made up the bowsprit ready for our return to Lough Ree in August of this year. The sails arrived and were bent on so that, by the Friday of the LRYC Regatta, we were ready to sail in a F 4-5. Much adrenalin flowed through the veins of the hand-picked crew of 11 and **Schollevaer** surged off at speeds of up to 10 knots!

Luckily (subject to sorting out a few practicalities), she sails like a dream and is very well balanced. We have had only two or three opportunities to sail her since, because of work commitments, but have found that a crew of four is adequate except for short tacking. Once she is "full and bye", her speed creeps up to an unfussy 8 knots. I now have the task of learning how to sail her correctly before taking her a little further afield. In the meantime, in narrow waters, perhaps the old motto "Faugh an Bealach!" would be appropriate!

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