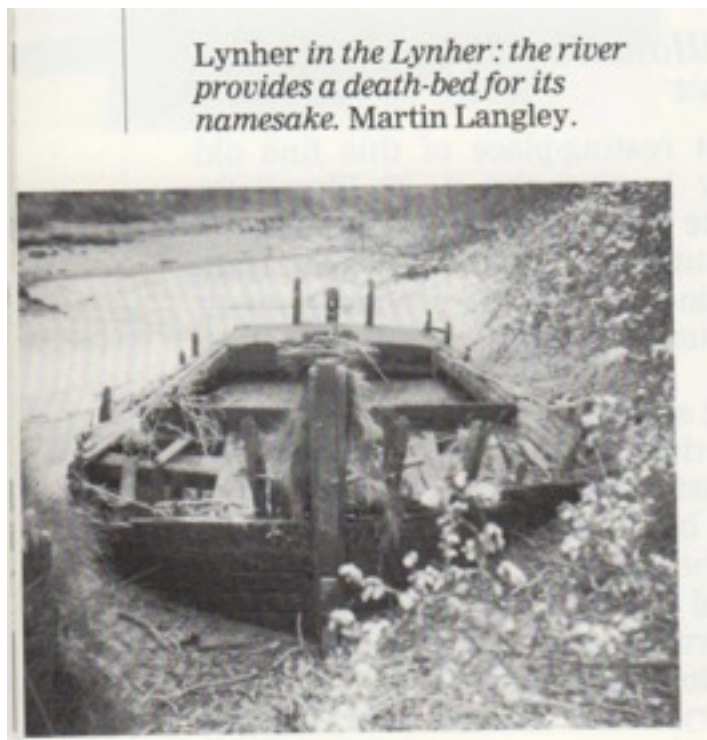


The Lynher Project



From the book "Lost Ships of the West Country" by Martin Langley and Edwina Small, 1978.

What is the Lynher?

The Lynher is the last of the inside Tamar barges left standing. She is in need of specialist conservation work. The barge is lying in Cremyll Shipyard (Mashfords Yard) on the Hamoaze, the mouth of the river Tamar. Built in 1891 or 1896 (?) by James Goss of Calstock, the barge was used to transport coal, stone and other goods from the upper reaches of the river Tamar down to Plymouth. As a sailing barge she was built expressly to suit the geography of one of the Tamar tributaries, the river Lynher. The Lynher is a narrow river that bends and curls its way from St.Germans creek and it is navigable up to Notter Bridge. The Lynher barge is smack rigged as a gaff cutter. She features an original tabernacle mast system whereas she could sail and also travel under low bridges with the aid of sweeps. Her beamy displacement and shallow draft permits her to sit on the river mud quite comfortably. This is the main reason why the hull of the barge has been preserved: the river Lynher itself looked after its namesake for over three decades before she was resurrected from the mud. Her 60 tonnes capacity cargo hold speaks of days of trade under sail when goods were transported up and down the river. The barge master and the barge boy would live and breathe the river life all year round, providing a lifeline link for the river communities divided by the geography of the Tamar which is particularly warped and eludes land transport systems. Very often this is still the case nowadays, which also accounts for the outstanding natural beauty of the river shores, which are still completely unspoilt.

What is the heritage the Lynher Project will focus on?

The Lynher will be restored and operated by Cremyll Keelboats, a maritime heritage Trust based at Cremyll and specialised in historic vessel conservation techniques and professional sailing.

The Lynher barge, when restored to her original specifications, will return to the river Tamar to provide transport services of people and goods. A special “heritage link” will bring visitors to the two Edgcumbe family homes (Mt.Edgcumbe House & Country Park and Cotehele National Trust Estate) and also link the historic sites of the Barbican and the Royal William Yard in Plymouth to the shores of South East Cornwall whilst delivering a traditional hands-on sailing experience to the public.

A maximum of 12 passengers will experience life aboard this unique inside river barge by sailing her up and down the river, move the tabernacle mast to drift under low bridges with the aid of sweeps and enjoy the outstanding surroundings of the Tamar and tributaries in the most environmentally friendly way. The experience in itself will be formidable with the added bonus of being transported to a different historic site to visit.

Marketing strategy

In co-operation with Mt.Edgcumbe and Cotehele House the Lynher will be advertised through various media and included in brochures, websites and travel books. Passengers will be able to book tickets through the Country Park and the National Trust at Cotehele. A calendar of sailings will be published for each year, planned around the tides. A set of information available aboard will display a selection of sites of interest along the river Tamar & tributaries. The Lynher will have room in her calendar year for other activities based on the heritage of the river Tamar and its tributaries such as:

- Educational activities (in partnership with Colleges, Marine studies institutes, educational charities and social enterprises).
- Private charter (corporate events, private functions, photographic venues, themed days).
- Fair trade under sail (transport of produce through partnerships with local producers, farm shops and markets).

Logistics

The Lynher will have a choice of moorings which she will be able to use depending on her programme and weather conditions. Thanks to her hull configuration she could sit on the river mud as she was purposely built for this task.

The barge will have the following mooring points for passengers boarding/diseimbarking:

- 1) Cotehele and Morwellham upriver are obvious landing points, as well as Weir Quay and Calstock quay.
- 2) Downriver there is Cremyll, the West Mud area and the Royal William Yard on the Plymouth side (permission has been sought and obtained for these sites).
- 3) The Barbican has a landing pontoon for ferries next to the Mayflower steps – permission to land will be sought from the Cattewater Harbour Commission.

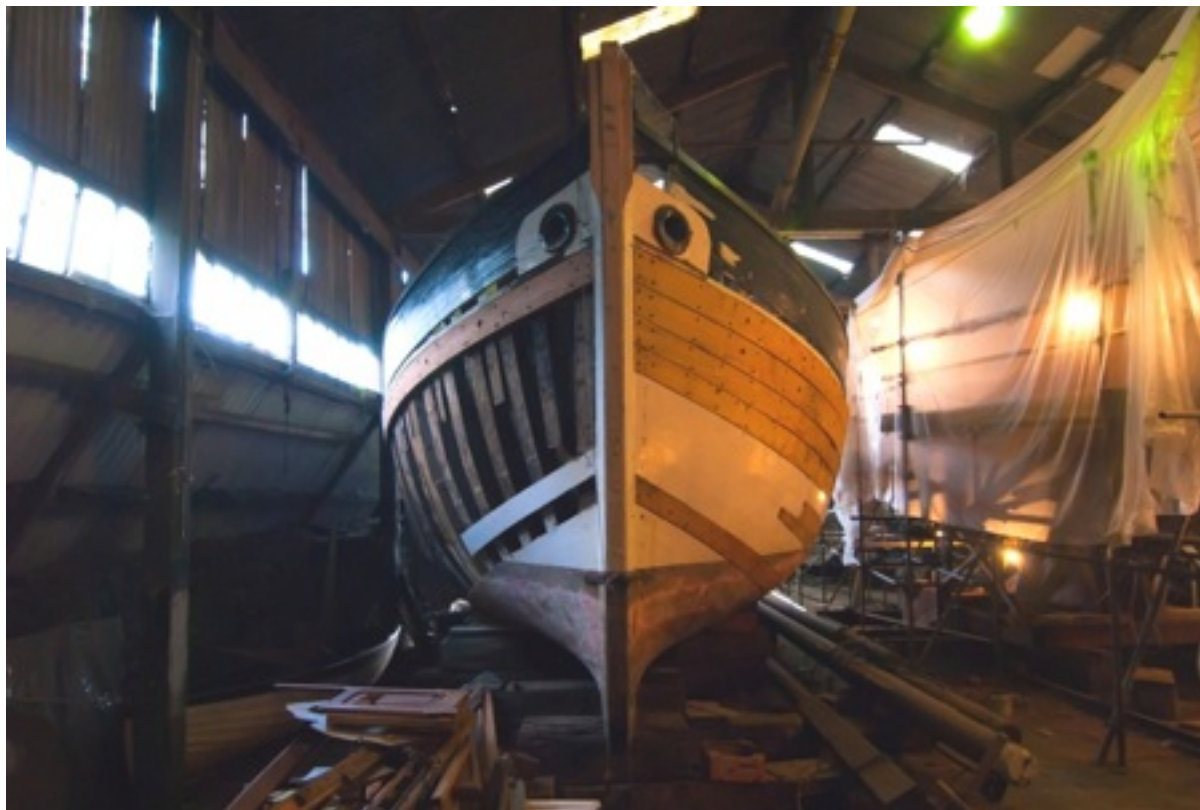
A qualified and experienced captain and mate will be employed and trained for the job. A sponsored place for a volunteer to fill the bosun position will be part of a sail training scheme for young people who demonstrate a strong interest in the maritime training field.

The restoration plan & skills training

Cremyll Keelboats is preparing an application to the Heritage Lottery in order to support the Lynher's restoration project. Her unique heritage as the last of the inside Tamar barges is highly graded by the Heritage Lottery. The project will create employment and training opportunities in the marine sector on the Rame Peninsula, an area with high unemployment statistics, above all among young people, whose primary economy is fuelled by the marine industry. By creating specific training and new employment on the peninsula, the Lynher project will contribute consistently to address some fundamental issues at the heart of the communities of the Tamar river. Boatbuilding and seamanship skills are a craft which is still in high demand nowadays, nonetheless learning patterns are fragmented and lowly funded. By supporting the local community in re-discovering these skills, the Lynher project will directly incentivise the economic growth of the area. It is, however, important to obtain support and match funding from other partners to demonstrate to the Heritage Lottery that the project is valued by the wider community. Cremyll Keelboats is looking for other partners who can contribute to the aims of the Lynher Project and who share the same values. Partners can come from not-for-profit, public or private sector. Please contact the office for further details.

The sustainability of the Lynher Project in the future

It is fundamental that, when the Lynher is launched again, she will become a sustainable operation producing enough income to maintain herself whilst fulfilling her natural role of heritage link and educational floating platform on the Tamar and its tributaries.



The Lynher at Mashfords, awaiting restoration

Cremyll Keelboats has taken steps in this direction by forging a strong partnership with Mt.Edgcumbe to support the application and the future business plan. Direct benefits to both parties are tangible and clear. Mt.Edgcumbe will widen its offer of attractions to visitors who value the Edgcumbe's and Tamar's unique heritage. The Lynher marketing campaign will be supported by Mt.Edgcumbe thus providing a solid and effective background to the Lynher's commercial operation. A business plan has been prepared by Cremyll Keelboats where valid options are presented to pinpoint the Lynher's position as a commercial operation in the future years after the end of the HLF project. Sensible and sustainable outcomes have been identified in order to produce a project which, it is hoped, will benefit both the communities and the wider public. Heritage tourism will be one of the main assets, the other two being skills training in boatbuilding and seamanship and respect of the environment by alternative ways of transporting goods.

HLF Application timetable

January 2014 - pre-application has been submitted; consultation with HLF begins

May 2014 – Application is submitted

September 2014 – HLF replies, if approved, the Development Phase starts

September 2015 - Cremyll Keelboats and Partners submit Round 1 to HLF

January 2016 – HLF replies, if approved, the Lynher restoration project starts

March 2018 – HLF the Lynher restoration project ends



1900s River barges under load. From the book “Victorian and Edwardian Sailing Ships”. By Basil Greenhill and Ann Giffard, 1976.

Advertising campaign & participation of the public

An extensive participation of the public programme will last for the whole duration of the project which is considered to be 26 months circa.

During this period Mt.Edgcumbe and other partners will have the opportunity to advertise their common aims by supporting the participation of the public programme. The programme will include exhibitions, presentations, workshops, lectures and excursions all focus on learning about the trade and shipping days of the Tamar river and its tributaries and the heritage of the Edgcumbe family. It will attract a wide range of people and organisations and create new networks.

High visibility from the very beginning of this campaign will guarantee an effective promotion of the Lynher Project thus amplifying the resonance of the partners’ common aims in order to benefit a wide range of social sectors.

List of organisations which expressed support in the project

1. Mount Edgcumbe Country Park, part of Plymouth and Cornwall Councils
2. Marine Training Academy Plymouth
3. Tamar Valley AONB
4. Tamar Valley Growers
5. Mashfords Boatyard, Cremyll
6. Falmouth Marine School (part of Cornwall College)
7. Cotehele House, National Trust
8. Pentillie Castle
9. Weir Quay Boatyard
10. Real Ideas Organisation

Appendix A - Lynher (ref. National Historic Ships Registry)

Tamar Barge built 1896 by Goss, James, Calstock



Certificate no

1137

Status

National Historic Fleet

Propulsion

Primary Propulsion **Sail** Engine: **Diesel** Engine year **1975**

Dimensions

Air Draft **To be confirmed** Breadth: Beam **17.57 feet (5.36 metres)**

Length: Overall: **51.18 feet (15.61 metres)** Depth: **3.61 feet (1.10 metres)**

Tonnage: Gross

25.00

History

The Tamar barge LYNHER was built in 1896 by James Goss at Calstock. Such barges carried coal, wood, limestone, sand and dung from Plymouth to Tamar Gardens. At one time she was owned by Mr Brand of Tudeford Post Office and Stores. He employed her bringing up supplies to his shop from Devonport.

For years after this she was engaged in stone carrying from Poldrissick quarries. The quarry owners, the Steed Brothers, had invested in other similar barges BLUE ELVAN, ELIZABETH JANE and TRIUMPH. Her last owner was Captain Sam Daymond of Saltash who re-registered her in 1924 when she was fitted with an engine. It is believed that she was last at work in 1954, though possibly reduced to a dumb lighter. The vessel was abandoned in the mud at Poldrissick quarry on the River Lynher in 1952 and recovered for restoration in 1989.

Key dates

1. **1896**

Vessel built by James Goss at Calstock, Cornwall.

2. **1924**

Owner based in Saltash, Cornwall, fitted vessel with an engine.

3. **1952**

Vessel abandoned at Poldrissick quarry on the River Lynher.

4. **1989**

Recovered for restoration.

Bibliography

1. **1988** Lost Ships of the West Country - Langley, M and Small, E
2. **1998** Classic Boat Classic one Lynher
3. **2000** Classic Boat Lifted from the Lynher



Appendix B - The river Tamar (From the BBC Discover Devon Files)

The River Tamar is where Devon ends and Cornwall begins.

The 50 mile long waterway provides a natural county boundary, starting just four miles short of Bude on the north Cornwall coast and flowing south, reaching the sea at Plymouth Sound in south west Devon. At the estuary, the Tamar merges with the rivers Tavy, Plym and Lynher and you can't think of the Tamar in isolation. Together, the Tamar, Tavy and Lynher are a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Flanked by ancient woodland along lengthy stretches, the rivers also provide rare habitat.

The intertidal systems are perfect for mudflats, saltmarshes and reedbeds - all home to birdlife, including the Avocet. The woodlands are also a haven for birds and butterflies as well as rare lichen and orchids.

The Tamar-Tavy Estuary and the Lynher Estuary are both protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of the habitat and wildlife. There is important heathland up river as well, where rare birds like the Dartford Warbler can be found.

The location and climate have made the Tamar Valley an important area for market gardening. At the height of the industry, the valley was covered with apple orchards, while cherries, strawberries and daffodils were also produced, not only for local consumption but for cities elsewhere in the country. Market gardening still takes place in the valley, but on a much smaller scale.

The valley is historically important, with evidence of Stone and Bronze Age settlements - especially on the Cornish side of the river. Kit Hill is a good example. All the way up the Tamar, there are magnificent medieval stone arch bridges - some of which are over 500 years old.

Plymouth: the growth of a city

At the mouth of the Tamar, on the Devon side, there is the port city of Plymouth, and Devonport Dockyard. This is where there is a potential clash between industry and naval interests on the one hand, and the environment on the other.

But the two have co-existed for centuries. Devonport Dockyard's origins date back to 1691, when William of Orange commissioned the building of a new dockyard to support the Royal Navy in the Western Approaches.

A world heritage site

The River Tamar has always played an important role in industry and the region's economy.

Mineral extraction was the key industry in the Tamar Valley dating back many centuries, and in 2006, the Cornwall and West Devon's Mining Landscape won World Heritage Site status. Tin, silver, lead, granite and copper were all mined in areas like Lopwell, Bere Alston and Morwellham. In fact, Morwellham Quay on the Devon side of the river was a centre for shipping minerals for 1,000 years. The Quay is now a visitor attraction.

The minerals were transported down the river to the sea until the advent of the railways - and Brunel's amazing Royal Albert Bridge across the Tamar. Isambard

Kingdom Brunel's bridge was an extraordinary feat of Victorian engineering. It was completed in 1859 and it was built to bear the weight of three express trains. It's still the main rail link between Cornwall and the rest of the country. The bridge opened Cornwall up for visitors - as did the Tamar road bridge, built more than a century later.

The Tamar Bridge was opened in 1961, and it was then the longest suspension bridge in the UK. The toll bridge was recently widened at a cost of £34 million. Before such engineering feats were possible, the only way to cross the Tamar was via the little bridges further up the river - or by boat.

An Act of Parliament in 1791 granted the major landowners - like the Earls of Mount Edgumbe and St Germans - permission to operate a ferry across the Tamar between Plymouth and Torpoint. A succession of Torpoint ferries have operated during the past 200 years, and now there are three: the Plym, the Lynher and the Tamar.

Like the Tamar Bridge, the Torpoint Ferries are now run by the a joint committee involving Plymouth City Council and Cornwall County Council.

A smaller ferry, the Cremyll Ferry, also runs from Admirals Hard, Plymouth to Mount Edgumbe, Cornwall. The Cremyll Ferry was first documented way back in 1204 - so 2004 was its 800th anniversary. These days, the Tamar is largely recreational - a place to visit, walk, enjoy a boat trip, and take in the scenery and wildlife. And, of course, it remains the most unique county boundary in England.



Tamar river barges moored at Cotehele, vintage 1909 print by Sutton Palmer.