

Another member has been busy working on his boat over winter. Matthew describes his restoration of GP12638.

A Few Minor Upgrades...

Matthew Gabbitas

After a couple of years sailing at Bishopthorpe and finding a boat (a story in itself), we decided it was time for a few minor upgrades and this is how it all unfolded.

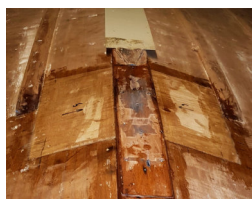
We decided that, during the winter we would return to the GP to its original blue and we also wanted to carry out a few more modifications. We brought it home for a weekend to work out a plan and it never returned to the water!

"...once they were inside I locked the door."

We made a start on changing the colour back to blue so we stripped the hull over two weekends. To our surprise we found a few things which we were unsure about. I decided that I needed some technical support. Little did I know what was in store for me over the next few months.

Technical support

I invited both Hugh and Steve around for a coffee and once they were inside I locked the door. I then ran through all the things which we planned to do and asked many questions. It was only after I had the information I needed that I let them leave!



...a couple of other areas ...

From then on we had a plan of the things which we needed to carry out. We started with some fibreglass at the mast base on the outside of the hull which needed to come out. It was not visible from the inside as was out of sight under the mast pad. It needed to be replaced on both the starboard and port side of the hog. Off came the keel and out came the fibreglass making two rectangular openings ready for the filler piece.

There were also a couple of other areas which looked like they might give us a little trouble over the coming few years so we decided to bite the bullet and replace these too. This involved cutting a chamfered piece of plywood to fit the opening (and checking to see if it did).

Once again with all the assistance from Hugh and Steve I managed to replace these to an acceptable standard and proceeded on to the next job.

Back to the drawing board

We had also decided to improve the mast step so we could load up the genoa rig tension a little more. To carry this out we need to remove the existing bulkhead, which was looking a little tired. Out it came and, with a fantastic mast step made by Hugh with Steve's old front door, we were on track for the upgrade.

Things seemed to be progressing at good rate until I removed the centreboard case, which I think had a very small leak between the hog and case. I lifted this out. Wow, what a weight it was!

It was back to the drawing board to see if it was possible to remove some weight. After a lot of research we decided that we



The red paint is stripped off

would build a new centreboard case. This appeared to be an upgrade which many Series 1 boat owners had carried out so I set about making something which would keep the water out and resemble a new case.

"Wow, what a weight it was!"

During the Christmas period, whilst I was off work, I purchased the wood and drew out the plans of the old case. Off I went into the garage, well wrapped up, to make a start. The case began to look quite impressive and I felt proud that I had manufactured this from scratch.

I was making good progress and it soon started to look like a centreboard case. Once again I referred to my two mentors for some invaluable advice as this process had already been carried out in Hugh's workshop.

Our boat was locked away in a remote garage for most of December and January due to the cold weather and the frost. It has been the one condition that Karen had stipulated — if the frost was coming her car needed to be in the garage or I had to scrape the ice off

before leaving for work, As getting up is not my strong point I decided that the extra 10 minutes in bed was worth having our boat some two miles away!

The sailing season looms

February came around. The months just seemed to disappear into each other. I was very conscious that the sailing season was only around the corner so I needed to step up a gear to be ready for the big launch!

We had a couple of good day with regards to the temperature so I managed to plan ahead and get the case back in and rebuild the bulkhead, got an undercoat on the hull and a diluted coat on the deck. I was going at a great rate of knots (pardon the pun).

"...it did seem to go on a little like treacle."

We decided to use 2 Pack Paint after advice from my mentors and because of the durability of the products. However it did seem to go on a little like treacle until I got the hang of it. Hopefully I might pull it off as long as I don't park next to or sail too close to the Paintcraft boats!

March arrived and the weather started to improve, so our boat came back home and we managed to get the hull painted and a coat on the decks. I was amazed how shiny it was but very happy as it should be on target to plane through the water very fast.

In April the weather is looked good so we came up with a plan to leave Karen's car outside so our boat had the garage all



Progress clockwise from top left:

From the stripped down hull to the first sail of the season via painting and varnishing, a new centreboard case and fitting out

to itself. Now we can work on it during the evenings. The floorboards and some of the rigging were added. We had to work out how to refit the toe straps and genoa halyard, once again relying heavily on photographs and emails from two great GP owners.

"...I'm not sure I would have believed it was possible"

I even managed to sneak down to Bishopthorpe for a cheeky look under the covers at a few boats to see how things had been installed on them. This helped me so much in preparing our boat for the next chapter and the sailing seasons ahead.

It's starting to look like we might just pull it off and have a floating boat which will give

a few years of enjoyable sailing on the river. It has been a very enjoyable few months and a massive learning curve for us both but I would definitely do it again.

Looking back through some of the pictures I'm not sure I would have believed that it was possible and I'm sure that the results would not have been anywhere near as good without the help and assistance of my two great friends — a big thank you to them both.

PS If you do decide to carry out anything similar make sure you allow plenty of time as you will need it!

R U Taking The P?

York's unique males-only charity race for **Prostate Cancer Awareness and Research** is ten years old this year. The 5K event dreamed up by city runner Brian Hughes in 2009, takes place on **Father's Day (June 16th, 9.30am)** as usual, and returns to Bishopthorpe Road after a successful tie-in with a street party organised by local traders last year.

Mike Craggs is taking part again this year and is hoping some more of our members join him. This year successful competitors will take away a water bottle and a medal. Entry fee:£17 (individual)

The organisers are keen to have more sponsored runners so if running/walking 5km doesn't appeal the how about sponsoring Mike!

<https://www.yorkagainstcancer.org.uk/events/r-u-taking-p-sunday-june-16>

Travelling with the Aero

Peter Craggs

Peter ended the racing season by competing in three Open Meetings starting in Scotland and finishing near Bristol

The end of the Championship season always seems to herald the rapid approach of the year end and with it comes a glut of open meetings. Spurred on by a good week at Weymouth, I was back on the road in early September. This time it was a rare foray north with a trip to East Lothian Yacht Club, which is the venue for the 2019 Aero Nationals.

This weekend ELYC was playing host to the Aero Northern Championships and, with the classic forecast of two halves (Saturday was reasonable, Sunday not so inviting), it looked the ideal test event. Arriving on Friday I was ready in plenty of time for a midday start on Saturday. Three races were promised plus the option of a standalone *Round the Islands* race at the end of the day.

"You think we have access issues..."

I do rather like the waters off North Berwick. ELYC always seems to deliver a nice mix of weather and they are a friendly club who seem genuinely pleased that you are visiting. The other plus is the race area is only minutes off the beach. As much as I enjoyed Weymouth, the monster sail home does grate after a while.

Round the Islands

The three races on Saturday were sailed in a building but predominantly light breeze and a decent tide that always seemed to make mark roundings more difficult than they should be.

With three OK results in the bag it seemed a good idea to join in with the Islands race. Starting from the same line



Peter heads ashore at the end of Sunday's racing at ELYC

we'd used all day (between the harbour and Bass Rock) it was a hefty (probably two mile) beat into a fierce tide to a mark alongside the island known as *The Lamb* and then round the island itself. (The mark was to help ensure you kept away from the rocks!). Back downwind to the much larger island, *Craigleith*, where you had to judge how far away was far enough to avoid the wind shadow, before rounding a normal mark for the beat to a finish line. It turned into a brutal race. I was happy I'd done it, but wouldn't be rushing to repeat the experience.

Wild winds & a choppy sea

Sunday promised to be different, wind was promised and it duly delivered. Walking to the club I could see the sea state was distinctly bumpy so I was ready for a big day out. The dinghy park was busy with people swapping rigs.

Launching was easy and the wind only got exciting once away from the harbour.

I'm not sure how many of the original 18

boats made the start line but by the end of the first race we were down to around six boats. It was wild with wind against tide making it pretty lumpy. The running leg was the least pleasant part of the course but the tide did at least mean the upwind leg was assisted.

"...swept under barges, never to be seen again!"

We sailed the full programme of three races and, thanks to a string of good results in the big breeze, I was suddenly third overall and the first English boat. (Not that there was a prize for that!) I'm hoping for a similar windy week in late July for the Nationals!

Racing on the Thames

About a month later, it was the Annual Aero River Championships. This time we were on the Thames. Upper Thames YC was the host. Located at Bourne End around 10 miles from Maidenhead it was completely new territory for me.

You think we have access issues...

Between the car park and the river there was a railway line. Admittedly it was a single-track branch line, but railways are railways. (A wise old head once told me even light engines are heavy). So it was **Stop. Look. Listen.** Then pull your boat over the crossing. I go sailing to get away from work!

"Maybe our river isn't as bad as we sometimes think."

I had sailed on the Thames before, many, many years ago. We were in Toppers, sailing outside Parliament. All I remember was the horrifically strong tide and tales of being swept under barges, never to be seen again!



This was a very different river, slow moving, with low banks, surprisingly

lacking in river traffic. It was not at all like home. The wind was weird, the full *'it's not normally like this'* speech was duly delivered. It poured with rain all day which didn't enhance the experience. Four races two each side of lunch kept us moving but did signal the end of summer! Maybe our river isn't as bad as we sometimes think.

Aero Inlands

A week later it was the Inlands, new territory again. This time it was a trip to Chew Valley Lake located somewhere south of Bristol. The forecast was breezy, I arrived on Friday (at a remarkably hard to find lake) in a full-on gale. The club helpfully allowed me to store the boat indoors to stop it blowing away! Saturday dawned brighter but not much lighter so we

were held on shore for a few hours before racing was abandoned.

Sunday was better, much better and a fourth race was added on the day to the programme. The race officer was brutally efficient so those with long journeys (me!) were still off the water in decent time for the long slog home.

Racing was short and sharp with a gusty breeze providing some entertainment. This was enhanced by the sheer quantity of weed that was attached to any mast during a capsized.

It was a friendly club and I'm glad I've been but it's a long way for a weekend.

I was very pleased to note that this year's Inlands are at the almost northern venue of Rutland!



Ullswater weekend

This year our Club's annual trip to **Ullswater** is on the weekend of **29th—30th June**. Once again we will be camping at Ullswater Holiday Park and sailing from their launch site about a mile away.

It is always an enjoyable weekend. If you haven't been before why not come along. It is a chance to sail on a large stretch of water, head for Pooley Bridge or venture down to Howtown or beyond.

Some of us arrive on the Friday (or even earlier in the week) and others can only manage a day. Most of us camp in the top field. We have a DIY barbecue on Saturday night, rain or shine. The early birds like to go for a very early 'sail' on Sunday morning whilst the rest of us stay in bed.

