

Lyhner Barge CIC

The 'Lynher Barge' is a community interest company which specialises in historic boat restoration with the aim of providing communities with access to their local maritime heritage. 'Lynher' is a Tamar sailing barge built in 1896



by James Goss. Lynher was built to transport post and groceries from Tideford on the River Tiddy (a tributary of the River Tamar) to Devonport. During her lifetime she then continue her trade by transporting Blue Elvan stone from the Treluggan Quarries to Plymouth where the stone was used to build roads.

During the middle of WWII Lynher was requisitioned by the government to be a barrage balloon vessell. It is extraordinary that Lynher



survived the bombing whilst other Tamar barges were sank by the German bombers. She continued to work until the early 1950's, and was abandoned by Poldrissik Quarry in the early 1960s and left to sink in the mud.

In the early 1980 a Cornishman from Newquay, Charlie Force, found a mention of Lynher in a book and he decided to resurrect her. It took Charlie a whole summer to dig the mud out of Lynher. He refloated her and brought her to Morwellham Quay where a lengthy restoration began. Charlie and many friends and local community members, completed the Lynher restoration in 1989 and Lynher started to sail again.

Wendy Yates bought Lynher from Charlie in 2000. She soon found that she could not maintain

Lynher and, following years of disrepair, in 2016 she donated Lynher to Dominic and Barbara Bridgman who founded the Lynher CIC and started to restore Lynher once again with help from the local communities of the Plymouth waterways.

Since her restoration the Lynher barge has delivered an alternative type of water-based education to the communities of the Plymouth waterways. Through our maritime heritage, people and communities learn life-long skills and a sense of identity with their local area.



www.tamarbarge.org.uk

About Ibis

Ibis is a Cornish Fishing Lugger built on traditional fishing hull lines. At 42' in length, 13' beam, and 6' draft (7' with her working gear onboard) she was one of the biggest Luggers working



from Mevagissey for many years, and her catch numbers were legendary. Ibis is the holder of two fishing records:

- > The Largest catch of Pilchard ever landed by a Cornish Drift Netter (2346 Stone).
- > The Largest catch of Turbot, long-line caught, from the Ray Pitts (English Channel) in July 1952 (896 Stone).

Ibis was built in 1929 by Percy Mitchell of Mevagissey and Port Mellon. He was described by Dr Claud Worth, an eminent yacht





designer, as “an artist in wood”, and by Cmdr W B Luard as “one of the finest traditional boat builders in the world”. Percy Mitchell was born in Mevagissey in 1900. His talent for boatbuilding was soon recognised and he was able to start his own

boatbuilding business at the young age of 21.

Drawn plans in this period were uncommon, but Ibis’s lines were drawn in a bedroom of Percy Mitchell home in Mevagissey. It is a sad thing that those line drawings have been lost over time. The normal procedure was to build a scale model 1”:1’ – the lines decided upon by commissioner and builder. Once agreed upon, the drawing would be transferred to the floor of the building shed, and the builders could transfer the lines to wood.

Ibis was built in traditional fishing boat fashion, on Cornish fishing hull lines. All pitch pine, full length planking on grown oak frames, closed seemed and built so well that there was no caulking in the hull. Ibis was built as a commission for the Lakeman’s, a fishing family from Mevagissey.



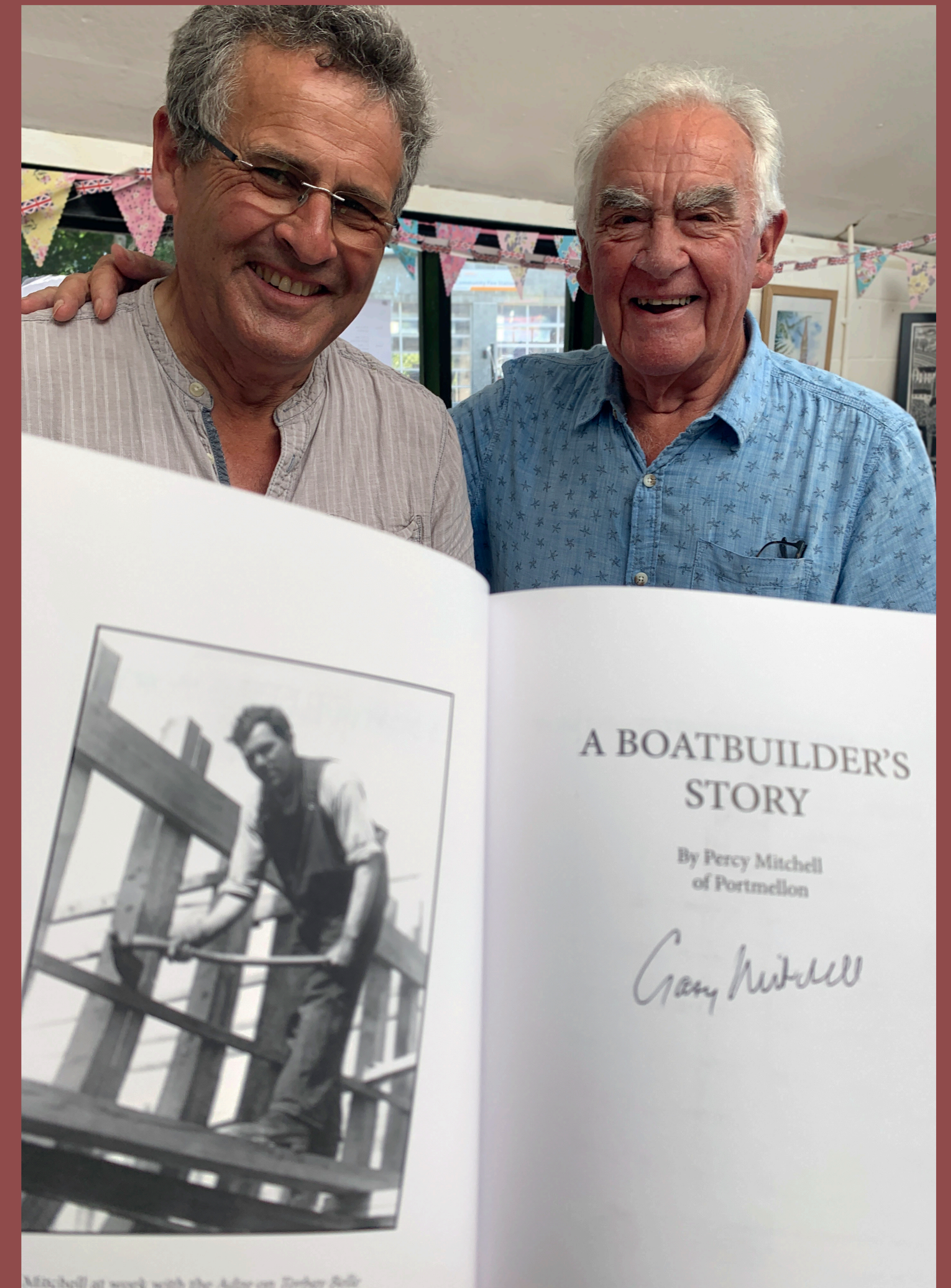
Laid out in the open, the building of Ibis took form over the summer months, on an area of ground where once pilchard cellars and seine lofts had once stood.



In 1968 Percy Mitchell wrote his autobiography, 'A Boat builders Story', where his account of Ibis being built, and launched, is remarkable.

“The Moon was nearing full when the Ibis FY119 was pulled along the road by the winch toward the sea; she was lowered down on her side and rested on greased ways, keel and bilge... Ibis was very heavy and it was almost a dead pull; the difficulty I had now was that although we had the winch, we did not have enough wire to go with it. What we had kept parting when the heavy strain came on it we found the snatch blocks and points to pull from were far from satisfactory. We used a spar that was allotted for her Mizzen Mast, in one instance to pull from; with the result that when the strain came on it, it snapped in two”

A Boat builders Story by Percy Mitchell 1968.



During the Second World War Lugger's, like many of the fishing fleet, became targets for the German Bombers. Ibis herself was shot upon. It is reputed that a crewmember took a wound to the arm.

Eddie Lakeman, skipper and owner of the Ibis for many years, was known up and down the Cornish coast as a brave and skilled fisherman. With Ibis, Eddie's catch numbers were legendary. He is reputed to have stood in the wheelhouse when bad weather came their way and say "She'd face a lion, boy!"

In the mid 1960's Eddie Lakeman sold her on, where she went to Mousehole/Newlyn under skipper and owner Jonney 'Conger', until being sold in the mid 1960's to a Salcombe Fisherman, Robin Gavin.

In 1972, Herbie Uren brought Ibis back from Salcombe to Porthleven, Mounts Bay. Here, Ibis worked the unfriendly waters of the Lizard peninsula crabbing in the summer and mackereling in the winter. Her registration Letters and Numbers changed from FY119 to PZ149. In 1978, the Merchant Shipping Act changed



and Ibis fell foul of the new regulations as she was over 40ft. Herbie Uren sold Ibis on, to Paul Greenwood of Looe. Here, Ibis became FY519, and was one of the last working Lugger's to work from Looe Harbour.



Ibis evolved for every need and new form of trade; from long lining, crabbing, sharking, a charter boat, DTI licensed for diving and fishing.

When the Merchant Shipping acts changed again, in 1988 Ibis lost her licence to fish. Ibis could

not compete with the stumpy and beamy trawlers that were appearing over Europe.

In May 1990, Ibis was granted the honour of being registered as a Historic Fishing Vessel by the MCA, and granted the honour of being allowed to wear her (defaced) registration Numbers and Letters.

It was at this time that Paul and Maggie Greenwood started up the Cornish Lugger Association, and held the first Looe Lugger Regatta since the turn of the century. This biannual event is a wonderful

opportunity to see the Lugger's as they once were - a Fleet.

In 2001 Paul Greenwood sold Ibis. She went to Martin Pomeroy of Brixham, and stayed in Torbay, being later owned by Andrew Clemants of Dartmouth and, in 2005 by Lee Moody.



The Restoration of Ibis

The restoration is so important because Ibis represents a boat construction, the one of the Lugger, which has proven to be immortal. Many replicas of luggers are built nowadays and the few historic ones left are all different due to the era in which they were built.

Lynher CIC took over Ibis in May 2022. Her conditions were so precarious that it took several weeks to stabilise her and move her from Falmouth to Millbrook in SE Cornwall.





A team of experienced boat builders came together to carry out the restoration. Chris Rees, who trained on Ibis with Paul Greenwood when he was 18 years old. Grahame Butler, who restored other iconic luggers, included his own, 'Reliance'. His son Bill, who decided to follow in his father's footsteps and learned through Ibis restoration and many other incredibly dedicated people with a passion for keeping maritime heritage skills alive, including asylum seekers and refugees who volunteered in the project.



The Future of Ibis

Sail Trade South West aims

Encourage Maritime Heritage being used to promote sail trade as a real alternative to fossil fuel powered transportation of goods whilst fostering the traditional skills of sailing and shipwrighting for the future generations.

Provide opportunities for people of all ages to experience traditional sailing. To enjoy the seascape and connect to marine life whilst learning transferrable skills on a Cornish heritage vessel.

Highlight regenerative food production and celebrate circular and local food economy by linking coastal communities through shared heritage and sail trade economy.



Many thanks to

This exhibition was produced by young people working with Fotonow at *Unlocked Youth* who enjoyed meeting everyone involved at team Ibis.



Thanks to the National Lottery Players who helped fund the Sail Trade South West project, Ibis has now gained a new lease of life. Fully restored and able to carry close to a 1,000kg of produce, a new chapter awaits this iconic fishing lugger. Ibis will run a regular route across to Brittany from Plymouth to collect fair trade produce from small producers to transport under sail to the food markets of the South West of England promoting a carbon neutral economy and lifestyle.



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