

The “Celia Elisabeth”

Cornish Lugger

This 20ft Cornish lugger (a Pilchard Driver) was built by the students of the Falmouth Marine School in 2007 and launched and named in November that year.

Her name is that of the daughter of one of the students, Andrew Gill. Celia was born shortly before the launch!

The history of her design is complicated in that the school wanted to build boats that covered as many aspects of wooden boat building as possible. Originally the school had discovered the plans of a boat built in Sennen in 1892; a Sennen crabber, “Silver Stream”. She was owned by a Sennen fisherman M.H.Nicholas. In 2003 the students that year built two replica boats “Silver Harvest” and “Silver Stream”; however the school wanted something more challenging and research found the ‘lines’ of a boat built in Newlyn in 1902 by Blewetts of Newlyn, called the “Veracity”. Veracity was owned by a Paul Humphreys of Mousehole, and she lived and worked out of that port. The problem was that she was 33ft and too big for the course students to tackle. The school technician Mike Selwood and the course manager Adrian Fielding compromised, and using a computer program, they reduced and adjusted the design until they had what they wanted. Six 20ft luggers of this new design were built over the next three years. In 2006 the decking was reduced and the keel expanded to accommodate a propeller shaft should anyone want to fit an auxiliary engine, and so the “Celia Elisabeth” was created.

An honest assessment of Celia Elisabeth’s pedigree is that she is a hybridised ‘pilchard driver’, developed from two ancient Cornish boats, “Silver Stream” of Sennen and the “Veracity” of Newlyn. What she is, is a beautiful traditional Cornish boat; built in Cornwall by Cornishmen and however much a new boat she may be, she is very much a ‘Cornish Lugger’.

She is now owned and sailed by Peter Morgan, Celia’s grandfather. She will be a Mount’s Bay boat sailing out from Penzance, Newlyn and Mousehole: a cherished addition to the increasingly popular ‘Red Sails in the Bay’

Falmouth Marine School has now built 9 Cornish pilchard drivers:-

	Name	Type	Owner	Where now
2003	Silver Stream.	Replica	Robert Simper	Looe
2003	Silver Harvest	Replica		Falmouth
2004	Veracity	Hybrid	S. Matthews	St Michael's Mount.
2004	Verity	Hybrid		Clovelly
2005	2 'Boiler House Boats'		Unknown; sold by auction in 2008	
2006	Upward	Hybrid	FMS	Falmouth
2006	Onward	Hybrid	FMS	Falmouth
2007	Celia Elisabeth	Hybrid	Peter Morgan	Penzance

The Falmouth Marine School has now built and repaired and restored many traditional wooden boats. Some of her more recent builds include:-

2007	Little Lily	18ft Clovelly 'Picaroon'	Clovelly
2008	Willie Johns	22ft launch	Falmouth