



New Thames sailing barge heels to the breeze for the first time



In 1930 one of the very last sailing barges was launched, her name was Blue Mermaid.

Her end together with that of her crew came during the war when she was mined in the Thames Estuary.

In May 2019 a full-sized replica of Blue Mermaid undertook her first shakedown sail in the River Blackwater.

Commissioned by Sea-Change in order to further develop their work with young people, Blue Mermaid was built by Toms and Son in Polruan and towed to Maldon, Essex for fitting out and rigging by Heritage Marine and James Lawrence Sailmakers.

Like her elder twin she is built of steel, remains engineless to deliver a low carbon operation and differs only in order to comply with modern maritime safety regulations.

The Sea-Change Sailing Trust makes a real impact on the lives of young people. Blue Mermaid will enable them to work with cargo in commercially minded training courses and take traditional seamanship training to a new level, giving them the opportunity to consider a career in the maritime world.

The charity will continue in parallel to deliver its traditional work residentially at sea with young people experiencing learning difficulties, suffering exclusion, disadvantage etc. in a structured and safe yet challenging environment.

To learn more please visit seachangesailingtrust.org.uk

