

## **Falmouth Classics May Press Release**

### **Fleet entries for Falmouth Classics 17 -19 the June**

The Atkins Ferrie Wealth Management Falmouth Classics, which takes place from the 17 -19th has been delighted to receive entries from the Cornish Maritime Trust who are entering all four of their boats for the first time, whilst local builder of wooden boats, Ben Harris, will see three of the boats he has built participating.

The Cornish Maritime Trust's flagship Barnabas, a St Ives lugger, has been a regular Classics participant for several years and was the 2021 poster boat. She is set to be the oldest boat entered for the 2022 event having been built in 1881. Barnabas was first registered as a St Ives Class2 pilchard boat, but later as a mackerel driver. She is the sole survivor of a fleet of over a 1000. Likely to be the second oldest entry is Ellen, a 17' Gorran Haven crabber launched in 1882. She was built by Dick Pill for the Willmott Family and is reputed to be the fastest Gorran Haven Crabber ever built. Her lines and spritsail rig are specific to her home area. By 1900 she was being fished by the Billings brothers, Dick and Andrew, who moved her to Flushing on the Penryn River, as there were too many crabbers in Gorran Haven! She is believed to be the last of her kind still sailing. The third entry by the Trust is Soft Wing, a Truro River Oyster Dredger built by Frank Hitchens at Point on the River Fal in 1900. During the 1950s she was also used for shark fishing in the summer. The fourth Trust entry is Silver Stream, a true replica of a 22ft 1890's Sennen Cove crabber, which is on loan to the Trust. She was built in 2003 by the Falmouth Marine School and was owned for several years by the marine writer Robert Simper who kept her at Looe. The Trust intend to use her to help develop the skills of future 'dipping lugger' skippers and mates, in preparation for taking the tiller and sailing Barnabas.

Rob McDowell said "The Cornish Maritime Trust is really excited to be entering all four vessels in Falmouth Classics this year. It's a first! We hope their participation will generate a greater interest in traditional sailing from a wider public. It should be a spectacle, seeing dipping luggers, gaffers and sprit-rigged vessels coasting alongside each other. To help preserve these historic boats, we're keen to welcome more members to our growing community. You don't have to be an experienced sailor to join us, but most folks like getting involved. We venture out on day, evening and longer cruises, but with four vessels, we hopefully have the flexibility to provide something for everyone. Sailing from Mousehole, Newlyn and Falmouth, family membership is around £40 a year, so it's an affordable way to sail some of the simplest wooden boats afloat".

Ben Harris, currently based at Gweek Classic Boatyard has recently completed Constance, a 34' gaff cutter launched on May 15th and in build from 2019. Influenced by Falmouth Working Boats, she was designed by Jack Gifford for a member of the consortia that owns Florence, the Falmouth Working Boat based in St Mawes. The construction is carvel with planking of larch on oak frames sourced from the Tregothnan estate. Constance will be joined by Alva, built along the lines of a Falmouth Quay Punt, launched in 2011 and owned by Ben. The two boats will be competing with each other in the same class which Alva won in 2021. The third entry that he has built is Panacea. She was launched in 2018 and participated in the Classics that year and then was shipped to the Swan River in Western Australia for her new owner. Concern about

the dryness of the climate and the impact on the non-native timber resulted in her being shipped back. She is now moored at St Just in Roseland. Ben Harris said "I am really chuffed about having three boats that I have built, participating in the same event and also that both Constance and Panacea are moored locally".

All seven boats will be alongside the Falmouth Haven during the event and can be viewed by the public on the 18th June between 09.00 and 10.30 and again from 16.00 - 18.00. Access to the Haven is free, but donations to the RNLI or Coast Medic will be welcome.

## **Images**

257 Barnabas a St Ives lugger launched in 1881 and the sole survivor of a 1000 similar craft sailing in the 2019 Falmouth Classics  
Credit: Doug Jackson

Ellen an 1882 Gorran Cove crabber now based at Mousehole  
Credit: Cornish Maritime Trust

DSC 00739 Constance built by Ben Harris Wooden Boats between 2019 and 2022 awaiting launch day  
Credit: Don Garman

## **Notes for Editors**

### **Falmouth Classics Association**

Falmouth Classics Association Ltd is a not-for-profit company, run by volunteers, which seeks to encourage the maintenance, renovation, and recreation of traditional craft by providing an annual three-day event to enable owners to sail, race and showcase their vessels.

Eligible vessels will have been designed and/or built on or before 1972. More recently built craft are eligible if they are built to a pre-1972 design or influenced by an early design or built or rigged traditionally.

Further information about Falmouth Classics: [www.falmouthclassics.org.uk](http://www.falmouthclassics.org.uk)

### **Cornish Maritime Trust**

The Trust Seeks to preserve Cornwall's maritime heritage by maintaining and sailing working vessels from the days of sail. The Trust works to educate people about the Cornish maritime heritage, and to train people in the skills associated with sailing, restoring and maintaining them.

The Cornish Maritime Trust is a registered charity no: 1037745.

Website <http://www.cornishmaritimetrust.org>

### **Ben Harris Boats**

Ben Harris Boats website: <http://www.benharrisboats.co.uk>

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