

Farewell to *Athene*

Recent visitors to Anstruther may have seen the *Athene* in the harbour, but in early September she departed for her new home port because she has been sold.



One of the purposes of the Museum's Boatyard is to maintain traditional boatbuilding and restoration skills amongst the museum staff and volunteers and, in this respect, the restoration of *Athene* has provided numerous opportunities.

Athene is a 20 foot creel boat built around 1932 by an unknown builder. She was donated to the Boatyard, by Gordon Scobie's family, as a restoration project. Although Gordon lived in Dunfermline he had been a keen Boats Club member for many years & took great pride in arranging sea faring festivals at the North Queensferry Sailing Club with the *Reaper* and *White Wing* in attendance. He had restored various boats over the years but due to illness he never completed the *Athene* so his last request to the Club was to finish what he had begun!



Gordon Scobie, whose family donated *Athene* to the boatyard.

Some of the hull woodwork needed attention due to wood rot, which is to be expected in any boat of this age. Two starboard side planks below the gunwale were removed and replaced. The *Athene* has a clinker-built hull, so

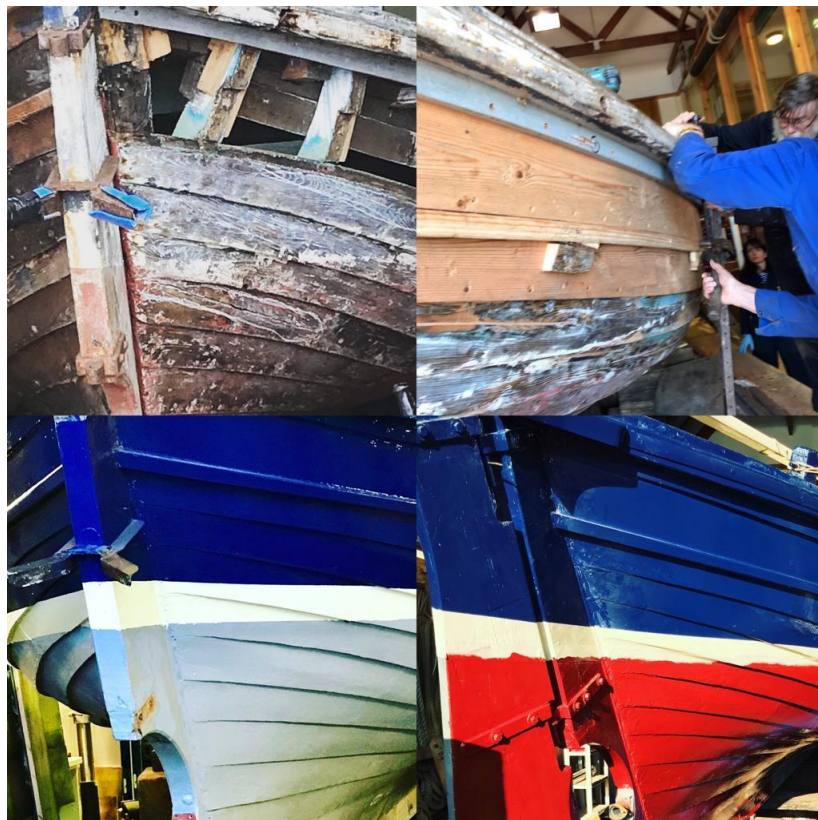
the overlap of the new planks was fastened to the adjacent planks using copper rivets, in the traditional way.

Small areas of wood rot in the garboard plank adjacent to the keel were excised and replaced with inlays, called graving pieces. This technique allows repairs to be affected with minimal intervention and permits retention of as much of the original fabric of the historic vessel as possible. With the use of modern epoxy resin glues, graving pieces are highly durable.



A graving piece in the garboard.

The hull has been thoroughly scraped, primed and repainted inside and out. New breasthooks were shaped from single pieces of oak and bolted into place. The deck seams have been caulked and sealed with pitch.



The stages of re-planking and painting the hull.

The engine, a 3-cylinder Lister air-cooled diesel, has been thoroughly overhauled, fitted with new injectors, silencer, and starter motor and reinstalled.

After launching, some leakage through the hull was noted, as was expected, because the sealing between the planks depends on their expanding as they take up water. After a few days, the leakage diminished considerably.

Athene has now been sold, and we wish her and her new owner well. We hope that the work done in the boatyard will contribute to a successful future. Given the large number of hours of work that Boats Club volunteers have willingly put into the project, there is no doubt the new owner has secured a bargain! However, the Boatyard and volunteers have also benefitted from preserving traditional techniques, learning new skills and having the satisfaction of seeing the job through to completion and knowing, by all accounts, that *Athene* has gone to a good home.



Wince Stewart, Dave Crowther and Dave Raeside, members of the restoration team.

Nick Chalmers, SFM Boats Club, September 2020