



Project leader David Lewin enjoys a well-earned beer as *Barangoola* nears completion

# Wreck to riches

Ben Meakins reveals how a team of volunteers restored a long-forgotten Hunter 19 for less than £5,000 – and raised £17,000 for the new Burnham-on-Crouch RNLI station by making it the first prize in a competition

**I**f you managed to get to the London Boat Show this year, you probably stumbled across a pristine Hunter 19. Despite being tucked away in a corner of the ExCeL centre's cavernous North Hall, *Barangoola* was effortlessly holding her own among the acres of shining glassfibre and polished stainless steel – and you could be forgiven for thinking she was a brand new



Dynamic duo: RNLI volunteers Dick Rycroft and Norman Gullen

boat. But the circles under the eyes of the volunteers manning the stand and the occasional tinge of blue antifouling dust would reveal a somewhat different story.

*Barangoola*, which means 'rising tide' in Aborigine, was restored from a wreck and raffled off to raise funds for Burnham-on-Crouch's new lifeboat station appeal. Three months before the show she was half-concealed in a Burnham

hedge, where David Lewin, the brains behind the project, found her.

'She was in a back garden, basically pushed into a hedge, where she'd been sitting for four years. She was totally neglected, full of water and had been parked beneath an apple tree and was full of rotting fruit. She was quite a sight!'

David was keen to show that with a bit of TLC, some new fixtures





Barangoola had been sitting underneath an apple tree for four years

**‘She was in a back garden, basically pushed into a hedge, where she’d been sitting for four years’**

and fittings, general repairs and a fair bit of elbow grease, a cheap wreck could be returned to use, all for under £5,000. ‘Sailing isn’t restricted to the wealthy – it doesn’t necessarily have to cost a fortune,’ he said, ‘and we wanted to show that anyone can get afloat’. Barangoola was rescued from her leafy grave by a £800 grant, courtesy of the Marine Trades Association.

But before any work could be done, *Barangoola* came under the surveyor’s close scrutiny. ‘As was common with early GRP boats, she’d been built like a brick outhouse, so the hull was fine, its moisture readings were within limits and there was no sign of osmosis. We pumped up the tyres and gingerly towed her to nearby Rice & Cole boatyard, where the great refit could begin.’

**Sanding time**

The next few days were spent in a haze of blue dust. ‘We got through £120 of sanding discs’ said David. Everything was removed. ‘You start out with huge enthusiasm and nothing is too difficult. We had an army of people scraping, cleaning, and chucking out of all the rubbish inside.’

The hull was sanded back,



TOP: A sorry state ABOVE: The cockpit stripped out LEFT: Primed and painted



The team of volunteers used £120 worth of sanding discs in preparing the hull







A bunk was sacrificed to make way for a small galley, storage space and the boat's basic electrics



New winches and genoa tracks could be bolted on once the paint had cured



*'Ripping her apart was easy. Now came the tougher, lonelier part!'*

before being coated with three coats of International GelShield epoxy primer and Perfection undercoat, before she went into the shed to be sprayed. In David's words: 'She went into the paint shop and came out looking like a swan – except she couldn't swim or fly!'

Next came the tough part. 'Ripping her apart was easy. Now came the tougher, lonelier bit,

which needed skill, patience and care while we rebuilt the interior and constructed the cockpit.' The flood of volunteers was replaced by the 'dynamic duo' of Norman Gullen, RNLI Burnham's Deputy Launch Authority, and Dick Rycroft, Burnham's Lifeboat Operations Manager carried on with the refit. They carried out the rest of the work, day in, day out.

**INTERIOR:** The original interior sported four bunks but that left no room for anything else, so it was decided to sacrifice a bunk (if four people tried to sleep in the boat there was no room for any kit whatsoever!) and create space for a small galley with a fresh water pump, fed from a small jerrycan in the cockpit lazarette. The sink is a washing up bowl, and there's a small portable gas cooker.

Beneath the quarterberth there's a new 85Ah battery, powering a NASA Clipper Duet depth and log, a masthead light and two interior lights.

The cushions' foam was in good condition but the covers weren't, so new ones were made by the local Stitch and Craft club.

**RIG:** Before taking up residence in the hedge, *Barangoola* had

## In the paint shop...



Once the hull was sanded, filled and prepared, *Barangoola* headed for the paint shop.



The topsides were primed and painted with three coats of International Perfection Undercoat...



...followed by three coats of Perfection Topcoat and FLAG cruising antifouling





**ABOVE** Dick works on a removable teak grating for the cockpit floor



**LEFT** New cushion covers - the foam was in good condition



**The completed interior, on display at the London Boat Show**

sported a cut-down Dragon rig, but this was considered too skinny and vulnerable. A call back to a previous owner found the original mast in good condition. A squib boom was found and all the standing rigging replaced. The sails were valeted and found to be in perfectly good condition.

**COCKPIT:** This had, at some point, been adapted to a self-draining cockpit, like that found on the Hunter 19's cousin, the Europa – but the cockpit floor had been 'boxed in' with plywood and badly glassfibreed to raise it above the waterline, so the team chopped it out and made a hardwood grating, which is in two parts and can be removed to reveal a bilge pump sump. Two powerful pumps were fitted, one to bail the cockpit and the other the bilges.

**TRAILER:** The central spine, and indeed much of the rest of the metalwork on the trailer, was replaced, along with its bearings and tyres, and the whole thing painted a smart shade of white.

*Barangoola* took up residence near the main stage at the London Boat Show. The raffle raised £17,000 for the lifeboat house appeal, and she was won by Ian Grimster. He doesn't live near the sea, and has never owned a boat, but last year he did a Competent Crew course with Sunsail and his two sons live on the Solent.

Ian told PBO. 'When I saw *Barangoola* I was amazed to find out that you can buy an old boat and do it up so well for such a reasonable cost.'

**WHAT WE SPENT**

Parts list	Manufacturer – Cost
Hunter 19 sailboat	£800.00
Clipper Duet Instruments	NASA Marine Ltd – £150.00
Windows	Houdini Marine Windows Ltd – £395.00
Skin fitting for bilge pump, Winch handle pocket, Horseshoe Buoy, Plastic bailer, Brittany anchor 8kg, Chain/warp/shackle, Ventilators, Bilge Pump 925c, Hose, Clips, Strum box, Switch panel, Socket and plug, Battery switch, Halogen lamps, Mini Contest compass, 75AH battery, Battery box, Battery terminals, Fire blanket, Fire extinguisher, First Aid box	Plastimo – £635.00
2x Nautilus winches No 8, Genoa cars & track, Deck fittings Mainsheet traveller system, Vang system	Barton Marine – £910.00
F2.5 Long shaft outboard motor	Yamaha – £579.00
2-Pack Perfection white paint, 2-Pack Perfection Undercoat, Watertite epoxy filler, Gelshield 200	International Paints £408.00
Cruising antifouling, Bilge Paint, Multi Purpose Metallic Primer, Yacht varnish	FLAG Paints – £78.00
Hatch seals	NER-Seals – £12.00
Upholstery material	Toomer & Hayter – £100.00
2x Harken No6 winches	Harken – £160.00
Sanding discs	£70.00
Barangoola signs	£27.00
Nuts, bolts, screws, sealant etc	Various – £250.00
Timber	£100.00
Rigging and cordage	£300.00

**TOTAL** **£4,974.00**

David Lewin reckons it could have even been done for even less. 'Much of our equipment was donated, but had we paid market value, we'd have spent a total of £4,974, just under our target. We could have spent less than £3,000, had we re-used some of the existing equipment and not gone down the professional spraying route. We did the whole refit in two and a half months with an army of people – but reckon it would have taken one man about a year's worth of weekends and evenings.' That's by no means unreasonable to get boating on a budget.



**The raffle raised £17,000 for RNLI Burnham's lifeboat house appeal**