

# BOAT IS RESTORED TO FORMER GLORY

## Conservation enthusiasts finish their first project

By JAYNE OLIVER

**A GROUP of maritime enthusiasts has just finished restoring its first old boat to its former glory.**

And it'll be riding the crest of a wave next month when the Royal Diadem II returns to the Tyne.

Over the last year, 20 volunteers from the South Shields-based North East Maritime Trust have been working on the restoration of the old Northumbrian sailing coble.

And thanks to a £9,400 National Lottery Heritage grant, the group has succeeded in making the 29ft vessel shipshape once again.

It's the first project the trust, based in Wapping Street in South Shields, has completed since it formed five years ago.

Now it hopes more volunteers will join up as it seeks to give further old boats a new lease of life.

Trust director David Parker said: "It is important that we use the opportunity of a vessel in the workshop to fully understand and pass on the history and associated boat-building skills required for each vessel."

"It has been a wonderful experience to get so much enthusiasm and interest from so many visitors, some of whom signed up and began working with us straight away after seeing this fascinating project."

"We thank all of those that have visited the workshop for their enthusiasm and support for this project."

"There will be fresh opportunities for members of the North East Maritime Trust to taste the sailing experience of such a vessel."

"There will always be restoration projects ongoing at the workshops, and everyone is welcome to join in."

"We need people with little or no woodworking skills to get involved."



**THE END IS NIGH ... North East Maritime Trust volunteers putting the finishing touches to their National Lottery-funded coble restoration project. (IRN 497410)**

"The only requirement is enthusiasm and passion for our maritime heritage."

All the Royal Diadem II, built in 1948 by Harrison's of Amble, needs before returning to the water is a fresh paint job, with sponsorship for the work already secured from International Paints.

Mr Parker added: "We have been able to show people the lifestyle and

fishing history of this coast, and to contribute to saving our maritime history by keeping alive the wood-working skills required to build and maintain this unique style of vessel."

"Volunteers have been able to revive and learn traditional skills which are rapidly disappearing."

"Our sincere thanks go to Fred Crowell, the last wooden boat builder and repairer on the river, for his help, expertise and everlasting patience, and also to International Paints."

Among the other craft the trust is restoring are the Henry Frederick Swan, a former Tyneside lifeboat, and Spring Tide, a 16ft fishing boat from Whitburn.

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— trust director David Parker