

**RASC Coquet**  
**(Royal Army Service Corps.)**

A rare opportunity to take part in a round Britain voyage in a fully restored and re- engined classic ex-Military vessel.  
I am seeking crew willing to help run the boat, and would be keen to take any interested people who are prepared to share the experience as well as the expenses.



Early days 1945. Old wheelhouse. Found again. Today

**Coquet** is a River Class boat, one of 40 built by the British Powerboat Co. at Hythe, on the Solent, Southampton.

The boats were all named after British Rivers, and **Coquet** was built in 1945.

The boats were employed by the RASC doing a variety of tasks which included VIP transport, target towing, and many were shipped to outposts around the world.

**Coquet** worked out of Yarmouth, the Isle of Wight, Plymouth and Dartmouth.

There are 11, possibly 12, remaining boats of this class.

I found **Coquet** in a boatyard in Cornwall, out of the water, and in a very run down condition.

She still had her two Perkins S6M engines installed.

The owner had brought her down from Swansea, South Wales 2 or 3 years previously, and had great plans to use her for film work.

She had been painted grey for her part in the film, when unfortunately the contract was cancelled. He tried a variety of ideas to make use of her, but eventually gave up, and left her, high and dry.

I had been looking for quite a while, for a more comfortable boat, to replace my previous boat I had sold, when I found **Coquet**.

I knew the boat type well, as I had spent time helping to run her sister, **Almond**, which was then used as a dive boat. I had many fond memories of **Almond**, she is still afloat in North Devon, although not used very often.



At Dover. Daewoo engine. Perkins S6M. At Padstow.

The engines/gearboxes I have installed are 2 x Daewoo 135Hp @ 3300 rpm, with turbo charged intercooler.

The base engine is a 4 cylinder Isuzu.

On sea trials she achieved 25k, but having added weight, she has a top speed of 20k, with a cruising speed of 18k.

Fuel consumption is 8 to 9 gallons per hour, for both engines.

I am very pleased with both the performance and the efficiency of this installation.

After purchasing her, I took a friend/engineer to the yard, and we craned her into the water. She leaked like a sieve, but we managed to start the engines and to keep the water at bay.

We set off on the journey to North Devon, and after many interesting incidents, a week later we arrived safely at Watermouth.

Here I had her taken out of the water, with the intention to do a complete overhaul and re-fit.

I built a scaffold around her and roofed her in. The refit then started in earnest, and we took everything off her, engines, electrics and plumbing. We then set about removing 60 years build up of paint inside and out, which took many weeks, with a team of 4 men working full time.

Once all the paintwork had been removed, I went round her with a probe, and was pleasantly surprised in that I did not find any nasty surprises.

The repair work was quickly attended to, and having completed this work we painted her inside and out. The outer hull I have painted in dark blue.

The new engines were next, with all new steering gear, electrics and controls.

She went back into the water looking in pristine condition, and I spent the first summer doing short trips. This allowed me to sort out teething problems along the way.

The second summer, I ventured further afield, including Wales, Scillies, Dover and France, which all went well.

The third summer I took her through the French canals, and she went well.

She is presently out of the water for the winter and being readied for the coming summer trip round Britain.



Under cover.



New wheelhouse.



Paint removal.



### **The proposed itinerary is very simple.**

Depart North Devon at the beginning of May 2009.

Up to South Wales.

Up to Pembroke, following the Wales coastline.

Possibly across to Ireland.

Back to the Isle of Man.

Up to Fort William, through the locks and canal to Inverness.

Then head south to London, calling at various ports including Lowestoft.

Hopefully join up with Humber and MTB102 at Lowestoft.

Then via South East Coast ports to Portsmouth.

Meet up with Garth, ST1502, Hyperion, Medusa, Ark Royal and RSL1643.

Then via South West Coast ports back home.

If you are interested in taking part in this adventure, please contact.

**David Little.**

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### **Coquet service history.**

Taken on strength. 27.10.1945

42 WT Unit Yarmouth IoW.

Transferred 06/11/1945

615 WT Coy . Portsmouth.

Transferred 03/07/1948

644 WT Coy Plymouth.

(Possibly served with 694 Motor Boat Coy Plymouth 1947/1948.)

Thanks to Phil Simons for this section.

1948 to 1957 23 WT Coy

1957 to 1958 71 WT Coy

1958 to 1960 WTT Training Coy Yarmouth IoW.

1960 to 1962 71 WT Coy.

1962 1 BSD ( Base Stores Depot) land cradled at Hilsea.

1963 For sale 03/1968.

09/04/1968 Sold to Mr H Trollope Swansea.

Thanks to David Fricker for this section.

