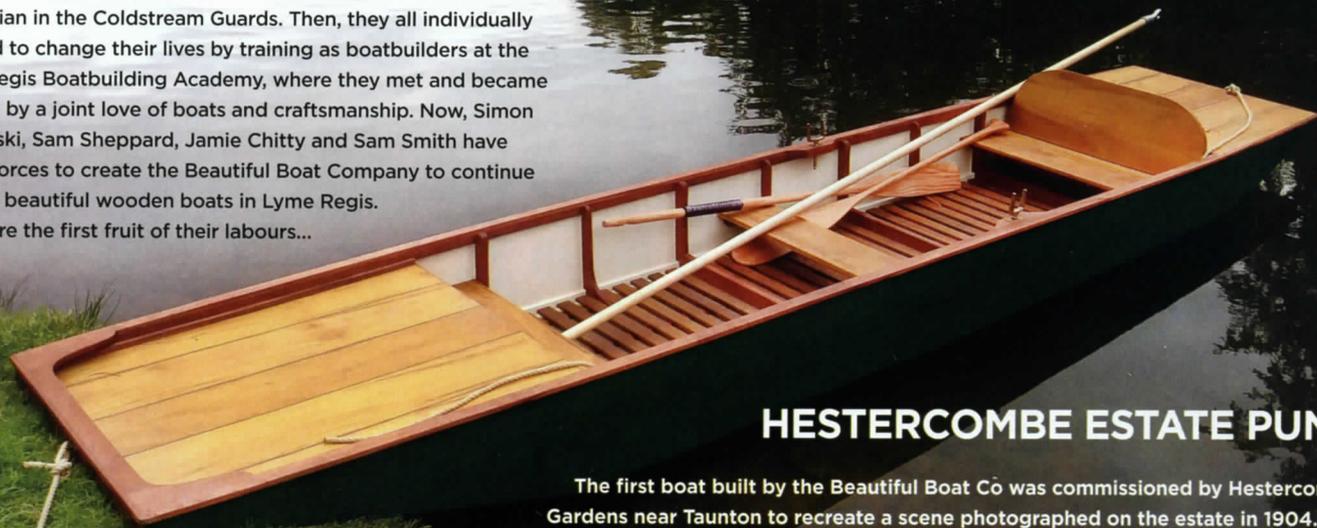


Four skilled men, three beautiful boats...

BY NIC COMPTON

They used to be a ship broker, a naval officer, an IT specialist and a musician in the Coldstream Guards. Then, they all individually decided to change their lives by training as boatbuilders at the Lyme Regis Boatbuilding Academy, where they met and became bonded by a joint love of boats and craftsmanship. Now, Simon Olszowski, Sam Sheppard, Jamie Chitty and Sam Smith have joined forces to create the Beautiful Boat Company to continue to build beautiful wooden boats in Lyme Regis.

These are the first fruit of their labours...



HESTERCOMBE ESTATE PUNT

The first boat built by the Beautiful Boat Co was commissioned by Hestercombe Gardens near Taunton to recreate a scene photographed on the estate in 1904. Old photos showed the estate's last private owner, Constance Portman, along with some friends and a dog, paddling a punt on the Pear Pond. Closer inspection revealed the punt was a one-off design about 18ft long, shorter and deeper than most punts and probably built by the estate's carpenter. The Beautiful Boat Co team set about recreating an exact copy, with a plywood hull finished with iroko, sapele and reclaimed teak, as well as the pole, oars and a paddle, all visible in the original photos. The new boat was named *Constance* and launched in August 2018, using period costumes and a "canine actor" to recreate the scene. *Punt away price: £20,000*



BASSETT RASCAL

The company's most spectacular build to date and a head-turner at the 2018 Southampton Boat Show, this is the 16ft Rascal. The design is based on drawings by Ken Bassett for a 14ft 10in runabout intended to emulate the classic two-seat sports cars of the 1930s. The BBCo stretched the design to 16ft 6in (an option offered by the designer) and built the hull of cold-moulded plywood on douglas fir frames, sheathed with GRP and painted for durability. The deck is plywood overlaid with douglas fir planking and go-fast sapele stripes on either side of the king plank. With its flashy stainless steel cutwater, retro hardware and dramatic tumblehome home aft, it's an extremely sexy boat which demands to be stroked. What's more, it is actually as fast as it looks, apparently capable of 52mph with a 60hp engine on the calm waters of its native Great Lakes. *Drive-away price inc engine £65,000 (VAT not applicable)*

BEAULIEU SCOW

Commissioned by Jamie's father, the 11ft 3in Beaulieu Scow is a cold-moulded version of the classic South Coast dinghy – the Beaulieu Scow being identical to the Lymington Scow, apart from having slightly greater sail area. Jamie built this boat while still at the Boat Building Academy, using three layers of kaya mahogany finished all-bright with nine layers of Epiphanes varnish. His flawless craftsmanship was much admired at the Southampton show. The original boat has joined her sisters on the Beaulieu River, but the BBCo can build similar dinghies to an equally high standard. *Sail away price £20,000*



See thebeautifulboatcompany.co.uk for more.