

## An eye for a knee

As Tim Clayton drove into the Sandringham Flower Show this year he noticed that a large limb had fallen from one of the oak trees along the access route. It transferred his thoughts immediately - from setting up his jewellery stand at the show, to the shape of Baden Powell's knees.

The Baden Powell that sprang to his mind is a fishing boat owned by True's Yard Museum and built in 1902 in King's Lynn by the town's famous wooden boatbuilding family, the Worfolks.

Tim heads a group of volunteers planning the restoration of the Baden Powell. The wooden knees perform the vital role of supporting the deck structure, and are fixed to the side of the hull frame. But they don't just provide something for the deck to rest on. They must help to keep the whole frame rigid against the constantly changing pressures of the sea on the hull.

Nothing does this so well as the natural strength of a stout limb of an oak tree from which a branch has grown out. Cutting and trimming the natural curve of this joint provides the 'knee' that is exactly right for the job.

While manning his stand later in the day Tim made enquiries and secured a substantial part of the limb for the Baden Powell project. A few days later, equipped with a chainsaw and the visual imagination that has made his jewellery designs so popular, he set about the task of cutting up the wood to best advantage.

"We're at an early stage in the restoration of the Baden Powell," he says, "but however we decide to tackle the project, there will always be a need for timber like this. And we're going to need about a dozen knees to replace those that have rotted.

"So I'll always be keeping an eye out for fallen timber that may be able to contribute towards getting the Baden Powell back in shape and in the water."

Anyone with fallen timber they think might be suitable for the restoration is invited to contact Tim at his Chapel Street shop (KL 772329) or via the website [www.floatourboat.co.uk](http://www.floatourboat.co.uk) which explains the project.

The Sandringham Estate has a major timber-growing enterprise, and has assisted local craftsmen in the past. Agent Marcus O'Lone says: "The Estate is delighted to be able to help this project. We have already been able to supply some oak and we are also working to supply some 'boat larch' if we can find some timber suitable."

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As well as being the first Norfolk-built boat in King's Lynn, the Baden Powell is an unusual design. It has two bows rather than a stern and a bow. That made it easier to handle out on the sandbanks of The Wash when generations of owners went out on a falling tide, beached on a sandbank, dug for cockles, then came back with the returning tide.