

SIR WILLIAM PRIESTLEY AND REPLICAS

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Sir William Priestley launch at Arnside 1934



Minx



Linda

Sir William Priestley– 1934 Lifeboat



Sir William Priestley being launched at Arnside

Key Statistics

Built 1934 Length Deck Level 27ft (8.2m) Length Water Line 23.5ft (7.1m)	Beam: 9.5ft (2.8m) Draft: 3.5ft (1m) Builder: William Crossfield and Sons, Beach Walk	Construction Carvel, Wood	Rigg Gaff Engine: Thorneycroft “Handy Billy”
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Summary



*Sir William
Priestley*

Sir William Priestley, the Morecambe Fisherman’s Lifeboat was built by Crossfields in 1934. Lady Priestley donated the money in memory of her husband, a Bradford mill owner, MP and supporter of the RNLI. Sir William had been involved in fund raising for the Spurn Head lifeboat “City of Bradford II”. Morecambe was popular with holiday makers from Bradford and was often known as “Bradford by the Sea.”

Six or more replicas have been made of the Sir William Priestley in glass fibre using a mould taken from the boat in 1979 by Eric Bergqvist, a Cheshire Boat Builder in return for royalties of £25 for every boat built. Sir William Priestley was retired from service in 1987. She is now in Lancaster Maritime Museum awaiting restoration.

The Morecambe Fishermen’s Association provided their own lifeboats. The first was Gyakhan, a large rowing boat built in 1895, the year following the capsizing of the Bay Boat Matchless with the loss of 25 passengers. Gyakhan was followed by the Rescue in 1907, which was sailed powered. In 1934 the Rescue in turn was replaced by the Sir William which was a sailing boat with engine. All three boats were built by Crossfields.

During the course her career Sir William Priestley helped swimmers in difficulty, people cut off by the tide, broken-down speedboats and capsized dinghies. It also took part in many

perilous rescue missions of vessels in distress on the Bay, sometimes in atrocious weather.

History by Year

1934 Launched. The boat was paraded up the Promenade from Morecambe to Heysham watched by 20,000. The launch was attended by Lord Mayors of Bradford and Leeds and the Mayor of Morecambe

1979 Eric Bergqvist, a boatbuilder from Lym in Cheshire takes a mould from Sir William Priestley in return for royalties of £25 to Morecambe Fishermen's Association for each boat sold

1987 Retired from service due to age and as most rescues were being out by the RNLI, which had set up a lifeboat station in Morecambe with an inshore lifeboat in 1966.

1987 Enters collection of Lancaster Maritime Museum. The Museum first opened in 1985.



Sir William Priestley in action off Morecambe (Keith Willacy collection, Morecambe Bay Partnership)

HISTORY OF REPLICAS OF SIR WILLIAM PRIESTLEY

1979 Eric Bergqvist, a boatbuilder from Lym in Cheshire takes a mould from Sir William Priestley in return for royalties of £25 to Morecambe Fishermen's Association for each boat sold

1983 Around Eight hulls taken from mould

1983 A Morecambe fisherman buys first hull. Names boat Linda after his wife. Eric Bergqvist supplies hull for Linda. The boat is fitted out by the fisherman in his back garden



Linda being fitted out



Linda off Morecambe now

1984 Venture built as a fishing boat from mould, for use off the Wirral coast

1984 Beryl (originally Drifter) is made from a hull as a yacht. First owner lives in London and keeps the boat on the Medway.

1985 Eric Bergqvist races Freda in Liverpool Nobby Race. Freda is named after his wife. Freda is open decked.



Eric Bergqvist at 1984 or 85 Liverpool Nobby Race in Freda?

1989 Classic Boats of Southampton buy Eric Bergqvist's Freda and another hull with the view to producing a Freda class yacht based on the design of the Sir William Priestley. Classic Yachts fit out Freda as a prototype for the class and display her at Southampton Boat Show. Only Freda built.



Minx

1990 Minx brought as a bare hull and fitted out by her first owner as a yacht for use in the Bristol Channel area. Launched in 1993

2018 Eric Bergqvist's mould of the Sir William Priestley is currently for sale



There are thought to be at least two other boats taken from the mould: Lucy on the River Wyre near Fleetwood, Jean on the East Coast. The Nobby Owners Association own a hull.

Linda – 1983
Replica based on Sir William Priestley



Linda off Morecambe

Key Statistics

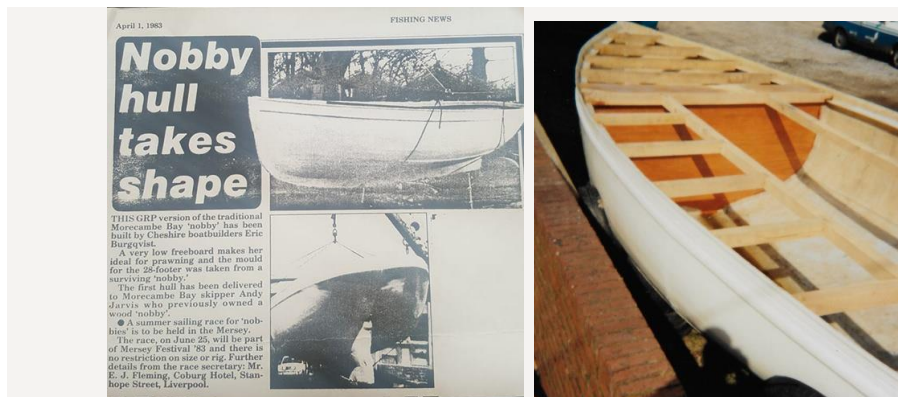
Built 1983 Length Deck Level 27ft (8.2m) Length Water Line 23.5ft (7.1m)	Beam: 9.5ft (2.8m) Draft: 3.5ft (1m)	Construction Glass Fibre	Rigg
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Summary

Linda is a glass fibre Morecambe Bay Prawner taken from the mould of Sir William Priestley. Linda is kept at Morecambe and still used for fishing. The hull of Linda was made by Eric Bergqvist with the boat fitted out by the fisherman's in his back garden. Linda is named after the owner's wife. She has been featured on TV in a programme about fishing in Morecambe Bay.

History by Year

1983 Linda launched. Hull is delivered by Eric Bergqvist and fisherman fits out boat in his back garden



Mauretania



Mauretania was Linda's owner's previous boat. Mauretania was originally a bay boat which was used to take holidaymakers out into the Bay. She was built by William Crossfield in 1906. She was originally opened decked to accommodate seated passengers. She was converted for shrimping in 1963 with the decking added to accommodate nets and equipment at hand level.

Freda– 1989
Replica based on Sir William Priestley



Freda at Yarmouth, Isle of Wight

Key Statistics

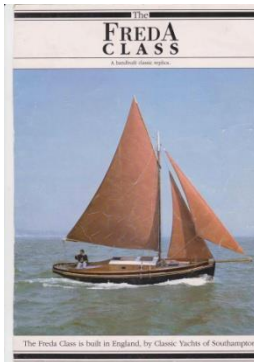
Built 1989	Beam: 9.5ft (2.8m)	Construction	Rigg Gaff
Length Deck Level 27ft (8.2m)	Draft: 3.5ft (1m)	Glass Fibre	
Length Water Line 23.5ft (7.1m)			

Summary

Freda is one of the glass fibre replicas of Sir William Priestley, the Morecambe Fisherman's lifeboat.

Freda was built by Classic Yachts of Southampton in 1989 as the forerunner for the Freda Class of yachts. Classic Yachts brought Eric Bergqvist's original Freda and another one of the hulls made from the mould of the Sir William Priestley with the view to marketing a class of glass fibre replicas of Morecambe Bay Prawners. Freda was exhibited at the Southampton Boat Show, as the design prototype to much acclaim. However no further Freda class yachts were built. The class is named after Eric Bergqvist's wife Freda. The boat was also exhibited at the Lancaster Maritime Museum..

Freda is at present kept in the Solent near Portsmouth



Sales brochure for Freda Class

History by Year

1989 Built by Classic Yachts of Southampton as the design prototype of the Freda Class of Yachts . Exhibited at Southampton Boatshow

2014 Purchased by current owners and kept in the Solent near Portsmouth



Minx – 1995
Replica based on Sir William Priestley



Minx at Brixham Regatta 2018

Key Statistics

Built 1983-1996 Length Deck Level 27ft (8.2m) Length Water Line 23.5ft (7.1m)	Beam: 9.5ft (2.8m) Draft: 3.5ft (1m)	Construction Glass Fibre	Rigg Gaff
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Summary

Minx is one of the glass fibre replicas taken from the mould of Sir William Priestley, the Morecambe Fisherman's lifeboat. Though the hull was completed in 1983, the fitting out was not finished till the mid 1990s with Minx not sailing for the first time till 1996. William Crossfield is credited as the designer of Minx, though the boat was completed 75 years after his death. Her first owners sailed her in the Bristol Channel area. Minx is now based in Brixham and regularly takes part in classic boats events on the South West coast including Falmouth and Plymouth

History by Year

- 1983 Hull made from mould of Sir William Priestley
- 1990 First owners purchase the hull and fit her out over five year period as time and money allow.
- 1993 Craned into water
- 1996 Sailed for the first time. Initially sailed in Bristol Channel
- c2010 Sold to a Dorset owner
- 2015 Purchased by present owner kept at Brixham.

Beryl 1984



Key Statistics

Built 1984 Length Deck Level 27ft (8.2m) Length Water Line 23.5ft (7.1m)	Beam: 9.5ft (2.8m) Draft: 3.5ft (1m)	Construction Glass Fibre	Rigg Gaff
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Summary

Beryl is one of the glass fibre replicas taken from the mould of Sir William Priestley, the Morecambe Fisherman's lifeboat. Hull was purchased from Eric Bergqvist in 1984 by a London resident, fitted out by owner and kept at Lower Halstow in the Medway. The yacht was originally called Drifter. Purchased by present owner in 2013, renamed Beryl and still kept on the Medway.

History by Year

1984 Mounded deck and hull purchased from Eric Bergqvist 1984 by a resident of Kidbrooke London

1984 Fitted out by owner, named Drifter and sailed from Lower Halstow on the Medway. 2013

2013 Purchased by present owner in 2013 and renamed Beryl. Extensive refit and still sailing from Lower Halstow in Medway.