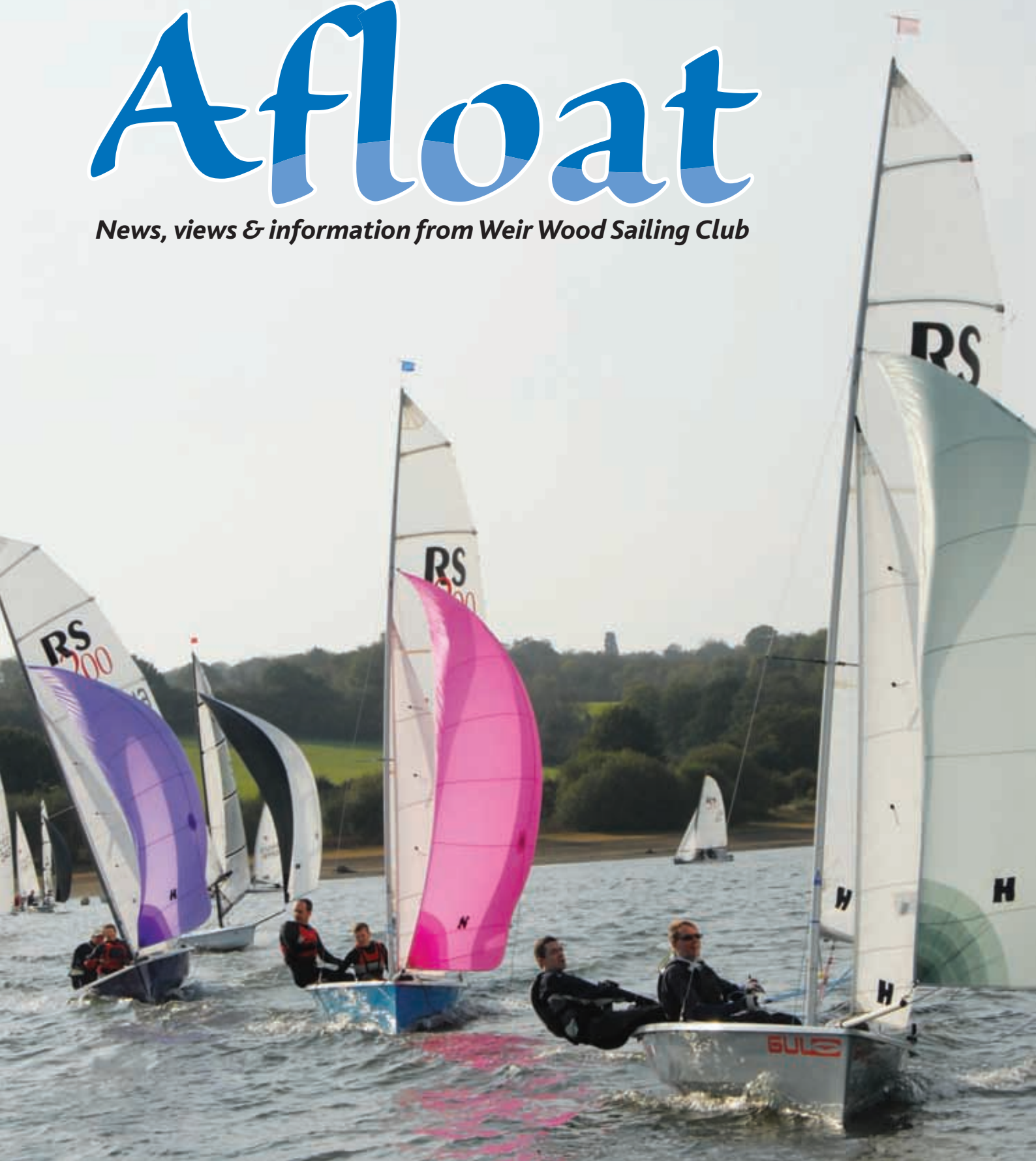


Afloat

News, views & information from Weir Wood Sailing Club



Issue 9 Winter/Spring 2012



**Winter Draws On
A Profile of Standen
Laser Masters 2011**

Photo: "Winter Draws On"

Commodore's Cosy Chat

Simon Davis

I am sitting at home on a grey but very atmospheric Boxing Day afternoon writing my 4th CCC warm with the glow of the Gluhwein that I had to keep tasting as I made it this morning for the 30 or so members and friends who turned up to race and watch this morning. The warm glow was in part brought on by the mulled wine and in part by the wonderful sense of warmth and friendship that WWSC can bring on at moments like this. It has been a difficult year for the Club, possibly the most difficult since the founding 45 years ago, but we live on and from here we grow on. Let me dwell for a short while on why WWSC gives that warm glow. Firstly the whole thing today could not have happened if Ernie Hatton hadn't rang me and offered his and his crews services as Race Officer and Timekeeper. Ernie is one of the Clubs absolute stalwarts and has been for more than 30 years both as high performance sailor, helper and administrator (he's served his time as Commodore). Ernie would have been sailing except for a cataract operation just before Christmas. When most people who couldn't sail on Boxing Day would have simply pulled the covers back over their heads Ernie offered his and Andrews help so others might benefit. Ernie, I'm delighted to say, is one of many who hold the club dear and would see it flourish.

Secondly the 30 or so who did turn up produced 17 boats racing and the spirit of competition was extremely strong. There was an excellent spread of both ages and a very high standard of racing. WWSC remains one of the genuine centres of excellence nationally for competitive sailing and when you see someone like Rob Long, only sailing really 2 seasons and coming 12th in a very strong field, tells you a lot about how sailors can develop in the Club. It gives me

a great sense of satisfaction, when meeting sailors from other Clubs when they say 'Weir Wood – that's a very strong club I hear'

Thirdly once everyone got together in the Club the atmosphere of good competition and quality friendship

produced a superb atmosphere, one that made you feel good to be a part of. So here we have the distillation of the essence of WWSC – a strong team ethic backed by individuals with the clubs interests at heart, a strong and developing sailing fraternity and the feeling, no matter how competitive we are on the water, that we are all friends together off it.

I think the issues that confronted us as a Committee in 2011 have been done to death both in the letter that I sent to all members in November and at the AGM so I will not dwell on those except to say that we have got through them and we will learn and grow through the experience. The one area which wasn't covered in those where I think we are still at risk is membership. While we have had a good year in terms of new members (over 80 'units') we lost 50. In a normal year this would have been a very creditable outturn, in a very difficult economic environment where every voluntary club is finding life very hard going, it is exceptional. Nonetheless we cannot relax partly because new members are the club's lifeblood and partly because I see every member leaving as a small failure on our part. Can I ask all members to use all their best efforts to glean new members for the club in 2012.

2012 and what it holds

The reservoir is quite quickly filling up – at last I hear you say! Matt and Annabelle Larkin ripped the rudder off their RS500 in shallow water before Xmas at a point where everyone thought there was plenty of water. We've been fairly lucky in that regard. Most problems seem to revolve around getting the glutinous mud off an otherwise pristine white sail! Southern Water have been pumping water to the aquifers until much later in the year than usual as this has been the driest October (2010) to October (2011) since 1976. We can even think ourselves lucky over that as South East Water may be investigated by the Environment Agency for allowing Ardingly reservoir to become dangerously depleted, reportedly allowing it to fall to 12% of capacity and putting the water supply of 65,000 people at risk!



← Simon Davis

Dates at a Glance

Sailing Events

25th March	<i>Club Championships</i>
14th – 15th April	<i>Oppy Open</i>
25th- 27th May	<i>Youth Cobnor</i>
29th July – 2nd August	<i>August Oppy Camp</i>
29th – 30th September	<i>RYA SE Zone Championships</i>

Social and other Events

5th May	<i>Open Day</i>
21st and 22nd July	<i>Sail for Gold Celebrations</i> <i>Yes! Put it in your dairies now.</i> <i>A whole weekend celebrating the Olympics</i>

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The Laser Christmas Cracker is running again in 2012. Ollie Bush's very successful initiative last year is set to start on Jan 8th and then every Sunday until the Club Champs on the 25th March. We have over 100 Lasers registered in the club and, from what I remember, we had nearly half of those involved at some time during last Spring so let's try and beat that in 2012. We already know that one or two 'hot' local sailors will be joining us from outside the club so the competition should be excellent.

Youth will kick off as usual in March and this will culminate in the South East Zonal Championships at WWSC over the weekend of the 29th/30th September. This may be one of the biggest competitions that our kids may have competed in and Richard Baker and his team are confidently predicting over 100 boats over that weekend. (Please note, well in advance, that there will be no club racing that weekend!)

The weekend of the 21st/22nd July is a date I would like all members to put in their diaries. That is the weekend of our pre-Olympic 'Sail for Gold' Regatta. The format will be a bit of fun based madness on the Saturday afternoon followed by an evening entertainment with a BBQ / Hog Roast and band in the evening. This will be followed by quite serious racing on the Sunday but with a number of formats to encourage those of you who find normal racing somewhat intimidating to have a fulfilling weekends competition. We are going to set up a sub-committee in the New Year to organise this and it will be one of the biggest events since

our 40th anniversary with the aim being to get 100 club boats on the water. Now that really is a challenge! Keep your eyes, ears, nose and throat open for more news!

One of the things we have to do as a Club is to look to generate more revenue from sources other than the membership. You'd be surprised just how much it costs to run the club despite almost all work being done on a voluntary basis. Also if we want to re-develop the Clubhouse we are going to need money to do it. One area we will be looking to develop is the social scene in the club. We have had the fantastic support of Jean Chisnall over the last 5 or so years. I know from my own experience just how demanding being Social Sec. is and I would like to take this opportunity of heartily thanking Jean for all the work she has done over the years. Social events are both an important source of club spirit and revenue. Although we don't seek to do more than cover our costs we will make money for the club when we can. We also make a reasonable return in the bar on Socials. I am in the process of looking for a replacement to try and fill Jeans shoes so if you would like to join the Committee then please let me know.

So 2012 looks like it is going to be a superb year for the Club. With the Olympics coming and with everything we have planned I suggest it is going to be a momentous year. I would like to extend my and all the Committees best wishes to all of the membership and wish you all a very happy new year. ▲

Sailing Secretary's Scribblings

David Giles

We are in the middle of our winter season as I write this and I must say compared to previous years we have been very lucky. The norm this winter so far has been medium to moderate south west to west winds with mild temperatures. Compare this to last year when by now we had already had one deluge of snow and the lake was frozen solid losing us over one month of sailing all in all. Admittedly the "tide" has been out further and longer than normal but the reservoir is now filling up rapidly and hopefully it will be full early in the new year.

Since my last set of scribblings there has been plenty going on (sailing wise) at the club. Sadly we had to cancel the Rooster 8.1 Nationals due to be held at Weir Wood on the 1st and 2nd of October when the wind failed again. Luckily there was just enough wind to hold the Weir Wood Seawind Model Yacht Club Championships instead. The America's Cup style format saw yours truly take the event 2-0 in the final and has nominated Fyans Lake (as is the holders right) for the next event probably in March. Model Seawind Yachts can be supplied to anyone interested in joining in next time so contact me if you would like to take part.

The following weekend Weir Wood entered a senior and junior team for

the annual large lakes Interclub held this year at Bewl Valley Sailing Club. It was a cool day with a gusty North Westerly Breeze. Both the senior and junior teams convincingly won their respective events making it 5 on the trot for the seniors and 3 on the trot for the juniors. A full report appears later in the magazine.

On Sunday 23rd October we held our annual Winter Draws on Open event. We had just fewer than 40 entries, about the same as last year, which was pleasing. The wind was from the south so it was as gusty and shiftily as it is possible to be. Despite this the event went off perfectly which is a great credit to the race management team. A full report of the event follows later in the magazine.

The Laser Class held a fast and furious day in November. This consisted of multiple short races held in very quick succession. A certain amount of help is offered to the up and coming Laser helms by the more senior helms which gives the day a training element as well as a racing element. Another Fast and Furious day will be held in 2012.

Up and coming events include the Laser Christmas Cracker where we are joined by Laser Sailors from the sea clubs that have closed for a Laser Series that runs from early January to the weekend before the club Championships. There are two series races each Sunday morning followed by an informal third race where less



← David Giles

experienced Laser racers can opt to be mentored by a more experienced member. This mentoring will consist of the experienced member sailing close by for the whole of the third race (usually just one lap) offering advice and tips to improve your boat speed and tactics. To be allocated a mentor contact me (David Giles) or Simon Davis.

Finally the last weekend of March is our annual club championships. The event will be advertised on the web site as the date approaches but please make a note in your diaries now as I would like us to beat our record entry from 2011 of 40 boats. In particular I would like to see more of our youth joining in. There will be many spot prizes and the winner will be immortalised on the club champions' honours board for all time!

Good Sailing ▲

WANTED

THE CLUB NEEDS VOLUNTEERS TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS

- House and Grounds Manager
- Oppy Fleet Flotilla Leader

The Club is a members club run by the members and relies on volunteers to take on all roles and will not function effectively without them. If the jobs are divided between us all the loads are lighter. At the moment there are a few people who are filling the gaps and spending more time than can be reasonably expected in order to keep things running. Please think carefully whether you have the time and the skills and the commitment to fill the above posts. There is plenty of help to get you going. Anyone interested please contact a committee member or the Editor.

Laser ramblings

Olly Bush

Happy Christmas and New Year everyone! Kings of the reservoir at the end of 2011 were:

Autumn

1. Chris SS
2. David B
3. Pete Y

Winter Warm Up

- 1 Olly
- 2 Bill
- 3 Peter M

Mid Winter

- 1 David G
- 2 Chris SS
- 3 James M

Late Winter

- 1 Bill
- 2 Chris F
- 3 Olly

And that's just about all the action to report on. Aside from the SE traveller series for which Chris F is to be congratulated (4th overall) and yours truly is to be commiserated (pipped on the last leg of the last race of the series). Of course the most exciting thing about entering 2012 is that a new Christmas Cracker Series is starting. Incoming news is that the two Davids have set the early pace.

New for this series are two innovations other fleets no doubt think we need. First, a regular rules slot. Every Sunday, one of the fleet will be charged with becoming an expert on a particular rule which he or she will present to the rest of the fleet at lunchtime. Second, a revitalised buddy system so we are a more friendly bunch. Last year's effort, relying as it did on a dash of altruism and camaraderie didn't prosper. So this time, we'll try to add some competition. There will be a buddy prize for the series. To enter, team up



← Olly Bush

with someone from the faster / less fast part of the fleet and let me know that you wish to be Christmas Cracker buddies. The buddies with the best combined results win. Entries at my discretion.

See you on the water. ▲

Social News

Jean Chisnall



→ Jean Chisnall

The main social event since the last issue was our traditional midsummer Picnic and Proms. About 80 folk enjoyed a wonderful summer evening. As I reported at the AGM the year has

been mixed on the Social front with Wednesday Evenings being the big success again. I have already thanked those who prepared the suppers and I hope you will all be available to help out again in 2012.

However, there was little (in fact no) enthusiasm for anything else and for the first year ever we had to cancel the Christmas dinner through lack of numbers. Despite extensive advertising with posters, on the web site and general and personal emails we only had about 20 signed up for tickets 2 weeks before the event. We could not commit to significant expenditure for the catering and the band on that basis and reluctantly cancelled the event.

We have chatted around with many members but it is not clear why support is so low. Possibly it is a combination of factors including cost, format, other commitments or just general lack of enthusiasm for social events.

This raises the general issue of Social

Events and the Committee need to hear from the membership what they want on this front if anything. I have asked repeatedly in the magazine and elsewhere for feedback and have had nothing.

I have now done the job for about 5 years and have enjoyed it and there have been some very successful events in that period. However, with what appears to be a failing enthusiasm for social things I feel that it is time for someone else to have a go at this job and I have stood down as from the AGM so this will be my last report. ▲

Jean Chisnall

Far be it for the Editor to put words into his wife's mouth but the following seems appropriate:

"Explicit hoc totem. Pro Christo da mihi palem"

Which roughly translates to

"The job is done I think. For Christ's sake give me a drink" ▲

Cruising Notes

Mike Summers

Happy New Year from the Cruising Section! I hope you had a great Christmas and are now looking forward to 2012 and all it will bring.

The Cruising Section is for those people for whom there may be more to sailing than racing on Sunday mornings at the Reservoir. We take our boats away to try out sailing in different places. If you don't want to trail your boat then we can look into ways of making best use of the reservoir in terms of activities like a lake cruise with picnic on the water followed by a barbeque or a treasure hunt (I promise to make it less arcane than last time!). I am determined to try out my boat-tent sometime this year if only I could persuade someone to join me! If any of that floats your boat (sorry, couldn't resist it) then maybe the Cruising Section is for you.

Before I look forward to Cruising in 2012, let's just recap on what we did in 2011.

Tony Carter and Richard Williams with their crews went from Warsash (in the mouth of the River Hamble) to Newtown Creek on the Isle of Wight in April and picnicked on the beach on a sunny day with beautiful blue skies. Check out their log on the Website for some great photographs and a description of the day by Tony.

In July five dinghies made the crossing from Warsash to Wooton Creek, where the Portsmouth to Isle of Wight ferries dock. On a warm day with brilliant wind and smooth conditions we romped over to the gardens of the Royal Victoria Sailing Club for a picnic (and some of their famous Yachtsman's Ale) and afterwards enjoying fantastic spinnaker reaches on the way back to the Hamble, achieving speeds of 11 and 12 knots.

In August three dinghies set off from Warsash Sailing Club (where Tony Carter is a member) and in choppy conditions



← Mike Summers

we made it to the Royal Southampton Sailing Club's Gins Lane clubhouse on the Beaulieu River. The last mile of so was in the teeth of a North Westerly as we worked our way upstream against a Spring ebb that was trying to flush us out of the river, dodging moving and moored yachts. Challenging stuff!

Also in August, Martin Craggs and Peter Deeming went to the Gillingham to discover the delights(?) of sailing from the muddy banks of the Medway. An ingenious solution to a sticky problem was a major feature of this cruise. All

of these cruises have a log which you will find on the cruising pages on the club website. Do go and have a look.

In September two dinghies had a blustery day in Chichester harbour when Richard Williams and Tony Forbat and their crews enjoyed the challenges and delight of sailing from Itchenor retiring to the warmth of the very nice pub just behind the broad hard from where you can launch in any state of tide. You may spot a common thread to all these cruise logs; there is always a beer in a pub at the end or middle of the day.



↖ Cruising in Suffolk



↑ To Beaulieu August 2011

So what's on the scope for 2012? Well that's rather up to you. I am very keen to go for a weekend on the Broads. I've done this before in my Enterprise with my 2 sons and had a great time camping by the water's edge. There are a few places next to the water where chalets or cabins can be rented for those who would prefer not to camp. Interest has also been expressed in sailing Poole Harbour. Day trips similar to those above are easy to organise and we will continue with them next year. If you have a destination in mind please let me know.

Last year I had a lot of people say "If we'd had a bit more notice we could have come". That's easily fixed and if cruising your dinghy sounds like the sort of thing you would like to do in 2012 then we should talk about what, where and when, and I suggest we should have a chat about what we want to do over

a beer or two soon so that we can plan to make best use of the better weather ahead.

If you are interested in cruising your dinghy please come along to **The Chequers pub in Forest Row on Friday 17 February at 8.30pm**. The idea is to hear what you want to do, to collect ideas for trips and activities and to put some dates on the calendar. In that way everyone will know when we have something planned and more boats will be able to join us.

Let's get ourselves (and our boats) ready for a busy 2012. If you would like to contact me before the 17th, an email to: cruising@wwsc.org.uk "cruising@wwsc.org.uk will reach me. ▲

Despatches from the Boat Park

Chris Moir and Geoffrey Bush

One Saturday in November the first boat park was abuzz with the sounds of toil. Armed with mattocks, brush cutters, hedge cutters, chain saws, rakes, sickles, snippers, and who knows what else, we heaved, we pushed, we hacked and we cut but still did not rid the boat park of all its overgrowth. And we cussed. There'd hardly be any need for all this if boat owners took good care of their patch. Come to think about it, how about a new rule that negligence attracts an invoice?

NB as a reminder: one of the club's rules is that each boat owner should keep the area around their boat park space from becoming overgrown. (However, the use of chemical controls is strictly forbidden.)

Anyway, very many thanks to the 15 or so volunteers who gave up their Saturday to tidy up the boat park. But there is some small tree felling/grubbing to be done (hand saws for the felling) and also the rest of the bramble clearing. Any teenagers who wish to earn some pocket money, please contact Chris Moir on christopher.moir@warwick.ac.uk. We will pay a lot more than the minimum wage!

"Please note change of email address for Chris Moir, Boat Park Marshall, which is now firdene4@btinternet.com" ▲

House and Grounds News

As you will all know from previous issues Steve Carr, our stalwart House and Grounds man for many years has retired. We have asked you for someone to come forward to take the role on but to date no one has volunteered. So as a temporary measure John Chisnall has agreed to act as co-ordinator of any maintenance or work and for organising for it to be undertaken. We have entered into an agreement with a general builder and electrician for work that cannot be undertaken by club members for any reason.

So what has been happening on this front? Firstly, a working party has cleared the first boat park of general brambles, weeds

etc. You will have read about that elsewhere in this edition of "Afloat". The other boat parks still have to be tackled and we will be calling for volunteers in the New Year. The Editor was on that working party and on arrival handed an industrial trimmer and told to get to work. Sadly he couldn't even start it but help was at hand. Lars, aged 6, was there with his dad.

"Wont it go?" he asked.

"No" I replied. "I have tried pulling this piece of string but nothing happens"

"I think you will find that if you pull this lever forward and disengage this catch and turn the petrol on it will go" he said with total confidence.

It did! Well out of the mouths of babes and sucklings.....

We have had a low level store built on the side of the club house to take outdoor gear such as the BBQ and the marquee. This has allowed us to clear the Training Room along with a lot of old junk that has been in there for ages. The switch room is now clear and meets electrical standards. We still have to finish this task and if anyone has any ideas as to where to store the model boats let the Editor know.

Electrical testing has been completed and various issues dealt with including restoring power to the Race Hut, installing an external power point at the garages, replacing the heater in the Ladies Changing rooms and bulkhead light over staircase, getting external lights working etc. Thanks to Messrs. Fyans Chisnall and Lankester for getting on with it and to Ron for work beyond our competence.

By the time you read this we should have a new intruder and fire alarm system installed and operational. Also the Club Room should have been redecorated. Thanks to the Lankesters for organising both jobs.

Plans are advanced for a secure stockade down by the Flying 15 park for three of our ribs and this should be constructed before the new engines arrive in February. All new engines have been sprayed vivid fluorescent colours and security tagged. The new ones will be similarly treated. Thanks to Messrs Fyans and Chisnall for doing the site clearance and for the "silver hair" volunteers for offering to do the installation.

A new open car port style store is to be built on one side of the Oppy garage to store equipment that is weather tolerant and to provide shelter for kids in bad weather.

We are looking at a new kitchen design plus some general improvements to the Ladies Changing Rooms.

If you see anything in terms of general maintenance that needs attention please let John Chisnall know. Contact phone 020 6668 0869 or email chisnall@globalnet.co.uk ▲

Introducing our new Club Honary Secretary, Chris Daniels

Chris Daniels

When Dick Lancaster approached me after racing a few weeks ago I should have known that he was not there to congratulate me on my exceptionally good starts that morning– rare as they are. Oh no. He told me that Geoff Bush was retiring as Hon secretary at the AGM and the club was seeking a replacement. Would I consider taking it on?

My first instinct was to regard him as deranged. Me? He knows I am retired with more commitments than when I was working – a typical retiree? I could not do it. Certainly not! I have no free time. I am married and my wife has two horses, which require quite a lot of effort. We have two children and three grandchildren, with the inevitable family duties.

I have numerous hobbies. In the summer I am away quite a lot during the week sailing a “big” boat out of Chichester - along the south coast and sometimes across to France. I fly fish. I play bowls .As well as our main house at Hurstpierpoint we have a holiday home on the New Forest, and two lots of gardening and maintenance is quite a stretch.

SO -Club Secretary – not a chance. But later on, in a quiet moment, I thought about it a bit further. My best pal Ray Nevard and I started sailing at Weir Wood some 30 years ago, at the very onset of summer sailing. Some sailors may have concerns about the fishermen now, but in those days we had to spray the boats with a special solution before sailing on the reservoir to ensure that we did not introduce bugs which could harm the trout.

In our first season I had a Mermaid (Boat!!) and then we jointly bought an Enterprise after completing the club’s RYA Beginners course – along with such esteemed novices as Allan Jones. Since then, we have raced most Sundays during the summer, from April to November. Even after all of this time, I regret we are still not very expert. We are rarely near the front of the fleet, but, as long as we have another Enterprise to compete against, (preferably one not much better than us -Vic) we very much enjoy the racing. The inevitable banter afterwards is great too. Come and join us. You do not need to be experienced to have a good time.

We only sail in the summer, initially because I worked very long hours – first as a power engineer, but then as Commercial Director of SEEBOARD ENERGY and then finally, for my last 5 working years until retirement in 2007, as a main Board Member of EDF Energy. My long suffering wife of nearly 40 years tolerated my absence sailing at weekends during the summer, but wanted me to catch up on jobs and spend more time with her and the children in the winter. That was the deal. Consequently, I was frequently seen painting the outside of the house in January! Of later years both Ray and I have disliked the cold and are now very happy to hang up our boots (in the garage-phew!) around November.

Despite the enormous pleasure I have enjoyed at the Club over so many years, I have contributed nothing to its running - apart from conscientiously doing my two/three duties a year. I have just turned up and sailed each week, expecting all the facilities to be available. Yet, Clubs like Weir Wood require a tremendous effort behind the scenes to allow them to operate so effectively. Work we rarely even think of – insurance, negotiations with the landlord, keeping the club house clean and catering available, the duty rota, keeping the rescue boats fit for service, training etc. etc. As in so many clubs, all of this work falls to a few volunteers willing to give up THEIR time so that we can all enjoy OURS.

And so my conscience cut in. Could I really, honestly say I did not have time now? As Ray and I approach the end of our dinghy sailing – (regrettably we are not all like John and Joyce who will still be sailing and winning past 100!!)- could it be the right time to give something back, modest as it is, to the Club from which I have taken so much joy?

So there we are. I did the moral thing and agreed to do it. You now have a semi-literate ex Engineer as your Honourary Secretary – you lucky people. Weir Wood is a truly great Sailing Club and I hope that I can make a useful contribution to the work of the Committee and help it through its many challenges. However, after experiencing my level of competence, you may, of course, quickly decide that you would have preferred me to ignore that voice of conscience and remain one of the idle many!! ▲



Winter Draws On - Sunday 23rd October 2011

David Giles

As seems to be the norm in recent years, the weather smiled upon Weir Wood's annual Winter Draws On open event again this year with plenty of sunshine and unseasonably warm temperatures. It was not totally perfect, however, with the wind coming from the south and the water level low sailing in the shifty breeze was at times rather frustrating and huge gains or losses could be made in the calm patches that at times surrounded the buoys on the south bank of the reservoir.



↑ Winter Draws On. The Fleet

An entry of 43 including a good contingent from our up and coming youth section entered for the event with a wide spread of different classes ranging in speed from the Optimist to the RS 400.

The format for the racing was as previous years with two handicap races in the morning (one of which could be discarded) and a pursuit race in the afternoon (which could not be discarded). Race officers for the event were Julie and Martin Pascoe who set a zig zag type of course to allow some upwind as well as some downwind legs making the most of the water available to them. The none too easy task of time keeping and tracking the results fell to Peter and James Mears who as ever did a superb job, having the final positions calculated before most boats were off the water at the end of the last race.

First race got away on time with a clear start. Those starting towards the committee boat end of the start line seemed best off with David Giles and Fiona Clark in an RS 200 rounding first followed by Colin and Tony Prince in an RS 400. The first few around promptly fell into a wind hole allowing those rounding slightly later to sail through in a gust and make large gains. Most favoured by this were

Whitehouse and Cullen in a Fireball who took the lead and despite the difficult conditions were never caught. Those also benefiting included Mike Uher in a Phantom and John Ramshaw and Mark Harrington in an RS 200. When the handicaps were worked out Whitehouse and Cullen were placed first followed by Giles, Uher and Ramshaw.

Race two saw three attempts to get the race away. After the first attempt the black flag was used (instant disqualification if over the start line with one minute to go). This did not put off several competitors who were promptly disqualified leaving a reduced fleet to fight it out. Prince led the way and looked to have comfortably secured a win but as it turned out he had not sailed the course correctly and he too was disqualified. Several new faces were looking good behind Prince. These included Chris Spencer-Smith, who was well up in the notoriously poorly handicapped Laser 1, Paul and Peter Jenkins, Rory and Simon Davis and John Ramshaw and Mark Harrington all in RS 200's. The RS 400 seemed to be enjoying the quick manoeuvring conditions and ended up taking one, three and four on handicap with Spencer-Smith's Laser Second.

After a quick break for lunch (particularly in the case of the Optimist sailors) the afternoon pursuit race got underway. With the wind gusting and then disappearing it was always going to be the luck of the draw who was favoured. The Optimists seemed to be in very poor wind for their start but for the RS 200 start a gust of wind strong enough to capsize



↖ Winter Draws On

one of the fleet blew through. It did seem to be the RS 200's that got the best of it and all 5 of them were well placed as the race came toward its conclusion. The exception was Colin and Tony Prince in their RS 400 that had worked its way into second place and was closing on David Giles and Fiona Clark in the RS 200. As the final minutes of the race ticked away it was going to be touch and go who won. With one minute to go Prince tried to overtake Giles to windward but Giles luffed up to stop him and both boats ground to a

halt when their spinnakers backed. Prince realising there was no way through this way bore away to pass to leeward but just missed judged it and touched the back of Giles's boat with his spinnaker pole. Prince therefore had to do a 720 penalty turns and this allowed Giles to limp over the finish line in first place. Behind the RS 200's of Ramshaw, Davis and Jenkins filled out the top 5.

The prize giving was held very shortly after the fleet came ashore. Most competitors attended and with additional spot prizes this year (and the winners overall not being eligible for any spot prizes) many were glad they did. Overall, first place went to David Giles and Fiona Clark, second to Paul Jenkins and Peter Jenkins and third to John Ramshaw and Mark Harrington all sailing RS 200's. There were 5 first in class awards, these went to Zac Riley (Optimist) Dick Lancaster (Enterprise) David Haw (Laser 4.7) C. Brunson and R. Williams (Laser

2000) and O Waring (Laser Radial). The youth helm (1st under 18) was won by Rory Davis, the master helm (first over 50) by Chris Spencer-Smith, the family award (first boat sailed by non married family members) by Colin and Tony Prince, the loving award (first married couple) by Matt and Annabell Larkin and the Endeavour (least well placed boat having completed all the races) Stuart Adams and V. Brooks.

Finally there was the Duckhams award for the biggest bloomer of the day.

There were several considerations for this but in the end the decision



← Enjoying Winter Draws On

was made to award it to Jon Ching in recognition of his boat maintenance skills after his main halyard gave way in race two. Oh for the want of a piece of string! 🚤

Social Secretary

Christine Fleming has volunteered to take this job forward. Welcome on board Christine and we look forward to seeing you back at WWSC.

Fuel Monitor

Many thanks to Kevin Francis for undertaking this regular duty for a number of years and thanks to Mark Walton for stepping forward and taking it on. The role is split between him and Bill Stean and thanks to Bill for carrying on.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Sasha Ghansam for getting her Instructor's Qualification with Rockley Water Sports. You join the elite band of those that have made it with Rockley's.

Thanks to Geoff Bush

After several years of sterling work as Club Secretary Geoff has decided to put the cap on his pen and take out his walking boots. Well, to be honest he never had put his boots away. Whilst doing the secretary's job Geoff has walked from Lewes in Sussex across France and the Alps and down to the tip of Italy, across Albania and part of Macedonia. This year he was planning to walk back via most of Europe and Russia. As a result he didn't think he could do WWSC justice as secretary and asked to be relieved.

Our thanks to Geoff who as has done the job very effectively over a busy and difficult time with the issues of lease conditions, insurance claims, etc. His committee meeting minutes were a paragon of succinctness.

Good luck with the walking Geoff. What did you say? It's had to go the back burner because someone is getting married and someone is having a birthday? Well, Europe will still be there when that's all over although you may need some different currency by then.



← Geoff Bush

The Wealden Interclub 2011

David Giles

The 2011 Wealden interclub was hosted by Bewl Valley Sailing Club on Saturday 8th October. At this event the six sailing clubs in the Wealden area, namely Weir Wood, Bough Beech, Bewl Valley, Chipstead, Crawley Mariners and Tonbridge Town, compete against each other both at junior and senior level to decide which is the top club in the Wealden area.



↑ Youth Interclub Winners

The rules of this year's competition allowed for a maximum of 5 boats per team with the results of the best 3 of those 5 boats counting toward the team result.

The event was sailed in a gusty and swinging westerly wind which varied between 8 knots and 15 knots. The key to doing well was in making the most of the wind gusts when they arrived down wind and trying not to get on the wrong side of the often large wind bends up wind.

The senior team was represented by Rob and Katie Burridge (Laser 2000) Paul and Gina Cullen (Fireball) Paul Jenkins and Jeff Larkin (Fireball) David Giles (Laser 1) and Chris Fyans (Rooster 8.1). The star performers for the senior team was Rob and Katie Burridge who comfortably won the



↑ Senior Interclub Team

individual prize but the other team members all put in solid results just behind to give the Weir Wood team 1, 3, 4, 5 and 18 placings individually to make sure they won comfortably from second place Bough Beech (2, 6, 9, 12 & 16).

The Weir Wood Junior team was represented by David Haw (Laser 4.7) Katie Wood (Topper) Verity Hopkins (Laser 4.7) Fiona Harrington (Laser 4.7) and Robert Chandler and Millie Hopkins (Laser Feva). Star performer for the junior team was David Haw who was narrowly piped to the top spot by ½ of 1 point. Again the other members of the junior team were very close behind to give them a 2,3,4,9 and 10 placings which again comfortably beat Crawley Mariners in second place with their 5,7,8,11 and 13.

Thanks must be given not only to the team members who represented their club but to the numerous parents of the junior team who towed boats to Bewl Valley and supported on the shore before, during, between and after racing. It was quite a logistics exercise making sure all the boats and competitors arrived for the event.

For the seniors this will be the 5th win in the last 5 interclub's and shows the high standard of senior racing at Weir Wood Sailing Club.

Even more pleasing is the junior team's win which gave them 3 wins from the last 3 events. This year's win was particularly dominant and reflects the effort put in by the club to bring on post Optimist sailing children. This initiative was only put in place a couple of years ago but is already showing great results thanks to the efforts of our youth section leaders. With a great group of Optimist children also coming through at the moment this bodes well for the future of the club. ▲



↖ Senior Interclub Winners

Laser Fast and Furious – Sunday November 20th 2011

Geoff Bush

Twenty boats turned out for the autumn F and F in conditions that did not satisfy the heavy weather specialists but kept most interested and gave good and fair racing to lightweights using full rigs. Everyone agreed that we had a superb morning's racing in the autumn sun. Good to see a few young ones and also others who don't often appear on Sunday mornings. Peter Meares was the excellent race officer. The first few races were windward/leeward using a spreader mark at the windward end. Then he introduced a slalom variant to the runs to encourage gybing.

We do have a problem with Starts. If people keep pushing the line the RO will resort to the black flag. But that defeats the object of the exercise. So next time, guys, kindly behave and be more gentlemanly. I know, it's a word generally unknown among the Laser fleet but just try it anyway, please.



Fast and Furious

Tips for improvers:

- Always ensure your rudder plate is fully down! There were two or three offenders.
- Sit at the front end of the cockpit, except when planing
- Sail the boat flat when going to windward
- You give yourself no chance if you are not close to the line and moving forward at the start, preferably at the favoured end. Practice makes perfect!
- With these windward/leeward courses think carefully about your approach to the windward mark so you don't tangle with the front guys who have already turned on to the run probably on starboard tack....and with others still beating up to the buoy. A starboard approach will probably be the safer bet!

Incident of the day? The Bearded Wonder causing mayhem in the fleet by doing a 720. That's rather shocking and unexpected behaviour from him and in the course of manoeuvres he managed to mount unsuspecting Allan J. and frighten the daylights out of a few other decent citizens. People get blackballed for less.

The results: There were 7 starts but only 6 finishes counted. The lost race was due to the inability of the RO's assistant to record finishes of boats crossing the line simultaneously. Had this race counted then Pete Young would have been undisputed winner but as it was he shared honours with David Giles and lost out if one discard was factored in. The two Matts – Giles and Larkin – were close. But in the real world the results might have been quite different had there been consistent use of the black flag...▲

Laser 2000 News

Ed

The plain fact is there isn't any! The fleet seems to have disappeared into the boat park with only a few regulars racing. There are some reasons for this. Poor Tim H has been out of any sporting action for months now with a bad neck and back. Dil S has been similarly incapacitated. Will Sloper has gone off to University and Andrew Sloper has resigned as fleet captain.

So what's to be done? We need a fleet captain to take over from Andrew. Any volunteers? It isn't an onerous job and you can make of it what you will. The main task is to organise the L2K Open and there are plenty of folk who will



Fast and Furious Down Wind

support you in that. The other thing that needs doing is to whip up some enthusiasm and get the fleet firing on all three sails again (The Editor should know better than to use a mixed metaphor but it seemed appropriate). It would be good to get the Saturday training sessions going again as well as fielding a reasonable fleet at Open Events. Up until last year WWSC was consistently the best represented club at Opens. We still have the largest fleet in the Association so lets get them out of the boat park and onto the water.

L2K 21428 "Foye Belle"

(And I admit that I am as guilty as anyone else having not sailed for various reasons (excuses) since last September! But my New Year's resolution is made. And yes, it is true that I have bought an Enterprise but that's only for the very light winds when the L2K won't go). ▲

A LESSON IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

With all the changes that are going on in the Arab World and elsewhere there may be a call for a lesson in political science.

Democrat

You have two cows.
Your neighbour has none.
You feel guilty for being successful.
You push for higher taxes so the government can provide cows for everyone.

Republican

You have two cows.
Your neighbour has none.
So?

Socialist

You have two cows.
The government takes one and gives it to your neighbour.
You form a cooperative to tell him how to manage his cows

Communist

You have two cows.
The government seizes both and provides you with milk.
You wait in line for hours to get it.
It is expensive and sour.

Capitalism American Style

You have two cows.
You sell one, buy a bull, and build a herd of cows.

Bureaucracy Canadian Style

You have two cows.
Under the new farm program the government pays

you to shoot one, milk the other, and then pour the milk down the drain.

American Corporation

You have two cows.
You sell one, lease it back to yourself and do an IPO on the 2nd one.
You force the two cows to produce the milk of four cows.
You are surprised when one cow drops dead.
You spin an announcement to the analysts stating you have downsized and are reducing expenses.
Your stock goes up.

French Corporation

You have two cows.
You go on strike because you want three cows.
You go to lunch and drink wine.
Life is good.

Japanese corporation

You have two cows.
You redesign them so they are one-tenth the size of an ordinary cow and produce twenty times the milk.
They learn to travel on unbelievably crowded trains.
Most are at the top of their class at cow school.

German Corporation

You have two cows.
You engineer them so they are all blond, drink lots of beer, give excellent quality milk, and run a hundred miles an hour.
Unfortunately they also demand 13 weeks of vacation per year.

Russian Corporation

You have two cows.
You drink some vodka.
You count them and learn you have five cows.
You drink some more vodka.
You count them again and learn you have 42 cows.
The Mafia shows up and takes over however many cows you really have.

Belgian Corporation

You have one cow.
The cow is schizophrenic.
Sometimes the cow thinks he's French, other times he's Flemish.
The Flemish cow won't share with the French cow.
The French cow wants control of the Flemish cow's milk.
The cow asks permission to be cut in half.
The cow dies happy.

Jottings from the Laser Masters Circuit 2011

Chris Fyans, our Vice Commodore and Intrepid Laser Sailor reports on the 2011 circuit

Chris Fyans

As most of you will know, the Laser Masters circuit is dedicated to those over 35 years of age and is divided into 10 year brackets. As long as you can launch and climb into the boat, you can race competitively. One of the regular Great Grand Masters turned 82 about three years ago but is currently suffering a back problem. He vows to return as soon as he can. I am in the Grand Master fleet sailing a standard rig. It is a very competitive fleet and, despite David Giles' gloomy perception, just great fun!

Our second son, Cavan, currently lives in Belfast and sails his Laser at Ballyholme Yacht Club in Bangor. So when I discovered that the Irish Masters was to be held at Ballyholme in May it seemed the obvious thing to do was to enter and use his boat. Moreover there was no necessity to apply for a weekend pass since my wife, Valerie, was only too delighted to have the opportunity to visit Cavan. It was a two day event and the forecast

was for winds in excess of 25 knots – good sailing winds to some of us. The first thing I noticed about the Irish Masters sailors was that, despite the forecast, there was not a Radial rig in sight. That allowed for many breakages and dramatic moments during the first day, so much so that the local spares supplier had to go back to his store to replenish his stocks. That caused me some bother when I came in with a broken tiller and found he was not there to supply a replacement to go back out. Still, it meant I was on hand to assist the ambulance crew to bring one sailor ashore who had been taken out of his boat by the prow of another boat in his kidneys. He spent some little time at the hospital but was reportedly back sailing within a month or so.

Saturday afternoon was the Heineken Cup final between Northampton and the Irish club Leinster, but Ballyholme had taken the disastrous decision to cancel their Sky subscription. However, in Ireland there was no question of everyone filtering away to watch in pubs and homes; the whole fleet, Guinness and Magners in hand, moved to Alex's house nearby where sausages and chips were provided to keep the 35 sailors in his front room going throughout the game. His wife went next door. My problem was being the only Northampton supporter and things were not looking good at half

time with Leinster trailing by a wide margin. But the second half brought the house down as Leinster forged through to win.

Sunday brought sunshine and 25-30 knots from the west. In race four I was in the leading group heading down the reach towards the shore and when we got to the wing mark, nobody gybed. We all just kept going in shore waiting for the right moment to tack round. The race officer said he was convinced the wing mark had drifted away. He measured the wind speed as we finished at 33 knots – awesome!. Sunday's results were good enough for me to get on the podium as second Grand Master. This is definitely one for the calendar next year.

July brought the UK Masters at Whitstable, and in complete contrast the forecast was for little or no wind for the whole of the three day event. So it proved, and there was no sailing at all on the Friday. That allowed for an early gathering for an excellent steak barbecue at the club accompanied by much merriment and swinging the lamp with Pete Young and Irish buddies from Queen Mary. Lots of jolly sailor songs and even table magic from Neil Peters! Saturday brought light winds which allowed four races to be run. I say light winds but Steve Cockerill sailing a full rig declared that he was uncomfortably on the limit of being overpowered. We are obviously doing it wrong. Several recalls that day, partly due I am sure to Ken Falcon's wicked habit of adjusting the start line between the warning and preparatory flags by paying out on the committee boat anchor warp. It pays to keep a beady eye on Ken.

Another two races were sailed in light and shifty conditions on Sunday. Highest placed Weir Wood boat was Dave Binding, 14th Overall but 3rd Grand Master. My own results were shocking and that together with remarks made in jest at Ailsa Giles' excellent birthday party on the following Monday sparked off something that was to lead to the suggested renaming of our club as Weight Watchers Sailing Club.



↑ Golden Gate, Golden Sailing

August in California might strike some as promising ideal summer sailing conditions. Not so for the Masters Worlds in San Francisco Bay. The heat in the Napa Valley draws in cold north Pacific air so that the Bay is blanketed in fog for most of the month. It hangs at a good height however, so doesn't interfere with sailing, but it is certainly not warm. It does mean, however, that the winds are truly awesome, consistently coming in late morning from west south west at 12 – 15 knots and steadily building to 25 knots plus in late afternoon. The Bay also features strong tides, running at up to 4 knots at maximum flow. A change from flood to ebb during the day means one race in smooth water and the second in quite challenging waves. Orlando Gledhill described it as "Stokes Bay on steroids". The tides were not too difficult during the first part of the week but the rate increased towards the end so that hanging about waiting for the flood current to fade enough for a course to be set at the start meant constantly sailing energetically up wind and tide if one was to avoid finishing up behind Alcatraz.

The week long regatta was based at the St. Francis Yacht Club, which must now provide the benchmark for Masters Worlds events. Situated right on the water's edge with spectacular views of the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz, the club's facilities can only be described as luxurious. For accommodation there were many reasonable motels within a short walk. The organisation of the event was also outstanding; it was said that there were some 260 volunteers on hand to assist the 248 sailors entered. It has become increasingly common at World events for the host club to provide some sort of snack every day for sailors coming ashore in the late afternoon after racing. St. Francis style was to provide a full service buffet in the clubhouse (and I mean waiters in white coats) and free beer, every day. That progressed into a scheduled de-brief each day, chaired by the Race Director, at which there was open discussion of the day's racing so as to allow adjustments to the organisation of the next day. A very useful innovation. One of the great



← Anyone Spot Fyans?

things about the Worlds is catching up with all the regulars from various countries. A great week with awesome sailing.

Weir Wooders generally were frightened off by tales of the winds in San Francisco Bay, so I was the highest placed Weir Wood boat at the Masters Worlds. I had some good results mid week, but some very bad ones at each end, so finished up 23rd in the Grand Master fleet. The UK faired quite well with second in the standard and radial Apprentices, third in the standard Grand Masters and first in the Great Grand Masters.

One week after returning from San Francisco it was off to Douarnenez in Brittany for the European Masters; an interesting event, with very laid back organisation. There was effectively no clubhouse, and a huge marquee had been erected on the quayside instead, but it housed only an administration desk and bar. The only showers were in a public facility tacked onto the side of the club. So some 170 sailors had to use a car park commandeered as the boat park on the quayside. We at least managed to corral the two camper vans of Neil Peters and Pete Young to make a passable Weir Wood clubhouse.

The launch and recovery procedure was also interesting, there being only one slipway and nowhere to stack the trolleys. The instructions were that when one came in to the bottom of the slipway one would call out one's tally number and a volunteer would

go and search for one's trolley and bring it. All well and good until fifty boats clamoured at the bottom of the slip calling out numbers in French and English. I repeatedly shouted my number in French to one young lad who did not seem to understand, no matter how loudly I shouted. Then I heard what he was saying – "I am English!". So I said "Well – did you not do French at school?"

One thing Douarnenez Voile did do quite well was the opening ceremony which included a very lively street band consisting of about 20 or so musicians. This was followed by Pete Young demonstrating his Brompton folding bicycle to a fascinated crowd – not seen before in France apparently.

The weather was hardly what one expects in France in August, but at least we were blessed with good winds every day. The wind direction in Douarnenez Bay did make it difficult to decide which was the favoured side of the course, but Simon Barrington seemed to get it right most of the time and finished the week third in the Apprentice fleet. My week started badly with an OCS and Black Flag in races one and two, leaving no room for later shockers. But it was a great week's sailing.

Weir Wood Laser Masters now look forward to the World's in Brisbane in 2012 year and the word is that D. Giles may be about to join us now that he is a Grand Master, if only to fly us all down there! ▲

Our Neighbours

WWSC shares its location with a number of other organisations who enjoy our wonderful surroundings. One of them is Standen House. (Pronounced StanDEN with the emphasis on the "den")

Ed



Standen from the South

Sailing towards the west end of the reservoir if you look to the north shore between buoys 6 and 8 you may just see in the winter a large country house at the top of the rise. This is Standen, now a national trust property. The house and its grounds run along the ridge with views to the south overlooking the reservoir and across to the Ashdown Forest.

In 1890. James Beale, a successful and prosperous London solicitor, and his wife Margaret, a lover of gardens, acquired a site for their country house consisting of three small farms just south of East Grinstead: Great Hollybush, Stone and Standen. These formed part of the Sainthill estate, on generously wooded and picturesque land with views south east across the Medway Valley to Ashdown Forest. The original Standen farm house was demolished in 1896 and it is the 15th century Great Hollybush building that was incorporated into the new building. This now sits close to the ticket office and is linked by a covered gateway to the new house.

Beale chose Philip Webb as his architect. Webb was known for his unpretentious and informal designs which were original and practical often incorporating the use of contrasting materials such as white interior walls and bare brickwork. He was a founder member together with William Morris and members of the Pre Raphaelite Brotherhood of the Morris's firm that pioneered the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Standen is a traditionally built house that was built between 1892 and 1894. It uses local materials and was built with great care and fine craftsmanship. However, it contained some up to date features. The House of Commons had been lit with electric light in 1881, with the first private house, Cragside, lit by electricity in 1884. Standen built only a few years later had one of the earliest electrical systems in Britain. This original system still survives in the house, and continues to power lighting at Standen today. If you go to the annual Christmas carols evening you can see the original lighting system in operation.

The house was decorated by William Morris's company. He believed that modern mass production endangered individual creativity, and threatened to dehumanise the working lives of millions of people. As a remedy he hoped his Arts and Crafts movement would revive traditional individual craftsmanship.

By the early twentieth century it became apparent that in spite of William Morris's egalitarian ideals, handmade products were expensive to make, and served only as status symbols for the rich. Standen, for all its beauty, is an illustration of this. In many ways Standen is memorial to the Arts and Crafts movement, one of its greatest achievements, and an illustration of why it came to an end.

Standen is wonderfully sited with its views to the south overlooking the Ashdown Forest and a London Landscape Gardener, G B Simpson, produced the original designs for the garden. These were based on old fashioned gardenesque style and Webb persuaded Beale to adopt a more simple formal style near the house that gave way to grass and native trees. His terracing, steps and summerhouse are clearly superimposed upon the very different work of Simpson.

To this amalgam of apparently conflicting styles was added the planting of Margaret Beale, which with its abundance of colourful and unusual plants was at variance with the effects Webb would have wanted. Margaret Beale died in 1936 and was succeeded at Standen by her daughters Margaret (d.1947) and, Helen, who bequeathed Standen to the Trust on her death in 1972. Mrs Beale's daughters do not seem to have wanted to interfere with what their mother had done. When the Trust took over, Simpson's dwarf shrubberies had grown to 30 feet high, blocking some of the views out of the garden. The Trust's policy has been a conservative one: to try and resolve the awkward differences between Webb's and Simpson's intentions and to sacrifice none of Margaret Beale's planting that could reasonably be kept, while maintaining the whole with a greatly reduced staff of a single gardener.

Today the gardens are a delightful collection of lawns, terraces, steps, orchards containing a huge variety of plants, shrubs and trees that have something to offer all through the year. And you can get excellent views of Weir Wood from various vantage points.

Standen has other connections of particular interest to Weir Wood members. Just after the first World War James Beale bought land at Cobnor including Cobnor House. The latter was built in the early 19th Century. His objective was to maintain Cobnor's conservation value to the highest standard whilst at the same time providing access for others to enjoy its beauty as part of the Chichester Harbour environment.

WWSC members know Cobnor and Chidham because of the Outdoor activity centre there which we all, youth and adults, enjoy for various weekends. Attached to Cobnor House is Cobnor Flat which some of us also know. The less hardy of us who can't put up with the rigours of communal sleeping enjoy the hospitality of Mike and Judy Cooper's Bed and Breakfast facilities.

Cobnor House and the estate remain in the Beale family. The Editor spoke to Diana Beale who manages the Estate to find out more of the history and her approach to estate management.

"My Grandfather Sidney's wife was from Saint Hill. He was a farmer and sailor. He brought the technical innovations of Standen with him including a generator to Cobnor. The values that he embraced back then are still the core values that we hold dear and continue today. My grandfather was very strong in developing a sense of community, was commodore of Bosham Sailing Club and my grandmother started the Woman's Institute.

My parents continued to develop the sense of community and the diversified farm and it is those values that we continue to maintain and develop today. Conservation has become even more important with bio diversity and carbon neutral objectives high on the list.

I remember the one Great Aunt left at Standen, Helen and I have memories of visiting this last surviving relative of that generation still in the house. I remember riding on the Rocking Horse which is still in the house and riding on the trolley car that went up and down the garden. I actually spent one Christmas there

We aim to keep the estate as sustainable as possible. We don't advertise and there is no private camping. Camping is for organised groups only. I run the dinghy park which is reserved for local folk who have strong connections with Chidham. Our approach to both camping and sailing is rather "Swallows and Amazons" style. I sail a Drascombe Lugger and a Laser and my two daughters are AI's at the Activity Centre." ▲



← Standen and the Old Farm



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Alex Matthews joins the British Keel Boat National Squad

Some of us have known Alex since he was in Oppy Club. Well he's grown a bit since then and not just upwards.

Ed

After sailing in the Student Yachting Nationals, Civil Service Yachting Nationals, various Royal Southern events, as well as the Fastnet and Fastnet qualifiers, Alex attended selections for the British Keelboat Academy. It was a pretty grueling weekend held at UKSA, testing sailing abilities as well as enthusiasm, commitment and leadership.

He was selected to join the development squad in September with 21 other young talented sailors. Two of them were then moved onto Kolga, a Farr 45, with the BKA National Squad. With the boat dry stored over the winter they haven't had many chances of boat training, but they have still been mending boat and sails as well as attending shorebased sessions, dealing with sponsorship, leadership, personal development etc.

Here's a profile of Alex:

- Age: 22
- Grew up East Grinstead
- Currently Living Bath
- Occupation: University Student
- Sailing Club: Weir Wood and University of Bath Sailing Club
- Position in boat: Bow
- First sailing experience: Taken yachting at a young age but started sailing Optimists at age 11
- Greatest Sailing goal: Steering 45+ ft boats to National/International victory
- Greatest sailing achievement to date: Completing the Fastnet 2011 after minimal yacht racing experience
- Most memorable sailing experience: Arriving at Plymouth after sailing for 5 days and 20+ hours during the Fastnet Race 2011
- Worst moment sailing: Defrosting jib sheets and ice breaking during last winter



↑ Relaxing on the Keel Boat

We all wish the best of luck in what is to come and look forward to seeing you at WWSC when you are home and hearing how it is all going. ▲

CUSTOMERS WANTED

The training team are looking for six total beginners for the aspiring Assistant Instructors to teach at Easter. If you know of anyone - friend, relative, work colleague, etc - who would like to learn to sail, please let us know by emailing Glynis at glynis@glynis.me.uk or call her on 01444 456759. The only requirements are that they must be 18 or over and able to attend both days - Easter Saturday, 7 April, and Saturday 14 April from 9 till 5. This two-day course is the RYA Start Sailing course, and while there's no charge for the course itself, a logbook and certificate costs £7. To satisfy the club's insurance requirements, we have to charge a £20 temporary membership fee which is refundable in full if they join the club later in the year.

Introducing Mike and Debbie Smith, Weir Wood's Fishing Managers

Ed

Members should be aware by now that since June last year the Fishing operation has been under new management for some time and many of you will recognise Mike and Debbie as you walk past the Fishing Lodge to the Boat Parks. The Editor met up with them to find out more about them.

Ed: "Tell us a bit about your background"

Debbie: "We are Mike and Debbie Smith. Mike was born in Bromley and I was born in Lambeth and we both reside now in Kent. Mike has been in the building trade both before and during the fishing industry. I have just resigned from working for a bank after 22 years to enjoy the outdoor life.

Ed: "How did you get into fishing?"

Mike: "I started fishing at an early age with my brothers in small ponds and this developed into all round fishing throughout Europe.

Ed: "What other fishing enterprises do you run?"

Mike: "We own a seven lake complex in Kent which we have had since 2000.

Ed: "Why did you take on Weir Wood?"

Debbie: "We started to look for a new fishery to take over and Mike has been fishing for trout and pike for many years at Weir Wood dating back to 1970's"

Ed: "What do you hope to get out of Weir Wood?"

Mike: "We are continuing to improve the fishing side and hope it can be as it was in the past known as one of the top trout and pike waters in England. We are promoting all coarse species i.e. carp, Rudd, roach, tench, bream and trout and pike. Coarse fishing has a closed season but trout opens all year. We are promoting regional competitions for matches and clubs, which we have already taken bookings to end of 2012

Ed: "What improvements have you made to the fishing lodge?"

Debbie: "We have transformed the lodge into a café which is a comfortable place for the fishermen to have breakfast or lunch in a warm and welcoming environment and also to relax. We also have a tackle shop. We are also in the process of building a new pontoon, and in a few months time a disabled toilet and showers."

Ed: "How do you see Weir Wood fishing developing?"

Mike: "We see this developing into a first class fishery for the future."

Ed: "What is the relationship between you and Nordic walking etc?"



Debbie: "Nordic walking is now being taken over by ourselves as previously with Michael Evans. We feel that walking on the reservoir should be done under organised and timed control which is being done by one of our employees."

Ed: "How do you see the future of fishing and sailing and should there be closer links between the two organisations?"

Mike: "We hope that for the future both sailing and fishing can work together for all parties to enjoy the reservoir and their sport. We feel that we have a very good relationship between our two organisations and hopefully will only get better. Maybe we should have meetings a couple of times a year to bring up any issues or problems or just to chat and have a drink or two.

Ed: "How would you like to see sailors supporting the fishing enterprise?"

Mike: "Lots of your sailors support us already by taking out our boats and fishing too but most important is the friendly greeting to each other."

Ed: "Are there any interface you would like to see clarified or explained better to the sailors?"

Mike: "All the interfaces that were addressed have now been rectified between both parties and we feel that anything that needs to be sorted out can be done directly between with us. We are now manning Weir Wood 24 hours for security which can only benefit both parties.

Let us all work together so you still enjoy your sport and we can run our business successfully.

We would like to wish all your members a Happy New Year"

So WWSC members, please make an effort to say "Hello" to Mike and Debbie and do everything you can to promote a good relationship between us. Do remember that there is a 50 metre exclusion zone around anyone fishing and you can call for "Room" on another boat if you need to stay clear. If there are any problems that can't be resolved by a friendly chat do let a committee member know and we will sort it out. ▲

Adult Cobnor 2011

Christine Fleming reports

Having a Friday off is one of life's blessings, having a Friday off and being able to drive down to Cobnor early therefore missing the m  le of roundabouts called the A27 masquerading as a car park meant the weekend starting blissfully. Sitting under the oak overlooking the water listening to the Curlew for the first time in several years was exquisitely peaceful and one of those moments when you feel time has stood still. Quite rare these days. An evening meal sitting by an open fire in a country pub was made all the more pleasurable by the company and the courteous staff.

Back at base, I decided to walk along to the bench which I have often pointed to whilst sailing and announced that's my favorite bench! Little did I know it is locally known as Martin's bench, Martin Beale whose name you will see on the new sail store at Cobnor.

Apparently this was his favorite place to sit, and anyone who sits there will see why.



↑ Perfect Sailing

Walking towards me was Mike of the B and B and keeper of the Beale estate with his camera doing the same thing taking pictures of the glorious sunset.

We then went on to say how generous the Beale family are without whom Cobnor would not exist. Their family home was Standen now owned by The National Trust, familiar to most Weir Woodonians as it is so close to the reservoir and celebrated elsewhere in this Edition of "Afloat"

What about the sailing I hear you cry? Well for me it was a brilliant experience. I was teamed with the delightful Richard and immediately apologized to him. As always the gentleman he smiled. I had forgotten how heavy these Bosuns are and as with everything in life once you progress and experience newer and better designed things it is easy to criticize something which has been well loved; i.e. worn to a frazzle.

Having said that, the sea requires a certain amount of sturdiness in a boat and the bosuns are certainly sturdy, just a tad cumbersome compared to a Laser 2000 but somehow more reassuring when there is more boat between you and the water; well for me anyway.

So, off to Emsworth we go, and to our utter amazement. there we arrived, just in time for lunch, with time to stand and stare and contemplate.

I did feel a little silly when I asked why is there a stiletto on that weather vane? To be told that's a slipper as it's The Slipper Yacht club. Ah, looks like a Manolo Blahnik to me I thought, or maybe an early Charles Jourdan.

We tried a bit of backwards sailing off the jetty which actually worked. Mind you there were a few people that just escaped a dunk by a halyard's width when reboarding their boats which were more tippy than they thought; quite entertaining.

I was desperately trying to pluck up the courage to helm, but the mention of "try to miss that bit of the channel" as you go out, left me feeling totally inadequate and I am ashamed to say fear got the better of me and I allowed Richard to carry on which was not at all fair. He deserves a medal for being so gallant. Does anyone else have a feeling of sheer relief when you reach the Fairway buoy? Anyone would think we had been across the Atlantic.

Supper was a delicious casserole cooked by Gill. When I asked her the recipe I think she said Pete the Plumber or Mike the gasman gave it to her. Anyway it was really scrummy.

Then off to The Old House (Home) whatever it's called to a very warm welcome from the Landlord, a place to sit and good company telling salty Old Seadogs tales of each others on and off the water.

What about the sailing? Sorry, technical details remain dim but joining us for the weekend was Archie Law as part of his Instructor rating and I was teamed up with him for Sunday. We had a briefing regarding the law of twelfths which I



↖ More Perfect Sailing

always try to remember and give up. We had established that during springs there was a difference of 15 feet (hang on was it 25 or maybe three metres?). So our mission was to head for East Head, try some rudderless sailing and conquer our fear of gybing.

Conditions were favourable. I know that's debatable as some of you are speed freaks and adrenalin junkies but for me a gentle breeze force next to nothing is ideal unless someone else is helming and I am in a race when slightly more is desirable. As we drifted backwards up the creek without a paddle, thought "I wonder if he can sail?" I found the paddle and gently we started moving forward managing to catch up with the rest of the brood into a comforting safe distance from the safety boat. The "woooooah" Archie exclaimed after the first gybe, unnerved me slightly but he was just finding his way around the boat and soon proved to be a very good sailor. He also proved a sage on very young shoulders, as ever so gently he suggested that trusting your fellow crew is an integral part of sailing. I relaxed ever so slightly. Half way across somewhere between here and there I caught sight of Mark heading towards us in the Rib and said to Archie "He's going to ask me to helm now" and sure enough he did.

I shall be eternally grateful to him that he did, as both of us know that without that request I would not have plucked up the courage....

So we swapped places, and to my utter astonishment I had not forgotten everything I knew (easy when it's not a lot) and there I was tacking albeit in ridiculous places with no consideration of arriving anytime soon just avoiding any possible hint of mud, sand, land buoy, boat or even seagull for that matter. Archie should also get a medal for his patience and understanding. Even he even gave a compliment or two on my sailing.

As we got nearer and nearer to East Head I remember Archie saying "Look at those huge waves crashing over there!" (Don't panic Mr. Mannering!) It's not a tsunami but what on earth is it? Oh get me to dry land soon little boat I thought.

A little peek over the top of the sand dunes and oh that weather looks a bit dark and windy and scary. Lets go home soon. So hold that thought and take your rudder off! So with a look of horror and heart thumping off we go backwards without a rudder. Archie in full control literally and after the first or second gybe or tack I started to smile as I realized Archie did have total control just by moving his body around the boat and he went on tacking and gybing without the rudder thoroughly enjoying himself not realizing that all the adults around him were looking on in awe at how easy he made it seem.

Sailing back with one hand on the boom to avoid giving Archie the pleasure of an unannounced gybe we went up to Bosham which I hardly recognized with the tide in and just for fun Archie sailed very close to various things including boats and wooden objects never hitting anything once or twice even. There was a slight gasp from someone sitting on



Watch Out! Enemy Vessel Ahead!

the stern of a lovely yacht but I did not quite see the whites of his eyes or decipher what he said so we cannot have been that close.

Back to base without any mishaps, well to me anyway, I vaguely recall Tony bending over the outside water tap rubbing his head. Funny thing to do on a cold afternoon I thought and unbeknown to most of us he had, really had been clobbered by the boom coming into shore. Just goes to show you cannot be too careful....

How lovely a mug of tea tastes when you have had an adventure and even more amazing then to have a full roast dinner cooked by Gill and the motley crew which I must say was so very tasty. So the miracles to behold at Cobnor are:

How on earth Gill can do safety boat, and food and look after us all at the same time?

How our instructors stop themselves from saying "I told you so".

How the rest of the planet have not discovered how great Cobnor weekends are.

My very grateful thanks go to

Tony, Gill Mark and Andy for being saints (special thanks to Andy for being a transit beacon as the ability to be able to see him in his bright red dry suit was a huge factor in not getting lost at sea) and Archie and Richard for being unbelievably tolerant.

Christine Fleming

P.S. Don't tell anyone, or they will all want to come! ▲

Ardingly Sailing

WWSC has a close connection with Ardingly College through members who are students and staff. Rory Davis, their Sailing Captain, talks about their sailing activities

Rory Davis

When I arrived at Ardingly in September 2007 the sailing team struggled to put out a team of 6 sailors. But to Martin Pascoe and Andrew Spiers's immense credit and thanks to their enthusiasm and management our sailing team has, over the last 4 years, not only become very competitive on the schools circuit but we regularly have over 30 sailors. We train almost every Saturday morning at Ardingly for the two later terms and Weir Wood has also become a big factor in the success of Ardingly sailing with 6 families of Ardingly College being members of Weir Wood. Weir Wood has allowed the pupils to gain vital race experience on the Saturday afternoon Oppy club and youth racing. This has meant Ardingly College is able to field three competitive teams and the Ardingly College first team had the most successful season in Ardingly College's history winning two major trophies and having a win rate of 90% over 28 races. There is a National circuit of schools that regularly compete including local hot contenders, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge schools.

I believe the biggest improvement in Ardingly's sailing team has been the strong sense of team and of community that the Scholl represents. The buddy system - the older ones passing on their knowledge to the younger Prep school sailors - works brilliantly just as Andrew and Martin did at the beginning to the whole sailing club. Andrew's and Martin's hard work with the Prep school sailing (8-13 years old) means that Ardingly Sailing will have a team to reckon with for many years to come.

We sail Firefly's and 420's on Ardingly and these are the two handed boats that pre-dominate in sailing in almost all educational establishments in the UK right up to University level. We mainly match race on the circuit though there is some fleet racing. We race keelboats when we get an opportunity, mostly j80's and SB3's, though I skippered the Beneteau 47 we entered in the Round the Island in 2011. We didn't actually make the race. We blew out our genoa going hard against the wind through the Looe Channel off Bognor on the way!! I personally sail an RS200 on Weir Wood and have never managed to beat Martin and Julie yet though I keep trying. Andrew sails a Laser 2000 which is a little more sedate though I can manage to beat him on handicap. I have mentioned Martin Pascoe a lot. He has been a teacher at Ardingly College for over 20 years and in that time has served the sailing team through the highs and lows. Even



Recognise any of these?



Ardingly Firefly's



Ardingly 420's

through the deepest lows he was able to keep the sailing team going. Andrew joined the staff about 3 years ago and has revolutionised the Team and has fully assisted Martin and between them we now have one of the most successful school sailing outfits in the country. Many thanks to every sailing member of Ardingly College and let's hope there is much more success to come! ▲

Vic Hopkins turns 80

Sailing chum, Kevin Francis, celebrates Vic's 80th birthday

Kevin Francis

Vic Hopkins celebrated his 80th birthday on 1st January. It was a fairly cool, wet, breezy day. But he didn't sit at home in front of the fire, wearing his slippers, reading the latest copy of SAGA magazine, reminiscing about "how it used to be in my day"; because it STILL IS HIS DAY! So he went sailing!! Don't all 80 year olds do that on their birthday; especially if their birthday is the FIRST OF JANUARY? So I thought I'd like to mark this milestone by telling you all a bit about what Vic does ... "IN HIS DAY"! So here goes



↑ Vic

I've known, and sailed with, Vic Hopkins for more than 20 years now and I think it's fair to say that we consider ourselves to be very good friends. I cannot think of a single occasion over all the time we've known each other when we have had cause to argue or even to have a serious disagreement. We only disagree with other people, and usually that is at an off-wind mark-rounding, but that's another story!

Vic is a person who lives life to the full. He, supposedly, "retired" many years ago but he packs more activity into his life than most people half his age; in fact more than most people a QUARTER of his age. Whether it's his wine club, supporting fund-raising for the Forest Row branch of the lifeboats, keeping in touch with and meeting up with school and youth club friends from his childhood, baking bread, fixing his roof (yes, he was up a ladder doing his roof only a couple of years ago), making or fixing things around the house when most of us would just pay somebody to do it, growing fruit and vegetables some to eat, some to go into his home-made wine, long-distance walking (and, until very recently, camping), going to the gym just about EVERY week (how many of us do that?), maintaining and

fixing his boat, regular trips to the theatre (he's a bit of a "culture vulture" is Vic), bagging some darned good deals for his holidays; its all done with the utmost enthusiasm; and ALL without any recourse to the internet! Oh, and he does a bit of sailing from time to time as well.

In case you don't know, Vic is the one in "Capricorn", the blue-hulled Enterprise, sail number 21540 which, aside from his family, is his pride and joy; and, by the way, he won the second Handicap Fleet race today, Sunday 8th January; and against some decent sailors too; not bad eh??

Vic and I sail together in order to enjoy ourselves. Its great when we do well, and even greater when we WIN!! But we sail together for the sheer fun of it. Anybody who has heard Vic's truly awful, but enthusiastic, singing before the start of a race on a Sunday knows that he just loves being on the water in his boat; and he loves to let people know about it too.

Vic is also one of those unsung heroes of Weir Wood Sailing Club; the ones who don't hold office but without whom the club could not function as it does. For some years Vic has maintained the club's hire fleet along with another good friend of his, David Ramshaw.

Over the years Vic has done a fair bit of big-boat sailing as well. He's cruised extensively on both sides of the English Channel including the Channel Islands and has ventured as far afield as The Morbihan in Southern Brittany and the South West coast of Ireland. Some years ago he gained his Yachtmaster certificate. He still keeps his hand in with a spot of sailing aboard ex-WWSC members Peter & Gill



↖ Vic Celebrating

Rowles's Westerly Consort and he takes a pride in working out all the tides in advance for Peter.

As I often remark to my wife, Glenys; if, when I'm Vic's age, I'm doing what he is doing now, I will be delighted.

Speaking of wives I must mention Vic's wife Pat; or, as he refers to her when he's trying to get into her "good books", Patricia. It seems to me that Pat always supports Vic in his

activities, many of which include her, but some of which, including sailing, don't. In fact some of them, big-boat sailing, walking, camping, etc.- involve him leaving her at home alone for days on end. Vic jokes about this and says that it suits Pat to kick him out of the house because he gets in her way at home. But I'm sure that, like all the best wives, she allows him his freedom simply because she knows that it makes him happy. What a wonderful wife you are to him, Pat; I don't know if he tells YOU, but it is evident from the way he talks about you just how much he appreciates your company and support; and he is keen to tell others about your qualities, especially about your cooking. If what Vic says is true then there isn't a person in the whole world who cooks a better roast dinner, or bakes a better Christmas cake, than you! And I can vouch for the Christmas cake myself.



↑ Vic and Kevin at Speed

I sometimes have to actually remind myself of Vic's age - and I sometimes wonder whether I should remind HIM of his age - because he doesn't act his age! Long may he continue not to do so!

Here's to you Vic, CHEERS! From your very good friend, Kevin". ▲



Sit!

HERE ARE THE ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONS TO SOME WELL KNOWN MEDICAL TERMS:

Artery	<i>The study of paintings</i>
Bacteria	<i>Back door to cafeteria</i>
Barium	<i>What you do when patients die</i>
Benign	<i>What you be after you are eight</i>
Cauterize	<i>Made eye contact with her</i>
Colic	<i>A sheep dog</i>
Coma	<i>A punctuation mark</i>
Enema	<i>Not a friend</i>
Fester	<i>Quicker than somebody else</i>
Impotent	<i>Distinguished, well known</i>
Nitrates	<i>Higher pay for night working</i>
Post operative	<i>A letter carrier</i>
Secretion	<i>Hiding something</i>
Seizure	<i>A roman emperor</i>
Tumour	<i>One plus more</i>
Urine	<i>Opposite of being out</i>

JOKE

- My wife went on a sailing course in Poole
- In Dorset?
- Yes, she'd recommend it to anyone.



Stand!

Weir Wood Sailing Club financial report 2010-11

Chris Wilson: Hon Treasurer

Firstly I wish to apologise for my absence from the AGM; a diary muddle and preparations for my daughter's wedding the following weekend completely erased it from my mind!

This report covers the year to 31 March 2011, so as ever it is more a historical document. A PDF copy of the accounts is available from the Club website, and all the numbers quoted can be found in there. Overall the Club had a good year, with a bottom line surplus of £6,419. Membership fee income was slightly down on the previous year, mainly due to holding the fees level last year, but total income was higher, at £113,503, due to the increased surplus on training and youth activities, which amounted to £8,332, up from £2,164 in the previous year. The Optimist activity again generated almost £3,000, and both these reflect the amazing hard work and commitment of a small group of members, who deserve our warmest congratulations.

On the expenditure side, a number of items were affected by the VAT increase to 20%, especially the rent, which as well as the VAT increase was also higher due to re-synchronising our quarterly payments (basically it had got out of step, and so we had to pay an extra month in the year to get it back on track). However, overall our expenditure was down, due in no small measure to finally getting our electricity supplier to accept my actual meter readings rather than the rather fantastical estimates they kept coming up with, which resulted in a refund to the club of just over £6,000. We have since switched to a new supplier with lower charges. Our expenditure on maintaining the clubhouse and grounds was some £2,994 lower,

On the asset side, we invested in more boats for training, including 4 Oppies, 4 Lasers and 3 RS Fevas, and some new Outboard motors, which have since been stolen, and so will be replaced over the next couple of months. Our cash reserves were virtually unchanged, at £147,879, up from £147,489 in the previous year.

For the financial year which begins on 1st April 2012, the Committee decided to keep most of the membership fees unchanged again, in acknowledgement of the difficult economic situation, but did propose the following increases:

- a. Windsurfers – increase to £75 from £60
- b. Seniors – increase to £85 from £74 (and to £100 in 2013/14)
- c. Cadets – increase to £75 from £60
- d. Affiliated clubs – increase to £300 from £275

As ever, I am always happy to answer any queries you may have. Thank you for re-appointing me as Treasurer in my absence, and I wish you all a good 2012, and good sailing! ▲

How much do you want to cut your marketing database costs by?

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atrium

Chris Hopkins



← Chris Hopkins

WWSC Youth Report December 2011

I write this in the doldrums period between Christmas and New Year looking back on 2011 and forward to 2012. Overall I am delighted with the progress that we have made this year and also with the prospects for 2012 where we have some very exciting events. Please see below for details particularly re the Zone championships.

Firstly I to say "thank you" to Mark Harrington who has stood down as Optimist Flotilla leader having spent 3 years in the role. Mark has put a huge amount of effort in both front of house and backstage: my mailbox is testimony to that! He now wants some freedom to spend more time looking after his own children, a sentiment that I can readily understand. I am happy to say that he will stay on as part of the Youth Committee (the "ad-hoc" committee of interested parties that looks after all our Youth sailing). This means that we have a situation vacant for Oppy Flotilla Leader. Any volunteers to take on this exacting but rewarding role please form the usual orderly queue....In the interim we will revert to the "Oppy Parent Team" to keep things running but again we need to bring in new blood as our own children are all getting older and moving on to bigger toys.

Secondly my thanks to Allan Jones for all his dedication and hard work in running the Sunday afternoon group virtually single handed for many years. The good news is that Allan has agreed to reduce his announced retirement to "semi-retirement". He will still support this group but we will need to provide him with assistance so that he does not have to be there every week. A rota is being put together and we both need and expect parents of participants in this group to share some of the effort. The Sunday afternoon drop and run has got to become a thing of the past.

Review of 2011

Overall 2011 marks a turning point in the history of the club. It seems longer ago but it was only in March that a huge gang of Weir Wood Youth invaded the dinghy show to receive the club's Volvo Champion Club accreditation. This marks what we have done in reality to answer the question of "Is there life after Oppies?"

The Optimist Flotilla used to run as a club within a club. There was nothing wrong with that. It was right at the time but the time was also right to move forward. The Oppy Flotilla is now fully integrated into the club youth programme where it remains the most important part and the starting point for everything else.

We changed the Oppy programme this year to give youngsters a quicker introductory course with the intention that more intensive training could then be provided for those that were interested in continuing. This has not quite worked as hoped and the proportion of those continuing has reduced from previous years. Next year we will tweak things to reintegrate the beginners courses into all the other Oppy activity and also to provide packages including the beginners and follow on courses together with boat hire to see youngsters through their first few months of Oppy sailing..

We have also focussed heavily on improving the level of race coaching in recent years which has perhaps put off some of those who do not want to race. This is something which we will seek to redress by putting renewed emphasis on the Intermediate group and having good old fashioned fun messing around in boats. Our thoughts are to achieve this by running the beginners and intermediate events in the early part of the afternoon and running the racing group later in the day alongside the Youth Racing Group. The exact format has still to be finalised and we will talk through our plans in detail with the parents before implementing anything final.

The Saturday afternoon Youth Racing Group came of age this year, if this can be said in its second year! It has done what we intended and provided a place for those growing out of Oppies but still wanting organised racing and coaching. Turnouts were regularly around 10 boats this year which provided a great platform for some serious coaching but always taken in a bit of fun. I measure success by the level of banter amongst the group and there seemed to be plenty of that. Like most of these things having a visible presence on the water provides an incentive for others to want to join in. Success breeds success.

Aside from the club Saturday afternoon sessions a good group of our young sailors has been travelling around the country on the Youth circuit. This has principally been in Optimists and Laser 4.7s but also in Toppers, Fevas and 29ers. The addition of Chris Fyan's large orange RIB complete with Weir Wood sign-writing meant a visible presence for the club at some major national event sometimes even for the right reasons but then again there is no such thing as bad publicity! As a bonus our Young sailors

are showing themselves to be no slouches and are turning in top half of the fleet results in very competitive fleets.

Sunday Afternoon Youth sailing was a bit of a victim of its own success. We have so many teenagers wanting to join in and so little regular adult help that sometimes it has been difficult to cope. This was partially dealt with later in the year by providing more structure to the sessions and finding more volunteers. We will need to take this further in 2012. My feeling is that we offer too much value for money so we may need to look seriously at our prices to help balance demand. None the less I personally feel very strongly that lack of money should never be a blocker for those that are really keen to enter and progress in the sport so this will need to be carefully balanced. Also as said above we will insist on greater parental involvement. As far as I am concerned there is no greater sin than our volunteers being left alone at the end of the day to pack up gear strewn around Oppy Bay. My worst experience is the adult watching a couple of us struggling up the slip with a RIB and commenting "that looks heavy" before turning back to continue their conversation.

Aside from the weekly sessions we ran two very successful weekends at Cobnor and a week's camp at the club. All of these are now fully integrated activities with participants of all ages. Just for fun we also ran a sea training day on Chichester harbour, something that I hope we can repeat in 2012 perhaps a little more formally.

Programme for 2012

I have mentioned above a few of the changes that we intend to make to the weekly activity. We plan to hold a parents' get together in the next couple of months to explain our plans and look to turn them into reality.

Key items in the programme for 2012 are:-

Optimist Open	14 – 15 April 2012
Spring Cobnor	25 – 27 May 2012
Oppy Camp 29	July – 2 August 2012
RYA South East Zone Championships	29 – 30 September 2012

RYA South East Zone Championships

We are delighted to say that the RYA have asked us to host the South East Zone Championships. Those of you who have been involved in Youth Racing will know how significant this is. The event is one of 8 coordinated championships across the UK all held at major clubs. It is primarily intended to give young sailors an introduction to major championship sailing. We confidently expect in excess

of 100 boats to participate so it will be the biggest event in the club's history. We regard this as recognition of the club's status as a Youth racing centre and also a vote of trust in our organisational ability. More details will follow as the year progresses but in the main time please pray for rain!

Spring Cobnor

An application form should be enclosed with this newsletter. This weekend residential event is open to all our young sailors.. If you want to know more please contact me.

Please note that we have been obliged to make a reasonably significant hike in our prices this year. Cobnor revised their pricing structure a couple of years back which had the effect of producing a hidden increase in our costs as the basic package contained less requiring us to pay out to hire extra sailing dinghies and support boats. The end result is that despite our best efforts we were struggling to cover our costs for the Spring weekend in particular. Having discussed this situation with some of the parents and members of the Training Committee we have reluctantly decided that we have to make this price increase. Despite the increase we still believe the cost to represent great value for a weekend's sailing including all meals and accommodation.

We recognise that times are hard for some people and as mentioned above we would never want to see a youngster excluded from our activities due to financial hardship. Should any family find themselves in a difficult situation please do not hesitate to talk to me, Allan or Simon in confidence and we will see what can be done to find a solution.

How can I help?

I hope that you can see that there is now a lot going on. There has been a lot of hard work by a dedicated team of helpers. Personally I have spent nearly every Saturday afternoon at the club for the last 8 years and I am not alone in this. For the sake of our sanity and our marriages we really need capable volunteers to help out from time to time. We have been lucky to have gained several extra pairs of capable and willing hands this year which has made it easier to run things. Part of our reasons for reorganising Saturday afternoons is to reduce the number of adult helpers needed at any one time. However we still lack is a core of responsible adults who are willing and able to supervise some Saturday or Sunday afternoon sessions. If we can put together a rota of such people who can do a couple of sessions a year that will be enough to relieve the burden from the regular crew. If you are able to assist please get in touch with me. ▲

2012 SUNDAY YOUTH SAILING

**ARE YOU BETWEEN 12 AND 16 YEARS OLD
AND WANT TO LEARN TO SAIL AND HAVE
FUN ?????? AND GAIN AN RYA AWARD AT
THE SAME TIME THEN THIS IS FOR YOU**

**WE MEET ON SUNDAY AFTERNOONS
STARTING ON APRIL 15th.**



**SPACE IS LIMITED SO IF YOU WANT
TO JOIN IN CONTACT**

ALLAN JONES 01883-346188

Oppy Report

Mark Harrington Flotilla Leader

This will be my final report as Oppy Flotilla leader having served almost 3 years and 3 previous years running beginners I feel it's time for some new ideas and input. This will also give me more time helping to support those children wanting to progress on the open circuit which is almost a full time job in itself. I may even do a bit more sailing myself (I certainly need the helming practice after capsizing in the Boxing Day race and watching the other 200s sail off into the distance! As Fiona 'explained', Matt G would never have done that!

We will be sitting down soon to work out the best way of taking Oppies forward at the club as at present there is no individual who has come forward. We do, however, have a great team of willing parents who will share responsibilities to ensure that Oppy Club continues to run during this year and beyond so we can continue to develop sailing for children at the club. A big thank you to the Oppy parent team who have made running Oppies "almost" easy! In particular Richard Haw who always ensures all the kit works, (you only miss it when it doesn't start), John Hamilton for rigging about 6 Oppies in 10 minutes every week, Tim Taylor for coordinating the beginners and Richard Baker who does a huge amount of organising of training, events and coordination with the RYA, plus all the other parents who put a lot of time and effort into making sure our children have a good time on and off the water and through all the Oppy events run in a year make a significant financial contribution to our club. Thanks also to the committee for their support and their appreciation for what we are trying to achieve.

As I said I will still be very much involved in the Oppy scene at the club through coaching and yes (sorry David!) maybe even coaching the 4.7s from time to time even if there is no wind!! We have a busy schedule of events this year with winter training already well underway. Looking on the



← Mark Harrington

webcam today Georgia and Zac were out there until 4pm! By the time you read this we will have completed in the Papercourt Open and I hope Zac, Georgia, Sophie and Louise will have done well. Then there are the Spring Champs in Poole in March, our Spring Open in April, Inlands Nationals in Wales etc etc. This all culminates in the RYA SE Zone championships the last weekend in September and I am delighted to say that Weir Wood will be hosting this event for the first time. It will good to get some more of our sailors in the zone squads for next year! There will only be about 120 boats competing!

To see what's been going on with Oppies in the last few months please read on:

Please read on to see what's been going on over the summer. See you on the water!

End of Season Prize Giving

Following the Autumn Series races the annual Prize Giving was held and the prizes were presented by our Vice-Commodore Chris Fyans who was presented with a signed photo of his rib which he has kindly let us use during the season. Thanks Chris. The series trophy started off the proceedings which the girls dominated being shared between Amy, Caitlin, Millie and Ellie, with Chris the only boy to pick up a series trophy! Re-addressing the balance were George Blatchford who won the Junior Shield, Zac Riley the Ashton Trophy for most improved racer and Harry Tucker the Endeavour Shield for most improved sailor overall. Back to the girls and

Amy won the Bridle Bowl for overall series points during the year and Ellie Clarke the Newcomers Shield. Well done to you all.

Final Races in the Autumn Series

Light conditions met the 15 competitors in the final 2 races of the Autumn Series which made for some tense racing. Race 1 saw Sophie Dorrington make a flying start to take the lead and despite sailing well Georgia Baker was unable to catch her and Sophie took her first win in a series event. Well done. Meanwhile Chris Taylor and Amy Bennett had to put in some good results to capitalise on their previous results. Amy picked up a 3rd with Chris only managing a 5th meant is was all on the last race. In the final race Georgia, who has clearly benefited from the recent girls training and really enjoying this racing, led from the start which she held until the finish. Well done. For most of the race she was pursued by Louise Harrington who again was sailing well but was hunted down by the ever "chatty!" Chris and George who finished 2nd and 3rd. Amy finished just behind the pair enough giving her 2nd overall in the series. Ellie Clarke put in 2 sound performances to give her 3rd overall in the series, with the overall Autumn Series title going to Chris Taylor. Well done Chris. For full results see the website.

Oppies do well at Winter Draws On

Well done to Zac for winning the Oppy fleet prize, great to see him up on the line at the starts, better than some of the 200s??!! Plus well done to Millie for winning the Lady helm prize in very testing conditions.

Congratulations to Emma Baker who secures her place in the Intermediate Squad for next year!

End of Seasons Rutland success in Regatta Fleet

Well done to our 3 sailors in the regatta fleet last weekend at Rutland. A fantastic performance from Zac Riley overall 5th (with a prize!) plus a 2nd in the last race at his first major event! Also well done to Louise Harrington and Harry Tucker both completed all 7 races in gusts of up to 30 knots on day 2. Louise finished 48th and Harry 51st out of 94. I think our main fleet sailors could learn something from them, too many of them retiring for each afternoon and not completing races, it's a long way to go to only do half the event. For full results please go to the website.

SE Zone Championships at Bewl

Well done to Emma getting 3rd overall last weekend including an OCS (at least Emma's on the line!). Well done as well to Abbie Back 16th overall plus somewhat improved results from our other sailors with final selection event coming up at Datchet.

Success for WWSC Open Meeting!

September saw a great event hosted by Weir Wood with over 60 competitors sailing 4 races in near perfect conditions (apart from the rain). The event went very well from start to finish and it was great to see Emma Baker winning overall and Abbie Back finishing in 13th overall. Most of the other prize were won by very strong competition from Papercourt, Chipstead and Bewl and well done to them. Zac Riley was determined to finish every race in his first event in the main fleet and won the Endeavour award. A huge thank you to everyone involved in making the day such a success, we did the club proud.

See you on the water! ▲

Youth Report 2011

Fiona Harrington

This year has been a great time for the Youth of Weir Wood. Many of the 4.7 sailors, including David, Jacob, Verity and Cameron have been working hard at regular training events (mainly at Datchet). First weekend in January they will all be off to Lymington and the Winter Championships at the end of January at Datchet.

I wish them the best of luck! We have a great programme planned for this year and I am sure we will see lots of Fevas out on the water too! Sorry it's a bit short from me this issue, I have been spending my time revising simultaneous equations instead of simultaneous starts! We are all looking forward to a great year, and can't wait to see you at the Club Champs, Cobnor and at the Laser nationals in July. I hope you all had an amazing Christmas and I wish you all the best for the year of the Olympics! ▲



← Fiona Harrington

Youth Cobnor

Ed

This event happened again last November and everyone as usual had a brilliant time. Unfortunately the Ed failed to persuade any of our budding reporters to put pen to paper to write the weekend up but see back cover for pictures thanks to Allan Jones. ▲

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS



Well the Season to be merry is over but I can't let it pass into annual oblivion without coaxing out the final groans. So here's what I got out of my crackers:

Q. What do you get if you cross a snowman with a vampire?

A: Frostbite

Q. Why are graveyards so noisy?

A. Because of the coffin.

Q. What is orange and sounds like a parrot?

A. A parrot

Q. Why did the scarecrow win so many awards?

A. Because he was outstanding in his field.

Q. Why did the bacon laugh?

A. Because the egg cracked a yolk

Q. Why did the mechanic lie under the car?











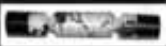
A. Because he wanted to get up oily

There were more but I will spare you

Ed ▲

Ate too much this Christmas? Work it all off in

THE WEIR WOOD CHRISTMAS CRACKER

-  25 race series (2 each Sunday, 3 the last), culminating in the Club Championships
-  13 to count
-  Close racing, whatever your ability
-  Fun, friendly fleet of about 30 boats
-  Handicap system for Radials and 4.7s
-  All ages welcome
-  Prizes for winner, top youth, top improver, top buddies and top visitor
-  Temporary WWSC membership, including a space in the boat park
-  A 'fast and furious' day (numerous back to back short course races)
-  A pint at the bar on the first Sunday for new members
-  No duties

All this for just £50

Dates: Sunday 8th January to Sunday 25th March

For more information or to enter, email bush.oliver@gmail.com



Feverish Activity at Cobnor



Cobnor is Fun!



The Cobnor Group



Who's the Bear in the Back?



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