

Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Contact/Notes
27-Mar	13.55	ICE BREAKER	N.B.BST begins!
02-Apr		KSSA Regatta	
03-Apr	10.55	Spring Points begins	Mothering Sunday
30-Apr	14.10	MYC/WSC series begins	Start at MYC
04-May	18.25	Wednesday evening races begin	
07-May	10.00	Junior racing starts	
08-May	10.55 14.25	Novices/Improvers/Ladies and Juniors & Commodore's begins	
15-May	10.55	Early Summer Points begins	
30-May	11.00	Pursuit race	
11 June	11.00- 17.00	Wilsonian S.C. Open Day	
26-June	12.40	South Kent	
2/3 -July		Medway Dinghy Regatta	
09-july	16.00	Evening race and BBQ	
17-July	12.55	Wilsonian Grand Prix	
31-July	11.55	Late Summer Points begins	
28-Aug	11.25	Three Race Regatta	3 races back to back start down-stream
29-Aug	11.30	Pursuit Race	Bank Holiday Monday
11- Sept	10.55	Leigh Trophy	Kent Scouts/MYC Wayfarer Open
18-Sep	11.55	Autumn Points begins	
30-Oct	13.25	Laying Up Cup	

Spring 2011
Issue 99

31½

The Wilsonian Sailing Club Magazine



On the Cover: Top: Hoo Freezer, for once the land appeared through the mist ! Photo Roy Winnet

Bottom: Warm up series commences. Photo: Tony Hunt

Editorial

Martin Smith

The season of winter work parties is over and our resident Staff Photographer (Ok—I admit I failed to note the name) took many pictures and finally captured some workers (posed?) in action. Enjoy the 2011 season! Can you let me have copy, all contributions appreciated, by 15 June please? As an experiment this version is on the web <http://en.calameo.com/books/0005148413ed64d4a1eb3>. Comments would be appreciated.



Thanks for all the contributions in this issue and apologies for the gentle reminders! Be very grateful for more articles and photo's—digital camera's are a wonderful thing but if you can add any detail of event, crew or location it would be much appreciated.

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is to manage the tides off the French coast. Apparently the race is quite often won or lost in the last 10 miles. There are usually around 100 entrants. This years race is to be held on Friday 27th May.

Until the reign of Charles 1 the ships of the Royal Navy were divided into 4 ratings according to fire power. The smaller ships then divided to give fifth rate & sixth rates. In the 17th C fifth rates often found themselves involved among the battle fleet in major actions. Structurally, these were two-deckers with a complete battery on the lower deck, and a fewer number of guns on the upper deck (below the forecastle and quarter decks, usually with no guns in the waist on this deck).

Contributed by **Mike Groom**

Training (cont)

WSC offers training for many roles and, I'm told, this picture depicts a trainee sent to look for a road in Salcombe that was there when the group last walked along it—tide waiteth for no man! Such training is essential for the many, and varied, roles required of a Trustee and full details of the duties these esteemed members perform will be in a subsequent issue. And you thought it was your club?
Ed



Photo and details provided by Christine Godber.

The Royal Escape Yacht Race

To understand the origins of this race first we need a little history revision. You will remember (*well Mike does!.....Ed*) the English Civil war and that Charles 1 was executed 1649. We pick up this rippin yarn where the King's eldest son, Charles Prince of Wales, has legged it to Scotland and was crowned Charles II King of Scotland. He returned to England at the head of a Scottish army and was finally persuaded to cut and run following a thorough defeat at the hands of Cromwell's Roundheads at the battle of Worcester September 3rd 1651. However there was not much cutting and quite a lot of running. There was also quite a lot of hiding, particularly in oak trees. The plan was to escape to France; however most of the likely ports were well supplied with parliamentary troops. Now we get to the sailing bit. On the morning of the 16th of October Charles finally got a passage on a coal brig, the Surprise, set sail from Shoreham harbour and was put ashore near Fécamp the following day.



On the restoration of the monarchy Nicholas Tattersell the captain of the Surprise was rewarded with a commission in the Royal Navy and his brig was commissioned as a fifth rate¹ renamed the 'Royal Escape'. Along with Kings gratitude came quite a lot of money, Captain Tattersell was then able to buy the Old Ship Inn in Brighthelmstone (now better known as Brighton). The Old

Ship Hotel, much expanded over the years, is still in business. It is halfway between the Grand Hotel and the Pier.

In 1977 the Old Ship Hotel together with the Sussex Yacht Club organised a cross channel yacht race to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. The race was such a success that it has been held every year since. The start is to windward in front of the Old Ship Hotel (West of the Pier) then turning south keeping the Greenwich light Vessel to port and finishing off Fécamp. Although the course sounds simple the trick

From the Commodore

At last the season is upon us. The hardy are already out there having tuned up with the warm up series. The Hoo Freezer was a great success with 60 entries combating the biting February conditions. In my case I kept on dry land which just heightens the anticipation for the new season.

You will notice how bright the club looks. Roy Winnett with his able band of supporters have again done a sterling job at the winter work parties improving the facilities of which the painted club dining area is the most noticeable. They did lots more besides! Particular mention must go to Brian Warwick for remodelling the back bar and creating a lot more space for easy storage and serving.

The Eric Twiname Trust have donated two new Teras for Junior training and racing. They were formally given to us at the RYA dinghy show. There was a fantastic show of support from club members for the presentation with over 30 crowding on to the RYA youth stand for the photos. We are very grateful to Derek Zobel for volunteering to pick the boats up from Southampton. RS Tera's are ideal for the smaller members of our Saturday Skimmers Junior Racing Club. They are named Eric Twiname I and Eric Twiname II after the sailing charity who have donated them. They are nippy and versatile boats which we will using at Junior week as well as on Saturday mornings.



Tera action at World Championships in Sweden - look out for them on the water!

Thanks to everyone who attended the AGM. The highlight for me was the unanimous vote to make Ann Heather an Honorary member for her years of dedication to the club.

You will shortly be getting your 2011 Handbook

which has been printed for the last time by Pam. Thanks, Pam for all

your efforts in organising the printing of the handbook and 31½ over the years.

At this time of year there is always the concern whether the number of members at the club will be sustained. This is so important to the financial health of the club. The number of members we have also directly impacts the number of duties we each have to do. We all have a responsibility here to encourage our friends and neighbours to try sailing and hopefully become members. The Open Day is June 11th and we look forward to seeing as many members and potential new members down on that day.

Unfortunately we will not be able to keep Nicholas Soellner. Nick's contract at Grain finishes at the end of April when he will return to Germany. We will miss him and I would personally like to thank him here for the contribution he has made to the club over the last 12 months.

Ann Heather: Honorary Member of WSC

At the recent club AGM members unanimously voted for Ann Heather to be given Honorary membership having been proposed by Trish Ayris and seconded by Paul Rodgers. Could there be a more worthy recipient? I doubt it.

Ann and Paul have now moved to Devon and so will be mainly watching us from afar. Having said that, Ann is coming back in August for one more Junior Week. We think that might make 20 years of giving up her valuable time to organise and then be the effective CDO and House officer for the week long event. That should be enough surely as countless Juniors have benefited from her dedication.

What newer members may not know is that Ann was also Rear Commodore. Commodore (for 3 years) and Vice Commodore in the late 90's and early 2000's. During her time as Commodore the extension to the club house was built and she ensured all the loans taken out with club members were paid off by the time she finished as Vice Commodore. Oh yes, she was House committee chairperson for several years before that!

Many sailors have appreciated the flexibility of being able to sign on to the Hoo Freezer and Medway Marathon at WSC. Ann has manned this extension of the race office for many years. She has also been the

their way down river without us? Shortly an important announcement from the captain saying we can now undo our seatbelts smoke em if you've got em and that further progress has been cancelled due to lack of interest and the mere fact that it's force eight and gusting nine at Southend. His lordship doesn't think it be safe to go any furtherer, and with the thought of what we might do to a rather old mile long pier at our landing speed rattles the imagination.

The coaches for our return arrive quickly enough that trying the on-board roast dinner isn't an option, pity, it looked really good. We are hustled ashore and stroll through the landing stage (looking a bit like a Croydon Airport foyer) and out the other side to a sight to chill the heart of any new arrival at the gulag, the dreary sight that is Tilbury International. One's first impression is of a concrete version of Siberia. Flat, featureless and the only signs of habitation being an oil refinery on one side and the docks on the other. Even Tilbury Fortress is hiding out of sight.



Apparently any cruise liners that can't get under Tower Bridge tend to unload their unwashed at this illustrious place, the idea being to discourage them from staying too long. No wonder they are starting to feel sorry for us. It worked for me, had there been a boat going somewhere hot & sunny I'd have been on it. So,

safely strapped in and half our dosh refunded our pleas to be removed from this place are answered with the aid of Pedro the mad axe man coach driver.

All in all, as far as it went, it was good. And we are going to try for the full trip when next we can. A problem to be sorted, after being released from the clutches of Pedro, we couldn't remember where we had left the bike!

apparently so we can see how ships are built, rather worrying as it looks somewhat fragile. Greenwich, looking most impressive and somehow reminding oneself of our illustrious naval past, up on the skyline the time-keeper's ball being clearly visible. Almost opposite is what looks like a ship breakers complete with a couple floating dry docks. We then take a flying run at the Thames Barrier and having luck with us manage to avoid all the solid bits, just after this we catch sight of the famous "One Woolwich Ferry" of world renown on every local radio. On passing Erith Yacht Club (most dreary) we catch sight of the QE2 bridge, looking seriously delicate and very susceptible to any slight nudge, the domino effect coming to mind.



We now join the flight path for finals into (dare I say it, but quietly) Tilbury International. Our descent takes us past Tilbury container docks with only the tops of container lifts and ship bridges to be seen (not very exciting), our destination hoves into view, what looks like a huge two storey shipboard pontoon with wooden skirting down to water level. It's here

that some of the passengers will take the opportunity to escape and pick up their coaches back to London International whilst the next stop being sunny Southend, then onto the Medway for the round trip.

It's about now that I should mention that it's been blowing old boots and building since we left the Tower, I mention this as we are approaching Tilbury Int., with an ebb tide under us, rather quickly as in quite quick, as in an almighty crunch as we arrive without any style whatsoever. The crew lassoo and firmly attach us to the bit that we had just tried to remove and hang on tight. Peeping over the side one notices some sizeable chunks of wood that had been glued to the paddle boxes to act as overriders, making



chairman of the planning committee for our big event the MYA Dinghy Regatta. Each year this starts many months before the actual event and Ann has made sure each aspect is covered as well as heading up the registration team during the actual regatta weekend. Are you exhausted yet? How about the sterling support Ann has given the KSSA over the years? And I have probably forgotten a number of other acts of support.



Ann Heather receiving RYA Volvo award on behalf of club, car was just a prop!

Photo: Dave Hudson

During all this time Ann has had a very busy professional job which involved travelling during the week a lot of the time. We must not forget that she and Paul also provide the dedication and support necessary to allow their son Mark to show his talents and become Topper World Champion. Lucy is also a very talented sailor.and this all from a lady who has never been seen in a boat!

We wish Paul and Ann well. Do their new local sailing club know how lucky they are? We do! Thank you Ann for all your dedicated work over the years and see you in August.

See you on the water some time soon!

Cheers,

Jeremy

Kestrel 1510

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB

MINUTES OF AGM 26TH FEBRUARY 2011 AT 19.00 HRS

Jeremy Drummond (Commodore) chaired the meeting. 41 members were present.

1. Commodore's Opening Remarks:

The Commodore welcomed members to the 52nd Annual General Meeting of Wilsonian Sailing Club and said it had been a privilege to be Commodore and to learn, as his predecessors had said, how much so many people did for the Club. One of the things he had discovered was that WSC was one of the truly volunteer clubs. Other clubs claimed to be run by volunteers then for it to transpire that they had paid bar staff or an independent kitchen. It did make WSC special. He looked forward to the agenda item later in the meeting where it was proposed formally to honour the work of one long standing volunteer, Ann Heather.

In the first part of the year the Club Development Plan had been updated. A central pillar of this was the reactivation of the Junior fleet. RYA Onboard status had been achieved following the previous year's AGM and then the Saturday Skimmers took off with up to twenty juniors attending on any given Saturday morning. That succeeded due to the hard work of members ably lead by Jayne Lambert and Peter Horner. Edward LeGassick had produced a flyer aimed at new Junior members with the help of Andy Pickrell. A Junior Regatta had been held at the end of Junior Week with free T-shirts given to all participants at no cost to the Club thanks to RYA and local company sponsorship. More recently the Club had received a grant from the Eric Twiname Trust to purchase two new Teras as club boats, again at no cost to the Club. The RYA had also donated twelve new rash vests marked 'Saturday Skimmers' to use during Junior racing days. Taster sessions for Thomas Aveling School had been run in addition to the Sports Leaders course and the normal training programme run by Tom, Brian and Peter. It was not necessary to be an instructor to help on Saturday morning Junior racing. Members were asked to let Jayne or Peter know, even if they could do only one Saturday morning.

One saga important to the Club's future was the lease with the Brice Trustees. This had been painful to close off in the extreme, although all very amicable. Andrew Clarke had been helping with these efforts and it was expected that a new lease to run for 28 years would be received shortly from the lawyers of the land agent. In the meantime the Treasurer continued to accrue for the rent increase which would be back dated to November 2009. The new lease would supersede all the previous lease amendments and would incorporate the water lease. The Commodore said the Club was indebted to the Trustees for their continuing support.

The Day we went to

Tilbury International !!!



Some of us have heard of it, a few of us have seen it, and one or two of us have been on it, the last sea going paddle steamer, Waverley. For many it's usually spotted filling up the Medway as it does a flypast the WSC and says hello to our resident steamer, Kingswear Castle. This, when it's trying to call port on the racing fleet can look big enough, but next to Waverley

tis but a minnow. Built for ferry and cruise work among the western isles and based at Glasgow along with several others. Waverley had a long and almost uneventful career, only slightly demolishing the occasional jetty.

So having seen it, sailed around it and been chased by it, we had to have a go on it. Bright and early we crossed Tower Bridge on our bike, Waverley is alongside tower pier, but facing the wrong way. All aboard and aim for a comfy chair for Maureen while I prepare to photograph all and everything. I head downstairs for a serious ogle at the engine, and am once again amazed that such huge lumps of metal can have life and movement and rhythm. Consisting of three huge compound cylinders and a paddle wheel on each end of the crankshaft, both turning together, so it's all or nothing forward or back. This doesn't make Waverley or the Kingswear Castle the most manoeuvrable of vessels; hence we are towed off the pier, aimed at Tower Bridge, and cast to our fate, with a strange sort of slow wave from the tug crew.

Past St Katherine's Dock and the Dickens type places along Wapping reach and onto Canary Wharf, (passing the Grapes pub Limehouse where the WSC cycle section had lunch,) looking even more imposing from sea level. As we do a one eighty right round the Dome one spots a sectioned ship alongside the afore mentioned tent, put there

Medium Fleet Report

A short report from your new fleet captain. I start with a thank you to Bob Dutton who has done a great job over the past two years. Bob has set us some interesting courses - including some which were more interesting than he intended when marks ended up as rounding marks.

As I write this we are just 10 days away from the start of the main sailing season but it still feels a bit cold for sailing to be enjoyable. Even so it is time to start sorting the boat out for the Ice Breaker on 27 March – I have yet another flat tyre on my trolley to fix sort out as well as the boat itself.

Many will know that I have been working on getting ready for the Census which also falls on 27 March. I still hope to be on the water that day with my mobile safely on land without too many missed calls when I get back. As well as counting down the days to the sailing season I am also counting down the weeks to my retirement at the end of April.



Looking forward to seeing lots of you on the water through the season – numbers sailing were a bit low at the end of last season, although the weather wasn't ideal, so lets keep the numbers up to make the sailing interesting.

Happy to have your ideas on fleet matters – ranging from the courses you like, through to what sort of prizes you would like and the most appropriate handicap for the National 12. See many of you soon.

Graham sightseeing on Leigh Trophy

Photo: Zoe Noble

Graham Jenkinson Laser 191856

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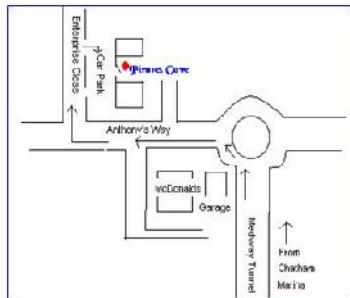
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2011 Nationals

This year's nationals are at Abersoch, on the North Wales peninsular. A beautiful spot, with an excellent sandy beach for easy/safe launching/landing, and rather different to what we had last year at Sidmouth.



Neat mark rounding by John Hewat in Warm Up Series. Photo: Tony Hunt

Finally

I look forward to seeing you all out on the water some time very soon, though I will only be watching from the shore. Unfortunately, my left leg is in plaster, and very likely to remain that way until some time in June. Still, I suppose it does allow Lauren some time to make those last

minute preparations for her wedding day in August. I just sense she's really downbeat about our inability to sail (not)!

Please do let me know if you have any concerns at all in relation to your sailing at WSC, or if you have any particular ideas you would like to see tried out or implemented within the Fleet.

Have a great season and enjoy your 2K sailing. MY fingers are crossed for some great weather this year.

Colin

Laser 2K 22258

- and so on, and so on.

In a nutshell, anyone not a member of the Association is effectively missing out on so much, so please do consider joining up. It's never too late. Please let me know if you require any further information, or go to www.laser2000.org.uk.

Incidentally, for those of you who have joined/renewed, there are some excellent articles in the Spring edition of the "Millennium Mutterings", including but not limited to the following:

- "Starting: timings and hitting the Line" by Clive Grant
- "Foil Repairs" by John Cox
- "Replacing the Centreboard Friction Device" by Andy Baldwin
- "Tech Talk" by Graham Sexton

....., and my favourite of all, "How to Break into the Top Ten" (if only!?!?) by Simon Horsfieldl .

The above are all well worth a read.

Fleet Notice Board

Please be aware that the position of our Notice Board has changed. Notice Boards for all Fleets are now located on the wall at the eastern end of the Clubhouse, and we enjoy centre place amongst them. All details of this year's Association racing programme can be found on the Notice Board.

Course setting

As with last season, I would urge you to take a turn at setting a course on a Sunday morning and/or afternoon. All I would ask is that you consult with me, or with Paul or Roy, beforehand, just in case there may be any special requirements on a particular day.

Masthead Floats

We agreed at the Fleet Evening to continue with our practice of recommending the use of Mast head Flotation devices on those days when capsizing is likely. In my opinion, this proved very successful last year, on the odd occasion when we did so. It not only encourages less experienced members to use them, which is the primary aim, but it also helps to protect our masts.

Of current concern was the absence of adult sailors particularly late on in the 2010 season. This was at the forefront of the RYA's mind as well. Committee members had recently attended a seminar on "Activating Your Fleet" run by the RYA, to be repeated at the Dinghy Show. It was hoped to try and use some of these ideas to help keep numbers on the water up in 2011. Given the current financial climate, there was no room for complacency. The Commodore urged members to think of one person or one family who could be invited down to sail. It could be on the Open Day or at any other time. A way would be found to get them on the water. A key benefit of more members would be the opportunity to spread the volunteer load. The Duty List Secretary was currently working hard to fill the duty roster. Any member able to offer an extra duty was asked to let a Flag Officer know.

2. Apologies for Absence: Apologies had been received from K Crundwell, M Fish, I Foxwell, J Gander, M Gower, C Grindley, P Horner, T Kift, R McLeod, P Nudds, I Parris, J Ramsden, J Rees, R Seabrook, J & J Shenton, C Stevens, T Lambert, L Treadwell, B & G Warwick, R Winnett.

3. Minutes of 2010 Annual General Meeting: On a proposal by T Sims, seconded by C Treadwell, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the 2010 AGM were confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Commodore.

4. Matters Arising: None.

5. SGM Minutes 2010: On a proposal by C Godber, seconded by P Thorpe, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the 2011 SGM were confirmed as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Commodore.

6. Matters Arising: None.

7. Secretary's Report: Membership again grew slightly during 2010 and at the end of December stood at 224, with 36 new members joining during the year.

For a year-on-year comparison:

YEAR	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
MEMBERSHIP	189	209	202	203	208	218	224
NEW MEMBERS	32	39	21	26	26	34	36

In order to try and develop junior sailing activity, a new category of membership had been introduced during the year – Guardian Membership - whereby parents or guardians could come and support their Junior during Saturday training and racing without the need to become Full members themselves. This had led to five Guardian Memberships starting 2011. Meanwhile the Club had continued to support Junior events over and above the usual programme. As well as starting the Saturday Skimmers racing, an Autumn training had been hosted for KSSA. This attracted twenty-five sailors, including twelve from Wilsonian.

The windy conditions had proved very testing, but the feedback from parents and visitors had been very positive.

Much of the Committee's work in 2010 had involved generators, the alarm system and the cess pit! With impeccable timing, the old generator broke down thanks to a sheared head bolt on the first day of the main season, before the new one was up and running. Thanks were expressed to Tim Kift for his emergency commissioning of the new generator that day and to Andy Hockey for all his work subsequently on the electrics associated with it. As part of the Club's insurance requirement an alarm system had been installed during the year, thanks to the work of Bernie Smith, Brian Warwick and Tom Sims. Another issue had been the problem of fresh water filling the cesspit. It was hoped that works during the winter work party had addressed that. Thanks were expressed to Brian Warwick and his team for all their efforts to resolve the problem. Colin Treadwell proposed a vote of thanks to Jo Wicken for her work as Secretary.

8. Treasurer's Report:

Following the extensive refurbishments of 2009, 2010 had been a quieter year with expenditure less than income, resulting in a surplus of £7278.27. After allowing for depreciation of £11,787, the value of fixed assets had decreased by £5051. The decrease in the surplus compared with previous years reflected the cost of Club cleaning and the increased cost of fuel. However, petrol costs were offset by the reclaim of fuel tax from HMRC.

The rent increase had not yet been paid owing to the ongoing lease renewal negotiations. However, funds had been set aside to cover this. The increased rent would further reduce any surplus that might be achieved.

The following costs had been capitalised: £1518 Dinghy Park and roads, £2678 installing the new generator and linking both the old and new, £2890 Club-house improvements - new alarm system, new tables and chairs, and £250 purchase of second hand Oppie. Puffin had been sold for £600.

The Treasurer stated she was pleased that some areas of expenditure connected with the day to day running of the Club had been reduced, but pointed out that it cost around £1800 per month to keep the Club open.

The key fund liability had been reduced as eight dinghy park keys had been written off, either reported lost or not returned by members leaving the Club. Allowing for an emergency fund of £10,000, plus key deposits, the rent increase contingency, the boat and generator funds, £23550 needed to be held in reserve before further capital expenditure could be considered.

- (vi) join in en masse with one of the Club's organised Cruises
- (vii) organise a Curry Night at the Club
- (viii) consider other social activities during the course of the season

Further details on all the above will follow in due course by e-mail.

Thanks very much to Paul Thorpe and Roy Winnett for kindly agreeing to continue in their role as Vice Fleet Captains.

My sincerest apologies to Zoe Bes-Green and Barry Curtis, who did not receive my invitation to this year's Fleet Evening. Now that I have captured their correct e-mail addresses, I can ensure that they are included in all future e-mail correspondence and invitations.

Thanks to all those who came along to the Fleet Evening, and trust you all enjoyed the meal and discussions.

Pre-season formalities Please remember, if you haven't already done so, to renew your membership of the Class Association and to check the renewal of your boat insurance.

I was interested to learn that, once again, 11 of our boats are members of the Class Association, leaving 7 or so of us who are not members. I would strongly urge those of you who are not members of the Association to join up – for an annual fee of only £15, it provides excellent value for money, affording you access to a plethora of information and benefits, including:

- information about the Class and the boat
- technical aspects
- boat handling techniques
- racing tips and advice
- a very informative and active website
- a very active Members' Forum, enabling discussion with/learning from other members
- an informative Association newsletter by the apt title of "Millennium Mutterings"
- reduction on boat insurance premiums (which generally on its own pays for the membership fee)

LASER 2K FLEET REPORT

Spring in the air, RYA Dinghy Show behind us and a sailing programme awaiting our undivided attention. Time for us to now get back out on the water and start enjoying our 2Ks once more.

Fleet “Evening”

We enjoyed an excellent turnout of 28 at our formal Fleet “Evening” (which was actually an afternoon lunch, but I like to stay with tradition by using that phraseology), where we recognised the achievements of a good number of Fleet members last year, and set down some plans for the forthcoming season, including the following:

- (i) a further Training Day, to build upon what we covered last year, this time involving principally practice out on the water, followed by a shore-based review.
- (ii) a Saturday “turbo” event, comprising of several (hopefully at least 10) very short races of approximately 5 minutes duration, starting from a Committee Boat line, a short upwind beat and a short downwind leg back to the Committee Boat finish line. This will give us plenty of start line practice, as well as plenty of boat handling practice within a confined space and timeframe. We will have plenty of more experienced Fleet Members on standby to assist where required and to give tips and advice as they spot things happening, and we hope to make use of a camcorder to film some of the activity with a view to reviewing it back in the Clubhouse.
- (iii) a weekend trip to Brightlingsea in Essex, with some training on the Saturday, staying in their on-site accommodation overnight and, after a hearty morning breakfast, hopefully joining in their Club racing on the Sunday.
- (iv) joining Medway Yacht Club’s Saturday racing series in the summer months, with prizes on offer to WSC members.
- (v) develop a “buddy” type of system to enable the less experienced Fleet members to team up with the more experienced members during racing, where so required.

Grant applications to the RYA resulted in £600 being received towards the volunteer development plan. A further £500 donation towards this plan had been received from Aesica.

Jane Drummond and Jayne Lambert and their team had worked very well to keep kitchen costs down and achieved a surplus of £6590, equivalent to 37% profit. (This had been £6223 and a 36% profit in 2009). The contribution of the kitchen and bar to the overall success of the Club was crucial and members were asked for their continued support. Gift vouchers from Gillingham Marina had again been awarded as prizes at a cost of £690. Vouchers needed to be redeemed by 30th June 2011. Whilst subscriptions had held up during the previous year, with the increased pressure on income, the Committee had reluctantly decided that subscriptions and dinghy park fees for 2011 needed to be increased. Fuel costs continued to rise and those involved were encouraged to carefully monitor the use of power boats during the coming season.

Members were asked to bring their friends and colleagues to the Club and to encourage them to join. It was also recognised that new members needed to be supported to become involved in Club activities as a significant number were not renewing each year.

The Treasurer said she would continue to keep a close eye on all expenditure and thanked everyone who worked so hard to keep the Club successful. She thanked Ken Crundwell for auditing the accounts and Gill Warwick for banking the weekly kitchen and bar takings and for looking after the Bosun’s Locker. On a proposal by B Smith, seconded by D Vettergreen, the accounts were adopted unanimously. T Sims proposed a vote of thanks to T Ayriss for her meticulous management of the Club’s accounts. This was endorsed unanimously.

9. Sailing Report:

In the absence of a Sailing Secretary, there had been little change in 2010. After a good start, turnouts had fallen with the arrival of more extreme conditions later in the season. It was suggested that handicap racing might be made more satisfying if the present divisions of the fleets were changed, but no changes were agreed at the fleet evenings. Pin-Up buoy was still out of use as a racing mark because it was habitually occupied by moored barges. Continuing use for commercial purposes made it unlikely to be available in 2011 either. MYA1 had been lost towards the end of the year, although it had since been located and was expected to be back in situ for the coming season.

The Club’s weekly returns to the RYA, along with those of many other clubs, had resulted in a significant change in the Portsmouth Yardsticks of a number of classes. That trend was likely to continue with more clubs participating, making handicap racing fairer for all.

It was planned in future to keep Club trophies in a new cabinet in the Club-house. Not only would this make an attractive display, it would also ease the task of the Trophy Secretary when rounding up the trophies for engraving and re-presentation. Trophy winners who especially wanted to keep them at home would still be permitted to do so, however.

The Warm-Up Series again ran thanks to a syndicate headed by Mike Gower, and Mike and the team would be back in business for the 2011 series. The Wednesday Series had again successfully run, with the weather generally good, and very few windless finishes. It was likely, however, that turnouts could be higher if the currently entirely voluntary duty system was made official. More participants would imply fewer duties per person, though even at present racers only needed to do a duty for every three races sailed.

The Club once more successfully organised the Medway Dinghy Regatta, again sponsored by MTS, this time with eighty-three entrants and no significant problems aside from a rather windless start. The Grand Prix also had somewhat light winds, but they were sufficient for a full course to be completed, unlike the South Kent Race, which had to be shortened. For the coming season it had been agreed to bring forward the posted start time of the afternoon race in class (not Club, such as the Commodore's) series racing from 14:00 to 13:30, but very much on the understanding that postponement might well be necessary any given week to allow competitors and RIB crews alike to have a sufficient break for lunch. This measure should, however, avoid prolonged sitting about on days when the morning races all finish early as sometimes happened when the wind was greater than anticipated. It was re-confirmed that preliminary discussion between fleet captains before any course was set could permit more adventurous courses without over-stretching the safety cover. Fleet captains should, however, in any event take account of courses already set when setting their own. The use of an upstream club buoy as the first mark was only approved when it would make the first leg a true beat. As with use of an upstream club buoy as a final turning mark, account should be taken of competitors' need to gybe or tack and the proximity of moored boats when setting the rounding direction, port or starboard.

10. Committee Reports:

Bosun: There had been no problems with breakdowns during the season as RIB crews had informed the Bosun promptly of any issues, thus enabling them to be resolved prior to the following weekend. The new Committee boat, Wilsonian, had been used for a number of events and had proved ideal for the job intended. Covers for the outboard engines had been moved to the Blockhouse.

Club Dinghies: The fleet now comprised eight Toppers, two Lasers, two Visions, two Fevas, one Optimist and two Teras (due to be received shortly). The Bosun reminded members to look after the Club boat equipment and to stow it correctly. In response to a question from the floor, the Bosun stated that

Training Programme 2011

Full details of the training programme are on the web site (*somewhere ...Ed*) but the following lists the start dates of the main courses and events :-

Junior:

Honda RIB	23 April
Kent Scouts Topper Day	14 May
Saturday Skimmers	28 May
Junior Training	June 11
Junior week	16 (to 19) August

Adult:

Safety Boat	April 9
Sailing Level 1 & 2	May 7
Power Boat Level 2	May 7
Introduction to sailing	August 6
Power Boat Level 2	September 24

Further details can be obtained from the Training Principal Tom Simms

Tel: 01689 854627

email: tomsimms775@btinternet.com

continued on page 39.....

Medway YC Dinghy Fleet Racing 2011

Hi All.

Allow me to introduce myself I am Phil Stacey Dinghy Fleet Captain @ MYC. This season I am try to promote a handicap fleet at MYC to race on a Saturday afternoon 14.10hrs start.

Entries from WSC would be very welcome and actively encouraged. This season all dinghies entering will need to fill in a race declaration form which can be downloaded from MYC website and then emailed back, couldn't be easier. All dinghies entering will be included in results and eligible for trophies. there will be three series throughout the season, Spring Series

8 races 2 discards. Summer Series 8 races 2 discards. Autumn Series 6 races 1 discard.

Dates of series:

Spring Series. 31st Apr. - 18th Jun.

Summer Series. 25th Jun - 17th Sept.

Autumn Series. 24th Sept - 29th Oct.

Please circulate these details to your fleets, hope to meet you all soon at WSC or MYC. I hope to sail a few races at WSC during April. This information will be on MYC dinghy fleet website in near future. Please contact for further info, or just to touch base.

Email. philstacey@hotmail.co.uk

Phone. 07860232236.

Good Sailing Best Regards Phil.

most of the Club dinghies were used each week. The Commodore said that Geoff Lambert could not be a more dedicated volunteer and the effort he put in was much appreciated.

Training: Adult training had been offered as follows: one Start Racing course (poorly supported), one level 2 course and one Level 3 (the latter again being poorly supported). Two Safety Boat and two Power Boat Level 2 courses had been run but there had been no takers for the Advanced Power Boat course.

Five Junior training sessions and five Honda RIB sessions had been held with Adam Bermingham winning the South East region age 13-16 category in the latter. The twenty-six Saturday Skimmers sessions had been well-supported and Junior Week had again proved very successful with thirty-six participants.

The Commodore thanked Tom Sims, Brian Warwick and Peter Horner for all the time and effort they put in to delivering the training programme.

House: Jane Drummond said all her team would agree that 2010 had been a good year for the House Committee. Price increases had been kept to a minimum so as not to discourage members from eating at the Club on Sundays. A dish of the day continued to be offered most weeks and home made cakes were now a regular feature on the menu. The improved kitchen had proved much easier to work in and the appliances had been less temperamental than previously. A wide slot toaster had been purchased to bring back, by popular demand, toasted teacakes on Sunday afternoons.

Some sort of social event had been held most months. In May a Mexican supper proved very popular with approximately fifty members served with a three course Mexican meal. In June there had been the Open day with a lunch time BBQ. This had been well supported and provided a good day out for families and new members. In July, approximately one hundred and forty people had been served with a Hog Roast in the evening, and the Committee had been surprised to see how much salad had been consumed. Quantities would be increased for 2011.

In October and November a roast dinner was organised after racing on Sunday, catering for between thirty-five and forty-five at each meal. These very good value home cooked meals not only saved cooking for oneself after racing but provided a good forum for race analysis and socialising. Family and friends were always welcome. It was hoped to increase attendance at these events especially now that the purchase of new tables and chairs could provide seating for sixty people.

In November the annual Dinner and Dance had been held at Gillingham Golf Club which proved to be a very good venue and everyone enjoyed themselves. It had been disappointing that only seventy-seven tickets had been sold. In the past the Dinner and Dance had been held either at the end of November or the end of January. Members were asked for a show of hands to indicate a prefer-

ence for either of these dates. The majority preferred November. T Sims said that prize winners should be encouraged to attend since it was also intended as an evening for them.

The year concluded with a Christmas lunch for seventy-one people despite the snow and the ice. It was only possible to hold the event thanks to volunteers who cleared the track in record time and offered to ferry food and members down to the Club in a 4x4. It had been a fantastic achievement. New for 2011, it had been decided to run the Open Day and the evening race as two separate events. In June the Open Day would run from 11am to 5pm following on from Saturday Skimmers and would include food at lunch time. On Saturday July 10th there would be the traditional Club evening race in the late afternoon followed by a BBQ, aiming to be a social event for all Club members and their families.

The House Committee was always looking out for extra pairs of hands for social events and would never turn down an offer from anyone to cook for any of the events. Any members interested in assisting were asked to contact the House Secretaries. Finally, Jane Drummond thanked all her team for their support and said if anyone wished to join them to please let her know. The Commodore thanked the House Committee and said they played a crucial role in keeping the Club solvent. This was endorsed by applause from those present.

Duties: Grahame Smith thanked all those who had turned up for their duties and said the default rate in 2010 had been a tiny percentage of the duties. It was a struggle to fill the duty slots each year, given the high number of sailing days programmed, and anyone who could offer an additional slot was asked to let him know. Offering a third duty in 2011 would mean not being asked to carry out a third duty the following year.

The website was the most up-to-date version of the duty list – in 2010 he made seventy-two updates during the course of the year. The Commodore thanked Grahame Smith for his work and said it was a difficult task where it was impossible to please everyone. He was nonetheless grateful for his efforts.

Publicity: Keeping the website up-to-date had proved to be an onerous task. The Club was looking for ways to open it up to others so they could carry out some of the work.

Maintenance: Owing to the uncertain financial situation, an attempt had been made to keep maintenance to low cost tasks and essential work. However, some jobs had turned out to be more extensive than planned and others had been discovered later. The weather had been kind, allowing outside work to be done on every work party, though the low temperatures and strong winds had made it unpleasant at times.

The proposal to move the bottle 'fridge to the other side of the bar, appeared to be a simple low cost job but had required the complete refurbishment of the

next season. The benefits of these junior schemes are becoming apparent with a large number of juniors quickly developing skills allowing them to become great sailors and members of our club.

To aid junior sailing we have recently refurbished three club toppers (thanks for your help Jeff!), and the Eric Twiname Trust (closely linked with the RYA) has provided us with two brand new RS Tera's, allowing us to add to fleet of club boats. (Thanks Jeremy)

With this increase of both junior sailors and events in the club, I would like to say a thank-you to all of those upon the training and coordination teams working tirelessly to allow these events to take place, these include Tom Sims, Peter Horner and Jayne Lambert, as well as all of those who have given up their time to support this process such as Lesley O'Rourke, Grahame Smith and Stephanie Wicken. I'm sure you, as well as me, can see the rewards of all the effort you have put in with every tack with looks a little smoother and with some juniors beginning to give some adults more of a run for their money. I would also like to congratulate the juniors themselves for applying themselves to a sport which can be testing, with little reward at times.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our newly elected deputy junior captain, Quentin Bes-Green.

It is great to be part of a club which is such a great ambassador for our sport.

As always I am open to suggestions, comments or questions from both parents and juniors regarding junior sailing at the club. Feel free to grab me around the club or drop me an email on 'sailing_edward@hotmail.co.uk'

Thanks for a great year!

Ed LeGassick

Junior Fleet Report

I would like to start by reinstating the importance of junior sailing within any sailing club. Junior sailing most importantly allows a club to be sustainable, by the rejuvenation of membership figures through the introduction of new members- our juniors! The Royal Yachting Association spends a vast amount of capital through its youth and 'On Board' schemes with the aims of maintaining a steady flow of juniors to become interested in sailing and joining local clubs. For any sport to be a successful one (in that it continues for us ALL to enjoy) all participants must be understanding and helpful in increasing participation of these younger members. Juniors also naturally allow a better representation of people into our sport, continually bringing new ideas and concepts 'to the table' (or water as it may be!).

Juniors do require a certain adaptation of schemes, timetables and a slight change to members life in the club, however the fact that we are willing as a club, to adapt towards helping our juniors as much as possible within their chosen sport is something we should boast about as a club, rather than waver to do.



Tera presentation at Dinghy Show

Photo: Paul Thorpe

I believe junior sailing has experienced a great improvement in the period of 2010 and 2011. There has been an introduction of multiple new events, including the 'Junior Regatta' and 'Saturday skimmer' sailing. Both of these events have had a great turnout, with another RYA training centre wishing to send some boats of their own to participate in the Wilsonian Junior Regatta. I am certain that this is a trend which is going to continue into

bar area: built-in cupboards, worktop, walls painted, telephone moved and a designated shelf for the CDO's stuff. The end result had been well worth the additional work and cost. An unintended job had been the replacement of the gent's urinal with ceramic ones after the old one was found to be leaking. Another additional task was the raising of the manhole cover over the cesspit. Surface water from the bottom of the track had been seen making a beeline for the cover to enter the cesspit. Painting had been a large part of the schedule of work; this included the saloon, changing rooms, entrance foyer, front and side outside walls, entrance gates, blockhouse door, race box door and railings. To help make the gents' changing room warmer, the double doors had been blocked-in to include a bench and shelf. A new larger electric heater had also been fitted. The Committee room had been cleared out and the engine covers moved to a tidied-up Blockhouse.

Additionally, paving slabs had been re-laid along the west wall of the Clubhouse and new drainage gullies made, block paving around Blockhouse and the top of slip had been re-laid, the top track potholes and adjacent to the gate entrance had been filled with planings, and grass cut in the trailer park, the track to the Clubhouse swept and additional light posts installed. The downriver slipway had been pressure washed and the 'steps' removed with wedges of concrete, additional rails were fitted for wetsuits and buoyancy aids in the outside clothing store, and the security sensors in the boat cage were protected. Bulkhead lights were fitted over the boathouse doors and the outside wooden racks securely fixed to the wall. Armoured cable was pulled through from the Bosun's store to Blockhouse and connected; the former had been cleared out and a replacement door fitted. The lower boathouse floor had been covered with plywood, sealed and painted and would be used as a classroom during Junior Week and as the results office for the Medway Regatta. Leaves and moss had been cleared from the gutters, roof and drainage ditches and litter cleared from the Dinghy Park. The telephone had been moved from the Committee room to the store cupboard, the store behind the Clubhouse had been cleared out, flood light bulbs replaced, a new tap fitted for the hose in the gents' changing room, the hair dryer removed and loose floor tiles fixed, extractor fans cleaned and repaired and changing room mats pressure hosed and shower walls cleaned.

Two tasks that had not been completed were the repair of the upstream seawall and new doors for the boat cage. The crack in the seawall had been sealed but metal straps were yet to be fitted before the soil could be back-filled. Stan Sprot was making the new doors and had had an unfortunate incident after delivering the metal in a small truck. He failed to round the first corner of the track and slipped back over the concrete edge. As to be expected, Club members rallied to the rescue, using blocks, rope, odd pieces of wood, bricks, a jack and manpower; recovery was fortunately successful.

Thanks were expressed to all those members who turned up to help, co-operating individually and in teams to get the work done effectively, additional

thanks went to those with specialist skills and those who turned up more than once, to the House Committee for keeping everyone well watered and nourished, Duncan Griffiths, whose skills and expertise had been invaluable, insuring the work was completed to a high standard while saving the Club a lot of money, Brian Warwick, who used his numerous skills to complete the bar refurbishment and install the urinals, Tom Sims, who as usual was helping out everywhere and was the first to arrive and last to leave and, in alphabetical order, extra thanks due to: Ray Craddock, Brian Lamb, Geoff Lambert, Colin Treadwell and Derek Zobel.

The Commodore thanked all those who had contributed to the work parties; it was a credit to the Club that so much had been achieved. Colin Treadwell proposed a vote of thanks to Roy Winnett. He said his support had been fantastic and as well as attending all the planning meetings and each work party date, he had managed to keep the works well within the budget. The vote of thanks was endorsed enthusiastically by members.

11. Election of Ann Heather as an Honorary Member:

The Commodore said that the Committee wished to elect Ann Heather as an Honorary Member in recognition of the extensive contribution she had made to Wilsonian Sailing Club over the previous two decades. He outlined some of her achievements, recognising that this was not a complete list. Ann had run the Medway Regatta team for at least fifteen years, had served on the Committee, steering the Club through the planning, funding and completion of the extension project, and ensuring that all loans had been repaid by the time she had completed her term as Commodore. She had served as House Secretary before becoming a Flag Officer, had been running Junior Week since the early '90s, been the Rep to KSSA for at least ten years as well as the MYA and looked after aspects of the Hoo Freezer and Medway Marathon. She had achieved all this whilst holding down a busy job with regular foreign travel, had supported her children in world competition and had bred a World Champion! All this, and never having sailed a boat herself!

The proposal by Trish Ayris, seconded by Paul Rodgers, was endorsed unanimously.

12. Appointments

Commodore:	Jeremy Drummond	Vice Commodore:	Paul Thorpe
Rear Commodore:	Christine Godber	Secretary:	Jo Wicken
Treasurer:	Trish Ayris	Bosun:	Geoff Lambert
Sailing Secretary:	Matt Love	House Secretaries:	Jane Drummond & Jayne Lambert

General Committee: Roy Winnett, Brian Lamb, Colin Treadwell, Martin Vinton, Paul Rodgers, Tom Sims

Support your House Committee!

by *Jane Drummond*

I would like to welcome Zoe Bes-Green to the house committee. Thank you Zoe for volunteering. As always we could do with more bakers to supply cakes for Sunday. If you would like to provide a cake even for just one week-end we will be happy to refund you for the cost of the ingredients.

Important dates for your diary:- Saturday June 11

Wilsonian S.C. Open Day 11 a.m till 5 p.m.

Free sailing for all visitors in a boat to suit them

Please bring a friend to introduce them to sailing

Come and try different boats

Games for the kids + the odd adult

Lunch time BBQ

We need your support!

Saturday July 9 Evening Race and Barbecue

Informal race at 4 pm

BBQ at 5 pm

A chance to socialise

Add some ballast for Medway Marathon on the following day!

Miracle fleet Report

After the long, cold winter that we have had, it seems a long time since the end of the main 2010 season. At the time of writing this, one Miracle has already re-appeared in the dinghy park and the new season is set to begin in a couple of weeks. The Ice Breaker is on 27th March and the Spring Points Series starts the following week, on the 3rd April and I'm sure you're all really keen to get sailing again.

A few suggestions were made at the Fleet Evening for social events and hopefully there will be a bike ride coming up as well as a cruising activity. There has been suggestion of another training event and it would be useful to ascertain the needs of anybody interested before proceeding.

For anybody who would like to further their racing experience, there is an Open Meeting coming up at Broadwater on 3rd and 4th April. Andrew Clarke promoted the Medway Regatta whilst at the Nationals last year and this now appears on the Miracle Association's event's calendar. However, trying to get them to amend the contact and website details

is proving to be difficult. Although they have said they will, they actually haven't. So keep the 2nd and 3rd July free for the Medway Regatta. The Open Meeting at Margate is the following weekend, 9th and 10th July. There are a few Wilsonian Miracle sailors who have already booked up for the Nationals at Plymouth for 14th to 19th August. It really doesn't matter how experienced you are. Even if you are a relative beginner, by the end of the week you will have made substantial progress. It is also a

Warm up series—Lesley contemplates coffee on members boat? Photo: Nic Soellner

really good week socially. Let's hope the new season gets off to a really good start.

Lesley O'Rourke Miracle3722



House Committee:

Carole Johnson, Sandra Smith, Carol Rodgers, Alison Williams, Derek Zobel

Auditor: Ken Crundwell; **Trustees:** Martin Fish, Bernard Smith, Roy McLeod, Dave Vettergreen

<u>Fleet</u>	<u>Class Captain</u>	<u>Vice Captain</u>
Miracle	Lesley O'Rourke	Paul Nudds
Handicap (Fast)	Mike Gower	Alison Williams
Handicap (Medium)	Graham Jenkinson	Ian Foxwell
Laser 2000	Colin Treadwell	Roy Winnett/Paul Thorpe
Handicap (Juniors)	Edward Le Gassick	VACANCY

Assistant Secretary: Pam Smith

Dinghy Park Secretary: John Shenton

Duty List Secretary: Grahame Smith

Membership Secretary: Lesley O'Rourke

Chief Sailing Instructor: Peter Horner

Assistant Sailing Secretary: Tony Hunt

Measurer: Tom Sims

Parent Liaison Officer: Kevin Downard

Sales Co-ordinator: Gill Warwick

Site Development Officer: Duncan Griffiths

Database Administrator/Trophy Sec: Ian Parris

Assistant Dinghy Park Secretary: Janet Shenton

Membership Renewals Sec: Christine Godber

Training Principal: Tom Sims

Website Manager/Publicity: Jason Ramsden

Editor 31½: Martin Smith

Youth Co-ordinator: Jayne Lambert

Chief Powerboat Instructor & Site Service Manager: Brian Warwick

Maintenance Co-ordinator: Roy Winnett

Cruising Secretaries: David Wraight & Derek Zobel

The above were all elected unanimously.

13. Any Other Business:

31½: Martin Smith, editor of 31½, said that the Committee was looking into ways of keeping down the costs of publishing and distributing the magazine. The Club no longer had access to free printing, so one alternative being considered was to publish some or all of the magazines on the website. Advantages included achieving a wider circulation and being significantly cheaper. Disadvantages were that not all members had internet access and others could lose access for various reasons during the year. The cheapest quotation obtained to print 31½ had been £120 and postage was approximately an additional £65.

Although, undoubtedly, it was technically possible to put the magazine on the web, attempts to date had shown that this was not easy. Assuming 31½ were made available electronically, a certain number of copies could still be printed to suit those who wished to receive a hard copy, and to hand to visitors. It was suggested there could be a box on the renewal form for members to tick to say whether they wished to receive an electronic copy or printed copy. A show of hands indicated that more were in favour of retaining the printed copy. The matter would be discussed further at General Committee.

Photo Gallery: Ian Wyatt asked why the photo gallery in the foyer had not been used for a number of years, and expressed a wish for it to be reinstated.

Medway Regatta: Colin Treadwell said it was likely there would be a new format on the Sunday of the Medway Regatta with the two races being run back-to-back. This would enable visitors to get away on their journeys in good time.

CDO Duties: J Wicken said that, in transcribing the duty list for the past two years, she had noticed that a number of members were carrying out two CDO duties each year. She asked what could be done to encourage other members who were more than capable of carrying out such a duty to put themselves forward, thus relieving the burden on those currently undertaking the commitment twice a year. From personal experience she had previously dreaded being asked to do a CDO duty, but subsequently, having become involved with Wednesday evening opening and closing, had found the role to be far less daunting than anticipated. Colin Treadwell said that he would be very willing to go through the role of CDO with anyone who felt they could assist, and would offer the same to anyone who would consider taking on a Race Officer role.

Gates: In response to a question it was confirmed that during the winter season the landlord had decided to lock the bottom gate to prevent arbitrary access. The padlock combination number was known to Committee members and would be available upon request for members needing to visit the Club outside normal opening hours.

13. Closing Remarks:

The Commodore said members would be glad to know that this would be the last time he had to make the closing remarks at an AGM! He wished to use the opportunity to thank those people who had bravely taken on new roles in the Club. He apologised if he had omitted anyone, but thanked Martin Smith for taking on 31½, Matt Love for volunteering as Sailing Secretary, Colin Treadwell for leading the management of the Medway Regatta, Kevin Downard for joining the Committee as Parent Liaison Officer and Graham Jenkinson as the new Medium Fleet Captain. He looked forward to working with them all to keep Wilsonian vibrant and to maintain its culture of self reliance and friendliness.

Meeting closed 8.43 p.m.



Warm up series 2011 — Martin Brown & Max Caxton failing to show due respect to Class Captain. Photo: Nic Soellner

I am sure we are all looking forward to another year of wonderful sailing on the Medway; for those who travel to other clubs don't forget to tell all what a great club we have and get as many as possible to come to the Medway regatta to try it out for themselves.

See you somewhere between 23 and 16 hopefully !

Mike Gower Vortex 1013

I was asked to come up with a questionnaire for the handicap fleet evening to see what people like about the club, what they dislike, what could be changed etc.

The results of this have come out as follows:

People are generally happy with the dinghy park; there are comments to improve the way boats are tied down with cables or chains or concrete filled tyres being dug into the ground. Some areas can be a bit muddy at times.

Launching facilities are good; we are lucky to be able to sail at any state of the tide without having to worry about large waves (except when a large commercial has just gone by). It can get a bit busy if the tide is high. It can be a long pull up the track when the tide is low but as one commented " You just ask a friend and they will help you "

The majority of the answers indicated that people would be happy with longer races and going to other parts of the river than we generally go to although plenty were very happy with what we currently do.

The only really consistent answer was regarding the changing rooms (cold) and the erratic showers which all want to see improvement in. (I believe both of these issues are currently being looked into ???)

The upstairs club area was universally liked as was the car parking and access; some are calling for a cable car to be installed to help with the long trek uphill after sailing and special mother and baby car parking spaces at the bottom of the track Others would like an oxygen cylinder half way up for a bit of a boost...

Some thought we could benefit from promoting the club at local events or the Dinghy show as we can be a bit hidden away in the woods.

I think the general conclusion to draw from this was the fact that the most common comment at the end of the questionnaire was what a fantastic club we have and this is a reflection of the quality of the membership.

Wilsonian's at Work

(As recorded in the AGM minutes and photographed for posterity by the Secretary)

Stan had delivered some metalwork and was heading back up the track but didn't have enough speed for the corner. He stopped, but every time he tried to move forward the van slipped back and the handbrake didn't hold. It was awful watching it lurch backwards and get first one wheel, then another, over the edge of the concrete.



Then team Wilsonian jumped in with the winch block and tackle. This managed to move the van forward just one inch. This was abandoned shortly afterwards and the decision made to go and find the farmer and see if his tractor could be borrowed.

Meanwhile Colin Lown found an old winch and the World's Strongest Man (or Wilsonian's at least), Grahame Smith, singlehandedly winched the van back onto the concrete.

By the time the others returned, having found the farmer was out, all that was needed was to re-lead the block and tackle and help haul the van up the hill.

All ended well, with no damage done,



Jo Wicken

Sailing Secretary's Report

I'm not quite sure how it happened, but I seem to have become the club's new Sailing Secretary, Bob and Jeremy must have remarkable yet subtle powers of persuasion. I haven't done any committee work for the club before, so I'm hoping I don't make a pig's ear of it, I've no doubt that if I do someone will let me know and give me plenty of advice!

Being new to the post I don't have much to write about yet, but three items I need to bring to your attention are:

The new afternoon start time of 1:30pm: this has been introduced to reduce the amount of time that can be spent hanging around at lunchtime waiting for the afternoon race if the morning race has been shorter than expected when the course was set. There is no intention to reduce the length of the morning races.

Members can now race in any fleet they choose and be eligible to win prizes in that fleet. However, should you choose to sail in the 'wrong' fleet, you can have no influence over the course set, for example, should a fast boat choose to sail in the slow fleet they can't set an impossibly long course for the other competitors.



Rule 41 of the Racing Rules 'Outside Help' has been revised, this now allows limited outside help in certain circumstances. This has been interpreted to mean that should a crew member become separated from their boat, they can be returned to it by a safety boat without disqualification (*I am told boat must return to notional point of crew loss before continuing to race. Ed*). I would like to point out that I am by no means a rules expert, so I recommend you take a look at the rules area of the ISAF website to make yourselves familiar with the changes.

Matt Love Blaze 531

Sailing Sec has quick nap before start. Photo: Ben Passmore

Fast Fleet Report

Here we go then, start of the 2011 season. Feels like it has been a very long cold winter but the sun is out today and Spring is definitely in the air.

We had a good turnout from the fleet in the Hoo Freezer; unfortunately the weather decided to not come out and play that weekend but it was nice to be out on the water again. Well some of us thought so anyway.

We have now run 3 weeks of the warm up series so far. I'm sorry to say that I seem to be leading again at the moment. Hopefully by the time this is printed someone will have overhauled me. Entries are down a bit this year, I admit it hasn't been the most welcoming of grey Sunday mornings so far but we have had good winds and great courses (thanks to our hard working RO Tony Hunt). Look out for this next year (by when I'm sure someone else will be organising the series.....) as it is a great time to be out on the water with very few moored boats and general river traffic to get in the way. Unfortunately the mooring buoys are still all in place so you do still have to be a bit on the lookout and they can be a bit harder to spot without a dirty great boat tied to them

We had a very successful fleet evening at Medway yacht club combined with the other handicap fleets. We enjoyed an outstandingly good value meal and the setting was ideal for post dinner discussion of various items with a well stocked bar at great prices too ! I received plenty of comments afterwards of how much everyone enjoyed the evening so perhaps we can follow a similar format later on this year ?

Among the dates to look out for this year are the South Kent, 26 June, Medway regatta on the weekend of 2/3 July, The Grand Prix ,17 July and the Leigh trophy, 11 September. In amongst this are all the usual series racing on Sundays so I look forward to seeing a high turnout from the fast fleet in all disciplines !

I shall endeavour to set courses to try to keep everyone happy; not always easy with the range of craft we have. We do have lots of river that we can use if wind and tide permit so do feel free to make course suggestions.