

AM I FLAGGING?

It is said that there is no such thing as a free lunch, so it came as no surprise when our secretary asked for a contribution to the Reef Knot now that I have been shoe-horned into the Flag Captain's trousers, if you will forgive my metaphor – this position awarded, it seems, by virtue of staying alive.

Having done so for some time means that one has a long rearward overview. Such a view covers a period of considerable social change, so although it is a gradual process, the difference between my early experience of Wells Sailing Club and that of the present one is vast.

Wealth must be the biggest factor, though you may be reluctant to think so. With cash comes mobility, both of members and their boats. Horizons widen.

Originally trailerless owners would sail their craft to and from local regattas at Brancaster, Overy and Blakeney – these being the highlights of club activities. Otherwise, championship competition (unless local) was restricted to those who aspired to a small car and a home made trailer to get to Essex or the South Coast. Consequently the membership was small and very local.

Led by the Commodore and town doctor, Willy Hicks, the names roll out like a school register: Bailey, Case, Cox, Cox, Cox, Emerson, Emerson, Fairbrother, French, Green, Grimes, Money, Neale, Parsons, Scoles, Thomas, Youngman, Webb – these and more living in the parish.

The 'Shipwrights' provided something of an unofficial H.Q., and each member's home a private changing room should such a facility be needed, although most sailed in everyday clothes augmented by odd ex-military surplus garments from the Army and Navy stores.

Club financial outgoings were minimal, restricted to cartridges for the starter's gun and provision of a programme of events. Annual membership was ten shillings. Boats were parked on the rough ground either side of the first slipway before the concrete wall and pathway were constructed. This area was often used as a dumping ground for unwanted rubble. Use of launching trolleys was a relatively recent innovation replacing the practice of leaving boats on moorings in the creek and rigging them afloat.

Club races always began and finished at the 'club line', defined by transit posts (still there) on the marsh, and a hut on the Beach Bank.

What a minimal and simple set-up it was. Two rounds of the harbour. No clubhouse, no rescue boat, no buoyancy, no kicking straps, no Saturday morning sailing because of work commitments. Nostalgia, nostalgia.

In the next instalment, I shall bang on about the shock of International competition.

Richard 2009

OPPORTUNITY FOR FUND RAISING

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Club has the opportunity to be part of a fund raising activity which could generate up to £700 towards Sailing Club finances.

Eleven groups have applied to man the Beach Road Playing Field Car Park during the summer. There are 15 days to cover so we need 15 volunteers willing to do one day each (2 to 4 hours).

The tasks will involve collecting money in a bucket and directing cars to a parking space.

You will be working alongside volunteers from other organisations sharing the same objectives.

At the end of the season, the takings will be divided evenly amongst the organisations which have taken part.

If you feel that you can offer your time and help your club please contact me by phone: 01328 710460 mobile: 07846567872 email: bobgbr16@aol.com

Bob Curtis – Vice Commodore

WELLS SAILING CLUB NEEDS YOU!

WELLS SAILING CLUB ANNUAL FINANCIAL MEETING

The AFM will take place in the clubhouse at 1100 on Sunday 22nd March 2009

Agenda

Attendance

Minutes of 2008 AFM

Matters Arising

Presentation of Accounts

General and Business Accounts

Bar Account

House Account

Building Account

Any Other Business

Items to be included in AOB should reach the secretary (in writing) at least one week prior to the meeting. The flag officers and committee will be pleased to answer any questions from the floor.



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REEF KNOT

THE NEWSLETTER OF WELLS SAILING CLUB

No 12 - Spring 2009

THOUGHTS FROM THE COMMODORE

Sailing seems to be a long way off. Snow on the ground, boats stored out of sight, bleak winds blowing ... and yet the season will be here before we know it!

I am delighted to welcome Bob Curtis as my vice commodore – and as he said in his own words 'I guess it is about time!' Thank you Bob – I am sure we will have a full social year. Martin Emerson has agreed to be rear commodore and I have absolutely no doubt everything will be ship shape ... what a great job he did last June with the British Championships. Both have a strong experienced committee to support them.

We have an enthusiastic, experienced main committee to oversee the year. We have a full roster of officers of the day, ample rescue boat teams and vessels in good order, a clubhouse to be proud of (thanks to all but especially Campbell for completing this before my time), a fleet of dinghies for beginners and a busy and profitable bar.

So Commodore should be a two-year enjoyment with a light hand on the tiller and a relaxed atmosphere. What goals should I set?

- To encourage as many people to go out and sail as I/we can
- To encourage as many youngsters (local and club members) to take up the sport as possible
- To make the greatest use of the clubhouse and enjoy the social occasions
- To begin the repayment of the loans so kindly given to us for the clubhouse development.

The sailing schedule has been drawn up with these goals in mind. Early in the season the schedule offers all-in races so that anyone wishing to sail can turn up and be sure of a race. We have included the usual Drascombe Rally but have added a regular monthly race as I know we have many Drascombe/Tan sail owners who have shown interest. Junior week has been moved to Whitsun so that after the course we can have fun evenings, leading hopefully to junior races and perhaps in August juniors joining the handicap fleet. Richard Cracknell (our Flag Captain) and Martin Emerson have taken responsibility for getting this buzzing. I am sure other club members will be pleased to lend a hand. Charlotte Lyddon is coming in the summer to help with this.

Sharpies have various meetings during the year including the British Championships at Brancaster Staithe in early June. We still have the Champions and Runners Up in our midst. We have the Frostbite team

race (where we stand something of a chance) in July and a Sharpie Open at Wells on 11/12 July. Please note that although I am an old timer Sharpie sailor I want to encourage all owners to come and sail. Even if you do not wish to race, if you set out with the fleet you can come under the cover of the rescue teams. Just stay in the area so you can be seen and return with the fleet. You might even try to start and round the buoys in the right order and then hey presto you are racing.

I have focussed our most prestigious trophies during the peak summer period so we can have big turnouts for events such as the Tommy Thomas Weekend. Put the dates in your diary and GET THERE!

I would like to thank all those who have loaned money to the club. It is the intent of the committee to make repayment a priority. We do, however, need to keep the clubhouse in reasonable order, maintain our rescue boats and equipment to a high standard, maintain our junior fleet of Fevas, plus have a reasonable fund for unforeseen occurrences. To make rigid promises would be unwise in the circumstances but the loans will be repaid as soon as possible.

May I make a plea to all members with boats? Every year a reasonable number of members park their boats on the quayside that sadly never get their bottoms wet (nor their boats). Please let Martin Emerson know if you would like to store a little-used boat in the winter storage area ... or keep it at home until you decide to use it. We are still receiving applications from potential new members. If they have a boat and are going to sail it that is great for the club. Better they have a spot near the water than the dry boats.



British Sharpie Champions 2008

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Which reminds me – there are some boats which have been left in the winter storage area which have no payment tag on them. If this is you please contact Terry Angles as soon as you can as we plan an inspection. Boats which are parked without a ticket may well have to be placed up 'the cut' until owners or others collect them!

Although a sailing club, I certainly welcome ALL those who go on the water. I have not forgotten canoes or cruisers. The club is erecting a series of racks on the side and rear wall of the club which will allow the canoes to be secured by lock and chain. With the underdecking storage, all canoes should be capable of being stored close to the clubhouse.

I always feel it is a shame that our cruising members, naturally enough, go cruising and perhaps are not welcomed into the body of the club. May I invite all cruising members to our social events and I will be getting in touch to see if we cannot bring the club together with perhaps a couple of events during the year – maybe we could have a cruiser race with some sailing helms crewing the cruiser boats ... or a day when the sailors take cruising members and their families onto the water in somewhat smaller vessels?

If you have any ideas for the future I am willing to listen and keen to move forward with the club.

All that leaves me to say is ... some easy year. But I look forward to seeing you and encouraging you onto the water to inject real life into the sailing club so that the facility is here for the foreseeable future.

Best Wishes, Martin Read

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A REMINDER – if you intend to renew your subscription as a club member, please do so by March 31st, as after this date you will incur the extra expense of paying the £75 joining fee. Treasurer – Gwen Woodhouse, 31 Nielson Close, Wells-next-the-sea.

WELLS SAILING CLUB WEBSITE

Jim Parkinson is in the process of updating the website with all the latest information.

www.wellssailingclub.co.uk

WINTER BOAT PARKING

Members are reminded that fees for this should be paid to the treasurer. If you have stored your craft over the past winter and have forgotten to pay, please get your money to Gwen as soon as possible

EMAIL

To be kept up to date on what is happening both on and off the water this season send an email to: john.gibbs3@tesco.net (unless you're already on his members Email list).

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT SPRING 2009

We intend to hit the ground running in 2009. The fabulous clubhouse extension is now complete and your House Committee will continue to tweak and improve the rest of the clubhouse. To this end, we need your support and participation.

I would like to thank the hard working House team for making the Christmas season another to remember. The Christmas Party was yet again a sell out and I understand the clubhouse was buzzing on Boxing Day and New Year.

The Annual Dinner and Dance was such a runaway success last year we have already fixed a date at the same venue for this year. **Make sure to put this one in your diary!** For the rest of the year we have an outline of things to come. We have lots of ideas from the team but if you have a sparkling idea for a fun(d) raising event please don't be shy, do share it with us.

During the year we will be looking for volunteers to help with the manning of the local town playing field car park. This should raise a large sum of money for the club and help to repay the loan. Details of the dates will be published later.

Throughout the year there will be events from other organisations, hosted by the club, to which members are cordially invited.

Coast Watch are holding a series of meetings with guest speakers on some Friday nights at 7.30pm. Details will be sent out by email. Your attendance would be most welcome at all these events.

Wishing you all a successful sailing season.

Bob Curtis, Vice Commodore

WSC SOCIAL CALENDAR 2009

Sat 28 March	Fitting Out Supper
Sat 2 May	Curry Evening
Sat 23 May	BBQ
26/29 May	Junior week
30/31 May	Drascombe Rally
Sat 20 June	Frostbites Team Race
Sat 27 June	Grand Midsummer Supper
11/12 July	Sharpie Open Weekend
Tue 4/Wed 5 August	NWNSA
Sat 29 August	Regatta Hog Roast
Sat 19 September	Country and Western Evening
Sat 17 October	Laying Up Supper
Sat 31 October	Halloween (Apples!)
Sat 21 November	Annual Dinner Dance at the Crown
12 December	Christmas Party

PLEASE KEEP THIS IN A SAFE PLACE!

GENERAL NOTES

It is most encouraging to note the increasing popularity of the Sailing Club and the resulting influx of new members who are enjoying its facilities both on and off the water. Rises in membership do, however, mean an added burden on the fabric of the club and its grounds, including the car and boat parks.

The Officers of the club would like to remind and inform members of a few basic guidelines which will assist the smooth running of the club.

■ CAR PARKING

We are very fortunate to be allowed to park our cars so close to the clubhouse. Consequently, we are bound to adhere to the following rules to be able to continue to have use of the land.

1. All vehicles should display the club sticker (available at the bar) when using the car park. Any vehicle not complying with this will be assumed to belong to a non member and will be asked to move.
2. Overnight parking is not permitted.
3. Park tidily so as many vehicles as possible can be accommodated.
4. Remember to replace the chain at all times.
5. Parking in front of the clubhouse is only permitted by members delivering or collecting, eg, for social functions.

■ IMPROVEMENTS TO FACILITIES.

We are sure that you will agree that improvements to the clubhouse, in particular to the changing rooms, showers, toilets and internal and external storage areas and the continued modernisation of the kitchen and bar, have been a great success and it is pleasing to see so many members enjoying these added facilities.

Members are reminded of the legal requirement to sign in guests who are not members. This includes wives, husbands, partners and friends etc. of Full, Associate and Junior members.

Guests may only be signed in up to a maximum of seven times during a year.



Neil Foster took some excellent photographs in demanding conditions at the 2008 Sharpie Championships at Wells.



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Campbell's unmistakable style shows in this photograph of the 2008 Sharpie Championships hosted by Wells Sailing Club, heavy weather and hectic sailing!

■ BOAT PARK

Because of the increased demand on a limited space, we are getting close to overspill into our land in the Cutting. This is less convenient as it is further away from the slipway. The Sailing committee may request that boats which are sailed infrequently are to move to make way for those that are used regularly.

All boats are allocated a specific space on the park. Please adhere to this plan. If you are bringing a boat to the club, please make sure you inform the Rear-Commodore, Martin Emerson, who will identify your personal site. Winter boat storage should be paid for at the end of the sailing season by those wishing to use this facility – once again, contact Martin Emerson.

■ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

If you are proposing or seconding new members, please make sure that they fill in the form accurately. Remember that proposers and seconders have to be members of at least 2 years standing and should know the applicants well enough to say a few words on their behalf.

■ WORK PARTIES

As you may be aware, Wells Sailing Club has always been a self-help organisation. Renovation, maintenance, grasscutting, land clearing, rescue craft preparation and handling, bar etc. have always been done by club volunteers. Notices of future work parties will be posted on the club notice board and circulated on email. If you can help, please let the party organiser know in good time so that in the event of the date being inconvenient to the majority of helpers, it can be changed.

Good sailing! Feb 2009

WATCH OUT FOR

Last year during the summer, film crews, technicians, production crews and actors (including Stephen Fry) shot footage at the East End and on the club boat park over 2 days for the series *Kingdom*. I assume that the programmes will be screened this year in the Spring. They will probably be worth a look.