



31 1/2

THE WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB MAGAZINE

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WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB
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The magazine of the
Wilsonian Sailing Club
is called "31 1/2" because
the club house, the barge
WILSONIAN, is moored
at approximately halfway
between navigation buoys
31 and 32.

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FROM THE COMMODORE

When we joined the Club in 1970 there were only three classes and about a hundred dinghy park spaces. In 1973 we doubled the size of the dinghy park and started a handicap fleet to let new classes emerge naturally. The Fireballs and Miracles have both built up to over twenty boats and fill a need in their ways between our established classes. The Fireballs have been noted for their good turnout and rising standard of competitiveness. Three went to their Nationals and several to the Southern Areas at Broadstairs, which was blown off. The Miracles have held successful Opens for three years and several of our members have competed in their Nationals and other Open meetings. We are also strongly represented on their National Committee. Our Fleet, No. 3, is one of the strongest in the South East.

We have been granted outline planning permission for a shore-based clubhouse, which is but the first stepping-stone in that direction. Your Committee considered it would be imprudent not to carry on with the maintenance and improvement of the Barge. Work has already started on getting her ready for Acorn Shipyard, who are due to start on the replating around the waterline in early December. As soon as she gets back we will need all the help we can get to build the new changing rooms.

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The opinions expressed in this magazine
are not necessarily those of the Editor
or the Club Committee.

A number of decisions have been taken by the General Committee of the Club in the last few weeks which will have some effect on the 1979 season. First, the Committee has decided to approve a recommendation from the Sailing Committee that the Fireball and Miracle fleets should be accorded sponsored class status. This means that these two classes will in future race as classes and not as members of the two handicap fleets. A number of consequential problems, such as whether Graduates should continue to start and race with the Miracles, with which they share the same Portsmouth Yardstick number, have yet to be resolved.

Second, the Committee has amended byelaw 9 with the effect that, in 1979, spaces in the dinghy park will be given only to boats having third party insurance cover for not less than £100,000. This is a belated recognition of trends elsewhere; at some open meetings, minimum cover of at least £250,000 is already being required. (With motor insurance, there is no upper limit of compulsory third party cover.)

Third, subscriptions for 1979 will be £2 dearer for family members and for individual members over 21. Dinghy park spaces will also cost £2 more. Forms for renewal of membership for 1979 are either enclosed with this newsletter or will already have been sent to you.

Some members will have heard that the Medway Council has now granted outline planning permission for a clubhouse on the shore. The permission is subject to certain conditions, one of which is that at the completion of the project the existing clubhouse (the barge) must be removed. The Committee has considered whether, in the light of this development, the planned refit of "WILSONIAN" this winter should be carried out. They decided that the proposed work should go on. They thought that even if the problems of obtaining detailed planning permission and of financing a new clubhouse could be resolved, it would be some time before a clubhouse could be built which would provide all the facilities now available on the barge and that it would be sensible to keep the barge in a marketable condition. Part of the 1978/9 refit is in any case maintenance, and the accommodation changes described in the last edition of "31½" are needed now and not intended solely to meet future needs. It must also be borne in mind that it is by no means certain that a majority of the members of the Club want to see the barge go - (see Letters). The Annual General Meeting in February will provide an opportunity for what could well be a lively discussion on this subject.

The Annual Dinner on 27 October was enjoyed by those who went and we were pleased to welcome as the Club's guests the Commodore of the Hoo Ness Yacht Club, the Medway Cruising Club and the SEGAS Sailing Club, the Rear Commodore of the Medway Yacht Club, Mr. J.A. Laphorn and Mr. E. StJ. Brice (and their respective ladies). Although it seems clear that the number of members willing to support this kind of event is reducing, nobody yet seems to have come up with a suggestion for an alternative kind of social occasion at which it is possible to entertain some guests and to present silver pots. Could we have some ideas?

Apart from the paper chase associated with membership renewals, annual general meetings and preparation of the race programme and duty lists for the next season, winter is also the season for working parties. No major working parties are planned for before Christmas. The barge is due to be at the shipyard from the end of November until the middle of December, and information about work that needs to be done either on the shore or on the barge will be circulated as soon as possible. We hope to circulate quite soon, too, information about other social events this winter. We hope to repeat the success of last winter's "Snowflake party" (in the early New Year) and

possibly to have a pre-season social evening. There will also be one or two evenings arranged by class captains for their own people.

Finally, may I remind you that at the AGM in February we shall be electing a new General Committee. New blood is always welcome and any of the existing Committee members will be happy to explain what is involved if you would like to take a keener interest in the running of the Club. We shall need a new Membership Secretary in 1979 in place of Barbara Dewynter who is stepping down for a well-deserved rest. Your Secretary would quite like a rest too, or at least an understudy. Any volunteers?

Peter Bolton

HOO FREEZER - JANUARY 27th and 28th

Would all those intending to enter please contact Bob Fitzpatrick so that we can enter en bloc and qualify as a club entry.

Phone: Medway 363942; or Write: 78A, Maidstone Road, Rainham, Kent.

WANTED!

Wheelbarrows
2 Low Level Toilet Cisterns
2 Toilet Pans
4 Kitchen Tables
3 Wash hand basins
Oddments of carpet
Shower fittings
Shower Curtains

Shovels
Pickaxes
Crowbars
Spades
A Cement Mixer
Hot & Cold Taps
for basins

Condition is immaterial but has to be repairable.
Your club needs these items, so if you can help in
anyway please phone: Dick Jordan Tonbridge 358879

RACING NEWS

ENTERPRISE

Mike Blake
Class Captain

"BLUE JIB" OPEN

Twenty-six Enterprises competed in this year's Blue Jib Open Meeting on 10 September, despite the weather forecast - "...and the south-westerly wind will be fresh to strong, force 5 to 6, gusting 7 at times..." - which turned out to be very accurate.

After the planing broad reach start, "The Executioner" (C. Prince) was in the lead at the first buoy. At the end of an exhilarating run to 27, John Mitchell had disappeared in a cloud of spray to an early retirement. Colin Prince went in as well, but got up again so quickly that you wondered if he had been in! When the boats arrived back at 31 after a long beat it was obvious who had the best beating technique: Colin Prince had a commanding lead (it is worth mentioning at this point that Colin was third in the World Champs this year), followed by Frank Adams, Mike Blake, Clive Grindley and Martin Smith. The only change in this order at the finish was that Mike Blake slipped back two places after putting in a bad tack.

After a quick pint and a ploughmans', the Blue Jib race was started with a reach to 30 and a short run to 29. Colin Prince was in the lead again as he turned to beat back to 31, closely followed by Frank Adams and Mike Blake. The race ended with a really tight tactical battle in the testing conditions.

The points situation before the last race was as follows:- Colin Prince: $\frac{3}{4}, \frac{3}{4}$; Frank Adams: 2, 2; Mike Blake: 5, 3; Clive Grindley: 3, 6; Steve Bradley: 6, 4; Martin Smith: 4, 9; Gordon Belcher: 7, 7. Colin Prince decided not to sail the last race, having already secured the trophy, which left it wide open for that vital $\frac{3}{4}$ point to be claimed.

The added ingredient which was to change the course of events in the melting-pot (or rather Gillingham Reach) was that the tide had now turned and we had wind against tide. After a short beat to 32, all the boats in contention were well up and close together. However, after the long run down to 24, the fleet had been scattered by several capsizes and the only one to remain upright was Clive Grindley, who sailed well to bring "Climactic" home in first position. He was followed by Frank Adams and Steve Bradley.

Overall Results: 1st. Colin Prince (Lensbury S.C.); 2nd. Clive Grindley (W.S.C.); 3rd. Frank Adams (Arun S.C.); 4th. Steve Bradley (W.S.C.); 5th. Mike Blake (W.S.C.); 6th. Martin Smith (W.S.C.).

NOTE FOR YOUR DIARY - There will be an Enterprise Class meeting on Saturday, January 27th, 1979, 8-10:30pm, at Sutton Court, 12, Main Road, Sutton-at-Hone. Situated on the A225 between Dartford and Farningham. Please advise Mike Blake (Farningham 863595) or Martin Smith (Medway 64074) if you are able to attend, so that we can organise some refreshments.

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MIRROR FLEET RESULTS

The Single-Handed Series had eleven competitors:-

1st. 33074, PALM PATCH	Martin Jones (16.7points)
2nd. 48992, RONDO	Clair Fryatt (17points)
3rd. 43000, PHLASHER	Dave Wittock (28points)

This was a very close finish, with the two Juniors showing their improved form.

The Autumn Points Series had ten competitors:-

1st. 33074, PALM PATCH	Bob Jones (3points)
2nd. 39453, LITTLE RED ROOSTER	Chris Harris (15.7points)
3rd. 3873, SUPRA	Harry Harsent (21.7points)

Laying Up Cup - 1978

Christopher Stevens

The glorious Indian summer weather must have done something to help bring 49 boats to the line for the morning race of the Laying-Up Cup, equalling last year's record.

The fleet got away in the lightest of westerly airs but within a few minutes of the "gun" this died completely as the sun's warmth brought in a fitful sea-breeze from the east and it began to look as if it would be an impossible task for anyone to get back from 27 against the increasing ebb. The Race Officer set off down river in the rescue boat prepared to shorten the course if necessary but as the leading Fireballs approached 30 the breeze picked up enough to bring them home in time for lunch, with the rest of the fleet following, except for the luckless Mirrors who were left to struggle against the full force of the tide. First on handicap was Bob Fitzpatrick in "E.L.O." (Miracle 1999).

Expecting that any sea-breeze there was would die away as the afternoon wore on, the course set for the second race included several laps so that it could be shortened at the line if need be. The first attempt to start was followed by a General Recall which was almost inevitable with the strong tidal stream and near-total lack of wind, especially as what breeze there was had repeated its trick of the morning, this time shifting a full 180° back into the west between the 10 and 5 minute signals; however, this having happened, the Force 3 that had been promised in the forecast began to develop and the course could be sailed comfortably.

Again Fireballs were first home, but although Mark Goodchild in "Goldie Fender" was able to save his time on the Enterprises in this race, on aggregate points he was unable to beat the remarkably consistent sailing of Bryan Saunders and Cyril Kinder who respectively achieved 2nd and 3rd place in both races and thus convincingly demonstrated the virtues of the Enterprise for close racing in such conditions.

RESULTS: 1st. Enterprise 2370, KEPAMI - Bryan Saunders (4 points)
2nd. Enterprise 4660, BOUNTY - Cyril Kinder (6 points)
3rd. Fireball 8517, GOLDIE FENDER - Mark Goodchild (11½ points)
4th. Graduate 2650, LANCER - Susan Smith (13 points)
5th. Enterprise 16564, IDUNNO - Colin Clamp (15 points)
6th. Graduate 471, KAGI - Ron Mountford (17 points)

SLOW HANDICAP - SEASONS' RESULTS

Spring Points Series

1st. Graduate 2650, LANCER - Sue Dean
2nd. Graduate 1290, MICAWEBER - Ray Powell
3rd. Miracle 2000, P.de R. - Sam Brookes

Morning Points Series

1st. Solo 1726, WIDDERSHINS - Bob Battershell
2nd. Miracle 1958, GERONIMO - Richard Jordan
3rd. Solo 2337, R-SQUARED - Richard Allardyce

Summer Points Series

1st. Graduate 2650, LANCER - Sue Dean
2nd. Miracle 1329, MOODY BLUE - John House
3rd. Solo 1726, WIDDERSHINS - Bob Battershell

Autumn Points Series

1st. Miracle 1999, E.L.O. - Bob Fitzpatrick
2nd. Graduate 1290, MICAWEBER - Ray Powell
3rd. Miracle 1958, GERONIMO - Richard Jordan

THAT SPARE BOARD!

Bob Fitzpatrick
Handicap Class Captain

Before going to the Miracle Nationals this year I managed to borrow from Richard Jordan's boat a spare boom, rudder complete and a centreboard. As the latter was the most likely part to get broken it was in my view the most important. However, the weather was not to be very kind to the seventy-one crews and families gathered on the shores of Lake Ullswater. It was Overcast - Damp, Wet, Drizzly, and wetter on the water - with a few minutes of sun (I can't remember which day that was); but, above all, NO WIND. Need I say it wasn't my type of sailing. The spares, of course, were not needed.

Anyway, back to the story. On or near the last day I happened to say to Sam that we had not needed to bring all the spares. CRUNCH. He said he had changed his centreboard with Richard's before leaving WSC, as he thought his board might be out of class! "*/*/*/". I politely asked him if he wanted to take his own board home!! WSC members all finished in the first half of the fleet of 71, as follows:-

6th - Bryan Matthews (780)
15th - Bob Fitzpatrick (1999)
30th - Sam Brookes (2000)

WSC Fireballs go 'Foreign'

David Scott
Fireball Captain Designate

WSC fielded seven of the twenty entries in the Medway Cruising Club Open for Fireballs, held 16 and 17 September.

In the first race on Saturday an ideal force 4 westerly at the start, becoming nearer force 5 by the finish, provided excellent racing with some spectacular spinnaker reaches. Gerald Stock was our best representative with a very creditable 3rd place, but suffered a grave misfortune when a high-speed encounter with the just-covered Gillingham causeway caused his transom to part company with the rest of his boat. Damage was sufficiently extensive to prevent him taking any further part in the meeting. So much for fixed rudders! Next best placed from Wilsonian was David Scott who, after a capsize at the first mark, recovered to finish 5th. Roly Spurgeon was 8th.

By Sunday the wind had moderated considerably, to the extent that some of the Wilsonian contingent, over-optimistic of the time required to reach the start-line, had a struggle to make it before the off. In the force 2-3 breeze, the intended 3-lap course was terminated at 2 laps. Best placed Wilsonian was David Scott who, after an appalling first beat, recovered (always recovering!) to 6th place. Roly Spurgeon was 11th and Keith Lennox 13th.

For the third race, the committee set an ambitious course visiting practically all the buoys between the line and 23, some more than once, followed by Otterham Creek buoy via South Yantlet Creek to 16 and home. For a change, David Scott had a good first leg and in fourth place was well clear of the other Wilsonian boats until Otterham Creek, where the wind died away for long enough to allow the rest of the fleet to get back in contention. In very changeable conditions on the beat home from 16, Keith Lennox seemed to find the best route and finished 6th. This was sufficient to give him 11th place overall and the Cadet Prize for highest placed helm under 18. Next best placed in this race were David Scott (7th) and Roly Spurgeon (10th), giving them overall 7th and 8th places respectively.

It was good to see so many from WSC keen enough to try their skills against different opposition; with the current enthusiasm in this fleet we shall have earned class status for next year. One can only hope that continuing recruitment to the Fireball fleet does not leave other classes too depleted. At least one Miracle owner was seen practising in a Fireball during the advanced RYA course the same weekend!

P.S. By the way, overall honours for the meeting were shared by Len Jones and Martin Wadhams, each with a first and second place, but they are not from our club!

THE SAILING SECRETARY

ON CHANGING CLASS

Christopher Stevens

If you are thinking of changing class this winter, please start by making sure that you have a look at Byelaws 8, 9 & 14 in the Club Handbook before you commit yourself to the new boat.

At their last meeting the General Committee accepted Fireballs and Miracles a club-sponsored classes in addition to GP14's, Enterprises and Mirrors; both will have class racing for their own prizes next season.

The sponsored classes are the backbone of the Club, and it is perhaps worth remembering that if you join one of them you are that much more likely to find experienced people sailing in the class who can help you to get the most out of your boat - either with advice or simply as you notice what they do - than you are in a minority class racing with the handicap fleet.

While not yet being club-sponsored, our single-hander fleets of Lasers and Solos are both fully recognised with their class associations. Sailing with the 'A' and 'B' Handicap respectively, they would each welcome new members who intend to race regularly. If you are thinking of a single-hander don't forget the Laser M which now has a suggested PY of 123 if you choose to sail a series with the rig.

The Sailing Committee's objective when approving applications under Byelaw 8 for boats applying to join the Handicap Class is to ensure that they are suitable for the conditions which are likely to be experienced on the river (hence the limits on length and PY Number), and to provide good racing by encouraging those classes for which there is already a nucleus of support within the Club. At present, apart from the two single-handed classes, only Marauders ('A' Handicap) and Graduates ('B' Handicap) among the classes currently represented in the dinghy park meet this requirement, since none of the others has shown any growth over the past few years nor, with one or two exception, do they take part in Club events.

This policy is not intended to preclude the entry of boats from other or new classes, especially where these could fill possible gaps in the Club's fleets; this perhaps would be the case with the Tasar and possibly the Topper - although there are reservations in respect of the PY of the latter - both of which have been canvassed to some extent during the past season. Before approving a new class, the Committee would however want to see evidence of the kind of support which it could expect, and it is always open to a group of members to make a joint application for the boat in which they are interested.

The Sailing Committee will be considering applications for changes of class and dinghy park spaces at their meeting in mid-January, so now is the time to let me know (Byelaw 14); please don't rely on simply writing in the new boat on your subscription renewal form - one or two people have done this in the past and been disappointed. If you are changing class later in the season it's also important that you obtain permission before doing so, as the Sailing Committee has to maintain a balance between the classes and not all dinghy park spaces will accept the larger boats.

Finally a word about measurement certificates and insurance (Byelaw 9). If you are buying do be sure that the boat has a valid certificate and that it refers to the sails and gear which are with it. And, of course, before you bring the boat down to the dinghy park, see that you have adequate third party insurance for a minimum of £100,000. They must both be presented to your Class Captain, and without them you risk disqualification.

GALE FORCE RUN

David McLean
GP14 'KUMALI'

TWACK, ROAR, CRACK, HISS - the jib sheet was wrenched from my hand, the jib did its best to tear itself to shreds, the stern rose, the boat slewed round onto its beam ends, Grundy (my crew) and I prepared for a ducking. . . . and the wind roared. Hold on! The very wave that had lifted our stern was now under our bows, dropping the stern into a following trough and righting the boat. I grabbed the jib sheet and tiller while the next wave lifted us up, propelled us forward in a corkscrew, stomach-dropping manner and left us subsiding into the next trough. We kept our erratic balance as several more waves propelled us helplessly forward, then a gust cracked the sheet out of my hand again and tore at the jib ferociously. To prevent us being slewed round broadside to the waves and overturned, I clutched at the sheet and tried to keep us flying dead before the wind. In our semi-petrified state we could go nowhere except the way we were blown.

It was Saturday, 12 November, 1977. Place: Medway - crossing between Folly Fort and South Yantlet Creek. Boat: GP14 under jib. Conditions: Westerly gale - gusting 9, clear skies, big seas in main channel (15 foot between crests). Voyage: From Wilsonian S.C. to Lower Halstow (head of Halstow Creek).

What we couldn't believe was the size of the waves. On the Medway, yet we were surfing on the crests of single waves! An ocean-going tug, plunging up river past Fort Darnett Beacon, was covered with successive clouds of spray. Straining to hold on, we sped into South Yantlet Creek and smoother seas. Soon after we had left the "WILSONIAN", we realized that we were mad, that no other dinghy would be sailing in the area, and that there was no way we could turn back into such a roaring wind. The sight, that morning, of eight boats blown over in the dinghy park ought to have convinced us against putting the boat in the water. However, compulsion to leave the dinghy park and the importance of midday high water at Lower Halstow (my winter quarters) meant that this trip had to take place on this weekend. Considering carefully the wind direction (ie. a straight run) and the shelter of Halstow Creek, we took a calculated risk. . . . but we forgot about the waves!

The unsheltered expanse of Half Acre Creek was a confusion of driving waves, the crests over a boat length apart. The wind drove the boat relentlessly through the seas, surfing it forward on successive breaking crests, and whipping the jib sheet out of our hands with gusts, while we became two pieces of crouching ballast, shouting to each other about what to do in a capsized! Out in the middle the white-laced coastline seemed a long way off, and we were scarcely comforted by the sight of a yellow Rescue helicopter, which hovered above the estuary to watch us. We reached Lower Halstow, failed to hold on to a buoy, got blown onto a lee shore, reluctantly accepted a short tow from a local fishing boat to the slip-way - and thus we made it. The boat and crew were intact, but my sea-nerves and dreams of another Gale Force Run were not! Besides, I had nearly lost a friend through shouting at him.

SAILING IN POOLE HARBOUR

Robert Cunningham (aged 14)
Enterprise 1240

I recently went on holiday to Poole, Dorset and enjoyed two weeks of sailing in one of the most beautiful harbours in the world. The harbour itself has many channels and creeks to explore, and is the second largest in the world. Poole Harbour is home to a large number of sailing clubs sailing Enterprises, GP14's, Fireballs, Lasers, Wayfarers, Albacores and Fireflies and is host to one of the few fleets of Y. W. Dayboats.

The harbour has four tides a day, and at the entrance to the harbour the tides are very strong which makes the water extremely choppy when against the wind. The tide is also strong enough to push the chain ferry across the entrance off course. Because of its popularity among yachtsmen, the harbour does tend to become congested but there is still plenty of sailable water.

Apart from being a yachtsman's paradise, it is also near a number of holiday resorts like Bournemouth and Swanage.

Going Faster → → → → →

(or HOW SMOOTH IS YOUR BOTTOM?)

Bob Fitzpatrick

If you own a wooden class boat - be it a GP, Fireball, Enterprise, Solo, Graduate, Mirror or Miracle, etc. - if it measures, it's as good as the top helm's boat. Apart from the sails (which only last, at the most, three or four seasons - if you sail regularly, that is!), there is one other very important thing: the part of the boat which is in contact with the water. The next time you see a fighter aircraft at an air display, have a close look at its finish. You'll see it's very smooth; this is one of the factors contributing to its speed, apart from the engines. Your finish can be as good if you put in some time during this winter lay-up between now and next March.

First inspect the bottom of the boat for any deep scratches, abrasions or cracks in the ply. The number of coats you have already on the hull will determine whether you strip to bare wood or not. If you have more than five coats - 1 primer, 1 undercoat, 3 top coats - then your boat is overweight unnecessarily. When stripping I prefer a blowlamp, but if you're nervous then paint stripper is the alternative. Be careful if you have a stitch and glue construction, as the paint stripper will affect the resin joints on the chines; keep about two to three inches away from these joints. When you have the boat completely stripped, allow plenty of time for it to dry out.

Roughen the surface with 220-grade wet-and-dry paper, used dry at this stage. Next fill all the imperfections with a filler paste as used by the car repair trade, such as Holts, Tetrosyl, Davids Isopon, to name just three. This paste sets or hardens by catalytic reaction; the time of setting can be adjusted by the amount of hardener mixed with the paste. You need more hardener if your garage is cold.

Rubbing down the filler can be done with a rubber or cork block, but a piece of wood $1\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}'' \times 8''$ is best of all. The grade of paper is 80-grit Production paper used dry once again. Once you have the correct shape finish off with 220 wet-and-dry paper, dry, to remove scratches left by the 80-grit paper. When all the scratches and cracks are nicely finished, the best method of removing excess dust is the vacuum cleaner.

Now you can apply the first coat of wood primer. Allow at least 24 hours drying, then lightly de-nib with 400 or 500 wet-and-dry, dry, to remove dust particles without penetrating through the primer to the wood. If you do then touch up these bare patches again with primer.

Next apply the appropriate undercoat for the colour you have selected. Drying time 24 hours; don't try to rush from now on. Flatten down the brush and dust marks with 500-grade wet-and-dry and use ordinary toilet soap and warm water to prevent the paper becoming clogged with paint. Wash away soap suds and leather off and you should now have a super finish on which to apply your first top coat. After drying, again use 500 wet-and-dry with soap, and apply your super race-winning final coat.

If you can get the temperature up over 65°F in your garage you'll find the paint will flow very easily. Try standing the paint tin in warm (not hot) water for 10-20 minutes before use.

Finally, I hope I don't see your shiny bottom next season. If I do it will mean you were in front of me and you capsized. Good sailing.

LETTERS

SHORE DEVELOPMENT

From Bryan Matthews:

The Shore Establishment (or the Willies' "Stone Frigate")

In response to your request for comment, the feelings of many are expressed in the quotation "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentis"; for yes, indeed, we fear the Willies Committee when they promise gifts of comfort ashore! (Translation difficulty? - See me after school!)

It might seem that such a clubhouse would be the ultimate objective for a club that has, in some 20 years, grown from a handful of boats (which I believe out-numbered the members!) into the lively and friendly organisation we know today. In spite of many difficulties, rivalries and indeed local government opposition, we have improved our lot - remember the old trek along the beach? - and so we continue to progress with the latest application for outline planning permission for the clubhouse ashore - or do we? Is it not time to pause and take stock of what we are, what we have and what we need?

We are already a dinghy sailing club of no mean size and with considerable respect in the area in which we operate. We provide some of the best sailing on the Medway at the least cost. We have a unique clubhouse afloat, which to some is not convenient but to others offers all that is necessary for an enjoyable day (or weekend) in quite beautiful surroundings. We do need toilet and simple changing facilities ashore but not the liabilities, both financial and security, of a fort-like clubhouse stocked with all sorts of goodies for the vandal and thief alike. Surely our energies should be directed to maintaining our sailing facilities and individuality, and not to providing a financial burden for all to the benefit of a few - remember Concorde?

Let the Committee analyse the present and prospective membership and its catchment area and question their needs. Ask the membership whether they are willing to pay a subscription probably in the order of 3 or 4 times the present amount for something which will not affect the quality of their sailing or may in fact detract from it by attracting a larger and different sort of membership, and by inducing the commercial development of Cockham Woods.

The Wilsonian club is large enough, some say already too large, and now perhaps is the time when we should be more selective in our membership so that boat use is regular and enthusiastic.

Improve the barge, provide better rescue facilities and elementary toilet/changing facilities ashore but do not, please, do not burden us with an unwanted monument to a sub-committee's over-enthusiasm for "development".

And from Ray Blyth:

Hearing the news at the Dinner & Dance, that we have obtained outline planning permission for a shore-based clubhouse, I felt that I would like to express my thoughts even if they are unpopular.

I joined this club many years ago, having looked at other clubs on the Medway, and having liked what I saw at the Wilsonian. The barge afloat appealed to me, and I could see that the sort of people who would join this club would be keen sailors, not bar-room sailors. The fees were very reasonable, and still are.

It is very obvious to me, with building prices as they are, that to have a shore-based clubhouse our fees would have to be increased dramatically. I, for one, would be against this. There is also the question of security; I think that a shore-base without a resident caretaker would have to be repaired each week. I do see a need for toilets on the shore, and changing-rooms, but these could be a simpler construction without any invitation to vandals.

We are undoubtedly the best dinghy club on the river and, with our clubhouse afloat, rather unique. I would hate to see it spoilt. I am afraid that my answer to members who want a clubhouse on shore is to join another club that already has these facilities. There are plenty of them quite close.

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Fireball 10394. Pallo Fuocco.
Professionally built all wood Moores.
Banks sails. Cover and all gear. Very
good condition. Reasonable record con-
sidering incompetence of helm. Suit
disillusioned Miracle/Mirror/ GP/
Enterprise owner. £850. David Scott.
Sevenoaks 884781.
Stop Press: Winner of Autumn Points.

Marauder, 283.
2 Main Sails; Spinnaker.
Trapeze Harness.
Road Trailer; Launching Trolley.
£350. Phone: Orpington 30846.

Fireball-Eater

MARAUDER, 288, Gullfoss.
Good suit of sails including spinnaker.
Vented side tanks and solid transom.
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SITUATIONS VACANT

Boatswain

An additional boatswain will be required
next season to supplement the work done
competently throughout the 1978 season
by Barry Bew and Ken Flowerday.
If you think you could take this on, please
contact any member of the Committee.

Working Parties

The following dates have been fixed for
working parties:-

February 4th; February 18th.
Volunteers essential.

Picketts Lock

We now have volunteers to design and
build the stand; all we need now is people
to run it. If you will be going to the
Exhibition and wouldn't mind spending an
hour or two enthusing about the Club,
please contact the Secretary or the Editor.



London Dinghy Centre
HAS COME TO MAIDSTONE!

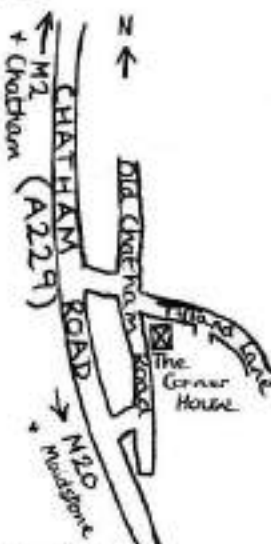
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5% discount off single orders
10% discount off orders over £100
(Members considering large orders are asked to let the Club Secretary know so that we can make up joint orders for £100)