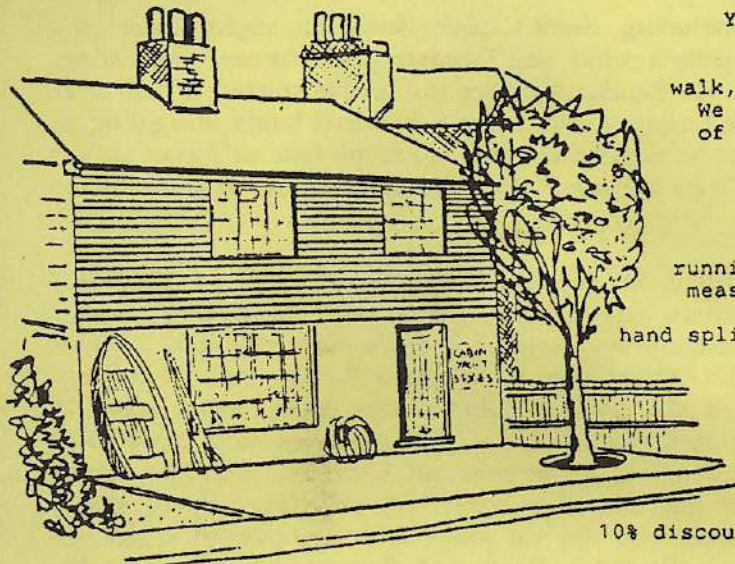


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31½

THE WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB MAGAZINE

ISSUE NO:57
SEPTEMBER 1996

HOUSE COMMITTEE

We are now well through the sailing programme but there are still some dates for your diary:

LAYING-UP SUPPER AND FIREWORKS

Saturday 26th October 1996

Bonfire to be lit at 6.00 p.m.

After the fireworks there will be supper including dessert

Come and join us for a family evening

Adults £3 Children £1.50

PRIZEGIVING AND DINNER DANCE

Saturday 16th November 1996

If you would like tickets for this enjoyable evening please contact a member of the House Committee or return the enclosed form to me.

Music this year will be provided by Escapade

who come highly recommended.

Tickets will £17 per person.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

15th December 1996 at 2.30 p.m.

Fun, games, tea and a visit from Father Christmas.

NEW YEARS EVE PARTY

31st December 1996

Hawaiian Evening

More details and/or tickets from Ann Heather or any member of the House Committee.

ANN HEATHER
(01322 228251)

MON I went
to the club
TUE I got to

WED Sayl Wincer
I & APSRD

at the case
THU in the morning
we worked together
BOOK ME AND MY
MUM GO TO TOGETHER
I got the copy we were
to pay for for films
we played games
my certificate
I went to the club
AND THE WE came to the club

TUE I got to sail with Claire

WED I capsized at the course

THU In the morning we watched
Jungle Book (wind F.6). It was good.

FRI Me and my Mum sailed in the
Oppy. We went to the bay for drinks

SAT We played games and got my
certificate.

ANNA TOZER AGE 6

MEDWAY REGATTA

13th/14th July 1996

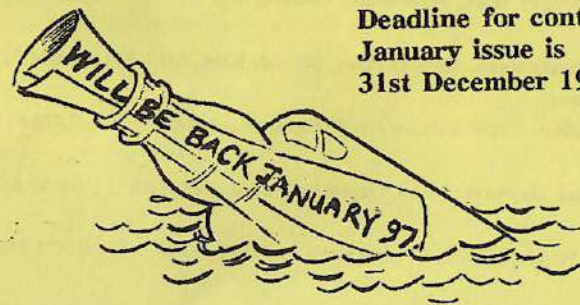
All the dinghies, including Squibs plus Sonatas, raced from the Wilsonian line. Saturday's wind was stronger than forecast and there was excellent racing. On Sunday however the breeze started to fill in as forecast, but then died away leaving over a hundred boats struggling to move. Shorten course arrangements were made at four different points but even so several fleets exceeded the time limit before they could be finished.

The questionnaires filled in (11 cruiser/keelboats and 24 dinghies) showed most competitors enjoyed the races but would like shorter courses, most preferred current format (2 races Saturday and 2 races Sunday for dinghies). There was no demand for a week of sailing. Ashore everyone liked the food. Entry forms were found easy to complete and sailing instructions OK. The comment was made that entry forms had not been sent to previous entrants (3). Concerning the sponsors, all but four questionnaires were very positive. There was a surprisingly large number who did not know that six boats of a type by the start of race 2 constituted a fleet, and there are more prizes for bigger fleets. All who attended enjoyed themselves.

The Regatta made a profit. Next year the Regatta will be on the weekend of 12th/13th July.

BOB JONES

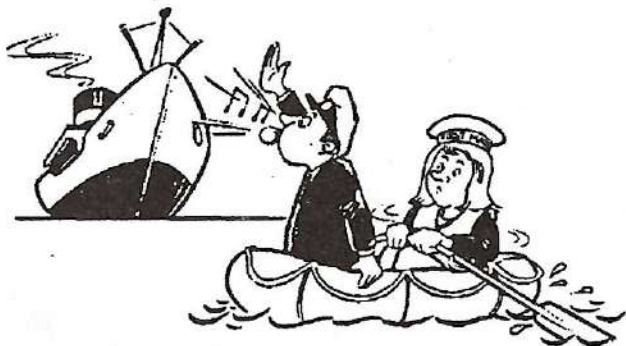
Deadline for contributions for
January issue is
31st December 1996



SMUGGLERS

I would like to comment on the article 'Freephone Smuggling' by Doreen Davis. I personally believe that the illegal importation of drugs should be prevented, but saying that, and there are many points of view on the subject, an eminent retired judge advocates that all drugs should be legalised. His reasoning was that if this were so, the price would drop and it would no longer be profitable for criminals to deal in them and addicts to steal for them, thus reducing crime. The same thing could be said for tobacco and alcohol. If the exceedingly high tax imposed by the government and excessive profit made by the manufacturer on these products were reduced and prices brought into line with other E.U. countries, the need to smuggle these items would be eliminated and I would not have to travel to the Continent to buy whisky at a reasonable price. The tradition of smuggling goes back very many years and impoverished seafarers used this method to supplement a meagre income from fishing. With regard to the suggestion of using 'freephone', I have to ask myself, if I saw the guy on the next trot to my boat trying to sink his tender by loading it with Belgian beer and boxes of Dutch cigars, would I be thinking of picking up a phone or would I be offering to lend him a hand? All of which brings to mind Kipling's well known poem:

"If you wake at midnight and hear a horse's feet,
Don't go drawing back the blind or looking in the street,
Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie
Watch the wall my darling, while the Gentlemen go by!
Five and twenty ponies
Trotting through the dark
Brandy for the Parson
'Baccy for the Clerk
Laces for a Lady, letters for a Spy,
Watch the wall my darling, while the Gentlemen go by!"



Peter Hampson
(ex Gentleman)

FROM THE COMMODORE

JUNIORS

The Junior Training Week has just ended. Twenty four children spent Tuesday to Saturday at the Club learning to sail and/or race when the weather permitted and just having good old-fashioned fun when it didn't. Everybody enjoyed themselves, including the Instructors and parents who all gave up so much time and worked so hard throughout. It was particularly pleasing to see people smiling and joking as they prepared food and washed up - why doesn't this happen on Sundays? Our thanks to all involved. Perhaps we will be able to repeat the training week next year.

TRAINING

Whilst on the subject of training, please let Tom or Barbara Sims have your training requirements. They plan the training programme on the basis of demand, so if you don't tell them..... There are many types of courses available, eg Basic Skills, Racing, Safety Boat, Race Officer and others can be arranged if required, for example, it has been suggested that a course setting seminar would be useful.

PRIZES

We need to know your views. A substantial proportion of your membership subscription is spent on prizes. Those who win frequently might be happy to see a reduction in the number of prizes, but conversely, those for whom a prize is something to be longed for would want prizes as far down the results sheet as possible. More prizes mean higher subscriptions, what do you think?

LEVIES

It has been suggested many times over the years that the Club should consider imposing a levy on duty defaulters or those who would prefer not to perform duties, or those who do not, or do not wish to attend work parties. Other Clubs do this. What do you think?

WORK PARTIES

You should find elsewhere within the magazine details of this winter's work parties. A small sub-committee (Ian Wyatt, Colin Treadwell, Tom Sims) has been considering the most effective way of organising winter work. They propose dividing the membership into three groups alphabetically for the work parties. Dates and work lists will be published early. There is, therefore, no excuse for not helping! As has been said so many times before, the Club depends on the commitment of its members to make it tick, so please don't leave it to the "faithful few".

DAVID TOZER

FROM THE SAILING SECRETARY.....

By the time you read this another season will be in its closing weeks. That is unless you enter the open Winter (Frostbite) Series and get an additional 7 weeks of racing. Last year around 20 entries came from WSC (from over 30 overall), so let's hope for another good turnout. Of course I can't guarantee the weather but could it possibly be as perverse as last year? Let's hope not! With more faster handicap boats in the club the Sailing Committee are aware that it is becoming more difficult to set courses to cope with the variety and please all. Nevertheless we have decided to stay with the same format as last year with a fast/slow handicap divide of PY 1149/1150 (approximately the old PY 120/121 point). We will however ask all Race Officers to try to set courses which are fair to all and are capable of finishing within the time limits (one of last year's grumbles). If this format does not work it will be back to the drawing board for the Committee.

The series will run from 3 November to 15 December - 13 races with 7 to count. The "bad" news is that we have felt it necessary to increase the entry fee to £12 (early entrants) or £15 for those who can't get their form filled in by 6 October. There will be NO special rates for WSC members. "Exploitation", "Gross inflation" - I can hear it now.

The simple truth is that on last year's entry fee we only just covered the cost of prizes with nothing to help the cost of running the club during these extra weeks. It is still good value and there hasn't been an increase for years. Entry forms are available from the clubhouse or me.

Now to some of what the season has seen.

Spring Bank Holiday Monday was a new departure from our usual fleet short series. To be honest the invitation handicap races did not attract a big entry - 17 in all, but many enjoyed it. Perhaps this is not what you want? Perhaps it is just Bank Holidays? The issue will be coming up again shortly as the Sailing Committee tackle the programme for 1997 so do let me or your fleet captain know if you have any strong feeling about the racing format for Bank Holidays.

June 9th saw me in sunny southern France enjoying the quiet tranquillity of an old ecclesiastical town. When I returned to England 3 days later I quickly learnt that it had been even hotter at WSC with the understandable disappointment that the South Kent race had been shortened. This was a hard one. It will always be so when wind conditions are uncertain and there are many judges and opinions on what should happen. Suffice to say that the Race Officer and Safety Boats had discussed a positive plan about shortening the race if needed and had the guts to stick to it when limited information suggested this was appropriate. It's not the first time the wind has picked up the moment a race is turned and it won't be the last. We've tried to learn from this and think how safety boat and radio coverage can be improved. Although there was a fall back date in the calendar the race will not be re-run as it did have a finish.

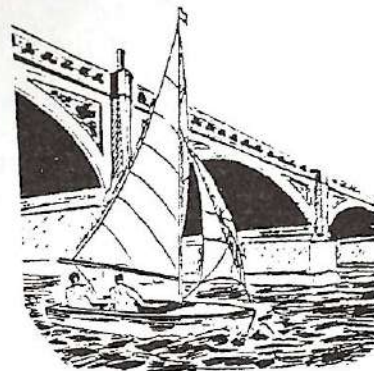
Another change this year was to ask fleets who had a class open to run the other open. My thanks to all those who made such an excellent day of the Miracle/Enterprise Open Meeting on 16 June. A special thank you must go to Brian Warwick who as CDO and overall organiser did a splendid job in the weeks before as well as on the day. As I write

By the morning the weather had cleared, the sun came out and the smell of bacon both animal and vegetarian (live and learn!) was wafting around the camp-site. By 1100 hours we were drifting down on the tide, making the best use of the available wind, again lurching at Strood Pier. Most of the lunch break was spent fending off boats. This was because of the wash created by returning motor cruisers dressed for a river parade. By this time the wind had freshened and we had a good couple of hours sail. Soon even those who had doubts about sailing were asking the helms to 'make the boat tip up more' and to chase boat wakes, including the Kingswear Castle, so they came over the side! At 1730 hours lots of wet Scouts and some more sensible(?) dry ones came ashore and the boats were taken back to Hoo and put onto their trailers.

Yes, it is a different sort of sailing to the normal club activities but from the Scouts point of view it is yet another aspect of sailing: while it does not have the excitement of racing, sail camping has its skills (not the least being the ability to avoid the mud banks further up river) and it does serve as an introduction to sailing for some Scouts. Will we do it again? Yes, after this year the demand for another one next year is there. Three years, three different places - where next?

PS Does anyone know of a suitable spot near Queenborough?

DAVID WRAIGHT



Scouts

A BRIDGE NOT TOO FAR

It was the annual Aylesford Cruise that gave us the idea. If the WSC can sail to Aylesford and back in a day then we should easily be able to sail to Peter's Wharf near Holbrook Marsh, camp overnight and sail back the next day. The Scouts discussed it, the Scouts that like sailing were happy, the Scouts that like camping were happy and those that like both were even happier.

We studied tides, arranged the use of Kent Scouts Drascombes (a 22ft Longboat and a 17 ft Dabber), talked to the landowner and chose the weekend of 8-9 June 1996. (If you do the Aylesford Cruise, it's the area of waste land with a lonely flagpole, just past the light engineering works and Farleigh Coach Park at Wouldham). The advance party arrived at Hundred of Hoo SC at 0600 hours on the Saturday, launched the boats and breakfasted on a mooring just off Wilsonians. Eight Thames barges had gathered for an event and watching them jockeying for position through the early morning mist, eighty odd feet of timber and canvas, made a race start look tame! We collected the rest of the Scouts from WSC and sorted out our fleet of two Drascombes and a motor boat.

All week it had been sunny with a good force 3-4 wind, but today, while it was warm it was not very sunny or windy, but even intermittent showers could not dampen our enthusiasm. We worked our way against the tide, motor-sailing to lunch at Strood Pier. (Who was the skipper who did not recognise either Strood Pier or Rochester railway bridge from their river aspects and had to sail back under the bridge for lunch?) After lunch we enjoyed a pleasant drift, aided by what little wind there was, under the bridges, past Rochester Castle, underneath the motorway bridge - you can see the work they are doing from down below - and on up the meandering Medway to our overnight camp. Our equipment came by road, the last time we tried to take camping equipment by water it resulted in a yacht which normally had an 18ft water-line having a 21 ft water-line and a slightly concerned owner! We soon had the tents up and our evening meal cooked. Just as well our visitors called early since a heavy downpour turned into a very wet night.

plans are well advanced for the Laser/GP14 event on 15 September and I have every confidence that that too will be a success.

We have continued to approve new classes and this season has seen the introduction of Osprey, Phantom, Contender, Merlin Rocket, RS 600, RS 400, and West 11, together with Skipper and Adventurer on yearly basis and OK on a trial. Some classes approved earlier are proving an attraction - we now have four ISOs. All this is inevitably changing the face of our racing particularly in the Handicap A fleet and club handicap races. The Sailing Committee will be looking at this over the winter so if you do have any ideas on how we might organise in the future to maintain good racing for all do talk to me or your fleet captain. This could be a hard one to crack.

One idea from the Sailing Committee relating to the quality of racing is to try to improve our expertise in course setting. To this end we have arranged a "teach-in" which Bob Jones has volunteered to run. This will be on Friday evening, 15 November at 8pm in the Clubhouse. Although of obvious interest to Fleet Captains and regular and aspiring Race Officers and Assistant Race Officers it is open to all. The more the merrier. Do try to put this one in your diary and give it good support. Who knows it might even help you to counter (or refrain from making) those sallies that the course was "too long", "too short", "not enough reaching/beating/running", "suitable only for —", etc. I think I've just pinched that line from my predecessor.

DOREEN DAVIS
Sailing Secretary

WINTER SERIES - FROSTBITE

3 NOVEMBER - 15 DECEMBER 13 RACES - 7 TO COUNT

Cost: £12 on or before 6 October £15 after 6 October

Entry forms in clubhouse or from Sailing Secretary.

COURSE SETTING

EVENING "TEACH-IN" - LEARN ALL ABOUT IT - ALL WELCOME

FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER AT 8PM IN CLUBHOUSE

HANDICAP A

For this issue of 31 1/2, Ian has kindly given me the dubious honour of writing the article for Handicap A. Thanks Ian !! Well here goes.

Despite losing the Wayfarers from Handicap A, the fleet has continued to grow throughout the summer with new club members as well as existing members switching to the fleet.

I would like to welcome the following new fleet members:

Steve Bristow has joined with a Contender. Ian and Sarah Wyatt have switched from a Taser to an ISO. Pat and Jane Ward have taken the same route as Phil and myself and 'moved up' to an ISO from a Miracle, increasing the number of ISO's in the club to 4. (Keep them coming !!). Chris Ashby and Mick Smith have also left the Taser fleet and have joined the asymetrics with an RS400. Neil Ashby has decided that he is not getting enough capsizes practice with Ian and has moved onto an RS600. Finally, Paul Kenwood and Tom Henderson have exchanged their 470 for a Fireball (they obviously spent too much time speaking to Ian and not enough time talking to me !!).

Ian and myself have continued to set courses together wherever possible in an attempt to be fair to all classes, but if you have any concerns, gripes or suggestions, please feel free to see either of us.

I understand that Bill Foreman of the Osprey has responded well to treatment and I look forward to seeing him back on the water.

The Summer Points Series saw a dramatic increase to the fleet turnout with a total of 18 boats competing in the morning series and 20 in the afternoon. The results are as follows:

Summer Morning Points:

1st	Ian Parris and Neil Ashby	FB 14042	Freddie
2nd	Tim Huckell and Phil Yates	ISO 905	They Think It's All Over - It Is Now
3rd	Martin Jones	Contender 358	Iceman

Summer Afternoon Points:

1st	Ian Parris and Neil Ashby	FB 14042	Freddie
2nd	Tim Huckell and Phil Yates	ISO 905	They Think It's All Over - It Is Now
3rd	Ray Craddock and Robert Walker	FB 9120	Laff-a-Ball

August Cup: 5 entries

1st	Ian Parris and Neil Ashby	FB 14042	Freddie
2nd	Steve Gibbins and Chris Swift	FB 13128	
3rd	Chris Ashby and Mick Smith	RS400 539	

One last item, just a reminder of the forthcoming Frostbite Series - the entry forms will be available soon. Don't forget to get them back in quickly to take advantage of the discount.

Back to Ian for the next article, so watch out Chris 'Crasher' Pygall - I've let you off lightly this time !

Tim Huckell - Vice Fleet Captain

HANDICAP B

Welcome back to Peter and Patricia from their stay in Paris, just in time to boost the entry numbers. Peter joins Bill Winnett in the Streaker, having bought Martin's boat. Well done to Mark on winning the Morning Points (in two different boats) and well done Dave and Stan on winning the Afternoon Points. They were the only people to do the five races needed in the whole summer series.

Entries have generally been low this season as people have been off trying different boats. Hopefully we shall all be back on the water for this Autumn's racing.

SUMMER A.M.

1st	M. Bew	Solo 1353 OK 2060
2nd	D. Vettergreen & S. Sprot	Ent 20175
3rd	P. Moncrieffe	Streaker 194
4th	T. Kift	Phantom 948
5th	D. Harland	Streaker 1436

SUMMER P.M.

1st	D. Vettergreen & S. Sprot	Ent 20175
2nd	M. Bew	Solo 1353 OK 2060
3rd	D. Harland	Streaker 1436
4th	J. Parsons	Solo 3525
5th	P. Moncrieffe	Streaker 195

AUGUST CUP

1st	J. Parsons	Solo 3525
2nd	P. Moncrieffe	Streaker 194
3rd	A. Gibbs & Wendy	Ent 22553
4th	J. Talbot & J. Whittaker	Wanderer 602

M. LEVEY



DOCKYARD EVENT

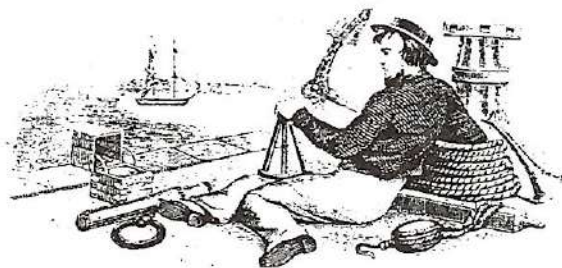
6th/7th July 1996

Our second visit this year to No.1 Basin was timed to be part of Rochester Council's Sports Week. We had the use of six Royal Engineers' Bosuns and Arethusa's Toppers and Optimists, and Arethusa had a lugger and a larger boat available.

The weather was fine, with light breezes, enabling the Bosuns to sail with one WSC member plus public. Wilsonian and Leander had the dual role of safety boat and ferry-taking passengers from the jetty out to the Bosuns. It was found easy for sailors to come alongside the slow-moving ferry.

The main problem on the Saturday was the lock sequence getting out of step and trapping our two safety boats for several hours, which was frustrating. The weekend generally however went well. Ken Crundwell's caravan and awning was excellent as a stand. Thank you to everyone who helped. I have not written to all helpers as I did not get all the names of all those who came. Thanks again.

BOB JONES



MIRACLES



Wilsonian had a very successful time at the National Championships once again, with seven boats making the trip to Weymouth. Special mention must be made of Ian Kelly and Gela Marshall who ended up 5th overall, this being the highest place ever achieved by a Wilsonian boat. Patrick and Jane Ward in their last Miracle Nationals (their boat is for sale) also achieved a good result, being 15th overall. Everyone who attended had a good time. The weather was fine most of the time, except when the Wilsonian Barbecue was to be held and then it poured down..... so we all adjourned to Ann and Paul Heather's self-catering flat and had a party instead.

Back at Wilsonian the Summer points series continued. Ian and Gela managed to put in enough appearances in between attending Open Meetings to win both the morning and the afternoon series.

SUMMER MORNING POINTS

1st	Ian and Gela	3794
2nd	Paul and Mark	36
3rd	Colin and Lauren/Adam	1336
First Silver	Paul and Mark	36
First Bronze	David and Jackie Hudson	3795

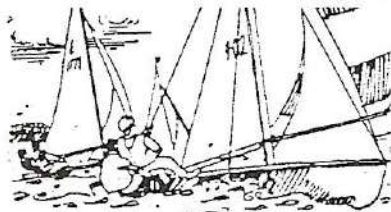
SUMMER AFTERNOON POINTS

1st	Ian and Gela	3794
2nd	Martin Smith and Mike Groom	1808
3rd	Bob and Natalie	3024
First Silver	Martin and Mike	1808
First Bronze	David and Jackie	3795

PAUL ABSOLON



WHAT'S GOING ON?



There are a number of initiatives either being looked at or actually progressing at this time. Most of these have been discussed at General Committee but this note is to try to inform as many members as possible of what is, or may be, happening.

NEW MEMBERS - We are continuing to try and get as many new members as possible, and to try and integrate these new members into the club as quickly as possible. This is to all our benefit as more boats racing result in more competitive racing for everyone, not just those at the front, so more enjoyment for everyone in the race.

SAILABILITY - We have been talking with Sailability, (which is now a branch of RYA devoted to promoting sailing for disabled people) about people with disabilities who could cope with sailing at WSC as members. I have already taken one prospective Sailability member sailing and this looks a promising option.

ELECTRICAL SUPPLY - Ken Crundwell is looking at all the options for club electrical supplies from doing nothing to getting mains electricity, costing the options and finding out what grants, cheap loans and other finance which may be available.

BOAT-HOUSE - The roof materials have arrived and the transformation from two containers into a building should soon be completed.

CLUB BOATS - It has been agreed to hire the two club Pacers to club members for £5 per day. This is intended to encourage particularly new members without boats to sail when conditions are favourable. It is not intended for when it is far too rough to take our own boats out!

BOATS IN BOAT PARK - As was anticipated when the classes permitted in the boat park was relaxed, several different types of boat have been approved by the Sailing Committee. Some of these, the ISO in particular, have quickly become a viable number of boats. This would have been more difficult under the old rules. Remember, you must get permission before bringing a different type of boat in the dinghy park, so if you are considering a different type - ASK.

LOLLIPOP - The marker on Chatham side showing where the start/finish line is, was dug up last year, but we have the OK to replace it and hope to do so soon. There will soon be a public walkway along the Chatham shore.



Winged Fellowship

I would like to thank all the members of Wilsonian Sailing Club for their kind hospitality on Saturday 20th July 1996. Last year, because Jubilee lodge was being refurbished, we did not have a 'Youth Fortnight', so after two years it was great to be back with you all. Over sixty of our guests, care volunteers and staff enjoyed the day and again the weather was kind to us.

You may not know much about Winged Fellowship apart from our annual visit, so perhaps I can give you some background. Jubilee Lodge at Chigwell is one of five purpose built centres which operate for 46 weeks each year, providing quality holidays for guests with severe physical disabilities and, as important, the respite that their normal carers deserve. As each centre has thirty six guests each week, we provide over 6,500 holiday weeks each year and therefore need a similar number of volunteers aged between 10 and 70+ to assist each centre's permanent care staff. Over 30 years ago Joan Brander (who was featured in the Esther Rantzen Hearts of Gold programme earlier in the year) started Winged Fellowship and the use of volunteers, who stay for a week at a time to ensure that we maintain a holiday atmosphere for each of the 46 weeks.

There is a constant need for volunteers and particularly so for this Autumn. Anyone with a week to spare can help and Winged Fellowship pays their fare, provides accommodation and food. Anyone considering a caring career, looking to regain their confidence after a spell of unemployment, taking a 'gap' year between college and university or taken retirement/early retirement can help. Further details can be obtained by ringing 0181 303 2155.

Thank you again for your kindness to us and we hope to see you all next year.

**STEVE TRUMP - MANAGER, JUBILEE LODGE,
WINGED FELLOWSHIP, CHIGWELL, ESSEX.**



LASER

We are now a long way through the 1996 season and I don't seem to have done much sailing. I have done a safety boat duty, have been race officer for an open meeting, have done a race officer duty and spent a Saturday motoring around Chatham Dockyard in a safety boat. Earlier in the season when I did get a chance to sail, I could hear some sharp cracking noises when sudden stress was put on the rig of 77750. On examination I discovered that the epoxy reinforcement for the mast step was breaking up and it took three weeks with a hammer, chisel, sandpaper, fibreglass kit and epoxy putty before 77750 was back on the Medway. Well, they are my excuses, what happened to the rest of the Laser fleet? The number of boats sailing in the series is less than in previous years.

So far this season has been dominated by Chris Mason, who is being chased by Martin Cockersole. Congratulations to both of them, as not only do they turn out regularly, but they are also depressingly fast! My advice to those who wish to sail faster is to sail more regularly and to ask Chris Mason how he rigs his boat. Being able to easily adjust the sail controls can make the difference between a boat that more or less goes where you want it and a boat that has a mind of its own and thinks you should be swimming in the Medway.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage more people to sail in the series. It appears to be a little known fact that a good way to obtain a prize is to sail regularly. Ensure that you sail in at least as many races as the number that count for a series eg if the series has eight races you must sail in at least five of them. It does not usually matter even if you retire after starting as you still have a reasonable chance of a prize as the number of boats sailing this amount of races is often quite low. If you read this before 15th September please remember to come to the open meeting. If not, then I hope that you came to the open meeting and enjoyed it. I hope to arrange a fleet evening sometime in November.

COLIN BOOTH

WINTER WORK PARTIES - This year we are trying to set the work party dates and ask members to work in alphabetical groups, and not have just the faithful few each time. Colin Treadwell, who has done a magnificent job as Maintenance Co-ordinator for several years, is not able to do so this winter. We therefore would welcome a "volunteer" to do this. Talk to Colin if interested.

TRAINING - By the time you read this the junior training week will have happened. Tom is organising a Level 2 course (beginners) for the Autumn. Power Boat training should resume soon. There are several copies of our home produced "Safety Boat" video available.

DIARY DATES - Fireworks and laying-up supper - 26th October 1996
3rd November to 15th December 1996 Winter Series:
Entry Fee £15 Early entry £12
Dinner and Dance at Gravesend - 16th November 1996

BOB JONES



JUNIORS



Are you under 19? Did you do the Red Badge Racing course at the end of August?

If so, why don't you come to the next Kent Schools Sailing Association event at Bewl on Saturday 28th September? You would be sailing with people of your own age and it's fun.

In May, the first Kent Schools event of this season, the Opening Splash, was hosted by Wilsonian Sailing Club and four WSC sailors took part - Tanya, Natalie and the two Patricks (Scouts) - all sailing Toppers. There were fifteen Toppers sailing in all with one morning and two afternoon races. The wind dropped during the afternoon and it looked as if the third race would not happen but it picked up enough for the last race to be sailed in the Bay. A fortnight later Tanya, Natalie and the Patricks joined together for the Topper Team Racing at Blue Circle which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Kent Schools for the rest of the season are:
Regatta at Bewl on Saturday 28th September.
Three winter race training days:
Downs Sailing Club on Saturday 19th October
Chipstead on Saturday 16th November
Blue Circle on Saturday 8th December.
Interested? See me for more details.



LESLEY O'ROURKE

JUNIOR SAILING WEEK



TUESDAY

When we got to the club we all went upstairs to see Martin Jessop who told us a little bit about what we would be doing. He then split us into two groups. I was in the beginners group and our leader was Mike Groom. We talked about the wind and how to find out which way the wind was coming from, and then changed into our sailing gear and headed for the beach. I was put in an Oppie on my own and sailed off and around the big club buoy, I also got hiccups in the boat. At dinner time we had sandwiches and drinks and went back in the Oppies and played some games because the wind had dropped off. The game was trying to paddle the Oppie to the mark and back again with a partner and was good fun. Then we had to pack away the boats at 3.30 p.m. because there was a thunder storm coming up the river.

WEDNESDAY

We crowded around Tom and he told us to go round the Orange buoy then the Black buoy and back to shore, this was good fun. After that I went with Anna to practice tacking in the Oppie. Then it was time for a drink and a biscuit, after that Tom told us to push the boats up to the fence so that they did not drift off while we had lunch. After lunch we went back to the shore to see how to capsizes and what to do. We all had a go while Tom and Mike held the boat for us. Anna managed to lose her Wellington boot but Mike dived down to find it and lost his glasses but someone else found them for him. Tea today was sausages and chips.

THURSDAY

Today it was too windy for us to go out on our own, so we watched Jungle Book on Martin's video while the racing course had to practice working out PY numbers. After lunch we all got changed including my mum (Denise) and we went out in the rescue boats for a ride out to the forts through Hoo Island and back around Upnor Castle. It was cold and very wet but we had flasks of Hot Chocolate to keep us warm.

FRIDAY

Today we got changed and went down to the shore, We tried to sail a triangular course on our own. I went round the black buoy and got caught by the wind and ended up hitting a big cruiser. Anna and I cried a bit but David came and rescued us. After lunch we went back out and some of us sailed up to Hoo Bay (by the Arches Barbara, Denise and Katie were sitting watching us) I went up in the rescue boat with Thomas, Alan was driving. They had a little race. When the games began I got in one of the boats and we had to collect water-filled balloons whilst sailing around the course - Fiona won but she cheated.

SATURDAY

The last day there was not very much wind but Martin arranged a paddling race out to the Club buoy and back we were in teams of four, two went at a time but only Dawn and Jessica got to the buoy, everyone else drifted down-river with the tide. The next game was Tug-of-War girls against boys, we played two games and the girls won both of them. The third game was walking across a string of upturned Toppers, being chased by one of the other teams (it was girls v boys) this was very slippery and everyone fell off. There was a lot of cheating going on from two adults, Ian and Fiona. After lunch we split back into our own groups and the Toppers went to do their racing in the bay, and we all went back out in the rescue boats (including Mum again) with Dad and set off to go to the Strand for a picnic. David and Tom took the Rib and we were all taken for two rides each in it. When we got to the Strand we had our picnic and then went over to the play park. This was great as we were all in our wet suits and waterproofs and we got some very strange looks. When we got back to the Club we had some more sailing but the wind dropped again. After dinner we were told to go outside where there was a big prize-giving for the Racing people with prizes Martin had brought back from his trip to Atlanta. The beginners all got certificates for Level One and twelve of the fourteen got Level Two. We had postcards from Atlanta and Martin gave Anna and myself a key-ring from Atlanta as well. I want to say a BIG thank you to all the helpers, especially to Barbara and Martin for arranging it all.
WELL DONE EVERYBODY.

CLAIRE PARRIS AGE 6

