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The Wilsonian Sailing Club magazine is called 31½ because the club is halfway between buoys 31 & 32

Summer 2001

issue 71

31½

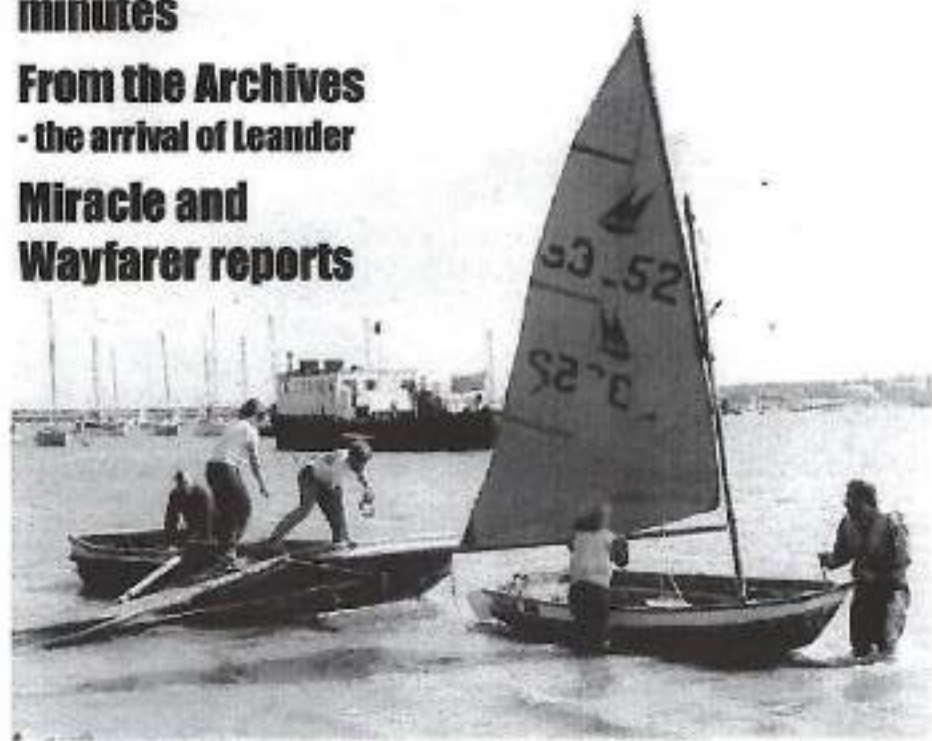
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Miracle and Wayfarer reports



From the Commodore

I can't believe it, Paul Absolon is asking for my piece for 31 1/2 again, -time flies. So here are a few ramblings for this issue.

The Medway Regatta has always been very important for the club, and this year it's even more important. Although under the burgee of the M.Y.A., it's being run for the dinghies by WSC, and all monies, profits and losses are down to your club. so come on, it's your regatta - July 14th and 15th make it a date.

On talking to our landlord recently, he did admit that he had a small concern and that was the speed of members driving over the farm roads, especially near the farm cottage, that now is home to some small children. Please try to keep it down to 20 m.p.h. - we do need our landlords goodwill.

After a thorough rebuild by Paul Heather and a team of members, the old safety boat Leander has been liberated from the men's changing room, so now we will have to try to find time to fit out and decorate.

The club has been presented with two new trophies. John Yeo was bosun for some years up to his sad death recently. His widow Janet will present a trophy in his memory for the winner of the evening race, a favourite of John's.

Phillip Holmes was a founding member and served almost ever since in some capacity. Latterly he was a trustee and now a co-trustee Martin Fish, and his wife Diane, wish to remember him and have presented the club with a trophy. The sailing committee have decided to award this to the winner of the creeks open, and that it will be kept at the clubhouse.

I hope you are all enjoying your sailing - by the time you read this you may have even seen Sarah and I out there again at long last.



Ian Wyatt

ensure you allow ample time to get to the start area. Please spread the word about this event as you travel to Open Meetings etc. If you are not competing in this event, I would be grateful if you would consider providing assistance on the day, please let me know a.s.a.p.

A reminder to everyone to ensure that courses are appropriate for the conditions and extent of available safety cover, particularly in inclement weather. This goes back to my earlier message - we should all be helping our Fleet Captains and offering comments if we feel something may not be quite right. It is also important that every Race Officer takes an overall perspective on the courses set and, where necessary, asks Fleet Captains to change their course. If this happens, please respect the Race Officer's decision.

It is some time before the Sailing Committee begins to think about next year's Sailing Programme. However, this point will inevitably be upon us in next to no time. One aspect I'm sure we will consider is Bank Holiday sailing (again). Please let your Fleet Captain know what you'd like to see happen on these Bank Holidays, together with any other views, in plenty of time for these discussions, likely to commence during September.

Please try to remember to enter early for the Winter Series if you are thinking of taking part.

Finally, a few key dates for you to remember:

10 June	Medway Marathon (note: this event was inadvertently omitted from the sailing programme)
24 June	Leigh Trophy
8 July	Creeks Open
14/15 July	Medway Regatta
29 July	South Kent
5 August	5-race Regatta
27 August	Club Cruise
4 November	Start of Winter Series

In the meantime, I wish you all a very enjoyable sailing season.

Colin Treadwell

From the Sailing Secretary

I am still a little perplexed as to how I came to inherit this particular job. At the last AGM I thought I was taking on the role of Duty List. Moments later I ended up being elected Sailing Secretary! The wonders of democracy. I would like to congratulate Brian Lamb for the sterling work he has done over the last three years, and to thank him for the assistance he has given me so far this year.

It may just be more than coincidence that we experience difficulties each year in finding Fleet Captains. I would like to see closer co-operation for Fleet Captains from their members, making their job easier and your sailing more enjoyable. Why not consider a social activity for your Fleet, and organise it on behalf of your Fleet Captain?

It is also important to keep abreast of what's being discussed at Sailing Committee meetings. Offer your Fleet Captain feedback on how you feel things are going. Tell him/her which aspects of the sailing programme you like, voice any concerns you have about sailing, offer ideas you may have and so on. With such information we can have informed discussions and make changes for the better. Idealistic, you may think. Maybe, but I believe it should work this way.

This year's Icebreaker attracted 15 entries.

1st	Contender 614	Martin Jones
2nd	Phantom 1073	Neil Lamprell
3rd	Fireball 14606	Tony Hurt/Peter Wolstenholme
4th	Contender 630	Mark Steadman

The new Racing Rules of Sailing came into effect on 1st April, including the new starting sequence of 5, 4, 1 go. I would like to thank Ian Parris for his work on the drafting of the new Sailing Instructions.

We hosted a successful KSSA Opening Splash again this year, with an entry of 23 boats, including 9 of our own Junior members.

This year's Medway Regatta for dinghies is to be held on 14/15 July, sponsored by Alcatel. Please make very effort to support this major event. A free t-shirt will be available to all competitors

This year's Creeks Open is scheduled for 8th July, starting at 1.00 p.m., with a briefing at 11.30. It is intended to use a Committee Boat start, which could be positioned some way down river, so please

On The House

DAY TRIP TO OSTEND I am organising a day trip to Ostend, on the 13 October. Anyone who would be interested please contact me at home or email pam.smith@bexley.gov.uk

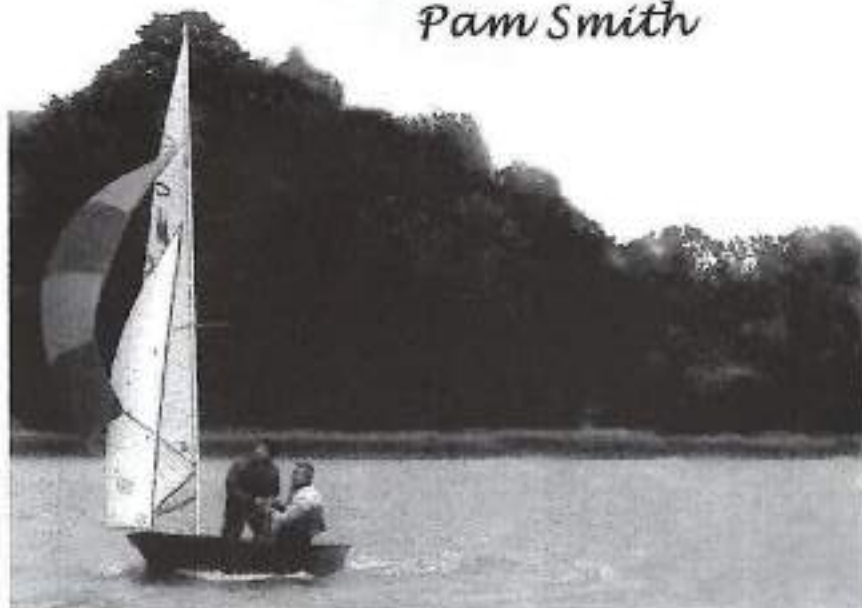
DINNER & PRIZE GIVING This year the Dinner and Prize Giving is going to be held at Lloyds Social Club in Gillingham.

Here are dates for your diary for forthcoming events:

2nd June	Evening Race & BBQ
14th /15th July	Medway Regatta
29th Sept	Topper Open
10th Nov	Fireworks
1st Dec	Dinner & prize giving
16th Dec	Childrens party
31 Dec	New Years Eve Party

Please help us this year by NOT defaulting on kitchen duty. Many thanks.

Pam Smith



What's Going On!

As I write this summer seems to have come at last – let's hope this summer will be a good one. The unusually wet winter meant many boat park jobs were delayed. When the season started we had to dig channels, and later lay drains, to channel the water running in a stream across the surface so the boat spaces could dry – the worst I can remember.

Leander has had a virtual rebuild in the gents changing rooms and is now back in the water. It is intended to use it mainly as a committee boat. With the boat out of the changing room the final fitting out can be completed there.

Sailing is well under way. It is interesting to note several changes. The number of Lasers are increasing again (we used to have a separate fleet) with both new members, individuals transferring from other types, and several of the older Juniors sailing Lasers when conditions are favourable. The number of Laser 2000, Wanderers, Contenders and Wayfarers are increasing.

Another area of change is the Medway Regatta. WSC will be running the Medway Regatta (dinghy section) again but using our money and keeping any surplus. This weekend comprises four races starting from our line and has many outsiders racing. The Miracles will also be competing for their Southern Area championships. We have made several changes to provide what you said you would like - lots of reasons for you to compete 14 and 15 July, so come and have a go.

Our web page address has changed it is now a much clearer address: <http://www.WilsonianSC.org.uk>.

We have several club boats now and are getting them into reasonable condition. They are available to hire to members, currently £5 per day.

There is a lorry load of tyres on top of the cess pit. These tyres are for members to use to support their boats, so take what you need.

Some changes are still to come. The individuals who do much of the organising have been fairly steady for the last few years. Several members of the general committee, including myself, have indicated that they will stand down at the next AGM (22nd February 2002). The

including accommodation details, then please contact Chris Cherriman at the club or on e-mail chrisherriman@btinternet.com (Report by Chris Cherriman)

General

A warm welcome is extended to Paul Nudds, having recently joined the Fleet with his Miracle 1808, and Adrian and Carol Lewis and their family, with Miracle 3024.

Please remember to let me know if you've recently acquired e:mail capability. You would also benefit from the Miracle egroup, formed and organised by Chris Vincent-Bennett. For further details please contact either Chris or myself.

The new GRP Miracle is now being raced on the Open circuit, and is apparently proving itself to be very competitive.

Finally I would like to conclude with the following reminders:

- (i) We still run a separate non-spinnaker prize. Remember to add "NS" alongside your Boat Number on the race Safety Sheet.
- (ii) Whilst we allow single-handed racing in a Miracle Fleet Series (only), please remember that this should not be taken to be automatic. We agreed, when coming to this decision, that single-handed racing should be utilised only after having made every attempt to find a suitable crew, to ensure that a boat can get out racing where otherwise she would remain ashore.
- (iii) Remember to renew/join the Class Association membership, if you haven't already done so.
- (iv) Remember to have your buoyancy checked and certificate signed
- (v) Get your boat and/or jobs around the home finished, if you haven't already done so!! (Even I got out on the water this year before June!)

It just remains for me to wish you all a very enjoyable season, and I look forward to seeing you out on the water.

Colin Treadwell

Plans are currently being made for a further session on 9 June and if you wish to put your name down for this then please advise Colin Treadwell or Chris Cherriman. This event is open to everybody, not just the Miracles. *(Report by Chris Cherriman)*

Chinese Meal

On 31 March the Miracle fleet went to Yeungs Chinese restaurant for their pre-season fleet evening. The attendance was so good that we filled one complete side of the restaurant.

Everybody enjoyed the meal and had a good chat with other fleet members and their families. Afterwards we went on to Colin Treadwell's sports and social club in Gillingham. I think the steward was somewhat surprised at the number of people signed in! It was a good venue for a beer and a chance for Chris Cherriman to present the research that he had undertaken for the Miracle Nationals in Plymouth later this year. *(Report by Chris Cherriman)*

Southern Area Championships 2001 - 14th/15th July 2001

We have been successful in securing the Southern Area Championships this year, having missed out last year to Broadstairs. However, rather than host the Championships as a separate event, we have decided this year to incorporate them into the Medway Regatta. The main "driver" behind this decision was the low number of visiting Miracles in recent years. There were several advantages in having the event as part of the Medway Regatta under these circumstances including, inter alia, an extra day's racing available in the Club's calendar, a reduction in duties, rationalisation of prizes and a boost to the Regatta support. I hope you have no objections to this decision. If you do, however, please let me know. I'd welcome your feedback.

National Championships - 5th - 10th August 2001

These are to be held at the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club in Plymouth. I am aware of 6 boats going so far and it would be wonderful to have more. The whole week is likely to be a good social week with several social events planned by the Miracle Association. We will probably arrange some of our own.

If you are thinking of going to the nationals and want more information,

positions on general committee are very flexible - it relies on individuals volunteering to do various tasks to get the organisation and work done. If you think you might be interested in being on the committee talk to me. We can even arrange for you to attend a meeting to see how friendly, informal and supportive it is.

Bob Jones

Editorial

Thanks to Mike Groom for the photo on the front cover, showing the Barge with the Bleriot and the Scow. Mike assures me that the handsome chap in the foreground holding the Mirror is indeed him.

I have not received any nostalgic jottings about the barge as a result of the article in the last issue, so I have written a few notes of my own. However there must be long standing members that were involved in the running of the barge and it would be interesting to hear from them.

In the same vein, I wonder if we should try to have a full set of 31 1/2s to keep as reference. The first issue was November 1976. Bob Jones recently gave me some early ones, so now I have the following nos:

1, 3 to 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 22 to 36, then 47 (May 1993) to present.

If you have any of the missing ones, please let me know and I will make arrangements to copy them. Will they acquire value as collectors items? I doubt it! but they may be of help to future editors.

The deadline for the next issue is the end of September 2001.

Paul Absolon

199 Church Street Cliffe Rochester Kent ME3 7QE
tel 01634 221032 email paul.absolon@lineone.net



WILSONIAN

Two years ago a small sub-committee was formed to look at safety within the club, particularly on shore. Things got a bit delayed as all its members have been pressed by other commitments but we are now almost there. This article explains our approach and proposals and we hope to issue other material later in the season. This is important to all members so please read. We have compiled lots of lists of risks and hazards but would welcome any comments or suggestions from you.

"WHAT SORT OF SAFETY POLICY?"

Surely the "C" in WSC should read "CODE". Obvious! Or is it? A code suggests lots of rules and regulations. But rules need enforcement. Who would do that? Should broken rules have penalties? What would they be? Given the professional mix of the safety committee members - including experience of safety regulations, risk assessment, quality assurance, insurance, and law and enforcement, we could well have written a long and detailed code. But our majority view was that that was not the way for a club of our complexion.

Our club is a collection of members, each with responsibility for their own safety on and off the water and each hopefully with responsibility for their fellow members. So rather than risking irritation with a lot of "do this" and "don't do that" we thought it better to promote safety through awareness and co-operation.

We realised we already pushed out a lot of information, some specifically directed, so rather than change our familiar formats we decided to build on them. Hence our main new thrust is to create more awareness. The panel on page 9 summarises what we already have and what we propose to do.

"WHAT ABOUT THE LEGAL POSITION?"

Initially we had little to guide us on whether or not we should have a published safety policy or code. The RYA advised that clubs should decide individually what was suitable for them but cautioned over formalisation suggesting that could cause more problems because of enforcement than might be solved. However at the eleventh hour the sort of help we had wanted arrived - very recently the RYA published a Guidance Note to help clubs look at their shore based procedures. Fortunately this confirmed that we were on the right lines.

Lauren taking the honours. David and Jackie Hudson put in a consistent set of top three placings to finish 3rd overall.

Final results often tell only half the story and those who competed will know that there were many close battles throughout the fleet and several of the races saw plenty of place swapping with the outcome often uncertain right up to the finish line. This is why most of us enjoy racing in the Miracle fleet so much.

Although many fleet members were unable to make it for many of the races, twelve boats competed in the series. It is good to see that the fleet is still strong in the number of competing boats. With at least two other boats nearing completion of their extended winter maintenance and warmer weather on its way, we will hopefully see more boats on the water each race for the Summer series with consequently even better racing. *(Spring Series report by Peter Horner)*

Quasar Laser Visit

On 24 March eight of us took part in a Quasar Laser session at Canterbury as a fact-finding visit. The purpose of this was to see if it was suitable as a Miracle fleet evening or even a club social event.

For the uninitiated there are two teams who enter a semi darkened room from different sides with computerised laser/infra red guns. The idea is to shoot the opposition and not get shot yourself! There are plenty of hiding places and smoke, although not too much. The room is laid out on different floors with recharging points for the guns, which stop working after being fired for a certain amount of shots. They also stop working if you get shot 10 times but can again be recharged.

At the end of the session we were given our computer printouts which showed how many times we had been shot, how many times we had shot the opposition and how many times we had shot our own team. A team score was also given to show the winning team.

We had 3 sessions and enjoyed every one. This event is thoroughly recommended and is suitable for anyone from age 10 upwards. During the visit we had discussions with the proprietor who has indicated that we could have an evening to ourselves (three hours) for £12 per head if we can get 50 people interested.

Miracle Fleet News

Welcome to another new season, with exciting times ahead.

Fleet Evening:

We had an excellent response, yet again, to the Fleet Evening, with 43 people seated for the meal and the discussions. The ladies did us proud, again, with an excellent three-course meal and coffee for the modest sum of £3.50. You'll have to suffer me as Fleet Captain for another year, and I am very pleased that Peter and Chris have both agreed to support me again in their dual role as Vice Captains. This system of three "at the helm" seems to work very well. Although Peter, Chris and I share the responsibilities, we have organised ourselves in such a way that Peter focuses on sailing matters and Chris on the social aspects, though the three of us work very closely together, with considerable overlap and regular liaison.

Spring Series

1st	3722	Colin & Lauren Treadwell
2nd	3737	Martin Smith & Mike Groom
3rd	3795	David & Jackie Hudson
4th	3805	Peter Horner & David Brooker/Richard Barkely
5th	3718	Chris & Nina Wallis

As so often seems to be the case in the Fleet, the winner of the series was not decided till the last weekend. In fact, the entire Series was to be decided on the very last race of the series, demonstrating just how close the racing has become. Martin Smith and Mike Groom notched a 1st place in the morning race, which put them on equal points to Colin and Lauren Treadwell. A further win in the afternoon's race would have secured the Series for Martin and Mike. However, in the breezy and rough conditions of the last race, it wasn't to be. The Series therefore had to be decided using the tie-break, with Colin and



SAFETY CONDUCT



As a club with no paid employees we are not subject to the Health and Safety at Work Act except to cover outside workers and the care and use of certain equipment. However the RYA suggests that clubs should try to ensure similar standards when appropriate and they draw attention to the non-statutory "duty of care" which requires club members to act responsibly. Should a club have to answer to any problems or accident it will be in a stronger position if it is seen to have exercised awareness and care. That is our aim.

"WHO TAKES RESPONSIBILITY?"

The answer is everyone. The lack of a "code" will not mean less commitment from those who "run" the club - the officers, aided by the ex-officio officers, committee members and fleet captains. They seek to ensure that the club is organised and amenable and provides a safe environment. Part of their task is to identify the risks and take action to keep them to a minimum - and to this end some risk assessment on RYA suggested lines will be done. Another part is to make sure that all members are aware of risks through publicity, education and training. Similarly, no code is not an excuse for members to feel free of responsibility. Constant caution, care, co-operation and common sense from all should result in a far more effective and satisfactory on-going standard than any set of rules.

(What is a risk assessment? Briefly - what is the hazard? Who might be harmed? Is the risk adequately controlled? Further action necessary.)

"BUT IS THERE TO BE NO EXTERNAL INFLUENCE?"

Not so. As an RYA registered training establishment we have to meet standards and are regularly inspected. These criteria cover much of what we need as a club. The liquor licensing authorities have complimented us on our organisation. We participate in the Medway Yachting Association which covers safety and environmental issues on the river.

"HAVE WE DONE ENOUGH FOR CHILDREN?"

Various RYA guidance stresses the importance of children's safety. We want them to enjoy themselves on club premises and generally

speaking they have the run of the place (well almost). But by its very nature a sailing club cannot be entirely risk free. We rely on parents to tell their children about the dangers and to teach them to be careful. The club will do what it can to minimise risk but the bottom line is - parents are in charge of and responsible for their own children. Please remember this.

"WHAT IF COOPERATION FAILS?"

Persuasion. Advice. Reminders. Do not forget there is a club rule concerning the "Impropriety of Conduct of Members". A draconian last resort if there is flagrant disregard - but it is there!

"IS THERE MUCH CHANGE?"

No - in that we already have an active concern for safety. Yes - a review has been done, strengths and weaknesses have been identified, and the new proposals, reinforced by ideas from the RYA guidance, should enhance. By making everyone more aware of the need to watch out for risks, to be security and safety conscious, and to care for themselves and others, we will together make a safer club. Our plea to all is to read and remember the guidance already available and to look out for a proposed new leaflet and poster.

In addition we will:

- ◆ Amend the "Notes on Safety" in the Member's Handbook to contain extra advice and consider annual reissue of this section.
- ◆ Provide a new leaflet which summarises policy and major risks.
- ◆ Display reminder posters in the clubhouse.
- ◆ Ensure notices at "danger points" are clear and visible.

WATCH ~ SECURE ~ CARE

Doreen Davis

(with other committee members Ann Heather and Colin Treadwell)

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Winter Mon - Sat 9am - 5pm
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38th Strood Scouts

A First Experience Sailing

When I first heard about the troop sailing day I got quite nervous because I remembered what happened to me when I was tiny and in the water. I spoke to my scout leader, my PL and my parents and they all encouraged me to go, so I did.

I got to the Wilsonians Sailing Club at about 9.00am, we got all the boats ready that we were going to use that day and once they had been checked over to make sure they were safe we went into the water. Derek (an adult instructor), Lewis and I went to the GP14 and we set off. First of all I was really really scared but once we were out there for a little while I started to really enjoy it.

We had to go back in for lunch at about 12pm, but as soon as I got off the boat I wanted to get back in it!

After we had lunch and warmed up a bit (it was a windy day) we went out a second time, this time the tide was coming in, but the wind was still up which made loads of waves. When we were going in one direction the waves were splashing over the boat into my face..... and I got very wet! It was this time that I started to get the hang of handling the ropes, and it was great.

I honestly can't wait to go again, and I'm really pleased I wasn't too scared to go the first time, otherwise I would have missed the lot!

Samantha McRae

(Sam is one of the first female Scouts recruited into the troop and joined us at the beginning of the year. The Troop is eager to ensure that all outdoor activities, while they have elements of risk, remain positive experiences that are going to encourage the young person to pursue outdoor pursuits as part of their personal development. On this Sunday the weather was quite severe but our risk assessment procedure suggested that safe sailing was available in Hoo Bay in the morning for all our craft and that the main channel outside the club offered similar opportunities for storm rigged GP14s in the afternoon. -David Wraight, Scout Leader)

SAFETY - A TWO PRONGED APPROACH

ASSESSMENT OF RISKS ~ measures to contain them.
AWARENESS ~ education, guidance and advice.

RISKS occur in all areas of the club. They will be controlled by:

- ⚓ Risk assessments and reviews.
- ⚓ Regular inspections and checks.
- ⚓ Records of action taken.
- ⚓ General maintenance.
- ⚓ Training and authorization in the use of equipment.
- ⚓ Club members reporting dangers and incidents.
- ⚓ Observance of advice and guidance given.

AWARENESS should already be there through:

- ⚓ Sailing Instructions promoting safety and good conduct on the water.
- ⚓ Dedicated guidance leaflets for Safety Boats, Radio Operation and Chief Duty Officers.
- ⚓ Notes for Race Officers in the Race Box.
- ⚓ Members' Handbook - "Notes on Safety", By-laws, and guidance on using the various parts and facilities of the club.
- ⚓ Club insurance on RYA recommended lines.
- ⚓ A club logbook for reporting incidents and events.

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL

Ian Wyatt (Commodore) was in the chair and fifty-nine members were present.

1 Commodores Opening Remarks: Ian Wyatt welcomed all the members to the 43rd Annual General Meeting of WSC.

It had been an eventful year, with two members dying and the clubhouse extension being progressed.

2 Apologies for Absence: these were received from C Ashby, A Clements, V Crocket, M Crundwell, T Eaglestone, G March, J Parsons, D & F Tozer, J Shenton, B & G Warwick, R Winnett, S Wyatt.

3 Minutes of 2000 Annual General Meeting: There were no corrections to these minutes which were signed by the Commodore.

4 Minutes of Special General Meeting held 25th June 2000: There were no corrections to these minutes, which were signed by the Commodore.

5 Matters Arising from these minutes: There were no matters arising

6 Secretary's Report on the Operation of the Club in 2000: A written report had been circulated. The club had two main problems to tackle - membership numbers and succession management.

Membership - each year some members leave for a variety of reasons, such as their work is now far away or family problems. There has to be a continuing effort by all the membership to recruit new members and then keep them. Last year membership dropped by twenty-five so we will have to work harder, not only to replace those leaving this year but also to regain those numbers.

Succession Management - some posts, such as Flag Officers, have to step down after a set time. There needs to be recruitment onto the committee so that these vacancies can be filled in future years.

The committee has deleted the post of Cruising Secretary, which the membership had asked for because after three years no one had been willing to fill this post.

Publicity Officer - Roy Winnett writes articles for the local papers

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From The Archives

(Our safety boat "Leander" has been extensively restored thanks to Paul Heather, and a few weeks ago many of us participated in dragging her out of her winter home in the Clubhouse. I found this article in the April 1979 edition of 31½, which appears to tell of the arrival of Leander as a club boat on 21 January 1979.... Ed.)

CLUB NEWS

Club events began this year with the Snowflake Party, held at Trottscliffe on January 20th. It was well organized by our new and efficient House Committee. In spite of the festivities, a small band of Club members and some co-opted relations were down at Hastings by 10 o'clock the following morning to collect the new rescue boat, Leanda. The purchase of this boat was the culmination of a lengthy search involving much hard work, by Colin Crawford in particular.

The removal of Leanda from the enclosure of the Hastings and St. Leonards Fishing Association to the awaiting Land Rover and trailer in the road required considerable strength and the assistance of all three previous co-owners. With the Commodore pulling at the end of a long rope, with one of the party throwing wooden slats from beneath the stern of the boat and another replacing them under the bow, and with the rest heaving across the shingle, Leanda eventually reached the trailer and was loaded on. The whole procedure looked not unlike the building of the pyramids, only without the crack of whips. Unfortunately, no-one had a camera.

The drive home had its excitement when the Land Rover was stopped by the Sussex Police, out for a Sunday drive; they felt that Leanda did not resemble the broken-down car which they thought the Land Rover's plates suggested it ought to be towing. The police looked round in some trepidation as two cars (the Club convoy) drew up, and the occupants emerged and sauntered along to see what was happening. The law was not to be put off, however, and the legal procedures were completed. The Club party then adjourned to a pub in Lamberhurst to celebrate the purchase. From there Leanda was taken to Tonbridge, where Robin Musters has since been working on preparing her for use on the Medway. Suggestions are invited for renaming her; the yellow Rescue Boat is called Bluebird.

MEETING HELD 16 FEBRUARY 2001

during sailing season. This post is more promotions and finding ways to make the public aware of the club.

7 Treasurer's Report: The Audited Income and Expenditure and Current Assets and liability Accounts and the depreciation schedule were circulated, and formally approved by the members present.

Summary The year 2000 provided the Treasurer with a constant financial balancing act. The members loans, gifts and fund raising saw us safely through although several times the margin was very small.

The cause was the new extension, the new generator and the refurbishment of the old changing rooms, which is almost complete at £47,000. This is under budget in spite of the bad start when sub-soil conditions forced us to go much deeper with the piling and increased costs by several thousands. The extraordinary amount of time and expertise given by some Club members to the project in the form of planning, organisation of contractors, construction, electrical wiring and general fitting out has saved the Club over £10,000 without which we would have run out of money. We should applaud the leadership and example of our Commodore in this.

The income and expenditure account does not include the income and expenditure relating to the new extension.

Comparing with 1999, both income and expenditure were down to give a lower, but respectable surplus of £8,721.29. The fall in membership caused subscriptions to drop by £1329.50, despite increased rates – this emphasises the need for all members to try and recruit new members.

A "simpler food" policy adopted to help reduce the work for duty crews, did, as was expected, reduce kitchen/bar sales and purchases. What was not predicted was that increase profitability and the surplus rose by £637.90

Clothing and other goods sales were lower as were purchases, leaving a surplus of £429.82 and reducing stocks.

Holding the Prize Giving Dinner twice in one year (January and December) upset both the Functions budget and the Cups and Prizes budget between the two years.

The barge "Wilsonian"

In the last issue I asked if anyone had pictures of the "Bleriot" - maybe a strange reference to anyone who joined after 1984. Well, there is a picture of this very thing on the front cover. It was the mobile "landing stage" used by members to embark on the scow and be ferried across to "Wilsonian", our floating clubhouse.

It was made up of planks with big iron wheels and supposedly had a passing resemblance to the early aeroplane that crossed the Channel. It was surprisingly heavy too.. one of the worst jobs on duty was pulling it up the beach at the end of the day, particularly if the tide had gone out. It took several people to do this.

New members of the club often were given the duty of acting as the ferryman, helming the scow. This was quite easy as long as you remembered the direction of the tide. However the Bleriot in particular could take a bit of a bashing from careless drivers. A worse sin was to forget to periodically pull the Bleriot up the beach when the tide was flooding. It didn't sink exactly but lay half awash, sometimes meaning wet feet for somebody who was public spirited enough to retrieve it.

The barge itself provided tiny accommodation compared to our present clubhouse, although it did have the feature of cabins and the CDO would usually stay overnight. The Bar sold real ale from plastic "polypins" - a member, Chris Gregson, was a brewer at Shepherd Neame - and in windy weather the motion of the barge meant the beer was very slightly, but continually, rocked meaning that your pint was just that little bit cloudy... The kitchen did a good trade in pies and "Barge Sausages" - the club's traditional single sausage in a slice of bread - and all the water was delivered by a tanker vessel.

On hot sunny days it was a great place to be. The "sun deck" was the place to lounge and to watch the racing, while looking over the stern on an ebb tide, you could see large grey mullet lazing around on the surface in the eddies. But it was important for the club to grow and to widen its appeal, especially to families, and so the barge is now club history - and a pleasant memory on a sunny day!

Opposite is a plan of the barge from 1982.

Paul Absolon

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General Committee, after consulting with the remaining Trustees, shall have the power to fill the vacancy forthwith. The appointed Trustee will serve until the next General Meeting, when they will be eligible for re-appointment.

New Rule 2(i)

In the event of a vacancy occurring in any position normally elected or appointed, at an Annual General Meeting, or a vacancy being declared by the General Committee, the General Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy forthwith. In the event of a vacancy occurring in the General Committee (or any sub-committee) the vacancy may be filled by the General Committee at their next meeting.

INTERVAL

9. Appointments: There was one nomination for each of the following posts who were therefore deemed to be elected: -

ASSISTANT OFFICERS (Appointed by General Committee)

DINGHY PARK SECRETARY	John Smith
DUTY LIST SECRETARY	Christine Godber
MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS)	Patricia Ayris
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Patricia Moncreiffe
TRAINING PRINCIPAL	Tom Sims
TRAINING SECRETARY	Barbara Sims
EDITOR 31 1/2	Paul Absolon (for final year)
PUBLICITY OFFICER	Ray Craddock
MEASURER	Tom Sims
TROPHY SECRETARY	Ian Parris
KENT SCHOOLS	Mark Steadman
SALES COORDINATOR	Sarah Wyatt

NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

POSITION	NOMINEE	PROPOSER	SECONDER
COMMODORE	Ian Wyatt	Ann Heather	Tom Sims
VICE COMMODORE	Brian Lamb	Ian Wyatt	Pam Smith
REAR COMMODORE	Ann Heather	Ian Wyatt	Patricia Moncreiffe
SECRETARY	Bob Jones	Colin Treadwell	Roy Winnett
TREASURER	Ken Crundwell	Bob Jones	Karen Steadman

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL

POSITION	NOMINEE	PROPOSER	SECONDER
BOSUN	Paul Heather	Brian Lamb	Tom Sims
SAILING SECRETARY	Colin Treadwell	Peter Horner	Ian Parris
HOUSE SECRETARY	Pam Smith	Ann Heather	Paul Heather
GENERAL COMMITTEE (6 places)	Peter Horner) Colin Treadwell) Roy Winnett) John Parsons) Karen Steadman) John Gore)	Ian Wyatt	Ann Heather
HOUSE COMMITTEE (5 places)	Gill Warwick) Christine Eagleston) Trish Ayris) Jane Treadwell) Carol Wynn)	Pam Smith	Ian Wyatt
AUDITOR	Roy McCleod)	Bob Jones	Tom Sims
TRUSTEES	Martin Fish) Bernard Smith) Roy McLeod) David Vettergreen)	Colin Treadwell	Pam Smith
FLEET	CLASS CAPTAINS	VICE CAPTAINS	
Miracle	Colin Treadwell	Peter Horner & Chris Cherryman	
Wayfarer	John Goudie	Brian Ward	
Handicap (Fast)	Brian Warwick		
Handicap (medium)	Malcolm Levey	Neil Lamprell	
Handicap (Slow / Junior)	VACANCY		
Class Representatives			
Enterprise	David Vettergreen		
Fireball	David Tozer		
Laser	Andrew Smith		
Optimist	Mark Steadman		
Tasar	Ian Wyatt		
Topper	The Heather Family		
Saturday Sailing	Martin Jessop & Paul Heather		
Contender	Martin Jones		
RS400	John Parsons		
Phantom	Malcolm Levey		

Last but not least, the Spring Points results:

Sharing first place, Nick Fenton-Smith in W10003 and Brian Lamb in W10201. Nick's crews included John Gurnett, and Brian Warwick was Brian Lamb's crew.

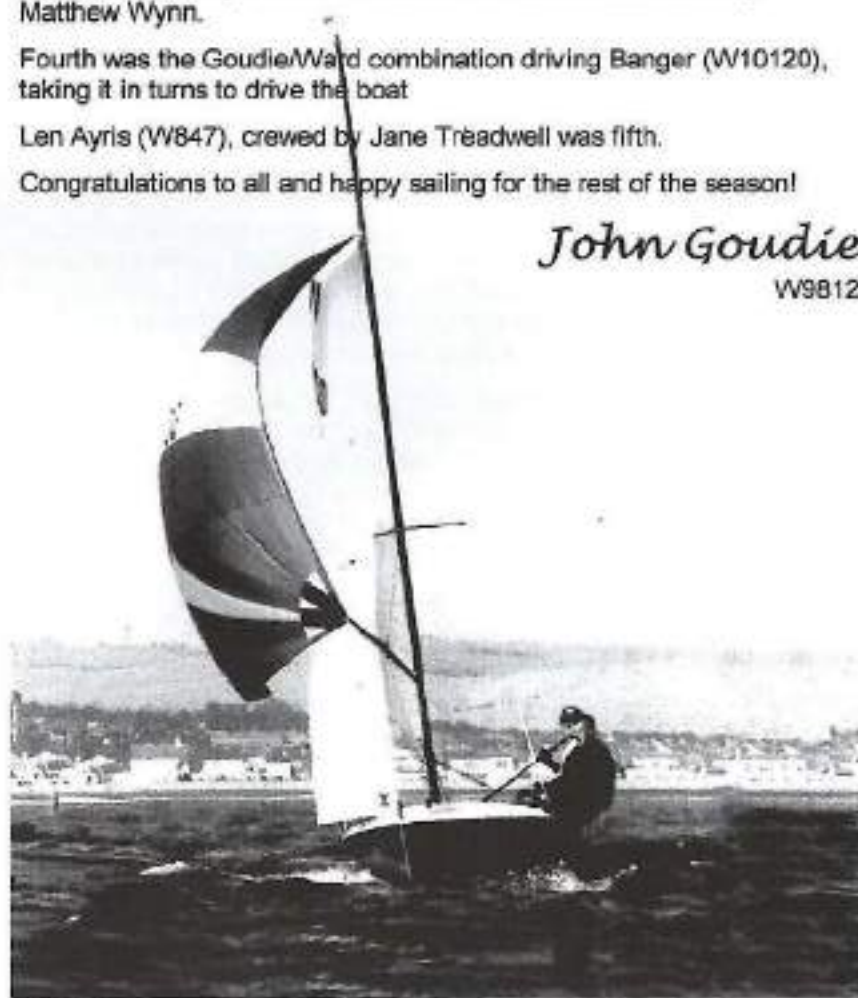
Bob Dutton (W84) was third, also with various crews, including Matthew Wynn.

Fourth was the Goudie/Ward combination driving Banger (W10120), taking it in turns to drive the boat

Len Ayris (W847), crewed by Jane Treadwell was fifth.

Congratulations to all and happy sailing for the rest of the season!

John Goudie
W9812



Wayfarer report

This is your new class captain calling all Wayfarer sailors and would be Wayfarer sailors. Time to finish the winter maintenance (I should talk - W12 is still in the barn) and sail your boats!

Now that the rain seems to have given way to sun, the river is rather more inviting, and so far, we do not seem to be afflicted by light winds - rather the contrary if the early May bank holiday is an indicator. The Wilsonian Wayfarers all came home unassisted on the Sunday, which is a credit to their seamanship (Matthew Wynn take an extra bow).

Turnouts in the early part of the season have been lower than hoped. I think that some of the reason is that the Wayfarer sailors like to get their club duties done earlier in the season. Also, as this is a 'World' Championship year, the open meetings and the Nationals are concentrated in the early part of the year.

Both Brian Lamb and I attended the Inland Championships at Bewl which caused us to miss two of the Spring Points races. Neither of us wish to brag about our results, though Brian had a very good last race - lets just call it a warm up for the Nationals at the end of May! In my case it is because W12 is not ready, though Brian Ward was kind enough to lend me his boat while he was recuperating from his recent operation (get well soon Brian).

To solve my boat problem, I decided to buy a second hand +S and return W12 to her owner.

Chris Vincent-Bennett has reluctantly decided that W12 (Betty) should be sold - he seems to be selling his fleet! I assure you that his reasons are genuine. Reluctantly, I decided that I did not have time to love another wooden boat, so bought a second hand +S instead - thus the fleet is not reduced, but could lose some of its character if a local buyer cannot be found for W12.



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10 Bosun's Report: The boathouse has been extended backwards so that the RIB now fits in straight. This enables the other half of the boathouse to not only house the Jeanneau but also act a workshop.

The blockhouse will be cleared out and then used to house ropes, buoys and sails. The old generator room will be cleared out, cleaned, painted then used to store club materials, such as paint, so they are all in one place and can be found when needed.

Leander is currently in clubhouse gents changing room having its ten-year overhaul - all damaged /rotten wood has been removed and just started rebuild. The electric's were also in a very poor condition and are also being worked on. These jobs are being carried out every Tuesday and Thursday - if anyone would like to attend and help they would be welcomed.

11 Sailing Secretary's Report: The weather was poor in 2000, with more lost races (mainly due to lack of wind) than can be remembered. Although memberships were down 25, average turnouts were only down two, from 29.4 to 27.4.

Race management was significantly improved. Our members did well in events away from the club with Mark Heather becoming Topper World Champion, Simon Allen European International Canoe Champion, and Peter Wolstenholme National Snipe Champion, and many performing well in Open events. Our youngsters did particularly well with several in youth squad.

Equipment was in better shape than before - always two safety boats, usually three or even four available. Radio problems were much reduced.

Besides Hoo Freezer and Medway Regatta we had Opens for Miracle and Topper. The Topper Open had 50+ boats and at that level external interest increases dramatically, and all indications are that this year's event will be very big.

For 2001 the new Racing Rules of Sailing will be in force. The start sequence will be 5-4-1-GO. The season will start with Fast/Medium/Wayfarer/Miracle plus Slow & Junior starts, although Sailing Committee have been looking at alternatives, similar to the system

used in winter series. They are also looking at alternative ways of handicapping, and further increasing safety and race management. Intend having a club cruise to Swale area and possibly one to Aylesford.

Open events in 2001 are:-

24/ 25th February	Hoo Freezer
21st April	KSSA Opening Splash
2nd June	Club Open Day plus evening race
8th July	Creeks Race
14/15th July	Medway Regatta including Miracle Southern Area Championships
29th September	Topper Open

Season starts on 25th March with a 1.30 p.m. start.

Medway Regatta will be different, we now have total control of the dinghies, including the finances, so we are particularly keen that it is a success.

Sailing Secretary thanked all those who had spent time and effort helping run the club. The target in 2001 is to increase the club membership again, and encourage them to race, as the more who race the better the racing will be for all.

12 Closing Remarks: The Commodore thanked everyone for coming to the AGM and to the team who had supported both him and the club during the last year. In particular he thanked Barbara Sims who had resumed the clubhouse cleaning as soon as she was well enough (a sentiment echoed by all present)

This year's Annual Dinner and Dance will be at Lloyds Sports and Social Club, Gillingham, on Saturday 1st December 2001. This club is by the A2, easily accessible from both North Medway Bypass and M2. - Pam Smith is the person to contact.

The landlord has been putting cut down diseased trees in downstream corner of car park, which has damaged car park. Our landlord has undertaken to repair car park after trees dry enough to burn.

From the Vice Commodore

Had I known before the AGM that someone would volunteer to take over as Sailing Secretary, I would have prepared an appropriate speech, so perhaps it was just as well I didn't have time to prepare! Seriously, I have to say that Colin would have been my first choice - I had tried to persuade him to accept the post but to no avail. I wish Colin all success in his new post and shall continue to do all I can to support him.

As I write this article, the sun is shining and there's a fine steady breeze blowing, gentle enough for Bobbie to accept a sail in our new boat (she's not even sat in it yet!). Hopefully this is the beginning of better weather than we've had since the start of the season.

The dinghy park is at last beginning to dry out and seems to have stopped sliding into the river. The new start sequence does seem to be causing anyone problems and the start line, some initial problems, has now been altered so that all poles (the two triangles in the dinghy park and the pole on opposite bank) should now be in line.

The Club has, over time, been donated several boats which have languished in the dinghy park uncherished and used. It has been agreed to repair some of them so any member can hire them during the season. The boats available will be: one Optimist, one Topper, one 470, one Wayfarer and Lasers. There will be a nominal charge of £5.00 per day. Any help in finding equipment or actually repairing them particularly appreciated - we're looking for Radial spars for the Lasers at the moment. We also need someone to look after these boats during the season, so please get in touch if you can help.

Brian Lamb

Wayfarer 10201 'Final Gambol'



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