

# Himley Hall News Letter



# Christmas 2011

# Commodore's Report

Welcome to a slightly belated 2011 Christmas edition of your club's newsletter. Once again I would like to thank everyone on the committee for their help during the last year and also thank all those other members who have given their time and efforts to help out around the club.

2011 has been another successful year for the club and you may have noticed the new RS Feva in the dinghy park together with our safety boat. These have been talked about for a number of years and the enthusiasm of the juniors gave us the impetus to apply to Sports England for a National Lottery Grant to purchase these new boats, other equipment and money towards instructor courses. We were finally advised in September that we had been successful and were awarded just over £7500. The Feva will be available for use during training courses and for hire by members. As it is centre main and the majority of our members are used to sailing aft main, the committee have agreed that, anyone wishing to hire the boat (or the club's new Laser 13) should be accessed by a qualified member of the training section to make sure that they will be able to sail the boat safely. Please contact Carolyn Wood, our boat hire coordinator for more details.

We had wonderful club trip to Clywedog in May (thanks to Carolyn for organising it) and about 25 members and their families turned up and sailed at some stage over the weekend. Several members took their own boats including Gulls, Merlins, Lasers and a little pink Mirror, which spent more time on the water than all the other boats and was the only one not to capsize (even when I was sailing it). If anyone has any ideas for club outings next year please contact either me or any other committee member.

Yet again, the training section have been very busy, running two adult courses and a junior course. Everyone in the team has worked hard in what is one of the most important aspects of the club and our main source of new members. We also had a record attendance for the taster weekend with over 80 people having their first sailing experience. An era is coming to an end as David Harris is stepping down as Principal of the training section after more than 30 years. In this time David and the team have taught several hundred sailors and a great many of them have gone on to become club members. We are lucky that Andy Degge has returned to the club after a short break and will be taking over as Principal.

We held the club's annual RLNI race in May and £1,156.50 was raised for this worthwhile cause. The Ladies Committee were once again busy organising the barbeque for both the RLNI race and Commodore's day. They also manned the galley for most race days and all of the training sessions. A big thank you to the ladies for all their hard work and their constant support of our events. Another era comes to an end as Mary Harris steps down as RLNI Coordinator. She has worked very hard in this position for many years and will be a hard act to follow. Carolyn Wood has agreed to step in as the new coordinator and we will have to give all the support she needs as she faces a steep learning curve. Congratulations are also due to Carolyn as she has just passed her dinghy instructors course.

Membership numbers have held up well again this year and there has been a slight increase in the numbers racing on Sundays but we could still do with seeing more racers. Thursday evening sessions have continued to be well supported and it is intended to run these again in 2012 as soon as the evenings stay light for long enough. As I said earlier, the juniors have been very enthusiastic and are still looking at forming a Junior Section, which is great news for the club as they are our members and trainers of the future and the Committee will do everything they can to support them.

Thankfully there have been hardly any outbreaks of vandalism this year and hardly any incidents with the fishermen. Andy Degge and I have spoken to Sally Newell, the Hall Manager and she has agreed to hand out leaflets to visiting fishermen asking them to fish sensibly, not to cast out too far and to respect the sailors. We have to recognise that we all want to enjoy ourselves and we have to share the water and Sally has asked that we also respect the fishermen. As individuals we should try to avoid sailing over the fishermen's lines and if you are the Duty Officer for races please try to set a course that means that sailors will avoid the anglers wherever possible. If you do have a disagreement with an angler and there is an OD or trainer on duty, please report it to them and they will contact the park's duty warden. If there is no OD or trainer on duty, please contact the duty warden your self on 07815 828222 and let them know what has happened.

The notice of the 2012 AGM is enclosed with this newsletter together with a nomination form for the election of the club's officers for the next year and a summary of the minutes of last year's AGM. Please do your best to attend as this your chance to have a say in the running of the club. If you would like to get involved with the organisation and running of your club, please have a chat with either me or any of the other Committee members. We would be grateful of any help.

When I was typing the "Many Years Ago" article it struck me just how many of the family names from the old days still appear in the newsletter today and this shows how much the present club owes to the efforts of its long standing members. As these members are now getting older, it is up to the younger members to step forward and build on the solid foundations that they have laid. Hopefully some of us newer members on the committee will still be around in 25 years time and the juniors of today will be on the committee referring to us as "the old folk"

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and healthy new year.

*Tony Sutton*

Cover Picture: Becky Lamb & Tony Sutton take the club's new RS Feva on its maiden sail

# Rear Commodore's Report

As we work our way towards the yearend, I am slowly getting to grips with what is required of a Rear Commodore, learning by trial and error and helpful guidance from fellow members. I have found that turning up as frequently as possible when racing is programmed makes up for my lack of experience, both smoothing the proceedings and helping me forward on the learning curve; so apologies to those who turn up on Thursday evenings and Saturdays that I haven't seen for a while.

Racing was quiet in the early autumn. Demands of training on Saturdays in September, together with a combination of no-wind and no-shows from duty officers and safety boat operators has resulted in five race days being cancelled. The number of no-racing days would have been greater if it hadn't been for others unselfishly offering their services and covering duties, so a grateful 'thank you' to you all who stepped in at the last moment. On a positive side, the Himley Hall Coffee Morning Club has thrived as, on several occasions we waited for the wind to get going in the morning.

Recently, racing has picked up again and good numbers have enjoyed the unseasonably warm weather, producing some closely fought and good humoured competition. Although membership is healthy, we haven't seen too many new members turn up for racing yet and are wondering what we need to do to provide encouragement to start an aspect of sailing which is both enjoyable and further increases sailing skills. Please contact me with your suggestions.

The old-faithful trolley that lives in the race hut, which is used to move the rescue boat fuel tank and gear recently expired and not having time to create another work of art, we have purchased a new and shiny lightweight folding trolley to compliment the new, shiny and lightweight rescue boat. I have also recently spent a happy (it must have been the solvent) couple of hours repainting the numbers on the buoys, so hopefully we won't need to have so many mid-race discussions about where we are on the course.

To give everyone as much support as possible in running or assisting in races, we are considering running a repeat of the popular race officer briefing sessions. Currently Andy Degge is musing whether he can enliven the proceedings with audio and visual aids. Watch this space for further details.

Finally, a first request to last year's trophy winners to return their hard-won silverware to me before the new year, either directly, or via other committee members, so that we can get it ready for the awards evening early in the new year.

Thank you,

*Ian Cowdale*

## **Bosun's Report**

As winter approaches you may not sail so often and visit the club as much. It is important that your boat, trailer and trolley are secure so that they cannot be pushed into the water, stolen or blown over and damage another boat. Make sure that you leave your bungs and self bailers open and the cover firmly in place so that your dinghy doesn't suffer from water damage or freezing. Please get into the habit of checking your boat at least once a month so that any loose or torn covers can be tightened or any minor damaged fixed before it gets any worse.

*Bill Nock*

## **Treasurer's Report**

The Annual General Meeting of the Himley Hall Sailing Club will be held on the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> February at the Woodfield Sports and Social Club. All areas of the club's business for they last 12 months will be examined and explained by the Committee members responsible. However, it is not solely for the benefit of the Committee but for all club members.

You will be provided with a copy of the balance sheet for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011. As a member you will have the opportunity of seeing where youyr membership money is used to support the club's activities, expenses etc and also raise any questions relating to this that you may have.

The total of the membership fees received each year pay over 90% of the club's annual expenses and are the only regular income that the club can rely on and you will understand, therefore, why it is important that we receive such fees in due time.

Please come to the AGM, you will be made most welcome and could find it interesting.

*Graham Allsopp*

# **Training Report**

We have now come to end of the Training Season for 2011, with a good success rate on all our courses. 10 members have taken their powerboat 1/2 course this year and will shortly be receiving their new certificates and logbooks – they are now registered with RYA

Six Junior sailors gained Stage 2 in the summer.

Twenty-two trainees gained Level 2 from the two adult courses we organised during the training season.

Carolyn Wood completed the Instructor's Certificate for Dinghy Sailing and now joins the team as a fully qualified dinghy instructor. Well-done Carolyn.

Jamie Degge has indicated his willingness to complete a Senior Instructor Course in Dinghy Sailing and Richard Harding has indicated his willingness to complete a Powerboat Instructor Course.

Our grant finally came through which enabled us to purchase a new rescue boat, which will help the safety boat /power boat courses we organise in the Training Centre. Funds also available for courses thus enabling more training qualifications. A Feva sailing dinghy has also been purchased with grant.

The Club has bought a quite new 15hp four stroke outboard engine for the rescue boat. It has several electronic bits added to it so is rather a different animal to the old engine. We must thank Andy Degge for this, he spotted it on the internet & it has only four hours running from new and he managed to negotiate a reduction in cost to £1000, an excellent bargain indeed.

We have arranged the revalidation and new First Aid Course on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February for those trainers and prospective trainers who require this for updating their qualifications.[no charge for training team]. Anyone else interested in gaining this qualification at a cost £40.00 [including handbook] may join in if there are places available Please ring Mary Harris if you are interested -01902 341754

This is my final report as Senior Instructor/Head of Training and I am happy to pass the mantle of Boss over to Andy Degge, I have held this office for over thirty years now and feel that the training section gets handed over in a fair state of efficiency.

Finally, can I thank all the members who have made my tenure of Office so worthwhile - Several generations of Instructors have worked for the club with me, but we must always remember those on rescue duty and the ladies in the galley. Also could I add a personal thank you to Mary who acts as Secretary to the Training Committee. There are a multitude of jobs to be done to ensure that the trainings get off smoothly and she does it with efficiency.

Thanks everyone and my best wishes to Andy.

*David Harris*

# **Social Secretary's Report**

As we come to end of the year I must report that the Ladies[Social] Committee has been very busy – we have manned the galley nearly every training day and on Sundays as well, sometimes in vain as there has not always been sailing due to adverse weather conditions, Our Social events this autumn have included a Cheese and Nibbles Evening held at the home of Mary and David Harris [we do have plenty of rooms]. This was a very happy and successful evening

Our other major event was the Christmas Dinner planned originally for the Club House but moved for 2 reasons – Mike Willetts was sure I put a spell on the Lake as I said it would be frozen- and so it was - so no sailing and the cooker, after many years, has started to wear out [2 hotplates are not working properly]. After discussions with Yvonne, who is the other Galley slave with me at this event ,we moved to 32 Coalway Road where after much planning we managed to seat 22 members in our dining room and two children in another room, and everyone enjoyed a full Christmas dinner. Our thanks to Dorothy, Pat and Ray who washed up, the gentlemen who put the tables and chairs back in their proper places and to Tony for his donation of wine to supplement the soft drinks. Many hands make light work and thank you everyone who helped in some way on that day.

Both events were so successful we were able to make a donation of £450.00 to the Club; our events so far for 2012 are the AGM at Woodfield Sports and Social Club on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February and the Prize Giving Presentation on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February at the same venue.

We shall post everyone details as soon as we have had the Social Committee Meeting at the beginning of January. We are pleased to welcome new members of the social committee, Janet Hendry, Renée Clark and Pam Speed. We are always pleased to welcome new members to share our activities and help with the duties in Galley – many hands make light work.

Finally I would like to thank all the members of the Ladies [Social] Committee for all their support and hard work on the many occasions during the sailing season that they have prepared the Galley and the meals and drinks especially Yvonne Nock who has looked after our finances and Pat West who patiently writes up the minutes and reminds us of meetings

The Harris Family send belated seasonal greetings to everyone in the club and express thanks for the Christmas cards received – a donation has been sent to the R.N.L.I. in lieu of cards.

*Mary Harris*

# RLNI Coordinator's Report

## What is it all about?

Well I really am going to retire from co-ordinating this event after 15+ years. It is our MAJOR FUND-RAISING EVENT for R.N.L.I. so I am going to tell you all about it – in hopes that a MEMBER is going to take this in hand and co-ordinate it

As some of you may know it does not start on 23rd April [2 weeks before the event] it is ongoing throughout the year. This year we raised £1,161.50 making our GRAND TOTAL to over £92,000.00 in the 32 plus years. Sorry I could not make £100,000.00 before I retire

As members of Himley Hall Sailing Club David and I have been involved since 1977 when we joined the club. I have been the RLNI Race Officer for a number of years, have retired and come out of the woodwork to help again.

But without YOUR help this **CLUB EVENT** does not function properly, WHY?

Well let me tell you a bit about the event - a maximum of 18 teams sail round the Great Lake at Himley for 5 hours - changing boats and crews as necessary, each team must have a boat on the water for the whole time, Before the event they go out with their sponsor forms and get friends, colleagues and family to sponsor their team at X amount per lap or a donation. The Clubs/members involved collect all their money in and send it to the Co-ordinator in the form of a cheque made payable to the R.N.L.I. It is then send it to the Brierley Hill and Kingswinford Branch Treasurer, who forwards it to Poole [R.N.L.I. H.Q].

YOU can help get us some sponsors and display posters where they can be seen, The Ladies [Social] Committee run the galley for 5 hours non-stop, a cake or pie is always very welcome in the CLUBHOUSE, a raffle Prize will be most welcome Gentlemen as well as Ladies are needed to cook, serve and wash up during this time.

To run the Event we need 3 teams of DUTY OFFICERS on 2 hour shifts

- A] Time Keepers [watching the boats going round the lake and checking them past the starters hut]
- B] Safety Boat Teams
- C] Younger Members to act as messengers [in two's]
- D] Marshals for the Gate Barrier 9.00am – 10.30am

Trophies and certificates are be awarded at the end, then off to clear up, collect the money in and another years event is nearly sorted [it takes about 6 months to complete the collections from all the teams] and we are ready for the next time.

During the last 2 years the Ladies Committee, as well as running the Galley for the duration of the event, have organised a Barbeque which this year raised £400.00 towards our total.

You are part of this SAILING CLUB come and join in with us at Himley Hall on the day. The Galley is open before and during the event except for the last hour of the race serving food and hot/cold drinks. St Johns Ambulance Officers will be in attendance for the period of the event. This is a team event and the winner will be the team covering the greatest distance [allowing for handicap] in the 5 hours.

A trophy is awarded to the winning team and the team name will be engraved on a trophy, which is kept by the winning teams club for the subsequent year. Proceeds from the sponsored mileage of each team will be donated to R.N.L.I. [to whom all cheques should be made payable.] **COMPETITORS/CLUB MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO CANVAS FOR DONATIONS OR SPONSORS AT SO MANY PENCE PER ACTUAL MILE SAILED IN THE 5 HOURS.**

### **HISTORY OF THE RACE:-**

2011 sees the 36th Year of the event, please help to make it a financial success. For the last 34 years, in May, Himley Hall Sailing Club has organised a sponsored sail in aid of R.N.L.I. During this period of time £92,031.00 has been raised [sponsorship money in 2002 resulted in the highest amount in the 34 years of the event—£4660.00] In 1987, with help of money raised by this event, the R.N.L.I. purchased an inshore lifeboat, stationed at West Mersea, on the Blackwater Estuary. It has now been taken off station. Himley Hall Sailing Club were honoured that the lifeboat was named HIMLEY HALL [many of the club members were present at the naming ceremony] in 1988 we were awarded the Beefeater Gin ‘Spirit of Achievement Award for our efforts in Fund Raising, and 2005 we were finalists for the NATIONAL SUPPORTERS AWARD for Achievement, to acknowledge the outstanding work of this CLUB for R.N.L.I.

**Did you know that** Himley Hall Sailing Club is a small friendly club with only small water, [17 acres,] hence our restriction on the number of entrants. Many teams have returned each year to participate in this event and it is certainly a social as well as a fund-raising event. Himley Hall, once the home of the Earls’ of Dudley, is now owned by Dudley M.B.C. The Grounds were laid out by Lancelot [Capability] Brown; this year the CLUB celebrated its 42nd anniversary. Thank you for reading this article – The Committee will look forward to hearing from you with offers of help

*Mary Harris*

# Murder in Himley Park ?

Please do not panic if you hear reports of an attack by a mad knife woman in Himley Park. Dog walkers and fishermen were recently alarmed to see a man locked in the bosun's store under the galley and a woman attacking the door with a carving knife! There is an innocent explanation - Derek Green had got himself locked in the store when he was turning off the water and the latch slipped down on the door and would not budge. Yvonne Nock was using the knife to lift the latch and free Derek, not to chop him up as it may have first appeared.

## Notice Board

### Dunster Beach – Somerset - Chalet to Let

*We will soon be advertising our chalet for next year and we are offering a 25% discount off our normal prices to members of the HHSC.*

*The chalet is on the quiet Dunster Beach site, sleeps 5 and the back doors actually open onto the beach. If you would like further details please telephone Libby Sutton on 01384 271447 or email Tony Sutton at [sutton\\_tony@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sutton_tony@yahoo.co.uk)*

If you have anything you would like to buy or sell or have any announcements you would like to make, please contact me and we can place a free advertisement in the HHSC Newsletter

Tony Sutton

## **Many Years Ago** **Extracts from Newsletter No. 65 – Winter 1984**

The Commodore, Bill Humphries, wrote:- We must remember we can only get out of the club what we put in, so all members, please give the club your support on the water, turning out for your duty weekend and at the social events, as with good support the club should go from strength to strength.

The Rear Commodore, Andrew Nock, who took over this post at very short notice from Elizabeth Willetts who has gone to Police Training College wrote:- In the Autumn Points Handicap 32 sailors entered but only 5 sailed enough races to qualify. The last race of this year is on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1984. After much deliberation and great concern for the ladies who may be hard pressed on the last Sunday before Christmas (they really do think about your welfare ladies or do they want to make sure that you have enough time to make the mince pies?) it was decided by the Committee to hold the clubhouse floor testing ceremony on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1984 immediately after the last race.

Gems from the past compiled by Ray West (in 1984):-

Looking through past newsletters recently, I noticed several amusing paragraphs that I thought would be entertaining reading in 1984 (and again in 2011 – Tony).

Member's guests, a nominal charge is made in respect of member's guests who make use of the club's facilities, i.e. sailing in member's boats and/or use of the boathouse. The charges are Adults 2shillings (10p) and children (5p). (This cheap charge, I understand, still applies today believe it or not).

The AGM on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1975 was a great success, well supported by 60 or so members. Why do we only get 30 members at the AGM now in 1984? (lets try to beat the 1984 attendance figure in February 2012 – Tony).

Leading competitors in the points handicap at this stage of the season are:-

1 <sup>st</sup>	Wal Williams	Europa Moth
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ron Dolby	Mirror 22486
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mike Willetts	Mirror 7954

(Ray wrote in 1984) I didn't realise Mike's boat was an antique!

(Tony writes in 2011) Mike finally changed his boat last year as he was spending as much time bailing as sailing – but it didn't stop him winning more races than anyone else!

Disposal of "Loo" fluids:- This necessary but onerous duty is one that should be shared by more members than has been hitherto. In June 1972 the Committee therefore have decreed that this will be the final responsibility of the OOD on Sunday evenings. How said the good old days???

*Mike Willetts*