

Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club Newsletter February 2015



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Winter Wednesdays

7 for 7.30, the bar will be open.

28th January

Quiz, fun and informal

5 teams pitted wit and brains to the loosely sailing associated questions provided by quiz master Mike Pearce. A VERY civilised amount of time between rounds made for a most enjoyable, jolly and social evening - I believe there were winners and prizes. Take note of severe penalties if you don't read the rules of engagement. Sadly there were no bonus points for witty humorous answers – that flag definitely means bring more cake!!

Thank you Mike and Sandy

11th February

From Bristol to the High Seas- Vicky Ellis.

The only female skipper in the last Clipper Round the World Race. See page 15 for more details.

25th February

Feedback and discussion on the membership survey.

Rob Mitchell, Commodore and team.

11th March

Race Officers Refresher

Open to all, especially ROs and AROs. John Smalley PRO and team.

18th March

HAFREN's Record-Breaking Round Britain Voyage in a Wayfarer- Phil Kirk.

£5.00 on entry, ALL proceeds to the RNLI and PAPPA fund (we will be inviting sailors from local clubs to join us for this one).

Commodores Letter

The membership survey has now been closed and the results collated and are being reviewed to firstly find a means of summarizing so that they can be presented to the club members and the achievable outcomes prioritized for the 5 year plan.

It is extraordinary how preconceptions can be so readily unraveled and thus how important the process has proven to be in understanding the interests of those that use the club and it is perhaps no surprise that there is a general desire to upgrade the facilities and move the club into the twenty first century.

There is also significant enthusiasm about what can be achieved and a great deal of pride in what the club has to offer with nearly 90% of respondents “very likely” to recommend membership of the club to a friend or colleague.

Part of our challenge is in recognising what we have and how we can best exploit the opportunities. The external perception of the club can be improved as can our public engagement and there are already initiatives that could do both. It would be superb to have a communications officer for the club and so if you have experience in this field, then please come forward.

The club has moved on significantly since the membership survey in the late 1980's and must continue to do so now, not least as we are 3 years from a significant anniversary with the 50th year of sailing and in moving on we need to invest. In addition to the standard inflationary increase, membership rates from March 2015 will increase by a further 3%, the annual additional cost to a single member with a boat will be about £9 and will collectively enable us to make the necessary and desired improvements.

Please support the Winter Wednesday events as we may “borrow” one late in February to present and discuss the outcome of the membership survey and in the meantime, dress warm and enjoy your sailing.

Rob Mitchell

Vice- Commodores Letter

I have been a member at Chew since 1980something. It is a great club with fantastic sailing, whether it be a gentle cruise to enjoy the scenery, birds, changing colour of the trees and the clouds over the Mendips or a full on race day with the competition, camaraderie and detailed analysis afterwards. I love sailing and I take enormous pleasure in encouraging others to participate in our wonderful sport. Those who know me will be aware that I tend to the racing side, however some of my most enjoyable days at Chew have been teaching beginners to sail over the few weekends of the RYA courses and then seeing them practice, improve, start racing and get more involved in the club. There is an increasing momentum to offer more training and coaching both formal and informal – and not only for the younger sailors. Several of the “fleets” organise training days. More experienced sailors are usually more than happy to offer help and advice. Talk to the fleet captains if you aren't sure who to approach, or ask me and I'll point you in the right direction.

So what do I do as Vice Commodore? Three months inSo far, lots of learning - learning who does what, learning how things work, learning that there are LOTS and LOTS of members willing to help out to make things happen. Thank you everyone for your support and encouragement.

Essentially the Vice Commodore works with the Sailing Secretary and the Sailing Committee to organise and oversee all things to do with sailing at the club. Probably the best job in the club!! (see later for who is on, or associated with, the sailing committee). Please come and talk to me if you have ideas and suggestions AND if you would like to help spread the load.

These “quieter months” aren't really quiet at all. The Frostbite series is well under-way and we welcome Frostbite members from other clubs. There is a Coastal Skipper course running on Saturdays through January and February. In January we saw a Safety Boat course, Powerboat Instructors pre assessment practice, RS Aero lift off day, Topper training, RS 200 training, and as I write there is a Regional Race Officers Course and the Western Region Universities Team Trials running at the club. February brings another Safety Boat course, the Powerboat Instructors official pre-assessment, more Topper, Feva, 29er and RS200 training and the prestigious Solo Winters on February 14th.

Next year's sailing calendar (April 2015-March 2016) is complete and will appear on the board and on the website soon. There is a programme of winter Wednesday evenings up and running.

Some of the best sailing conditions occur in the winter, despite the cold, so I wish all you hardy wednesday, saturday and sunday sailors warm hands and feet, and to those who prefer warmer conditions, I wish you pleasant dreams of balmy spring and summer afternoons and evenings.

Sailing Committee 2015

Vice Commodore	Helen Martin
Sailing Secretary	Errol Edwards
Principal Race Officer	John Smalley
Hon. Bosun	Alan Coventry
Hon. Dinghy Bosun	Peter Barnes
Results	Chris Goldhawk
Chew Crew	Claire Firmstone
	Jackie Berridge
RYA Principal	Mark Fordham
RYA Training Coordinator	Rich Hole
CLADS	Mike Preater
Fleet Captains:	
Feva / 29er	Nick Edmonds
Flying Fifteen	Bill Chard
Handicap	Peter Rose
Laser	Laura Smith
RS 200	Nick Martindale
Solo	Tim Morgan
Topper	Julian Cooke

Helen Martin

Laser Fleet

Welcome from your new Laser Fleet Captain, Laura Smith. I took over the role at the start of November from our new Vice Commodore Helen Martin. So what does a fleet captain do? For the benefit of those of you who aren't sure, there are a few parts to the role:

- Representing the fleet's views to the Sailing Committee (who meet once a month to sort out all things to do with on-the-water activities, cruising and racing alike)
- Generally being enthusiastic about all things to do with your fleet, including welcoming new members to the fleet, presenting the prizes in November and keeping people up to date with what's happening at the club
- Linking in with the class association for open meeting dates and organising another fleet's open

We've had some cracking racing on Sunday mornings recently – cold weather certainly has not stopped play! There were 7 qualifiers for the Winter Series who sailed at least half of the races; well done to all who entered.

With newbie enthusiasm I dived in (fairly literally recently when I did a great demo of how to capsize in a good breeze at the gybe mark) and organised our fleet Christmas party, the first to be held at the club in a number of years. Sarah Tauwhare and Peter Sherwin transformed the club into a laser winter wonderland, complete with scale replicas loaded with gifts. Over 30 laser sailors and their friends joined us for a delicious three course meal cooked by Doug, followed by home-made laser mince pies and coffee. Steve Smith presented a video of the fleet year which was met with plenty of cheer. It included a piece on Ellie Cumpsty, our home-grown laser sailor selected to represent Team GBR in the ISAF Youth Worlds. We are so proud of all you have achieved Ellie!





This year we turn to our creative side, with a t-shirt competition (open to all) to design the next 'Chew Lasers' fleet t-shirt. There is a bottle of wine on offer for the winning entry, and the t-shirts will be available later this year. Entries are open until **20th February** - email chewlasers@gmail.com.

A date for your diary is the **Laser Training Day** on **Saturday 18th April**. Sailors of all abilities are welcome, and you can stay for as much or as little of the day as you like. If you'd like to be included in my monthly update to the fleet then please drop me an email at chewlasers@gmail.com for useful

Happy Sailing!

Laura Smith Laser 166580

A decorative border of small sailboat icons surrounds the text. The icons are arranged in rows at the top, bottom, and sides of the page. They alternate between two designs: one with a red mast and white sails, and another with a green mast and blue sails.

Feva, 29ers (and Optimists!) at Chew

The Feva and 29er fleets have been very busy over the winter months.

29er fleet expanding

We now have 5 youth 29ers sailing at Chew: Ella and Phoebe were the sole Youth 29er at Chew last year, but have now been joined by a further four boats – Cristian & Milo, Charlie & Ben, Michael & Matthew and Charlie & Hugh (most of whom hit their fifteenth birthdays and made the leap from Fevas to the 29er).

A 29er is quite a step up from a Feva so much of the autumn has been spent training and learning to keep the 29er up right in both light and strong winds. Most of the boats have attended 29er Class Association Open Training, and we had the Class Association head coach visit us at Chew for two training sessions in the autumn. The effort is starting to pay off as the 29ers are pulling themselves up from the back of the club's Fast Handicap fleet. We've yet to get all five boats on the Fast Handicap start line on the same day due mainly to mock GCSE schedules and coursework deadlines. Hopefully the short gap between the last of the mocks, the remaining open training sessions and the start of revision proper will enable all five boats to race together on a Sunday.

Don't miss these upcoming 29er events:

- **A training session at Chew** with the 29er Class Association Head Coach on 6th/7th March.
- **Youth Nationals at Weymouth** in early April (includes 29ers, 420s and Lasers)
- **29er Nationals and World Championships in Pwllheli** in August

If you'd like to attend the training or want to try a 29er contact me directly (edmonds_nick@hotmail.com).

New faces in the Feva fleet

Eight junior sailors moved out of the Feva fleet into the 29er, but the Feva fleet held its own with some new faces and three Sunday all day training sessions in November and December with RYA coaches. It was great to see Ruby, Eleanor, Huw, Henrik, Giles, Hugo, Sam, Olivia, Tito and Alex all taking part. The Feva race coaching continues into 2015 with our combined Chew, Bristol Corinthian and Royal Torbay Open Training program. We have 4 Fevas taking part in this 4 weekend coaching series – Alice & Louis, Hugo & Sam, Huw & Giles and Quinn & Finley.

With Chew Valley hosting the Feva Inland Championships in June it provides a great focal point for all our junior sailor and we will hopefully have at least five boats representing the club. We plan to hold some additional Feva specific training later in the year for those hoping to participate in the Inland Championships.

Free Optimist Training

Lastly, and a bit outside my remit as Feva & 29er Fleet Captain, we have Optimist training organised for 6th/7th March. This training is being funded by the Optimist Class Association and is free to Chew members. We plan to have some race Optimists (not the Optibats!) available to hire for those that don't have an Optimist. Coaching will be delivered by James Grant – the RYA's current South West Zone Optimist Lead Coach and ex-Optimist National Champion. The weekend is geared towards sailors who have learnt the basics but wish to progress onto racing and have ambitions for RYA Zone Squad, and also more experienced zone squad members. For anyone at Chew who is under 15 years old, below about 45kg and keen to start racing – this is the perfect opportunity. If you've been confidently sailing a RS Tera or a Topper 4.2 why not come along to kick start your summer sailing? To book a place contact me directly (edmonds_nick@hotmail.com)



Cristian and Milo at the Datchet Water SC 29er Grand Prix in November

Nick Edmonds, Feva and 29er (and sometimes Oppie) Fleet Captain

Universities and Schools

Bristol Brew 2014:

On the 6th and 7th of December, Bristol University hosted their annual team racing event 'The Bristol Brew' at CVLSC which saw 21 teams of 6 come to compete from everywhere from Durham, to Exeter, to Trinity College Dublin, as well as 6 external umpires and an external race officer.

Saturday dawned with little wind; having arrived early in the morning to rig 24 boats and set up the course we proceeded to spend much of the morning waiting around hoping for the wind to fill in. By 12.30 we had finally made it on the water and managed to complete 47 races before the sun started to set and we all headed back to Bristol.

Sunday morning started with a much more threatening forecast, and a lot of uncertainty over how the day would pan out as we arrived in the pouring rain. The first race managed to get under way by 10:30 and mostly the weather held out with a consistent wind. Midday saw a large squall blowing through the racecourse, causing moderate carnage and requiring a lot of quick fixes to be carried out by everyone on the shore (including a few very helpful members of CVLSC)!

Having completed the set of 105 races, everyone had managed to race against 10 team, we managed to fit in semi-finals and finals before sunset. The winners were BYOB (Bristol Young Old Boys) a university of Bristol alumni team, and second place went to Royal Thames Yacht Club. The final result was 2:1 to BYOB.

It was a great weekend, that couldn't have taken place without the help and co-operation of everyone from CVLSC, Bristol University, and everyone else so on behalf of the University of Bristol Sailing Club thank you to everyone involved!

Lucy Hartley- University of Bristol Sailing Club

Clifton College:

The club's helpful arrangement for 6 boats on site and 3 toppers off site trailered in means we have 15 students coming twice a week even during winter. Experienced coach and umpire Nigel Vick is providing weekly Team Racing Coaching every Thursday. Thank you Nigel and thank you Chew. Highlight of last season was Clifton coming away with 1st place at the Feva Team Racing event at Maidenhead Reservoir (hosted by Claire's Court School)

Clifton entered its first Firefly in the Itchenor Schools' Week Regatta. Very memorable experience. We hope to enter 4 boats this summer!

Mr O. Lewis- Clifton College

Millfield:

Sailing continues through the winter at Millfield and we are currently preparing for the 2015 BSDRA (British Schools Dinghy Racing Association) season. 2014 saw many successes with a young team placing 4th at the Southern Area regional regatta hosted by Winchester College, and winning the Silver fleet at the Thames Valley regatta hosted by Eton College. In October, Millfield hosted a small South West regatta at Chew. Four teams (Truro School, Sherborne, Clifton College & Millfield) enjoyed a great day of sailing which tested the sailors through almost every weather condition! After a series of round robin races, Millfield beat Clifton College in the final and Sherborne beat Truro School into 3rd place.

Millfield sailors also enjoyed some successes in fleet racing. At the School's Championships held at Itchenor Sailing Club Campbell Manzoni & Octavia Greig finished 5th (2nd British boat) with the rest of the squad also posting good results in a competitive fleet of 45 Fireflies! Finally, many thanks to CVLSC for hosting the Firefly Inland Nationals in October; it was great for our students to be able to experience this high level fleet racing. Go-faster tips were gained from experienced Firefly sailors, and the final results saw Scarlett Manzoni & Emma Stevens finishing 11th overall and also picking up the Ladies trophy.

Mr P. Williams- Millfield

“Roll-Up, Roll-Up “ - Become a Race Officer!

Now, what could be difficult about raising or lowering a few flags, writing down some sail numbers and times and sitting in a warm, comfy Race Hut or bobbing around the lake in a big, safe Committee Boat? And they call this a duty....!

Not only is the Assistant Race Officer duty at Chew a positive pleasure to do, it can set you on a distinct ‘career pathway’ of duties that will undoubtedly add a measure of interest and satisfaction to your sailing.

Chew's Sunday Series have an allocated team of 3 to manage the racing each week; two Assistant Race Officers and a full Race Officer in charge. The Assistants are moulded into a team, each with specific tasks including all of the above, which when combined hopefully give the competitors a satisfying days racing. On Wednesday evening the race team is up to 5 strong to cope with the additional numbers sailing. The learning curve can be steep, but it is both rewarding and fulfilling and I rarely come away from the day without learning something new.

Each year I try to run at least 1 RYA/Chew Club Race Officer course. This is valuable as a tool to better understand what is going on for those volunteering as AROs, or if they want to make the step up to taking charge as a Race Officer. But remember, the Race Officer in charge will be showing you what to do and explaining why.

As a Club Race Officer it helps to have an understanding of racing, though this does not need to be extensive, to have a fairly thick skin (!) and definitely you need to be able to make a decision, often very quickly.

A fast-track route to gaining knowledge is to volunteer for Race Committee duty at an Open Meeting. Chew has a long history of running superb events because of the enthusiasm of our volunteers and the experience of our leading Race Officers. There is a huge sense of ‘involvement’, whether you are actually on the Committee Boat or in a RIB laying courses or recording starters and finishers. It is very much a team effort.

I have been fortunate to use the experience gained at Chew to volunteer as part of teams running open meetings and championships around the country. Initially I would be allocated simpler roles such as flagman or timekeeper and as I began to meet people I would be offered more opportunities. We are running a RYA Regional Race Officer course at Chew this weekend, and this was the next step on my pathway, followed ultimately by gaining the National Race Officer qualification. Recent highlights have included taking charge of RYA Zone Championship regattas and last summer's National Schools Championships at Downs Sailing Club in Kent.

The ‘top dog’ qualification is International Race Officer which can lead to invitations to officiate at events all around the World – maybe the Rio Olympics in 2016.....?

I would encourage any of you to at least try taking the first step – volunteer as an Assistant Race Officer when the renewal forms float into your ‘In boxes’!! Good luck!

John Smalley, Principal Race Officer

RYA Training and Qualifications

RYA Training at CVLSC

We have had an excellent year with more novice sailors, adult and junior progressing through the certificated program and qualifying in dinghy sailing. This next year will see yet more and we welcome as much participation as possible in the courses which will run in spring and autumn. I would like to say a very big thank you to Rob Mitchell for his fantastic work as training coordinator and I know that despite his new challenging role as Commodore he will be very active as a senior instructor. I would also like to welcome Rich Hole as the new training coordinator and I know he will be very proactive in his role which will include training new instructors up this year.

On the power boat side, which takes up most of my time I need to thank Mike Meloy for his continued hard work and dedication. We are in the process of putting forward six potential new instructors who will later this month undertake the RYA pre assessment. I wish them all well and I know they will be a huge asset to the club. As you will see from the calendar we have scheduled in power boat training weekends and I welcome any members to get in touch with any interest. We will also be running Wednesday and Thursday courses for those who would like to get in touch.

Finally a big thank you to all those who give up their spare time to support the club in all of its training and if you are interested in joining an enthusiastic growing team please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Mark Fordham- RYA Principal.

Gain RYA Qualifications in 2015!

Once again, we will be offering RYA training courses in 2015 for around half the cost of a commercial centre! We are very proud of our status as an RYA Training Centre, and all our courses are run by club members who hold RYA instructor qualifications.

The next courses will be run 25/26 April, 2/3/4 May and if you miss those, they will run again 5/6, 19/20, 26/27 September. The focus will be on beginner courses, but if there is demand we can also offer advanced courses. For adults, this is a combined Level 1 & 2 gained in the club's Vision or Wayfarer double-hander dinghies. For Youths (12 - 16 years) and Juniors (8 - 11 years) its a combined Stage 1 & 2 in the club's Toppers and Optibats. The cost is £140 for adults and £90 for youth/juniors. Application details are on the website Training page.

'Pay-and-play' to top up your skills. If you haven't the time for a full course, or you just want to brush up your skills, then why not try 'Pay-and-play'. For a flat fee of £40 you (and a friend if you wish) will receive half a day of instruction from one of the club's RYA Dinghy Instructors.

Power Boat qualifications. As well as sailing courses, you can also gain the RYA Power Boat Level 2 certificate to enable you to helm the club's safety boats.

Become an RYA Instructor. And if you want to get involved in delivering training, then we can also offer "Assistant Dinghy Instructor" and "Dinghy Instructor" training.

Check the website for full details, and if you have any questions, contact me.

Rich Hole, RYA Training Co-ordinator
training@chewvalleysailing.org.uk
07980 800615

From Bristol to the High Seas- Vicky Ellis

"In the history of this planet only a handful of women have ever led a crew around the world in a yacht race.

Vicky Ellis is one of them.

Rarely does life offer a challenge that demands such courage, determination and pure leadership"



At the age of 31, local sailor Vicky Ellis skippered the yacht 'Switzerland', one of the 12 entries in the Clipper race 2013-14, the only round the world yacht race for amateur crew. She trained and led an international team, from all walks of life, on board a stripped-out 70' ocean racing boat for the 11 month challenge of a lifetime. They raced across some of the planet's most remote and hostile oceans, facing storms and disasters.

Team Switzerland developed to become one of the highest performing teams on the race. With an impressive safety record they climbed from the bottom of the fleet to the top, achieving several podium triumphs and finishing 5th in the overall standings.

Fewer people have raced around the world than climbed mt Everest. Her talk will show why. With video footage from the race, stories of human endeavour and above all, the secrets of creating a safe, competitive and successful crew, capable of taking on one of the greatest challenges on the planet.

Vicky is a chartered engineer and professional offshore sailor/instructor and lives in Bristol with her husband/reluctant crew Laurie. She has been a member at Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club for much of the past 12 years, including 4 years on the University of Bristol sailing team and committee before bringing her radial and, later, Fireball to the club. A hobby dinghy sailor since her Oppy days, she enjoys getting out onto the lake when she can't make it to the sea.

Vicky is coming to Chew to give a talk about her sailing experiences on Wednesday 11th February at 7.30. 15

Lake and Cake

The very popular Ladies Lake n Cake sessions will start again on Sat 11 April afternoon!

Our sessions are great fun and good practice, encouraging everyone to get afloat and build their sailing skills. We plan according to what we need as a group - so it could be race start training, or a sail around the lake to look at the wildlife. But nothing is set in concrete - so please make suggestions for what you would like to do.

As I am by no means an expert sailor (but a competent baker I like to think) we will be relying on our trusty supporters to help get us afloat - Helen Martin and Laura Smith of course, with Steve Smith contributing his superb instruction, Steve Turner (and often Gus) on rescue boat, and Pete Sherwin taking newbies afloat in a club Vision, and offering rigging checks for example.

Please put these dates in your diaries. We'll continue with the usual format to meet in the bar 1.45pm, and get afloat for the afternoon, back on shore about 4pm for gentle de-briefing over generous amounts of cake.

Sat 11 April
Mon 4 May (Bank Hol)
Sat 6 June
Sat 4 July (Ladies Day)
Sat 1 August
Sat 5 Sep
Sat 3 Oct

The first session is on Sat 11 April. I'll email closer to the time to gather numbers, volunteers for cakes and preferences for the afternoon.

Please let me know if you would like to be included in the emails, or if you wish to be taken off the list.

And please tell others, its open to all lady sailors at any level of experience

Sarah Tauwhare
sarah.tauwhare@bristol.ac.uk

Tap Trophy, Boxing Day

Almost 20 hardy sailors braved the wet, cold and fairly windy conditions on Boxing Day afternoon to race for the Tap Trophy, correctly named as the mounted original water tap at Chew many, many years ago. (not a pretty trophy!).

Race Officer, Rob Mitchell, set a course almost as lengthy as the lake allowed to sort the men from the buoys! The first 2 laps were sailed in lighter winds from 10-12 knots, increasing to nearer 18 knots for the final round.

First to the windward mark was Alex Knight in a Musto Skiff, followed by Ben and Ros McGrane in a beautiful blue Merlin and John and Paul Smalley in a beautiful white Fireball!

The wind increased towards the 3rd and final lap. Alex was fully a half lap ahead, though struggling to fly his kite on the tighter legs. The Fireball finally passed the Merlin as they were able to trapeze on the reaches, but a spinnaker glitch meant they finished closely behind. Ed Presley in the Contender relished the last lap but had struggled in the earlier stages; he finished 5th.

Steve Smith in his Laser full rig sailed a solid race from start to finish and narrowly beat the Fireball into 4th place.

The Flying Fifteen contingent was lead throughout by Bill Chard and Ken Comrie. At the end of lap 2, Bill and Danny Pilgrim had left Keith 'Grumpy' Harris some way behind but, low and behold a miracle (it is Christmas!) – Keith and Claire banged the right corner and were miraculously back in the mix! Their final order was Bill, followed very closely by Keith and Danny. 6th and 7th places were closely fought between Andy Harris in his Europe and K. Moore in a Topper. The Topper was 30 seconds ahead at the end on corrected time.

Warm mulled cider was most welcome in the bar as we all tried to warm up, thanks to Laser fleet captain. Almost incredibly, Ben and Ros beat Alex Knight by a corrected, massive, 3 minutes after an hour's racing – impressive!

John Smalley

NB. A check on the results and handicaps afterwards revealed that the actual winner was Alex Knight in his Musto Skiff. Most importantly everyone had a great sail with close racing.

“In recognition of his commitment to keeping us sailing”

Alan Coventry, Hon Bosun, December 2014.

In November Force 4 Chandlery donated a ‘one off’ trophy to Chew. We decided we should award it to one of the unsung heroes of the club. Many, many members give their time willingly above and beyond the regular duties, so we had quite a long list, however this year we homed in on someone without whose hard work none of us could go sailing. For several years Alan Coventry was “apprentice” to Mike Bracey. When Mike decided to call it a day, Alan took over this vital role. He is at the club almost every Wednesday maintaining our ever increasing fleet of rescue boats.

It was with great pleasure that we presented the Force 4 barometer to Alan at the Wednesday sailors Christmas lunch to say “thank you and please keep going” on behalf of all the members.



Crewing Membership

At the 47th AGM, held on the 22nd of October 2014, I apposed a proposal re the introduction of “A Crewing Membership Group” with a maximum of 20 members; each of whom had to meet certain specific requirements. My objections to the proposal being that it did not take into account existing crewing members of the club. I made it perfectly clear that I was not against having crewing members as, at the last check, we already had 98 on the membership data base, thus making crewing membership something that already exists at the club.

Since that meeting I have been criticised by several member for my objecting to the proposal at the AGM; some of those critical of me I might add did not attend the AGM and so their comments fell on stony ground. Apart from other concerns that needed addressing, my main reasons for objecting to the proposal were because I felt that it did not take into account existing crewing members in that it imposed a limit on numbers; it also had age limitations; a greatly reduced annual subscription fee and was not open to existing or pre-existing members of the club.

The proposal was put to the vote at the AGM and it was not my lone hand that defeated the proposal, it was the majority who voted against the proposal as presented that defeated it, I think it is called democracy!

I am reminded by several “senior” member of the club that, in past years when it sometimes proved difficult to get a crew, the local schools and the corporate groups were approached and asked if they would like to crew a boat on a Sunday or Wednesday evening. In some cases friend/relations of members paid the weekly visitors fee to crew in the Wednesday evening series. Apparently the system worked very well and it did introduce some youngsters who had never sailed to the world of sailing. Isn't that we are trying to achieve?

During my years on the General Committee as Commodore, Vice President and President many members will tell you that I always championed the case for corporate groups; sometimes against the strong opposition of some General Committee members. My approach was always that any person/s has the right to apply for membership of the club without the need to know his sailing ability or indeed if he ever proposes to own a boat or sail.

The ethos of the club was and still is that every member has equal rights; no persons or group of persons has any more rights or control of the club than any other member. This is spelt out in our current Rule Book under the heading "The Objects of the Club".

One has to ask oneself why we are seeking to introduce a special group of members. Is it to support a specific requirement and if so does that mean that the applicant/s has to state his/her reason for wanting to join the club.

I restate that there already exists within the club a large group of members who are already "Crewing Members" and so why are we trying to introduce an elite group of just 20 crewing members?

Brian Brooks H2 Trustee

My First Year

I decided that it was time to get back in to dinghy sailing in Christmas 2013 and having not sailed anything without a fixed keel since I was at school I concluded that it would be advantageous to have some gentle introduction back in to the fold. The wonders of the internet brought me to the CVLSC website and the RYA1 & 2 course.

This sounded perfect for my needs and so I got in touch with Claire Jefferies about membership. She explained that there was a waiting list but suggested that I visit the club to have a look around in the meantime. I have to confess that my first thought was that I would have to find somewhere else (patience is not a virtue I am known for) but I thought it could do no harm to pop over and take a look.

Having navigated the difficulties of the entrance gate I took a wander around the club and found myself on the balcony of the club house watching the sailing on the lake. I was greeted by the two OODs of the day who could not have been more welcoming and were more than happy to talk to me about the club and getting back in to dinghy sailing, whilst always keeping an eye on the sailing of course!

As always, their bias towards which were the best boats were completely in line with their current prize possession but I would expect nothing less. However, the advice and the warmth of welcome sealed it for me, this is where I wanted to do my sailing. (The beauty of Chew in the sunshine probably helped too.)

Happily in April I was admitted for membership and took part in the course. Everything from that point onwards has reaffirmed the opinion I formed in my first visit, everyone I have met has a real passion for their hobby and have been so helpful to a (very) novice sailor.

Having made a good friend on the course we went out to hone our skills in the club Visions (a fantastic resource for those starting out) while we discussed what would be the perfect boat for us. Finally settling for an RS200 (bright yellow so you can't miss us), she has now been out a couple of times and we are slowly getting the hang of it. Again the fellow members of the RS200 fleet have been fantastically helpful in providing advice and guidance and the Asymmetric Sailing course that Nick Martingale has organised this winter, whilst a little advanced for me, is proving a really good testing ground.

In amongst all this excitement I also found myself volunteering to help the club in some capacity and being guided towards the role of Secretary. Taking over this role in October was little daunting I was assured by everyone that I would be fine because "Andrew has always done such a wonderful job of it"! No small shoes to fill then but I think I am slowly getting to grips with it. What is clear the more you get involved with this club is that the passion shown in relation to the sailing is mirrored in the passion for the club (as evidenced by the initial results from the survey) and the effort put in by those who volunteer to assist is truly inspiring. (I don't put myself in the category I just take the minutes of the meetings!)

All in all a great year and I am looking forward to my first summer season of sailing. Hopefully I will be able to keep the RS200 upright by then!

Simon Rowe

You're not too old to learn to sail.

I've been a CVLSC member for about 2.5 years, and prior to that I had never in my whole life set foot in a dinghy. With sons who had learnt to sail at school, I thought that maybe if I learnt to sail I could enjoy it with them. And so, as a 50th birthday present to myself I joined the club and enrolled in the level 1&2 training. It seemed like everyone else on the course knew at least a little bit e.g. from having crewed for somebody. And here was me, who thought that hiking was what you did in the hills and a boom was the noise of thunder! Still, with the patient encouragement from Rob and his team of instructors, I successfully completed the training and found myself hooked on sailing.

Of course, what teenage sons want to sail with their mum? So double-handers were out, and I bought myself a single-hander and found myself developing friendships with other ladies who sailed single-handers. I even felt guilty about enjoying myself so much. As a mum I was so used to spending my life doing things for my family that it didn't feel right to be doing something for myself! However, my boys were very supportive of my new-found hobby, and so I continued, eventually finding my way into the handicap racing.

Any mum who taxis their children to and from the Chew Crew sailing, or any wife or partner of a sailor, I would encourage you to give it a go. You never know; you might find yourself enjoying sailing even more than they do. And lake&cake is a brilliant way to be encouraged in your sailing at the same time as socialising and developing friendships.

About 9 months ago I joined the General Committee as somebody who hadn't been a member so long that they had forgotten what it's like to be new. To those of you who are new(-ish) members, if you've got any questions, concerns, things you're not sure of, or if you'd simply like a coffee and a chat, please come and find me.

Cathy Bartram



RS200s at Chew

The RS200 fleet continues to swell in numbers with two new boats joining us over recent months.

First up...Dave Bonstow and Simon Rowe have rejuvenated one of the older boats in the fleet and are raring to get on the racecourse – you can't miss them, bright yellow hull with appropriate name, "Yellow Peril" or is it "Top Banana" I don't recall.

Then Nigel Snedker has traded in his singlehanded days to sail a 200 with his daughter. Unfortunately no sooner was the deal done than a torn ligament put a halt to any sailing and unlikely to be seen on water til May or thereabouts.

Meanwhile we've had a usual quiet spell over the Winter series and now into the Frostbite. I've braved it on a few occasions along with Martyn Stubbs and Yvonne.

The Asymmetric training sessions being run by Pete Vincent over the winter months are proving popular with the 200s. The first on 24th Jan attracted 8 boats covering a wide range of racing experience, with all given something to think about by Pete. A further 3 Sessions are scheduled for Saturdays on 21st Feb, 21st March and one April/May tbc. The training is intended for any double-handed, non-trapeze asymmetrics so RS400s, Laser 2000s and the like are all catered for - get in touch for more details.

Nick Martindale- RS200 848

Chew Crew

Chew Crew is the rapidly expanding section of CVLSC and aims to get young people from 8-18 (or until they leave school) on the water on Sunday mornings. Children use club boats to start with before progressing to their own boats. The 2015 season begins on 26 April 2015. Chew Crew is run by volunteers and parents and is not an RYA course. However, we do broadly follow the RYA curriculum and use qualified instructors to get children understanding basic sailing theory and boat handling. Once they are competent children go on to join our challenge group and begin racing in the club's Sunday races. From there it's up to them how far they go. The next step within the club is our youth Racing Squad, again on Sunday mornings. Our youth racing squad are sailing through the winter too as the club is organising external instruction and training both at home and away.

To sign up for Chew Crew please email Jackie and Claire on cvlsccrewcrew@gmail.com to register your interest. Registration forms will be available on the website from March.

Date for your diary

Junior Prize Giving Sunday 28th June with club barbecue -all members invited.

Instructors Wanted

With our ever growing youth squad we need more instructors for Junior Sundays. Any sailor parents who are interested in doing the instructors course please get in touch.

Topper News

After the manic summer of "Chew Crew", with Toppers everywhere each Sunday, things quietened down considerably for most over the winter. However Chew has had great success in qualifying for the RYA Topper Squads with Frances, James, Murray, Ben, Kieran & Mary all off around the country over the winter attending squad training. By the time this is published most of the above will have attended the Topper Winter Champs at Weymouth; good luck!

Its been great to see a bit of a resurgence in the Topper fleet with up to six Toppers out racing on Sundays. There have also been several race training sessions at Chew attended by brave souls. Well done to all who came. We had a mix of abilities which was good as the less experienced could learn from the others. Racing is a great way of learning as a bit of competition is a marvellous incentive for trying to improve! We have two more sessions organised for February 22nd and March 15th. Top coach Ed Jones is running these sessions and best of all the RYA are paying! Let me know if you are interested in attending.

Finally it will soon be April and the start of another great year of Chew Crew. Hope to see you there.

Julian Cooke

Health and Safety

At present the General Committee are in the process of discussing changes to the manning of the safety boats on the lake. At present the precise details have not been finally agreed, but we hope to be able to inform members about these changes in the next month or so.

However as part of our continued development of safety boat handling skills, the club has set up a mentorship scheme whereby some more highly trained volunteers can offer support and advice to anyone in the duty team involved with safety on the lake. We want to do this in a friendly and informal way, so that anyone can feel happy discussing any issue. The mentor will normally suggest and encourage the safety boat helms to spend a while with them on the water honing their skills. This will normally be near the beginning of their duty. At present (Jan 2015), we have 8 trained mentors and another 6 training in the pipeline. We are currently offering our services to each Saturday duty team and will endeavour to contact them by phone before. As we get more mentors we hope to extend and develop this service. To do this we will need more mentors. If you are interested in becoming a mentor yourself, or have any questions about the scheme, please feel free to contact the H & S officer, Charlie Tricks at: health-safety@chewvalleysailing.org.uk

Charlie Tricks

