

# Newsletter No 1

## May 2007



Charity No. 1105212

### A brief history of your Sailability Group

Founded in 2000 as an off-shoot from Lymington, with two 203 Access dinghies, one new 303 and the electrically controlled 203, it stayed in the doldrums for a couple of years and very nearly fell apart in 2002 when two volunteers and the secretary left. This all happened just as Rory joined, but I assure you it had nothing to do with me!!

2002 also saw the gift of a double boat from Bransgore with a second one from RYA Sailability, but the financial system was in dire straights.

In February 2003 we advertised for volunteers in the local press and were astounded to find that about 20 people offered their services. The group suddenly took off. That year we increased our sailing hours on a Tuesday from 12 noon - 4pm to 10am - 5pm and operated a 4 shift system based on alternate Tuesdays. Later that year, as demand grew, we also started to open on Fridays with a bare minimum of volunteers though far more people came and still come for a whole day every week.

In April we held a street collection in Ringwood which brought in about £300 and started to attend the local carnivals - Bransgore Fun Day, Ferndown and Ringwood Carnivals. Each brought more funds. The local press printed articles and people started to talk about us.



In 2005 Mike Shand, New Forest District Council Chairman, made us his Charity of the Year. With these funds we bought an Access 303 and the Chairman of Ferndown Golf Club, together with Peter Alliss, gave us another.

In 2006 more of Mike Shand's funds and a grant from Awards for All enabled us to buy the two International 2.4 metre boats that you see on the water.



## **Problems!**

We have had two major problems over the years. One is the weed. Normally this manifests itself in June or July but this year - in April - it is already bad. We have tried before to get the lake dragged. Will it be done this year? Will it solve the problem?

The second problem is with Wessex Water. The lake is a reservoir and when the population of Bournemouth gets thirsty they start to take water away. Spinnaker Club's lease permits them drop the level of the lake by 2.5 metres! Our dedicated pontoon - the grey one - becomes unusable.

Your committee has been discussing this for years. Problems have arisen due to the shape of the lake bed and the steepness of the slope when the water is really low. We hope that we have now found a solution though Eric and Rob are still working on the design with Walcon. The black pontoon near the clubhouse will be replaced by a marina-type wooden floored pontoon with a much bigger "T" on the end. This will support two new hoists, giving us three in all. The hoists are here - some of you will have seen them in the shed.

Funding for this has been achieved after much hard work (paper work) by Rory during the winter. The Hanson Concrete Charitable Trust has given us a grant for £10,000; the Gannet Trust (Salisbury Newspapers) has awarded £5,000 and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Foundation (Sports Relief) a further £5,000.

We also applied to Awards for All for £5,000 but have not been awarded a grant. However, there is enough in our own funds to cover the purchase price of approximately £25,000.

## **Geoff Holt's Expedition**

Geoff is a member of our group. Follow his voyage on [www.personaleverest.com](http://www.personaleverest.com). Two of our members are supporting him - Spike on the water and Mike Golden on land.

## **Lyn goes Swimming!**

Did you hear about Lyn's episode last year? She wrote:

"Single Access. Very strong gust resulted in mainsheet becoming very firmly cleated. All efforts to release unsuccessful. Boat tipped 'till gunwale vertical and both hands on sheet. I was tipped into water. I remained with the boat. No problem!"

As a result of this and with a grant from the RYA we have purchased the Orange Peril that you have seen on the water this year. It enables us to lower the bow to pull a person with very severe disabilities into the boat.

## Access Travellers!

Keith and Jenny have been sailing in the Access Traveller Events this year though Keith has been very unlucky with the weather - not enough wind at Nottingham and too much at Frensham. However, Jenny braved the elements!

### Baptism of fire - with water - at Frensham by Jenny Monger

Peter, Rory and Jenny set off from the Spinnaker Sailing Club at 8 am. Well, we were supposed to! Unfortunately the tow hitch of Keith's boat was locked and no one had the key. So quick thinking from Rory had us all changing over the trailers so that Keith's boat could still get to the venue. We just made it in time to sign in before the briefing where we were talked through the flag systems for starting and the course. I was borrowing one of Frensham's dinghies for the racing. Keith was waiting to be put on board but he decided that the weather was too rough after watching some of the others having trouble staying upright and I do not blame him, I often wondered if I had made the right decision to sail.

I was totally unprepared for the rough weather - in experience and clothing, I had not expected it to be rough so did not even take a coat with me let alone the wet weather gear needed for the waves breaking on the lake. The weather had previously been 20°C in the sun, today it was wind force 5-6-7 at times. Fortunately Peter lent me his Sailability jacket and gloves, and I was very grateful as the water was coming over the side and the gloves certainly prevented me from getting rope burns when the wind whipped the sail out of my grip.



My first obstacle was getting to the start line without being capsized; it certainly was a day to try out this boat's stability. I did surprise myself by staying upright - just about. The first buoy was so far across the lake that I could not see it from the start line. I asked one competitor where the first buoy was and he just laughed!

My start was OK, not the first over the line but up with them. All was well until my first tack. Worried about other boats, I left it too late, luffed up and had problems getting going again. 30 minutes later I was wondering if I would ever get past that buoy and when I did, oh wow! what a relief! With the wind behind me I could now relax for a while. The 3<sup>rd</sup> buoy was OK as well, but at the 4<sup>th</sup> I kept heading up into the wind too much and it just blew me backwards. I struggled to find the right angles to take me in the right direction. I could imagine Rory on the side lines, saying "no, don't do it that way, pull in the sail harder" etc. etc. But the wind was so strong I could hardly pull the sail in at all. A safety boat helped me to tighten the outhaul and I managed to sail the next lap in 15 minutes. Tip: make sure that the outhaul does not slip!

At one point the wind just blew the sail round the front of the mast taking the boom off completely. Fortunately a safety boat came along and put it back on but by that time the race had finished and we all went in for lunch. I decided not to sail in the afternoon - 2 hrs in a howling gale was very exhausting.

I learnt a lot at this baptism of fire with water, mainly to keep on checking that the outhaul is tight, that the main sail hasn't got too loose and not to let the boat point too far into the wind (sail flapping), to pull in the main sail really tight when sailing close to the wind.

Keith gave me a good tip, if the wind is on the right side of your sail; you are in the right, meaning boats coming from the opposite tack have to give way to you. Also watch out for others coming up on the inside at the marks.

Perhaps you would like to give it a go too. It is worth the effort even if you come last like I did, after all someone has to prop up the winners.

Thank you to Peter for taking us, thank you to Rory for organising it and getting the boats ready for Keith and me - very much appreciated.

\* \* \* \* \*

Rory says: I thought Jenny did extremely well to complete the course in these conditions. We don't usually let sailors out when it is that windy! We found out later that during the afternoon race one boat had tipped its sailor out - just like Lyn! And several were swamped.

If anyone wants to see what conditions were like at Frensham, and get some hints on sailing in such conditions, Rory has made a DVD - cost £2.00 - profit to Sailability.

## **Forthcoming Events**

[Help is needed for most of these events - see Rob](#)  
[Please see Club notice board for further details](#)

Wednesday 13 June: Treloar Trust. About 12 children, all in wheel chairs.

Monday 25 June: Monday Club. 10am - 3pm. They provide a BBQ!

Saturday 7th July: Ferndown Carnival

Tuesday 24 and Friday 27 July **No sailing.**

**Friday 27 July** **Volunteers' BBQ. Sorry, no sailors.**

Wednesday 15 August: Access Travellers **HERE**

Monday 20 August: Monday Club. 10 am - 3pm Another BBQ!

1 - 16 September Southampton Boat Show - to be run by RYA but they need our help!

Saturday 15th Sept. Ringwood Carnival - stall on the Bickerley and Evening Procession

**Keith has offered to produce the next newsletter. Articles to him, please!**

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