



## BLACKWELL SAILING

### 2016 Newsletter



#### **Cold Start/ New Groups**

We have been lucky with the weather being mostly dry for the first half of the season, but at the end of April we had a very cold spell and for the first time we were sailing with the snow covered fells all around us!

A new group from Beaumont College, Barrow, booked some sailing sessions and started off very well. Their group leader, Nigel Prescott, used to bring students from Lindeth College (before they closed down) and some of the students he now brings used to come sailing with George Hastwell School so we are very pleased to welcome them back.

Whinfell School, Kendal, have returned with a group of boys who have not sailed before and they have also been very enthusiastic. The school used to come for both sailing and canoeing a few years ago but they now have their own canoes which they can take to different locations.

#### **Very Wet Winter!**

Everyone in Cumbria was affected by the floods in some way and some people in Kendal are still waiting to move back into their homes. Here at Blackwell Sailing we were lucky because our purpose built building has proved to be above the flood line. We always expect the little round building on the quayside to flood but prepare for this by removing or hanging things up that would get spoiled. Some of our neighbours are not so lucky and were badly affected, as in 2009. The picture shows how the floating jetty looks when the water level comes up so high.



Our longest standing sailing group, from Whinfell Centre, were very much affected and their building was flooded to a depth of 7 feet! The water was contaminated with

sewage and oil from the central heating tank so the contents of their building were all wrecked and worse than that, the County Council decided it would not be worth re-opening the centre. The service users from Whinfell Centre are now relocated at other day service units in Kendal.

### **Linking up with Glenridding Sailing Centre**

As a part of our volunteer training program this year we have had two “away days” at Glenridding where one of our instructors, Linnhe, also works. They were able to offer our volunteers some training in Whammel boats (because they have even more of them than us!) A total of 15 volunteers took advantage of this excellent opportunity and benefitted from a very high standard of tuition and some fine weather, though the wind was rather light on the Monday.

Volunteers and other Blackwell sailors might be interested to know that the centre offers a “Ready About” discount of 25% on boat hire for locals and their Whammels are almost as good as our own! (tel. 017684 82541) We are very grateful to Linnhe and the rest of the instructor team for also giving us a good discount for the volunteers.



### **New Boat**

At the beginning of June a new boat was launched for Will Clark, Steve Hague and others to sail. It is an RS Venture Keel with special equipment added to ensure that people with limited mobility can sail it. The boat is large enough to take extra crew and performs very well. It has been funded with money from a Westmorland Gazette appeal that was originally for an off-road bike for

Will. Steve gave the largest donation and when the project failed to work out they decided that a sailing boat would be the best alternative. The boat has now been sailed by both Will and Steve in various weather conditions and has been named *June Hague* after Steve's Mother.

The story of the new boat has now been reported in both the Westmorland Gazette and Windermere Now local papers

### **Capsize!!**

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> we experienced an unexpected capsizing when one of our Whammel boats, Frieda, was caught by a gust of wind while the crew were getting ready to gybe. We are pleased to report that the water was quite warm(!), the rescue went smoothly and the group who went through the experience, from Chrysalis Day Service, coped with it very well. They are still happy to come sailing and have actually booked some extra sessions since the incident. So we are relieved that they have not been put off the activity and thank the volunteers and the visiting staff who

kept calm throughout, which in turn helped the rest of the crew to take it in their stride.

The care staff reported that some of the group were actually very excited about the capsize when they got back to Wigton and felt they had a really good story to tell. We do try to keep the boats upright and certainly do not wish to frighten people, but when something like this happens we do talk about it afterwards to see what we can learn from it. Here are some of the points we picked up on....

- Everyone must remember to bring spare clothes.
- Buoyancy aids must be in good condition and always properly fastened.
- We must always rescue the wet sailors as quickly as possible and worry about the boat afterwards.
- When you know you can't sink it's not so scary!

### **New mast for May Dora**

Early on in the season we realised that May Dora would need a new mast because the repairs we made to the old one might not last the whole season. Some of you might remember that Frieda had a new mast last year (after nearly 20 years of use). The masts are laminated and now made out of Douglas Fir which is a heavier wood but it should also be stronger and more resistant to rot. Our re-fitting of the mast has



been delayed because when it was first delivered from the mast maker it was square all the way up (instead of just at the base) and had to be sent back to be rounded!

### **Vital Group camping weekend**

This year we held the event on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> July and it was well attended. It also tied in with Adrian Moore's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Because he arrived later on – after his party in Kendal – an evening sail was organised and then the Red Arrows flew past! WOW who organised that?

### **Flotilla Day**

On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August we had another special day and sailed to Hodge How for a picnic and ice cream. This time it was a chance for people from Kendal to come sailing with their residential care staff, who don't often have the opportunity. We had groups from Peat Lane House, Lowther Parks and Manor Barn. Some of our other regular sailors joined in too and

we borrowed some extra boats to fit everyone in.

Once again we were very lucky with the weather and had a very good picnic next to the lake. We are very grateful to Windermere School for lending us this venue for both this event and the Vital Group camping weekend. Generally the day went very well but we did have a couple of mishaps. While getting ready to go one of our crew fell in the water! He was not hurt but needed to get changed. The other incident happened after the picnic on the way back when in the gusty conditions the yard (spar along the top of the mainsail) on May Dora broke in two.

## Residential Week at Plas Menai

Once again the Horticare Group from Kendal were able to have a week of water based activities at the National Sailing Centre at Plas Menai. They were lucky to have dry weather, lots of wind for the sailing and an action packed time with some different and challenging activities. They sailed the J80s again and on one occasion had to paddle the canoes against the wind and tide. The fishing expedition was a big success and the group caught a record number of crabs (38) as well as having the chance to drive the fishing boat. Every member of the group said that they had a fantastic time and would like to go again if they have chance.



## Extra Support for Next Season

The children of Vicarage Park School in Kendal have voted to support us as their chosen charity for the current academic year. We are very pleased to hear about this



and wish them luck with their fundraising projects. This has come about because Lesley Wallace, who teaches at the school, nominated us this summer and Oli Cunningham, who has been sailing with us, also pitched in and supported the nomination. (Shown here sailing with his mum, Julie).

We have won a place, through Virgin Money Giving charity ballot, for Lesley to run in the

2017 London Marathon so we will be able to sponsor her and cheer her on next March.

## Acknowledgements

Since our last newsletter we are grateful for the support/donations we have had from: Frieda Scott Charitable Trust, Harold and Janet Lefton, Sir John Fisher Foundation, St. James's Place Foundation, Simon McCleery and team of swimmers, Douglas McCleery, Rotary Club of Windermere, Maiden Marine, Mark Hancock, Remap, Cate Davies, Rothera Family Trust, Goacher Sails, Glenridding Sailing Centre, Alan Nowell, Pat and Peter Lennon, Kevin Hughes, Windermere School, Steve and Gill Riley, RYA Foundation.

*Life through Sailing- Sailing through Life*

