



Waldringfield Sailing Club

Newsletter

Autumn 2021

Our Centenary Year



Centenary Regatta weekend

Photo: Robert Deaves

Covid restrictions were firmly in place at the beginning of the season and we did not know how much sailing, let alone how much partying, we could do. It has turned out surprisingly well.

Club sailors were back on the water for the first time with a slightly shortened Centenary Easter Egg competition. Around 60 boats came out to sail, despite our being unable to welcome visitors. The weather was grey and chilly but the sailing shook us out of our winter hibernation. A splendid centenary cake was made by Cathy and John Fish, and every sailor had a piece on their way home.

The weather eventually warmed up so the Centenary Regatta saw a gentle drift for the Friday evening Birketts trophies followed by a hot meal from the galley outside in the evening light – and one rain shower! The shore events, including the traditional running and rowing, were their usual hit with children and families, while yachts opted to do a timed passage up from Felixstowe. The dinghy classes raced on Saturday and Sunday in rather more wind, and dinghies, yachts and the Harwich ILB joined the centenary sailpast, making a colourful show at the club. The weekend ended with the traditional Yachtsman's Service, with Covid restrictions allowing the Excelsior Silver band to play and everyone to sing for the first time this year.

In July the rain held off so that 200 club members could enjoy a hog roast (and vegan option), spread out along the river bank. Aartwork played their fiddle and guitar, giving a cheerful feel, so club members,

old and new, and of all ages, were able to relax and chat together.

By now, open meetings were happening 'normally'. This year's events included the Wayfarer Eastern Championships, the delayed Squib 50th event, and the Dragonfly Worlds. Further afield, club members became National Champions in the ILCA6 (Laser Radial – Daisy Collingridge), Cadet (Hannah Carruthers and George Cox-Olliff), and National 12 (Tom and Isobel Stewart). A remarkable achievement.

In September the Centenary Cartoon Open was held in gentle breezes, with large fleets of RS200s and Larks. The race officer managed to fit in five of the six races and the results were notable for having two octogenarians in the prizes: Dawn Larkman crewing for her son Fred were second Dragonfly. Meanwhile Gordon Harris with grandson Jamie convincingly won the Wayfarer trophy.

The 'WSC at 100' evening brought memories old and new, while David Moon's renowned Quiz Night was the usual challenge, won this year by the 'Laser Sharp' team. The 'Sailing in 1921' evening featured diary excerpts of sailing Clytie in the 1920-30s, and the end of the season brings the Club's AGM.

Centenary clothing has been worn with pride, and cheered many a gathering with the variety of colours. Centenary mugs have been given in prizes and are still available to buy (£7 each). Then the centenary book is still to come, capturing the club's activities over 100 years, including this celebratory year. It has been a season to remember.

Anne Spalding



Go Sailing

Commented Kevin Ward: I started the year without a clue about sailing and turned up at a Go Sailing session with Oriel feeling very nervous and apprehensive. However, I was made to feel very welcome and ended up in a boat with Kieran, who was fantastic, clearly one of the most patient men on the planet. We had great fun, learnt a lot and returned the following week.

Over the course of the season I've been encouraged and pushed by Oriel and her wonderful group of volunteers and thanks to their help, I've ended up managing to sail twice a week most of the time, including most Wednesday night races and a few weekend races, including the Cartoon series. Oriel has also welcomed my son Ollie on a regular basis. Her help getting him some helming practice has been brilliant as the plan is for him to helm a Cadet next year, but there was little chance for him to gain experience this year. Oriel communicated with the Cadet team and they worked a plan between them.

Oriel's work with the Go Sailing programme has been absolutely fantastic for us. It's given me the confidence to go out in races, it's introduced me to



Enjoying a gentle day

Photo: Alexis Smith

lots of people and I've learnt a massive amount – albeit with plenty still to learn. It's also helped Ollie immensely and has enabled him to work towards bridging the gap just a bit between him and the more experienced kids moving to helming next year.

Keith Vincett, a Go Sailing helper, says:

Go Sailing is an enjoyable way to pass on our love of sailing while discharging our commitment to do club duties. Those coming to Go Sailing are mixture of a few that have never sailed; a lot that have done a bit a long time ago, are rusty and need a refresher; and some that have done RYA training, often as a foreign holiday. The latter want more practice, and often have not rigged boats because the staff spoil the customers! Almost no one wants to go for a ride, they want to learn and practice.

As the date for the next session approaches, Oriel sends out a request for helpers. There is no compulsion but, so far as I can tell, she is never short of them. We then get another email telling us who we get – or who gets us! This often changes on the day, thanks to who actually turns up and the vagaries of the weather. So I have met a lot of new people from various backgrounds, some having already joined, some owning their own dinghy and some planning to do so. It's all great fun, and it is easier than if we were on our own: the shore team and others help to pull the boat up the slip and put it away much quicker than otherwise.

Years ago, when the club started training, it owned no boats so dinghies were borrowed and, later, also hired. Today the club owns an impressive number which are available to club members to use for a modest donation. Quite apart from Go Sailing, they provide an opportunity for members to go for a cruise, try a different class, or for racing crews to helm. To find out how to borrow them, look on the club's website.



The waiting shore team

Photo: Anne Spalding



Go Yachting: Orford Cruise

Six yachts took part in the Orford Cruise in September. These were Aquagem (Phil and Jane Hall); Barcarolle (John and Gillian Shambrook); Blue Spirit (Geoff and Sue Sinton); Moonbeam (John Palmer and Anne Barnes); Rikasa (Mike and Rosemary Nunn) and Wandering Star (Peter and Ann Thubron).

Five yachts left Waldringfield together at 11 o'clock on Saturday morning under engine, sails up before



A hilarious lunch was enjoyed by all. Anne, Jane and Mike took charge of the cooking and attempted to organise us.

We enjoyed a varied and delicious spread of sausages, burgers, minted lamb and scallops, accompanied by a range of salads and wine, and followed by ice creams for some, from the Orford van in the nearby carpark. The feast was rounded off with a glass of Madeiran rum kindly provided by the Nuns.

In the evening, some of us paid a visit to Blue Spirit. We were then all invited on board Barcarolle for 6pm drinks where we huddled together in the cockpit out of the strengthening easterly wind. Gillian ran a superb bar from her cockpit.

On the Monday, we took the last of the ebb tide down river and anchored near the entrance. We waited for enough water on the Bar for us to sail out of the River Ore and enjoy a sail all the way back to Waldringfield. It was good to see the Sintons on their new yacht and to have the Aquagem crew joining a Yacht Class cruise for the first time. Our thanks go to John Palmer and Anne Barnes for organising this excellent cruise.

Jane Hall

the Felixstowe Ferry moorings, and sailed over the bar, still fairly close together. Blue Spirit followed later. A light/moderate SW breeze gave us a broad reach up the coast, a near perfect sail. The Orford Harbour Master was able to give us all moorings for the two days.

On Saturday evening, we were all able to enjoy an evening meal outside at the Jolly Sailor where we were joined by George and Jane Rolls, who arrived by road.

On Sunday, we woke to magnificent weather. A lunch-time BBQ in Orford Sailing Club's garden had been arranged, and Candy Masters was kindly on hand to help with the Club's magnificent gas barbecue. We were joined by John and Jenny Chaplin, together with Bridget Dearlove and Liz Shambrook, who arrived by road to join us for lunch.



Gillian's Bar on Barcarolle



Junior Sailing



Cadet racing

Photo: Alexis Smith

Starting the year with Covid restrictions still in place led to the established Junior Sailing sessions being abandoned once more. Undeterred, and determined to get kids on the water, we set about getting our current crews teaming up to practice their helming skills, and some of the existing helms taking out new crews. We were operating on a week-by-week basis, unsure if restrictions would stop us again. Our aim was to create new teams in the Cadet fleet and get them racing. Hazel Whittle did a great job coaching these new pairings. Existing parents coached the crews, and our amazing Cadet helms were superb, motivating and teaching the new crews. These are the views of three new members, all new to Cadets, racing at Waldringfield this year.

Primrose (age 8):

I love sailing at Waldringfield. I feel part of a team being in a Cadet. Sailing inspires me to get out in the fresh air and not stay at home. I love racing and feel safe with Gwen in the boat with me. She

has taught me a lot from the start. My favourite thing is playing the spinnaker. It's great fun. Even if we don't win, I still have a good time with Gwen. The other children at Waldringfield are really friendly and kind. When we have finished sailing, I love playing in the trees and marshes and going swimming with all of my friends. I have several hobbies but sailing is my favourite.

Daniel (age 13):

I began sailing at Waldringfield Sailing Club in May 2021 after doing stages 1 - 3 of the RYA dinghy training a couple of years earlier. I hadn't done dinghy sailing for a couple of years due to the pandemic and I felt that it was something I wanted to take up again. I started by taking part in Saturday Cadet workshops, and I was very quickly offered a space as a crew on Wednesday night races. This proved to be lots of fun, and I learnt a lot about crewing. Since May I have also taken part in a couple of regattas - one at Grafham Water as crew as well as one at



Primrose

Photo: Alexis Smith



Waldringfield as a helm. I have sailed with several different people who are different ages to me and it has been really good to make new friends. I have



Daniel

Photo: Alexis Smith

found that everyone is always willing to help and is very welcoming.

I really enjoy being out on the river as well as the competitive challenges of the races. It is a great way to unwind and enjoy the great outdoors away from the stress and hard work of school! In the future I hope to continue to build my experience as a crew as well as developing my skills as a helm. I have already taken part in several training courses and I have found these extremely valuable. I know that the sailing club will help me to grow as a sailor. My dream would be to go to the Cadet World Championships in Australia next year.

Henry (age 14):

I was used to sailing just a few times a year on holidays. I could take a boat onto the water and sail comfortably but I knew very little theory. I felt out of my depth sailing anything with anyone but myself on board, let alone racing.

In April, for the first time, I went sailing at Waldringfield on a two-person dinghy called a Cadet. It was a sort of trial sailing morning for new sailors hoping to become helms. I was extremely anxious. I

soon discovered that actually there was a lot more to sailing than I realised. I sailed very poorly, so much so that I capsized.

I was looking forward to coming back the following Saturday to improve. This was due to the warmth of the club; all the coaches were kind and helpful, telling me and the other new helms pointers on how to improve.

For the following weeks I went to a Cadet workshop where old Cadet helms who were now young adults taught us how to race Cadets. We were taught how to set yourself up before a race; how to start a race; how to hoist a spinnaker; how to take down a spinnaker; how to navigate and pick a course to avoid the currents; rights of way within sailing; how to rig your Cadet, how to de-rig your Cadet... and that is just to name a few of the skills we were taught.



Henry

Photo: Alexis Smith

Once I felt comfortable, I started racing on Wednesdays. Wednesday racing was a great start into racing. It was only one race in the evening with other fairly new helms. This was where I first realised how friendly the other kids are at the club, always asking if they could help you rig up and answering your questions.

In around five months I now have my own Cadet which I race almost every week. I have taken part in lots of events at the club and am looking forward to seeing what next season brings. I haven't capsized since my first day at Waldringfield.



Daisy Pulls it Off

Waldringfield has produced its fair share of National Champions but probably none as exciting as Daisy Collingridge. She cut her teeth in the WSC Cadet class and is now the Laser Radial National Champion after a tight week of racing at Weymouth in August against some of the best singlehanded sailors in the country! She has followed up this success with an amazing result in the European Senior Championships in Bulgaria, winning one race and finishing seventh overall against the hottest of European female sailors.

She is now preparing for the World Championships in December, in the unfamiliar waters of Oman. The club is massively proud of her achievements... so far.

After a brief flirtation with the 420 class, sailing with Willow Bland, Daisy recalls her first proper experience of a Laser, sitting with Pip Dearlove on the bow of Charlie Dearlove's boat. They were planing at top speed on a wild Waldringfield afternoon... a 'poop poop' (Toad of Toad Hall) moment which led her to muscle her way into the RYA Transition Squad. She remembers struggling at first to rig a Laser and she spent much of the winter swimming in the



All photos: ILCA

murky depths of Weymouth Bay. Little did she know that, some years later, this would be the scene of her latest championship triumph.

Daisy's first goal was to make it as one of the top two girls in the Youth Squad. This was no mean feat in itself, involving massive commitment and hard graft, in a mixed group of highly competitive and determined youngsters. She admits to being terrified of the boys in her first couple of training squads but at her first international event, the Europeans in Poland, she finished 11th in variable conditions which she likens to Waldringfield.

Ironically her main competitor within the Squad,

and now a good friend, Matilda Nichols is a member of Aldeburgh YC. One point separated the two girls in the Youth Worlds in Medemblik which Daisy then followed up with a tremendous bronze medal in the ISAF Youth Olympics in China. There was no great pressure on her at the time and no particular expectations. Sleeping on the floor of the airport was an inauspicious start to the event but Daisy sailed each race as it came



and carved out a consistent set of decent results.

At this point she was in her last year of school, squeezing in her revision for 'A' Levels whilst being encouraged by her coaches to press on with the goal of qualification for the British Sailing Team. Team selection opened the door to a measure of funding from UK Sport, based on

results and with intensive training for two weeks every month. Portugal was chosen as an ideal training camp as it was cheap for accommodation and allowed for interaction with other national teams, including a Danish laser superstar Anne-Marie Rindom, who Daisy singles out for inspiration: 'She is quite simply fast all the time, always knowing where to go and what to do... she just makes no mistakes!'

Daisy admits to liking the windier conditions now, particularly as she is probably the fittest she has ever been, with regular trips to the gym. This involves a mix of strength-and-conditioning work and time on her bike, which has helped to increase her base level of fitness. A strength-and-conditioning coach has taught her how to use the gym equipment to maximum effect, and she now has the power in her legs to hike for England... literally. Her victory in the ILCA6 (Radial) National Championships in



Weymouth was the culmination of a rigorous training regime. Although the points were tight, Daisy led the results for the whole week but picking up a 'U' flag (premature start) halfway through the week did not make for an easy finish in a one-discard event. Scoring a 4th in the penultimate race and a 2nd in the final race was enough to give her the title against the best Radial sailors in the country.

Daisy puts her success down to spending a huge amount of time on the water. Luckily the structure of her degree course at Bath University allows her to do this. The Psychology Course she is sitting involves minimal contact hours with recorded lectures and assignments which she can undertake around her sailing. At the same time as studying how the human mind works, she is learning the finer points of sailing a Laser fast; how to read the conditions, make a race plan and develop a strategy which also involves some

classroom work in Weymouth. Her coach, James Gray, who was originally with the Laser boys, has a keen eye for detail, and Daisy recognises the value of a post-race debrief which her supportive parents will undoubtedly have encouraged in her Cadet days.

The Club is privileged to have such a talented sailor amongst its competitive ranks and we all wish Daisy every success in what will be an exciting few years ahead of her.

Patrick Cooney



Commodore Rob Bellfield ADC CBE

Royal Navy

In the Queen's Birthday Honours earlier this year WSC member Rob Bellfield was made a CBE for his work as Commander of the Devonport Flotilla and Commander Coalition Task Force Sentinel in the Gulf.

Rob's career has largely been at sea and supporting operations, much of it based in the West Country. We are now delighted to see him return to Waldringfield, and the decision to award him a CBE was no doubt influenced by his efficient handling of the WSC Centenary Sailpast, conducted with military planning and precision.

Rob recalls the day he caught the train from Ipswich Station to start his naval journey at the Britannia Royal Naval College:

'Hours of ironing kit, learning drills on the parade ground, being "beasted" in the gym, interspersed with quality time sailing on the River Dart in both yachts and dinghies. My first deployment was to the West Indies with the Dartmouth Training Squadron, living in the messdecks, alongside the sailors getting to know life on the "lower deck" and having an appreciation of the work done by those we will lead in the future.'

Rob's early career included time in minehunters, fishery protection vessels and frigates; operating in every sphere of Royal Navy maritime operations, in UK waters, the Far East, the Gulf, South Atlantic and the West Indies. Rob remembers a magnificent day spent in the BVIs when he borrowed a Squib from the Commodore of Tortola Yacht Club and, stopping off in Brandywine Bay, they happened across a WSC member on his yacht – a small world.

He went on to command the Type 23 frigates Grafton (Ipswich's ship), Portland and Argyll and was second in command of the carrier Ark Royal. He has now swapped these giant vessels to take charge



of a Dragonfly and an OK on the calmer Waldringfield waters. He is clearly intent on encouraging the resurgence of both classes. A highly competitive Lark and Laser sailor in earlier times, he offered his time back to the sport as a member of the UK Mirror Class National Committee and Chairman of the GBR 420 Class Association.

Time ashore was spent running North Atlantic anti-submarine operations from the 'bunker' at Northwood, training junior officers at Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth and, post-command, the inevitable tour at the Ministry of Defence

in London. Commanding maritime operations in the Arabian Gulf has been a feature of recent times, including the US/UK/AUS Coalition Task Force Sentinel providing the deterrence most of last year against Iranian interference in merchant shipping traffic. Command of the Devonport Flotilla was the most rewarding assignment, responsible for preparing all Plymouth-based ships for operations!

On the home front Rob is ably supported by his wife Zoë and he has two daughters, Eleanor and Imogen, both accomplished dinghy sailors. Before

joining Waldringfield Rob was a member of DYC and his love affair with the Mirror dinghy was rekindled in his girls' upbringing, Imogen coming 4th in the Mirror Worlds in South Africa. The family yacht Jemima is back in Levington, Suffolk, with plans to patrol the east coast rivers and evoke the memories of sailing on the Deben with his parents and brothers in his notably nautical upbringing.

Rob may now be important enough to have his underpants ironed by an orderly (he says, 'If only!') but he hasn't forgotten his Suffolk roots and we are happy to salute his honourable mention.

Patrick Cooney

