

**Beaulieu River Sailing Club**

**Sailing Secretary’s Report 2023**

Good evening.

We’ve had another good year of sailing and activities – starting with packed Pre Season Drinks at the newly renovated Palais des Vaches in Exbury on the left bank (or Rive Gauche as we like to call it) courtesy of Nick and Caroline de Rothschild.

Our new Captain of Scows, Victoria Bonham Carter, introduced a new post-race concept – those coming second now write a race report so that those who couldn’t take part can read all about it. Reports are now posted on the website each week, together with photos of the race – many thanks to Tim Robinson for this.

The first race of the year had seven boats out and was won by Eric Williams with his granddaughter Ida. Race 2 started with Jay Devonshire’s buoyancy machine checking all the boats were up to scratch before racing and Martin and Pippa Sellars went on to be first across the line. Many thanks to Sara Steele for hosting lovely refreshments afterwards at Bignall’s Boathouse. Race 3 was another win for Martin and Pippa, followed by glorious tea in Rope Factory Field for new and old members – something we’d been looking forward to since Covid.

Aimed to encourage more volunteers, Race 4 began with a pre-race training session: included VHF radio use, starting platform procedure, First Aid and Safety boat rescue, including how to right a Scow with the newly mandated eight metre painter. Many thanks to Oli Stanley, Elizabeth Gedge, Ginna Gayner and Jay Devonshire. 15 boats then raced to Brickyard House, kindly hosted by Christoph and Sarah Brooke, and the race was won by Sam Van Holthe.

We’d had good weather so far that season but Race 5 was a wet one –however, seven boats bravely raced and saw a win for Eric Williams.

Onto Race 6 – the last of the Scow Challenge Cup races. Thank you to Jay Devonshire for sharing his boat-tuning secrets to the fleet before the race … then won by Jay himself so some sceptics wondered whether he had really shared ALL his secrets!

It was so nice to see some of the younger members racing during the Spring Series, including Poppy Markby, Timor Karavan and Pippa Sellars.

The Scow Challenge Cup this year was won by Jay Devonshire, 2nd was Sam Van Holthe, 3rd was Victoria and Ed Bonham Carter and 4th was Mary Montagu Scott. Well done to all.

Next – The Down River Race, this year a stand-alone race with a new trophy - The Phipps Oar. Visitors from Royal Lymington and Keyhaven joined us on the Beaulieu River leg of the Travellers Trophy, so a total of 30 boats (including a rogue scow belonging to a mooring holder who decided to join in). Thanks to Bill Osborne-Young for moving all the trolleys and congratulations to the winner Jay Devonshire, Richard Chitty in 2nd, Charles Nicholson in 3rd and the rogue scow in 4th!

Race 1 of the Scow Summer Series fell on the weekend of the the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. A sail to Royal Southampton Yacht Club at Gins was nearly cancelled with winds gusting Force 7 but in the end seven boats raced and was won by Mike and Molly Doherty.

Sadly, the Spring Junior Regatta on the same day did have to be cancelled.

The weather didn’t stop a terrific Jubilee Celebration BBQ back at the Needs Ore Clubhouse – huge thanks to Ross McGinn.

Race 2 of the series was cancelled as the winds were just too strong but the fleet instead drove to Bucklers Wood boathouse for tea courtesy of John and Carol Hackman.

Race 3 was another sail to the Rive Gauche - this time to Inchmery Hard with refreshments provided by Benji and Christian Scrimgeour. Gusting Force 5 and a challenging course with 3 gybes, and another win for Jay Devonshire.

Next up the Club Rally to Newtown Creek. With ten boats – seven Scows and three Lasers, it was a perfect day and good winds for the adventure across The Solent. Thank you to Nina, Guy and Charlie McNair-Wilson for accompanying in Eagle 4 as the ‘Mothership’. Guy, using a drone, has produced a fabulous video that brilliantly captures the fun of the day.

Five days of Senior Sail Training with over 20 teenagers taking part was once again brilliantly organised by June Kirkman, supported by Victoria Bonham Carter, Andy Roberts and Simon Knott. Thanks too to Maud Bonham Carter, Bella Ormerod and Freddie May for making it much fun for those on the water. The Laser Tiller was awarded to Charlie McNair-Wilson and The Curtle Cup for Toppers was won by Xanthe Knott.

Race 4 was a beautiful summers day with perfect sailing conditions and 14 scows on the water sharing the river with the 20 teenagers doing their thing. First across the line was Mary Montagu Scott.

Five days of Junior Sail Training this year had 55 kids participating in the Oppie and Scow Programme at the top of the river, organised by Charlie Bubear and supported by Alice Bubear, Ginna Gayner, Victoria Bonham Carter, Cassie Strang, Frank McGinn and Lucy Markby. Thank you to Charlie and Stephanie Morgan for allowing us all access to Oxleys for this event and Maria Stratton for use of her garden for ice creams after the racing.

The Captain’s Scow Challenge Trophy was won by Oscar Nicholas, Senior Optimist Trophy by Matilda May, Intermediate Optimist by Henry Nurton, Junior Optimist by Natasha Sellars and Beginners Optimist by Pippa Sellars.

Ginna Gaynor and Frank McGinn will be retiring from this very important part of the Club’s activities – so many kids have benefitted from their efforts and they will be much missed – we offer them a huge thank you. (APPLAUSE).

Back at the bottom of the river for Race 5, we had two back-to-back Scow races to make up for the cancelled Bucklers Wood race – a good call from our Scow Captain as both races were won by Victoria and Ed Bonham Carter!

Race 6 - a heatwave, light winds and an extraordinary strong flood tide meant some boats spent 15 minutes just trying to get over the start line, myself included. Martin Sellars and his daughter finished first – the fleet sailed to Gins Old Farmhouse for some lovely chilled rose and refreshments courtesy of Julian and Holly Chichester.

The Scows Summer Series – The Hextall Trophy – was won by Mary Montagu Scott, with Rupert Scott 2nd, Red Johnson 3rd and Nick Bentley Buckle in his old school scow 4th. Well done all.

Ginna’s Sailing week had an excellent turnout of 23 sailors with some new faces this year. More organised pottering now than an official instruction week - thanks as ever go to Ginna for so expertly organising it and to the safety boat team for their support. This is such a great week in the Club’s calendar but we are in danger of having to lose it if we can’t find future volunteers to make it happen – so please think about it and get in touch with Sam Van Holte if you are interested in helping.

This year’s Regatta saw fine weather, decent winds and a good turn out of scow and laser sailors, although no Toppers this year. There were over 40 volunteers over the two days to help run the platform, man the safety boats, be the beach masters and provide and help with refreshments. Thank you to all of you – and an early call for anyone who’d like to step up next year!

We had three scow races on the Saturday and another three on the Sunday. George Nurton and family won the Chichester Trophy on the first day and won all three races on day 2, winning the Commodores Trophy. Angela Hayward-Broomfield came 3rd on the Saturday winning the Ladies Cup and Mary Montagu Scott came 6th on the Sunday winning the Cobb Trophy. The Lasers managed four races on the Saturday and 5 on the Sunday. James Gedge won the Challenge Cup on the first day and Ed Hayward-Broomfield won the Young’s Trophy on day 2. The Junior Improvers Cup went to Henry Gedge.

The Juniors then had fun back at the top of the river with the Junior Summer Regatta organised by Charlie Bubear. The Judge’s Trophy was won by Laszlo Drummond.

The Up River Race followed next and thanks again to Bill Osborne-Young for moving all our trolleys back to the top of the river. 20 or so boats raced and Martin and Natasha Sellars were first over the line winning for 2nd time, the Pleydell–Bouverie Oar and Camilla, with Pippa Sellars were the first females over the line winning the Toddy Spoon. It was a lovely day for our annual tea at Friar’s Oak courtesy of Maria Stratton.

Race 1 in the final series, competing for the Borthwick Cup was won by Andrew Duncan and everyone enjoyed the sail to Gardiners Ground for a BBQ courtesy of Nick and Amanda Bentley Buckle. Race 2, a little windier, was won by Victoria and Ed Bonham Carter. Race 3, calmer and sunny, was won by Jay Devonshire, finishing with another lovely BBQ at Oxleys, courtesy of Charlie and Stephanie Morgan.

Race 4 saw high winds but six boats raced and five finished after Andrew Duncan had to retire after the ‘Duncan Dunking’. Charles and Ned Nicholson led from the start and won the race. Race 5 was calmer again in between the stormy days of autumn and was won by Jay Devonshire and the last race of the year, with a moderate breeze was won by me with Emily Monkton as crew.

So this year’s Borthwick Cup has in 4th place, Red Johnson and his daughter Cleo; in 3rd place, Victoria and Ed Bonham Carter; in 2nd place (despite his capsize in Race 4) Andrew Duncan, and winning this year is yours truly!

This year quite few of us brushed up on our First Aid skills - thank you to Elizabeth Gedge for organising the courses and updating all the first aid boxes. We now have a portable defibrillator which travels between Needs Ore and Rope Factory Field.

We’ve invested in an electric engine for the safety boat at the top of the river and also in new buoys with new flags and longer chains so they don’t float away. The ladder on the pontoon is being fixed. At Needs Ore, the starting posts got a new lick of paint and there is a new concrete slipway. We also plan to level up the boat park at Needs Ore this winter to try and deal with the flooding.

I think that pretty much sums up our year - I’d like to offer a special thank you to our Committee – who probably do more than you know – and a huge thank-you to all our volunteers throughout the year who make the sailing and all our other activities possible. In particular I’d like to thank Geri Marling-Roberts, Miranda Knowles and Pam and Peter Bettridge who have done more than their fair share this year. Plus Tim Robinson for maintaining and updating our fabulous new website.

Here’s looking forward to our anniversary party next month and to another year of glorious sailing in 2023.

THANK YOU!