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## Spring Newsletter

Welcome back to the sailing club for the 2009 season. I am beginning to find my feet as Commodore and have been amazed by the industry of the club committee. As a result there are a number of changes you can look forward to in the coming season: -

### Membership arrangements

The outcome of the financial consultation was discussed at length at the AGM. The conclusion was not to charge for storage ashore and to clarify entitlements through a "membership benefits table" which is in the handbook and on the web-site. Due to increasing pressure on space in the Dinghy Park and harbour we ask you to follow the guidelines for dinghy storage and remove cradles for the summer after the crane in. We introduced joining fees for new and lapsed members and made a larger increase in fees than in recent years to cover increased utilities and insurance costs. The membership year still starts on 1st January but the renewal date is now 14th February after which membership will have lapsed. This allows us to know who the renewing members are before the handbook is issued at the end of March. You can now pay by direct debit, which I hope you will find more convenient and which will simplify administration. The committee is put to a lot of extra work chasing-up late payments, so we have asked for renewals to be in early with late payments incurring a new member's fee. Thanks to Jon Shepherd and Richard Robinson.

### Membership cards

You will have received a membership card with this mailing. It proves that you are a paid-up member and gives you a 10% discount at Caley Marina. Remember to take your card with you!

### The Clubhouse

The windows at the front of the clubhouse have been repaired, a new screen fitted to the bar, new doors fitted to the side of the clubhouse, store and sail loft, a heater moved and 2 new sockets upstairs. New equipment has been bought for the kitchen and the 2 shower cabinets in the ladies changing room have been replaced. Please note the new door means new lock and keys. More info on getting new keys will follow. Thanks to Diarmid Hogan.

We have also bought 16 smart new 'café' style chairs to replace the faithful but rather old black chairs in the clubroom and have also disposed of most of the old metal tables. Thanks to Helen Jenner



## Harbour

Ladders and handholds have been replaced and the bed of the harbour will be levelled, removing much mud and waste. We hoped to progress plans for a loading pontoon within the harbour but have encountered planning obstacles, which will delay things. This pontoon was surplus to Avoch's needs and we hope it will greatly enhance facilities for less agile sailors and for training. We also hope to see the installation of Interpretation and Information boards for visitors to the harbour. We will keep you up to date with developments. The trot moorings have been a success and new shackles will be fitted by a diver. We plan a spring clean of the harbour in the near future. **If you have an unlabeled trailer, mast, cradle, etc lying around please remove it - otherwise it will be removed as presumed scrap and disposed of after 1 May.** Look at the photos at the end of this letter to see if any of this kit is yours!

Thanks to David Pocock.

## Training

Over the winter, training continued with a Dinghy Cruising Course, First Aid course, Powerboat Assessments, and VHF course. Training facilities have been upgraded with a computer on a robust table, a new screen and projector. Masthead floats and two camcorders have been bought with a grant from the Big Lottery Fund. Avoch Sea Scouts will keep 4 Topaz Uno + dinghies at the club which will be available for club training through the affiliation agreement. Details of all the proposed training for the coming season are in the club handbook and web-site. In addition Chanonry Sailing Club has been the favoured venue for the North of Scotland Sailing Squad training weekends and will host an RYA summer school. Thanks to Richard Jenner.

## RYA Scotland Coach of the Year Award

In the last few weeks we were pleased to hear that Richard Evans has been selected to be presented with the RYA Scotland Coach of the Year Award at the RYA Scotland AGM on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at The Falkirk Wheel. I am sure you will want to join me in congratulating him on this achievement. Any of you who have seen the effort and skill he devotes to sailing development will realize this is richly deserved. Well done Richard.

## Wisp

You will be aware that club members have the use of "Wisp", a bilge keel micro-cruiser, kept on a club "trot". Some maintenance is required to keep her in order and the committee is looking for people who are willing help to do this work. If this cannot be done the committee will be forced to consider the future of Wisp. If you can help please contact Dave Dunton.

## Lettoch

Unfortunately efforts to sell the land at Lettoch have so far not been successful. We wish to sell this land to free up funds for development but this may be difficult in the present financial climate.

## Winter Programme

We have enjoyed the "Drysuit Diehard" series and the ever popular "Cold Turkey" event that true to spirit meant emptying dinghies of ice before taking to the water! Richard Evans has also continued



informal training days for hardy Laser and Topper sailors. We have also enjoyed three social events, the annual dinner, Burns Supper and Quiz Night. Thanks to Pam Moncur and her assistants.

### **Communications**

Ask any organisation what its key issues are and invariably Communications feature. The Club is no different. Ensuring that those that need to know something know it when they need to is a challenge. Presently this is done through occasional newsletters, the web site, word of mouth and the Yahoo e-mail Group. For those with an active e-mail address the latter is the quickest way to communicate messages to and from the membership. Being a member of the Yahoo group - [chanonrysc@yahogroups.com](mailto:chanonrysc@yahogroups.com) - doesn't expose you to spam or unwelcome e-mails. Membership is private to the Club and can only be used by members. Registration is simple and can be arranged by contacting our Webmaster - Richard Evans [cscwebmaster@chanonry.org.uk](mailto:cscwebmaster@chanonry.org.uk) . To date 75 members are registered. If you're not, contact Richard and never miss late breaking news about the Club again! Thanks to Richard Evans.

### **Dutyman**

You may remember mention of this electronic reminder system last year. This year we will to use it for real. Many members have agreed they will be happy to accept duty reminders (and potentially other activities, events etc) by email. Dutyman is the web-based system that will be used to manage reminders. All members will be put on the system – those who have elected to receive email notifications will automatically receive reminders and those who prefer paper will still have notifications posted. There are also tools in Dutyman to arrange duty swaps – saves having to email around the group.

It's new for us and there may be teething problems but it's worth trying it. The saving in postage and printing will pay for Dutyman – and it should save the Membership Secretary a lot of work!

### **Safety Boats**

Following an accident last year involving children and a RIB at Plas Menai, the RYA issued guidance on the use of RIBs for non-training activities (there is already guidance for training!). The committee reviewed our procedures and has made a few tweaks which are in the handbook on the section on advice for safety boat crews – please read this carefully if you are involved in safety duties or event organizing. Briefly, we recommend that dual watch is maintained on Marina 1/chnl 37A and chnl 16 when possible. The Club is buying a new base station radio to allow this (the handhelds already have this feature). We've also highlighted the operating limits of our RIBs which must not be exceeded (up to F6 winds or 2 metre waves and 6 adults maximum) and the importance of safety boat crews not endangering themselves thereby making a bad situation worse. Additionally, if there is a desire to use the safety boats away from the Normal Operating Area (as defined in the handbook) a competent person must do a risk assessment first and obtain permission from a committee member. Finally, following separate advice from the RYA, the prop guards have been removed from both RIBs. Please ensure that you wear the kill cord whenever the engine is running and that you shut down the engine if close to anyone in the water – you should also shut down the engine and raise it in the shallows.



### And finally, Volunteering

We are well placed for a great year of sailing. My last request is for all club members to help with the duties that are needed to make the season a success. We need crews for rescue boats, race officers, help with maintenance and grass cutting, help in the kitchen and with all the things that keep the club running. As you see it is imperative that all active members share the duties (perhaps 3 rescue boat/race officer duties or equivalent per year) and I hope you have all told Jon of your preference on your renewal forms. If not please drop him a note as soon as possible. We offer training and there is real scope for it being more than just a chore.

I hope your winter maintenance has gone well; as a laser sailor I leave mine until 30 minutes before the first race! For those with wooden boats good luck with the wet and dry sandpaper and varnish. The new season is very close and I look forward to seeing you all on the water.

### Miles

#### Abandoned kit???

