

Dear Member,

Another year has gone by and I am happy to say it has been a very good year for the club with lots going on throughout the year.

We have again increased our member numbers and gained more boats of all types, this is a testament to what a good place Dee Sailing Club is. Helping to encourage new members is vitally important and with General Committee making the decision to change the way that Subscription Fees are paid for new members, we now offer the monthly payment option in year one of joining, rather than being lumped with one large bill, this has proved to be very successful.

There has been more work done on improvements to the Clubhouse, notably to the bar which has had a new back bar, plastered walls, the addition of an extra till and new fridges that are so much more efficient than the old ones. The air con in the cellar has also been replaced with a much more efficient model, which keeps the beer at a perfect temperature for us all to enjoy and the added benefit of keeping the running costs down.



We now have super-fast 4G Wi-Fi at the club, a new server system for the office computer, tills and all access controls plus there are on going improvements to the alarm and security system. This is all essential to the smooth running of the club and I would like to say a huge thank you to Rich Stacey for all the hard work and many hours he has put in to making all this complicated stuff work.

As ever our Tuesday gang are always busy maintaining the property, from the upkeep of the lawn and boundaries, the new guttering installed in the summer, filling and painting the external walls and taking in the beer, wine and spirit deliveries to name just a few of the many jobs undertaken.

I am sure I am not alone in this and would like to say a big thank you for the contribution of time and effort for the club; it is very much appreciated.

I would like to mention David Fagan, for many years he has performed the stocktake of the bar's contents virtually every Tuesday without fail and is this year stepping down from this role, I thank him for the many years of counting and wish him a relaxing Tuesday from now on.

Earlier in the year we took delivery of a 40-foot shipping container, which is situated just behind the clubhouse. The purpose for this container is for the promotion of junior sailing, and we would like to say a huge thank you to Sue Orrell for funding the entire cost of this. We can now safely store all the assets the club has for the juniors in one safe place, the container will house the two new club Mirrors, five Optimists and all the equipment that goes with them. Once racked out and with the addition of a door at the far end we will be able to neatly store all the Dart 16 equipment too, making it easier for the juniors to get their kit and get on the water.

You may have also noticed all the rolls of Astro turf that we had delivered, firstly I must say a big thank you to Chantelle for providing sponsorship towards the purchase of this. The Astro turf is perfect for all the boat parking areas keeping the areas clean and free from weeds, although the down side it is incredibly hard to move around! Another work party earlier in the year saw members from all fleets mucking in to get the second stage of turf rolled out, with more work parties to come we will in early 2019 get the remainder in place on the hill and in the back field. Once completed we will reinstate the fence along Dart row and replicate in the centre of the car park to form a proper parking area and I'm glad to say we can then do away with the metal poles and ropes that look so untidy.

Another major asset that the club has invested in is the new boat lift, this was designed and built mostly by our own members before being put through the legally required tests for safety, which I am glad to say it passed. This has already proved to be an invaluable piece of equipment and has enabled the ever-increasing cruising fleet to launch and recover their boats with relative ease and it has made the whole process so much safer for all involved.

Thank you to Mike Feely for modernising the Website and for continually looking after it, we are always looking for articles and photos to post so if you have anything please send to Mike or Roy and we will endeavour to add these to the site.

Over the coming year we will be setting up the membership registration online, this will make everyone's job so much easier. E-mail reminders will be sent out automatically in the future to renew your subscriptions, all you will have to do is update or confirm your details and submit. All members will be informed when this is up and running and we will let you know the payment options too, ultimately this will make the collection of subscriptions much more efficient and reduce the workload for the new membership secretary, Mike Noonan who will be taking over from Jon Smith following the AGM. Again, thank you Jon for all the years you have put in to being membership secretary.

On to the sailing...

Juniors,

The beginning of the 2018 sailing season saw both our juniors and West Kirby Sailing Club juniors taking to the water in the Dart 16's for some more of our programmed coaching sessions again this has proven to be a great success and will ultimately lead to more of the young sailors progressing in to our other fleets.

This season saw the resurgence of some beginner junior training for Dee Sailing Club. Along with the club Optimists coming out of hibernation from the container, 3 of our juniors joined in with some Optimist Class training organised by IOCA North West on the marine lake at West Kirby. Athena Nash, Emma Millensted and Eve Bromilow enjoyed 6 Saturday

mornings along with 4 other juniors from WKSC, under IOCA's New Helm Programme, with shared coaching from DSC and WKSC instructors, supported by keen parents in waders. The girls did fantastically well, being able to successfully sail around a triangular course by the end of the 6 weeks, and more importantly sailing up to the top end for an ice cream!

There is more beginner junior training planned for the Spring alongside WKSC optimists on the lake, with perhaps some beginner tidal training for the junior Oppi sailors at DSC in the warmer weather.

Both Trevor Jenkins and Sally Bromilow have been an enormous help to get this up and running and it is appreciated for the time you have put in spending helping to sort out the boats and coaching juniors on the water.

With the beginnings of the Optimist sailing at the club once again, we hope to get all the boats in to full working order, this was something that was made far more achievable with the generous sponsorship from Deva Sail Racing, our very own Simon Moruzzi, thank you Simon for doing this for the Juniors.



Still with the juniors, our Mirrors have been in action too, Jonathan Waddington has kindly written the following report. It is great to see the club boats getting used by our juniors and with great success too, long may it continue.

Abersoch Mirror Week...

We had another successful year at Abersoch where 3 boats sailed by the Wyles and Waddington families flew the Dee SC burgee. Another well attended event with 53 boats competing over 5 days.

Unfortunately for Harry, Archie and Jon Wyles a trolley through the hull cut their week short but great to see them return after a few years in British Columbia.

Our club boats were sailed by Matthew, Harriet, Josh and Jonathan Waddington. Jonathan advises that Josh drew the short straw having to sail with Dad!



Matthew and Harriet had another brilliant week in strong winds that were a challenge for their lighter combination. I was delighted to read of their success in Yachts and Yachting where they were commended for winning the trophy for the first youth boat: For the third year running. They were also proud to again be in amongst previous national champions with an excellent 7th within the seniors.

A great week that has seen many of our juniors and families compete over the years and hopefully one that will see our latest recruits to Optimists in the not too distant future.



Dart 18's...

2018 Saw yet another increase in numbers to the clubs Dart 18 fleet, notably with Billy resurrecting Dart 1056 which had not been afloat since the 80's and was used as the Hill Top Bar when we hosted the Nationals the previous year. It has turned out to be a superb boat, even winning the Dart open meeting at Bridlington!



Easter saw the return of the Dart Open meeting, with visitors coming from all over the country for the 3 days of sailing and the occasional party. Sadly, due to illness I missed this event but all reports back were extremely positive and the racing was excellent. Well done to Jonny Harris for being the highest placed Dee Dart finishing in 4th position.



Training sessions run by Simon, James, Lee, Jon and I have continued to run through the year and will be starting up again soon, don't miss out and come and grab some tips and tricks.



The Darts have had some good turn outs at the club during the year and there has been some very enjoyable racing going on week in week out, what better way to spend your weekend!

There is another side to the Dart sailing which is traveling around the country or even further afield to take part in the racing, a good number of the Dart sailors travel but without doubt Simon Moruzzi has done more miles to go sailing than anyone else, finishing a more than respectable 5th out of 87 boats in the traveling series plus also coming 3rd in the Scottish National Championships at the Royal Tay Yacht Club.



Congratulation to John Hayley who is now the Dart 18 fleet captain and is extremely busy planning the 2019 Dart Open meeting at Easter which will be an amazing event for all club members to come and join in on and off the water.

Another noteworthy well done is to Simon Moruzzi who is now the UK International Dart 18 President, we wish you every success in this new role.

As some of you may be aware, the Dart 18 World Championships are to be held at the Royal Varuna Yacht Club in Thailand, there will be 8 boats at the Championships from Dee Sailing Club.



As you can imagine, the logistics of this are huge, we are all taking our own boats 6500 miles round the planet to go sailing.

The boats needed to be shipped by sea, so we arranged for 1 of the 2 40ft containers going to Thailand from the UK to come to Dee on the 15th of December 2018, we had to load our 8 Darts and a further 7 Darts from other parts of the country in 3 hours!



Container now gone and being tracked by most of us every day, it should arrive at the Yacht Club in Thailand ready for unloading on the 9th of February.

The Siam Championships are on the 12th- 13th of February followed by the World Championships which begins on the 16th of February with 10 races scheduled over the week, with the final race on the 22nd, fingers crossed for a Dee boat to win and all the others close behind! We will send back race results and photos of the event so you can follow what's going on, or you can check out the following website <https://dart18worlds2019.com> for more news.

We will all look forward to another great year in the Dart 18, racing both at Dee and away proudly representing our club.

Other sailing...

With more new member numbers, there has come an increasing diversity in boats arriving, so we may see more fast cats out this season. We are also looking at a possible resurgence of dinghy sailing and racing from the club, this would be great to see and fun for our juniors to join in with.

We have a very exciting sailing programme for 2019 with lots of opportunities to get out on the water, be it for cruising or racing it is just great to see lots of Dee boats afloat and then enjoying the club's facilities after. For those that are worried how to get your dinghy down to the beach, worry not, when there is racing or training on the tractors are most likely available to tow you up and down the hill, just ask the Captain, Mark or John and they will be happy to oblige.

Alex and Jonny are often seen whizzing around on a Cherub, foiling at Dee! this is a great spectacle to watch, partially if it goes wrong, are also keen travellers racing their amazing boat up and down the country, I'm sure this coming year there will be more of the same going on!

Cruisers...

It has been great to see an increase in numbers within the cruiser fleet and I have to say the moorings outside the club have never looked so busy. Roy has kindly put the following report together showcasing some of the exploits that have gone on this year. We look forward to even more cruisers launching in 2019 and I hope that your coming season is a great one.

Although this year's sailing season was planned in October 2017 with Duncan, Noel and myself scheduling an early start to the season in April, it all went a bit haywire due to me breaking my back, neck, leg and ankle in January, topped with a large pulmonary embolism in February. There were also difficulties in getting the club's new boat lift built in time.

Many hours of work designing and testing by Duncan Swinson finally resulted in the steel being ordered and ready for transport in mid-April.



It was not until the end of April that Meccano was delivered to the club, pre-fabricated and ready to build. With all hands-on deck (so to speak) the new boat lift started to take shape thanks to: Mike Noonan, Malcolm Southern, Dave Gibb, Vic Allen (Taffy), Dave Goddard and me. Mark Collins, Andy Murphy, Noel and Duncan were limited by work commitments but still managed to help due to a shift schedule that was drawn up allowing everyone to get involved.

By the 1st of May the frame was starting to take shape.



Working 'til late meant the frame was finally finished and ready for testing in June. It was used to crane in the larger boats in the fleet, including Malcolm's £10 refurbished masterpiece, a Westerly 23 Pageant.



By the end of June and ready for action, most of the boats were on the water. This was the season of new boats: Taffy with Bronwyn.



Dave Goddard with his newly acquired Seadrift 20 was able to enjoy a full season. Malcolm with his £10 acquisition which was completely transformed over the laying up season from a project boat into a classic refurbished Pageant.



Mike Noonan and Sandpiper.



And John with Salena.

Towards the end of the season Graham managed to get his large catamaran on the water and test its capabilities.

By July we had more cruisers on the water than in recent years, with a fantastic turnout for the Commodore's Cruise.



In August Noel and Duncan led the fleet to a new destination: the Duke of Lancaster (Fun ship cruise)



Venturing further afield, Dave Gibb and crew together with David Purdell - Lewis sailed to Preston and back. (trip on YouTube: Sailing Wirral to Preston part 1 and 2).



Finally, the season came to an end and the Dunkin with its new wheels, certification and paint job lifted all boats from the water.



There is no question that the Dunkin has revolutionised the way the club now takes boats off the water: less work, safer, and allowing for an increase in size of boats we can accommodate. I am sure that future seasons will see a dramatic increase in the level of cruiser members participating without the worry of putting on and taking off their boat from the water.

In November we organised another 1st, our Cruiser Craning Out supper attended by cruisers and partners. A good night was had by all. Next year we intend to do the same starting the season with a Craning in supper and finishing with a Craning out supper.

Other club events...

During the year we also held open days at the club in conjunction with the RYA to give people a chance to experience sailing and rescue boats. After our first open day we did a follow up approximately a month later and this proved very successful, with new members being welcomed in to the club.

We have also welcomed back the Kayak's, these are always a great event and it shows that we can offer something a little bit different that compliments what we do at the club. We look forward to their return this year.



Dee Sailing Club Regatta was a very memorable day, I'd never done race officer at a Regatta before so what could possibly go wrong! Well, unfortunately for the 70 plus competitors the wind forgot to turn up, and when it did it wasn't much more than a sneeze. This presented some challenges, where on earth do I put the windward mark when the wind is going in circles, what size course do I lay, and will I have enough sun cream and sandwiches! In glorious sunshine, the wind finally filled in enough to get the racing started, with some frantic flag hoisting and lowering, every class was eventually away for their start and I could get on with the serious business of eating that sandwich and copious amounts of jam tarts supplied by Gareth Owen.



The wind just about managed to hold out for race one with nearly all the boats that had started finishing except for the West Kirby Stars. High water was upon us and the decision was made to try and start the second race, the eternal optimist I set the sequence in motion. Sadly, the wind decided it had had enough of pushing boats around for the day and

must have dozed off, out of sandwiches and in need of amber nectar there was only one decision, race abandoned, which not surprisingly was met with a cheer!

Safely ashore and refreshed with a hard-earned beer in hand, the clubhouse and lawn filled up, a great afternoon, great food and beer, live music and sunshine what more could you want.

Commodores Cruise...

The weather couldn't have been much better, and what a turnout of boats from Dee, fifteen Dart 18's, two Dart 16's, six cruisers, 2 Ribs and Dawpool loaded to the gunwales with refreshments and entertainment, this was already looking like it was going to be a fantastic day.

Setting off from Dee we had a good force 3-4, blowing up the river, blue skies and sunshine, you couldn't ask for more. As we sailed down towards Hilbre the conditions became quite lively, but great fun, with everyone blasting around waiting for the sandbank to emerge.

Over the coming hours boats from Hoylake and West Kirby joined us and as the tide ebbed away, the bank began to show, everyone made a b-line for the new beach. BBQ's lit, refreshments flowing the afternoon proceeded in predictable fashion, Darts nipping in and out for a sail, taking people for a quick blast around the bay, back for more refreshments and more fun.

If you have never done it before it is always one not to miss... we will hope to see you out there on 13th of August this year.



Social...

Throughout the year there is an enormous amount of work put in by the House and Social Committee with all the organising and preparation, it is a mammoth task.

We have been very fortunate that our own members do all of this work on a voluntary basis and without this level of support and commitment to the club; it would be extremely difficult for the Club to host so many successful events, both for members and visitors alike, a huge thank you to you all for helping out making these events possible.



As you will see from the following list, there is always something going on: Dart Open, Cocktail Party, Regatta, Christmas dinner, Prize giving, Snooker matches, after sailing food, Work party food, open events like the Kayaks and much, much more. So please if have the time to help out with any of the clubs social events, please let myself, Lee or the House and Social Committee know, any help would be warmly welcomed.

For the past ten years the role of Rear Commodore Social has been filled by Dave Clements, closely assisted by Linda, they have decided to step down this year and have a well-deserved retirement from office. I would like to say a huge thank you to them both for all the hard work and devotion to the role, ensuring that all the functions held over the years have run so smoothly.

The bar continues to be a great source of income particularly from events and the increased number of members using the club is great to see, where else would you go on a Wednesday evening or Sunday afternoon for a nice cold drink, well done Angie for keeping things running smoothly.

Rib Teams...

Where would we be without the RIB volunteers, well we would struggle. Thanks to our RIB drivers and support crews we are well looked after, with them providing rescue should something go wrong on the water, mark laying for racing and ferrying race officers and members to and from their boats.

This invaluable contribution makes the training and racing possible at the club, thank you for turning out in all conditions to ensure our safety.

Captain and team...

In the early months of 2018 Andy Nash took on the role of club Captain and has done an outstanding job, assisted by both Mark and Don.

There is always a constant stream of jobs to be done and they all work tirelessly behind the scenes to achieve this. The club would not be able to function properly without all the hard work that goes in to the upkeep and maintenance of the club, tractors, ribs, buoys/moorings, motorboat and ark.

Having the tractors in working order is a constant battle but without them we would have a tough job getting boats launched and recovered, thank you Captain and team for everything, especially towing us up the hill after sailing.

This season work parties for the Ark, Dawpool and the Buoys are well under way but there is still a lot to get done before the beginning of the season in April. Please let Captain Andy know if you are free to help. In keeping with technology there is a Captains WhatsApp group, which lets us know what work and how many people are required, if you would like to be on the group please let Andy know.

Earlier this year, it was decided to honour one of our longest standing members, this was a unanimous decision by General Committee and I was given the great pleasure of informing Don McKinnon that he would be recognised for all the many years of hard work and devotion he has put in to the Sailing Club and would be bestowed with the highest accolade of Honorary Member, congratulations Don.

Going forward in to 2019 I hope that the club continues to grow and we all as member make more use of the club and its facilities. We have lots of jobs to get on with and projects that we would like to set in motion to better the club for all our members. We are currently looking into obtaining a grant to improve changing and toilet facilities, which would include disabled access and a training room; we will keep you posted as to how we progress with this.

Thank you to everyone all for the support that you have given to me as Commodore and I look forward to another exciting year at Dee Sailing Club.

Will Thompson

Commodore
Dee Sailing Club