WEIR QUAY SAILING CLUB

RYA Affiliated

www.wqsc.org

WQSC BULLETIN 2026

WITH NARRATIVES

















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Officers standing for election at the AGM on 16th November 2026	
President	Carol Horner
Commodore	Robert Kirby
Vice Commodore	*Volunteer needed*
Secretary	Lorine Barbier
Treasurer	Alex Michelsen
Membership Officer	Toby Armstrong
Moorings Officer	Richard White
Lead Barge Skipper	Doug Hinge
Dinghy Officer	Rosie Duncan
Cruising Officer	Matt Jackson
Welfare Officer	Phil Towers
Dinghy Park Officer	*Volunteer needed*
Website Officer	Rosie Hinge
Social Events Coordinators	Judy Turton & Jane Morton

Editorial

This is my fifth year of editing the club Bulletin.

The Officers' Reports are an informative way to hear what those in charge of running your club have been up to this year and how they see things from their perspective. It would be useful to have read these before you attend the club's AGM on Monday 16th November [7pm for a 7:30pm start at Bere Alston Bowling Club].

This year's Narratives cover a wide range of watery activities that, in a few cases, describe quite hair-raising instances!

I hope that you enjoy this 2026 edition.

Rosie Hinge
website@wqsc.org

2026 AGM (no. 60) Officers' Reports



Commodore
Rob Kirby commodore@wqsc.org

Dear Club member,

With the AGM on the horizon, now is the time to summarise the 2025/26 sailing year.

The committee would love to take credit for the wonderful weather we enjoyed this summer, albeit even for us "gingers" it was getting slightly too warm at times!

The club has enjoyed a great year both on and off the water. That is very much down to the fostering of good teamwork and commitment from both various groups, individuals and indeed you as members. To sum up the year in one word – Development!

Has everything gone to plan? Not quite, but likewise nothing has gone seriously wrong either. We must remember for a conglomerate of individuals with a heterogeneous mix, this club punches well above its waterline!

There are several groups of people I would like to thank.

Firstly, the committee.

Multiple newish and younger members stepped up to fulfil the various committee roles at our last AGM. Many of whom our seasoned echelon would not instinctively know, but they have all contributed with great enthusiasm and applied some subtle tweaking to our existing setup.

Alex M has upgraded our website, admittedly a couple of gremlins existed, but the introduction of the club officers' specific email addresses has been a terrific bonus for the various positions. Rosie and Lorine have also introduced the communities WhatsApp group 'Weir Quay Sailing Club' with the then various sub-groups such as dinghy sailing / cruiser announcements.

This has enabled an instant flow of communication, responses and likewise then only supplying the information to a targeted group rather than having your phone going ping all the time. No doubt further adaptations will happen next year.

We do recognise that not all members have or use smartphones to the full, so as much information about the club and events etc will still go via email. This ability is now shared by 3 rather than just top loading one person as previously.

Jane and Judy have spear headed the numerous and varied social events during the year ranging from walks to talks, quizzes, one man show, barn dance, return of the downriver BBQ and the Regatta to name a few. Hopefully something appealed to everyone.

Not forgetting Mat and Rosie D for organising the various down river and upriver social sailing gatherings.

Thank you collectively to the committee for making the events all happen.

The second group of people to thank are those of our Tuesday maintenance workforce spearheaded by Steve Kirby, Robin Venables and Pete Silcock.

Not only have they kept our dinghy fleet afloat, despite some members best efforts to sink them, they have prioritised, when weather permits, to oversee the merry band of members to commence the build of the extension to the boatshed. Whilst this project is not quite finished, I am pleased to advise it is in its final stages. Looking back, this time last year, all we had were 5 big holes in the ground filling up with water! So great progress.

Akin to Grand Designs, we always anticipated a few hitches along the way and this certainly has been a learning curve. The next build will be easier!

Finally, a big thank you to you the members for supporting the club's various activities held throughout the year. A call to arms for wheelbarrows to move 6 tonnes of concrete achieved a terrific response along with members frying the burgers and sizzling the sausages at the various social events. To highlight a couple of individual members who have made wonderful contributions are Sue Coomber for once again organising the Cotehele summer camp, Rob Larman for taking charge of the Tectona sailing weekend and Richard Kelsey for overhauling the barge trailer. This all takes considerable time, effort and commitment but hopefully the results have all proved worthwhile.

On the water, very pleased to say that our Friday Evening Sailing Sessions have been exceptionally well supported and due to the awarding of a grant, we welcomed the addition of a third Jaffa Safety boat with outboard. Dinghy and cruiser day trips have had mixed response. We have to be realistic that finding an approach that appeals to all is never going to happen, but if we keep it simple, keep it fun, hopefully we can entice a few more participants in 2027.

This year marked the clubs 60th anniversary. Fascinating looking back at some of the old pictures. Naturally personnel and fashions have changed, but some of the boats from yesteryear are still adorning the dinghy park or moorings. The mud has not changed much either.

To conclude, it's been a great year, a few incremental changes and implementations which I believe puts the club on a stronger footing for the seasons to come.



Treasurer
Alex Michelsen treasurer@wqsc.org

Note: The Financial Statements for the year Ended 30 September 2026 can be found after the Officers' Reports.

Membership
Income (£7,244) was marginally up on last year (+1%).

Moorings and maintenance
Mooring dues (£9,690) again covered the Fundus fee (£9,277), with small surplus (£412).

Mooring maintenance expenses (£9,249) increased substantially, as we undertook a diving inspection of our deep water mooring blocks (£3,600). This year's mooring maintenance fees (£5,848) were roughly the same as last years, and did not cover this additional cost.

Going forward, the club plans to do a diving inspection every 5 years, so a surcharge has been added to the annual mooring maintenance fee for those moorings that has been calculated to cover this additional cost.

Friday night training
Income from dinghy sailing was up slightly (£1,477, +7%), more than covering expenses (£761).

Donations
The sailing club received a significant grant (£9,088) from Samworth Bros to support our youth sailing programme. This has already covered the cost of a new safety boat and vision sails, with £2,475 remaining which is ring fenced for future expenditure on a trolley for the safety boat, repairs to the rib or further expenditure for the benefit of the youth sailing programme in 2026/27.

Social
Income from a lively programme of social events increased (£1,914, +55%), more than covering costs (£1,559). Sales of the anniversary tea towels, along with other sundry items, are going, and sales income (£520) has more than covered cost of sales (£452).

Hub Club rent
Hub Club rent increased slightly from £218 to £225 and the utilities charge increased from £33 to £45 per month.

Insurance
Our main club premium increased by £176 to £2,436. We also renewed our director's liability cover and extended of our public liability cover to £10m for the Cotehele camp weekend at the request of the National Trust.

Next year we can review our club's insurance as our current 3 year undertaking with Gallagher will have ended.

Reserve policy
As per our reserve policy, the club continues to have sufficient funds to accommodate its liabilities such as lease or licence commitments and this amount, and excess, are stored in the club's deposit account (£9,570.32 as at 30 Sep).

Summary
While total club reserves increased this year, this was due to the generous Samworth Bros grant, of which £2,476 remains to be spent of youth sailing activities.

Unrestricted club funds fell slightly overall (-£634).

However, the value of the club's fixed assets (+£2,800) and mooring stocks held at year end (+£2,246) both increased.

Many thanks to Steve Kirby (once again) and Helen Silcock who have volunteered as auditors this year.



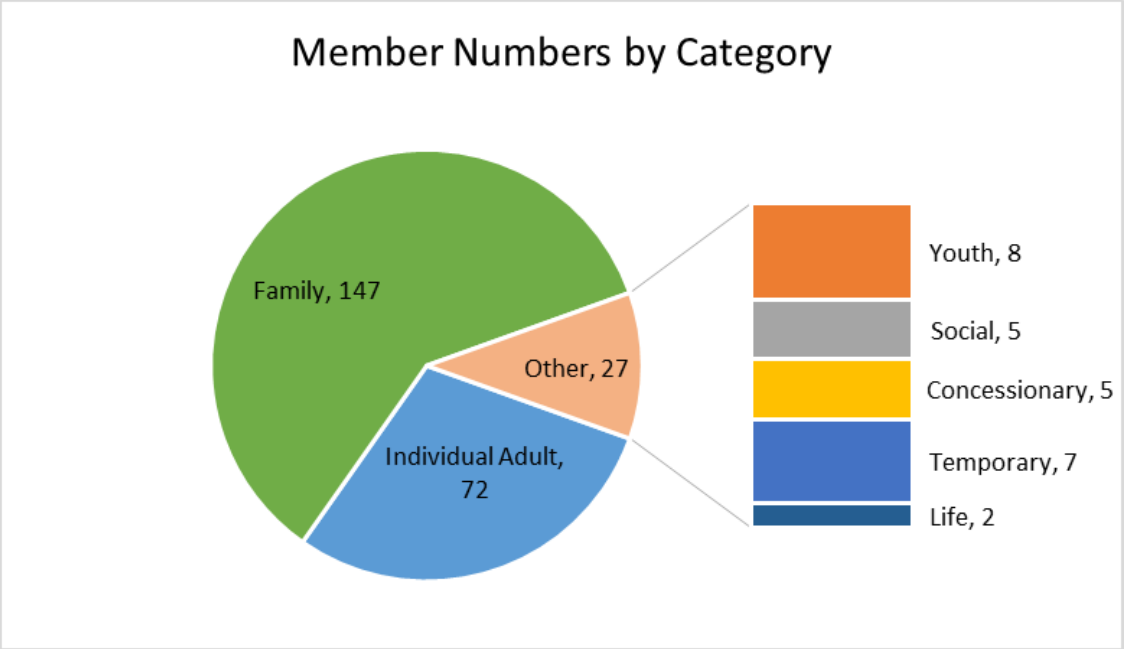
Membership Officer
Toby Armstrong membership@wqsc.org

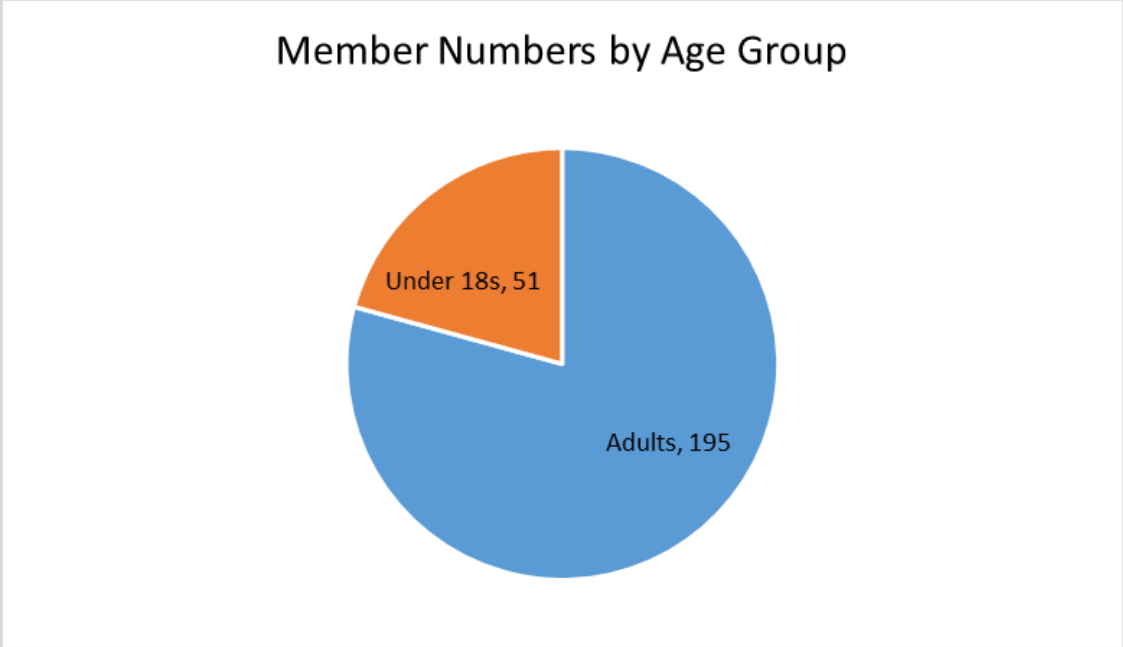
First off, thank you to Dougie Hinge for the thorough briefing on the role and an introduction to the world of MemberMojo! However, much of our membership database remains a mystery to me and an amendment here and there has led to quite a bit of head scratching to fix the resultant side effects. Whilst it is a bit 'clunky', for a club of our size, it is a very useful and cost-effective tool.

Membership Numbers

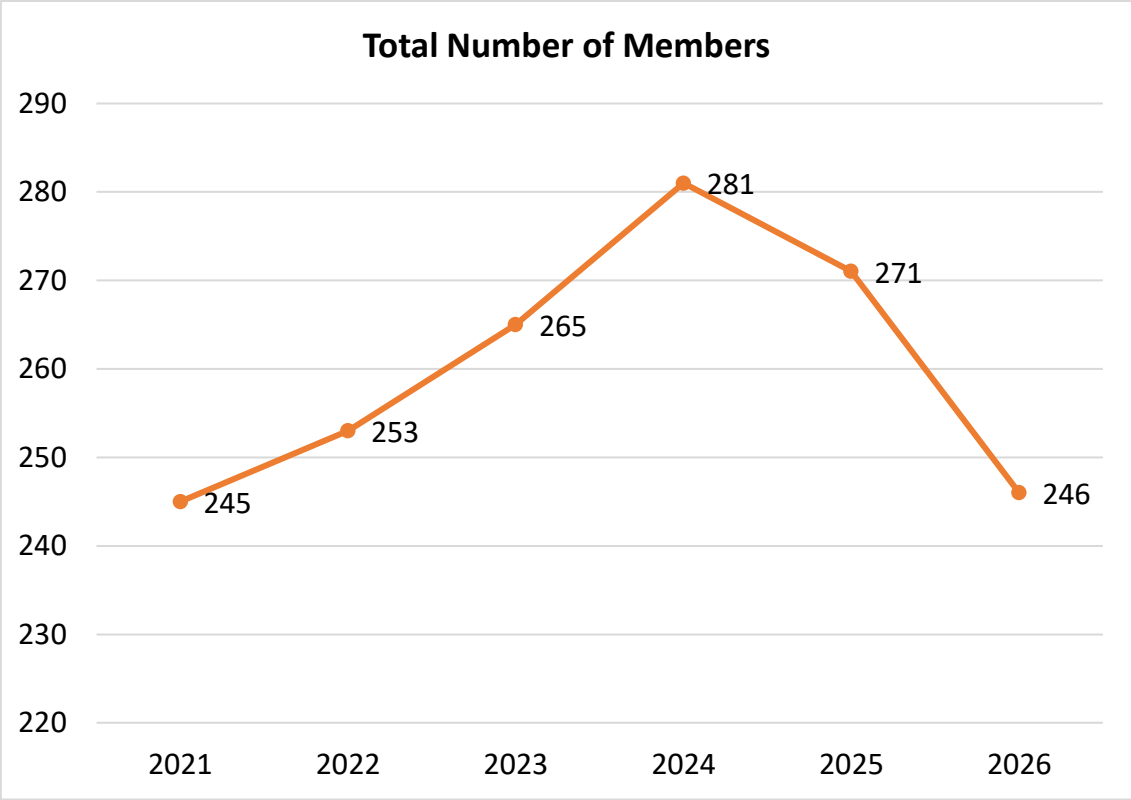
There has been another decrease in membership this year. Some of this is traceable to a bit of cleaning of the database where there were a few duplicated entries and some family members that have now grown up and flown the nest. Several others have called it a day on their sailing activities and hung up their oilies, whilst others have moved away. On the up-side, the Temporary Membership scheme has led to a number of conversions to full membership.

Total Membership as at 18th October 2026 is 246, which can be broken down as follows:





Membership Numbers Trend – 2021 to 2026



Whilst these numbers look rather disappointing, they broadly align with the findings of the Annual RYA Affiliated Clubs Census. These indicated a general decline and plateauing of membership numbers following the post-COVID peak around 2024.

Main Activities

Responding to queries from members and prospective/joining members, often relating to MemberMojo.

Tinkering with the MemberMojo structure to try and make it a little less cumbersome when joining or renewing (the jury is still out on whether I just made it worse!).

Updating the automated MemberMojo emails, welcome letters and checkout items.

Sending out the renewal letters with tide tables and boat stickers, mostly between January and April.

Preparing and submitting the Club's input to the Annual RYA Affiliated Clubs Census.



Secretary
Lorine Barbier secretary@wqsc.org

My role as the secretary for Weir Quay Sailing Club this year has mainly been compiling agendas and recording committee meeting minutes, which can be found on the website's members only page.

I have answered emails from both the secretary and the enquiries mailbox as well as sending out a small number of emails to the wider mailing list through MailChimp, to keep members updated about various club events.

This first year as the club secretary has been really good to learn about the inner workings out of the club, with a lot of help from the committee, so thank you to all committee members for the support.



Welfare Officer
Phil Towers welfare@wqsc.org

A successful season from a Welfare Officers point of view. No hospital admissions, no missing children (or adults) and no major concerns raised along the way.

Several new adults have joined the club and gone through the DBS check process which has been made simpler by the RYA and I will be carrying out an audit before the start of next season to identify anyone who regularly attend's or supports the Friday evening session and may be going out of date in 2027.

Further guidance will be released ahead of next season, however if I could kindly request that if dogs are brought along to Friday night sessions or WQSC events that they remain on a lead and under the direct supervision of an adult at all times.

Also, we have had a couple on incidents with children getting carried away and over excited, so please keep your eyes peeled for unruly behaviour with the young-uns (It is up to you if you wish to keep your child on lead 😊).

Have a safe winter and see you all next season.



Cruising Officer
Matt Jackson cruising@wqsc.org

Cruising Through 2026

The cruising season in 2026 has had mixed successes. Club members individually made it to The Channel Islands, Brittany, The Scilly Isles and various south coast locations. There were eleven club events planned in total for 2026; several of these were cancelled due to weather (lack of wind, too much wind/rain) and a couple due to lack of attendance. Other events saw a maximum of two or three boats going along and having a jolly time, including day sails to the Sound and overnight sails to the Yealm.

There were two very good events that were both well attended and enjoyed by all. The first was the late June 'Eddystone Challenge', which saw six boats and crew attempt to leave the moorings, round the lighthouse and return. The day was forecast to be a perfect, westerly force 4; the actuality was a rather lumpy south westerly force 5, which broke the resolve of many crew members, some of whom worked hard to control their stomachs! The friendly challenge included recording our time from the breakwater light and back; only Sea Nymph completed the challenge; Bronte got to within 0.5nm and gave up with a wind shift (poor resolve you might say); the rest of the fleet, perhaps more sensibly, ducked back into Cawsand for a relaxed and sunny day. This is definitely one to repeat.

Our second club trip of note was the September weekend trip to the Yealm, which had seven boats along, including four families with six (total) children; a truly multi-generational event. The wind was perfect, both inward and outward and the swell was kind too. We berthed at the upper pontoon on the Yealm, which is always so lovely, and where lots of informal socialising and boat touring/exploring took place. There was fishing too, with some of the adults as excitable as the kids, resulting in the prize of a speared mullet, which was cooked up and enjoyed by all. Little Bronte broke a hosting record, with nine adults in the cockpit and two on the coach roof. What stood out to me as a relatively new club member, is just how much WQSC is a welcoming, relaxed, family friendly club; something to be cherished as we grow the future generations of sailors.

The 2026 season had a lot of events planned and, on reflection, perhaps this flooded the calendar. I will review this with club members soon, ready for planning the 2027 year; my initial feeling is that we need fewer, very well publicised events that many of us try to join.

As ever, if you have any thoughts, please do email me at cruising@wqsc.org



Website Officer
Rosie Hinge website@wqsc.org

My role over this year has been to keep the website updated with the latest information and to send out most of the MailChimp emails – and I am grateful that the Social Events Coordinators, Jane and Judy can now also send these.

In the weeks leading up to the end of March, our Treasurer (and IT expert) Alex Michelsen organised the transition of the club's website to a very cost-effective option with a similar appearance and functionality to the previous one. And… after a few teething troubles it was soon working well. Quite an achievement! Well done and thanks, Alex!

At the same time, new role-based contact emails were created for all the club officers. These shall be passed on to their successors in future years to create continuity for comms and data.

Updates to the website have included adding the latest info on Events, listing the new officers' email addresses, updating club membership costs on the Join Us page, adding the Friday evening Code of Conduct to our Policies page and adding this year's Moorings inspection schedule.

I am also working with our Membership Secretary, Toby Armstrong to make it easier for members to use the website to access the part of MemberMojo that they need.



Dinghy Officer
Rosie Duncan Carrick dinghy@wqsc.org

What a busy year! Last October/ November we held our Autumn race series. A range of boats competed over 3 days of racing with a total of 5 races. Rosie and Ben won the overall series in a Laser 2 but plenty of competition was provided by all attendees. As always, the race series cannot be done without the presence of a race officer and safety boat crew, so a massive thank you must go to all the individuals who volunteered their time to make it possible!

The dinghy derig was one of the most successful and efficient we have had to date, even if the young people took the opportunity to have a water fight.

Over the Winter our maintenance team was busy mending all the boats we had broken as well as restoring and building new trolleys.

Chris F applied to Samworth Brothers for some money to help support our young people continue to improve and enjoy their sailing. She was successful and with the money they provided we have managed to buy 2 full sets of sails for our Visions (and numbers of all 3 sets), a new Jaffa support boat and an engine for this.

On the 7th of February we reinstated our jacket potato evening where the instructors put on an evening of theory for sailors of all ages and abilities as well as providing jacket potatoes for dinner with a range of toppings and as the club does best, everyone brought along a pudding to share.

When Spring arrived, it was time for the rigging to take place. All went smoothly and was very efficient apart from the discovery of a Laser 2 mast happily rigged on to the hull of an Enterprise!

The sailing season for all returning members kicked off on the first Friday night of April and in the cold and strong breeze the instructors gave some very good demonstrations of how to capsize. Though, due to it being the Easter holidays, there was luckily not many people to witness these demonstrations.

The first dinghy cruise was an upriver sail on the 26th of April, a beautiful sunny day for a successful sail (and maybe a bit of a paddle/tow) up to Calstock. Overall, a highly enjoyable day for all.

Then on the 10th of May we had our first down river sail in a fresh easterly breeze. Eight boats ventured down the Tamar and then up the Tavy towards Lopwell dam with lots of tacks, many

encounters with the mud and one hat rescue mission. All boats made it there safely. Again, a riveting day out for all who attended.

At the beginning of May we started to welcome new members to the club. Shortly after starting our yellow hat club with around 16 participants depending on the week – a group we started a few years ago which gives brand new beginners a crash course in sailing whist wearing yellow cycling caps over their helmets - hence their names.

As I am sure many of you are aware this year was the 60th anniversary of Weir Quay Sailing Club with the official date of it being set up being the 15th of May. By some chance this date fell on a Friday, so it was decided it was only fitting to throw a pirate themed birthday party. Fancy dress was not mandatory (but expected) and everyone did a wonderful job. Unfortunately, due to the high winds, the on-the-water activities did not fully go to plan. Due to the cold 3 sailors were chosen to walk the plank (or jump out of the tender) - Steve, Rosie and Ralph to everyone's entertainment. This was followed by a brilliant birthday tea and a pirate ship birthday cake.

On the 31st of May we then had a down river sail to Barn Pool with two small cruisers and one dinghy, where we stopped for lunch followed by an exciting sail around the Sound and then back up the river.

This year's summer series consisted of 2 days of racing and a total of 4 races the first day presented some interesting sailing including some spectacular capsizes and man overboard recovery. The series was won by Sophie in a Laser radial.

This was followed by the Tamar bridge race on the 21st of June. The race started with a good force 3, which held until the dinghies had rounded the Tamar bridge, after which the wind started to die until there was absolutely nothing. Tom S in his Laser standard, who maintained a good lead throughout the race, was the winner.

The big BBQ happened on the 3rd of July with both Cargreen and Saltash sailing clubs making the trip upstream. It was a wonderful evening with everyone from all clubs fully enjoying themselves. A massive thanks for this event must go to our social events coordinators for organizing and for everybody who lent a hand and made it possible!

On the 11th of July we then had our annual Regatta which started with the Weir Quay Olympics held in the paddock, with multiple challenges for the 2 teams to compete in which the spectators enjoyed watching just as much as the people participating! The highly anticipated and always dramatic trans-Tamar model boat race was this year won by Tom M. This was followed by the fun dinghy racing which consisted of two races and a pirate boat set on wreaking havoc - meaning nothing was certain. Despite this, Rob L won the single-handed fleet, and Iris and Saoirse won the double-handed fleet.

In July we also ran our first assistant instructor course since 2017. This consisted of two days where participants covered topics such as how to teach tacking and gybing, rudderless sailing, coming alongside moored boats, as well as teaching students with additional needs. We are proud to say all 5 participants passed and we have 5 new assistant instructors – Katie, Belle, Ralph, Rob L and Andy M.

There was meant to be a cross over day with the gig club and a down river awayday sail in August but due to high winds we had to unfortunately cancel both.

In August we were meant to have our annual Cotehele camp, however due to the risk of fire, the decision was made to move it to September instead. Although this had a slightly smaller number of campers than normal, a wonderful time was had sailing up to Cotehele to set up tents and lunch before heading up to Calstock for ice creams. On return to Cotehele the

campers got stuck into a bit of mud sliding before washing off and collecting some firewood for a delicious BBQ and marshmallows roasted over the fire.

On the 13th of September some of the cruisers kindly welcomed aboard dinghy sailor for a day trip down to Cawsands for lunch and a swim. It was a brilliant day for all the dinghy sailors who went along and a massive thank you goes to the cruisers who allowed them onboard.

Along with all of these wonderful events Friday evenings have been consistently running throughout the season with lots of great sailing, many capsizes, plenty of fun and the occasional sinky boat. This year we had to introduce a club Friday night sailing code of conduct, which allowed us to present the standard of behavior we expect from all our sailors and other associated people on site - so that everyone is able to enjoy sailing in a safe, pleasant and fun environment. This has allowed us to continue operating in a safe, fun, and learning environment.

In total this year we have had around 40 new participants, some of which have only attended once or twice and others every Friday. We had a total of 117 different sailors attending Friday night sessions this year. Luckly not all of these people turned up at once! The most we had in one evening was 50 with an average attendance of 31. These sailors vary in age and ability and as an instructor team we are very happy to be able to provide the opportunity for all to get out on the water and to continue to improve their skills. Of course this would not be possible without the wonderful instructor, safety and beach team who consistently give up their time on Friday nights and weekends to put in the extra work needed behind the scenes to keep the dinghy section working!

Consisting of (in no particular order) Steve K (our chief instructor), Sophie, Chris C, Kris, Lorine, Sam M, Sue, Phil, Rob K, Ben W, Andy M, Tom S, Isy, Chris F, Belle, Rob L, Katie W, Mat, M, Neil, Mat N, Ralph, Aoife and of course our dynamic duo in charge of signing everyone in and keeping the records as well as much, much more Alan and John G (I don't think I have missed anyone but my deepest apologies if I have). Plus of course the countless family members who help out each week with rigging, derigging and hauling the boats up the slipway. A Special mention should also of course go to our maintenance team who meet on Tuesdays to fix all the boats that we break – which is a lot! If they did not take time out of their day to fix our boats, we would have none left!

At the time of writing, we are currently still in the middle of this year's Autumn race series and our derig day is still to come.

I hope that everyone has had an enjoyable time sailing with us this year whether you have only made it to one or two session/events or if you have been at everything.

I have started to look at possible events for next year and will shortly be discussing this with the other instructors. So, if you have any ideas please contact me and we will take your suggestion into consideration.

Finaly pictures paint a thousand words and photos from most if not all our events can be found on our Instagram account @weirquaysailingclub and we will make an effort to create a folder of all the photos the instructor team has taken this year.



Moorings Officer
Mark Reynolds moorings@wqsc.org

It has been another busy year on the moorings front, although I cannot take the credit as all the hard work is done by the amazing Mooring Barge team – as most of you know time has not been my friend recently, and therefore as always, my biggest thanks must go to our **ever present and multiple-role Commodore, Rob,** together with everyone who has supported the Mooring Barge and inspections (particular shout out to Richard, Stuart, Martin, Dick, Matthew and of course, Doug) . The work that goes on behind the scenes is considerable and often unseen. The team have done an **amazing job keeping the mooring barge running,** and getting all the mooring inspections completed and up to date despite the mechanical problems and challenges that come with an ageing vessel. Without their time, practical skills, ingenuity and sheer persistence, we simply would not be able to operate our own barge and provide the mooring service that we do.

The team have also put a great deal of work into **refurbishing the mooring trailer**, which is now in much better condition and ready to support future mooring operations. This has been another excellent example of club members giving up their time to maintain the equipment on which the mooring operation depends.

Take-up of the moorings remains healthy with the Deep and Mid lines remaining well subscribed. As ever, anyone intending to give up their mooring, or who may be able to sublet it, should make this known as early as possible.

There remains a longer-term challenge in inspecting and, when necessary, replacing the mooring blocks themselves as well as the chain and associated components. The barge continues to deliver, but is not getting any younger. The inspections of the blocks by Diver earlier in the year was a game changer – thank you Doug for organising.

The biggest concern remains the safety of all vessels on our moorings; both ensuring that none of our vessels gets damaged and remain seaworthy. I would as always like to take this opportunity to remind all mooring holders of their individual responsibilities. Vessels should be secured with **two suitable strops**, with appropriate anti-chafe protection at contact points, and owners remain responsible for ensuring that their strops and associated equipment are maintained in good condition. It does not take long for even a well-made and quality strop to chafe as demonstrated when one of the mooring barge strops recently parted – it can happen to any vessel! Those leaving boats afloat through the winter should check them regularly and,

while out on the water, please keep an eye on neighbouring boats as well. That simple bit of mutual support is one of the strengths of the club.

Finally, after a couple of years managing the moorings, **I will be handing over the Moorings role at the AGM**. It has certainly been an education but I have thoroughly enjoyed doing it and have had the pleasure of working with some fantastic stalwarts of the club. More than anything, it has reinforced just how much Weir Quay Sailing Club relies upon members who quietly volunteer their skills, knowledge and time.

We enjoy an exceptional mooring facility and remarkably good value, but we can only maintain that because members are prepared to get involved.



Dinghy Park Officer
Rob Kirby enquiries@wqsc.org

Once again, the dinghy park is bursting at the seams.

We have managed to accommodate some new members boats as vacancies appear; a waiting list exists for free standing dinghies. One slot is available on the old toast rack.

Hopefully over winter a trailer can be constructed for the new Jaffa safety boat which will allow that to be stored alongside the other two and that will then allow better access to the toast rack.

Following discussions with the Hub Club board, the intention is to relocate all the canoes to racking between the new extension and electricity pylon. This will allow easier and safer access.

For cruiser owners, please remember, if you change your tender from an inflatable to a hard tender, you cannot automatically think that you are entitled to a space in the dinghy park. Whilst you may visit and see empty spaces – that is because the tenders that normally sits there are actually out on the water attached to a mooring!!

We have tender toast rack lists on the outboard storage cupboard as to who is allocated to which slot. We had an instance this year where again a slot was commandeered without prior

consent. Thankfully the original occupant was not overtly possessive and agreed to move sideways.

A major tidy up will be required over the winter months to dispose of old mooring gear.

Some major shuffling / reorganisation digging out will occur within the next year or so as the gig currently stored on the designated social area will need to be accommodated down by the entrance. That will be fun! 🤗



Social Events Coordinators
Jane Morton & Judy Turton social@wqsc.org

This year's club social calendar has been centred around celebrations of our club's 60th Birthday. With this in mind, we've been busy bees behind the scenes to ensure it has been appropriately marked, with a celebratory theme to all events and the creation of our special 60th anniversary tea towel, designed by our club members young and old, available for sale at most events and on Friday nights throughout the season. Thanks to Sarah at the Z'bra Creative Design for designing the lovely 60th Anniversary logo which adorned the tea towel.

We kicked off the year in style with the Winter Barn Dance! The event was a huge success with over 100 people attending. Dancers age 6 and up joined hands to Promenade and Do-si-do around the hall with pasties and sharing platters for refreshments. Great fun was had by all and a huge thanks goes to Aoife Nicholls who organised the event along with Judy. Save the date - 6th March 2027 and look out over the winter months for more information about the next Barn Dance!

In May, the date of the clubs actual 60th Birthday coincided with a Friday evening sail and so, in true party spirit we all dressed up as pirates! Nibbles and cakes were brought along to be enjoyed following a very blustery evening on the water. The event was brilliantly supported by current and new members and special mention goes to Katherine for her wonderful pirate-themed Birthday cake, large enough to be enjoyed by all, although it was almost a shame to cut into it! Music followed in the clubhouse to round up a fun-filled evening on and off the water.

The Big BBQ also went down a treat. On Friday 3rd July we were joined on the water by Saltash and Cargreen Sailing Club members who were all duly fed and watered on arrival at

Weir Quay. A huge thanks goes to Judy, for all her brilliant organisation in advance, with a very capable band of jolly volunteers who kept everything running smoothly. The event went off superbly with a friendly and cheerful atmosphere and also raised a modest amount for club funds.

Just a week later the clubs willing volunteers turned out again to help run the Annual Regatta with much of the organising behind the scenes carried out by our commodore Rob and team. It was a glorious day with lots fun to be had. Highlights included the silly games with Jon and Alex's 3-legged tumble at the hurdle getting the most laughs! The hotly contested model boat race was won in style by Tom Morton with plenty of other boats taking part with varying degrees of success. More fun on the water followed with the dinghy races and challenges, meanwhile those on the shore could enjoy a display of club photos through the ages. A BBQ, cakes and music rounded off a fun and eventful day.

The Joint Sailing and Gig Club's Fundraising Auction was held in October at Bere Alston Bowling Club. Special thanks to Jane who, with the help of Carol Horner led on the organisation alongside members of the Gig Club. We had 36 completely varied lots to bid on as well as a raffle drawn on the night with a selection of vouchers and two Christmas-themed hampers. Lots included a commissioned painting of choice, homemade pavlova, a fully catered BBQ for 20 people, a wing foil lesson, language classes ..... and many more besides. Thanks must go to all those who donated prizes as well as those who came and supported the evening and bid on the vast array of lots as well as to the team of volunteers from both clubs who made the event possible. We are delighted to report that around £2,500 has been raised for the Hub Club to help fund a new BBQ area for both clubs to enjoy in the future.

As we head into the winter months, we will round off a busy season with the End of Season Supper. This year, the sell-out event has a new venue with a nautical theme: The Ship Inn at Morwellham! The team look forward to welcoming us with an appetising menu offering a choice of two or three courses.

Overall, it has been a busy but rewarding year, and we hope you enjoyed the events you were able to attend. Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone who volunteered, shared food or cakes, played music, sang, swept the floor or helped in any other way. These events take hours of planning and organising, but they could not happen without the team who help on the day. There are too many people to thank individually, but special thanks go to Rob Kirby for his help and support, Rosie Hinge for the many emails promoting events, and Rosie Duncan and Steve Kirby for organising the water-based activities. Finally, a huge thank you to everyone who came along and joined in the fun and Happy Birthday to Weir Quay Sailing Club!!!

Please note: These accounts have not been audited but any changes are expected to be very small.

Financial Statements for the year Ended 30 September 2026

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE			2026	2025	2024
INCOME					
MOORINGS			9,690.00	9,138.00	8,743.50
MEMBERSHIP			7,244.00	7,149.00	7,660.85
MOORING MAINTENANCE			5,848.00	5,907.64	6,590.38
STORAGE			3,053.00	2,991.00	3,247.00
TRAINING			-	225.00	-
INTEREST			129.10	165.03	178.46
MISC SALES			519.79	67.55	144.00
ERROR			137.50	-	607.43
FRIDAY DINGHY SAILING			1,477.20	1,380.00	1,690.00
COTEHELE CAMP			208.50	865.00	-
TECTONA			1,650.00	-	-
END OF SEASON SUPPER (PREVIOUS YEAR)			1,640.00	1,760.00	1,504.00
END OF SEASON SUPPER (CURRENT YEAR)			-	660.00	-
SOCIAL PROGRAMME / EVENTS			1,913.80	1,231.90	2,800.36
MEMBER DONATIONS			357.00	997.00	3,611.32
SAMWORTH BROS. GRANT			9088.00	-	-
TOTAL INCOME			**42,955.89**	**32,537.12**	**36,777.30**
EXPENDITURE					
FUNDUS			9,277.64	9,277.64	9,277.64
MOORING MAINTENANCE			9,249.14	5,667.43	4,523.48
HUB CLUB RENT			3,708.40	3,465.60	3,344.40
INSURANCE			2,703.86	4,938.48	2,388.97
ADMINISTRATION			1,274.23	939.37	795.22
ENGINE SERVICING			982.40	849.40	394.32
REFUND			-	532.00	-
RYA AFFILIATION			435.00	415.00	400.00
TRAINING			308.00	450.00	-
HALL HIRE			120.00	390.75	175.00
FRIDAY DINGHY SAILING			760.69	1,695.92	910.59
COTEHELE CAMP			-	660.38	-
TECTONA			1,650.00	-	-
END OF SEASON SUPPER (PREVIOUS YEAR)			1,991.00	1,740.00	2,242.00
END OF SEASON SUPPER (CURRENT YEAR)			-	100.00	-
SOCIAL PROGRAMME / EVENTS			1,558.68	1,548.36	2,866.95
COST OF SALES			452.40	-	-
SAMWORTH BROS. GRANT			6,612.10	-	-
DONATION - HUB CLUB			-	7,000.00	-
DONATION - RNLI			-	55.00	61.32
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			**41,083.54**	**39,725.33**	**27,379.89**
NET SURPLUS INCOME LESS EXPENDITURE			**1,872.35**	**-7,188.21**	**9,397.41**
FINANCIAL HOLDING	**HSBC C/A**	**HSBC D/A**			
OPENING 01/10/25	17,191.13	9,441.22	26,632.35	33,940.46	24,718.42
CLOSING 30/09/26	18,166.38	9,570.32	27,736.70	26,632.35	33,940.46
NET CHANGE (25-24)	975.25	129.10	1,104.35	-7,308.11	9,222.04
CASH IN HAND			1,128.41	360.41	240.51
CHANGE IN CASH			768.00	119.90	176.37
TOTAL CHANGE IN HOLDING			**1,872.35**	**-7,188.21**	**9,398.41**

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. **Accounting Policies**

   Summary of significant accounting policies
   Accounts are prepared by the treasurer and reviewed by two auditors, both members of the club. The accounts which comprise of the Income and Expenditure Account, Balance sheet and related Notes to the Accounts have been prepared from the books and records of the club on a cash basis. The financial information is not intended to achieve full compliance with provisions of UK generally accepted accounting policies, as the purpose of the accounts is to advise members.

   Tangible Assets
   The club's non-current assets are revalued annually at fair value and therefore no depreciation is charged on these assets. Any increase or decrease to an asset's value is not charged in the Income and Expenditure Account.

2. **Stock**
   The value of stock at the year end at fair value was £4,924.52.

3. **Insurance**
   This year we have paid our final premium as part of a 3-year undertaking with Gallagher. Our total premium in 2025-26 was £2,438.16 (annual), compared to £2,262.27 (annual) in 2025-26 and £2,676.21 in 2024-25 (monthly).

4. **Donations and restricted funds**
   A generous grant (£9,088.00) from Samworth Brothers was used to purchase a new club safety boat and engine (£5234.50) and dinghy sails (£1377.60). This fund is restricted for youth sailing activities, leaving £2,475.90 remaining. Considering this, the clubs total unrestricted funds decreased slightly overall:

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Opening Funds	£26,992.76	-	£26,992.76
Samworth Bros. Grant		£9,088.00	
RNLI Donation		£30.00	
Closing Funds	£26,389.21	£2,505.90	£28,865.11
Change	-£633.55	+£2,505.90	+£1,872.35

5. **Payable and receivable amounts**
   Donations for the RNLI totalling £30 were paid into the club account in June. Payment to RNLI will fall into the next financial year.

   Two overpayments for the Tectona weekend (totalling £137.50) were identified after 30 September, with refunds falling into next year’s accounts.

   This year the traditional Cotehele Camp was postponed due to fire risk after a dry summer, and took place over a weekend in September. Expenses (£191.19) were reimbursed in October, falling into next year’s accounts.

   The 2026 EOSS is being held at a new venue, with all income / expense falling into next year’s accounts.

6. Fixed asset register

	2026		2025	
	Qty	**Total Value**	**Qty**	**Total Value**
Power Boats and Engines	11	14,500.00	9	11,400.00
Dinghies & Equipment	54	11,950.00	54	12,250.00
Mooring Barge	1	9,000.00	1	9,000.00
Other Insured Items	3	1,710.00	3	1,710.00
Total Fixed Assets		**37,160.00**		**34,360.00**
Change in Value		+2,800.00		
Dingies In Storage (Not Insured)	2	550.00	3	-
Mooring Stock Value		4,924.52		2,678.76
Total Assets		**42,634.52**		**37,038.76**
Change in Value		+5,595.76		

Hub Club News

Weir Quay Community Watersports Hub Club wqwatersports.org.uk

Rob Kirby

I think we can safely say that that this year has not been the Hub Club's best year behind the scenes regarding the committee.

We have although been in active communication with the **sailing club workforce** who are building the extension. Our thanks go to Steve Kirby, Robin Venables and Pete Silcock - being the principal players and thanks also to the numerous volunteers who have turned up in all conditions to assist.



November 2025 – holes dug, ready for concrete footings to be poured

The build has proved slightly more challenging than first envisaged. Tremendous time was taking up with the preparation, surveys, environmental, archaeological inspections etc before you could move forward to see any tangible results.



November 2025 – 6 cubic metres of concrete arrives!



Over 20 volunteers with shovels, spades and wheelbarrows formed a synchronised team



February 2026 – first upright in place



June 2026 – installation of the roof structure

Still, holes were dug, footings poured, bolts inserted, frame erected, roof installed and now the sides are all but completed.





The next steps will be concentrating on the floor and drainage to ensure the levels are all correct before the doors are finally ordered and fitted. The end is near!

Otherwise, we have ensured all our financial obligations were met whilst accommodating a large jump in our electricity invoices. The site has been maintained ensuring that the road hedges were cut, the waste system overhauled and the roller-shutter door goes up and down!

Thank you to the Gig and Sailing clubs for raising funds at your charity auction where this income will be set aside for the development of a communal area in front of the boatshed as we strive to maintain and improve the conditions on site for our member clubs.

NARRATIVES

Carol Horner

Scotland in Zuza

After years of searching for the perfect boat……too small…..too slow…..too exposed to the wind and rain, we may have found the perfect solution.

This spring we spent 4 days on board the ZUZA a 70' aluminium cutter with a large deckhouse for protection from the chilly wind and occasional rain. She has four double or twin guest cabins, and is managed by a crew of three, skipper, cook and mate, working on monthly rotation throughout the season.



The sunshine was misleading and it was chilly as we sailed out of Oban, up the Sound of Mull for our first night in Tobermory, so the deckhouse with 360 visibility was a great place to sit and enjoy the scenery. The following day we were blessed again with fabulous sunshine as we sailed round Staffa and back to the Tresnish islands where we anchored off Lunga for a trip ashore to watch the puffins. The abandoned crofts are a stark reminder of the hard life of previous generations, but the

puffins appreciate having the island to themselves (at least after the daily trip boats have left). A green rope indicates the area beyond which visitors are requested not to go, about 10 feet away from the nesting birds, and we had a fabulous view of them returning to their burrows and popping in and out as we sat on the grass nearby.



We stayed anchored for the night and enjoyed a fabulous starry "dark sky" midnight when the only lights visible were the lighthouse on Ardnamurchan point and the Point of Sleat on Skye.

Our final full day was beset with flukey winds and misty drizzle, no surprises there, but the deckhouse gave perfect protection for the skipper and passengers. We managed an afternoon walk on Kerrera before our final dinner on board. It was a thoroughly enjoyable trip with all the comforts of a large boat and plenty of opportunity to assist the crew with sailing Zuza. She usually spends the summer season on the Scottish west coast so I think we will go again.

Chris Fillan & Nick Ferneyhough

Sailing in Tectona to Southampton and Back

On Friday 18th September Tectona left her mooring up river from Weir Quay Sailing Club to embark on her voyage to the 2026 Southampton International Boat Show.

Tectona had been totally refitted over the past 6 years and was now back in service as a sail training vessel. Sailing Tectona inspires positive change for people in recovery from mental health issues or addiction and young people of all backgrounds. Tectona's hands-on, sail training voyages build confidence, resilience, teamwork and connection. As a charitable organisation, Tectona is supported by volunteers and fundraising.

So it was time to get her out there at the boat show, promote her and raise money by shaking buckets.



On board were young sailors from the dinghy section and two parents with the Tectona Skipper Roo and other support crew who would sail her as far as Brixham.





It was dark as she went down river and as Friday night dinghy sailors were packing up for the evening , she was given a rousing send off in the darkness as she passed the Clubhouse.

She dropped anchor near Plymouth for the first night. The weather Gods were unfortunately against them and their trip the following day was, without going into too much detail, a memorable one requiring the sharing of buckets on deck.



They did however cover a huge mileage (65 NM) arriving in Brixham in glorious sunshine, allowing the crew to recover before being collected and driven back to Weir Quay.



A crew of Tectona volunteers boarded at Brixham at noon and motored off the pontoon in a flat calm sea. The lack of wind persisted and so the motoring continued until the wind increased and we had a full compliment of sails up before dropping anchor between Old Harry Rocks and Studland for the night.



A 4am start next morning was accompanied by much needed coffee and she set off towards Southampton, arriving at the boat show just after 19.00hrs.





The Southampton boat show basked in glorious sunshine for the entire week and was very well attended by some very generous members of the public. A surprisingly large amount of money was raised for Tectona.



The following week, a group of 12 home-educated youngsters were taken on a sail training trip around the Southampton area, taking part in the Small Ships Race.



Tectona in The Small Ships Race

After this, Tectona's return trip home began from Cowes, Isle Of Wight.

With the promise of a decent blow and the tide in our favour, Tectona cast off from Cowes Yacht Haven at approx. 2000 hrs Tuesday evening, the new crew having replenished the ship's supplies. A spaghetti bolognaise was enjoyed beforehand to get us on our way.



With 7 onboard, Tectona left on a heading to pass 6 miles off Portland before a tide change.

The crew were on 3-hour shifts throughout the night and into Wednesday.

We motor-sailed for the first 12 hrs with the sea state slight and a gentle 2 to 3.

It was only when we neared Start Point that the promised wind picked up and we had a decent 12-hour sail at around force 5 topping at 7. Putting in a reef on a 75ft gaff is a bit of a task, with a fair bit of teamwork along with a shout of “2–6 heave” going on to set the reef and this set the tone for the rest of the trip.

We sailed into Plymouth Sound around 3pm, just making the flood back up the Tamar - Wednesday early evening. We had an evening meal onboard at Tectona’s WQ mooring.

Relishing our beautifully made curry we all commented on the total stillness and silence now on the mooring in contrast to the last full-on 12hrs.

What an incredible experience to sail such a beautifully restored 75’ gaff cutter ketch, teak on teak, built in 1928 on a beach in Calicut, Kerala, India.



Steve White

Cody SC Visit to Weir Quay 17-26th April



We are very fortunate to be able to sail from Weir Quay, camp in a beautiful location, use the facilities of Weir Quay Sailing Club and have an interesting and challenging few days of river sailing. Very many thanks to the hosts who make this camp possible.

Having set up camp on the Clarke's paddock on Friday 16th, the next day we had breakfast in the excellent cafe at the boatyard near where we camped. Then we sailed at 10am from Weir Quay to Mount Edgcumbe/Cremyll on a sun filled day.



The following day with no wind, some of us took the train and bus to the Barbican in Plymouth, visited Force4 and bought boating provisions, enjoyed Fish & Chips and caught the last train (17:44) home, while two others cycled to Buckland Abbey.

We now knew that a strong Easterly wind was forecast from Tuesday onwards but on Monday, sailed in light zephyrs of wind on a sunny and cold morning upriver, around the big corner and up as far a mile short of Cotehele.



Then there was a pause until 13:00 when we prepared for a sail downriver, possibly stopping at the Ferry House Inn, so set off in a F4 from the North-East F4. When we got under the bridges, new signs warned of Private Land and No Landing, so the developing plan was then to see how far downriver with the tide we could get. About half a mile short of Cremyl, after the Torpoint Ferries, we decided to make for the shingly beach to the North East of the Edgcumbe Arms where there were a few metres of windward shore to anchor our boats and fetch goodness from the pub, including coffee in cups on saucers on trays. All boats had tripping lines on their anchors and Mel grabbed an escaping Trio before it had a chance to escape.



This was like two sails in one day and it was worth it because… the strong East Wind then stopped all sailing from Tuesday to Friday evening, and we reverted to having a lovely holiday in Devon and Cornwall. During this time, we visited various local highlights from the land!

On Saturday 25th, Mel and Steve joined WQSC for their annual sail to Calstock (we had both assumed they went there regularly, but no, once a year). The day started calm and we pushed off at about 11am into a gentle breeze and full sun. The fleet consisted of 7 different dinghies

and a yacht, and a mixture of adults, youth and children. The sail there was straightforward, with the wind blowing from behind all the way from the end of the big turn, past Cotehele and onto Calstock.



Calstock is not a welcoming location to beach seven dinghies and a metal powerboat. There's a steep bank at high tide which drops to soft, thigh deep mud and requires scrambling up the vegetation to get to the top of the bank, or the ferry pontoon which is small and high. Having eventually settled on the land side of the ferry pontoon we joined not only the sailors on the many picnic benches, but the parents of the sailors, and the WQSC walkers, probably about 35 people having lunch in the sun. It was a lovely atmosphere, and the numbers overwhelmed the ice-cream sellers of Calstock. We were in no hurry to leave as the ebb was building in strength.

The wind continued to be shifty in the reach along Calstock, and then it settled on a beat almost the whole way home on a decent neap tide ebb. The sea-breeze had made it up as far as Calstock, and was a steady F3 and very many tacks between Devon and Cornwall (the county boundary runs through the centre of the river).

All returned to Weir Quay by 6pm. It was a highly satisfying day of sailing in good company. If only Calstock sorted out a better way of hosting visiting dinghies it would be an excellent destination. Cotehele is a much better destination for a group of dinghies.

Overall, the week was a success if the goal was a lovely Spring holiday in Devon. It would have been better if the wind had been moderate, and yet Devon and Cornwall are a lovely place for a camping holiday.

Editor: thank you to Cody SC for braving our unpredictable weather and muddy river conditions. We look forward to seeing you again in two years' time, if you decide to pay us another visit 😊

Eloise Streeter

Dinghy Sailors with Cruisers to Cawsand Bay



Wacabone

[Editor: On 13th September, two simultanous cruiser events took place. One was the second day of the late-season meet up on the River Yealm and the other was the dinghy sailors joining with cruisers for a day sail to Cawsand Bay (posponed from earlier in the year when it had been called off due to bad weather). The former event naturally curtailed the number of cruisers able to take part in the second one. But in the end, two cruisers – Steve Kirby's "Wacabone" and Rob Kirby's "Sparta" collected some intrepid dinghy sailors from Weir Quay for a trip to Plymouth Sound and an anchor in Cawsand Bay for lunch. Plus, Rosie and Doug from Rapport stopped by after their Yealm trip to visit them all in Cawsand Bay.]



Sparta

It was an amazing experience - we both really enjoyed it. We sailed all the way down the Tamar all helping to rig and trim the sails.



We then went around Drakes Island and straight out past the breakwater into some waves.



Sam and I then got a chance to helm the boat, which was very fun.



Then we sailed over to Cawsand where we had some lunch and a lovely swim.





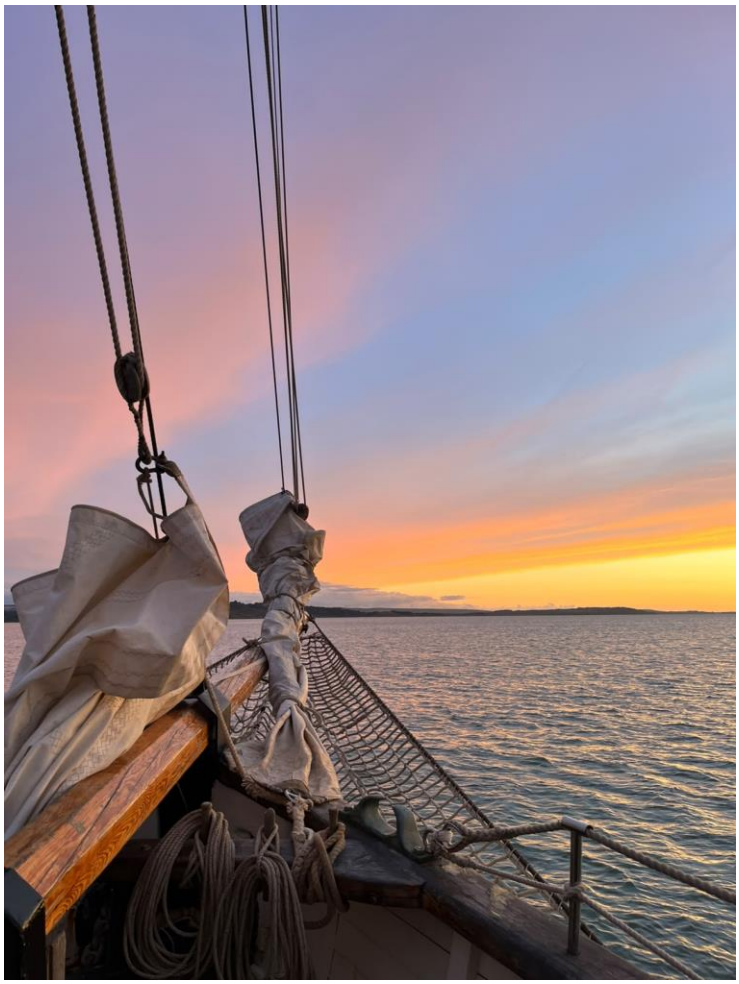
Afterwards we sailed all the way back though the Drakes Island gap called the Bridge and back up to the club.



We both had an amazing day and it was a lovely experience where we got to have a go at everything.

Cicely Jackson

TECTONA WINS! YAAAAAY!



In September, a group of home educated young people set sail from Southampton aboard Tectona. Their goal was to circumnavigate the Isle of Wight and compete in the Association of Sail Training Organisations (ASTO) Small Ships Race.



The sailors, aged between 12 and 17, had varying levels of experience, from ferry trips to dinghy sailing to growing up on a sailing yacht.



Over the week, we were taught tacking and jibing, sail and mast names, sweating and tailing, points of sail (with the help of a paper boat named Delores) and much more.



Of course, all of this was taught by our amazing sea staff Ben, Roo and Sasha.



I would like to say all these skills were used during the race, but as there was no wind they were not. Instead, our time was spent singing and dancing with great enthusiasm; Enough enthusiasm for us to win the 'parade of sail' prize!

Luckily for us the race was changed to a scavenger hunt, which meant (even if it was with selfies and snack platters, not sails) we won, not only in our class but overall.

By the end of the voyage, we had sailed 142nm in maximum wind strengths of force 6. Ben said at one point, that it was the most water he'd seen on Tectona's deck at one time

At the end of the day, it isn't the winning that matters, it's the fact that we were still smiling even when we felt seasick, and created lifelong memories and new friendships.



Sampson Smart

Saint Patrick the Seafarer

Saint Patrick is a significant part of Irish history and also its nautical background too. He was born during the 5th century AD. In his life he had many roles; known as the 'Apostle of Ireland' or the 'Enlightener of Ireland', he is one of the primary saints of his nation and, curiously, Nigeria.

Patrick is venerated as Saint in the Catholic Church, the Church of Ireland (a section of the Anglican Communion), Lutheranism, and in the Eastern Orthodox Church where he is regarded most respectfully and regally. The events of his life are not fixed in time with certainty but the one, and probably most famous feat of his life, I am going to inform you about is his incredible voyage across the Celtic Sea.



What I am in awe about is not the reason why Saint Patrick and the monks crossed the waters to Wales from Ireland, but the skill required to successfully complete the journey.

Brendan, the navigator, could possibly be the most inspiring and impressive member of the party, and not for his fame or religious career. Brendan of Clonfert (AD 484-577) is one of the early Irish monastic saints and is an apostle of Ireland. He is recognised for his legendary voyage to find the Isle of the Blessed, renamed Saint Brendan's Island. He is renowned for his profession and agility in sailing and orientation despite being an abbot. His cause for exploring the oceans was commonly to discover islands or nautical features related to Christianity such as Hell, Heaven and promised lands in remote locations unknown to people at the time. There are over 100 manuscripts of his exploits throughout Europe and a variety of translations. The ninth-century *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis* is a plain Christian

narrative of Saint Brendan's legendary seven year Atlantic voyage, but also describes natural phenomena and unbelievable happenings which to many viewers are plausible.



Sampson visiting St Davids Cathedral in Wales, where St Patrick had formerly built a church



St Davids Cathedral



It is proven that many sectors of history are based on vessels, seas and venturing on water, from a faint touch on the subject to a whole novel on it. This is why the use of boats for trade, transport and many more purposes is so crucial to communities today and supports the fact that we should weave the topic of seafaring into our everyday lives.



Andy Morton & Rob Larman

Just a Quick One ….

On return from a successful holiday sail to the Channel Isles myself, Jane and Tom feeling pleased and happy with our new boat Periwinkle, contacted our good friends Rob, Judy and family and invited them to come out and join us in our old Hurley 22; Elowen.

They sailed down from Weir Quay to meet us and we were anchored in Barn Pool and decided to raft up together for a leisurely lunch whilst waiting for the tide to flood.

Relaxed and confident in our home waters we decided to leave the rafted boats at anchor and wandered round the corner to the public house to celebrate our first longer voyage in Periwinkle.

Having dispatched Tom and Wilfred ahead of us while we finished our pint, we found them a little later on our way back talking animatedly to two strangers down on the rocks.

Both boys exclaimed at once: “The boats are gone!” The strangers were already on the phone to HM Coastguard. Our natural reaction was that they must be mistaken; they must be there!

However, unfortunately, they were not! Had they been stolen? If they had drifted, had they sunk or where had they gone?

The tide was by now coming in again and we scoured the horizon. A few minutes passed, during which time the MOD, HM Coastgurard, WQSC WhatsApp group, John (the previous owner) and his friend in Canada and probably numerous others, knew where our boats were ……. but we did not.



Periwinkle and Elowen alongside at Mayflower Marina

Jane suddenly shouted out “That’s Periwinkle over there, at Mayflower Marina. And there is Elowen also, just in front of her! They are over there on the other side of the river, tied onto the outside of the jetty.”

Rather sheepishly we contacted Mayflower Marina and they informed us that whilst we were not aboard the boats, they had become restless and drifted into the channel together.

The Cremyl ferry came upon them drifting and to our huge gratitude later we were informed they had acted fast and abandoned their current service to take hold of the two boats and tow them out of harm’s way, depositing them at Mayflower, most likely to the wild entertainment of all their summer passengers.

The event I’m sure is widely available to access on most social media platforms!

Rob Larman

Lockeridge Learning Curve

This 'learning experience' happened in the pitch-black early hours on 5th July. We had meandered upriver to Lockeridge (between Weir Quay and Cotehele) in Elowen, the Hurley 22 which Andy and Jane Morton had kindly lent us this season.



Wilfred sailing the Topper upriver to our campsite

I'd anchored Elowen just off the main river flow on the bend. The families had all enjoyed time ashore until after dark where I'd left them camping and I'd returned by canoe in the dark around midnight and retired to the berth onboard. Andy and Jane returned to Periwinkle anchored just downriver. I must have gone straight to sleep.

I was startled awake by a clatter of noise. Saucepans falling from the shelf. In moderate alarm I realised we were not entirely upright. At anchor, somehow we were fairly well heeled over. I scanned outside but the moonless sky at 2 or 3am gave little visibility. I reasoned that in the turning tide we'd snagged on the bottom mid-turn.

At this stage I thought there was little that could be done so I must have drifted back to sleep thinking that the tide would come back up and we'd point back in the right vertical and horizontal direction again. I was wrong. I drifted into a deep sleep.

PSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSHHHHHTTTTTTTTTTT…

…Came the loud noise from next to me in the fore cabin. Total alarm struck this time. Have we sprung a leak? Has a sea-cock burst? Why is my left leg wet?

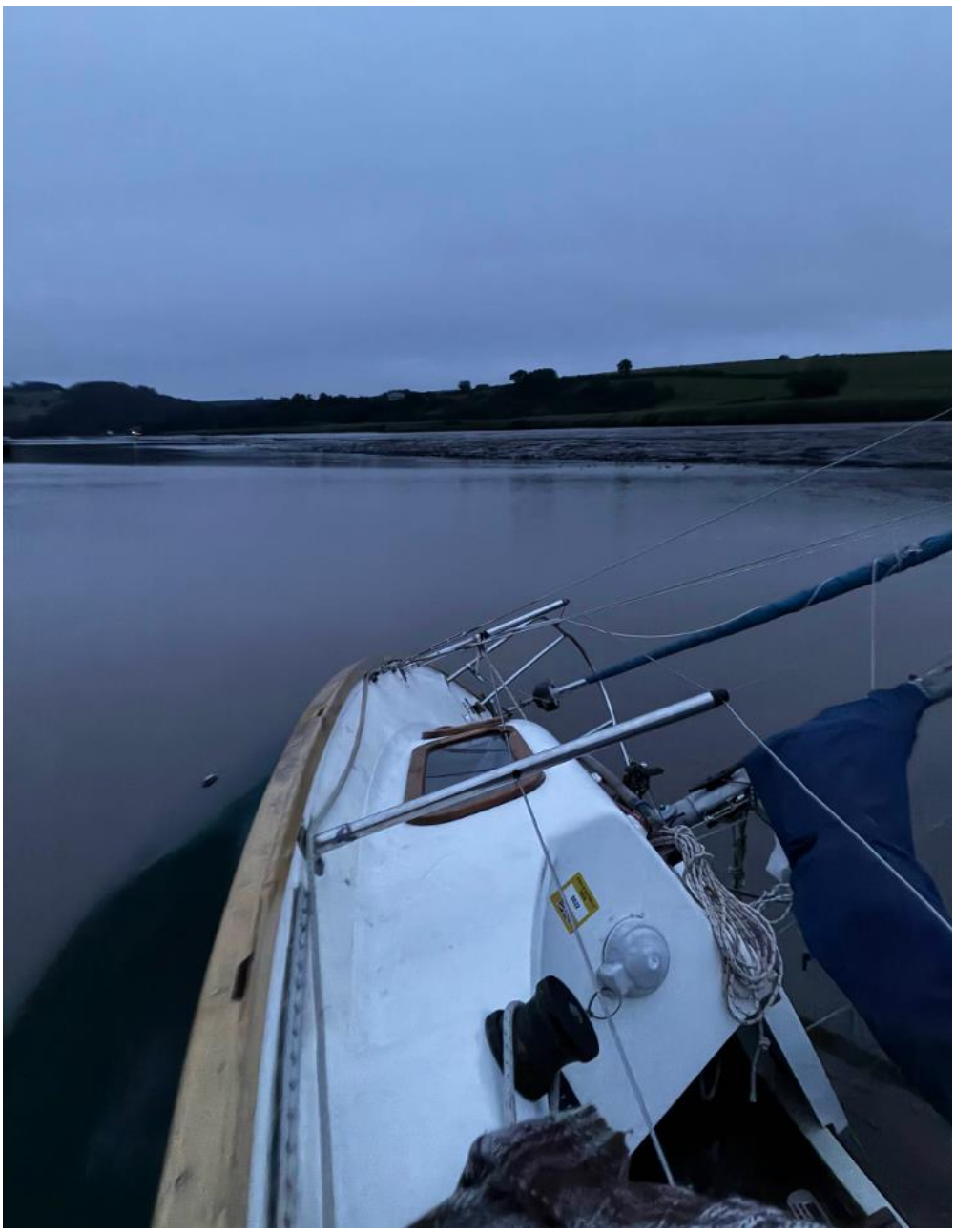
Turns out the inflatable life jackets stored in the interior cabin locker had detonated under water. I was confused. Also, our angle of lean had increased to a point that the cabin floor was where the wall should be and I had to stand on the wall to get up. I peered out of the window in the now dusky morning light around 4am and saw only murky brown, Tamar River brown.

At this point returning back to sleep was no longer a viable option.

All may be lost I thought as I surfaced awkwardly from the hatch, clambering on top of the gunwale to notice that we had approached a 90 degree angle and the hull sides were sat on the mud. But the water was rising with the tide and the boat was not returning upright. Concerned about the water somehow leaking inside the boat, which had now filled most interior starboard lockers, I rang Andy.

“Andy, sorry to disturb you but a problem shared is a problem halved” I said.

Andy paddled over in the half-light and assessed the situation, which looked concerning even from Andy’s calm manner. Water was covering the windows and seeping inside the cabin lockers soaking my Weetabix. Both of us agreed that there was only one solution…Put the kettle on and hope for the best.



View from my early morning perch with cup of tea in hand



Glad no-one was passing by at this hour! View from cockpit companionway.

Observing sunrise perched on top of the gunwale and cabin side was quite beautiful and at some thankful moment buoyancy began to overcome gravity and with relief Elowen smoothly returned upright, albeit much later than we would have liked. The anchor, which had not slipped at all, was repositioned to assist and the bilge pump (which had clearly decided to take the night off at that angle) returned to functionality.



Returning to upright! Back to a comfortable position feeling relieved.

Up the hullsides, I carried muddy tidemarks of shame as we returned to Weir Quay. I also learned not to anchor on a river bend.

Here's Tom Morton and Wilfred drifting peacefully back in Sea Swallow and Ethne enjoys a leisurely sunbathe towed behind:



Rosie Hinge

Plymouth Fireworks - 12th August

We set off from Weir Quay at 5:30pm (HW was 6:40pm) in bright sunshine, headed downriver with our friend, Sarah with us to see the first night of the 2026 British Fireworks Competition. The plan was to anchor while we watched the 3 displays – each about 10 minutes long and 10 minutes apart.

The fireworks were to start at 9:30pm, so we wanted to be safely anchored before darkness fell and in a good position to see the displays that take off from Mount Batten Breakwater- with time for supper in the cockpit and a glass of wine before the fun began.

It just so happened that 12th August was also the date for the (partial) solar eclipse - taking place between about 6:45pm and 7:15pm. This was to be the deepest eclipse for 27 years and not to be missed, except that we were also hurrying to take our place to see the fireworks!

We were motoring through Devonport Dockyard as a spooky and rather unnatural partial-darkness fell and we realised this must be about the time for the eclipse to take place. Doug hastily poked a small hole into a piece of cardboard he found and we held it up so that the sunlight was projected onto our white superstructure bulkhead. The result was surprisingly good, given our hastily prepared and unbelievably basic pinhole projector 😊



Depending on where we could anchor for the display might mean that we'd need to move somewhere more sheltered for the night. In past years, this has involved a chaotic motoring through a melee of boats, some unlit and with even a few stand-up-paddleboards to carefully manoeuvre around in the pitch darkness!

The wind was forecast to be E/SE becoming variable F2-4, so we dropped anchor in Jennycliff Bay – great for both staying overnight and for viewing the fireworks, very convenient 😊



Anchored in the dark, ready for the fireworks

We saw three very professional displays, each one different from the others and it was very hard to judge which was the best but all were very impressive.





Next morning, with the wind forecast to change to SW F3/5, we sailed across to Kingsand Bay to wait for the afternoon tide that would take us back up to Weir Quay in the afternoon.

While we were there, we were joined by Neil and Pam in Grazia who rowed over to share food and a cuppa in our cockpit before we all headed for home.

Sue Coomber

Cotehele Camp



The dinghy sailors' annual Cotehele Camp took place over the first week in September, postponed from late August as the then-drought conditions forbade the use of any source of ignition on our camp site close to Cotehele Quay.

Our usual two nights had to be reduced to one and many people were unable to make the new date, so just the Club dory as support, two club dinghies and Rob Larman's Kittiwake 'Annie' set sail from Weir Quay on a glorious autumn morning.



Perfect - apart from very little wind - so it was a gentle drift, tow, paddle, and occasional sail - up to camp, though after lunch the sea breeze filled in, just enough to push the tide (with a little mechanical help) and make it to Calstock for ice creams.







Back to camp, our numbers augmented by more participants and boats, it was into wetsuits for all the younger contingent plus two of the 'big kids' (well done Steve Kirby and Rob Larman!) for the favourite Cotehele tradition of mud sliding, which made an excellent spectator sport too (after all, there has to be plenty of responsible adults on shore too,





and to cook a mountain of Downings excellent burgers and sausages, followed by baked apples and bananas,



which just left a bit of space for the traditional 's'mores' - marshmallows, chocolate and biscuits - enjoyed around a roaring camp fire.



The weather came up trumps the following day - warm, sunny, *and* breezy - though on the nose for the return sail, it goes without saying.

The long walk to the loos at Cotehele Quay became a whole lot more exciting with the sight of beaver activity that had taken place right by the bridge, not far from camp, where it had been busily coppicing a hazel overnight.

An immensely pleasant morning in camp passed with a leisurely breakfast, the luxury of packing up dry tents and gear, and games, including what has become another Cotehele tradition of the human pyramid, before the thankfully uninjured campers enjoyed a cracking sail back to Weir Quay.



Many thanks to all participants who pitched in and helped with all the hard work that goes into making a great weekend, both before and during:

Treasurer Alex Michelsen for all the faff in arranging the extra insurance; Steve Kirby and John Giblin for support boating; Steve and Rosie Duncan for organising all things boat-related; Judy Turton for shipping a mountain of bags there and back; Isobel Lindsell for slaving over a hot BBQ and miraculously rotating all the food through; catering and general camp assistance from John G, Jon and Aoife Nichols, Jane Morton; Will Higgs for serenading us with music around the camp fire; Rosie Duncan, Katie Watt and Belle Lindsell for organising and supervising activities; all the junior sailors for splendid participation and helpfulness; and to my husband Chris for a mountain of support as always. Weir Quay teamwork at its best!

Rosie Hinge

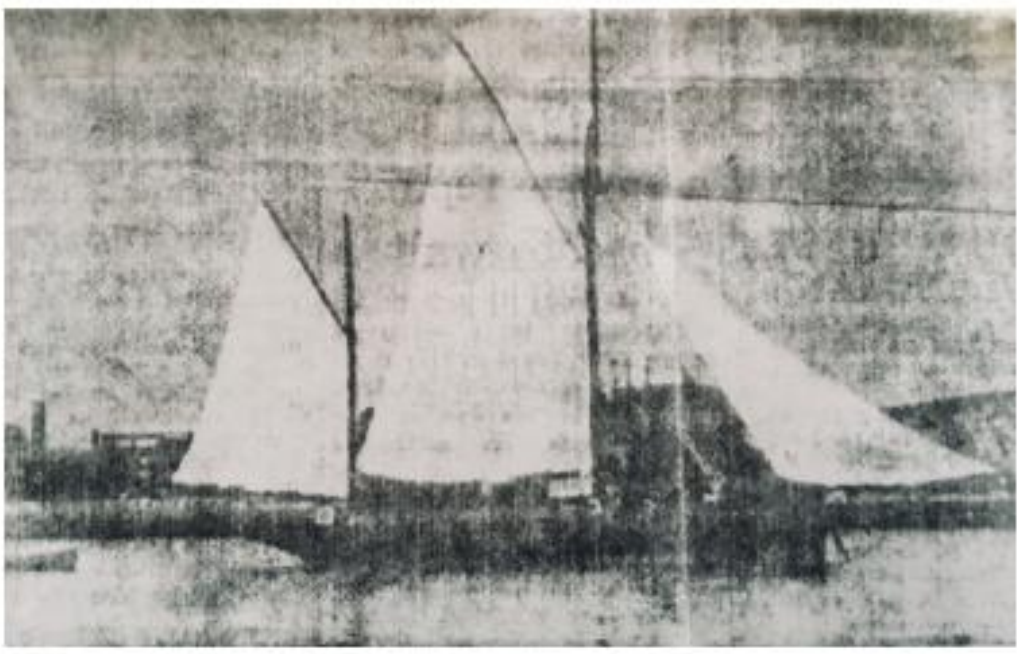
With additional details from The SHIPS Project www.shipsproject.org

Merganser



Merganser as she is now

Earlier this year, I was approached by Ken Hall from Bere Alston asking me to make a painting for him of the vessel, Merganser, that he had lived in as a boy with his four brothers and his parents. He wanted a memento of the houseboat as it was then, where he had lived until early adulthood. He wanted the painting to show her exactly as she used to be, although he could only provide me with a black and white photograph 😊



The only known photograph of the yacht Merganser afloat [Sue Pillar-Lea]

Merganser was built by Camper and Nicholsons, Gosport in 1887 and was 68ft long.

56 Gross Registered Tonnage

She was a sailing yacht, first with a cutter rig that was later changed to a ketch rig in 1906.

Records show that she was registered as a trawler (PH37) with a crew of five people from 1887 to 1896 while also registered as a yacht.

She had a number of owners:

1. She was built for **Hugh Leyborne Popham** of Hungerford. He owned the vessel for 33 years and would take part in yacht races and regattas with himself as skipper. In one account of a storm in 1899 she was referred to as 'Mr Popham's yacht *Merganser*' reporting that she fell over on her side while beached at Mount Batten.
2. Plymouth sailmaker **Samuel Boon Harvey** bought the yacht in 1920.
3. Then **Robert Dell** bought her in 1924. Dell was listed on the bill of sale as a 'commissioned gunner, Royal Navy', a warrant officer. Dell moved her to her current location and converted Merganser into a houseboat while living at Tamar View in Holes Hole.



Merganser's Emblem - now with Ken Hall

4. **George Evans**, a stove and grate merchant of Plymouth, then bought the yacht in 1930 and his daughter and son-in-law lived aboard for some years. One of our current WQSC members, Val Anderson, was George Evans' daughter and has told me that she learned to walk on the decks of Merganser!
5. **Harry John Hall** took ownership in 1947, using her as the family home and only finally leaving in the 1970s.

   By now the hull was collapsing at the stern on her mud berth and most of her upper fastenings had been removed. The Parish Council ordered the hulk to be demolished but the National Maritime Museum got involved to see if she could be saved but she was considered too unsafe to move.

6. In 1975, a local craftsman called Charlie Hingston was employed by new owners **Eric and Alison Paice** to restore Merganser to her former glory. The hull was rebuilt to the original shape but sadly this work was not completed and the half-restored boat was sold to a local resident in 1986.



The half-restored Merganser [Nick Clegg]

Later, the partly-restored hull was cut in half by John Hall using a chainsaw and the stern section removed to prevent the yacht being occupied by squatters.

Only the forward part of the hull of this yacht still remains, pulled well up on the foreshore where she was originally beached. The remaining forward part was still largely intact in 2007 but has now collapsed.

So, this brings me to the painting I created for Ken. I visited him to ask about his recollections of life on board.

He told me there were 2 chimneys, one for the galley stove inside the hull and one for the fireplace in the saloon on the upper deck.

He and his brothers would take the gangway ashore to get on the school bus that stopped at the corner of Holes Hole.

Then after school they would jump into one of their rowing boats and head into the river to do some fishing that they all loved (school work could wait he said).

I asked about her colour at the time that his family had owned Merganser and Ken said it was the same as you can see on her forward section now.

I was shown to the hulk of Merganser and there are still traces of the sturdy wooden structure that used to support the gangway that was removed when she was cut in half.



The B&W photo that Ken Hall provided to assist my painting



And the finished product that is now with Ken



Combined Reflections

At the end of each season, the club's Dinghy sailors are asked to give their feedback. This is a compilation of their replies given at the Jelly & Ice-creams Party.

What have you enjoyed the most about Friday evenings?
Improving my sailing, watching the sunset, relaxing on the water, hot chocolate, the community, being on the water, meeting everyone at the club, fun, teamwork, friendships, sailing, capsizing, the company, adventure, sailing with my friends, getting afloat, meeting people/being sociable, getting to see the sunset on the water, learning to sail, jumping in, fun, fun, fun, sailing with my friends, practice capsizing, pushing Ralph in, wonderful company, relaxed(ish).

Is there anything that you have disliked about Friday evenings?
The rush at the start, no, that they stop! Nope! Nothing. Late packing up. Finishing quite late in darkness. Rushing to get there after school. Cold. Finishing earlier. Can be hard to find the parts for boats for inexperienced people. The new dinghy shed and labelling kit will help.

What could be done to improve Friday evenings?
Having a plan before the night, so everyone's aware what we're doing and can organise crew etc before the night, so that we can be out and get back in earlier and get to bed. Longer sailing. Sailing on the weekends in winter so it can continue. More light (torches/lamps) when it gets dark early. More capsizing opportunities. Short races/race practice. Splitting into 2 groups: late and early finishers especially on longer, lighter evenings. Having more people helping to bring boats up and put them away. Hot chocolate with marshmallows. Soap in the showers. Get people on the water quicker. Longer time sailing. More themes e.g. pirates, animals, fancy dress. Could the kids do some certificates? More food 😊 Could Steve book more favourable winds? Hotter showers. Sometimes have an earlier/faster finish – say go home at 9pm. Occasional BBQ?

What topics would you like to see covered in winter instruction meetings?
Some more advanced technical stuff, knots, parts of the boat, sailing rules & etiquette, navigation, racing theory, anything, general sailing, adjusting the sail according to the wind, spinnaker sailing, just all of them generally.

What events would you like to see in next year's programme?
Club racing – competitive, the Regatta (as always), some more casual races, a couple of mini races, more combined activities – cruiser/dinghy, dinghy/gig, beginners' racing, more sailing, water fights on the boats, Film Night, camping, reeds, pirates, qualifications, skills, fun, sail to Drake's Island, Cotehele Camp, sailing downriver, jelly & ice-cream! More camps, Social BBQ at the club, sailing to somewhere.

What do you wish to achieve next year?
Junior Instructor – not sure on age but a future aim. Become more confident on harder dinghies / sailing singlehandedly. Better skills, lots of fun. Have lots of fun. Capsize more. Fewer gastro infections from dirty river water. Fun, experience. Stage 4. Setting up and putting away boats. Fun and world peace.

Have you had enough direction from the instructing team? How could this be improved?
Sometimes there just isn't enough time to properly go through stuff and there's too many people for 1 to 1. Yes. No improvement needed. Encourage adults to ask more questions if not sure. Perfect. Talk and show me through things I need to improve or I struggle with.

What type of event on a weekend would you be keen to attend?
Racing, anything, BBQ, water fight, big sailing trips, Film Night, themed sailing, dance party, sails up/down river, practicing man-overboard drills, capsize/turtle drills, trip to Calstock, yacht trips, sail down or upriver to somewhere e.g. chips in Bere Ferrers pub.

Which dinghy class is your favourite and least favourite?
Favourite: Pico, 400, Vision, Laser 2, Feva,
Least favourite: Topper – felt weird to sail, Pico, the Vision that leaks, Flipper.

In a few words, tell us the highlight of the 2026 sailing season for you.
Improving my sailing skills and starting to feel like a real and appreciated part of the WQSC community.

Joining.

Joining the club this year has been great, everyone is so friendly!!

It's always nice to see how people help each other out at the end of every session.

Actually getting sailing.

Watching the sunsets on a boat with my friends.

Having fun in boats, on the water.

Loved the camp, loved Tectona, really enjoyed the dinghy cruise to Lopwell.

Pushing Ralph in the water!

Winning the Quiz!

