





LARGS SC NEWS – NOVEMBER 2023

Not so much a newsletter – more a newspaper, but there's been so much happening at the club, afloat and ashore, since the previous e-news in June!

On the water, we've had club racing, a full programme of junior and adult sail training, plus the well attended (40!) youth sailing week in August, powerboat and other training courses, and our main event, Largs Regatta Festival and the Round Cumbraes Weekend. Our sailors have also been travelling, and many congratulations to Phil and Carol Alderson, Cherub National Champions 2023, and our young sailors, competing in many events up and down the country.

Our cruising members have enjoyed a full programme of cruises in company, bookending the season with socials – a fitting out supper, and a laying up supper dance, when we welcomed the cruising group's founder Gordon McLaren as our special guest.

Ashore, the clubhouse has been busy, with club and external functions, including our volunteer party, recognising the amazing contribution so many members make to the club. Quiz nights are restarting, and other socials are in planning over the winter. Note also our AGM on Sunday 3rd December.

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COMMODORE'S OUTLOOK

The 2023 sailing season seemed to go past very quickly. One day the social team were discussing the fitting out supper and then suddenly it was the laying up event! We have seen good levels of participation all season in club racing, LSTA training, a rejuvenated cruising programme and other on the water activities, despite the weather often being sub-optimal. Is there any other sport where the weather makes quite such an impact quite so often?

Off the water, social activities have been well attended and use of the clubhouse has increased. Our volunteer operated bar team have helped to make the club a more welcoming experience for members and visitors alike while removing a lot of the financial risk that running any form of bar and catering operation brings. My thanks to them and to all the other volunteers, visible and in the background, without whom our club wouldn't exist.

Like every other organisation and all of us personally, the club has faced major cost challenges over the last couple of years. While a 5 year deal we secured in early 2022 protected us from the worst of the electricity price increases, we have faced sharply increased costs for oil, insurance, rent, boat fuel, maintenance... the list of things that are largely beyond our control goes on. At the same time, the grant assistance which we received during the pandemic has, of course, ceased – and we have had no major events this year. I don't think our 2023 accounts will make particularly pleasant reading, and your committee will have to make some difficult choices to ensure we remain financially sustainable.

One proposal we are considering is to move to a monthly subscription model for most members, rather than the current annual subscription. Quite a few members already pay by monthly direct debit and we feel that making this our main method would provide the club with more predictable income, while allowing members to spread the cost of their membership rather than being faced with a single large payment. We will present our finalised proposal at the AGM on Sunday 3rd December, where I hope we will see a good turnout of members.



The committee also urgently needs new members who can contribute their skills, experience and insight to the running of the club. Please consider whether this could be you and talk to any committee member (our details are at the end of this newsletter) if you think you might just be persuaded, or you can think of someone else who might. Please don't just assume that someone else will run the club. We are all volunteers and several of us have been doing it for far too long!

Meanwhile, sailing goes on for a hardy few while the majority look forward to next season.

John Scott, Commodore

AFLOAT

CLUB RACING (from Jon Bassett)

The autumn (winter?) is upon us, and the most of the season's racing series have been sailed with us currently in the midst of our Frostbite open series. It has been a great season at the club with 103 sailors having sailed in the dinghy club racing so far. It is fantastic to see such large numbers coming along and enjoying this aspect of being on the water. The Club Regatta in August remains a highlight which this year also saw the return of the 100 Guineas midweek series which was so tightly contested, with only half a point separating 1st and 2nd. (See Largs Regatta Festival report on page 7.)



As always our thanks go to everyone who has helped to make the racing happen – the racers who have volunteered to do duties, the club maintenance crews looking after the RIBs and the marks kit, and the non-racing volunteers (22 people) that have come along and enjoyed being part of things by helping with duties both on and off the water. Special thanks to Eddie Woods and Ziggy Walker who have clocked up 56 duties between them!

A full year round up will follow in the next newsletter and we look forward to seeing you all on the water for the New Year Race on Sunday 7th January.





Many congratulations to long standing LSC members Phil and Carol as the Cherub National Champions for 2023 in their high performance twin trapeze Cherub dinghy "Zero Gravitas" - particularly as the boat was built by Phil in his garage!

The event was held at South Shields Sailing Club, so in the open waters of the North Sea. Challenging conditions at times, with big seas! Phil and Carol won three of the 7 races to count, plus three seconds, so an excellent performance.

CLUB TRAINING (from Phil Alderson)

The LSTA have now wrapped up a good summer season of learning and fun on the water for both children and Adults. We finished the evening sessions with the Hiking Viking (below) which was the first experience of racing for many of our beginners. To end the season, again this year we also ran some Saturday afternoon sessions through September and had incredible weather for the first three, and only lost the last one through wind and rain.









Through the year we have run 15 different courses of different lengths and have provided the following training places.

- 30 first aid
- 7 power boat level 2
- 24 safety boat update
- 30 Thursday youth evenings
- 16 Monday adult evenings
- 40 youth sailing week
- 18 autumn Saturdays

As well as teaching beginners, we have been bringing some of our sailors up through the training instructor system, with five new Assistant Instructors qualifying this year. Three of our Al's completed training to become Dinghy Instructors. Two of our Dinghy Instructors completed training to become Senior Instructors. Congratulations to all of our new Assistant Instructors, Dinghy Instructors and Senior Instructors, they have already shown themselves to be great members of the LSTA team and I look forward to working with them in the future.

YOUTH SAILING (from Louise Russell)

Throughout the summer months, several of our youth sailors were busy competing at events all over the UK and Ireland. Ruairi Herrington (ILCA 6), and Macy Law and Cara Russell (420) competed at the RYA Youth Nationals at WPNSA in April; Kate Shelley (Optimist), Jamie Shelley (Tera), and Cameron McDaid (Topper) competed in the RYA Eric Twiname Championships at Rutland SC in May; Ruairi (ILCA), Finlay Briggs (ILCA), and Cameron (Topper) took part in the RYA Scotland Youth and Junior Champs at Loch Tummel SC in June; Cameron, Eva Farnell, and Rohan O'Kane competed at the ITCA Nationals at Plas Heli in August; Cameron and Eva also competed at the ITCA Worlds in Cork at the end of July!;

Then towards the end of August, Macy, Ruairi, and Cameron all also competed in the <u>UKLA Open and ILCA National Champs</u> at Hayling Island Sailing Club; And finally, RYA Scotland hosted their first ever Giant Academy, with seven different youth and junior dinghy and windsurfing classes, here at LSC on 29th September and 1st October. There's a great video of the action here - https://fb.watch/oa8gwSizvL/!

Coming up, the RYA Scotland Winter Championships will be held here at Largs on the 2nd/3rd December, and include Optimist, Topper, ILCA, Feva, 29er, Techno 293 and iQFOiL classes. Come and watch – and the LSC and LSTA AGMs follow Sunday afternoon's prizegiving.



UKLA Open & National ILCA Championships 2023 at Hayling Island © Gorgie Altham / www.facebook.com/galthamphotography



RYA Youth Nationals 2023 © Paul Wyeth Marine Photography

YOUTH SAILING WEEK AT LARGS SC

In early August, 40 young sailors, including one from Ukraine, enjoyed a week of fun and sailing tuition at the club, building water confidence, and awareness of the marine environment.





Under the leadership of chief instructor Bill Forsyth, senior instructor Alastair Khaliq, and 11 other instructors, many of the young sailors worked through the syllabus of the RYA stage 1-4 programme.





Thursday was a local education and picnic day on Cumbrae, learning something of the island's history, and its role in the Battle of Largs in 1263. As part of the Club's greening policy, 6 bags of rubbish were collected from the beach, and disposed of properly.



The weather was kind, and the highly successful week ended with some games and [picnic lunch ashore on the Friday afternoon. Lots of happy faces, and the change in confidence in many of the young sailors was such that the instructors struggled to get a lot of them out of the water and changed at the end of the day!

Thoughts are now turning towards next year, possibly an even bigger and multi week event for 2024, which may see as many as 200 plus young sailors coming to the club.

Many thanks to all those afloat and ashore who make our junior and adult training so popular and successful. (For more photos of the week, see https://www.largssc.co.uk/node/748.)

ADULT LEARN TO SAIL PROGRAMME - END OF SEASON SOCIAL

Our Monday Night Adult trainees had their end of season social at the end of August, and were given their achievement certificates by Stu White, the Senior Instructor. They are all planning to return next year, with some hoping to train as instructors to help others learn to sail.



A big thank you to Stu, Bill Forsyth, Alan Masey, Stephen Harrison, Ross Gibb and Lisa Griffin who made these lessons happen this year by giving up their free time to come along as volunteers every Monday right across the summer. Also big thanks to our administrator Julia Gibson who organises and facilitates our junior and adult training programmes (and many other things!) through the season.

These volunteers enable the club to grow as more new members learn to sail and in turn, become more involved in the club as volunteers in the many different roles available.

Out of this particular group we already have 3 Bar Crew, 3 Event Beach Volunteers, Committee Boat team member, 4 Bosuns, 5 Rib Drivers and an Event Photographer who happened to do really well in the weekend racing in a RS400 with her husband...not bad for a beginner!!

EVENTS 2023

LARGS REGATTA FESTIVAL 2023

Our club's main annual event, the Largs Regatta Festival at the end of August, attracted a record 67 dinghies and 50 keelboats, with "round the cans" racing for keelboats and dinghies on Saturday 26th August, and our famous Round Cumbraes on Sunday 27th August.







Saturday's sunshine and light winds meant some postponements, but finally a good NW'ly filled in, giving good racing on the keelboat and dinghy courses. Then it was social and fun time ashore, with live bands in the marquee, children's entertainment and food stalls.

Also on Saturday, the LYH based charity Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust, the official charity partner of the festival, led 17 boats on a cruise in company around the Cumbrae Islands, raising £1,500 from entry fees and clothing sales.





Sunday's race around the Cumbraes had the dinghies circumnavigating Big Cumbrae, and the keelboats doing a figure of eight around both the Cumbraes, plus a further circuit of Big Cumbrae for the fastest keelboats.

Largs SC sailors did well over the weekend, with Jon Bassett (below, left) in his D-Zero winning his class, and taking dinghy of the weekend. Robbie Burns and Vicki Simpson took the fast handicap in their RS200, and David and Ian Kent (below, right) topping the catamaran fleet. In the

SATURAL STATES

keelboats, Carolyn Elder won in CYCA Class 5, and Brian Young the multihull class. Keelboat of the weekend was El Gran Senor.





The weekend's events were followed by midweek evening racing for keelboats on Tues 29 & Weds 30 August, and the dinghies competing in the 100 Guineas series over Tues 29, Weds 30 & Thurs 31 August.

Full dinghy results are in the attached files here - http://www.largssc.co.uk/node/721. There are fuller reports and many photographs on the LSC main and racing Facebook pages, plus these links:

Yachts and Yachting - https://www.yachtsandyachting.com/.../Largs-Regatta....

Marc Turner's (excellent) photographs - https://marcturner.photoshelter.com/.../G0000lkFP16IV_UY.

Many thanks to all the volunteers and sponsors (Saturn Sails, Coastworks, Blue Seas Consulting, and Largs Yacht Haven) who made the event possible.

707 SCOTTISH NATIONALS - A FRUSTRATING WEEKEND ...

A very frustrating weekend in early October for all involved in the Scottish National 707 Championships - the 16 competitors, the mark layers, the committee boat, and all the volunteers ashore.

Saturday had wind shifts up to 180 degrees, and wind speeds from zero to 10 knots, often within a very few minutes. Two courses were laid, but the wind refused to



stabilise, and as everyone was very wet and cold, we called a postponement to allow competitors to go ashore and warm up. Of course the law of sod applied - cue the best and most stable wind of the day! Another course was laid after the break, and a start attempted, but that had to be general recalled with a bunch of boats over the line. And that was it.

Sadly, although Sunday wasn't as wet, the wind was still on strike, so the event was abandoned without a race being sailed – fortunately a rare occurrence in Largs, and unlike their championships in 2021, with great racing. Hopefully better next time!

MARK LAYING, ALLIANZ SAILING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS, THE HAGUE





Well done to the team of some of our highly experienced mark layers, who provided this essential service to the Allianz Sailing Worlds off The Hague in August. They were the only non-Dutch mark laying team – a tribute to our reputation! Thank you also to RYA Scotland for their support.

CRUISING

Our cruising members have had a fantastic season, with our activities fully back to normal after Covid etc, new boats joining in the fun, and several new leaders of our cruise in company programme. This season, after the shakedown cruise and fitting out supper, then the May c-inc to Tarbert, led by Andy and Jackie Taylor, *Ghoster* (see June newsletter) we've since had monthly c-in-c's:





June – Troon – David and Lesley Harley, *Milou*. David (left, above) had exhumed his guitar, and led the singalong, with Rob Paterson from *Suvi*.





July – Andy and Karen McDaid, *Icarus of Penryn* – Rhu. Good sunny sail there, and fun in the marquee in the evening.









August – Chris Hubbard, *Alice Mari* – 4 days, "around Arran" – Lamlash, Campbeltown, Lochranza. A particular well done to Gordon MacKellar in his Drascombe Lugger "MacPuff", who has participated in most of the c-in-c's over the season, sleeping aboard!





September – Simon and Geraldine Warden, *Maddison* – Holy Loch – but discretion in the face of the forecast southerly gale on Sunday meant a switch to a day sail round Cumbrae, and an evening social, with a carry-in in our clubhouse!

LAYING UP SUPPER DANCE

The cruising season's activities concluded with over 60 members and guests enjoying an excellent buffet supper from Ros's Catering, then dancing the night away to music from the duo Mixed Emotion.







We also had as guest of honour the founder member of the cruising group, Gordon McLaren, pictured above. When Gordon joined the club in early 2006, he asked if we had a cruising group – and was told "no – but if you'd like to start one …"

And he did, working with George Rich, establishing the format of weekend cruises in company, and winter talks. Well done Gordon – a perfect example of volunteers making the club work! As was the whole evening, with organisation and table decoration by Geraldine Warden, Isabel Gregg, and Marilyn Campbell, m/c'd by Simon Warden, and Neil Stuart and Gavin McGill behind the bar for the evening.







After dinner, a few special awards were handed out, including Isabel presenting Ann Cochrane with her Tarbert Trampoline Queen prize (a Terry's Chocolate Orange – yum!), and Geraldine and Simon got into the spirit of the evening!

We were also reminded of our past activities with a presentation of cruising members' photographs collated by Evan Gregg (see this on our Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/LargsSC.) – and some 2008-9 examples below – a winter talk at Saturn Sails, and Gordon McLaren's boat "Claymore" at dawn in Lamlash Bay.





ASHORE

CLUBHOUSE EVENTS (from Rear Commodore Neil Gould)

The activity in the clubhouse has continued apace since the June newsletter. Many of the activities are covered in more detail elsewhere in this newsletter, and members have been fully participating in them, so there is no need to include more detail here.

In summary though since June, there have been ten club social events, three external events and five sailing related events, including the 707 class Scottish National Championships, and dinners for the Fisher and Moody Associations. During the last weekend of September, the club hosted the RYA the parents and participants of the RYA Giant Academy (85 boats!), the Fisher Association Lunch, and FYC prize giving! None of these would have been possible without the enthusiastic support of our volunteer Bar Crew.

In addition, training picked up again in September and October. Facilities hire continues to grow, both for meetings and longer events. This makes a valuable contribution to the club both financially and creating a more lively atmosphere during the day when the clubhouse has often been empty.

There are a few more social events planned before Christmas with two quiz nights and other events. Plans are forming for winter talks, formal and informal dinners to take us through to April. Watch this space for more details. Book early as many events have been at close to capacity. Look forward to seeing you!

LARGS SC AND CCCC HELP UKRAINE

Largs Sailing Club and Castle Craigs Canoe Club joined forces in late July to provide some fun watersports taster sessions for a group of 25 Ukrainian sailors who had been in the UK for six months training, prior to their return to their country in conflict.

They had been moored up at Fairlie Quay, and Largs SC was contacted by the Royal Navy, through the office at Fairlie Quay, and asked if they could provide some water sports for the young sailors, who were getting two days shore leave after their six months training in British waters, and about to head back home to rejoin the war in Ukraine.

Volunteers from Largs SC and Castle Craigs Canoe Club were able to get the lads out on keelboats, dinghies and kayaks. Some Ukrainian refugees known to a club member, who can speak English and are currently living in Glasgow, came to act as translators to help with the coaching on the water for the various activities.



With funds from the Royal Navy, Michelle's Rolls at Fairlie kindly dropped off some cold filled rolls for lunch, and the club provided drinks and biscuits after sailing. After the fun on the water, the Ukrainian sailors were able to enjoy the views from the club balcony and relax for the afternoon.

Largs SC and the canoe club were able to find sailing gear for them, along with spare clothes and clean towels – many of them loved the warm Scottish rain, and decided it would be fun jumping in the sea off the slipway while the rain was pouring down!

Their ages ranged from around 19 to 28, so many of the volunteers found it quite emotional knowing that they were leaving us to go back to the Ukraine, but the two clubs were proud that they were able to provide some fun for them on a break from their training.

This is not the first direct assistance Largs SC has provided to Ukraine, whose flag has been flying with the LSC burgee and the Red Ensign above the clubhouse at Largs Yacht Haven since the start of the war. In June, members responded astonishingly generously to an appeal for donations of material after the collapse of the Kakhovka dam, and subsequent flooding of vast areas downstream. Items requested included batteries, torches, candles, matches, personal hygiene products, underwear for men and women, and clothes for children aged 10 – 14. Such was the amount donated that the LSC administrator Julia Gibson, who had coordinated the appeal, filled her car twice!

A huge thank you to all those who contributed to the June appeal, and to the volunteers from LSC and CCCC for the watersports session.

(There are no photographs of the day for security reasons.)

VOLUNTEER PARTY

Running our club relies very heavily on our amazing volunteers – everything from clubhouse and RIB maintenance to all our activities on the water – from training to club racing to major events. To recognise this, we invited all volunteers, plus our discount partners, honorary and senior members, to a party evening in September, with nearly 100 able to come along.







The evening began with a welcome glass of wine, and an appreciation of our volunteers from our commodore John Scott, followed by the prize draw, which included vouchers from Cardwell Garden Centre (£150) and Scott's (£50), and a bottle of malt donated by a member – won by your newsletter editor





Julia added to the fun with some awards of her own – everything from winter socks for the RIB maintenance team, who work though the year keeping our RIBs in working order, a model boat to intrepid Drascombe Lugger sailor Gordon MacKellar, and some "Henry" vacuum cleaner bags to our club event bosun Billy McCarlie.





After supper, we then danced the night away until closing time.

Of course, the evening itself wouldn't have happened without our volunteers! In addition to the excellent sandwiches from Michelle's Rolls in Fairlie, and our own Steven Low's hot food, including home made pakoras and haggis bites, we had welcome drinks from Heloise le Clanche and Jennifer Smith, and behind the bar, Lynne MacDonald, Maura Scott, Jackie Allan, Lucy MacDonald and Ziggy Walker – John Ridley and Gavin McGill having prepped the bar during the week. Also behind the scenes were our young kitchen crew Robbie Woods and Eva Farnell.

So, enormous thanks to each and every volunteer who has contributed to our activities over the last year – you are absolutely vital to our activities, and your contribution is really appreciated!







(Our wonderful office administrator Julia had also set up some boards showing the huge contributions of so, so many volunteers – details here - https://www.largssc.co.uk/node/742.)

RIB MAINTENANCE TEAM

Our RIB maintenance team of volunteers do invaluable work through the whole year, in all weathers, keeping our RIB fleet in top condition, and they are pictured below having a well deserved warm-up coffee after their regular Thursday morning's work. Left to right – Matt Mochar, Eddie Woods, Alistair Mackay, Henry Wilkinson, and Bill Whigham. Alan Masey, the sixth member of the team, missed the photoshoot! Many thanks all!





OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 50:50 DRAWS

The regular monthly daws for the 50:50 club have continued through the summer, distributing £150 of prizes each month to members. The RIB maintenance team (above) did the **October draw**, with first prize of £60 going to ball number 89, second (£40) to number 30, third (£30) to number 8, and fourth (£20) to number 45.

The **November draw** was done at the laying up supper, with winners first (£60) to number 14, second (£40) number 20, third (£30) number 41, and fourth (£20) number 15.

Congratulations to all these winners!

You have to be in it to win it! The photo on the right shows the available numbers (except 1 and 82 were taken very recently by new members), so if your lucky number is



there, it's £5 per month for a number, with half going in prizes, and half to club funds, for "nice to have" things. See the application form <u>here</u>, and the standing order mandate <u>here</u>.

Remember there's a special additional £100 prize in the December draw!

QUIZ NIGHTS ARE BACK!

Our very popular winter quiz nights resume on **Friday 17th November**, and details were sent to members on 8th November. Quiz Masters are Marc and Jo Turner. They've never done this before, so please come and support their debut night!

Bar open 6.30pm, buffet from 6.45pm, quiz from 8pm. The buffet is £15 pp, and will be lasagne or vege lasagne, served with salad and soda bread. There will be crayfish platter for those who are not keen on lasagne. Please pay in advance into the club bank account, Largs Sailing Club 83-24-15 00250765 Reference is QUIZ plus your name.

Also put the Christmas party and quiz night in your diaries – Saturday 10th December!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS – LSC AND LSTA

The Largs SC Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 3rd December, at 4pm, following the RYAS Winter Championships.

The LSTA AGM will follow the LSC AGM.



CLUBHOUSE, CAFE AND BAR OPENING HOURS

The **clubhouse** is open from around 0800 each day, as below, accessible with the members' door code. If you have been working in the boatyard, or just out for a walk, come in for a warm, and grab a coffee or snack from our **honesty cafe** in the Lookout Lounge. We have sandwiches, crisps, snack bars and even pot noodles for sale. It is self-service and you can pay by card or cash.



We reserve the right to close the building early if the weather is atrocious and members are unlikely to be popping in. We endeavour to keep members informed of any early closures where possible. Sometimes weekend training will mean the building is open slightly later.

Bar Opening - Sunday afternoon plus Socials. Our bar is manned by club volunteers, and they reserve the right to close early if the day's activity has been cancelled, or the bar is quiet. We endeavour to keep members informed where possible.

Please keep an eye on the Club website and Club Facebook pages for details of any socials in the club. Remember also that many members meet on Tuesday mornings from around 1045 for coffee and a natter - join us!

Members can book our main Lookout Lounge for private parties, and also the upstairs office. . Note that under our licence, booking of the clubhouse is restricted to members only.

Members and outside groups can book the Hems Kalis meeting room, with AV facilities. All rooms have access to our high speed wi-fi.

For full details, see http://www.largssc.co.uk/club/facilities, or contact Julia in the office (secretary@largssc.co.uk).

Newsletter collated by Gordon Cochrane, Largs SC membership / publicity

Links // Contacting the Club, the LSTA, and other links:

LSC office: 01475 670000

LSC general e-mail: secretary@largssc.co.uk

LSC web site: www.largssc.co.uk

LSC Facebook: www.facebook.com/largssc

LSC Racing Facebook: - see here

LSC clubhouse weather: – see here
LSC webcam (slipway etc): - see here
LSTA e-mail: secretary@largssc.co.uk
FoC Coastal Rowing Club: – see here
LYH webcams (several): – see here

The Executive Committee members for 2023 are pictured below:



John Scott Commodore



Vice Commodore (vacant)



Neil Gould Rear Commodore -House



Marilyn Campbell Treasurer



Jon Bassett
Dinghy racing



Adam Lansdown C'ttee member



Youth representative



Phil Alderson Training



Bill Forsyth Safety



Johnathan Briggs Development



Gordon Cochrane Membership, publicity



Cruising convenor

(vacant) Events

convenor (vacant)

As you can see, the important positions of vice commodore, events convenor and cruising convenor aren't filled – and it is likely we will be looking for a treasurer and youth representative for next year. The treasurer's role speaks for itself – the crucial matter of club's finances! – and our youth representative reflects our very important younger members – the future of our club. Our vice commodore normally has overall responsibility for our sailing activities. Events form a significant part of the club's income, and cruising activities are a major part of the attraction of motor boat and keelboat members to the club, so it would be great if we could have volunteers come forward to fill these important roles.

Contact John Scott or any other member of the executive committee if you think you can help. Contact us via the exec ctte page on our web site (https://www.largssc.co.uk/club/executive), or via Julia in the office – secretary@largsssc.co.uk.