



## Stoke Gabriel Boating Association

# Winter News Bulletin, January 2011

With the evenings slowly getting lighter, snowdrops appearing from their slumbers and the winter snows an increasingly distant memory (hopefully), it's time to look ahead. What does the coming season have for us in terms of boating?

Well, the **Junior Sailing** Group has been busy planning this year's course and has decided to base it again around the summer half-term holiday. The dates are 21, 22 and 28-30 May. If you have a child aged 8 – 12 years old who is interested and you haven't yet had the details, please contact Kim Connabeer on 01803 782433.

For older children the main sail training activity on the river is the annual **DRYSA Week**, for which SGBA is the main organising club this year, led by Barry Jobson. The event will be based at Dittisham and runs from 23 to 27 July. Volunteers will be needed in plentiful supply for both this and the Junior Sailing Course, so if you think you can help please put these dates in your diary and let the organisers know.

For adults, **sail and power boat training and coaching** are being organised by 'Bones' (Trevor Black), with dates and other details in our forthcoming Spring Newsletter.

The winter weather has somewhat hindered progress on our major capital project this year, the **Mill Point quarry steps**. Preparations have been completed for the construction of the two concrete plinths and the 10 tons of concrete are due for delivery on 4 February. When the concrete is set we will have a working party to backfill the area around the plinths, tidy up the quarry surface and do some maintenance work in the woodland above. I will be emailing for volunteers when the time comes.

In December the new Dart Harbour Master, Rob Giles, took office and I was delighted to meet him and his Assistant, Nick Clarence, to discuss the **Stoke Gabriel pontoon**. None of us doubted that a new pontoon is needed and with substantial funds in this year's DHNA budget and a clear will to get things done on the part of the Harbour Master I hope that a replacement will be made by early 2012. But what sort of pontoon? On this it is clear the Dart Harbour is willing to listen to those most closely concerned – current berth-holders, those on the waiting lists, SGBA motor boat users – as well as representatives of the general village community. They are evidently open to suggestions about the placing and configuration of the pontoon as well as its dimensions and appearance. The Harbour Master hopes to have completed the consultation in time to present a business case to the Dart Harbour Board when they meet on 11 April. I will let you know of any developments on this.

Some of the older children who have trained with us and gone on to DRYSA and other sailing activities in more sophisticated boats have been lobbying for the **club to buy an RS Feva**. They are keen to raise some of the required funds themselves. On this basis the Committee recently agreed to match any sums raised pound-for-pound. The overall target is something like £3000, so the children need to start fund-raising soon if we are going to be able to buy a Feva this season. We also need a parent to take charge of the Feva Fund.

Talking of money, most of you have by now renewed your **subscriptions** and, where applicable, paid your **fees for the dinghy park**. Sheila and Alun find prompt payment extremely helpful because it enables them to begin the difficult job of allocating dinghy park berths. If you haven't renewed you must do so immediately if you are to retain a space. Alternatively, if you are giving up a berth or resigning from the club it would be very helpful to know that – if you haven't already told Sheila.

Many of you are aware that Sheila Adams has been our hard-working **Membership Secretary** for more years than it takes to grow a medium-sized tree and will not be surprised to learn that she wishes to pass the job on to a willing volunteer. Gaye Astley has nobly come forward, has been co-opted on to the Committee and is helping Sheila with the current renewals. In a similar vein, Barry Jobson is relinquishing the post of **Sailing Secretary** to concentrate on DRYSA and other sail training activities and Sue Mortimer is putting together this summer's programme.

Which brings me to my own situation. Those of you who endured my take on Sir Joseph Porter at our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner will know that I have now served the maximum term of 3 years laid down in the Rules. I'm not in favour of the type of dynastic succession that seems to prevail in some clubs and actively encouraged the Committee to seek a volunteer. I am delighted that John Bradbury has responded to a number of requests to let his name go forward as a candidate for the post of Commodore at the **AGM**, which has now been settled for **Thursday, 24 March**. A formal notice and invitation to submit nominations for all Officer and Committee posts will be issued shortly. The current Committee will also be proposing a number of minor rule changes. Please put this date in your diary and remember that the AGM evening is not just a formal business event but also a social evening, with drinks and nibbles available and a chance to discuss club affairs with the Committee and fellow members.

In the meantime, I hope to see you at some of our remaining winter social events and wish you all the best for 2011.

Neil Millward