



Yeadon Sailing Club

75th

Anniversary Update

June 2003.

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Introduction

It is with great sense of pride that I write this introduction to the History of Yeadon sailing Club.

Pride in the fact that the club has served the community and it's members continuously for 75 years and that it now faces the future in such good shape. For this we are indebted to all those members who have served on the committee, bringing with them such a diverse range of abilities. I also take pride in the family nature of the club which results in a steady stream of youngsters endeavouring to beat the age and experience of their parents.

We are extremely grateful to the author, Howard Chadwick who has added historian to his many talents and I know you will enjoy reading it as much as I have.

David Johnson
Commodore.

Potted History-Executive Summary for those in a hurry!

A quick overview of the key points and activities over the last 75 years at Yeadon Sailing Club.

1928	Yeadon Sailing Club was founded, the initial rules ensured that all boats would cost a maximum of £20.00 and be built within 30 miles of Yeadon. Yeadon means water on the hill.
1929	Saw the construction of the first boat house, a corrugated tin hut constructed half way up the eastern side of the Dam with room to store about 12 boats in two tiers. The original island was blown up and the current one was later built with a hut for the swan population.
1934	The price restriction was lifted and the first boat to exceed the £20 limit was launched.
1935	The rocks were put in place around the edge of the dam to protect from erosion.
1937	Bradford Model Boat club who had shared the Dam with YSC moved to Larkfield Tarn at Rawdon as the new rocks were doing too much damage to the delicate craft.
1939	At the outbreak of the war the club had 12 registered boats
1940	The Tarn was drained as it provided too good a landmark for Yeadon Aerodrome and the nearby AVRO factory which was producing Lancaster Bombers
1945-6	The Tarn was refilled and interest in sailing was again beginning but the Dam had serious weed problems having been empty for so long.
1949	The Tarn was drained and bulldozers moved in to clear the bottom of the Tarn. Sadly the area above the island has a rock base and it was not possible to increase the depth in this area.
1950's	Class dinghies such as Cadets, National 12's, Herons and Graduates began to be introduced into the club. Boats were stored upstairs in an old mill above a bus garage. Access was via two girders and boats were winched up through an upstairs doorway strapped firmly to their trolleys
1954	The club built its first Dinghy Park which occupied an area towards the back of the current dinghy park. Alongside the esplanade between the current clubhouse and slipway was a Novelty Golf area and a dirt road ran between this and the old dinghy park with its cinder covered surface. (A readily available and cheap material when Yeadon had lots of mills!
1956	The first "Sailing Pavilion" was constructed on the present site. This consisted of a 30ft by 10 ft hut with a veranda on the front and two very small changing cubicles. The building was well used especially on Saturday evenings when the club skiffle group would entertain the members most of whom stayed on well into the evening.
1962	In the February of this year a severe gale blew the pavilion down and the roof into the tarn where it was spotted and reported by a member walking his Border Terrier round the Dam. The pavilion was temporarily reconstructed and held down with wire ropes over the roof to prevent a similar occurrence.
1963-4	The present clubhouse was constructed by working parties entirely made up of volunteer members of the club with all the frames being built in the pavilion prior to its final demolition and the laying of the new foundations.
1973	The changing rooms were added on to the clubhouse and the old changing area became what is now the "Bosun's Store"
1970's	Club training nights began, the highlight of our Commodore's Weekends were the disco's and the annual Southport 24 Hour Race was a major feature of our social calendar. We also had our first expedition into Europe in 1977 in conjunction with the Bradford twin town of Vervier in Belgium. Four members went over to the Yacht Club De la Warche to compete in their regatta with borrowed boats and local crews. A great event and in 1979 they came back for a return visit but sadly the event was not repeated. In the early 70's the council decided to stop the hired rowing boats which had been a feature of the Dam for many years. With turnouts of 20+ most weekends and up to fifteen rowing boats on the water sailing in those days was always exciting.
1980's	One of the key developments was the proliferation of new single-handed boats. The old methods of learning to sail by crewing and then moving on were often replaced by club training or an RYA course and then buying a single handed dinghy.
1990's	Club training continued to improve and Tuesday evening classes often saw the largest turnout of boats other than Commodore's Weekend. Training also expanded to cover race training especially for junior sailors and it is thought to be this effort that has resulted in Yeadon being so successful currently.
2000+	The club continues to go from strength to strength with a good range of ages all enjoying the club facilities. Want to know more? Then read on and continue to support your club!

1 In the beginning:- (extracted from the Jubilee Booklet)

Yeadon Sailing Club was launched in 1928 by a textile manufacturer and a joiner. They had met about three years earlier, when the maker of fine cloth took his boat on a lorry to Yeadon Dam. At that time the dam had not been dignified with the name of Tarn, which still sits uneasily on the tongues of many Yeadon folk. Guy Fison, whose family mills were at Burley-in-Wharfedale, had permission from Waterworth and Denison, of Crompton Mills, Yeadon, to sail his home-built boat *1 Wild Duck on the 17 acres of water. His crew was William Atkinson, of Yeadon (*2 universally known as Willie), and from that partnership Yeadon Sailing Club sprang. Although for the first sail they had to remove a five bar gate to gain access to the dam in the "Mill Corner"

The inaugural meeting was held in March, 1928, when Guy Fison became Secretary and Treasurer. Others at the launching ceremony included Willie Atkinson, David Ginn, of Shipley; C. A. Hardy, of Guiseley; the Rev C. C. Marshall, Vicar of St Chad's, Headingley, Leeds; Lt. Col. J. MacKillop, of Harrogate; and a Col. McKenzie, of Harrogate. Yeadon Urban District Council, who became owners of the Tarn on November 25th, 1925, sent their Clerk, Mr. Conrad Walmsley, and one of their members, Councillor Walter Walker, as watchdogs. They must have been suitably impressed, for the council granted the newly-formed club permission to sail at a yearly rent of £5. They could afford to be generous. For £2,400 they had bought the dam and the land surrounding it, some cottages and the mill's office block.

The inaugural meeting of the club fixed the annual subscription at 10s. 6d. (52.5p) per registered boat and 2s. 6d. (12.5pence per member) payable on or before April 1st. This payment would include the right to keep boats in the club's boathouse, said the rules.

Any member whose subscription is unpaid by May 1st the rules added, "shall receive notice from the Treasurer and shall cease to be a member if payment is not made within 14 days". New members who join after June 30 may be allowed to pay a less subscription for that year at the discretion of the committee-

It was also laid down that "all boats shall be officially measured by the committee at the beginning of the season and their measurements registered with the Secretary who shall keep a register of boats and issue official distinguishing numbers to be affixed to the sail.--- Members disposing of their boats or building new ones were obliged to notify the Secretary.

In November another meeting was held - this time at Burley-in-Wharfedale, where the Fison mill was the dominant industrial under-taking. Mr. Fison was confirmed as Secretary. Mr. Ginn became Treasurer. There was no mention of the office of Commodore, but an attempt to appoint a President failed when the nominee, Mr. Jennings, refused the office. From that point Mr. Fison appears to have been regarded as the President, and when it was realised that sailing clubs had Commodores he filled that office and was generally regarded as having done so since the inauguration of the club. David Ginn succeeded him in 1931. Willie Atkinson took over from 1939 to 1948. Clifford Chadwick who was Commodore from 1951 to 1955, was the father of the 1977 Commodore, Howard Chadwick. It was the first time in the club's history that a Commodore had been the son of a former holder of the office. Clifford, who became Sailing Secretary in 1959 held that onerous job until the end of 1977. He had been a member of the club since 1930, and his son *3 is said to have been wheeled round the Tarn on his first outing as a baby.

*1 The National 12 fleet still sail for a trophy of this name donated by Clifford Chadwick

*2 Willie Atkinson was affectionately known as Uncle Willie to many of the younger members of the club (now much older) but was probably too modest to mention this as he was one of the writers of the Jubilee Booklet.

*3 Left in against my better judgement Howard C

The First Boats and Early Developments Source Jubilee Booklet

In March, 1931, the annual meeting in Brunswick House, Rawdon, heard that the accounts showed a balance of £1-1s-6d. The four members present appointed Mr. H. G. Hilder as Secretary and elected Willie Atkinson to the Committee.

All the early boats were home made. The rules decreed that they must be built within a radius of 30 miles of Yeadon (a restriction that did not last long) and must not cost more than £20 complete with sails and gear. There was no difficulty in keeping within that budget. Willie Atkinson, the chief boat builder of those early days, was producing hulls (flat bottomed because of the shallowness of the Tarn) of half-inch pine or red deal with red deal floor boards for £5 each, sometimes less. Sails were obtained from Stanley Beal, of Shaftsbury Avenue, London, who charged £3 17s 5d. for a mainsail or £1 5s. for a jib. Willie Atkinson made his first jib at home. Another member boasted that his mainsail was his mother's tablecloth.

Willie Atkinson had his eye on Yeadon Tarn before he met Guy Fison and had begun to build a motor-boat. Then he found that power-driven craft would not be allowed on the water. He made radical changes to the design and a sailing boat emerged. Later he bought for £5 Guy Fison's second boat, the gaff-rigged Swallow, renamed her Kay and added to her reputation as a notable trophy winner.

The first commercially built boat to sail at Yeadon cost David Ginn the princely sum of £35. Its purchase was made possible by the rescinding of the £20 rule in 1934.

The first rules for racing limited the length of boats to 12ft overall excluding the rudder. No spar should be longer than 12 feet. If desired the gaff may be jointed to the mast. The jointed mast shall then count as two spar. It was further ruled that no headsail shall be set beyond the stem head.

Centreboards were not to weigh more than 30 lb. Only live ballast was allowed. Not more than three persons, all members of the club could be carried during races, although once during each season a member may have a visitor as crew without charge. Spinnakers were banned nor may boats with headsails boom them out when running before the wind.

Racing was not allowed on Sundays, while on alternate Saturdays and every Wednesday the water was reserved for the Bradford Model Yacht Club. The two clubs had joint use "at owner's risk on the other days when members must do their best to keep clear of model yachts which may be sailing.

In 1937 the model yachts moved to Larkfield Dam at Rawdon. The council had ringed Yeadon Tarn with large boulders and the beautifully built craft were suffering considerable damage to their bowsprits as they sailed into the new hazards.

The dam wall carried a single flagged path 20 inches wide without a balustrade. A 15-inch-wide plank bridged the overflow. The crossing of the dam resembled walking along a wall top. More than one child was blown into the water while trying to cross in high winds.

Uncle Willie (Willie Atkinson)



A Flattie enjoying an evening sail



The launching ramp was built by a team headed by Clifford Chadwick, John Scott and Willie Atkinson. Stone from a mill chimney recently felled nearby came in handy for the foundations.

The island which frustrates so many helmsmen's strategy, is the successor to one blown up on July 15th, 1929, to make a clear water for racing. The present island was an attempt to provide sanctuary for the Tarn's bird life. It was equipped with a hut for swans which then graced the water.

In July, 1931, the council fired a shot across the bows of the new club. The Engineer and Surveyor, Mr. N. Houlden, wrote "it has been reported to the Council that you are using a boat on the Yeadon Dam and also taking passengers. As you are aware you have no authority to do this, and I am directed by the Council to inform you that such act must cease".

A few years later a similar warning was addressed directly to a member of a club by the Clerk to the Council. He wrote: "it has come to my notice that you are taking females for a ride in your boat, without charge. This practice must cease forthwith". One of these pleasure trips ended in a capsize which faced the skipper with a problem of how to dry drenched girls' clothing.

St Hilda was the most notable boat of the club's early days. With H. G. Hilder at the helm she won the Fison Cup, the club's first competitive trophy outright with a hat-trick of successes in 1929, 1930 and 1931. No racing took place in 1932. The following year St Hilda again led the field but there was no cup for her to win. She was then skippered by David Ginn. In 1933 and 1934 she won the club's next trophy, the Leyshon Cup. Notes on these early boats show that she was 12 ft 10 in long with a 4 ft 1 in beam and was gaff-rigged. The original St Hilda was built to Guy Fison's drawings but proved too slow for Hilder. He evolved a *1 double-bottom boat with hinged mast and an outstanding set of sails. In heavy weather or light airs she was generally in front.



The original Boat House for 12 dinghies.

Te-Wahine, 9ft 6in long with 4ft 2in beam was built by Willie Atkinson for J. Kendal. The charge was £3 10s with old sail thrown in, but not rigged and no mast. She always appeared to be nose heavy and the skipper carried a quantity of iron in the stern for ballast.

Swallow was built by Guy Fison in 1929. She was described as "very light with absolutely no freeboard and was very skilfully sailed by her owner. She was sold to Frank Hirst and then to Willie Atkinson who sailed her to success to win the Bulmer Cup in 1936. He renamed her Kay and won the Leyshon Cup the following year. The next season he won the musical tankard given by David Ginn. Kay was "retired" in 1955.

The dinghy Joy was Guy Fison's first venture in boat building. He called her Mayfly and sailed her on the Wharfe. There she was shipwrecked when she went over the dam between Burley and Otley. but the 11 ft 9 in boat could stand up to this treatment. She was robustly made of mahogany with metal bows and an aluminium rudder. At one time she was used to carry stone on Yeadon Tarn, but was rescued from this indignity and reconditioned by Tommy Dennison and Clifford Chadwick. Their efforts produced "a nice craft and capable if sailed keenly.

*1 Double Bottom Boats are not a modern invention it seems!

The New Class Dinghies

By the early 50's class dinghies were starting to appear at Yeadon initially in the form of 4 cadet dinghies and Spindrift a sturdily built 12ft clinker dinghy which was described at the time as "a nice cruiser that beats all at Yeadon for speed.

National 12's also began to appear with N330 Yvery owned by Geoff Munro who won most of the races he entered and then Clifford Chadwick updated from his Flattie by buying a virtual wreck from Yorkshire Ouse Sailing club at Naburn near York. The boat was called Pride of Naburn and was owned by Commander Palms of Naburn Hall the founder of Yorkshire Ouse Sailing Club (10 years after our own club). The boat had been left part submerged in the mud on the river bank and took many hours of work to patch planking, replace ribs and redeck before finally emerging renamed as Otterzell. The boat finally succumbed to a YSC bonfire in the early seventies after rot finally took over and an exuberant crew put her foot through the bottom although the name lives on with N3245 which is currently still a Yeadon boat. Bert Wady also had a National 12 but moved on to a Merlin as they would carry more weight.



Heron dinghies also started to appear either home built or finished from Kits. The Heron was of course the original car top dinghy although it has to be said the car roofs in the 50's were thankfully very strong as the Heron is not a light boat by today's standards. The first boats included Fidget (108), Petronella (199) Pegasus (318) and Swish (507). It is a tribute to these early builders that two of these boats are still in the club and have been in fairly regular use as is Honey (222) although this is an offcomedun which appeared in the sixties.



Firefly's were also a popular choice and sailed alongside the nationals in a combined fleet as is demonstrated on club trophies such as the Firefly and National 12 Salver and the mid week shield.

The only boat officially adopted by the club is in fact the Graduate which was brought up and demonstrated by Dick Wyche of Wyche and Coppock boat builders in Nottingham. The Golden Jubilee Booklet recalls that members were impressed by the professional demonstrators failure to control the boat on a very rough day and then by competent way that club member Harry Lupton sailed the boat.

MU pictured here was dropped off her trolley whilst being winched into the upstairs of the old mill. Despite being shortened by a foot or so she was sailing again at her full length the following weekend!

The man who tried to buy the dam

The following anecdote is lifted from the Jubilee Booklet:-

Then there was the man who tried to buy the Tarn. He applied to join the club when a waiting list was in force. He was told that he would have to wait his turn. His appeal to the council produced the reply that as all sailing rights were vested in the club the local authority could not interfere. The impatient helmsman then played his trump card. He told the council that he would buy the Tarn and asked them to name the price. Again he got a dusty answer. The Tarn was not for sale.

About 18 months later when his turn for election as a member arrived, it was decided that his past behaviour should be ignored and he was elected. On the day that he turned up to sail, a chauffeur-driven car towed his boat, which the chauffeur rigged and launched. But the wind was blowing straight on to the jetty and the wealthy new member made many futile attempts to get his boat away. Eventually the chauffeur took down the sails and rowed him up the tarn. There the sails were hoisted, the chauffeur got ashore as best he could. The dinghy was turned down wind and headed for the club house. A sudden capsized ended the sail.

When the boat drifted to the jetty the owner disappeared. The chauffeur got the boat back on to the trailer. It was driven away and neither boat nor owner appeared again.

The old mill boat store

The boat storage was in fact a corrugated tin shed which could accommodate 12 boats in two layers and this was located up the eastern side of the tarn where boats were then launched. The location is marked today by a copse of trees that is in a slight hollow. The hollow is not in fact natural it comes from the time after the war when the tarn was re drained and bottom bulldozed to clear the weed. The earth from the dam bottom was spread around the edges of the dam and on either side of the boathouse thus creating the hollow that exists today.

When we were given permission to use the top floor of an old mill for boat storage the shed was given to the council who moved it down near to our current slipway and used it for the council rowing boats.

The mill was about 75 yards South of the current clubhouse and ran straight out towards the High Street finishing at a yard that was located under the new flats recently completed. Access to the upper floor was via two girders and a winch was used to haul boats up. The boats and trolleys were strapped on to a cradle for the hazardous journey into the shed.

The ramp was however not the only hazard associated with this storage area as there were numerous holes in the floor and various no go areas where the floor was rotten. (As a boy I was fascinated with the fact that I could look through the floor to see the buses stored on the ground floor and constantly being shouted at to come away in case I fell through! *(Howard)*)

The resourcefulness of one member was put to the test on one occasion when his boat Mu fell off the cradle when it was half way up and fell back smashing the transom and shortening the boat by about 1 foot! Fortunately the designer, builder and owner, a chap called John Scott was a woodwork teacher and the boat was fully repaired and back on the water by the following weekend.



Our new clubhouse and dinghy park:-

For several years our clubhouse was a lean to workshop belonging to Bill Sallis who kindly allowed members to use his workshop for changing etc. In 1956 the club was able to buy a new clubhouse which was bought as a prefabricated building at a cost of £208. This was erected by the members and elegantly named "the Pavilion". This structure covered the area of our present clubhouse its rear wall being where the support pillar stands now in the main club room. Inside were two very small changing cubicles just large enough for one person and on the front corner where



Bert Wady, George Howells and Eric Myers on O O D duty at the old Pavilion.

our OOD box is was an open veranda for starting the races. Catering was non existent but we did have "Frank's Café". Frank's Café was in the first shelter up the Eastern side of the tarn and whisky in the coffee was a regular feature on cold windy days.

The clubhouse was well used and members would stay up after racing just to sail or chat with friends. We even had a Saturday night skiffle group made up of members playing guitar, drums, washboard, tea chest, comb and paper and occasionally a banjo not to mention some vocal accompaniment.

The first dinghy park was also constructed in the 1954 and was quite small with a surface of ash and clinkers a commodity readily available from the many mills that existed in Yeadon in that area. The task was made all the harder because the stone from a demolished mill chimney had to be removed from the site first. In front of the dinghy park, alongside the promenade and between the pavilion and the slipway was a small novelty golf area run by the council and where we now have our eastern jetty the council had a rowing boat stage where boats could be hired by the hour. This made sailing on busy sunny weekends extremely interesting as the hirers would often play a game called "Lets Ram a Yacht" and as our rules clearly said we had to extend every courtesy to other users of the dam this often led to some frustrating situations. Another favourite for tired rowers was to have a rest by hanging on to the marks again resulting in some interesting situations including what to do when they took a mark away half way through the race. The original rowing boats were clinker built, heavy but capable of being rowed at speed and a number of members boats suffered serious damage and in one instance a member even broke her arm trying to fend off a colliding rowing boat.

The gales of 62

The Pavilion was unfortunately to come to a rather sticky (well wet actually) end in the winter of 1962!

A February gale had been blowing most of the night and in the relative calm of the morning one of our (very young!) junior members was out on a dog walk around the Dam and came across the clubhouse strewn across the promenade with the roof in the water and bare electrical cables etc exposed to the elements. Returning rapidly home he reported this to his father who initially refused to believe that such a thing could have happened but finally succumbed and went off to see for himself. A working party was then rapidly roused, the Pavilion recovered from the water and the area secured.

The Pavilion was put back together after a fashion with crude repairs and some wire ropes secured over the roof to try and prevent a further problem whilst members considered what to do next.

Another new clubhouse and Championship Hosting

After much debate and fund raising from members a new clubhouse was designed by club member Johnnie Morris and work began on producing the frames required in the new structure by working parties using a combination of new and reclaimed timber. Many skills were learned from the skilled joiners such as Willie Atkinson and the frames took shape over the winter months. As Spring came around the extended foundations were laid under what is now the kitchen and Bosuns locker with many comments as to the depth of concrete with the young architect taking no chances at 14 inches in the middle and more at the edges! The front part of the building is on the original and much lighter foundation wall which seemed a little odd at the time. Finally working parties were arranged and the clubhouse erected with working parties well attended and by some miracle no accidents as everyone pitched in on the construction work and got the job done.

It is a great credit to all these members of years gone by that we have the facilities we have today. The current changing rooms were in fact a later addition in the early eighties and these were a prefabricated structure that fitted in with original building to almost look as though they were designed for the job.

So good were our facilities that we were able to host the Heron Northern Championships and the Heron Class to this day continue to be well supported at Yeadon.

As the picture below shows we had a good turnout and some of these boats are still sailing at Yeadon today.



Heron Northern Championships held at Yeadon circa 1964

The Seventies and The Southport 24 hour excursions

A key event that became an annual weekend away was the Southport 24 Hour race run on the Marine Lake at Southport every September. The event still runs to this day but with less entries, in those days up to 120 boats would be on the start line with up to 40-50 members attending to support or sail in our team. Camping and sleeping in cars was the norm and the race was not normally stopped for any reason including the fact that in some events we had winds up to force 7. Sadly we have failed to get sufficient support in recent years to justify an entry due perhaps to the many other open events that our members travel to.

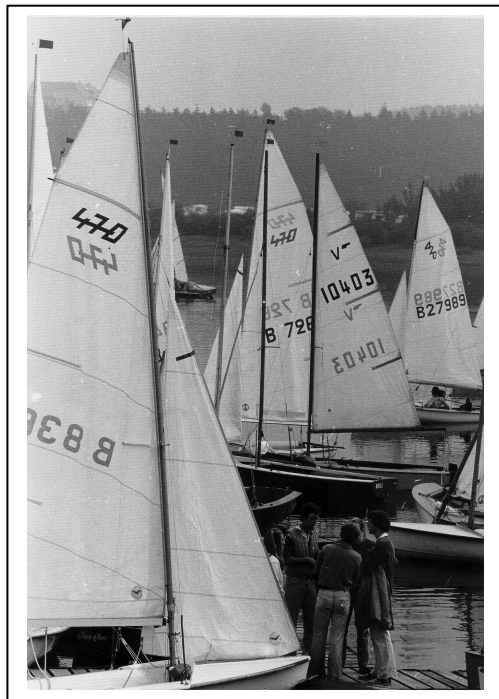
Safety on the water also started to become more important and we invested in our first committee boat. The committee of the day were always at pains to refer to it as a committee boat rather than a rescue boat in case members became too complacent and started to rely on a tow back home when things went wrong.

Another key development during this time was the start of our Tuesday Night Training and in those days we became an RYA Training Centre with our own RYA qualified Instructors and Senior Instructors. Over the years this has lapsed due to the time required to maintain instructor registration and the increased legislation etc. The principles however have survived the years and our Tuesday Training is as successful as it ever was with the added bonus of some race training thrown in.

The Commodore Weekends developed during this period and inevitably the Saturday entertainment was a wine and cheese party followed by a disco and then followed Midnight Race. Whilst these have evolved even further the purists among us do point out that the Night Lite Trophy was presented by Mr and Mrs McDonald for a race to start at midnight and hence our current start time of 11.00pm is a cop out!

Our First International Club Sailing event was in 1977 when we were invited through a Bradford twin town arrangement to go and sail against the Yacht Club De le Warche at Butegenbach in Belgium. Our Commodore and three other sailors took on the challenge and drove to Vervier where they were met and directed to a civil reception in the town hall (Hotel De Ville). They were unaware of this reception prior to leaving and taken aback by the presence of several local dignitaries. Amongst them was the Lord Mayor waiting to deliver a welcome speech and of course listen to the carefully prepared response from our Commodore! Recovering fast from the shock our Commodore gave his best shot at a thank you and nice to be here speech including in it an apology for being late and remarking that every effort had been made to arrive on time by breaking almost every speed limit between Calais and Vervier. The translator missed this bit out according to our one French speaking person and the reason became apparent as the group were introduced individually to all the dignitaries including the chief of the fire service and the chief of the police service!

The weekend was a great success and sailing in Vaurien class dinghies we managed to win a number of trophies before returning home in a seriously overloaded Capri with our prizes and souvenirs. A return visit was made the year after but sadly apart from some individual contacts the event has not been repeated.



The Eighties, the boat builders and the Single Handers

In the eighties we saw a number of new single handed classes gaining in popularity not least because crews were becoming difficult to find with more and more youngsters leaving home for a university education leaving mum or dad without a crew. Disposable income was also growing and hence people could afford their own boat at an earlier stage. The old methods of learning to sail by crewing for several years were fast dying out.

Toppers and Lasers were becoming the norm and even our long established Heron sailors were having to sail their two handed boats single handed. On the positive side the time from starting to sail to becoming independent was much reduced as people were able to learn through the Tuesday evening activities and get in plenty of practice in their own boats. Overall though numbers were down during the eighties and in particular young members were in short supply.



Denis Beard (Ent) Brian Cocker (Streaker) and John Southal in close competition 2003.

Increased mobility for all also meant that members were able to travel easily to open meetings and championships etc. In particular Bassenthwaite Week in the Northern Lakes became a very well attended event for Yeadon members and still is to this day. Other events include North west Norfolk Week and Burton Week for the twelve fleet and various other championships and events such as the Mirror and Solo championships.

The long tradition of boat building was however flourishing particularly in the two handed classes. The club was of course founded on home made dinghies and even when the class dinghies arrived in the early fifties many members built their own craft particularly Cadets, Herons and Enterprise. Many of the early Herons were home built and in fact are still sailing at Yeadon today some 50 years on. Barry Pratt for instance not only built his own Heron but made all the fittings and prevailed upon his mother to make the sails! Willie Atkinson built his own Heron from the plans and several others were built from kits. Enterprise was also a popular boat built by many of the members. Many of the National 12's were also built from kits that generally consisted of a bare shell for home completion/decking by the owner.

It was in the late seventies and eighties that many of the current National 12's were built as the rules were changed to allow a four-plank construction to ease home building. The ingenuity however was often in finding the room for home construction with one of our amateur builders (Dougie MacDonald) even using a bedroom which required the window frame removing to get the boat out and the boat having to be carried backwards across a plank to an adjoining roof before being lowered to the ground. Despite this minor difficulty Dougie built about six boats in this way. Our most prolific boat builder is Donald Acklam who has built over a dozen new boats and restored and repaired countless others as well as assisting a number of members to build their own boats by providing guidance and help.

Despite the renewed activities on the home build front the two handed classes did however loose out to the single handed boats and particularly those requiring minimal maintenance such as Toppers and Lasers.

The Nineties and in to the Millennium

The nineties are famous not least for the fact that our 21 year lease expired and we were negotiating for a new 15 year lease. Despite most of the hard work being done early on the lease was not finalised and disappeared into the legal department of Leeds Leisure Services/Leeds council and in fact at the time of writing this we have not yet seen it emerge even though we are now ten years into the supposed 15 year lease.

Membership remained fairly static over this period at around 140 memberships many of whom are family members giving a total number of people in membership of somewhere in the region of 300+. One source of membership however has been from the sailing centre next door to the club. The centre does in fact complement our own activities and people who have done sailing courses next door have become good members of the club on many occasions. Equally when we are asked for short courses we can direct them next door or of course our preferred route is to enlist them into membership and help them to learn through our own Tuesday evening training sessions.

Our training activities now cover Tuesday evenings from late April until into August for learning the basics and gaining confidence but they have also been extended to cover elements of race training. This particularly applies to junior members who gain extra race training and coaching for sailing in the junior races. This has been so successful that we have seen record entries in this series over the last few years.

Through the nineties we have also seen far more of our members branching out into larger craft and being involved in anything from flotilla cruising to making some fairly complex passages. Many of our members have studied and become certified as day skippers and yachtmasters etc which includes the intricacies of navigation. (not all that useful at Yeadon though) As several Yeadon members have been involved in round the world sailing activities we are safe in assuming that tackling the tricky winds of Mill Corner have in some way helped to prepare them for greater things.

2000 to Present Day

Since we entered the new millennium the club has gone from strength to strength not least with our training activities still on Tuesday evenings for new members but also now including race training especially for our junior members. Our capability has been further enhanced by the purchase of three Pico dinghies which provide the vital link between fully supervised learning and those first steps of helming without instruction and joining in the racing activities.

Our junior members also now compete very successfully on the RYA schools open circuit and take part in training. Our members have also been successful enough to be loaned an RYA 405 asymmetric dinghy to sail on the circuit and use for training.

We started our events Open Days with great success even making it onto the television in 2002 through Look North which generated lots of interest and a number of new members. This years event (2003) resulted in eight new members joining most of them being family members.

In April 2003 we got our own web site up and running and although the development is still ongoing the site is already starting to look very professional and should create interest in the club and be a source of information for prospective and existing members. Our club continues to improve and develop despite the limitations of our small water and it is a tribute to all our members past and present that this is the case.

Members of Note?

Over the years we have had many members and many characters and we have also had a number of families where membership has spanned more than one generation. It is impossible to mention them all but here are just a few people of note during our 75 years.

Willie Atkinson Was a founding member a past Secretary and Commodore and finally a Life member. Willie lived all his life in Yeadon and died in the late Eighties. Without Willie YSC may not exist today and certainly would not be the club it currently is.

Clifford Chadwick Was not quite a founding member but was a past Commodore, our Sailing Secretary and then a life member. Clifford's sons are both still keen National 12 sailors, his granddaughter is also a keen 12 sailor and his great grandson James is also now crewing a 12 with Grandad and a Dart 15 with his dad proving that the sailing bug can run through several generations.

Bert Wady Was another early member at Yeadon with son Brian who sailed at Yeadon and daughter Sarah who still sails at Yeadon although now a Chadwick. The club has been responsible for many marriages over the years many of which have resulted in multiple generations of membership.

David Sharples Was also a very early member and held the position of Treasurer for many years as well as serving as a committee member and as Commodore. David is also a life member. David is well remembered for his Treasurers Report to the committee which invariably was simply that "we are in funds". The technique worked well in that the committee were very frugal as they were never quite sure how in funds we were! David is still an active member and is we believe the only member to be still actively racing at Yeadon whilst in his eighties. (sorry David but we couldn't leave that out)

Donald Acklam Was a relative newcomer joining around 1963 but very quickly settling in to various roles as Sailing Secretary, committee member, Commodore and most recently Membership Secretary not to mention his many years of club maintenance and help on training nights etc. Donald probably has more years in when he has been in office during his membership than years out of office.

Dennis Beard Is another member and past Commodore who has given such a lot to the club through many years as our Bosun looking after all aspects of club maintenance. Denis is one of those members who just does the jobs required with no fuss or search for recognition.

Neil McInnes Neil has many helpers but few who could or would step into his shoes to make sure that training happens and new members can learn to sail and join in our activities.

There are many more members who should be mentioned but space dictates we have to stop at some point. Currently we have a very active group of retired members who quietly get on with essential works. Over recent times doors have been replaced and painted, drainage channels dug, club boats refurbished rescue boats overhauled and so on. This is not magic it is hard work put in by the few.

You know who you are guys! Thank you on behalf of us all

A number of members have also gone on to do some interesting things with there sailing skills perhaps the most high ranking in sailing terms being Richard Ibbotson who developed a keen interest in sailing at an early age and is a very competent National 12 sailor.

Richard is currently a Commodore in the Royal Navy and was recently out in the Mediterranean and rumoured to be short staffed having only 7 surface ships and 2 submarines under him! (Hope he doesn't have to do his own winter maintenance on that lot!)

Finally

To celebrate our 75th year of sailing at Yeadon we are holding a dinner to start off a very special Commodores Weekend with events for all and of course our historical Midnight Race. We are hoping that we can mark the occasion by having at least 75 members on the water at the same time. This was going to be a target of 75 boats but we do have a water limit of 35 hence we have lowered our sights.

Another key event will be the 75th race of the 75th season with special prizes so altogether 2003 will be a very special season for us all.

In writing this update we are very conscious that some people who deserve a mention may have been missed and we must therefore apologise for any inadvertent omissions and hope that despite that this document has been of some interest in recording some of our activities over the last 75 years.

To finish a few current images of the fun we have at Yeadon and the friendly atmosphere we enjoy!



Early season 2003.



Members getting on well with the Treasurer!



A few words from our Commodore before we launch our new Pico's 2003.



The Pico's first sail April 2003.

It would of course be very remiss if we did not record within our brief historic update the names of our Commodores over the years and those members who have been elected as Life Members an honour not given lightly and used to recognise those members who have given exceptional service to our club.

Commodores of Yeadon Sailing Club 1928 - 2003

1928	Guy Fison	1966	Dick Thackeray
1929	Guy Fison	1967	Brian Hobley
1930	Guy Fison	1968	John Carter
1931	David Ginn	1969	Jimmy Clapham
1932	David Ginn	1970	Douglas MacDonald
1933	David Ginn	1971	Roy Wilson
1934	David Ginn	1972	Donald Acklam
1935	David Ginn	1973	Brian Waite
1936	Willie Atkinson	1974	David Laycock
1937	Willie Atkinson	1975	Keith Weir
1938	Willie Atkinson	1976	Jim Shephard
1939	Willie Atkinson	1977	Howard Chadwick
1940	Willie Atkinson	1978	Bill Wilson
1941	Willie Atkinson	1979	Brian Ward
1942	Willie Atkinson	1980	Tony Shakespeare
1943	Willie Atkinson	1981	Alan Caunt
1944	Willie Atkinson	1982	John Ashworth
1945	Willie Atkinson	1983	Dennis Beard
1946	Willie Atkinson	1984	Brian Walton
1947	Willie Atkinson	1985	Ken Chadwick
1948	Willie Atkinson	1986	George Dawson
1949	Willie Atkinson	1987	Mike Pickard
1950	Willie Atkinson	1988	Brian Cocker
1951	Clifford Chadwick	1989	John Southall
1952	Clifford Chadwick	1990	Harrison Fletcher
1953	Clifford Chadwick	1991	Jill Birch
1954	Clifford Chadwick	1992	Cliff Bailey
1955	Clifford Chadwick	1993	Don Goode
1956	Harry Hammond	1994	Barbara Pickard
1957	Harry Hammond	1995	Jim Dumbell
1958	David Sharples	1996	Neil McInnes
1959	Bert Wady	1997	Peter Slingsby
1960	Harry Taylor	1998	Rob Parnaby
1961	Guy Locke	1999	Neil Ashurst
1962	Guy Locke	2000	Sarah Chadwick
1963	Ted Clark	2001	Rob Phillips
1964	Basil Rycroft	2002	Helen Nicholson
1965	Jack Barker	2003	David Johnson

* * * * *

Life Members Past and Present

Norman Bulmer
Willie Atkinson
Clifford Chadwick
Bert Wady

David Sharples
Donald Acklam
Geoff Wheeler
Sarah Chadwick
Don Goode

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To Donald Aklam

Who patiently read through, quietly did some research and tactfully gave constructive criticism.

To David Sharples

For reading through and adding some key points of interest

To Sarah Chadwick

Who proof read repeatedly, kept quiet as the air went blue and supplied information and inspiration for this project not to mention lots of coffee and the occasional whisky.

Dedication

- To all those members who over the years have provided food and sustenance to members and visitors alike.
- To all those members who serve as officers and committee members and give so much of their time to support our club and our sport.
- To all those members who work tirelessly behind the scenes maintaining the club and attending working parties etc.
- Most importantly to those who come and sail because without you the fishermen would have nobody to shout at!