

Friends of Loch Tummel Sailing Club Newsletter

Issue 1 September 2009



Photo – Ali El-Ghorr

Welcome to the first edition of the Friends newsletter. As well as a newsletter the plan is to have a party during the season to give a chance to meet with former shipmates. The dates for these will be confirmed shortly. Those without cars will be offered a lift!

Sailing close to the wind

Hi everyone, my name is Ali and my wife (Linda) and I are lucky enough to live at Foss next door to the sailing club.

You probably see us in the garden when you are splicing the mainsail and jiving (I know, I am an expert on sailing lingo).



Anyway, sitting there watching you exerting yourselves, got me excited about joining in. So off to the website I went and joined, as a non-sailing member. You see I am not

really a sailor. In fact I am afraid of water. I am hoping that by being "one of the crowd" some of your expertise and fearlessness will rub off on me and one day, I will be as good as some of the junior members. Another thing about me you didn't know, I have high ambitions.

So now I have been getting announcements about sailing days, competitions and regattas. I am really scared. So I am starting with baby steps. I first borrowed a fishing boat to see what it's like being on the water.

Having survived that experience, I decided to buy my own boat. I wasn't yet ready to rely on the wind alone. I got a boat

with a motor to help me get used to being on the water. I am increasingly going out, especially when we get friends visiting.



I am also learning to fish. So far I have not managed to catch anything yet, but that doesn't bother me. You should have seen the one that got away. But I only go out when it is dead calm. I don't get on well with waves and wind...

Since joining the club, I have been welcomed by everyone. It is very nice to be a part of such a friendly club. None of this Groucho Marx business. I am delighted that so many members have offered to teach me to sail. My nerves are still stopping me from accepting, but I am working on it. One day soon, you'll see me out there. Shop Ahoy Mateys

Ali El-Ghorr (elghorr@hotmail.com)

Memories of Loch Tummel.

The boy stepped nervously from the car. High overhead a man was working on the roof. It looked like he was putting the finishing touches to the front porch. Clearly a brand new addition it looked strangely out of place against the corrugated iron clad building it now embellished.

“Can I help you ?” called down the man. “Perhaps you can” replied the young boy’s father, “We are thinking we might like to launch our dinghy here...”



interest was walking and fishing but having been captivated by Arthur Ransome’s Swallows and Amazons as soon as I discovered there was sailing on the Loch I could think of nothing else.

As new members we were keen to get involved so we soon found ourselves allocated those beginner member jobs like overseeing the parking of the cars at the Enterprise Bluebell Traveller Event. With about thirty visiting boats this was a major event in the calendar and all club sailing was cancelled that weekend.

And so that is how it started. The year was 1976, the man, as it turned out was Alistair Calder and the man helping him was

then club Commodore Iain McLaren I think. The porch was the brand new LTSC Clubhouse extension with its panoramic windows gazing out over Loch Tummel and its beautiful varnished



floor just waiting to be danced upon. The boy? The boy was me, Graham Foster, aged 10 and one quarter. This is my first memory of the sailing club which has become one of the most important places in my life for the last 33 years. I can remember launching that little boat and tentatively setting sail towards the moored Flying Fifteens (no dry-sailing and no Fifteen Jetty in those days). It felt like a dangerous voyage across a mighty Ocean. Later, as my confidence grew I can remember the joy of reaching and rounding the ‘S’ Mark for the first time, the terror of surviving every little puff of breeze and the envy I felt for the little fleet of racing sailors in their Optimist Class dinghies. Back then, as can be seen in the picture, the club still had a healthy fleet of Kestrels although David Laing and son Pip were the only regular competitors. Iain McLaren had just launched “All sewn up” a beautiful wooden Scorpion and Tummel Week was a new idea. The Club AGM was held in a hotel in Pitlochry (and yes it did take a whole evening) and was separate from the Annual Dinner Dance and Prize giving which was held in a Hotel in Perth and involved lots of Scottish dances I could not do. Some things were much the same, the Barrons and McLarens seemed to collect all the prizes for example!

My father had come to Dundee in 1974 to work in the brand new Ninewells Hospital and in 1976 we bought a second hand ‘Pemberton Rancher’ static caravan on the site at Tummel Bridge and found ourselves neighbours to the Calders, the Laings and the MacLeans amongst others. I think the main

A year or two later and we had bought an “elderly” wooden Wayfarer and she was to stay in our family for nearly thirty years. My first Tummel Week was sailed in that Wayfarer with my Dad as crew and our introduction to the Island race ended in tears when returning to within sight of the club my very tired (I was 12) hands did not let the sheet go in a gust and we capsized at the E mark. So near and yet so far. One RYA capsizing drill later and we were towed home by Bernie Walton in the club’s original Dory. I think he may have been the Vice Commodore that year and he was certainly an early hero of mine blasting around in a Mirror 14 (Maruader) the first true trapeze and Spinnaker dinghy I had seen.



Next my dad bought me an ex University Lark dinghy which was to be the reason I had to recruit a more agile crew and



was persuaded by persons who shall remain nameless to invite Lesley to come to Tummel Week. Fortunately for me my crew

was to become my wife and Tummel Week for us is always special as the Anniversary of our very first kiss.

Graham Foster

Vacancies

Contributors to the editorial content of this newsletter welcomed.

No pay

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