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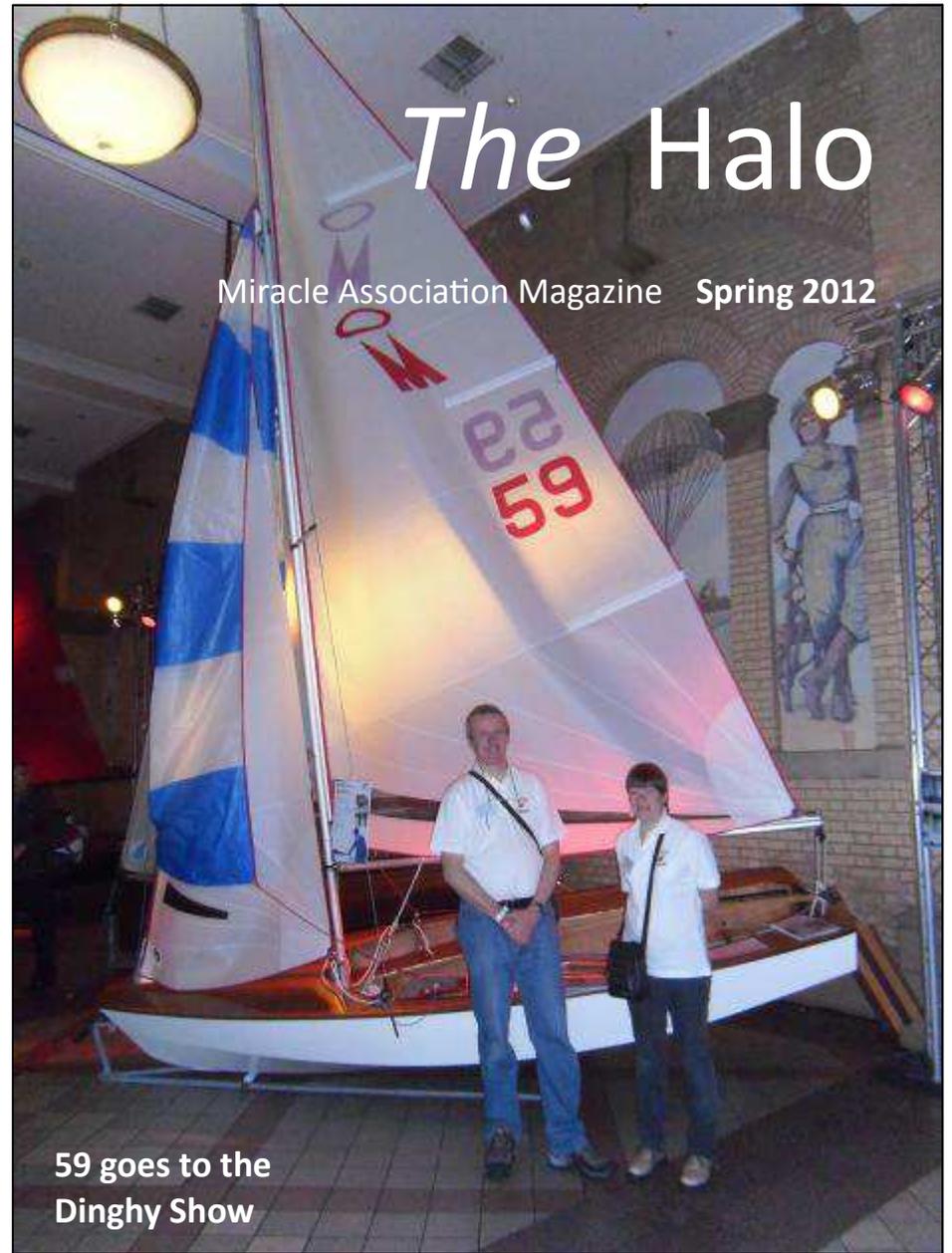
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**“The Friendly, Family, Dinghy Class”**

## Editor's Corner

Spring 2012

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Disclaimer: Much of the information within this publication is gathered from individuals, clubs, etc. The Miracle Class Association and its Officers and Committee accept no responsibility for the correctness of such information and opinion. Members are always advised to check with clubs before travelling to events.

**Photo credits:** Cover and p5 Kenneth Gibson; p2, 3 and 17 Sue Atherton; p12 Gillan Gibson; p16 John Clarke.

Items for the next issue should be with the Editor by 1st June 2012

This is an issue which looks forwards and backwards. Forwards to the new season and the many events organized. With more meetings everyone will hopefully have more events closer to home. It is appreciated sailors are looking to the distance travelled and the impact of the fuel price rises, so hopefully this will help. Though don't forget to let Kenneth Gibson know and/or use the "Count me in" facility on the website to register your interest in the meetings you currently plan to attend. As an extension to this don't hold back putting in your entry in for the Nationals at Ullswater this year—and note the new initiative of a cruising option for those who do not wish to race.

Looking even further ahead the 40th Anniversary Nationals in 2013 are to be at the Olympic venue, the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy. It's a place you have probably hear a lot about and will see this August if you follow the Olympics, well this is your chance to be there, if a year later. The facilities and sailing are considered superb and Weymouth is a big tourist venue

The backward look of this magazine is into the history of the Miracle and the Association. With the 40th anniversary



next year the aim is to have an article each issue - do you have any tales to tell? - I'd love to hear from you.

*Gillan Gibson,  
Magazine Editor  
Miracle 3670*

## Chairman's Desk

Another busy sailing season will shortly be upon us, we have more events and some different venues for 2012. More about this later.

Our non-sailing programme started much earlier with first the Dinghy Show and then our first committee meeting (see the report later).

The Dinghy Show was a great success, we had many visitors to the stand and much interest was shown in the two Miracles kindly provided by Dave Butler. I would like to thank all the people who helped out with manning the two days and especially those involved in the set up on the Friday evening and the break down on the Sunday after the Show closed, Martin Bathe has some comments on this in his article later in the magazine. Next year is the Miracles 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we have already started planning for a bigger stand with more boats, as they say watch this space and be part of it.

Our first event of the season is at Welton Sailing Club just off the Humber on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> April, hopefully we will have a good turnout. Next we have Broadwater who are hosting the 'Puddleduck' this year, followed by an new venue at Maidenhead for a one day event. After that it's Delph for the Northern Area Championships. The rest of the events are on the programme listed later in the magazine so decide which you will attend and put the dates on

your calendar. It would make life easier if those regular travellers would give me an indication of which events they anticipate attending as I am frequently asked by host clubs for possible numbers. Please give it some thought and e-mail me.

Your Committee realise that not all members of the Association are interested in racing, but those members may feel that many of our activities are directed to racers, so here is something different, why not have a cruising holiday in the Lake District with us at Ullswater. Sail the lake during the Nationals week, join in the family atmosphere, camping, social events use of the club galley and bar. We have negotiated a deal which gives temporary membership of Ullswater Yacht Club at a reasonable fee for the week. Interested? Get in touch with me for full details.

As I write this the temperature which last week in Tyneside was a balmy 22 degrees has dropped to a chilly 5 degrees with an extremely cold wind chill factor, but I have my fingers crossed that by the 14<sup>th</sup> the thermometer will be heading up again. See you on the water soon.

*Ken Gibson  
Chairman, Miracle 3670*



## E-mails—are you receiving them?

An e-mail list of members is used to pass on information. Have you been receiving the e-mails?

If not please contact Ken Gibson on kengillian2@yahoo.co.uk to go on the list.

# RYA Volvo Dinghy Show Alexandra Place

Sat & Sun 3rd - 4th March

This was a great weekend and offered an ideal chance to showcase the Miracle. With plenty of members to talk to interested people and those who have, or

## Miracle 59's Spring break in London

*Martin Bathe*

*'Twas (as near as makes no difference) the night before Christmas, when all through the house*

*Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.*

*The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,*

*In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.*

And then the phone rang and it was Ken calling on the pretext of requesting the membership labels for sending out the Winter edition of the *Halo*. Oh, and by the way would we be prepared to take Miracle 59 to the Dinghy Show at Ally Pally (Alexandra Palace – amongst other things an exhibition centre in North London) in March to be part of the Jack Holt Centenary Display? I muttered something about the boat needing “a bit of fettling” but there seemed to be no way out of it and in a moment of weakness I agreed to Ken’s request.

Normally, once Mavis and I have

had, Miracles it was an excellent event and thanks go to everyone who helped out.

It was also a good opportunity to see what is happening in other classes and there were a few deep discussions about technical matters, e.g. sheeting angles and laminate sails.

This year is the 100th anniversary of Jack Holt’s birth so there was a special exhibition of 10 of his classes and a Miracle was one of those chosen, but that’s a different story.....

put 59 away for the winter, we don’t get it out again until the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in April when I (Mavis does not participate in boat maintenance except for helping me turn it over) get it ready for “our season” – the beginning of May to the end of October. “Everyone knows that epoxy and two-pack varnish doesn’t cure at temperatures below 15°C so there’s no point in trying before it starts to warm up a bit at the end of April” has always been my excuse for our not sailing any earlier than May.

So, at the end of February I wrapped myself up in multiple layers, fingerless gloves and woolly hat and ventured out to the garage to survey the damage. Unable to complement us on our sailing, people fairly often come up to us in the boat park and admire 59 – the result of a redecking with Sapele ply by Brian Jones. However, keeping it in reasonable condition requires a bit of work. This year the starboard rear quarter of the deck and a handful of dents in the hull needed

attention. And then I got it into my head that it would be a good idea to rig the boat with as many of the original Holt features from around the time that the boat was conceived: round two section mast, round boom, 4:1 kicker, wooden tiller stock – all that needed cleaning and the tiller stock varnishing. The spinnaker sock, toe-straps and all the “string” got put through the washing machine. Oh, and the trolley which was to be used to display boat was looking tired: rusty P-clips and washers and UV faded wheels – more cleaning and a respray for the wheel hubs. Just to be on the safe side I fully rigged the fettled boat on the drive to check that we had a complete boat – we’ve turned up at Delph on the first day of the season without the boom before now.

Having prepared the boat we needed to get it to London, in one piece, and in time to set it up on the Friday evening before the show on the Saturday. Tired from fettling I slept in the passenger seat whilst Mavis did the bulk of the driving from sunny Blackburn (The sun always shines in Lancashire – it only rains at night! Honest!) to Ally Pally. Oh dear! The setting up at the show can tenuously be described as “organised” chaos. We had wristbands to get past security and we knew where we needed to set the boat up and it would have been fine if it wasn’t for everyone else trying to set up at the same time. Fortunately, once we had negotiated all the carpet fitters trying to lay football pitch sized bits of carpet and electricians running what seemed like enough

cablings to stretch to the Moon and back and found our way through the exhibition hall to the relative calm of the West Corridor we started to calm down a bit. Neil Gibson, who had kindly agreed to lend us a new set of sails to put on the boat, had also arrived and he helped us rig the boat. Luckily it had been dry on the journey down so the boat only needed a wipe down with a damp cloth to restore its shine. It was with a small sigh of relief that we finally gathered up all the towing paraphernalia and headed off to our lodgings for the night.

On the Saturday of the show we arrived to find that the electricians had managed to complete their Earth to the Moon and back again wiring job and that 59 was now sympathetically lit with red



## Miracle 59's Spring break in London (cont.)

and yellow flood lights enhancing the shine and hiding the imperfections. It also dawned on us that the Association had landed one of, if not *the*, prime position out of the ten boats in the Jack Holt display. We were just helping Gillan apply the finishing touches to the materials she was decorating 59 with for promoting the Association when the show opened and we were inundated with people passing by and stopping for a chat. Indeed, meeting many of those who had sailed Miracles and chatting about their experiences proved to be the highlight of the show for us. We spent pretty much the whole day at the Jack Holt display talking to people.

The show on the Sunday was a bit quieter than the Saturday and we managed to spend an hour listening to the presentation about Jack Holt. By 3.00pm the show really started to quieten down. However, we weren't allowed to start taking things apart until we were given the

"green light" after the show had closed at 5.00pm. Woe betide anyone who dropped a mast on a member of the public. I am surprised they didn't issue the exhibitors with hard hats and high viz vests. Anyway, once the general public had been escorted safely from the premises the mayhem to dismantle in five hours a show that had taken three days to put up was underway. Mercifully 59 just squeezed through a pedestrian doorway with 5mm to spare, whilst boats that were broader in the beam had to negotiate the queue at wider doors. I'd just discovered another reason for choosing to sail a Miracle – not only is it lighter to pull up the slip-way but it fits where other boats can't!

Would we do it again? Er, I really must start rehearsing my excuses in case Ken asks us again. Does anyone know where Miracle 1 is?

*Martin and Mavis Bathe  
Miracle 59*

### Hints and tips

**Do you have any ideas that would help others?**

**Let the editor know and they can be shared.**

If your crew is 'cheese-wired' against the shroud when hiking out the weight is too far forward. A good place is to have the crew's back leg toughing the thwart and the helm's front leg touching the back of the thwart. *Sam Mettam*

In light airs look through your transom flaps to check there is no turbulence. If there is, your transom is dragging and you need to move forwards. The thwart is too far back! *Sam Mettam*

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## Race meeting Calendar 2012

<b>Welton</b>	(HU15 1PT)	14th & 15th April	<a href="http://www.weltonsc.org">www.weltonsc.org</a>
<b>Chichester</b>	(PO20 7EJ)	22nd April	<a href="http://www.cyc.co.uk">www.cyc.co.uk</a>
	Jack Holt Memorial event		
<b>Broadwater</b>	(UB9 6PD)	21st & 22nd April	<a href="http://www.broadwatersc.org.uk">www.broadwatersc.org.uk</a>
	Puddleduck		
<b>Maidenhead</b>	(SL6 8HZ)	5th May	<a href="http://www.maidenheadsc.org.uk">www.maidenheadsc.org.uk</a>
<b>Delph</b>	(BL7 9TS)	12th & 13th May	<a href="http://delphsailingclub.co.uk">delphsailingclub.co.uk</a>
	Northern Area Championships		
<b>Girton</b>	(NG23 7HX)	26th & 27th May	<a href="http://www.girtonsc.org.uk">www.girtonsc.org.uk</a>
<b>Burton</b>	(DE65 6EG)	9th & 10th June	<a href="http://www.burtonsailingclub.co.uk">www.burtonsailingclub.co.uk</a>
<b>Leigh &amp; Lowton</b>	(WA3 1BQ)	16th June	<a href="http://leighandlowton.wordpress.com">leighandlowton.wordpress.com</a>
<b>Wigan</b>	(WN3 5HJ)	17th June	<a href="http://wigansailingclub.webs.com">http://wigansailingclub.webs.com</a>
<b>Bala</b>	(LL23 7BS)	23rd & 24th June	<a href="http://www.balasc.org.uk/">www.balasc.org.uk/</a>
	Welsh Championships		
<b>North Lincs.</b>	(DN18 5RB)	23rd & 24th June	<a href="http://www.nlsail.co.uk">www.nlsail.co.uk</a>
	<i>National Sprint Championship</i>		
<b>Margate</b>	(CT9 1HD)	7th & 8th July	<a href="http://www.margateyachtclub.org">www.margateyachtclub.org</a>
	Southern Area Championships		
<b>Draycote</b>	(CV23 8AB)	14th & 15th July	<a href="http://www.draycotewater.co.uk">www.draycotewater.co.uk</a>
	Midland Area Championships		
<b>Ullswater</b>	(CA10 2NA)	12th to 17th August	<a href="http://www.ullswateryachtclub.org">www.ullswateryachtclub.org</a>
	<i>National Championships</i>		
<b>Thornton Steward</b>		1st & 2nd Sept	<a href="http://www.thornton-steward-sailingclub.co.uk">www.thornton-steward-sailingclub.co.uk</a>
	North Eastern Championships		
	(HG4 4BQ)		
<b>Pennine</b>	(S36 4TF)	22nd & 23rd Sept	<a href="http://www.pennine-sc.co.uk">www.pennine-sc.co.uk</a>
	Inland Championships		

**"Count me in"**

Don't forget to register your interest in events on the website  
<http://www.miracledinghy.org/>

## Racing Matters

Well the season is at last underway with Welton Sailing Club running the first event on 14th & 15th April.

We have meetings at some of our favourite venues, as well as some new ones. Many of the regular racers are familiar with a lot of the clubs we visit, but some members who may be considering joining the racing fleet may wish to know where they are and what is available should they decide to take part, so below is a brief summary of what clubs have to offer. However, always check you know exactly where you're going before you travel.

### Welton (HU15 1PT)

North of Humber Bridge, East Yorkshire  
www.weltonsc.org

**14th & 15th April**

Last year at very short notice Welton Sailing Club were able to accommodate a 2 day event instead of a 1 day when Hornsea was cancelled. This year it is an official 2 day event and we are grateful they have invited us back. Free camping is available on both Friday and Saturday nights but Friday is only with prior booking, see the flyer on our website for details. Booking is required for the Saturday evening meal. Food will be available during the meeting.

### Broadwater (UB9 6PD)

Junction 1 off M40  
www.broadwatersc.org.uk

**21st & 22nd April**

Broadwater is hosting the 'Puddleduck' which is a 2 day event. Free camping on site, but booking is required for Friday evening. Food is available during the day over the weekend, see flyer on our website for details about Saturday evening.

10

### Maidenhead (SL6 8HZ)

West of Slough, off A4094  
www.maidenheadsc.org.uk

Another new venue for this year, this is a 1 day open meeting, 3 races, 2 to count, starting at 11.00 am. Entry Fee £10, including 1 free hot meal, extra meals £3. No camping available, but there is some in the area, see ukcampsite.co.uk.

### Delph (BL7 9TS)

North of Bolton, Greater Manchester  
delphsailingclub.co.uk

**12th & 13th May**

Delph is a two day event hosting the Northern Area Championships, 2 races on Saturday and 3 on Sunday with 3 to count, so even if you can only make the Sunday you can still get a series in. Free camping for tents and motor homes is available along with ample car and boat parking space. Food is available both days, including an evening meal on Saturday.

### Girton (NG23 7HX)

West of Lincoln  
www.girtonsc.org.uk

**21st & 22nd May**

Girton is a two day open event with the regular two day format. Free camping for tents and motor homes is available along with ample car and boat parking space. Food is available both days, including an evening meal on Saturday.

### Bala (LL23 7BS)

South of Ruthin on A494  
www.balasc.org.uk

**23rd & 24th June**

The Welsh Area Championships will be held at Bala Sailing Club. The nearest campsite is Pen-y-bont (200yds from clubhouse, www.penybont-bala.co.uk or phone 01678 520549). Food is available

both days, including an evening meal on Saturday. The views are great!

### Burton (DE65 6EG)

Nr Burton upon Trent, at Ticknall Reservoir  
www.burtonsailingclub.co.uk

**9th & 19th June**

Situated at Foremark Reservoir we join with two other fleets for our weekend of racing. Camping is available on both Friday and Saturday, food is available both days with an evening meal on Saturday @ £7.

### Leigh & Lowton (WA3 1BQ)

Between Wigan and Leigh, off A579  
www.llsc.org.uk

**16th June**

Nice to have Leigh & Lowton back on the circuit. Camping available on Friday and also on Saturday evening for those going on to Wigan on Sunday. As a special attraction there will be free race training by the experts on Friday evening.

### Wigan (DN18 5RB)

South of Wigan, Greater Manchester  
**17th June**

This is a one day open event, there is ample car and boat parking space available and food is available during the day.

### North Lincs. (DN18 5RB)

South of Humber Bridge  
www.nlsail.co.uk

**23rd & 24th June**

#### THE NATIONAL SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIPS

A Popular venue with a new format ! Not the usual racing format, instead there will be 8-10 short races over the two days. There is ample car and boat parking space and food is available during both days. Some free camping is available and also space for motor homes.

**Details of other venues will be in the next issue, by e-mail, or view on the website**

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# Miracle Nationals 2012

## Ullswater Yacht Club

### 12th to 17th August



#### Websites

- Ullswater Yacht Club  
[www.ullswateryachtclub.org/](http://www.ullswateryachtclub.org/)
- Ullswater Association  
[www.ullswater.com/](http://www.ullswater.com/)
- Ullswater.co.uk  
[www.ullswater.co.uk/](http://www.ullswater.co.uk/)
- Cumbrian Tourism  
[www.golakes.co.uk/](http://www.golakes.co.uk/)
- Wave Clothing  
[www.waveclothing.co.uk/](http://www.waveclothing.co.uk/)

#### Racing entry fee: £160

##### Includes:

- Racing
- Boat space
- Trailer storage
- Car parking
- Commodore's Reception
- Prizegiving Buffet

A midweek evening meal is to be arranged at an extra charge.

#### Onsite camping

In a field adjacent to the sailing club:

Fee for up to 7 days, Saturday to Friday inclusive (extra nights are available)

Small tent:	£45
Large tent:	£85
Motor home:	£105
Caravan:	£105

#### Racing starts:

**Sunday 1.30 pm**  
**Monday to Friday 10.30 am**

- Gold, silver and bronze fleets
- Youth and Junior Series
- Singlehanded Race
- Non spinnaker Race
- Crews Race

#### Social Events Diary

(Provisional)

**Sat 11<sup>th</sup> August**

Informal evening at Ullswater YC

**Sun 12<sup>th</sup> August**

**Commodore's reception**

**7.00 pm**

**Mon 13<sup>th</sup> August**

A free Evening

**Tues 14<sup>th</sup> August**

**Roast meal**

**Wed 15<sup>th</sup> August**

A free Evening

**Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> August**

**Association AGM**

**7.30 pm**

**Fri 17<sup>th</sup> August**

**Prizegiving and Buffet Supper**

**7.00 pm**

## Cruising Nationals

**A new initiative this year:**

**How would you like a holiday in the Lake District?**

For those who do not wish to race, but would like to use the facilities and absorb the atmosphere, a special deal has been arranged for temporary membership of Ullswater Yacht Club.

A lower cruising fee will include launching as well as boat, trailer and car space. Camping fees are the same as for racing entries.

Tickets to the Commodore's Reception, midweek roast meal and Prizegiving buffet will be available at an additional charge.

For more information and a booking form contact  
Kenneth Gibson  
[kengillian2@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kengillian2@yahoo.co.uk)  
0191 537 1712

**Miracle  
40th Anniversary  
Nationals 2013**

**Weymouth**

**Sail the Olympic venue  
a year after the games**

**12th-18th August 2013**

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[www.wpnsa.org.uk](http://www.wpnsa.org.uk)**

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## Going to an open meeting - Give it a go

If you've wondered about going to an open meeting but were not sure what was involved there was an article in the Spring 2010 issue of *Halo*. Along with other articles from the magazine it can be found

on the website. Clicking on "members" will bring up a page with a list of articles at the bottom right, one of which is on going to open meetings.

## Towing - tie everything securely

When towing please take particular care that all parts of the boat are securely tied on. At the end of 2009 there was report of an incident where a mast came off a towed dinghy and killed another road user. It may have been a freak accident, but no one wants to risk it happening to them.

Also, when tying boats, etc, to the trailer be careful if you use the straps with hooks that there is no possibility they will loosen and unhook. Ropes or straps which loop around or through when tying should still restrain an item even if a bit loose. Basically, make sure everything is secure.

## Spring 2012 - Membership Matters

*Martin Bathe*

Firstly, thank you to all of you who promptly renewed your membership when it expired at the end of March. As it is my first year in the post as Membership Secretary I am grateful for your promptness.

If you haven't received a renewal reminder and you think you should have please can you let me know by emailing me at [membership@miracledinghy.org](mailto:membership@miracledinghy.org).

If you have received a renewal reminder and have not yet renewed, please would you do so? By paying your subs, as well as making sure you continue to receive the *Halo* and are entitled to enter open events and the National Championships, you are also supporting the Miracle class by enabling the class to be present at the Dinghy Show thus maintaining interest in the class and also helping to fund the development and survival of the class as a whole. Whilst there are numerous more modern and exciting boats, the Miracle is still an enjoyable and interesting boat to sail and is worthy of such support.

### John Clarke's Spanish sailing

During the renewal process a few of you have engaged in correspondence with me. One such person was John Clarke. He sails regularly on the Mar Menor, a large lagoon on the east coast of Spain. About seven years ago, some of the local ex-pat Brits formed a sailing association there, primarily to aid would be sailors to get afloat in their various types of boats. The

"Sailing Association Mar Menor" (website: <http://sailingmarmenor.com/>), has grown and prospered and is based at a sailing centre at Los Narejos near to the San Javier airport. As can be seen from their website they cater for all types of sailing. John himself is an active member and skipper of the catamaran group, as well as racing his Miracle on alternate Sundays.

Before moving to Spain to retire, John used to sail a Solo at a club in the Midlands during the '80s, but as he now claims to be of mature years, he decided to recapture his more youthful days in a slightly more stable manner. So he chose the Miracle because he had sailed one once on Rutland Water, and he found it to be very comfortable, and surprisingly responsive. He judges it has proved to be the right decision, a delight to sail, stiff and responsive and quite fast although he thinks his boat is probably over weight!

He bought his boat in a very dilapidated state five years ago during an Easter holiday in the UK. After a visit to Ian Kelly for some new fittings, lots of good advice, and a new trailing cover, and fitting new wheels to the trailer, he towed it to his home there in Torrevieja, Spain. He had to do a complete re-build of the hull, stripping it down to the bare wood, re-glassing the seams, fitting extra floor runners to cover the holes, and making a new rudder assembly. That took him the whole of the summer, and his first launch was on 18th November 2007. Since then, he's sailed regularly with his crew (he doesn't mention who), winning the series three times. His boat is always admired,

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Photo—Phil Gamlen

## Spring 2012 - Membership Matters - part 2

with its glossy varnish finish, on the beach and slipway, being one of the few wooden boats in the area.

The racing includes many types of dinghy, with only three having an official PY number, so the race committee have to 'gestimate' ratings for the Spanish boats. His rating is 1190, although he does not have a spinnaker (other boats are allowed +5% for that), but he complains he is penalized for being a persistent winner!!

The sailing conditions in the photo John sent showing him and his crew

leaving the jetty for the start of a race last autumn look very appealing. In case anyone is interested there is a dinghy hire company run by an ex-pat in Los Narejos, and for those prepared to trail their boats there (It's 1500 miles and 24 hours from sunny Blackburn!) the slipway can be accessed for a small fee. If you are interested you can contact him by email for more info: [j.22clarke@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:j.22clarke@yahoo.co.uk).  
*Martin Bathe*  
*Membership Secretary*



**Spanish sailing**  
**John Clarke at Mar Menor**

## Measurement

*Brian Jones*

### Spinnaker pole uphaul and downhaul:

The wording of Clause 12 has been amended to allow control lines to run through the mast. It now reads as follows:

"Clause 12 The following are specified:

- (i) Distance from centre of shroud and forestay tang eyes to top of the sheave in block maximum 250mm. (or 220mm maximum from centre of T terminals to top of the sheave)
- (ii) Only one Spinnaker pole may be used with a maximum overall length of 1525mm
- (iii) No Spinnaker, Deck or Shroud fittings shall extend beyond a vertical line through the outer edge of the Rubbing bead (i.e. When the system is in normal tension.)
- (iv) The hull may be cut away for the installation of a spinnaker chute
- (v) A maximum of two bushed holes of not more than 6mm diameter (10mm diameter max. O/D bush) may be provided in the fore deck to allow control lines to pass through. The holes are to be positioned so that the control lines pass through the mast partners so as to not interfere in any way with the

mast partner clamping and fixing screws. The bushes to be of either nylon, brass, stainless steel or other similar material."



### Laminate sails:

The trial continues. Those interested in trying the sails should contact Dave Southwell. It is anticipated the topic will be on the agenda for the AGM and information will be published before then.

**Jib sheeting angle:** Trials of 2 different methods of adjusting the sheeting angle are continuing at club level. I have more detail for those who wish to know more.

Note that proposals for the AGM must be with the Secretary of the Association by 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012, see page 23 For the official AGM notice.

*Brian Jones*  
*Measurement Secretary*

## Nautical Sayings

### "Boot camp"

This name for cadet training schools first came into use during the Spanish American War. Sailor's leggings were known as boots which quickly became the

nickname for a Navy or Marine recruit. So logically these rookies were trained in 'boot' camps

Courtesy of [www.harbourguides.com](http://www.harbourguides.com)

## It's not a Miracle, its evolution

### Nick Smith's perspective

The Miracle we enjoy sailing and racing today is not the same boat that hit the water in 1973.

That boat was a simple, two sailed, plywood dinghy which was designed to be built at home and its most unique feature was the slot and tab construction method. It had a two piece mast which allowed the Miracle in kit form to be easily transported and it did appear in some far flung corners of the globe.

The boat soon started to be raced and a spinnaker was adopted. The spinnaker chute was developed and spreaders were added to the mast to resist the pressure of the spinnaker pole. As the boats were raced more seriously, obvious weaknesses in the hull were detected and supports were added in front of the mast and knees were attached to support the front of the centreboard case. Control lines for the kicking strap and mainsail outhaul were led aft and the jib changed shape within the measurement rules, making it lower to close the gap between the deck and the foot of the jib. The mast has become a continuous (one piece) tube and we now use a rectangular section boom. The Miracle was also produced in GRP.

Many of these developments were introduced in the early years, but it continued to evolve, reaching a peak in the late 1990's when the boats were constructed, still in plywood, but using epoxy resin for the joints and as a coating which resulted in stiff, light boats with the maintenance characteristics of a GRP boat. Up until last year's event, the National Championships have been dominated by boats from this construction era and even this year there were four of these boats in the top ten.

Development has continued in the intervening period with new versions of the GRP boat and Miracles with a double floor. The double floor was definitely a backward step, because the builders were unable to overcome the extra weight and the difficulty of draining the underfloor area. The Mk3 and Mk4 GRP and double floor boats show natural selection at work as these versions quickly disappeared from the race circuit. Throughout its history the Miracle has evolved, the last major change being the centre mainsheet. At the 2011 AGM the latest evolutionary steps were proposed: change of jib sheeting position, this is not a new process for the Miracle, as it has already moved from the middle of the sidedeck to its current position; the laminate sails are a natural progression, much less of a jump than going from cotton to man made fibres; and the increase in purchase from 8:1 to 16:1 in the kicking strap would not result in a spate of boom breakages as the required kicker tension is already being used by the top sailors and a broken boom is a very rare occurrence in my experience of the Miracle. These three changes are like all evolutionary steps, they are small and would not massively change the Miracle, but would improve its pointing ability, modernize its appearance and make it easier to sail.

The evolution of the Miracle could be looked on as a process of refinement. In the better manufacturer classes this refinement process is carried out before production begins, but in the Miracle this is being done by the sailors and the Association over time. Has this refining process come to an end, I don't think so. It might have slowed a little, but the evolutionary pressures are still there.  
*Nick Smith, Miracle 3805*



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## Killer shrimp *Dikerogammarus villosus*

Hopefully everyone is now aware of this highly invasive, predatory, shrimp (10mm-30mm long) which kills invertebrates and small fish and can dominate an ecology. A key ID feature is the presence of cone shaped protrusions on the tail.

As of the beginning of 2012 there were still only 3 populations known, fortunately none of them at venues used by Miracles. However, we all need to be aware so if a club does start to suffer we understand why we will all need to take measures to prevent it spreading elsewhere.

Key methods are:

- reducing contact time with the water, especially of eg trailers which have lots of cavities.
- thoroughly washing equipment down on

site.

- making sure no lake water is taken away on boat or kit.
- thoroughly drying equipment out as the shrimps can survive for days in damp conditions.

To find out more the RYA website has information and links: [www.rya.org.uk/newsevents/news/pages/killershrimpcontained.aspx](http://www.rya.org.uk/newsevents/news/pages/killershrimpcontained.aspx)

There is a link to an identification sheet at: <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/alerts/index.cfm?id=3>

Let's make sure no Miracles spread the problem.



# Miracle Association Committee

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<http://www.miracledinghy.org>

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# Miracle Association Committee

## Summary of minutes

Upton—17th March 2011

- **Dinghy Show 2012** at Alexander Palace a success with many visitors to the stand and Miracle 59 on Jack Holt 100th anniversary display in West Corridor.
- **Dinghy Show 2013:** To celebrate 40 years of the Miracle a larger stand is to be taken and more boats displayed.
- **Secretary:** Various correspondence re information on Miracle and future nationals , plus offers to run open meetings
- **Membership: Renewal forms** to be sent as separate mailing to ensure are seen.
- **Membership: Electronic payment** is still being explored, but is proving to be complicated/costly.
- **Membership: Database security** was considered and current procedures are considered adequate.
- **Measurement: Spinnaker pole uphaul and downhaul** - Amended wording of Clause 12 to allow control lines to run through the mast was accepted
- **Measurement: Laminated sails** - Use to be considered at AGM at Ullswater. Proposer, Dave Southwell, to be requested to provide more technical details on the materials proposed together with arguments for these material, for an article in July *Halo* to inform members prior to the AGM.
- **Finance:** The Association's finances are sound. In view of increased petrol costs a revised petrol allowance for committee members whilst on Association business was agreed.
- **Website:** The *Rules of the Association* are on the website included in a drop down list (home/about the miracle/miracle rules). An article on tuning is to be compiled. Articles on various topics to be in member's area.
- **Halo:** Articles always welcome.
- **Nationals at Ullswater:** Arrangements discussed, including possibility of a cruising/non-racing option which is to be explored. Race Officer to be asked to abandon races where the wind speed is less than 4 knots
- **Future Nationals:** Various venues were discussed. In particular Weymouth is to be pursued for 2013 and Rutland for 2015. Especial efforts are to be made to maximise publicity in 2013 as it is the Miracles 40th anniversary.
- **The Miracle in 2053:** A discussion document considering how to promote the Miracle for the next 40 years was considered and various options arose:
  - ◇ Compilation of a survey, which will be predominantly online with links to other websites, to reach existing and future sailors so they can provide their views on the boat.
  - ◇ Online videos of the Miracle.
  - ◇ Information published on all the various options available to those wishing to acquire a Miracle, eg. plans, kits, part build, etc.
  - ◇ The use of other sailing websites, eg *SailRacer*, *Marine Directory*, etc.Other ideas will be welcome
- **Secretary and Sailing Secretary:** Members to take on these roles are to be sought.
- **National Sprint Championship at N. Lincs:** A format of many short races (possibly 10 races of 20-30 minutes each, sailed in pairs), as an alternative to the usual open meeting format was accepted.

Copies of the full minutes of meetings are available from the Secretary on request.

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the  
Miracle Dinghy Class Association will be held at  
The Ullswater Yacht Club  
Howtown  
Pooley Bridge  
Cumbria. CA10 2NA

on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2011 at 7.30 pm

### Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Approval of Minutes of AGM held on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011 at The Mayflower Sailing Club, Plymouth
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman and Officers Reports
5. Treasurers Report
6. Proposals for changes to the Miracle Association Rules of the Association
7. Proposals for changes to the Miracle Association Rules of Measurement and Construction
8. Election of the Committee
9. Any Other Business

According to our Rules of Association any proposal for consideration at the AGM shall be proposed and seconded by full members and submitted to the Association Secretary no later than 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012