

COMMODORE'S REPORT 2023

Well what a year at EDYC!

With the Pandemic now, hopefully, a distant object in the rear-view mirror, a full calendar of events went ahead in 2023.

Starting with the Icicle Series early January right up to the children's Halloween Party at the end of October it was a busy year with hopefully something to suit club member of all ages and range of sailing experience.

This year saw the first of what will be a new annual series, the Impala / Sonata Open Event. Organised by John Patterson, it had some great competition with boats taking part from SLYC and EDYC. The Peel Race, one of the few events where boats head out into the Irish Sea, was unfortunately cancelled due to bad weather. The summer had more than its fair share of inclement weather and it was touch and go as to whether our Regatta would go ahead. It did, thanks to RO Keith Maxwell however, due to the weather, the field of boats from around the lough was greatly diminished. The Ardglass Race went ahead in much better conditions. The race included a cruise in company by the Leisure 17's who stayed overnight in Ardglass and returned home the following morning in a heavy mist.

Speaking of L17's, we now have a fantastic group of enthusiastic sailors led by Stephen Perry and Alan Jennings with an equally vibrant Whatsapp group. This group has now expanded to include other small sailing craft.

Training is always important with VHF (SRC) radio courses being held February and April with special sessions for female candidates. There was successful Day Skipper and Race Officer training, as well as some specific training for Leisure 17 owners. RYA Powerboat Level 2 courses were also a success. Tractor training, another important aspect, took place again this year and there were many other informal training achievements.

Our club's young sailors had a busy and successful year. There were many opportunities for training and racing with 58 involved in dinghy sailing and power boating over 6 Fridays. I would like to thank additional instructors, assistants, everyone who looked after the catering plus those who provided their own boats. Our young people had success in Wales, attended the Topper Worlds in Cork and took part in the Feva Northerns 2 day Regatta and the final leg of the youth series, both hosted at EDYC. Finally, several young sailors represented the club at the RYANI Youth Champs in September, with one gaining second girl in a Laser 4.7. I would like to thank them for all their hard work and also let all the youth sailors know how proud we are of each and every one of them for their dedication to sailing. Many thanks to the team who ensured everything ran smoothly including EDYC Principal Training Officer Gordon Reid, Vice Commodore Liam Kelly and Patrick Hamilton.

Then of course there was the International Wayfarer Event organised by John Miller. A week when Wayfarer sailors from many countries enjoyed the hospitality of EDYC and were blessed by a glorious week of sunshine (a rarity this year!) The feedback was fantastic and there was much praise for the friendliness and warmth of the club. "Keepers of the Lough" producers filmed the event and interviewed some of our younger members, later in the year, so look out for the next series due out in the new year.

I would like to thank Margie Crawford who, over the last few years has been our club ambassador, meeting and greeting new members. She puts time and effort into making those new members feel welcome and this is much appreciated. Margie also organised two very successful Ladies Cruises allowing ladies to try a different sailing experience and to encourage them to become more involved in water based activities.

One small but crucial group of volunteers are David Ward, David Maxwell and Alan Gilliland-Patterson. They can be found around the boat shed most Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. This year, without them, the Chevy wouldn't be working and neither would Daisy, the race marks wouldn't have been laid nor the committee boat launched and retrieved, rescue boats maintained etc. etc. So many vital jobs wouldn't be carried out without their work and the club is indebted to them.

EDYC is a volunteer club and most of you will, at one stage or another, helped at the club. Our club prides itself in the willingness of folks to get involved even if simply doing your bar duty. It's important to keep this ethos alive and I would like to thank each of you for any contribution you may have made.

Over the last couple of years the Committee, with the help of Hana Stolcova, drew up plans to modernise the ladies and gents changing rooms. It was hoped that a grant could be obtained to help finance this work. Unfortunately grants are in short supply at present and our hard work was unsuccessful. The decision was taken to go ahead with, what is, the long overdue modernisation of the ladies changing rooms. Work has been going on behind the scenes and I'm pleased to announce that the refurbishment will begin shortly with the intention that it is completed by the start of the new season.

The Hamilton Room, on the first floor, is a busy place on Wednesday nights after racing and is well used for events throughout the year. Like the Ladies Changing it is showing its age and in much need of a refresh. Plans, again drawn up by Hana, were displayed during the summer for comment and thank you to those who responded.

Graham Wright, Alan Wood, Peter Thompson and Hana have been working hard to bring the designs to life and again this is planned for completion before next season begins.

We really hope you are pleased with the final results however, in the meantime, we ask you to bear with us as the work is carried out.

With so much going on this year it's hard to mention every activity taking place such as the evening kayaking and sea swimming etc. however it's great to see folks out on and in! the water in whatever way they prefer to enjoy it.

Finally, work never stops and the Sailing Committee have already started planning next year's calendar. Over the winter months the Committee will carry out a huge amount of work to ensure there are plenty of racing and events for everyone to enjoy in '24. I'm looking forward to it already!

Keith Carr
EDYC Commodore 2023