

The last Newsletter ended with a reference to the health of the Club President, 'Bob' Jeffries, and this one needs must start, regrettably, with the announcement of his death on 15 October last. For the benefit of newer members, who neither met nor knew him, Bob, whose business career had been in radio, was involved in R/C sailing from an early stage, when 'on board' equipment weighed 12-15 lb., and the only Class big enough to carry it was the "Q" (later "RA"); he did much work on development of this side, publishing many articles and winch designs in the model press, and was the author of the first book on R/C Model Yachting, around 1970. Retirement had brought him to this area, and after some years with the "RA's" at Poole, he founded the New Forest Club to sail "RM's" at Setley, which expanded rapidly and made a name for itself before being driven away from Setley by the disastrous drought of 1976. After a year away, Bob opted to come back to Setley (which had refilled satisfactorily) and founded this Club, with an initial membership of 5! He was the first Commodore, was responsible for reaching an agreement with the local power boat enthusiasts and establishing the Scale Section, being elected Life President after a few years in recognition of his service. He supported each Class in turn and was always competitive in each; he continued to write for the model press, and his last article, on the 1-m Class, as the writer has reason to know, was the source of much interest in the Scale Section, and in both Sections, there is little doubt his presence and influence will be much missed.

Having had to start this, the last Newsletter of our eleventh year, in such a sad manner, it would have been pleasant to look at a brimming lake and the prospect of a good season ahead. Unfortunately, the level at Setley has not been so LOW at this time in our eleven years, and there can be little optimism, certainly where the RM's are concerned. So, just hope for some rain, however unpopular this may make you with wives and friends outside model yachting, and look around for a 36 if you don't already own one! However, a programme had to be drawn up, on the assumption of normal weather, so this programme accompanies the Newsletter, and sailing members will have to be informed of any changes as the season progresses.

Looking at the Programme, the first major event of the Season will be the Easter Trophy on Sunday 26 March, for which it is to be hoped there will be enough water for a satisfactory race to be held, AND that we shall have a bumper turn-out; this is a quite magnificent Trophy, and deserves the Club's best effort. The other change perhaps worthy of comment is the inclusion of Tuesday am. racing for the 1-metre Class, alternating Tuesdays with the 36's, and further Club action will depend on the support given. An 'Open' event is scheduled for this Class on 23 April, but we were a little late applying for an Official MYA 'date' so there may not be much outside support.

Having mentioned the 1-m Class, this might be the time to bring this situation up to date. At its AGM in December last, the MYA gave its general blessing to A 1-m class, and indicated that if there is sufficient support in the country, it will adopt the IMYRU version: however, appreciating the current situation, it appointed a Registrar (Mike Kemp) with instructions to start a Register, issuing numbers for MYA racing needs, and accepting boats built to AMYA and NAVIGA Rules, as well as IMYRU boats, on the understanding that those boats will be modified to fit the IMYRU Rule within 3 years. Since that meeting, the IMYRU have again modified their Rule so that it will now embrace, in linear measurements, the other two Rules. One the face of it a sensible solution. However, there is one snag ... the word "Draft" rather than fin length. "Opinion has been taken" as they say, - Chairman IMYRU and Chief Measurer of MYA - and this is to the effect that the boats will HAVE to be measured afloat, in a tank, so this Club, among many of the newer Clubs in the country, must decide how to overcome this problem BEFORE adopting IMYRU Class. We have the 3 years' grace for our 'outsider' boats, but IMYRU boats will need this measurement certified before a certificate can be obtained from the beginning, so this is mentioned here in view of the approaching Club AGM, when members might wish to express views. Interest in the Class continues to grow, and there are almost 20 boats, built or building, in the Club; latest to be launched has been a 'Mini-Cedar' built most beautifully in Cedar, by

our Trusty Mr McThrifty himself, from whom we would, naturally, expect such precise and detailed workmanship; I don't know whether this will put off, or inspire, intending builders in wood, but this they MUST see! For further encouragement of the inspiration, Eric Shaw has obtained the lines of Graham Bantock's latest 1-m design, which are available for members' inspection; this is a round-bilge design, for wooden construction; looks very different from the current 1-m designs, and, with that pedigree, should be very fast. Graham is also supplying cedar planks, and is also producing very good, laminated, fin and rudder materials, which are being stocked by Tony Abel, who we have much pleasure in introducing to our Club ranks. In addition to the 1-m, Graham is also producing a new 36 design, and an order has been placed for an early copy, news of which will be circulated as soon as available, in view of our urgent need of some new 36's. (Incidentally, Tony himself is working on a very promising looking new RM, which should interest members ... should the monsoon break ...)

There isn't a lot of Club activity to report ... in fact, the lack of activity, particularly on Sundays, is rather worrying, and something the new Committee might like to consider. Vic Ward has similar concern over the Scale Section. A dry, bright, mild Sunday afternoon with a good sailing breeze, and only one Club boat sailing seems far from satisfactory, and one hopes we are not becoming a purely racing Club ... However, we did manage to run the "Frostbite" event, at the first time of asking, thanks to this very mild winter, and there could be no grumbles at an entry of 14 - and this with three of our 'big race regulars' not available. Light, fluky winds, and minimal possible depth of water made racing somewhat 'chancy' - and there were several cases of 'hard-luck-stories' but everyone seemed happy with their day at the end, perhaps mollified by the mildness of the weather! The Trophy went to Chris Thomas, deservedly, with the most unlikely-looking light weather boat in the fleet, with Walter Newton two points behind, in second place, and Jack Fry third; Tim Baker was fourth, with his beautifully built wooden boat, so we had four very different designs at the top, showing the competitiveness of them all ... and, again, the importance of that 'knot on the end of the tiller!' The only other Club function that will have taken place by the time you read this is the Exhibition, at the Highcliffe Community Centre, of the Scale Section's boats; with more space available, and an ever growing Scale Section membership, we look forward to an even better display than last year, and it is to be hoped the Sailing Section will show their support. Incidentally an odd coincidence has arisen over one of the scale models, and its builder; Charles Somerville, in a magazine article describing the building of his model of HMS "Wild Goose" revealed that he had served in the actual ship during World War 2, as, it happens, also did our visiting sail member from the Medway, Cyril Gould! Their respective service in her were divided by a month, but doubtless they would share many memories of the ship and her successful anti-sub Group.

Scale Membership, by the way, is now 21, with Sail Membership at 63, with one or two more to add to this list after the AGM, which can be no bad way to finish the year, the more so with a highly satisfactory financial position, this latter being such that, other than the necessary increase of £1 in MYA Affiliation fee, no increase in sub is needed for yet another year!

Which statement leads directly to the next major item on the Club's programme, the AGM, to be held early in April, Notice and Agenda for which should accompany this letter. Once again, perhaps even more earnestly than before, a really good turn out is sought; much has been achieved in the past eleven years, but the one facing us now could be the most difficult yet; the new Committee will need the co-operation, support and ideas of all members, and a good attendance at the meeting can assure it of these things. Most of the members of the present Committee have expressed their willingness to serve again, but the Committee has to be elected, so other nominations are sought. The main difference must be in