

# Horsham Life Saving Club Annual Report 2011

## Introduction and General Statements

As the measure of what the club has achieved over the last year we usually look at the total number of RLSS exams club members have succeeded in passing but, as we shall see, this is only half the story, for in this year's summary I have included information about how many of those passes have also qualified the candidates for passes in their GCSE PE and in many cases various elements of their Duke of Edinburgh Awards as well.

The attached summary of awards will, as you can see, make comparison with 2010, the only thing missing from last year's totals is the number of GCSE and D of E related passes as that information wasn't collated. I thought it was about time it was because a lot of work has gone into these achievements by both members and teachers. Number were up across most categories – Total 2011 ex GCSE & D of E = 159 against 2010 = 124

You will also see a significant increase in the number of NRAFT&C exams (National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches). We ran our usual internal course for younger members who wished then to go on and assist with teaching in the club and some of these have carried those lifesaving qualifications into other swimming teaching or coaching activities. We were also joined by two Nursery School teachers who have a pool at their disposal and needed to qualify. However, a significant number of this year's passes are by Swimming Teachers employed at The Pavilions. We were invited to run courses for new teachers or refresher courses for re-qualification outside club hours and these were tutored by Bryan Lopez whilst the examinations were shared by 3 Club Lifesaving Trainer Assessors.

Another external Water Safety course for very young people again featured in our work beyond the pool whilst at Southwater Lake we were pleased to embrace people from other clubs and organisations in the courses.

All in all we had a record year for passes. In no other previous year since the club was formed have we managed to achieve so many successful RLSS lifesaving qualifications and our collective thanks go to all those who contributed either by teaching or examining. In future we can also look forward to measuring how this impacts with GCSE PE and D of E. These two outlets increase in importance to us as most of our new members join us for that reason rather than simply because they want to learn survival and rescue skills for their own sake. As a result some of these members are short term and not on-going which means that we need additions to help us pay our way and cover pool hire.

With the retrenchment of numbers of D of E personnel this means that the message that we are available to facilitate sections of the awards is spread ever more thinly and Secondary School PE teachers are seemingly reluctant to motivate their pupils to look at lifesaving as one of the GCSE PE or indeed D of E options.

The credit squeeze has affected us and some parents of members struggle to find the finance to cover exam and pool hire fees whilst we have lost a number of potential members when the financial outlay is known. Disappointing when you realise that the charge we make for providing 2 hours tuition a week by volunteer teachers plus the hire of the facility works out to the princely sum of £2.46p each Thursday. Pretty good value I'd say!

Our own internal competitions were well contested and we had an increased number of participants in the Sussex Branch competitions all of whom qualified for the S E Region Competition. 3 members qualified there for the National Finals in Sheffield although only 2 were available to participate. Those that did both gained places as you will see. Well done the oldies!



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Thanks are due to Horsham Lions who kindly donated most of the funds to enable us to purchase two new submersible manikins that will be of great assistance to us when the new awards, launched as part of the Survive and Save, gain momentum. More of this later. Meantime we have entered a team of 6 in the Lions Swimarathon sponsored swim in February (we'll be towing partners not just swimming!). The proceeds of the sponsorship will be shared 50/50 with the Lions, their proceeds from the whole Swimarathon are being allocated to provide defibrillators to each of the areas Secondary schools, Tanbridge, Millais and Forest. Many of our members attend these schools and thus we have a double interest in the event being successful.

Our application to the RNLI who were offering financial help to RLSS connections unfortunately failed to succeed.

Our finances continue to give cause for concern as, with the present membership, our income each quarter is insufficient to meet pool hire costs. The Committee have agreed to run with the existing quarterly fee of £32.00 until the April/July 2012 quarter in the hope that we can secure additional members in the post Christmas period. Efforts to secure new members by offering a cash prize to the member who introduced the most new members, failed to deliver minimum overall numbers set. If new members are not forthcoming we will need to consider either raising the quarterly fee or reducing the water space we use. Meantime, the Committee has opted to retain the current level of annual membership subscription despite the RLSS proportion being increased by HQ.

In March the club purchased 4 infant manikins with a view to 2 Club LSTA's undertaking a series of modest cost Baby Save mini workshops for young mothers utilising day facilities at The Pavilions. We were unable to get the go-ahead for this very quickly and as a result nothing was put in place this year to offset the £450 these cost us. However a firm first date is now in place for a 2 hour workshop on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Maximum places 12, so if you know anyone, old or young who is interested, contact David soon.

Initial indications point to the club running at a loss of about £500 this year, partly due to the purchase of the baby manikins but it is the imbalance between income and expenditure on the pool hire that we need to address and resolve. Annual membership of the club and the RLSS ensures we are all embraced within the RLSS Insurance arrangements for public/personal liability and personal accident.

Accidents can and do happen as we sadly found out this year when one of our members sustained a very bad injury to his leg when a poolside grating on which he stepped, collapsed and he fell into the hole. This necessitated hospitalization and a skin graft. No fault for this lays with the club and indeed club members reacted and dealt with the immediate first aid issues in an exemplary fashion.

We understand however that there may be legal actions pending so nothing more must be said here.

Members make very good use of the club 'closed group' Facebook facility and, despite normal e-mail contact, Facebook seems to be a more effective means of getting reminders out to those who need reminding about exams, times etc. In between times our periodic newsletters in their great new format, designed by member Lee Wright, has proved more than worthwhile in keeping members and other people with an interest in the club, in the picture.

## The Details

### **Lifesaving, Life Support and other qualifications ex open water.**

We continue to deliver a good number of Distinctions, the highest and most exacting current practical lifesaving exam embracing life support at a high level, pool tests and open water test at Southwater County Park. We also have a number of candidates working hard to achieve this in the early New Year. Awards of Merit and Bronze Medallions were well up. Basic life support was down as a number of the candidates took the test at the tail end of last year and their BM early this year. NRAST&C has already been mentioned – 27 in total of which 13 were

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Swimming Teachers at The Pavilions. Another internal class is scheduled in January/February 2012 for those now aged 16.

There were 6 youngsters who took their GCSE PE exams with us and they and others used it mainly for their 'Skills' section of their Duke of Edinburgh Award although some older ones used this for their 'Service' section.

Mention needs to be made of the impact that one member drawing in friends to make up a class can have. Natasha Mays' efforts before she went off to University contributed significantly in increasing the number of awards taken and assisted in no small measure in enabling us to keep quarterly fees in check and pay our way in pool hire through the year. Despite Tasha going to Uni in September, all but one of her class remain with us tackling the higher awards and in some cases now helping with the teaching.

Three further members successfully gained their Assistant teachers qualification and we are hopeful that the new syllabus launched as 'Survive and Save' in 2012 will be added incentive to others to remain involved and possibly add teaching and leadership to their list of skills honed at Horsham Life Saving Club.

## Open Water activities

Open Water activity at Southwater Lake took place between 1<sup>st</sup> week of June and 1st week in September. Until the schools broke up for summer holidays we also went from the lake to the pool and thereafter we were just at the lake. Attendance at the lake is always patchy due to school exams and of course, summer holidays and the vagaries of the weather but the average attendance was 13.

However, our main stream members excelled themselves this year successfully passing 13 Bronze Cross and 19 Silver Cross exams. There was a bit of a foul up with the sending out of the medals from HQ as some were sent direct, which made it difficult to track all had been delivered whilst two letters with cloth badges were received direct with no medals enclosed! Rather a lot of time consuming follow up needed at this end.

We ran a one day course for those wanting to take or retake the Emergency Response Activity Supervisors' qualification. At least one person with this qualification is always 'in command' at any of our open water sessions as well as a rescue ski being in close proximity to anyone in the water. 12 people qualified and this included 2 people from Crawley Town LSC.

Our trainers undertook 39 hours tuition at Southwater this year and our thanks are due to them for this additional work and indeed to them for transporting our skis and all the kit back and forth and washing it each week. Sadly the state of the changing facilities and showers left much to be desired this year and showering afterwards is vital when members have been in the lake. Additionally, in the course of the summer holiday period both John Stainer and Robin Akers were involved in taking a group from 'Aquafins' through some open water safety related activities.

6 of our older, experienced members acted as 'safety cover' in conjunction with Southwater Water Sports at the annual Triathlon Relay Competition on the first Sunday in September at Southwater Lake when some 40 plus teams of 3 were competing - so it was a rather busy morning. That concluded our very busy open water season for 2011.

## Trainers, Assessors and Outreach.

Our **4 trainer/assessors** have been very busy in consequence of the volume of exams both at the Pavilions, Southwater and elsewhere all of which they do on a voluntary basis and for this we, and indeed the Society, continue to be grateful.



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We were **at The Pavilions** for 42 weeks (84 hours split 50% dry 50% wet time) and our **average attendance was 24**. During this period our trainers and assistant teachers delivered some **480 hours of voluntary tuition** to members. No mean achievement by any measure and thanks are due to everyone who helped. We also had a day stand at The Pavilions which sadly attracted but one enquiry all day.

Mention has already been made of the work with 'Aquafins' but in addition David Slade again ran 2 CPR/Water Safety sessions with a local 'Pilots' group from St Andrew's URC in Rustington and they all had their Water Safety certificates signed off. We have also facilitated the NRAST&C courses for The Pavilions Swimming Teachers, the Nursery School Teachers previously mentioned and a panic-stricken teenager who needed the Bronze Medallion award for Camp America employment and dragged her mum along to casualty for her during a 4 week crash course! A parent at the pool – now there's a novelty!

We had a full day manning (6 members worked shifts from 9.30am until 6.00pm) a display stand at the Zoggs Event Day held at The Pavilions on 11<sup>th</sup> December and a number of useful enquiries emanated from this with a start being made for takers on the first Baby Save course we are running in February.

## Competitions (Full details of the club results on separate attachment)

### Sussex Branch Competitions:-

Senior Girls – Scarlet Taylor-Waller and Ellie Brown – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

Masters – Ladies 30-39 yrs Kate Hall, Men 50-59 yrs Robin Akers and David Slade 60+ yrs.

All qualified to represent Sussex in the South East Region Competition for National Finals places.

### South East Regional Competition:-

Scarlet and Ellie didn't compete as Scarlet was ill.

Masters as above. Kate Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Robin Akers 1<sup>st</sup> place, David Slade 1<sup>st</sup> place.

### National Finals in Sheffield:-

David couldn't compete due to another pre-arranged commitment.

Kate – 2<sup>nd</sup> Life Support Incident and 6<sup>th</sup> Overall

Robin – 3<sup>rd</sup> Life Support Incident and 5<sup>th</sup> Overall

**Officials/ Casualties:-** A number of our members acted in these roles at Branch, Region & inter-club.

### Club Competitions:-

These are run over the last 3 weeks in November and thus the recently joined members were literally 'in at the deep end'! However they all did extremely well, in one case exceptionally so. Well done Joe Harrod! We operated a new format this year thus allowing for both a dry and an aquatic incident on week 3 and a streamlined set piece program over the first 2 weeks. This allowed (stupid me!) David to get conned into competing in the Set Piece as we'd finished the main bulk in good time. As he had set the incident tests he didn't participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week! - except as an official. Thanks are due to John Stainer, Trudi Peel, Andrew Slade and Bryan Lopez who acted as judges, 'returned members' and others who acted as casualties and not forgetting spouses who assisted with stewarding the competitors.

**Overall Aggregate Champion – Robin Akers 168.5**

2<sup>nd</sup> - Ciaran Fitzgerald 161

3<sup>rd</sup> - Lee Wright 161 (placing dictated by Incident results)

### Set Piece Event:-

Teachers 1<sup>st</sup> David Slade 122 2<sup>nd</sup> Lee Wright 117 3<sup>rd</sup> Robin Akers 116.5

Men 1<sup>st</sup> Joe Harrod 106.5 2<sup>nd</sup> Duncan Smith 101.5 3<sup>rd</sup> Felix Close 97.5

Ladies 1<sup>st</sup> Harriet Boyle 86.5 2<sup>nd</sup> Ellie Brown 75 3<sup>rd</sup> Freddie Hayes-Coles 74

Novices 1<sup>st</sup> Joe Harrod 106.5 2<sup>nd</sup> Edward Kear 76 3<sup>rd</sup> Joe Wright 74

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## Incident Event:-

Teachers 1<sup>st</sup> Robin Akers 52 2<sup>nd</sup> Ciaran Fitzgerald 47 3<sup>rd</sup> Lee Wright 44  
Men 1<sup>st</sup> Toby Miles 27.5 2<sup>nd</sup> Edward Kear 27.5 3<sup>rd</sup> Felix Close 27.5  
Ladies 1<sup>st</sup> Ellie Brown 29 2<sup>nd</sup> Freddie Hayes-Coles 28.5 3<sup>rd</sup> Emily Heather 25  
Novices 1<sup>st</sup> Edward Kear 27.5 2<sup>nd</sup> Joe Harrod 24.5 3<sup>rd</sup> Daryl Williams-Cass 13.5

## Novices Rope Throw Event:-

1<sup>st</sup> Joe Harrod 37 2<sup>nd</sup> Natasha Godfrey 28 3<sup>rd</sup> Joe Wright 22

## National Recognition

We were delighted that the ongoing contribution of the following members to the work of the RLSS was recognised in the **National Honours awards for 2011:-**

<b>Natasha Mays</b>	<b>Certificate of Merit</b>	<b>Lee Wright</b>	<b>Certificate of Merit</b>
<b>Ciaran Fitzgerald</b>	<b>Certificate of Thanks</b>	<b>Bryan Lopez</b>	<b>Certificate of Thanks</b>
<b>Ana-Maria Braddock</b>	<b>Certificate of Thanks</b>	<b>Robin Akers</b>	<b>Certificate of Thanks</b>

Natasha, Lee and Ciaran were able to be present at the London Guildhall for their presentations by Lord Norrie the RLSS UK Patron and Dr. Claus Wilkens, President of the German Lifesaving Society and President of International Lifesaving Europe. Sadly both Bryan and Ana were ill on the day and could not attend.

**Mary and Paul Braddock** who have acted as our Treasurer and her 'helper' for the last 4 years were awarded **Friends of the Society Certificates**.

All of these awards will be (re)presented by Stuart Bailey the UK National President at our Annual Presentation Evening in January 2012.

**John Stainer**, one of our founder members who is now an Honorary Club Member, was presented with the **Wilkinson Sword** at the National Lifesaving National Finals in recognition of his many years of service to competitive lifesaving as an official.

## The Survive and Save Program

A completely new program of training and awards will be introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 and to allow for those already in the system, the existing awards may continue to be taken until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012. Those wishing to migrate to the new system can do so at Bronze or Silver level. Survive and Save will have 4 strands: Lifesaving, Beach, Still Water and Sport; each of which has 3 levels, Bronze, Silver and Gold with a medallion award for each and each level has a core level which must be completed before the medallions are taken. To obtain the Distinction in future, members will need to take at least one strand at each of the Bronze and Silver Medallion levels and then 3 of the 4 strands at Gold.

There is no separate exam for Distinction. If you've done the requisite B,S & G Medallion(s) you'll have earned the Distinction. Take my word for it! There are some tough tests in there, especially in the Lifesaving Sport schedule.

The club will be moving towards transferring existing and new members throughout the year but the current Bronze Medallion classes will complete their original syllabus to Bronze Medallion level as will those scheduled for higher awards in the near future. The introduction of the new system is very welcome and will offer members much more to maintain interest and, who knows, we may get people joining simply to participate rather than as a vehicle for activity qualifications. As the new scheme is to only be delivered by fully qualified teachers a determined effort to upgrade our current Assistant Teachers and provide the means of bringing new people on stream will be an additional challenge in itself.

Our existing 4 LSTA's have all completed the requisite on line test to re-qualify so, we're at the starting gate in time for launch on that score. The only immediate concern is the one of additional equipment being needed and the considerable additional costs both for this equipment and for the exams at a time when we are struggling to get/keep members due to existing costs. This year we will also have to bear the expense of writing off obsolete books

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and packs. We will have to see how things pan out but we've a tough time ahead on the finance front.

## The Endeavour Cup.

This cup is awarded, not necessarily for any specific achievement, but usually to someone who, during the year, has perhaps shown exceptional commitment either by what they have achieved through sheer hard graft, perhaps through consistently 'being there' to act as a casualty, or undertaking something exceptional to assist the club.

The recipient this year is a young lady who has been a conscientious attendee at both The Pavilions and Southwater Lake despite the fact that she has had to wait an inordinately long time to reach the minimum age enabling her to be examined for the Bronze Medallion and was for the same reason, not old enough to be examined for any of the open water awards. Despite this, she was almost always present and as such was called upon on an extraordinary number of times to act as a casualty for other members being examined and this of course allowed further members to continue their own training without the distraction of being a 'body tonight'. All this was done without the slightest complaint and she is an example to everyone of what being a 'club member' means. The award this year goes to Emily Heather.

## Club Member of the Year

The Committee decided 2 years ago that voting for this award should be carried out on the night of the Presentation Evening from a short list as, by so doing, more members would have the opportunity to cast their vote and those newer members of the club would have some guide-line from which to vote. Before then there were always absentees due to other commitments in the week preceding the Christmas break when traditionally votes were cast and the October intake would know little of what had gone before. Last year this arrangement was hijacked!

Due to some skulduggery on the part of our Hon. Life Member, John Stainer, with the co-operation of other members, the short list was added to and shortened to one! - 'voting' proving in favour of and to the embarrassment of the Club Chairman David Slade.

Normal service is now resumed and voting took place on Presentation Evening and Robin Akers was declared to be the Club Member of the Year.

His nomination read:-

'A Committee Member who has consistently been at pool & lake & been actively involved in assisting in training the higher awards. Also transported ski's to & from the lake & provided winter housing. He has competed in the SE Region and National LS Competitions coming 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Life Support Initiative event & 6<sup>th</sup> overall in his Masters Age Group'

## Annual Presentation Evening

The 2011 Presentation Evening took place at the URC Church Hall, Springfield Road, Horsham on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2012 and our Guests of Honour were Stuart Bailey, RLSS UK National President and Cllr. Claire Vickers, Chairman Horsham District Council. We were also joined by Natalie Sharma-Pearl, Director of Community Services at HDC; Deryck Wright, President of Horsham Lions; John Stainer, Honorary Club Member and Chairman of RLSS South East Region and Tim Bolton from The Pavilions.

The £67.00 raised from this years raffle will be allocated to the sponsor monies raised in supporting the Horsham Lions Swimathon. There was also a demonstration interlude of 1930's Land Drill as well as a display of RLSS memorabilia from the Chairman's collection.

## Social Activities

Most of this seems to take place each week before we start and indeed at the beginning of the dry training hour - usually whilst the Chairman is trying to give out the weeks' notices! All this despite the on-going daily exchange on the club Facebook wall. The usual 'Fun Night' took place on our last swim night in 2011. Silly games and even more complicated than usual quizzes were undertaken. In the wet session some extra-ordinary rescue races took place



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partly involving air crash survivors on uninhabited islands, time bombs, sharks and rubber bricks and far too many 'non-swimmers'!

The summer B-B-Q at Southwater Lake at the end of July after one of the training sessions was well attended whilst the committee and teachers met for their usual Easter and Christmas meals at local restaurants.

## Conclusion

In conclusion I wish to thank all those who have helped to make this year probably our best ever but, in particular, thanks to the regularly attending Committee members and the Teachers.

Now that our Treasurers' daughter, Ana, has left to go off to University we are actively seeking a parent to take on the role of Club Treasurer so if you have some experience in book keeping and feel able to contribute, please speak to David before the AGM in February.

We need, as always, to ask that everyone tries very hard to put the word round that new members are still needed for us to remain financially viable. Word of mouth has always been our best way of attracting new members – we have something valuable to offer and with the introduction of the Survive and Save Program we have a great new incentive - so let's spread the word!

**David Slade.**  
**Chairman. January 2012.**



**Kate Hall & Robin Akers**  
**National Life Saving Competition**



**Safety Cover Team - The Annual**  
**Triathlon Relay Race at Southwater**



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