

Horsham Life Saving Club Annual Report 2012

Introduction and General Statements.

Well, to say it's been a funny old year would be something of an understatement. We've seen the demise of the Heritage Awards - the format of senior awards that has been in use roughly since 1891 with variations along the way – and the introduction of the Survive and Save program - a completely new range of skills to be taught, learned and examined. In this there is a much greater emphasis placed upon personal safety than was perhaps obvious in the Heritage syllabus, albeit it was always present.

The new syllabus embraces 4 distinct strands – Pool Lifesaving, Stillwater Lifesaving, Beach Lifesaving and Sport Lifesaving - in which there are bronze, silver and gold standards and to achieve the Distinction it is necessary to achieve gold standard in 3 of the strands, all within a 2 year time scale.

We as a club didn't really get stuck into much of the new syllabus until after the summer as there were existing classes and members training to 'finish off' under the Heritage syllabus. The usual time for our main new class intake is always September/October and it was those who joined us then who kicked off the program at Pool Lifesaving Bronze Medallion level. Existing already qualified members have switched to the new syllabus at Lifesaving Silver level.

All awards have as a pre-requisite a current basic life support qualification (CPR, Choking, Bleeding, Shock etc) and only then can the tests for any of the Survive & Save program be taken. Each of Bronze, Silver and Gold levels also have as a pre-requisite Bronze, Silver or Gold Core and when these have been passed the detailed syllabus can be pursued at the appropriate level. Followed all that so far? So, what has it meant for us as a club? Well firstly the number of awards successfully taken this year is well down on last year. This was anticipated as you will see from what follows, albeit unwelcome.

Under the new Survive and Save program only fully qualified teachers are permitted to deliver the training but once qualified they are also permitted to examine their own classes should they chose to do so rather than get an independent moderation. All four of our existing qualified teachers (what were called Trainer/Assessors – David, John, Kate & Bryan) had to re-qualify before we could kick off and of course had to purchase, and swot up on, and be examined on the necessary support material (the Instructors Manual could keep a pretty hefty door open in a high wind!) and those who had an Assistant Teachers qualification or wished to start teaching needed to attend and pay for a 2 day course and secure their copy of the doorstop.

Existing members and the new class needed to purchase their own S & S candidate pack (which embraced the cost of the first exam at bronze or silver level). And guess what? The new syllabus also requires additional training kit, submersible manikins, obstacle gates, fins and places to store these. All these things cost money and much effort has been made by the Club to raise funds for a start to be made in securing at least the manuals, packs and basic 'kit' needs for the levels we are currently working on. Reference to where funds came from can be found later in this report.

As far as the manuals and candidate packs are concerned, the club had to fund these up front to secure an 'early-bird' discount and fund raising has in part, but only in part, contributed to allowing us to provide existing club members with the material at a subsidised cost. The initial outlay was however over £1,000. The additional basic 'kit' acquisition saw a further significant sum of around £500 being laid out.

The number of new members joining us continues to dwindle. I have reported on this in successive reports and we still struggle to attract additional members, partly due to the cost,



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the pressure of other school course work and activities and having to stand in the queue with so many other opportunities and attractions. We then struggle to retain many once the basic Bronze Medallion was secured as this satisfies which ever of Duke of Edinburgh or GCSE PE was the reason for joining in the first place.

With the present membership numbers we are running at a loss of £200 per quarter on pool hire costs. Some donations and sponsorships have allowed us to subsidise the quarterly fees which fund the pool hire and this was in an attempt, thus far not delivering, to keep costs down and thus encourage more to join. Just how much reserves have dwindled after taking account of the donations and fund raising we will see when the annual accounts are produced. However, reserves serve no purpose unless they are used to teach survive and save skills – but when they are gone, they are gone – so a way forward has to be found.

It remains to be seen as to whether the new Survive and Save syllabus will generate an increase in interest and participation. Certainly, to achieve the new higher awards and in particular in the Lifesaving Sport strand, it will require a different, fitter, more competent swimmer than has possibly been the case in the past when those who have come to us have generally speaking been in the form of the non club or 'average' swimming club person. New adult members continue to be as rare as hen's teeth.

Meantime, the club teachers continue to give of their considerable time and effort to provide an enjoyable club environment in which important skills are taught which one day may save the life of the erstwhile member or someone they see in difficulty in the water and/or who has stopped breathing. I just wish there were more people wanting those skills from us as those who do join us seem to enjoy what they do.

The Details

Lifesaving, Life Support and other qualifications ex open water.

The figures on the accompanying summary of awards show the range of qualifications gained. You will see there were 109 in total. Last year, 2011, was an exceptionally good one – 164 - and we must not be too disappointed with 2012's results. The Bronze Medallion class of 2011/12 all successfully passed their basic Life Support and Bronze Medallion but sadly only one of this class elected to continue beyond that level. Frequently, the pressures of college and school course work are simply too much to allow time for too many 'outside' activities or, our higher qualifications/awards. In addition the demands of the new higher levels in the S & S syllabus have been given as a reason for non continuation. We have to accept that the level of swimming ability of most of our joiners is 'adequate' not 'exceptional' and most of these would normally gravitate towards us for D of E and GCSE PE achievement before moving on to something else. Take your pick.

Those that do stay make really good progress particularly in developing their inter-personnel skills and especially their organisational ability when they get into NRAFT&C (National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches) and Lifesaving Instructor. This is when those of us who are long term members really get great satisfaction – seeing the slightly shy and introvert individual who is afraid to shout at a 'casualty' in the water who becomes a more confident, knowledgeable, young person.

You will see our volunteer instructors/examiners again provided a course and (re)qualification facility for a number of Swimming Teachers employed at The Pavilions. With Bryan Lopez's qualification as a First Aid Trainer/Assessor we hope to be able to capitalize further on this part of what we offer but note he has also become a Rookie Lifeguard instructor at The Weald in Billingshurst. We are hoping that this may be the springboard for some 'graduate' Rookies to gravitate towards higher awards with us. Thus far, this hasn't happened. It's a long time since we had anyone from The Weald School join the club so any such appearance would be greatly welcomed.

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We ran our usual internal National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches Course which is a good stepping stone to those wishing to teach within the club or indeed have lifesaving skills to supplement pool-side teaching/coaching in one of the swimming clubs here or at perhaps University.

Open Water activities.

Yes, well the dreadful weather didn't help attendances it must be said. We train at Southwater from June through to the end of August – June and July until schools break up at the lake and go to the pool afterwards, and then during school holidays at the lake only. On a couple of occasions only the teachers turned up at the lake which made for a wasted frustrating evening.

The Heritage Bronze and Silver Cross Open Water number of exam passes were very disappointing mainly due to the exodus of the 2011/2012 Bronze Medallion Class. Most of these started coming to the lake after obtaining their pool qualifications and then gave up before examination. Two of the class did however complete before leaving whilst another was below the minimum age to take the exams.

We ran a one day Emergency Response Activity Supervisor Course thus qualifying people act as the nominated supervisor for each open water activity we undertake and also should they be asked to supervise a open water event for another organisation – for example a Scout or Guide Camp open water swimming excursion. As with all RLSS qualifications, each has a 24 month period of validity and thus re-takes form part of our program.

We couldn't get stuck in to the Stillwater S & S program as our teachers had yet to re-qualify and no one had achieved any of the core levels to enable the training and exams to take place, albeit some skills were 'test run'. The average Thursday training attendance at the lake was 8 and some 30 hours tuition was provided.

Five members again acted as 'Safety Cover' for the swim elements of the Annual Southwater Triathlon Relay in September and there were no incidents to report thankfully although there were one or two very weak (or bewildered) people in the latter legs that needed careful 'shepherding'.

Trainers, Assessors and Outreach.

We were at The Pavilions for 40 weeks (80 hours split 50% dry 50% wet time) and our average attendance was 20. During this period our trainers and assistant teachers delivered some 432 hours of voluntary tuition to members. Our 4 Assessors in the Club have all contributed in the exam program – over 100 exams being assessed in our club - and elsewhere in other clubs or organisations - and we thank them for continuing to giving up their and for their patience.

We included some members of other clubs in our Open Water program and in the NRAFT&C qualification.

David Slade ran his usual Water Safety teach-in at St Andrews Pilots Youth Club in Rustington and 8 youngsters received the Water Safety Certificate. In addition David and Kate Hall ran a our first 'Baby Save' morning course at The Pavilions at which 10 expectant parent(s) or parent(s) with new babies attended and received instruction in paediatric CPR along with a copy of the appropriate video and pamphlet. Sadly a 2nd course had to be cancelled due to insufficient numbers but we hope to run another in 2013 and schedule it for an evening as a day-time attendance appears to present more problems than it solves.

Finance

As mentioned in the leader paragraph we continue to be concerned about our ability to continue to function particularly with the numbers of people seeking courses and the outlay necessary to support pool hire, candidate pack, exam costs and secure new equipment to facilitate the training and examining of the new S & S program. Lack of numbers is in part due to costs of joining given there are significant pressures on parental finances. To this end we sought and secured some donations to enable us to modify and, in one or two particularly

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severe cases, subsidise youngsters rather than see them drop out from something they clearly enjoyed doing.

In this respect we wish to acknowledge the donations made by the parents of Tasha & Alex Mays, Ellie Brown and Freddie Hayes-Coles as these covered the cost of pool hire for about 3 weeks. In addition we secured donations from the Richard Colyer Lodge of Freemasons, Hall and Woodhouse Brewery, Waitrose via their Green Disc initiative and Barclays Bank via their matching facility which flowed from our efforts in the Horsham Lions Swimathon. In this latter we retained 50% of the £764 sponsorship money raised whilst 50% went to their efforts to fund defibrillators for each of the Senior Schools in Horsham. A certificate was presented to us by the Lions marking our contribution. We are hoping to have another team participate in their 2013 Swimathon and this will again enable us to subsidise some of our costs but will need support from our members either in swimming – we tow people on each length – or in obtaining sponsors.

Some of these other sources may be willing to help us again in 2013 eg Waitrose, and we have an application in the pipeline with Saxon Weald Developments which we hope to hear about in February. We must however bear in mind that we cannot keep hoping for help from the same sources and our best plan is to self fund by increasing membership. Without all the help we've had we would have struggled in 2012 so our thanks are due to all those who assisted. Meantime our Treasurer has provided this thumb-nail sketch of the position as at December 2012 but before the accounts are audited.

'The year has ended with approximately £100 less in the bank than when we started the year but this doesn't tell the true story of the year. As mentioned earlier we have been fortunate to obtain donations which have kept the club going and enabled us to embark on the Survive and Save program. This totalled over £2,000.

The pool hire currently costs us about £75 per week and when combined with membership fees to the Club and RLSS we made a loss about £100 over our income from members for membership and quarterly fees. Our main expenditure has been related to the introduction Survive and Save program with purchase of equipment, Candidate packs, Instructor manuals and training courses for Instructors amounting to £1,785.'

Membership

I have already mentioned the numbers concern in other parts of this report. Mindful that many of our new members do not continue past the Lifesaving Bronze Medallion stage, we are examining the question of whether it is essential for each new class member to become a full member of the RLSS which is the course we currently adopt. Basic insurance cover for members is part and parcel of the Club's Annual Membership of the RLSS. Wider cover to include personal accident cover is a benefit of individual membership and, for some higher awards, a lower examination fee, as well as receipt of a quarterly Magazine. There is no reduced exam fee benefit for any of the S & S exams.

There is a much greater need, and in some cases an obligation, to be a full RLSS member for those involved in teaching, in open water activities and in competing. So, perhaps in an effort to make joining a course more financially attractive, a full membership might be obligatory only if continuing beyond basic lifesaving bronze medallion level. Your comments would be welcome.

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

Sussex Branch Competitions:-

Masters – Ladies 30-39 yrs - Kate Hall and David Slade - 60+ yrs.

Both qualified to represent Sussex in the South East Region Competition. Sadly no other club members competed this year and we particularly missed having Robin Akers on board but family duties took precedence.



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South East Regional Competition:-
Masters as above.
Kate Hall 2nd place, David Slade 1st place.

National Finals in Sheffield:-
Masters as above:-
Kate Hall - Overall 7th
Individual Sections:- Swim & Tow 7th; Line Rescue = 6th
Life Support Initiative 4th; Aquatic Initiative 7th
David Slade – Overall 4th

Individual Sections:- Swim & Tow – Gold 1st; Line Rescue – Silver 2nd;
Life Support Initiative:- Bronze Medal 3rd; Aquatic Initiative 4th

This is the first time a club member has won a gold medal in an individual section at the National Championships for 4 years. Our club members contributed to the South East Region Team winning the overall trophy against competition from Scotland, Wales, All Ireland and Regional teams from the East Midlands, East, North East, North West, South, South West, West Midlands, West and Yorkshire.

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

Club Competitions:-

These are run over the first 3 weeks in November and thus the recently joined members were literally 'in at the deep end'! However they all did extremely well. This year we introduced a new event - two tests totally dependent on speed thus allowing for both a dry and an aquatic incident on week 3 and a streamlined set piece program over the first 2 weeks extended to include the speed tests as space permitted.

Thanks are due to Nigel Blackwell from Crawley, Andrew Slade and Bryan Lopez (Set Piece) and Kate Hall (Incident) who acted as judges, 'returned members' and others who acted as casualties and not forgetting spouses who assisted with stewarding the competitors. The Overall Aggregate Champion was extended to include the speed events and we are indebted to Kate Hall's father who has donated new trophies for the speed event.

Overall Aggregate Champion – George Bachelor 197 pts
2nd - Alex Mayes 186 pts
3rd - Robin Akers 183 pts

Set Piece Event:-

Teachers	1 st Geo. Bachelor 123	2 nd Alex Mayes 117	3 rd Robin Akers 116
Men	1 st Harry Close 100	2 nd Joe Burke 92	3 rd Martin Bourne 50.
Ladies	1 st Tasha Moore 97	2 nd Rachael Kearley 89	3 rd Lauren Chappell 85
Novices	1 st Rachael Kearley 89	2 nd Lauren Chappell 85	3 rd Franky Williams-Faulkner 77

Incident Event:-

Teachers	1 st George Bachelor 53	2 nd Freddie Hayes-Coles 51	3 rd Robin Akers 49
Men	1 st Joe Burke 39	2 nd Felix Close 38	3 rd Harry Close 36
Ladies	1 st Emily Heather 39*	2 nd Lauren Chappell 34	3 rd Rachael Kearley 33
Novices	1 st Lauren Chappell 34	2 nd Rachael Kearley 33	3 rd Martin Bourne 27

* Wins main mens/ladies cup as wet incident mark higher.

Novices Rope Throw Event:-

1st Lauren Chappell 24 2nd Franky Williams-Faulkner 23 3rd Rachael Kearley 23

Best Overall Novice:- Rachael Kearley 136 pts

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Speed Competition.	Cumulative Time
Men:- 1 st George Bachelor	1min 37.04
2 nd David Slade	1min 44.81
3 rd Alex Mays	1min 57.03
Ladies:- 1 st Abigail True	2 min 06.88
2 nd Kate Hall	2 min 13.01
3 rd Rachael Kearly	2 min 14.78

National Recognition by RLSS UK

Three of our members were recommended for National Honours and these were accepted and the Presentations by Lord Norrie, the RLSS UK President, took place in October in the wonderful setting of The London Guildhall.

RLSS UK Honorary Life Membership (For services rendered)

John Stainer

Service Medal (12 Years continuous work for the club)

Lee Wright

Dean Wright

Certificate of Merit (Special or outstanding contribution to the club in 2011)

George Bachelor

The Survive and Save Program

Well we've made a start! A single Bronze Core as Silver Core wasn't on his physical radar – just yet and 11 Silver Core all passed in December. So, we're all set to go for the Lifesaving Silver in the New Year whilst the October intake, now with the Basic Life Support under their belts will tackle the Bronze Core and then the Lifesaving Bronze Medallion.

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 man who, despite being too young to take his Bronze Medallion was nevertheless was a permanent fixture at start time, always had his kit and books, always struggled with his swimming ability, always knew the answers to exam questions (more or less) was always at the lake despite knowing he was ineligible to take the Bronze Cross and since the September term started, always chases to the pool immediately after football practice. All in all, as long as he's kept busy he's not too much of a problem! This year the Endeavour Trophy goes to Joseph Burke.

Club Member of the Year

The Committee decided 3 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. The short list this year was Robin Akers, Lee Wright, Freddie Mae Hayes-Coles and George Bachelor and from the votes cast Freddie was voted Club Member of the Year for 2012.

Annual Presentation Evening

The 2012 Presentation Evening took place at the URC Church Hall, Springfield Road, Horsham on Thursday 3rd January 2013 and our Guests of Honour were Cllr Leonard Crosbie, Chairman

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HDC, Miss Hannah Russell, 2012 Paralympic Silver and double Bronze Swimming Medallist. Other guests were Stephanie Andrews, RLSS Branch Rep to the UK Management Committee and Surrey RLSS Branch President. Simon Crute -RLSS UK Customer Engagement Manager for South Region; Barbara Childs, Head of Leisure & Economic Development at HDC, John Stainer, Honorary Club Member and Chairman of RLSS South East Region, Betty Hakesley & Doug Simmonds, President & Chairman respectively Sussex Branch RLSS, John Williams, President and Tom Osborne Swimathon Organiser both from Horsham Lions and Tim Bolton from The Pavilions. .

Social Activities

Most of this continues 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. Thanks to Lee Wright for setting this in motion. E-mails to members don't seem to work as well as a quick sentence on the club Facebook page. Sadly, we can't fit this report on there so can only hope it gets read by the 'old method' of reading the printed page!

The usual 'Fun Night' took place on our last swim night in 2012. Silly games and even more complicated than usual quizzes were undertaken. In the wet session some extra-ordinary rescue races took place partly involving air crash survivors on uninhabited islands, time bombs, sharks and rubber bricks and far too many people with broken-legs or who were '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 usual Easter and Christmas meals at local restaurants were well supported.

We also had two evenings at the Horsham Bowling Alley which proved a welcome diversion from throwing ropes. It was clear that one or two people had recently been watching 'The Dambusters' film on TV and there are dents in the alley to prove it. July saw our long term member Lee Wright married in Horsham Parish Church to Caroline and a number of members were there as guests.

Conclusion

In conclusion I wish to thank all those who have helped to make this year 'work' but, in particular, thanks to the regularly attending Committee members and the Teachers. 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. December 2012.



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Kate Hall & David Slade
National Life Saving Competition
Finalists 2012 at Sheffield



The Annual BBQ at Southwater.
These were the eaters, not the
cookers and stokers.



After National Honours Presentation
at London Guildhall October 2012
l-r George Bachelor (Certificate of Merit)
Dean Wright (Service Medal)
David Slade (Club Chairman)
Lee Wright (Service Medal)



Club Incident Competition Night
November 2012

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