

Horsham Life Saving Club Annual Report 2013

Introduction and General Statements.

It has been an exceptionally busy year and, as you will see from what follows, it has been a year of considerable success across a wide range of activities.

Through 2013 we really got stuck into the new Survive and Save syllabus and awards with most members gaining experience right across the range of new things to learn, new skills to acquire and new challenges to meet. That we did so right across the membership, teachers and instructors included, says much for the enthusiasm of the latter mindful that they had to fit their own training and exam taking around keeping their own classes up to speed and on course for completing the tests required.

As we have a new syllabus to work with it is difficult to make any comparison with 2012 – the old and the new are very different. The attached spread sheet demonstrates who has done what and just how many strands we are now juggling with. 196 passes is an excellent end result and reflects much hard work.

Congratulations to Emma Hatton, Robin Akers and David Slade who all achieved the Distinction award in 2013. This entailed passing bronze, silver and gold levels in 3 of the 4 strands albeit Emma went the whole hog and achieved B S&G in all 4 strands in a rush before numerous summer holidays and before disappearing off to University in September.

The paragraph under 'Details' lists what qualifications have been gained other than S & S and demonstrates what other courses the club has run or participated in and the numbers involved. Undertaking additional open water work in the sea was a new experience for many members and we are indebted to Frances Garrard at Worthing Life Guard Corps for allowing us to descend on 'her bit' of beach at Lancing to undertake most of this.

In the school summer holiday period we alternated between the lake and the coast and this worked well but we fitted an extra Sunday afternoon session in at Littlehampton Beach to pick up some candidates who would otherwise have missed out. Thankfully throughout the open water season the weather was kind to us for a change.

We had a shock to find that our fee we needed to pay for the use of Southwater Lake from June to end of August had shot up from £20 to £150. We got round this partly by registering as the RLSS and sharing the cost between ourselves and Crawley Town LS Club who also use the lake for training and exams. We still had to find £75 however, an increase that was not welcome.

The limitation on who is now actually permitted to deliver the S&S training - the minimum age for attending a qualification course now being 17 - and, inevitably, the base for these always being in East Sussex, has meant that a heavy load has, as ever, fallen on a few stalwarts supported by 5 newly qualified S & S Instructors, some of whom we immediately lost to University once September was upon us.

The type of young person attracted to what we have to offer and those most likely to extend their time with the club will almost always be those who will eventually go off to University at the age of 18. Rarely do these people return to the fold in their working life by which time there are other pressures upon their time. There are exceptions of course but they are few and far between. It does however mean that the old stalwarts are paddling hard against the current and the age gap between them and the majority of the members gradually increases. It was a shock to the senses of some of us to realise that we now have new members whose dates of birth are in the 2000 range! We as a club are not alone in the struggle to attract young people in the age range 13- 18 and to keep our club 'afloat'.



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We have worked very hard at securing external funding from various sources to subsidise pool hire charges and some exam fees in the hope that this would encourage new members but whilst this funding has been invaluable it has not produced new numbers in sufficient numbers to allay our concerns about the continued viability of the club. See the section on 'Membership' for more information on this subject.

Within the context of costs, having now run the S & S syllabus for a full year we are able to make some considered comments. The increased number of qualifications available and, what appears, in the view of the experienced members, to be a dumb-ing down of the lifesaving content, means the turnover of exams has been greater and thus the overall cost to examinees has significantly increased. With a validity period of 2 years for all qualifying exams to reach 'the top' award - The Distinction - a not insignificant outlay is required for the exams before we add in pool hire fees and annual subscriptions.

It is to the credit of the members that, notwithstanding the above, we have made it a memorable year through sheer hard work and enthusiasm.

The Club Competitions had to be revised to fall in line with S & S content and to maintain the element of everyone competing against the same criteria and on a level playing field. It cannot be denied that there was as a result more competition but there was, by definition, less 'life saving' content.

We had some marked success at Regional and National level in the competitions and the results are set out further down. Sadly we have yet to create much enthusiasm within the younger members for competing outside the club and this is partly down to the age range and timing of the branch and regional qualifiers clashing with A Levels, AS Levels and GCSE's. Again, we as a club are not alone in this.

However, we will press on and continue to do all that we can to deliver S & S courses and other related activities and play our part in reducing the number of drowning fatalities which continue to plague our young people. 317 deaths in 2012 (the last collated figures) and a very high proportion of these in the very age group we work with.

We had a wonderful representation at the National Honours Awards ceremony held in London's Guildhall in October when the Society was able in its own way to say 'Thank You' to the recipients for their enthusiasm and for giving their time to make our waters safer for everyone.

I need to record the terrific support we've received from The West Sussex County Times who have kindly reported on many of the highlights of our achievements this year. Whilst it may not generate new members per se it does give us a very 'public face' in the community as a whole and for this we are extremely grateful.

We again participated in the Swimathon organised by Horsham Lions. 50% of the sponsorship we secured went to The Lions who have targeted raising a significant sum to provide Night Flying Equipment for West Sussex Air Ambulance. The club retained the other 50% and the decision was taken to donate half of this to 'Emily's Trust', a trust set up to provide ongoing support for one of our ex-members who was struck down with meningitis and is now permanently confined to a wheelchair and has other disabilities. Emily and her parents came to the pool where we were able to pass the donation over to her. The £54 raffle income at the 2013 Annual Presentation Evening in January 2014 also went to Emily's Trust.

Lee Wright is now a member of the Sussex Branch Committee with responsibility of developing and maintaining the Branch Web Site.

My thanks as Chairman go to all those who have worked so hard to enable me to report another very successful year and I'm delighted that we have, in so many ways, been able to put a great deal back into our community and I sincerely hope that those organisations who have helped us financially will be satisfied that their money has been well used.

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The Details:-

Life Support, Lifesaving Pool; Lifesaving Sport; Lifesaving Stillwater & Lifesaving Beach

There were 19 Life Support exams taken 8 of which were Life Support level 3 and some of these were 'rolled-over' from 2012 for validity purposes.

There were 64 successful 'core' exams at bronze, silver and gold levels; Lifesaving Pool clocked up 46 passes across B S & G and Lifesaving Sport a modest 4 – but this latter was very much an add-on this year. Watch this space in 2014.

At Southwater we achieved 30 B S& G exam successes in Lifesaving Stillwater and in Beach Lifesaving a further 30. We trained for the latter and exams were taken at both Lancing Beach and Littlehampton Beach. As an aside, it was clear that for sea activity we ideally need something other than our lake rescue skis for next year.

Our average attendance at The Pavilions was 23 and in the open water sessions at the lake and the beach, the average attendance was 20, both being an improvement on 2012.

Other people taking courses and qualifications

Automated External Defibrillator Operator Course (AED) Qualification:-

6 – Robin Akers, Dean & Lee Wright, Megan Holms, Emma Hatton & Alex Mays

4 - First Aid At Work (FAW) John Stainer, Dave O'Connor, Lee & Dean Wright (All re-qualifiers viz ©)

1 - National Pool Life Guard Qualification – (NPLQ) Bryan Lopez ©

5 - Emergency Response Activity Supervisor (ERAS) &

5 -National Rescue Award Swimming Teachers & Coaches (NRASTC)

Megan Holms, Lee Wright ©, Bryan Lopez ©, Emma Hatton ©, David Slade © (All club members)

15 - NRASTC (14 of whom were The Pavilions Swimming Teaching Staff)

4 - Parents/Grandparents - Baby Save Evening Course

Basic Water Safety:-

6 – St Andrews Church Rustington Pilots Group

24 – 2nd Southwater Beavers

18 – 3rd Rustington Rainbows

24 – 3rd Rustington Brownies

Thus a further 112 qualifications to our credit for 2013.

Training, Instruction and Examining.

Our 4 Survive & Save including Open Water Instructor/Tutors/Assessors, John Stainer, Kate Hall, David Slade & Bryan Lopez, were joined by 5 S & S Instructors who all qualified in early 2013 viz Robin Akers, Lee Wright, Dean Wright, Emma Hatton and Freddie Hayes-Coles who all also qualified as Open Water Instructors.

In total these Instructors delivered around 416 hours tuition at the pool and a further 114 hours at the lake and the beach – a total of about 530 hours. As is the way of these things we lost Freddie and Emma in September when they went off to University. However through the Spring and Summer peak periods all Instructors and Tutors made the teaching and examining program run very smoothly.

You can see from the S&S exam template just how many separate exams were taught and examined and our thanks go to all the instructors for their commitment.



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What we cannot do, as we have in the past, is tell you exactly how many hours tuition has been provided by our instructors as the need to re-qualify across a whole range of exams has been mixed in with their teaching classes as well. Thus the figure of 530 hours is a 'rough and ready estimate' but nevertheless a fair reflection of how much voluntary time has been given to the club and the members.

Outreach

On the outreach front the following additional courses were run exclusively for, or in part for, external organisations:-

- 1 x Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Operators Course (By Bryan Lopez)
- 1 x First Aid At Work (FAW) Course (By Bryan Lopez)
- 3 x National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers & Coaches Courses (NRAST&C) for The Pavilions Swimming Teachers (Run by Bryan Lopez & examined by Kate Hall and David Slade)
- 1 x Emergency Response Activity Supervisors Course (ERAS) (Run by John Stainer)
- 4 x Water Safety Evening Courses for Youth Groups (Run by David Slade (3) and Kate Hall (1))
- 1 x Baby Save Evening Course (Run by David Slade)

In addition our members provided safety cover on rescue skis, manned publicity stalls or participated in the following:-

Crawley Heart In The Park Day (The whole being organised by one of our previous members now working for Crawley Town Council!) (Megan Holms, Emily Heather, Tasha Mays, George Bachelor and Alex Mays)

Southwater Annual Triathlon Relay Competition (Robin Akers, David Slade, Frankie Williams-Faulkner, James Cossons and Freddie Hayes-Coles.

Great London Swim in Dockland (Megan Holms, Emily Heather and David Slade)

Horsham Lions Swimathon (Team Joseph Burke, Lauren Chappell, Sophie Brooker, Martin Bourne, Emily Heather, Bryan Lopez, Megan Holms: Team Capt., David Slade)

ERAS Course casualty and safety cover at Shoreham Harbour for Worthing LG Club members (Robin Akers and David Slade)

Finance

As already mentioned we have been extremely fortunate in receiving external funding from a number of sources totalling just over £1,600. This funding was from Saxon Weald, West Sussex County Council Community Initiative Fund, The Lions and a parent. These have enabled the pool fees to be kept down to £25 per quarter. The charges at just over £3,100 for this were £350 more than our income. We have also been able to subsidise the cost of a first award by £19 and the cost of the first further award that each member has taken by £9. We have purchased fins and rescue tubes which are required for the Sport strand of the awards and this was subsidised by RLSS Sussex Branch. We purchased our first award packs last year when there was an introductory offer but we will have to purchase more packs in 2014. It is understood that potentially exam fees will increase in April 2014 and if this is the case more packs will be purchased for both first and further awards to keep costs down.

Membership

Membership is now our main area of concern as our efforts to secure new members have not produced anywhere near the number needed to make the club self sufficient given the annual hire costs for our 1 hour of water space now exceed £3000.

We have been able to subsidise quarterly fees and some exam costs by seeking external sponsorship and donations and been delighted with the help we've received from a number of quarters. However, although this has undoubtedly helped many of our existing members it has not had the desired effect of attracting enough new ones.



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Our flow of new members seeking to learn about lifesaving and take a qualification as one of their Duke of Edinburgh programs has been disappointing this last year. This may be partly due to the number of D of E Youth Workers having been reduced and one of the Secondary School opting out of the scheme. Our own Kate Hall who is heavily involved with D of E has had to re-apply for her job within D of E and, due to sustaining a severe back injury necessitating surgery, has not been able to bang the drum for us this autumn – our normal big intake time.

We've had our fair share of members who have been poorly throughout the year and most have, despite their various injuries or illnesses, still attended club to help and encourage. It says much for their goodwill and enthusiasm and proves that what we offer has some 'fun' element to it and as a social network which beats texting any day!

We have a new initiative planned for next June when one of our members, James Cossons, has negotiated with Millais School to attend the catchment year assemblies and make a 'pitch' for what we can offer stressing the additional uses to which the skills may be put (D of E and GCSE PE and a pre-cursor for NPLQ) and that they are indeed not just life saving skills but life skills.

We have also booked, thanks to another initiative by James Cossons, a 'slot' for a display/information gazebo in the Swan Centre at Horsham on the last Saturday of the RLSS Drowning Prevention Week - 29th June. This will not only wave the flag for the Drowning Prevention Week but hopefully lay the foundations for some addition members to join in the September/October intake.

We attempted to do something in the way of a display in the foyer as a joint venture with The Pavilions during the 2013 Drowning Prevention Week but received no response to our enquiry and thus the opportunity passed. It is possible we may also do something in Horsham's Town Centre around the bandstand on the Saturday at 'the front end' of Drowning Prevention Week. This is work in progress as both events will necessitate some outlay for publicity material and 'stand' equipment.

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

Sussex Branch Competitions:-

Robin Akers, David Slade, Emma Hatton, Lee and Dean Wright qualified for the Regional Competition but due to other commitments not all were able to participate in the Regionals.

South East Regional Competition and Qualifiers in Essex:-

David Slade won the Masters 60+ and Robin was 2nd in the Masters 50-59 Category thus qualifying them both for the National Finals. George Bachelor and Emily Heather also made the journey to act as casualties and without them and other volunteer casualties there would be no competition possible – so grateful thanks to them.

National Finals in Sheffield 9th November:-

Robin secured a Silver medal in the Life Support Incident event and David secured Gold in both the Swim & Tow and Line Rescue events, a Silver in the Aquatic Incident, a Bronze in the Life Support Incident and a Silver in the Overall Competition. Our best 'club' performance to date.

Officials/Judges/ Casualties:-

A number of our members acted in these roles at Branch, Region & inter-club events.

Club Competitions:-

Due to the introduction of the Survive and Save syllabus it was necessary to completely re-vamp the events for our own club competition as within S & S there is a much greater emphasis on survival skills rather than basic life saving skills and the former don't lend themselves to a lifesaving competition whilst many of the latter are not taught or examined at

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bronze or even silver level. Thus we had an uneven pitch on which to play within the tests of our original competition format.

Overall Aggregate Champion – Robin Akers

2nd - Abbie True
3rd - Lee Wright

Set Piece Event:-

Seniors :- 1st David Slade 194 Pts 2nd Lee Wright 181 Pts 3rd Robin Akers 175 Pts
Men :- 1st George Bachelor 155 Pts 2nd James Cossons 154 Pts 3rd Harry Close 133 Pts
Ladies :- 1st Lauren Chappell 166 Pts 2nd Abbie True 166 Pts 3rd F Williams-Faulkner 159 Pts
Novices :- 1st Kathryn Otley 124 Pts

Incident Event:-

Seniors:- 1st Robin Akers 65 Pts 2nd Jon Borley 60 Pts 3rd Lee Wright 60 Pts
Men :- 1st Joe Burke 46 Pts 2nd Edward Baker 44 Pts 3rd Dan Bailey 33 Pts
Ladies :- 1st F. Williams-Faulkner 57 Pts 2nd Abbie Sandle 48 Pts 3rd Sophie Booker 40 Pts
Novices:- 1st Edward Baker 44 Pts 2nd Kathryn Otley 38 Pts 3rd Emily Bromley-Ellis 27 Pts

Novices Rope:-

1st Kathryn Otley 14 Pts 2nd Edward Baker 12 Pts 3rd Emily Bromley-Ellis 10 Pts

Speed Competition.

	Total Points
Men:- 1 st David Slade	71
2 nd Robin Akers	64
3 rd Jon Borley	63
Ladies:- 1 st Rachael Kearly	73
2 nd Abbie Sandle	67
3 rd Abbie True	63

Best Overall Novice:- Kathryn Otley

National Recognition by RLSS UK

The following members were all honoured by the Society for Merit and Services Rendered. In October they all attended The London Guildhall to receive their awards from Sharron Davies, sometime Olympic Swimmer and now a TV Presenter. Sharron did a superb job and all the recipients got to meet her. A moment captured on camera by the club chairman & submitted to HQ was featured in the 'Lifesaver' magazine (and credited to the Official photographer in the article, not the Club Chairman who was consequently a bit miffed!!)

Service Cross (22 years of Service to the Society) Andrew Slade
Certificates of Thanks (4 years Service to the Society) Natasha Mays and George Bachelor
Certificates of Merit (Meritorious Contribution to Club/Branch in 2012) James Cossons, Freddie Mae Hayes-Coles and Megan Holms

The presentation of the following Certificates is carried out locally and Peter Moyes RLSS UK President undertook this at the 2013 Presentation Evening

Friends of the Society Certificates (Non Members who made a valuable contribution to the club)

Mrs Karen Mays, Mrs Shivaun Hayes-Coles and Mr Jim Hills



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The Endeavour Cup

This cup is awarded, not necessarily for any specific achievement, but can be made to someone who, during the year, has perhaps shown exceptional commitment either by what they have achieved through sheer hard graft, or a determination to improve or succeed or perhaps through consistently 'being there' to act as a casualty.

This year the cup goes to a member who, on all evidence thus far, is not overly blessed with an affinity to water. Despite this, through regular attendance and perseverance, we have seen the amount of effort and co-ordination that is put into the tasks gradually improve. The swimming technique displayed can best be described 'interesting'. Who among the teachers can forget the first foray into a one length swim with no goggles and a mop of non compliant hair that put the Loch Ness Monster to shame? Who, on very rare occasions has been known to volunteer a few words unrelated to questions posed during exams? – not loudly it's true, but made they have been. This is progress which we are delighted to see. Indeed in the pre Christmas Fun Night picture quiz there was general amazement when a correct identification was made and articulated which prompted instant and enthusiastic action. So, to reward noticeable progress in developing inter-personnel skills as well as swimming ability the cup is awarded this year to Brendan Clery

Club Member of the Year

The Committee decided 4 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. On the short list this year were James Cossons, Megan Holms, Emily Heather and Alex Mays and James Cossons received the most votes to take the trophy for 2013.

Annual Presentation Evening

The 2013 Presentation Evening took place at the URC Church Hall, Springfield Road, Horsham on Thursday 9th January 2014 and our Guests of Honour were Peter Moyes RLSS UK National President, Cllr Phillip Circus, Chairman HDC, Other guests were, Miss Emily Darbyshire and her parents representing 'Emily's Trust', Miss Gabbi Simmonds RLSS Sussex Youth Development Officer; Steve Hawker at Strategic Leisure Manager HDC, John Stainer, Honorary Club Member and Chairman of RLSS South East Region, & Doug Simmonds, Chairman respectively Sussex Branch RLSS, Tom Osborne President of Horsham Lions & Swimathon Organiser, Tim Bolton from The Pavilions and Frances Garrard from Worthing Life Guard Corps.

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 and now (apparently!) on Twitter. Thanks to Lee Wright for keeping this running. 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 we can only hope it gets read by the 'old tried and trusted method' of reading the printed page!

The usual 'Fun Night' took place on our last swim night in 2013. Silly games and quizzes designed, but failing, to stimulate the little grey cells were undertaken. In the wet session some extra-ordinary rescue races took place again partly involving air crash survivors on uninhabited islands, time bombs, alligators, sharks (and rubber bricks?) and far too many people with pretend broken-legs or who were 'non-swimmers'!



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The summer BBQ at Southwater Lake at the end of July after one of the training sessions was well attended whilst the usual Committee and Instructors Easter and Christmas meals at local restaurants were well supported and slap-up meals much enjoyed.

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 Instructors without whom we simply could not survive.

I 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 new incentive - so let's spread the word!

David Slade.
Chairman. December 2013.



Competitors, Casualties & Judges - Cub Incident Competition November 2013



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