

Marina Mail

The Newsletter of PRESTON MARINA.



2020? Well, that didn't go according to plan!



Our cancelled 30th Anniversary Open Day event (left) was to include other local boat companies to help us celebrate.

12 months ago, when sitting down to write our annual newsletter, we were excited to be announcing plans for celebrating Preston Marina's 30th anniversary year in 2020.

Well...we all know what happened next.

Just as the boating season should have been getting started the first big lockdown came along in March and everything stopped. We all had to stay at home, and stay away from our boats (and other loved ones). As was the case everywhere our chandlery shop had to close, the coffee shop had to close, training courses were cancelled and so was our celebration open day planned for April 11th, our actual anniversary day. To rub salt into the wounds, the weather was glorious for weeks!

Someone once said "When life gives you lemons - make lemonade", and so we used the enforced closure to make some big "once every 30 years" changes to our marina building with a huge revamp of the coffee shop (more overleaf) and chandlery.

As the spring and the summer progressed a few things started to cautiously open up again, with the "new normal" being the phrase on everyone's lips (behind the facemasks). Some of us were lucky enough to be able to salvage what was left of the season and get out on our boats or do whatever we love to do—but not everyone has been so lucky and as this terrible year draws to a close, with lockdowns returning for many, we think about those we have lost, and those who continue to struggle.

The world hopes that 2021 will start to bring a return to normality - with a renewed appreciation of all the things we perhaps sometimes took a little for granted.

Right; The enforced closure in the Spring enabled us to do a major refurbishment of our coffee shop—adding a licenced bar and pizzeria. More information overleaf.



Despite the lockdowns and the restrictions, a few of us were still able to get out and enjoy some boating in 2020.

The planned Cruises In Company to various destinations around the Irish Sea didn't happen but a couple of trips along the coast (below) to Piel Island were a very welcome tonic.

Keelboat sailing (below right) in the dock proved a great way to socially distance and enjoy the outdoors. It is hoped that there will be more keelboats sailing and racing in the dock in 2021 and beyond. Thanks to John Billington for the photo.



Peter Manning



Without doubt, the cruellest blow that 2020 dealt the small community of Preston Marina was the loss of Peter Manning in April.

Peter was a great evangelist for junk rigged sailing boats and was in the final stages of completing his own impeccably self-built 34ft yacht "Malliemac", with the dream of making long-distance voyages.

Those of us who were lucky enough to know Peter will miss his generosity, and his tremendously enthusiastic support for all the activities here at the marina.

We will cherish the many fond memories Peter leaves us with, not least his role as King Of The Party at our berth-holders bash in summer 2019, with his companion Shirley as his Queen. The set of wooden stocks that he built for the occasion (for party-goers to be placed in and pelted with wet sponges for charity) were themselves a fine example of the craftsmanship and attention to quality and detail, as well as the dry but good humour, that defined Peter.

Bon Voyage Peter.



Cruises In Company - 2021

A small flotilla in the river. Summer 2020. Photo by Rob Lawlor



In our newsletter last year we announced that we were hoping to start an informal programme of Cruises In Company in 2020.

Well, needless to say - it didn't happen.

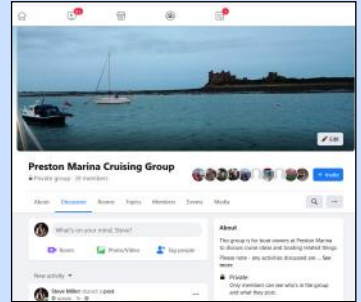
The concept however is still very much alive, and fingers crossed - Covid, weather and tides permitting we will try again in 2021.

It is not possible yet to set dates and destinations, but trips to places like Liverpool Marina and Whitehaven Marina are in our sights, probably following a shake down or two to good old Piel Island (hoping that the pub might be open when we get there).

Something that has emerged recently is a new **PRESTON MARINA CRUISING GROUP** Facebook page.

This is a private group for berth-holders at Preston Marina to exchange cruise ideas and any other boating related information.

It has already proved very useful and popular, and we would recommend anyone who wants to get involved and keep up to date with boating activities based here to join the page.



Cheers!

We made good use of the enforced closure this Spring and gave our "Beach Hut Coffee Shop" a major refurbishment—including creating much more space inside and outside for socially distanced dining.

New additions include a licenced bar serving a range of craft beers (from local independent brewery The Beer Brothers), wines and spirits.

Freshly made pizza is also on the menu.

The new look café bar will become more of a social hub for the marina when things start to get going again, and we look forward to things like berth-holders quiz nights and boating talks.

We also have a live music licence so look out for small acoustic and folk style gigs, and "Open Mic" evenings when we are able to.



RYA Training Courses 2021

Yet another thing that had to go on the back burner for 2020 was all of our planned RYA Training course programme.

Well - not quite all. This year of all years the ONLINE courses have proved to be extremely popular.

The online Essential Seamanship and Navigation course really is a perfect introduction to all aspects of boating theory and highly recommended.

Also the online VHF Radio course has been the only way for people to obtain this compulsory qualification for those using radios at sea.

The online courses are a great way to gain the knowledge needed at your own pace at home. The online courses can be found on our website www.prestonmarina.co.uk

We are optimistic that practical and classroom courses will return in 2021 - and we are expecting a lot of folks will want to make up for lost time. To this end we have bought a second training R.I.B. for RYA Powerboat courses - a brand new EXCEL 470 with a TOHATSU 60hp engine, which we can't wait to launch and put into service.



Preston Dragons

After winning their national division in 2019, the Preston Dragons dragon boat club has had a frustrating year not being able to compete, with all events cancelled in 2020.

Ever resourceful though, in the Summer they obtained special permission to train in the marina using kayaks which kept the cobwebs off.

We all hope that racing will resume in 2021 - and when it does the Preston Dragons will be roaring to more victories. www.prestondragons.org



Is your boat ready for winter?

Please make sure you pay a visit to check that your boat is properly winterised, and also that all mooring lines are in good condition and properly tied and all sails are secured (or preferably removed).

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A Message from Dyson...



Dyson, first mate aboard "Regis Filia" and one of Preston Marina's saltiest sea dogs said this in a statement yesterday...

"2020 has been ruff!" He also added, "Sausages!"

Preston Marina - Open 7 Days Per Week.

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