



Report for ACM Jan 2025

The North West includes the Lake District, the Isle of Man and the Irish Sea Coast. The Lake District is important for small boats nationally, whilst the Irish Sea is shared cruising area with North Wales and Ireland.

The North West Area recruited 9 new members in 2024, increasing our membership by around 25% mainly as result of putting on more activity and making new connections. This follows on from 12 new members in 2023. Only 7 of our members were members before 2020.

The following events were held in 2024

- a) National AGM Liverpool - Jan
- b) North West AGM and talk about Character Boats – March
- c) Arnside Classic Boat Regatta – June
- d) Windermere Jetty Rally – August
- e) Lytham Rally - August
- f) Ullswater Rally - August
- g) South Windermere Old Gaffers Regatta – September
- h) Visit to Fleetwood Museum and lunch at North Euston Hotel

Separately from the OGA, a boat festival was held at Peel on the Isle of Man attracting boats from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Our most successful event in 2024 was our rally at Windermere Jetty Museum in August. Combining heritage with sailing the Museum makes an excellent base for a traditional boat event. The Museum tells the story of Windermere's boat history. As well as local boats, the event attracted two boats from other areas. As well as sailing on the lake, the event included a guided tour of the Museum and conservation workshops. Blackwell Sailing Trust, a charity who use gaff rigged Lune Whammels to take out disabled sailors, lent us their safety boat for the event in return for two of their boats taking part.

Our Ullswater event attracted fewer boats than in 2023 though we still managed to sail the head of the lake at Glenridding through increasingly mountainous scenery. The event resulted in a new member. Other events were affected by the weather with strong winds, with the South Windermere event having to be cancelled. A new event for us in December was a visit to Fleetwood Museum, which houses Harriet a fishing smack and Judy a

Morecambe Bay Prawner, followed by lunch at the historic North Euston Hotel. Fleetwood a planned nineteenth century new town was a major fishing port, first with Morecambe Bay Prawners and then with deep water trawlers.

Kevin Goulding stepped down as our President in March, with Jeremy Lambert, who was our Treasurer taking on the role. Nick Costen became our Treasurer with Robin Ashcroft and Ann Ingham joined the Area Committee. Alasdair Simpson continued as Secretary. We would like to thank Kevin for his long service as North West President.

In 2025 we are offering the below programme

- a) North West AGM at Lytham – Feb 15
- b) Lytham Rally – May 23-26
- c) Arnside Classic Boat Regatta – June 27/28
- d) Ullswater Rally – August Bank Holiday Weekend
- e) South Windermere Regatta (date to be confirmed)
- f) Windermere Jetty Regatta – Oct 4/5
- g) Crossfields Conference, Arnside – Nov 22

The Peel (Isle of Man) Rally is on the weekend of July 25 -27th.

The Ullswater Rally may include the Gaffling Championship. At the Windermere Jetty event there may be a chance to sail in the 1950s dinghies used in 2018 Swallows and Amazon film. The Lytham event is suitable for seagoing vessels as well as trailer-able boats

Several North West OGA members are involved with the Morecambe Bay Prawner Trust. The Trust completed the purchase of Spray, a prawner built in Arnside in 1896, at start of March 2024. Initial costs were funded by donations and gift aid. It is intended that the boat will be funded by membership and sailing fees in the future. Hopefully Spray should be in the water in 2025. Volunteers have been involved in stripping her paintwork back to wood and then repainting her. Plank repairs in the bow area were carried out by Matt Foot, a young professional boatbuilder who is advising the project. The bowsprit also needs replacing.

On Merseyside, Wallasey Yacht Club celebrated the 125th anniversary of their Seabird Half Raters. Merseyside was a centre for one design boats in the early twentieth century with several clubs having their own classes.

Arnside Sailing Club's Severn should back in the water in 2025 after a £90,000 restoration funded largely by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Severn was built in Arnside by Crossfields in 1912. The NOA Classic Boats Association are restoring Pride of Liverpool, one of the boats made from the moulds of the Morecambe Lifeboat Sir William Priestley. Hearts of Oak, another Morecambe Bay Prawner owned by a charity is kept at Roa Island, near Barrow. Her skipper joined the OGA in June. With three historic boats owned by charities in the water in 2025 (hopefully), there should be good opportunities for people without their own boats to sail in seagoing gaff rig boats in the North West.

We look forward welcoming both North West and OGA members from other areas to our events in 2025.