

2021 NEOGA report

For all that we are few in number in the north east we have had quite a hectic year!

Before lockdown we were arranging this national AGM in Newcastle. We were able to pick up the threads where we left off once our bonds had been freed and now, we here in the north east are very happy to be hosting you all in bonny Newcastle upon Tyne and believe we have a great programme for everyone to enjoy.

Earlier this year Patrick visited the north east where he presented Martin Haigh, our brilliant shipwright with the Jolie Brise trophy for outstanding contribution to the OGA dinghy project and gaff rigg. Throughout the year, despite covid, Martin has been able to continue to work on our first dinghy, in splendid isolation in the disused Blyth port mortuary, to prepare it for its launch and naming ceremony by the principal of High Tunstall College at our NE regatta.

We had a record turnout this year for our regatta held in August and were very happy to welcome 3 new members sailing their boats. Seven boats attended the weekend (4 more than at our previous regatta) with 6 boats taking part in the racing and the 7th, “The Royal Diadem”, a sailing coble from the North East Maritime Trust, based on the River Tyne supporting the event and flying the OGA flag. The Royal Northumberland Yacht Club (RNYC) in Blyth hosted the event and provided support both on land and on the water. Weather wise we had glorious sunshine but stiff winds causing a couple of boats to capsize. (Thank goodness for the RNYC safety boat!)

A grand BBQ was held on the Saturday night at the workshops of the Blyth Tall Ship with a number of members bringing their instruments and voices for a goodly session.

Our 2nd dinghy’s hull has now been completed by Martin in conjunction with staff from The Duchess School Alnwick. We hope that over the winter the hardwood joinery and fitting out will be completed by the school under arms length mentorship by Martin.

Next year we will be concentrating on raising more money for a third dinghy and look forward to organising an even bigger and better regatta!

Des O’Meara, President NEOGA
Anthea Connor, Secretary NEOGA