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## NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2018

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Firstly, I am delighted to report that our Youth Racing Team on the Cork 1720 'Spirit', Skipper Jules Mitchell, were the overall winners of the AYC Round the Island Race in January.

The traditional prize is the Skipper's weight in rum – so the Academy took home 84 bottles of English Harbour 5-year-old. As only two of the six crew are old enough to drink, and the two that can, don't - the rum is now being sold to raise funds to get the boat in trim for Antigua Sailing Week at the end of April. Thanks to support from Caribbean Alliance Insurance Company, 'Spirit' will be sporting a new spinnaker for Sailing Week.



The team also competed in the Jolly Harbour Valentine's Regatta – but they were forced to retire on the Saturday with broken gear, and all racing was cancelled on Sunday due to the extreme winds.



Also in January, we hosted a 'World Sailing' Technical Course – delivered by Tim Cross, assisted by Karl James, over six very full, days. The nine candidates already hold their RYA Dinghy Instructor's qualification – the purpose of this course was for them to learn how to teach racing techniques.

The students were: Alesia Charles Junella King, Mauriceson Valentine, Rasheem Nedd, Maliek Patterson, Joshua Daniels, Xavier Athill, Stephon Dundas, Jules Mitchell.

## GIRLS SAILING TEAM

One of the goals of 'World Sailing' (the governing body for our sport) is to encourage more girls to take up sailing. Their research shows that girls particularly like the teamwork and camaraderie of sailing in two handed boats and so we applied through our National Olympic Committee for funding of two more Fevas to add to our fleet. Our Thanks go to Hon. E.P.Chet Greene, Chairman of the National Olympic Committee for his support with this project. Now we have the boats, we are increasing the number of girls sailing. The group pictured are from Pares Secondary School.



## YACHT TRAINING PROGRAMME.



As Kamar has left us to join the Police force and has become 'Officer James', we now have two students – Joshua Daniels and Maliek Patterson - who have completed the prep work for their Day Skipper Theory training. They have studied navigation, chartwork, safety procedures, passage planning etc. and, over the Easter break (with myself as the passenger) they undertook their first practical experience as yacht Captains on and sailed our 'pea green yacht' (aka Feanor) to Deshaies, Guadeloupe.

At this time, we are seeking funding for them to complete Day Skipper (Theory & Practical); STCW; Eng.1, etc. by the end of summer at the UKSA in Cowes, UK - the ultimate aim being for them to be suitably qualified, so they can seek employment as superyacht crew next season. The only 'challenge' was that Feanor does not have an 'in-flatable' but rather a 'de-flatable' – the picture is how the dinghy looked when we

tried to return to the yacht!! Joshua & Maliek have become quite adept at paddling (we do not have an outboard). Our next voyage will be to St. Maarten when time and weather permit.



The Antigua Laser Open Championship was held in March, and was won for the second year running by Jules Mitchell who is hoping to compete this summer in the Central American Games in Barranquilla, Colombia.





## SAILABILITY CHARITY WALK – MARCH.

Thanks to Bob Bailey and his team, another successful day was held Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March. This initiative was supported by many businesses and individuals – particularly those in/around English Harbour - and made a profit of approx: EC\$27,000 – enough to meet the payroll costs for a further year. His Excellency, Sir Rodney Williams can be seen leading the walk; after which a ‘Family Funday’ was held at the Academy, followed by an evening party with the band ‘1761’ providing live music.



Also, as part of the days activities, a Regatta was held for superyacht crews. This proved to be very popular fun dinghy racing - the eventual winners were Team Juno.

Thanks to generous donations from The Sanders family, The Boltini Trust and the Miley Foundation, we have been able to extend our dock to provide four additional berths in deep water. We have very reasonable rates for dockage for boats up to 6'6" (2m) draft.





For us, the most exciting news is that – Thanks to the support of Antigua Sailing Week and the sponsorship from the Global Bank of Commerce -we are looking forward to welcoming the youth team from the Greig Academy in the London Borough of Harringay. This team were donated ‘Scaramouche’ - a 45ft Swan racing yacht (deep envy!!!) and successfully raced last summer in Cowes Week and then the Fastnet. The Sailing Academy is providing our Cork 1720 ‘Valiant’ for them to race, against the identical boat ‘Spirit’ skippered by Jules Mitchell with the Antiguan Youth Team. Jules, at 19 years, will be the oldest sailor on both teams. See Sailing Week press release for more details:



<https://www.sailingweek.com/antigua-sailing-week-inspiring-youth/>

So, watch this space to see how these two young teams perform at ASW.

... and again, through Antigua Sailing Week, several Captains/Owners have agreed to take one of our Antiguan youth sailors on the ‘Youth to Keel’ programme (Y2K). There are 10 students who will be racing on individual yachts for the regatta and, for most of them, gaining their first experience on keelboats.

**SWIMMING:** Thanks to our small team of volunteers, led by Zoe & Richard, we are continuing to provide free ‘Water Confidence’ sessions to children. At present, this is limited to Saturday mornings, which is a shame as the pool is sitting empty all week. As ever, the problem is funding – if we had more helpers, (you do not need experience) we could be holding many more sessions per week - but we believe we must be able to offer some financial compensation for, at least, expenses, in order to attract people. We estimate the cost at U\$5 per child per session, and we find that approx: 6 sessions are enough to give the level of confidence we require, i.e. to jump into deep water in a lifejacket. So, if anybody reading this would be interested in helping with the sessions, or with the funding, please contact us.

**.....AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT:** On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April, many of you on this list were present at the Concert of Operatic Arias. There were 277 people present – way beyond expectations and what a magnificent evening it was. The founders of the (non-profit) Antigua Opera Society are already busy plotting and scheming next year’s event – you can follow them on facebook.



P.S. I realise this Newsletter is longer than usual but there is so much going on at present I am afraid its unavoidable. Thank You for your past, and hopefully, future support.

Elizabeth Jordan.