

Brand New Wheelyboat Model Launched

First 'Coulam 16 Wheelyboat' joins the fleet on Rutland Water



L to r: Ray Prince (Wheelyboat Trust), Jim Coulam (boat builder), Danny Peet (Wheelyboat Trust), John Seaton (Anglian Water), Jake Williams (Anglian Water), Jon Marshall (Anglian Water), Andy Beadsley (Wheelyboat Trust)

DISABLED ANGLERS fishing the 3,000 acres of Rutland Water are the first in the UK to benefit from the brand new Coulam 16 Wheelyboat, a joint development by the Trust and JM Coulam Boatbuilders. It is a bigger version of the successful Tweed Wheelyboat launched in 2006 and has been designed primarily for angling on large stillwaters. The prototype was funded by the CLA Charitable Trust and the first boat off the production line was purchased by Anglian Water.

The new model has come about due to the fundamental desire of disabled anglers to have the same opportunities to fish as their able-bodied counterparts. (Standard Wheelyboats provide safe and stable access to the water but they lack the looks and performance of a purpose-built fishing boat). It is based on Jim Coulam's existing and popular 16' fishing boat and provides wheelchair users with step free access on board via an external ramp from the pontoon and a hydraulic platform built into the deck. The deck is open and level throughout and the disabled angler can sit at the bow or the stern and helm the boat if desired. Rutland's boat is fitted with a 10hp outboard with electric start for easy operation.

The modifications are incorporated into the hull as the boat is being built and are very discreet. The boat looks and performs like all the others in the fleet which means that disabled anglers can at last have true equality of opportunity with the able bodied. This also means that, for the fishery, the boat has a dual role. Not only is it an accessible boat that disabled anglers can use successfully, but when no disabled anglers are fishing it can be used by anyone, thus increasing its return to the fishery in these cost-conscious days.

A short ceremony was held on 4th April 2008 and Danny Peet, disabled England International angler and a Trustee of The Wheelyboat Trust, formally declared the new boat launched. ITV Anglia filmed the occasion for their local news and the item can be viewed at www.itvlocal.com/anglia. In the intervening period, the boat has been used regularly and has received first rate reviews from anglers. To book the Wheelyboat telephone Rutland Water on 01780 686441.

Millhall Reservoir—AFMA Winners

SPONSORED BY Suzuki Marine, the 2007 Alan Faulkner Memorial Award has been won by Millhall Reservoir near Falkirk. The award is usually presented at the CLA Game Fair but with last year's event at Harewood House cancelled due to the weather, it had to be rescheduled. Created in memory of the Trust's Founder President, the award goes to the game fishery that provides disabled anglers with the most outstanding service, facilities, opportunities and access. The fishery, run by Avonbank Angling Club, has invested considerable sums upgrading its facilities and the judges felt the contribution Millhall makes to accessible angling put them well ahead of the field. The fishery joins an elite group of previous winners including Eyebrook Trout Fishery, Lake of Menteith and Grafham Water. Its main prize was a 4hp Suzuki outboard. The Trust is delighted to announce that Suzuki Marine will sponsor the 2008 award. The CLA Game Fair this year is at Blenheim Palace July 25th to 27th (weather permitting!). For day ticket enquiries at Millhall telephone 01324 714190.



Avonbank AC's Andy Kirkham, Jim Cowan and Sandy Johnston with their prizes

New Trustees

THREE NEW Trustees have joined the board. They are Lady Arabella Kiszely, Jonathan Midgley and Tish Seligman. Thanks and best wishes go to Antony Caulfield who has retired. The new Trustees join at an exciting time of development for the Trust.

Huge Thanks to Tweed Foundation

THOUSANDS OF pounds were raised for Tweed Wheelyboats and The Wheelyboat Trust at a fundraising dinner and auction last October. Chris Tarrant and his fishing chum, comedian Mike Osman, hosted the gala evening at Kelso's Tait Hall attended by 250 diners and guests. A **Tweed Wheelyboats Supplement** has been issued with this newsletter and carries a full report on the evening. It also features news of the second Tweed Wheelyboat to be launched and important developments on bank access that can now be implemented as a result of the funds raised.

Wheelyboats coming soon:

Castle Loch, Lockerbie
Kyle of Sutherland
Celtic Lakes Resort, Lampeter
Stithians Reservoir, Redruth
River Fowey, Golant
River Fal, Falmouth
River Tay
River Tweed

Watch this space!

Drive-from-wheelchair console for Mk III

THE MK III Wheelyboat has a new optional feature offering disabled people even more independence and control. The drive-from-wheelchair console comprises sturdy aluminium tubing that swings away when not in use, steering wheel and gear lever/throttle in a wheelchair accessible driving position. The first public venue likely to have a Mk III with this facility is Stithians Reservoir, Cornwall, due summer 2008.



Ken Waters, WRRRI main winner, and Stuart Illsley from Rutland Fishing

Wheelyboat Rainbow Reel-In

SPONSORED BY Corus Tubes, the Wheelyboat Rainbow Reel-In competition held at Eyebrook Trout Fishery came to a close with four anglers netting generous prizes to the value of £700. Ken Waters scooped the main prize of a £400 voucher from Rutland Fishing with his 8 fish bag of 17lbs 11oz. The competition was run by Andy Miller and the staff at Eyebrook Trout Fishery with support from Stuart Illsley of Rutland Fishing and Corus Group. The Trust's grateful thanks goes to them and to the anglers who participated. It is also indebted to Sue Hiatt for conceiving the idea of the competition and bringing it to successful fruition.

WE WOULD like to express our enormous thanks to the following for their recent generous support:

Tweed Foundation, Henry Smith Charity, John Ellerman Foundation, Willan Charitable Trust, Bob Tyrrell, Eyebrook Trout Fishery, Orrin Charitable Trust, The Worshipful Company of Grocers, Goldsmiths' Company Charity, Inchcape Foundation, Corus UK Ltd, Percy Bilton Charity, George John & Sheila Livanos Charitable Trust, LS Trillium Drifters Fly Fishing Club, Marjorie & Geoffrey Jones Charitable Trust, Jane Hodge Foundation, Charles Shorto Charitable Trust, Lionel Wigram Memorial Trust, Norman Family Charitable Trust, Raymond & Blanche Lawson Charitable Trust, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Scott (Eredine) Charitable Trust, St Austell Brewery Charitable Trust, Leicestershire & Rutland Masonic Charity Association, Cornwell Charitable Trust, Nigel Angus & Team Scallywags, J & D Hambro Charitable Trust, Catherine Melhado, Radnor Charitable Foundation, Chigboro Trout Fishery, Leicestershire Police Fly Fishers, Verdon Smith Charitable Trust, Anglian Water, Southern Water, Sue Hiatt, Sussex Flydressers' Guild, Lance Nicholson's Dulverton, Wheatley Fly Fishers and Fly Tyers, Dr HCI Bywater, Mr RJ Prince, Mr R Bomford, Mrs ACW Moubray, Mrs DFD Pulman, Mr AP Corn, Mr D Melhado, the family and friends of Bill Buchanan deceased, the family and friends of Glenys Faulkner deceased, and all contributors to last summer's Waterwheels' appeal.

Please donate, it's very easy....

The excellent work we undertake is funded entirely by voluntary donations. Enclosed are two Gift Aid forms—one for one-off donations and the other for regular donations. Gifts of any amount are hugely appreciated but if you can afford a regular monthly or quarterly donation by standing order it would make such a difference. You can now donate online—www.wheelyboats.org.

Clubs, groups, fisheries, etc ... Can you help?

Eyebrook Trout Fishery, LS Trillium Drifters Fly Fishing Club, Chigboro Trout Fishery, Sussex Flydressers' Guild, Leicestershire Police Fly Fishers, Wheatley Fly Fishers & Fly Tyers and Team Scallywags all deserve special mention and thanks for making the Trust the beneficiaries of their charity fishing days, club days, end of season raffles, etc. If you organise something similar, please consider us as your charity to support in 2008.

Many thanks indeed!

Sad news about some old friends

SINCE THE last newsletter some old friends of the Trust have, very sadly, passed away. **Bill Buchanan** was one of the original Trustees and the person for whom the concept of the Wheelyboat was invented. **Eric Thomas** was a Trustee until 2005 and helped with the development of the Mk II Wheelyboat. He also helped the Trust establish connections in Ireland. **Glenys Faulkner** was the widow of the Trust's Founder President and retained a keen interest in the work of the Trust and its innovative new boat designs.

GREAT NEW WEBSITE!
Super photos, more info, FAQs, latest news, donate online. All at www.wheelyboats.org

THE WHEELYBOAT TRUST

PATRONS

Mr Jeremy Paxman Sir Max Hastings Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE Mr Allan Lamb Mr Charles Jardine Lord Steel of Aikwood KBE DL PC Baroness Golding

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Tweed Wheelyboats Supplement



October 2006—Chris Tarrant cuts the ribbon and declares Tweedability I launched

as importantly, passes muster with the boatmen as well. Funding for the project was provided by the Tweed Foundation, without whose initiative and enthusiasm none of this would have been achieved.

In its first year, Tweedability I was used 44 times on beats up and down the river.

FUNDRAISING DINNER & AUCTION

In October 2007, Chris Tarrant and his fishing chum, comedian Mike Osman, hosted a gala charity auction and dinner organised by the Tweed Foundation in aid of Tweed Wheelyboats. The pair richly entertained the 250 diners and guests throughout the evening, skilfully relieving them of £20 notes at regular intervals. A silent



L to r: Nick Yonge (Director, Tweed Foundation), Mike Osman, Chris Tarrant

Tweedability II to be built in advance of the dinner and it was formally launched on the famous Junction Pool in Kelso on 1st October. Ray Crompton, a wheelchair user, whose friend donated the funds, was the first angler to use the boat and christened it by catching a salmon the following day. He said 'it is a fantastic boat and without it I

TWEEDABILITY I

ACCESS FOR disabled anglers, and wheelchair users in particular, to the fishing on large rivers like Tweed is, by the nature of the environment, severely limited. Steep banks, fluctuating water levels and unsuitable fishing boats mean that much of Tweed's first class game angling has been out of bounds to all but the most determined disabled angler. Thankfully, these problems were substantially overcome in October 2006 with the launch of Tweedability I, a revolutionary new fishing boat that provides safe and straightforward access for disabled anglers over much of the river.

This new boat was developed at the behest of the Tweed Foundation by The Wheelyboat Trust in conjunction with JM Coulam Boatbuilders. It took more than a year to turn the initial idea into a fully working boat that not only meets the needs of the angler but, just



February 2006—a plywood and aluminium mock-up demonstrated the possibilities at a trial on the river at Tweedwood

an auction was held during dinner and the main live auction followed. The lots were extremely desirable including a week in October 2008 fishing six of Tweed's finest beats (a once in a lifetime opportunity). Mike Osman proved an expert auctioneer and squeezed every ounce of value from each lot. The six days on six beats went for £15,000!

The evening of fundraising had three main aims: to repay the development costs of the Tweed Wheelyboat; purchase two more boats for Tweed; and endow The Wheelyboat Trust with funds to enable it to supply boats to other rivers. The evening was a huge success and the money raised exceeded all expectations.

TWEEDABILITY II

As a result of publicity for the auction and dinner, a generous benefactor donated funds to enable



Night is drawing in but success for Ray Crompton in Tweedability II



Tweedability III which will be built in 2008. As word spreads about the availability of these boats on Tweed and as more beats are able to accommodate them, demand will grow. It is no exaggeration to claim that the new boats have revolutionised the opportunities for disabled anglers on Tweed. Not only do they solve the problems of access but they have also made life so much easier for the boatmen and fishing proprietors to accommodate the needs of disabled anglers. Mr George Binks clearly articulates the benefits of the Tweed Wheelyboats in his letter printed below.

This letter first appeared in **Fly Fishing & Fly Tying** magazine (August 2007) and is reproduced with the kind permission of Mark Bowler, editor, and George Binks

"Having recently used the disabled boat Tweedability at Ladykirk on the Tweed, I would like to thank the magazine for publishing the article about its launch, without which I would not have been aware of its availability.

I cannot praise the staff at Ladykirk highly enough. The care they showed me when transferring me from my car into the boat, and while fishing, and then back into my car, was simply first class. I felt my safety was paramount to them – no mean feat as heavy rain for two days and nights meant the river banks were treacherous – and at no time did I feel unsafe.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the Tweed Foundation and The Wheelyboat Trust for making this facility available. I would encourage readers to support any of their fundraising efforts because you never know when disability can strike. I became disabled two years ago and thought my fishing days were over, but thanks to The Wheelyboat Trust and disability-aware fishery owners, I can now enjoy my game fishing which has given me a new lease of life." *George Binks*

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simply could not get on the river'. The boat's unique design means that the boatman and angler, between the two of them, can board and disembark easily and safely. The Tweed Wheelyboats' success is due in no small part to the boatmen who operate the boat and who find it so easy to row and control.

ACCESS PATHS

Such a success was the auction and dinner that it has been possible to set aside a substantial sum to help beats construct permanent access paths. These are essential to provide disabled anglers with access from their vehicles to the water's edge to board the Wheelyboats. It is not an easy process though and each path will need planning permission and the approval of either Scottish Natural Heritage or Natural England as Tweed is a SSSI and Special Area of Conservation. Beats can apply to the Tweed Foundation for a grant to cover the costs of planning approval and for some of the construction work. It is hoped this initiative will create up to 40 new paths across 30 beats and thereby provide much easier access to the water's edge than is currently available.

BOOKING THE TWEED WHEELYBOATS

It is still early days and the learning curve is a steep one, but it is believed most beats with boats could accommodate the Wheelyboats. Disabled anglers wishing to fish first need to book the beat of their choice either directly or through an agent (e.g. www.fishtweed.co.uk). The beat then books the boat from the Tweed Foundation. More information on the booking process is available on the Tweed Foundation's website www.tweedfoundation.org.uk/boats or from its office on 01896 848271.

TWEEDABILITY III

Funds from the auction and dinner have also been set aside for