

Latest Wheelyboat model wins award



Vincent Hedley Lewis (left), Chairman of the CLA Game Fair, and Jonny Beardsall (right) of The Daily Telegraph present Andy Beadsley with the CLA Game Fair's Most Innovative Product Award

THE AWARD for the Most Innovative Product on show at the CLA Game Fair has been won by the Trust for its latest Wheelyboat model – the Coulam 16 Wheelyboat. The Wheelyboat beat stiff competition from more than 60 other products launched in 2008 and on show at the Game Fair, held this year at Blenheim Palace.

Jointly developed by the Trust and JM Coulam Boatbuilders, the Coulam 16 Wheelyboat is a purpose-built fishing boat that provides disabled anglers with step-free access on board via bank or pontoon. The design is based on Jim Coulam's standard 16' reservoir fishing boat with some ingenious modifications incorporated during construction.

For the first time, disabled anglers can use an accessible boat that looks and performs like all the other boats in a fishery's fleet. Indeed, even though it has been modified to provide hassle-free wheelchair access, it is a boat that anyone can use without compromising performance compared to regular fishing boats. It is a genuinely dual-purpose craft – a boat that can be used on exactly the same terms by any angler, whether disabled or not.

The Trust is delighted to have won the award. Andy Beadsley, Director, said 'This new Wheelyboat ticks all the boxes in terms of accessibility, looks and performance. Disabled anglers have long been waiting for a boat that competes on equal terms with those their able bodied counterparts use. The judges were clearly very impressed by the boat's dual-purpose role which should prove very appealing to fisheries and anglers alike. We are indebted to Jim Coulam for his expertise and enthusiasm which was fundamental in turning the design from idea into reality'.

The first production model has been purchased by Anglian Water Services Ltd and joins the fleet of fishing boats on the 3,000 acres of Rutland Water.

Fiona Armstrong launches Mk III

SCOTLAND'S LATEST Wheelyboat "Willan Ahoy" was launched on Castle Loch, near Lochmaben, Dumfries and Galloway, on 30th October by TV's Fiona Armstrong, ably assisted by Martin Mitchell, Fishery Manager, and John Hood, Field Officer for The Wheelyboat Trust. Fiona also presented a news item on the launch which was aired on Border TV's evening news.

Castle Loch, Scotland's premier coarse fishery, with many Scottish records, is an ideal venue for the new Wheelyboat. Its primary use will be to enable disabled anglers to access the excellent coarse fishing there, but in common with the majority of Mk III projects, the boat will have a wider role and will provide disabled people with nature watching and pleasure boating trips.

Martin Mitchell is keen for the boat to be used by as many different groups as possible. As well as managing the Castle Loch fishery, Martin runs courses at Barony College and the boat will be used by its disabled students as an educational resource providing them with access to the loch and other local waters. He will also be promoting the Wheelyboat's availability at shows and fairs throughout the Dumfries and Galloway area and further afield.

Funding for the purchase of the Mk III was generously provided by Peter Willan through the Willan Charitable Trust in memory of his parents. Mr Willan, a keen angler, regularly supports causes for disabled people and everybody connected to the project is extremely grateful to him for his invaluable help. To book the new Wheelyboat telephone 07952 545883 or 07773 658136. Website: www.castlelochfisheries.co.uk.



Fiona Armstrong (centre) with Martin Mitchell (left) and John Hood (seated). The Mk III is the most versatile of the three current Wheelyboat models and is perfectly suited to the variety of activities this latest addition to the Scottish fleet will provide access to on Castle Loch.

Tweed Foundation wins 2008 Alan Faulkner Memorial Award

ON BEHALF of The Wheelyboat Trust, Bernard Cribbins presented Tony Bird, representing the Tweed Foundation, with this year's Alan Faulkner Memorial Award.

The Tweed Foundation has demonstrated extraordinary effort and enthusiasm over the last two years to ensure that disabled anglers have access to the fishing on this world famous game river. Their efforts have turned a river that was out of bounds to all but the most determined disabled angler into a fishery that is widely and easily accessible. No other organisation has delivered such a massive transformation in a fishery's accessibility in such a short period of time and they deserve much praise and recognition for their hard work and determination. They have helped provide funds for two specially designed Wheelyboats now in operation on the river with funds in hand for a third. They are also offering grant aid to encourage riparian owners to construct access paths up and down the river so more beats can use the boats.

Created in memory of the Trust's Founder President, the award is presented annually to the game fishery that provides disabled anglers with the most outstanding service, facilities, opportunities and access. The Tweed Foundation has set the standard of disability access for other large game rivers in the UK to follow and their achievements beat the competition for the award this year hands down.

The Trust is very pleased that Suzuki Marine sponsored the award again this year with the main prize of a 4hp outboard. Without their support and appreciation of the award's aims, it would not be the sought after title it has now become.



Tony Bird (right) receives a Suzuki outboard from Gareth Lumsdaine (left), Suzuki Marine's sales manager, with Bernard Cribbins and Andy Beadsley looking on.



TONY BRIGNALL with a fine summer salmon from the famous Lees beat near Coldstream. Tony fishes Tweed regularly and has benefited considerably from the new Tweed Wheelyboats. He has helped the Tweed Foundation promote the boats and has provided an invaluable service as 'guinea pig', trying the boats out for the first time on a variety of different beats. His findings show how important the new Wheelyboats are at providing access for disabled anglers and their potential on beats up and down the river, especially with the support of proprietors and boatmen.

Tweed has the reputation of being an expensive river to fish but in the summer months, June, July and August, first class salmon fishing is widely available for £50 a day including boatman! There is an excellent webpage on www.fishtweed.co.uk which gives details of the boats and their availability as well as a link to the Tweed Foundation for bookings.

Royal visit to Trust's showstand

HRH PRINCE Philip was guest of honour at this year's CLA Game Fair and paid a visit to the Trust's stand on his tour of the showground. He took special interest in the Coulam 16 Wheelyboat which had won the Game Fair's Most Innovative Product Award the previous day. Prince Philip was accompanied by Vincent Hedley Lewis, Chairman of the CLA Game Fair Committee and Trust Director, Andy Beadsley, answered his questions and informed him about the Trust's work.



New Patron joins Trust

WELL-LOVED character actor of cinema, stage, TV and radio, musical comedian and passionate angler, Bernard Cribbins, has joined the Trust's illustrious list of Patrons. Bernard's connection with the charity goes right back to its beginning – he was present at its launch with HRH Prince Charles at Fishmongers' Hall in 1985. In more recent years Bernard has been presenting the Alan Faulkner Memorial Award at the CLA Game Fair and helped raise funds for the Wheelyboat at Bushyleaze Trout Fishery. Andy Beadsley, Trust Director, said 'This excellent news is long overdue. Bernard has been a loyal supporter from the outset and the Trust is honoured to have him on board as its newest Patron.'

Mk III to Celtic Lakes Resort



CELTIC LAKES Resort, near Lampeter, has taken delivery of a brand new Mk III Wheelyboat. The fishery is Wales' premier coarse fishery and comprises 6 lakes totalling 75 acres. The Wheelyboat will be located on the largest lake (17 acres) and will provide disabled anglers with access to specimen carp and catfish fishing. The fishery is still being developed with its first two luxury self catering cottages having been built this year. More will follow next year as well as a 20 bedroom hotel, clubhouse, restaurant and bar. John Carney (left), the fishery's owner, is determined to make the complex totally inclusive to disabled anglers. Funding for the Wheelyboat was generously provided by the Millennium Stadium Charitable Trust, Environment Agency Wales and the Jane Hodge Foundation. A formal launch ceremony will take place in the spring. In the meantime, a dedicated mooring and access point for the Wheelyboat is being built.

Wheelyboats For All

THE TRUST'S flagship development project continues to broaden the appeal, usage and availability of Wheelyboats beyond the fishing lake. *As a result 50% of Wheelyboats we now supply are used by disabled people for a wider variety of activities including nature watching, sightseeing and pleasure boating.* Access to angling will always be an important component of our work; the new Coulam 15 and 16 Wheelyboat models demonstrate our commitment to helping disabled anglers. However, many more disabled people are now benefiting from the wider impact the Trust is making.



Two Darrens and their Wheelyboats

WHILE THE Trust's principal role is to help venues open to the public acquire Wheelyboats for their disabled visitors, it receives enquires from and sells Wheelyboats to individuals for their own private use. Two recent Wheelyboat buyers, Darren Conroy and Darren Bragg, have impressed the Trust so much with their Wheelyboat exploits, it is a story worthwhile imparting. Both are tetraplegic wheelchair users following accidents and both are keen anglers, the primary use to which they put their boats.

Darren Conroy bought his in 2006, a Mk II, and takes it fishing on the Rivers Trent and Dee, Blithfield Reservoir and other waters. He designed a drive-from-wheelchair console which inspired the Trust to design its own console which it developed for Darren Bragg's Mk III supplied earlier this year.



Darren Bragg—weir pool on the river Trent



Darren Conroy at the helm of his Mk II

Darren Bragg's main venue is the River Trent where, powered by a 30hp outboard, he almost flies to the huge weir pools for the excellent barbel, pike and carp fishing. Unfortunately there isn't room for a photo of him and his Mk III dwarfed by the enormous locks on the Trent as he makes his way upstream and down. It is an impressive sight—so are the photos of the fish both Darrens catch on their travels.

Although their Wheelyboats have helped them achieve their independence, the fact that they have not allowed their disabilities to get in the way of participating in their passions is inspiring. With the right attitude coupled with help from the right equipment, difficult barriers can be overcome as these two chaps amply demonstrate.

Mk III to Kyle of Sutherland

A MK III Wheelyboat purchased by the Kyle Trust was launched in June. From the start of the 2009 season it will be used by the Kyle of Sutherland Angling Association and the Lairg Angling Association for salmon and sea trout on the tidal waters of the Kyle above Bonar Bridge and on Lochs Migdale and Shin for brown trout. The Wheelyboat will also be available for nature watching and sightseeing. Contact the Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust for more information about letting and availability—telephone 01863 766655 or e-mail admin@ksft.org.

The boat was purchased with financial assistance from Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE) and has been donated free of any charge to the two mid-Sutherland community angling associations.

WHEELYBOATS COMING SOON:

Llandegfedd Reservoir, Pontypool
Raith Lake, Kirkcaldy
Stithians Reservoir, Cornwall
River Fowey, Cornwall
Llyn Clywedog, Llanidloes
Tiverton Canal, Devon
Waterford & District AA, Co
Waterford
Eyebrook Trout Fishery, Corby

PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT:

River Fal, Cornwall
River Tay, Perthshire
Lake Windemere, Cumbria
Farmoor Reservoir, Oxford
River Tees, Teesside

WATCH THIS SPACE!

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 at www.wheelyboats.org.

Legacies

We all need to write a will so that we can help protect the future of our family and friends. When it comes to writing yours, please consider a gift to The Wheelyboat Trust. You have undoubtedly enjoyed the fresh air and freedom of the countryside and quite possibly the spray of fresh or salt water on your cheeks. You know how important activities like these are to your wellbeing. A gift to the Trust in your will is a guarantee that disabled people whose choices are limited will benefit from the freedom and exhilaration Wheelyboats provide.

If you would like to leave a gift, let your solicitor know. Our registered charity number is 292216 and our registered office is 20 Eversley Road, Bexhill on Sea, TN40 1HE.

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

Every year a number of donations arise from charity fundraising events, club days, raffles, etc. If you organise events such as these, please consider nominating us as your charity to support in 2009.

Many thanks indeed!

THE WHEELYBOAT TRUST

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