

# RYA Sailability Press Release

## **NAMING OF A DEVON LUGGER FOR QUEEN MARY SAILABILITY BY HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL ON WEDNESDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JANUARY AT THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL BOATSHOW**

**HRH The Princess Royal will perform a short ceremony of naming a new Devon Lugger for Queen Mary Sailability on the Honnor Marine stand (N1823) just after 1430 today (Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January) at the London International Boatshow.**

**The boat will be used mainly by Special Schools for children with severe learning disability. Some children from Walton Leigh School, Walton on Thames, who will be sailing in the Lugger this summer, will be on the stand with their Head Teacher, Linda Curtis.**

**There will also be a representative present of Thames Water and the Masonic Province of Middlesex Charitable Trust that have provided the funds to purchase the boat.**

**The Lugger will also be adapted for wheel steering to enable paraplegics and other sailors with severe physical disabilities to sail it.**

**Michael Shefras, Chairman of RYA Thames Valley will introduce Michael Cogswell, Chairman of Queen Mary Sailability, who is wheelchair dependant following a skiing accident and is a member of the 2.4 mini keelboat Paralympic squad.**

### **Further details:**

#### **QUEEN MARY SAILABILITY**

Queen Mary Sailability is a group within Queen Mary Sailing Club, Ashford Middlesex that offers sailors with most forms of disability the opportunity to get afloat in a variety of boats suited to their needs. The standard of sailing ranges from complete beginner to Paralympic Squad member. Among the disabled sailors are children from six special schools in the surrounding Boroughs of Elmbridge, Spelthorne and Runnymede and an adult group with learning disability. The children are mainly severely Autistic or have Downs Syndrome. They have been sailing for several years in 20' Yeoman Keelboats but a recent Recreational Craft Directive has reduced the maximum number of crew in the Yeoman. We therefore have been looking to purchase an alternative boat and chose the Devon Lugger which has a Yawl rig with a loose footed mainsail, preventing the danger of head injury from the boom, and enables us to accommodate two additional children at a time. Also it is easier for our volunteers to launch.

#### **THAMES WATER**

The Thames Water representative at the Boatshow will be Rob Harrison, who is the Director of Asset Management. Rob's team looks after all Thames Water's assets (which includes reservoirs) and in addition he is a keen sailor in his spare time.

Queen Mary Reservoir is the location on which members of Queen Mary Sailability sail. Thames Water has donated £5500 towards the purchase of the Devon Lugger.

#### **THE MASONIC PROVINCE OF MIDDLESEX CHARITABLE TRUST**

The Trust will be represented by the Chairman of the Trustees, Mr Peter Baker, who is also the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex, whose Provincial Grand Master is HRH Prince Michael of Kent, *GCVO*.

The Masonic Province of Middlesex Charitable Trust was established by the Freemasons of Middlesex in 1997 with the specific purpose of enabling the Province, which has approximately 8,000 members, to be able to actively participate in charitable giving within the area of the former County of Middlesex. It has investments of approximately £1.25M and the return on these monies is used to make charitable grants totalling approximately £50,000 per annum to a wide variety of organisations catering for both young and old people, the disabled and sick. The Trust has donated £3000 towards the purchase of the Devon Lugger for Queen Mary Sailability.