

**MBL 009****John Howell – Born 1936 - Lives in Arnside – talks of Arnside Sailing Club and his sailing experiences.**

	Sailing has played a big part in his adult life, first learnt on Killington describes first experience. Bought a mirror dinghy and then sailed on Windermere for 2 years. They wanted to sail on tidal waters so joined Arnside sailing club
1.40	Then (circa 1966) was a small club with a little dinghy park (which has been replaced) club had started in 1958. About 15 members' boats. Friendly club – a family club. Children would make mud slides and get covered in mud.
3.10	Talks about the sort of events they organised. On mid height tides John went across other side of estuary and planted balloons and the most balloons brought back the winner. Close to Holme Island, 3 rocks inner, outer and seldom seen (currently on view, previous time 12 years ago). John would walk from white creek to rocks and put toffees in rock, sailors with most toffees would win
5.20	Commodore – Jeff Robertson in late 60s early 70s – good at teaching youngsters.
6.05	How did you learn to sail in Kent Estuary? You would crew for someone and if you showed promise they would keep you – one way to learn. I would go up to Arnside Knott at low water and try and memorise the sand banks. Club would also have trips to Morecambe out on one tide and wait for tide to turn to come back.
8.30	Club social events outside of sailing? To fundraise club would hold jumble sales, also slide shows and talks. Club never rich but kept going. Then bar came along which changed things and made club richer.
9.55	Has the club always been in the same place? Yes, it's the old customs house. Access was original around the side as only upper floor was useable space. Talks about building. Old dinghy park - no changing facilities or toilets. New dinghy park has proper facilities
11.54	What first got you hooked in to sailing? One of first events on Windermere came third which gave pleasure of feeling they had worked hard to get to that position.
12.51	Talks about leaving Arnside on early morning tide. In ignorance they thought there was permanent water. They ran out of water half way down the bay. They realised they were not in channel to Arnside so carried the boat into the right channel which took about 3 hours. He could see a red object on sand which was a sea bed drifter. The tag on it asked that it be sent back to Dept for Fisheries. It had been dropped off in Whitehaven area and had been pushed along the sea bed to Arnside - It had taken 9 months. He got 10 shillings in return.
15.20	Particular sailing days which stick out in your mind? Outer rock race (Grange) if a good windy day it was very exciting race. Late 60s he once counted 21 sails on the water which was extraordinary. Never seen so

	many boats on water. Talks of open event. It isn't a good place to sail but it has its pleasure. Water never constant.
17.11	Is it difficult to sail here if you haven't before? Difficulty knowing how to judge going around buoys because of speed of tides, but you learn.
18.24	Racing keenly contested, young and old could take part. What is the difference between then and now? Across the North West the numbers have dropped. Little dinghy racing. Only club in area which is thriving is Blackpool and Fleetwood. Numbers of people from Arnside at club would be 50% but not the case now. Lifestyle changes? Used to have cruisers moored in channel but channel silted up and now there are no cruising boats here.
21.50	Talks of wall at far side of viaduct which once showed but no longer depends upon floods etc. The channel used to meander until the late 50s until they dropped sill on viaduct. Now stays on Arnside side.
23.30	Storms or floods? Talks of a strong wind and worried about boats at dinghy park. He threw a rope around boats and held them for the rest of the night. 68? 69?. 82 or 83 jetty at Arnside swept away and cruisers blown away from boat yard and blown in to viaduct.
25.50	Crossfields boatyard in 60s under management of John Durden(?) who was commodore of Sailing Club, then boats repaired and some stored in shed (next to coastguard station). The boat yard was locked up and deteriorated (remains of stone building). Boats repaired up until early 80s. Also became a chandlery.
28.50	John has had no links with coastguard. Talks generally about coastguard.
29.50	Sailing to Piel Island (he is referring to a navigational chart). Talks about the differences in water, clear not sandy. Ever since trying to find a fast north west channel to Piel. Once they grounded on a sand bank but they could see the lights from the pub on Piel so they managed to swivel the boat off the bank. They would try and get in to the Grange channel and head for Half Shoal. Talks about navigating to Piel fastest was around 5.5 hours.
34.16	Other trips? Talks of one of best sails, left Arnside about 4 in morning, and to Fleetwood. Headed for café at Knott End – too early for café, (a very fast time), then to Walney and back to Fleetwood, back to Silverdale to wait for water had a pint and then got back to Arnside.
36.40	What does it feel like to have a great day sailing? Talks about bad days sailing. Talks of walking the boat back. Sometimes have to take it down to viaduct before coming back because of flow.
38.14	Picturesque place to sail? Talks of popularity of cruising to Isle of Man, particularly TT week. Also a member of Glasson sailing club. Talks of Glasson open event in 1960s.
40.30	Difficulties of working with local tides. Water only comes in for 2 hours and then goes back so it's hard to get anywhere. On a late afternoon tide talks of walking the boat and anchoring to wait for tide and sail on – a way to beat the limitations of tide. Talks about getting stuck in Morecambe because of the wind.
44.20	Mooring in Grange? Talks of Marsh disappearing near Holme Island. Talks about the idea that Morecambe Bay is on a fulcrum. Remembers one

	winter when waves were being thrown on to the prom. Talks about marsh changing in Grange and Silverdale. Talks of rocks near Silverdale that he was once worried about.
47.45	Talks about channels in Bay. Arnside bank breaking off into bay,
49.49-50.16	(Break) talking about Alan Lockhet? (author of pamphlet about the Bay) was member of Barrow Club and he organised cadets racing.
	Interviewed by Emma Aylett 18 Oct 2016 Summarised by Emma Aylett