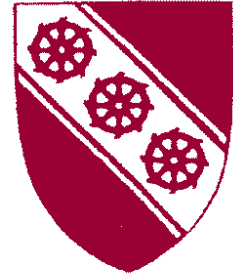


St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



11th February, 2006

In this issue ...

We have the results of the boat naming auction, arrangements for Torpids, reflections on the boat club of 25 years ago from someone who was in the thick of it with updates from some of his contemporaries, a call for any sporty alumnæ willing to kick a ball, details of the AGM & Dinner, somewhere to hang your oar, and the latest rumours on our triallists.

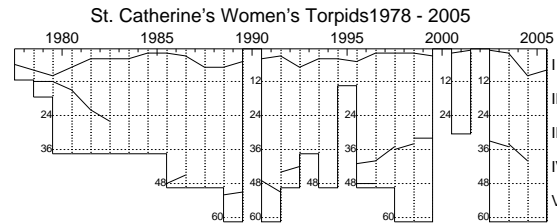
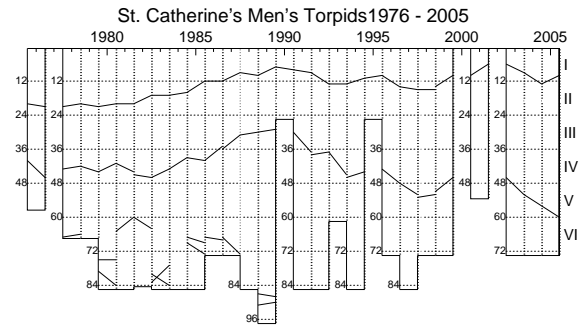
Boat Naming

The winner of the bid to name the new Women's 3rd Boat was Richard Peters (M.82), former Chairman and current Vice-President of the Rowing Society. He has chosen to name it *Sir Glyn Jones* in memory of the first President of the Society who played a significant part in securing our original sponsorship deal with Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte. The winning bid was £200, which seems quite a modest sum.

At some point this term we hope to arrange a mass naming ceremony for all our new eights. However, naming 6 boats together instead of the usual one at a time does present a few logistical problems that need sorting out. We've got our eye on the patch of grass in the Gut just downstream of the boathouse, but where are we going to find 6 pairs of trestles ...



Dawn at the head of the river. Plenty of time to admire the view while crews wait for their turn to spin.



Recent performances of St Catherine's Torpids. (1978 was the first year that Torpids included Women's divisions)

Torpids 2006

Torpids 2006 will run from Wednesday to Saturday, 1st-4th March, with divisions racing every 30 minutes from noon until 5pm. Unlike Eights, there is no change in times on the Saturday.

Our Men's 1st and 2nd Torpids and Women's 1st Torpid have places in the fixed divisions. There is also a women's 2nd Torpid and possibly a men's 3rd Torpid who will have to qualify via Rowing On, although it should be noted that 1997 was the last time a St Catz Torpid actually managed to Row On.

Torpids 2006: Wednesday Start times

Crew	Div	Bungline	Time
Men's 1st Torpid	I	10	5.00pm
Women's 1st Torpid	I	8	4.30pm
Men's 2nd Torpid	V	12	1.00pm

Normally this issue of the newsletter would contain some details of the prospective 1st Torpids, but both captains seem to be playing their cards close to their chests this year.

President: Bruce Mitchell

Vice Presidents: Don Barton, Rev. Joseph Bell,
Lord Garden KCB, Richard Peters,
Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE, Ben Sylvester

25 Years Ago

Anu Dudhia, Captain of Boats 1980/81

The morning after the 1980 Trinity Term Boat Club Dinner I awoke to find myself Men's Captain of Boats. Having never rowed higher than the 2nd VIII, I wouldn't have been an obvious choice but, during the after-dinner speeches the outgoing Captain, Ed Parker-Jervis, announced that there wouldn't be any men's rowing next year since he had failed to persuade anyone to take on the job. I sometimes wonder what course my life would have taken if, of all those present, I'd had the *second* lowest alcohol tolerance.

It was a difficult beginning. Nothing had been written down from previous years, there were no 'how to run a College Boat Club' training days and, of course, no Rowing Society. I did at least try to remedy the first point by starting up the 'Captain's Diary' so that my successors might avoid some of my inevitable mistakes.

The Boat Club was run by a relatively small committee of just 4 people. Apart from myself there was the Men's Boat Club Secretary, Tony Mitchell, whose exploits as a born-again sculler have often featured in recent newsletters; the Women's Captain, Sharon MacDonald, who resigned after one term to be replaced by Cathy Panter-Brick — every bit as formidable as her name suggests; and the rather less scary Women's Secretary, Laura Monger.

Despite our collective lack of experience, somehow we managed to get out 9 crews for Christ Church Regatta, 5 crews in Torpids and 7 in Eights. Of course, there was no internet in those days, no mobile phones, and email was only used between computer-nerds in labs. I should add that in those days there was no OURCs either, and the whole of College rowing, including Torpids and Eights, was run by the Secretary of OUBC in his spare time. I think one has to question if these so-called modern aids to communication really are all that they are cracked up to be.

Or maybe we just didn't study as hard. In my case the captaincy coincided with the start of my DPhil and I was fortunate in having a supervisor, an ex-Univ oarsman himself, who was unperturbed by my long absences from the lab. Actually, I don't think he took much notice of my occasional presences either.

We kept our boats in one of the bays of the OUBC boathouse, owned by University College. The Univ boatman, Norman Dix, had also been keeping an eye on our equipment since time immemorial, which, in practice, meant at least for the undergraduate lifespan of 3 years (as I said: nothing got written down). However, he did claim to recall my supervisor rowing 20 years earlier.

Funding came entirely from JCR Clubs. Each term there was a 'democratic' meeting to decide how this would be divided up and one of those who always gave us a difficult time was a leading advocate for the dramatic society: a certain Jeannette Winter-son. Although she had the advantage of knowing more and longer words, we had the advantage that about a third of the undergraduate body (including Ms Winter-son herself) had sat in a boat at some point during their time in Oxford so when it came to the vote we generally didn't do too badly.

It would be nice to say that we were as successful with the 'quality' as well as the 'quantity' of our crews but, in the case of the men's boat club at least, it wouldn't be true. With only a couple of ex-1st VIII oarsmen, the 1st Torpid just about held our place 8th in Div II but by Eights even those had succumbed to finals and we dropped a couple of places to 3rd in Div III, the lowest 1st Eight on the river (not counting the minor colleges), which, I feel may, be the main distinguishing feature of my term of office.



The 1981 Men's 1st Torpid: Anu Dudhia (bow), Steve Prosser, Kip Marks, Tony Mitchell, Gareth Williams, Dave Youd, Graham Elliot, Ed Parker-Jervis (str), Pete Firth (cox).

The women's 1st boat had a more successful year, up 3 places to 3rd in Div I in Torpids and holding on to 9th in Eights. Only 10 Colleges had women's crews in those days: the 5 women-only colleges and the 5 mixed Colleges such as Catz.

1981 was the last year the Men's 1st VIII rowed in *How Cold My Toes*. Over the following years it was subjected to use and abuse by ever lower crews, abandoned in a barn while the boathouse was being built, ceremonially trashed in the Quad in 2001 when the women went Head in Torpids, and the fragment bearing the boat's name was back in the boathouse at the time of last year's fire. Traces of our other boats from that and later days have long since vanished, yet that piece of the bows still survives. I don't have particularly happy memories from my year rowing in that boat, but I have to admire its determination to outlast me.

News from Alumni

Anu Dudhia (M.77) Well, obviously still here in Oxford and, more worryingly, still in the Atmospheric Physics lab where I did my DPhil all those years ago. Nowadays, however, I have DPhil students of my own to supervise. None of them rows.

Ed Parker-Jervis (M.78) I'm now living on the south coast at Emsworth, near Portsmouth, after making a life-style choice a few years ago to work for myself rather than continuing with corporate life. So I'm still working in telecoms but providing a consulting service for others, mainly working from home. Sarah, the kids (Helen 10 & Jamie 8) and I all mess about in boats to greater or lesser extent — but boats of the sailing variety on Chichester Harbour rather than rowing. At the last count we were up to a fleet of 6 dinghies and canoes between us!

Luet Wong (M.80) I stayed on after graduating with my BA and finished my DPhil in chemistry in 1987. I then went to Wolfson as a JRF for 2 years before working as a NATO Fellow at Caltech in Pasadena. I took up a temporary lecturer post at Oxford in 1991 and was appointed a University Lecturer and Fellow of St Hugh's in 1994. I work on metalloenzymes and biotechnology. Married to Qi, we live in Oxford with our two sons aged 12 and 9.

Robert Trythall (M.80) Still living in Kincardineshire and working for BP. Have finally retired from rowing and coaching at Aberdeen boat club, as it took up just too much time. However, still keeping fit by running up hills instead. Very occasionally we use the ergo in the garage. Went with Shona (Mrs T.) to Henley last summer to watch the Royal Regatta. For a couple of rowing buffs like us it was great to see so many good crews. I also thought that we were some of the few people more interested in the rowing than being seen in a posh frock and getting drunk (not that I wear a posh frock).

Calling All Old Catz Birds ...

Sarah Boddy (M.98)

Saturday 4th March 2006: Catz Old Birds v Catz Birds football match. If you ever wore the sacred navy shirt, here's your chance to put your boots back on and take on the current college team. Then you can either join the footballers for some curry action or put on your glad rags and head to the Rowing Society Dinner. We can try to work the match around watching this term's fabulous Catz crews charging up the Isis. If enough former rowers show up, perhaps we can go out for a paddle too on Sunday?

Anyways, all welcome, all abilities, any current fitness level, the more, the merrier. If interested, email sarah.boddy@stcatz.ox.ac.uk (yes, I am still here).

Rowing Society Dinner, 4th March

You should by now have received your copy of the St Catherine's Year from the College. Apart from containing a nice piece by Chris Liwski on his perceptions of the College and the 2005 Boat Race, the package should also have included an invitation to this year's Rowing Society AGM and Dinner on the Saturday of Torpids.

In case you've not received it, or mislaid it, the summary is that you need to send a cheque for £39 per person (including guests) to Gill Branagan at the Development Office, St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ by 17th February. Even if you've missed the deadline, it's probably still worth contacting her: email gillian.branagan@stcatz.ox.ac.uk or phone 01865 281 585.

Drinks and the AGM are from 6.45pm in the Mary Sunley Building, with the Dinner in Hall at 7.30pm. Dress is black-tie.

For various reasons, this is probably the last year we'll be running the annual dinner in such a format (shifting to summer term and perhaps a buffet are options under consideration) so if you've always been meaning to attend a formal dinner in Hall with current and former Boat Club members, this may be your last chance.

Society Ties and The History

We have recently ordered a new stock of silk bow-ties in Rowing Society colours. These can be obtained from the Treasurer, Chris Talbot, for £15 (email christalbot@ntlworld.com or phone 01234 305765).

Also there are a few remaining copies of *The History of St Catherine's Rowing 1875-1999*, for sale at £19.95. To order one, contact the Development Office.

Both items should also be available for purchase at the Rowing Society Dinner.

Old Trophy Oars

One feature of the new accommodation block which houses the Captains' Rooms (funded thanks to you, the Rowing Society) is a large blank internal wall. Just the sort of place we've been looking for, in fact, to hang oars celebrating past successes. So if you do have an old illuminated St Catherine's oar, consigned to the attic now that you've given up trying

to impress visitors or descendants with tales of past exploits, here's your chance to give it a new lease of life and impress a whole new generation of students as they make their way up the stairs to hassle the Captains.

Contact me if you have such an oar and we'll then try and sort out how to get it to Oxford.

University Triallists

The OUBC crews have not been officially announced yet, but rumour has it a couple of the seats in the Blue Boat might have St Catz names on them, with perhaps another two in Isis and the coxes yet to be decided. If that's true it should certainly help our College's statistics on the number of members of the OUBC and Isis crews in the past 10 years.

Top Colleges for supplying Men's University Heavyweight crews during 1996–2005

OUBC		Isis	
1. Keble	14	1. Oriel	15
2. Oriel	10	2. Magdalen	9
3. Christ Church	7	3. St Catherine's	8
= Lincoln	7	4. Lincoln	7
= Pembroke	7	= Pembroke	7
= St Catherine's	7	6. Keble	5
7. Brasenose	6	= St Edmund Hall	5
8. University	5	8. Christ Church	4
= Hertford	4	= University	4
10. Balliol	3	= Worcester	4
= St Edmund Hall	3		

Although these figures reflect the fact that we have had representatives in the Tideway Boat Races every year since 1998, we haven't had anyone in the Women's or Lightweights' Boat Races held at Henley since 2003. However, this year our Women's Vice-Captain, Clare Shakespeare, may well be putting in an appearance since she now seems to have been 'co-opted' into the Women's Lightweight squad.

Subscriptions & Newsletters

I have been asked to remind those of you who haven't yet updated your regular payments that annual subscriptions are now £15 (and have been so for a couple of years — yes, you have been sent reminders!).

These newsletters usually appear on the web a week or so before the postal version arrives. If you want to be put on the Rowing Society email list for notification of when this happens, contact me. For those of you who've been reading or printing off the PDF versions of the newsletters from the web for

some time and have no further need for the postal version, please let us know since it helps us keep the administrative overheads to a minimum.

Coming Up ...

In the next issue there will be the Captains' reports on this term's rowing, official announcements of those participating in the Oxford Boat Race crews and a look at the Boat Club of 1970/71 when Nigel Henderson was Captain. Items for the 'News from Alumni' section are always welcome, but particularly from anyone who rowed in that year.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

Row.Soc: <http://www.atm.ox.ac.uk/rowing/rs.html>

Diary

1–4 March 2006	Torpid
4th March 2006	RS AGM & Dinner
1st April 2006	Henley Boat Races
2nd April 2006	The Boat Race
24–27 May 2006	Eights

Robert Giles

We note with regret the recent death of Robert Giles (M.39), who we think may have been the most senior member of the Rowing Society. Robert was an active member of the Boat Club during the early 1940's, fulfilling at various times the roles of Secretary, Treasurer and Captain, and several extracts from the diary he kept during that period appear in the History. His funeral was held on 12th January in Godalming.



The 1942 St Catherine's Eight. Back row, left to right: G. A. Morrison (4), J. H. Kahle (3), A. Green (2), T. J. Brown (bow); Middle row: S. Solomon (6), R. N. Giles (str), J. Marsh (coach), J. H. Walker (7), W. G. Timms (5); Front: G. Knight (cox)