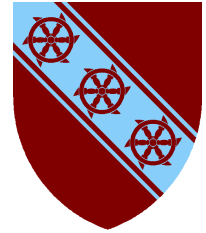




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



7th February, 2010

In this issue . . .

Now we're at the end of 3rd week, I'm finally back on schedule with these newsletters. The river's just reopened, post thaw, and the top Catz boats have been in action earlier this afternoon, so I've even got something for the 'Results' section. There is an update on the London Drinks, and a reminder of the AGM & Dinner on 6th March and, river permitting, details for Torpids. Ed Parker-Jervis and Anne Hollifield both contribute memories from 30 years ago. With the help of the Alumni Office, Ed's also made heroic attempts to track down others from that era and not only has this elicited contributions for the 'News from Alumni' section, but also the 'Photo Archive' section of the web-site. And finally a brief update on our two (it turns out) University triallists.

Results

Isis Winter League D, 7th February

Total: 43 Entries

| | | | |
|------|------|-----------|------------|
| 6th | 4:54 | *Men's A | 6th/28 M8 |
| 8th | 4:59 | *Men's C | 8th/28 M8 |
| 9th | 5:00 | *Men's D | 9th/28 M8 |
| 22nd | 5:41 | Men's B | 22nd/28 M8 |
| 25th | 5:44 | Women's A | 2nd/15 W8 |

*Same crew racing 3 times



1980: a grateful Boat Club expressing their appreciation for all the efforts of the outgoing Captain, Ed Parker-Jervis, in what was then the traditional manner.

London Drinks

Firstly, a reminder that the February drinks are this coming Thursday, 11th Feb (see Diary at the end of this newsletter). Also, bumping into Darren Chadwick at the boathouse today, he asks me to spread the word that he's now managed to arrange the 'Oxford & Cambridge Club' in Pall Mall as next month's venue (11th March). I'll add more details on the RS web-page when I have them.

AGM & Dinner

The Rowing Society AGM & Dinner will be held in St Catherine's College on Saturday, 6th March (the Saturday of Torpids). You should, by now, have received your invitation. If not, it can also be found on the Rowing Society web-pages.

For those who have scanned the menu in detail, I am assured that the dessert is actually a 'Mousse' and not a 'Mouse'. Having recently returned from a gastronomically adventurous week in France, I can't help feeling a bit disappointed.



Finally out on the water, the Men's 2nd VIII on the Isis yesterday. Only 24 more training-days to Torpids. . .

Torpids

The river was briefly open for business during 0th week when some of the 1st boats were back, but the towpath was too icy for anyone to cycle alongside and coach. With the thaw came the inevitable floods and the rest of January was spent land-training. However, now at the end of 3rd Week, the river's dropping, the restrictions are gradually being lifted and next week

President: Bruce Mitchell
 Vice Presidents: Don Barton,
 Richard Peters,
 Sir Matthew Pinsent CBE,
 Ben Sylvester.

even novice coxes will probably get to go out. Given the late start, it's fortunate that Torpids this term reverts back to its nominal 7th week dates.

Torpids 2010 will be from Wed-Sat, 3rd-6th March. Racing each day starts at noon with divisions every half hour until 5.00pm.

The women are starting Head of the River, being chased on the first day by Christ Church, and the men 4th are on the river, with Magdalen ahead and Oriel behind. Rachel Loveridge continues to coach our 1st boats but both will do well to hold their positions; the women, especially, have had a large turnover since last year.



The Catz Women's VIII racing in today's IWL.



Catz Men's 'C' racing in today's IWL.

These days, Torpids consists of 6 men's and 5 women's division, with crews in the lowest division having to qualify in the Rowing On races held on the preceding Friday. Last year both our 2nd boats had to Row On. The men's 2nd went on to successfully re-establish themselves in the fixed divisions but the women's 2nd Torpid had a bit of a nightmare, dropping 8 places. Fortunately the women's 3rd Torpid fared rather better, finishing 2nd in Div V. So, if they qualify, this year's Women's 2nd Torpid will inherit that place with another chance of returning the fixed divisions. The last time a Catz Men's 3rd Torpid actually succeeded in Rowing On was in 1998, so that's their only goal. There's not even a rumour of a women's 3rd boat at this point.

Torpids 2010: Wednesday Start times

| Crew | Div | Bungline | Time |
|---------------------|-----|----------|---------|
| Men's 1st Torpid | I | 4 | 5.00pm |
| Women's 1st Torpid | I | 1 | 4.30pm |
| Men's 2nd Torpid | V | 11 | 1.00pm |
| *Women's 2nd Torpid | V | ? | 12.30pm |
| *Men's 3rd Torpid | VI | ? | 12.00pm |

*Subject to qualifying in Rowing On

30 Years Ago ...

Ed Parker-Jervis, Men's Captain 79/80

I recall arriving at college for the first time for Michaelmas Term 1978. Before I'd had time to register and collect a key for my room I'd been pulled aside 'You're the one who rowed at school aren't you?'. My questioners turned out to be the then Captain of Boats, Rob Hughes and the previous Captain of Boats, Jon Wilmshurst. This set the scene for me for 1978-9; rowing with some experienced 3rd and 4th years in a IV for Christ Church Regatta and then in the 1st VIII for Torpids and Eights.

So it was with some shock that, as the newly appointed Captain for 1979-80, I realised that not only had many of the most experienced oarsmen and women left, but also the slowly dawning realisation of the huge effort that had to go into organising some 8 to 10 crews. With the assistance of a great team consisting of Anne, Women's Captain, and enthusiasts like Anu (then still an undergraduate), Tony Mitchell, Steve Wald and others, the bar (run by Paul Spedding, bar manager and 1st VIII cox — a useful combination of skills!) became a nightly venue for organising crews, coxes and boats.

I recall 1980's Torpids and Eights as a time of great interest in the Boat Club with so many crews actively rowing. We boated from OUBC — the old, pre-fire, boathouse — and had a constant battle to keep the modest number of wooden boats and blades serviceable given the normal mishaps of rowing on the crowded river. The University College boatman of the time, Norman Dix, who helped Catz on a fairly informal basis, was probably not as well appreciated by passing undergraduates as his unstinting efforts on our behalf deserved.

The view early in Michaelmas Term 1979 was that Boat Club, JCR and College funds could be made to stretch, just, to a new boat. Women's rowing was gaining in popularity and we took the decision to go

for a new shell, custom built for the women, a decision which we later realised was surprisingly radical as seemingly no one had thought to build a boat customised for women and had simply used schoolboys' designs. After much research and several visits to see boatbuilders we decided to play safe and use the local builders, Salter Bros. No sooner was the boat delivered in Hilary 1980 than OUWBC, under the forthright leadership of Leo (Eleanor) Sharpston, decided they'd like to borrow it for Osiris. We ended up, one or two JCR meeting debates later, trading the boat loan for some much needed experienced coaching from Leo.



The 1980 Women's 1st Torpid. From bow: Aileen Edwards, Lynn Abercrombie, Julia Hood, Sarah Forster, Cathy Panter-Brick, Christine Baker, Karen Troy, Sally Holden, with cox Jim Skinner. Photo from Jim Skinner.



A scene from the 1980 Boat Club Dinner. I have a queasy suspicion that a challenge involving beer and sit-ups is in progress. Gallantry prevents me from identifying the ladies concerned, but the gentlemen aiding and abetting are Kevin Skinner and Ed Parker-Jervis. My gratitude to Nick Taylor for supplying the photo, although possibly those featured may feel differently.

Torpids and Eights weeks saw great enthusiasm, with Chemists, Engineers and Rugby VIIIs helping make up a total of 8 crews taking to the water for Catz. The lack of experience however took its toll with the Men's 1st VIII having something of an ongoing battle of nerves with St Peter's (our neighbours in the OUBC boathouse) and the Osler House crew. The Men's 2nd VIII fared best with good results in both Torpids and Eights while the Women's 1st VIII had a great Torpids but suffered in Eights week.

A review of my time as Captain 30 years ago should perhaps not go by without mention of the 'duck' incident. While sculling peacefully one afternoon near Donnington Bridge I ran into a few ducks. In my haste to allow them under the blade on one side I caught a crab on the other side — and promptly ended up swimming — with the ducks beating a hasty retreat. Unfortunately for my pride the incident was witnessed and a photo of a duck presented to me at the next Boat Club dinner. Sadly the photo has since been mislaid!

Anne Hollifield, Women's Captain 79/80

I hadn't the first idea about rowing when I came to Oxford and no desire to try it initially, but was persuaded to have a go by someone in the bar who said something along the lines of 'Come on you can't go to Oxford with all these toffs and not have a go at rowing, it'll be a laugh'. And, at less than 8 stone at the time and 5 foot 2 on a good day, I was hardly built for it — in fact I had a go at rowing because I fancied coxing. Of course, once I'd been out on the river I was hooked and that was the end of my plan to go up to Oxford and get a first.

News from Alumni

Cynthia Grover (M.77) Every year I make at least one boating expedition: in Belgium usually kayaking (from pub to pub — every activity here includes beer!), and in Canada canoeing in the wilds. I would happily cross the Channel to row on occasion.

Angela Megson (M.77) I went from college straight into retailing with Marks and Spencer — learning the ropes in shops and after 18months joining their HQ in London as a Food Buyer. I stayed until 1990 and ended up being Head of their Fish Department but was headhunted for a senior position at Sainsbury's where I stayed for 11 years, buying many different types of food and became their first Trading Departmental Director (was a bit of a male bastion!) and then promoted to their Board in 2000 as Director of Ecommerce and Business Development but until that point had really only done food buying — it was an interesting DotCom time! I resigned in 2001 — long story! and then joined the Board of Waitrose as Director of Buying which was a great job! It was combined with a move out of London into rural Oxfordshire and that was great too!

I resigned in 2006 — for many reasons too long to mention, but one sad reason was that my husband had been diagnosed in 2003 with terminal cancer and I wanted to spend the time he had left with him...he died in September 2007 — much later than all the predictions and we enjoyed many happy times together. Only now can I truly say that it was a privilege to be by his side on his last journey.

I moved to a more ‘part time’ life in 2006 and became a NonExec Director for a couple of companies and refreshed myself with some training back in my psychology and physiology roots and am now also a mentor and coach for some senior business execs, and indeed people I meet who, I sense, need some help! It is a very different life from the full throttle existence I had for over 20 years, but am getting used to it and now greatly enjoy the greater freedom!

I also met in 2008 a fellow widower (his wife died of cancer after a long battle in early 2008) and we have regained a bit of sunlight in our lives, have become extremely close and plan to marry on May 1st. So out of a lot of personal grief and tragedy has come love and happiness again, and another wedding for me aged 51 (very odd and never imagined) and I am blessed to have found another wonderful man to share my life.

We live on a hill on the far edge of the Cotswolds in a thatched cottage with lots of peace and quiet.

Ed Parker-Jervis (M.78) I’m living on the south coast, between Portsmouth and Chichester and married with 14 and 12 year olds; working in the telecoms industry — for the last 7 years as a consultant after opting out of corporate bureaucracy. Although no longer rowing I still spend a lot of time on the water — in sailing dinghies.

Martin Clark (M.78) Martin has had a ‘fairly serious’ rowing career (15 years of it in Germany) and had the opportunity to row with some exceptional international oarsmen (including Simon Gawlik — 2010 Blue Boat squad). Now mainly involved as a juniors coach at York City Rowing Club, Martin is still a member of three other clubs — Frankfurter Rudergesellschaft Nied 1921 e.V, Ruder Club Nassovia-Höchst and Thames Rowing Club. Best recent success: 9th at the 2009 Vesta Veterans Eights Head.

Anne Hollifield (M.78) *Currently working for Middlesbrough Council — Google will provide more details and photos, adds a last remark to her piece on 30 years ago ...* Would still love a paddle and the Tees looks fabulous but they all look a bit young and I haven’t been able to con any of my kids to having a go (so I can join in).

Laura Hughes (née Monger) (M.79) I am married to Hywel Hughes (Jesus 1970) and living on Dartmoor with our daughter, Tirion 11, and son, Tomas 8. I work for the RNIB transcribing educational material and music into large print and Braille — a job I love. I also voluntarily run a small charity called Moorvision which provides support for families of blind and partially sighted children throughout Devon. We are not a terribly sporty family and a back problem prevents me rowing but our house is full of music — everything from Haydn to Heavy Metal!

University Triallists

My apologies to Gareth Morgan for omitting him from the last newsletter. He’s a Catz fresher — I’m guessing of Welsh origin — who’s trialling for the University lightweights and featured in their Trial VI-IIs race last November (unfortunately in the losing crew). OULRC’s winning run of 7 races came to an end last year, so no doubt Oxford will be planning to set that right.

As far as I know, Martin Walsh continues in OUBC trials, but Boat Race crews have yet to be announced.

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be Torpids results and reports, further updates on our University triallists, and a piece on the Boat Club of 40 years ago, when Nick Young was Captain. News items from alumni always welcome, including any of you from 30 years ago who missed the deadline for this edition (or who didn’t miss the deadline but whose replies got buried somewhere in my in-box!).

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

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

Diary

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|----------------|--|
| 11 Feb 2010 | Drinks at <i>The Cock Tavern</i> |
| 7.30pm | 27 Great Portland Street, London |
| | Closest tube: Oxford Circus |
| 21 Feb 2010 | Isis Winter League E |
| 26 Feb 2010 | Rowing On |
| 3–6 Mar 2010 | Torpids |
| 6 Mar 2010 | RS AGM & Dinner |
| 11 Mar 2010 | Drinks at <i>The Oxford & Cambridge Club</i> |
| 7.30pm | 71 Pall Mall, London |
| 28 Mar 2010 | Henley Boat Races |
| 3 Apr 2010 | The Boat Race |
| 26–29 May 2010 | Summer Eights |