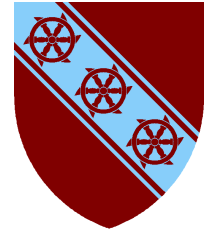




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College,
Oxford OX1 3UJ



11th November, 2007

In this issue . . .

I'd better start with the summer floods. Despite widespread coverage in the national and international media, the Oxford flooding was, in fact, no worse than it had been in January 2003 or Easter of 1998, and pictures you may have seen of water lapping up against ancient buildings were, how shall I put it, 'slightly contrived'. The river got as far as our boathouse doors and no further. The only parts of town that were flooded were the lower end of Abingdon Rd and the Botley Rd.

Nevertheless, it was a truly miserable summer with a number of UK regattas cancelled and the others almost invariably run in the rain. At Henley Women's Regatta the mud was so deep that, observing the women struggling to get through it, one (male) race official was famously overheard to say, 'normally you'd have to pay to watch this sort of thing'.

Anyway, in this issue there are the results of the Henley Royal and World Championship regattas, news from our alumni of other races, a look at the Boat Club of 10 years ago, an article about W.G. Kendrew, recently published writings of Nick Heiney, and the the current state of the Boat Club and, indeed, the river.



Hell and highwater for some, but just another working day for Jim, our boatman (on the right), on the 'towpath' last July, outside the site of the old OUBC.

Results

Henley Royal Regatta 4th-8th July

Stewards' Cup (Open coxless fours)
 Leander & Molesey (Andy Triggs Hodge, M.04)
 SemiF beat Australian Institute for Sport
 Final beat Brentwood Coll &
 Sharnigan Lake (Can)

Ladies' Plate (Intermediate eights)
 Isis & Oxford Brookes (Anthony Mullin, M.06)
 Thursday lost to Syracuse University, USA
 Oxford Brookes & Isis (Bruce Magee, M.05 &
 Stephan Moelvig, M.05)

Thursday beat Cambridge University
 QuarterF lost to Leander & Henley
 Molesey & New York A.C. (Neil Chugani, M.87)
 Thursday beat Triton Laga, Ned
 QuarterF beat Bantam BC, USA
 SemiF beat Leander & Henley
 Final lost to Harvard Univ, USA

Wyfold Cup (Club coxless fours)
 1829 Boat Club (Matt Smith, M.99)
 Wednesday beat Lea RC
 Thursday beat Eton Vikings
 QuarterF beat New York AC, USA
 SemiF beat Grosvenor RC
 Final beat London RC 'A'

Thames Cup (Club eights)
 Black Sheep 'A' (Darren Chadwick, M.03)
 failed to qualify

World Rowing Championships,
 26th August – 2nd September, Munich

Ante Kusurin (M.06)	CRO 2x	7th
Chris Liwski (M.04)	USA 4+	1st
Colin Smith (M.03)	GBR 2-	3rd
Andrew Triggs Hodge (M.04)	GBR 4-	4th

Summer Rowing

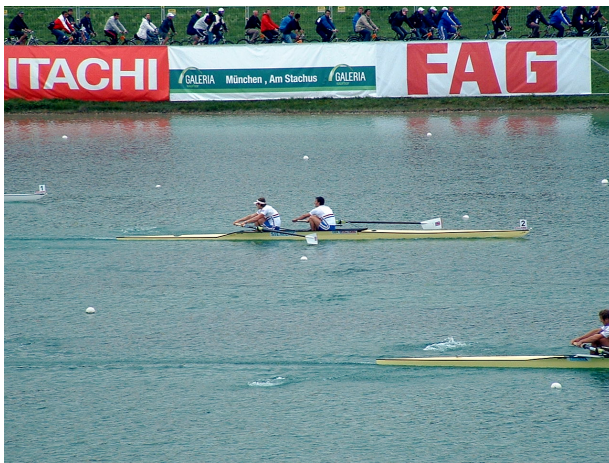
While the college rowing winds down over the summer, the more serious rowers are reaching the peak of their racing season. Seven alumni participated in this

President: Bruce Mitchell

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

year's Henley Royal Regatta. No less than three different crews in the Ladies Plate featured our alumni — fortunately managing to avoid having to race each other. Of these boats, Neil Chugani's crew (see News from Alumni) fared best in reaching the final. We did better in coxless fours. In the Wyfold competition (for club crews) Matt Smith was the stroke of the winning '1829' crew consisting of Oxford & Cambridge Boat Race veterans. (I'm sure there's a quip somewhere in there about burying the cleaver, but it's getting late and I'm tired!) The Stewards' (for international standard crews) was won by the GB four, stroked by Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04), seeing off competition from the Australian and Canadians.

At the Rowing World Championships held in Munich, there were more successes for our alumni, although not from the expected sources. From a UK perspective, the headline news was the GB coxless four *only* managing 4th place but, on a day when all the GB crews seemed doomed to finish 4th (the Saturday — I was there in the grandstand!), Colin Smith's bronze medal in the pair — his first at senior level — was a welcome relief. Ante Kusurin, in the Croatian double, finished 2nd in the B-final but Chris Liwski's American crew took gold in the coxed fours. Since the coxed fours may well be dropped from future World Championships through lack of entries (it is no longer an Olympic event), Chris may be now be able to hang on to his title of 'Reigning World Champion' for longer than most.



Colin Smith (bow) and Matthew Langridge rowing into 3rd place in the Coxless Pairs at the 2007 World Rowing Championships in Munich.

10 Years Ago...

In Michaelmas Term 1997 we had been in our new boathouse at Long Bridges for less than a year. Despite constant wind and rain we managed to assemble

5 crews (2 men's, 3 women's) for Christ Church Regatta, only for racing to be abandoned after 2 days due to a rising stream.

In Torpids the following term, both the men's and women's 1st boats rowed over for three days, maintaining respective positions of 15th and 2nd on the river, before racing was again cancelled due to a rising stream. Catz women were coached that year by Steve Williams, currently bow man in the GB coxless four.

There was also another bout of flooding over the Easter vacation which brought the river up to the boathouse doors but fortunately the Boat Club had decamped to Chester for a training camp (where the main problem was snow).

The following extracts are from the Rowing Society newsletters of that year.

Ollie Jones, on rowing in the first Isis crew to defeat Goldie in 8 years:

... By the time we arrived at Putney, after spending a productive week with the Blue Boat in Amsterdam on the Bosbaan, we knew we had a chance. Goldie certainly didn't share our point of view, and provided us with ample free motivation leading up to race day; we learned that they were expecting to clear us in three minutes and win by at least five lengths. So, in the race itself our plan was to stay right next to them and induce some self-doubt in their boat. After a sprint to the mile post, we dug in and rowed round the outside of their Surrey advantage, always at least half a length down. By twelve minutes in, we drew level, knowing our bend was creeping ever closer. They must have realised this too, and seemed to fade. Within little over a minute we had clear water and the racing line to ourselves.

In summer term the weather finally improved and there was a major, and successful, expedition to Coate Water Park, near Swindon. Laura Rose, women's captain:

We took both the 1st and 2nd VIII's to Coate Water Park Regatta totalling, with the men, one tenth of the college on this day trip! After a bad start due to my decision that cheap coaches are better than reliable ones [I assume Laura's referring to the vehicles] we eventually made it. Good job Tom and I decided to allow several hours to get there! The 2nd VIII were closely beaten in the first heat by Pembroke 1st VIII, whom the 1st's then went on to beat in the final along with St John's 1st VIII.

Also from Tom Wright, Men's Captain:

The 2nd VIII beat St John's 1st VIII to win the Novice final, and the 1st VIII reached the Senior 2 final, losing only to a very strong University of Wales

Cardiff crew. Rowing aside, the weather was beautiful, and sharing a 57-seater coach with three other colleges made it a very enjoyable day out.

In Eights that year, the Men rose 3 places to 14th while the Women remained 3rd. With more successes from the lower crews, including blades for the men's 2nd Eight to accompany their Coate Water pots, Catz emerged as the most successful College with a net total of 15 bumps. That also completed a year in which not a single Catz crew was bumped, either in Eights or in Torpids.

News from Alumni

Tony Mitchell (M.78) Just thought you might like to know that I had a go at the World Masters in Zagreb back in September and managed a win in the Vet C 1x with a time that was 4th fastest overall — so, not too shabby — and then won in the mixed 2x with Sarah Payne [Tony & Sarah also successfully defended their Mixed Vet C doubles titles at Henley Vets and the Pairs Head].



Tony Mitchell and Sarah Payne at the World Masters in Zagreb.

Ros Temple (M.81) Now back in Oxford as a University Lecturer in French Linguistics and as a fellow

of New College, but trying to walk a tightrope between incurring the wrath of St Catz or New College for not supporting the right boats on the river.

Neil Chugani (M.87) I'm enjoying my latest return from retirement to competitive rowing having raced in the Molesey BC and New York Athletic Club crew of former British, Australian, German and US internationals in the Ladies' Plate at Henley, where we unfortunately lost in the final to Harvard by a length, albeit that we despatched a few reasonable (and younger) crews en route to the final. Not bad for a part-time crew of old men. More recently we won the Head of the Galway in Ireland.

I'm now a non-exec director of the Boat Race Company, the entity which manages and organises the event.

After a stint in investment banking at Goldman Sachs, I am shortly due to take up a new post back in the media sector as Chief Financial Officer of BBC Worldwide, the commercial arm of the BBC.

Finally, and most importantly, my wife Kirsten Wilson (M.89) and I have just had our third child — Sam — a brother for Rosie (4) and Zach (2).

Charlotte Alldritt (M.04) I won at the Boston Marathon [a 31 mile Head Race] in the first coxless four to ever do the race (!). We now hold the S1 4- record by default, but got a pretty swift time (3:48:37).

W. G. Kendrew (1884–1962)

This article was prompted by a profile of W.G. Kendrew written by Joan Kenworthy which appeared in a recent Meteorological journal¹. That article is also the source of some of the information reproduced here.

Wilfred George Kendrew was an eminent climatologist and widely regarded as one of the founders of the discipline. But he also had strong connections with St Catherine's Boat Club probably from his arrival in Oxford as a student in 1902 until his retirement, as Dean, in 1950.

Unfortunately we have no record as to whether or not he rowed while an undergraduate (although it seems probable that he did) but, after serving in the First World War with the Royal Irish Fusiliers he returned to act as tutor for the non-Collegiate students in a wide range of subjects, becoming Senior Tutor in 1920. In 1914 he had married his former student, Evelyn, and a son, John, was born in 1917. However, he and his wife separated in 1921.

¹ *Weather*, Feb 2007, R.Met.Soc

The first reference to him in the Boat Club records occurs shortly thereafter: in 1922 it is noted that he was helping with the coaching. In 1930 he offers to give a lecture on the ‘theory of rowing’, and two years later addresses the freshmen on the contribution of the Boat Club to the St Catherine’s Society, as it was then known, while in his address to the following year’s freshmen he is recorded as emphasising that rowing is ‘not such a gloomy prospect as the Captain had indicated’.

It took until 1933 before he was finally appointed as a lecturer in Climatology, possibly as the result of the President of Magdalen writing a letter wondering why ‘one of the greatest climatologists in Europe’ was still earning his living ‘by teaching classics at St Catherine’s’, and elevated to Reader in 1940.

During the Second World War he served in the Navy but, on his return to Oxford, his involvement with the Boat Club seems to have diminished. In 1950, his final year before retirement, it is suggested that ‘Dean Kendrew be asked to coach the Schools VIII’. Hardly an onerous task and probably intended as a gesture of thanks, although it was also acknowledged that he was unlikely to accept.

Following his retirement he spent some time in Canada and Sri Lanka. He died in April 1962. A few months later his son, Sir John Cowdery Kendrew, was announced as a recipient of that year’s Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

This Term’s Rowing

So finally on to this term and, up until now, the weather has been rather kind. At last count we had 3 men’s and 2 women’s crews training for Christ Church Regatta in a couple of weeks time, while our senior crews have found other competitions in which to amuse themselves — details in the next newsletter. Rob Hollis continues as senior coach.

Nick Brodie has been elected President of OUBC and will be trialling once again for the cox’s seat alongside Dane van den Akker (spare cox from last year) and newcomer Colin Groshong (ex Penn lightweights cox) — it looks like there might be a bit of competition for Catz coxing seats this summer, too. For the rowing seats, Anthony Mullin (Isis last year) is joined by Martin Walsh (ex-Imperial College, Irish junior and U23 international) and Jan Herzog (German pair 2001–2005, and Olympic finalist in Athens). No news of any Catz triallists for the women’s or lightweight squads.

Coming Up ...

In the next newsletter there will be the Captains’ reports this term’s rowing and the progress of our triallists, also a piece on the Boat Club of 20 years ago (under the captaincy of Jim Bigger and Katherine Morris). Contributions for the News from Alumni section are always welcome, and those of you on the RS email list will receive a call for submissions about a week before publication.

Also, advanced notice that the AGM & Dinner will be held on 23 February, at a cost of approximately £23.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

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

Diary

20–23 Feb 2008	Torpids
23 Feb 2008	RS AGM & Dinner
23 Mar 2008	The Henley Boat Races
29 Mar 2008	The Boat Race
21–24 May 2008	Summer Eights

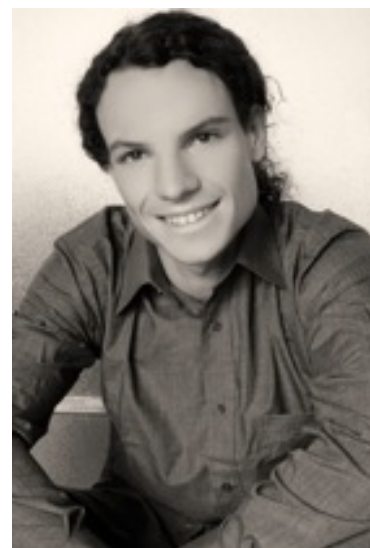
The Silence at the Song’s End

Many of you will already know of Nick Heiney’s death last year, aged 23, and of the circumstances that led to it.

Now his mother, the journalist and broadcaster Libby Purves, and Duncan Wu, one of his College tutors, have decided to publish a collection of his writings, *The Silence at the Song’s End*, extracts of which were recently featured in *The Times*.

Nick joined the Boat Club when he came up to Catz in 2002. Through enthusiasm, determination and a fair amount of natural talent, he progressed from novice to the 1st Torpid after just one term’s rowing and narrowly missed out on a place in the lightweights’ Nephthys crew in the following year.

More information can be found on the web-site www.songsend.co.uk.



Nick Heiney 1982–2006.