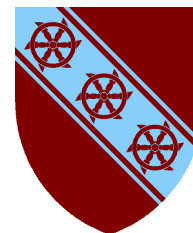




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



6th November, 2011

In this issue ...

It's been a few years since our men's 1st boat last competed anywhere other than on the Isis so I was a little surprised to hear that they'd accepted an invitation to an international, multi-lane event in Korea (and even more surprised to hear they'd returned with bronze medals). Meanwhile our more established international, Andy Triggs Hodge, continues his collection of silvers, although with a win at Henley on the way.

Our own records show merely that S. F. Markham rowed for St Catherine's in 1922, but his daughter provides some details of what he did next. A copy of the 1939 Torpids Card has prompted some further investigation, and Mike Ellison writes of the Boat Club of 45 years ago.

When Mike arrived in 1964 he would probably have met Chris Talbot, who'd already rowed two years in the 1st VIII. When the Rowing Society was formed some 20 years later, Chris once again became a key figure, serving as its Treasurer until his sudden death in a motorcycle accident this summer. Many generations of Boat Club captains, and those attending the Rowing Society dinners over the years, will know that there was never going to be any shortage of material for the eulogies at his funeral service. Shortage of seats, yes; but stories, no! Tony Hancox contributes an obituary.



Some familiar faces, and familiar kit, but those are about the only things that are ... (and why does Mal get the flowers, and not Theresa?)

Results

Henley Royal Regatta, 29th Jun – 3rd July

Silver Goblets & Nickalls' Cup (Open pairs)

Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04), with Peter Reed

Thu	bt Hemsworth & Porter, Worcester RC	4 1/2 L
Fri	bt West & West, Walton RC	1 1/4 L
S/F	bt Gkountoulas & Gkountoulas, Greece	Easily
Final	bt Carboncini & Mornati, Italy	Easily

Rowing World Championships, Bled, 28 Aug–4 Sep

Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04)	GBR 2–	2nd
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STX Cup, Korea, 30th July

Men's Novice VIII's

1	6:00	Melbourne University (AUS)
2	6:03	Keio University (JPN)
3	6:27	St Catherine's (GBR)
4	6:32	Waseda University (JPN)
5	6:50	Yonsei University (KOR)
6	6:52	Hankuk University (KOR)
7	6:53	Seoul Nat.University (KOR)
8	8:03	Muhan Dojeon (KOR)

STX Cup in Korea

Ben Trigg, Men's Captain

Twelve members of the College travelled to South Korea to represent the college in the recent STX Cup Korea Open Regatta on the 30th of July. The 2 km long race was held at Misari rowing lake, the lake used for the rowing in the 1988 Seoul Olympics¹

As far as the organisers were concerned, the aim of the event was to raise the profile of rowing in Korea. As a result, we featured in two separate episodes of the South Korean TV programme 'Infinite Challenge' (also known as 'Muhan Dojeon' in Korea). This is huge in Korea and with 25,000,000 viewers it has been said its popularity makes it the Korean equivalent of

¹where a Catz oarswoman, Jo Gough, competed

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



St Catherine's competing at the STX Regatta. Photo (and the one on the front page) courtesy of Joon Son.

Top Gear!² This was soon apparent when we became local celebrities and began to be recognised everywhere we went, getting stopped every few minutes to pose for photos with fans!

The event's high profile was also highlighted by the fact that 10,000 people turned up to watch, more than attended the rowing at the Olympics! We also had the opportunity to meet senior officials of the rowing community, including the FISA (Fédération Internationale des Sociétés d'Aviron, the international governing body for rowing) Media and Promotions Commission officer, Mike Lee, helping to put SCCBC on the international map.

However, despite the scale of the event, we did not put too much pressure on ourselves. As a college, we couldn't help but think that competing internationally against university teams might be punching a little above our weight. Our competition comprised of: Melbourne University, Keio and Waseda Universities (apparently in Japan their rivalry is likened to that of Oxbridge), three Korean universities (Yonsei, Hankuk and Seoul National), and The Infinite Challenge comedian team.

Despite our initial apprehension, we raced very well. Unfortunately, a lack of translation at the start meant that we didn't know the race had started until the other boats began to row, and so we lost a good few seconds from the outset. However, once we recovered from a disjointed start sequence and settled into the race, we could see that we would fare better than we had originally hoped, finishing 3rd of 8, only being beaten by Melbourne and Keio. This was a great result for a college rowing team competing against university rowing teams, especially given that it was a crew that had had only about three weeks to row together before travelling.

²overseas readers: please ignore this!

The Squad

B Matthew McGilvray
 2 Joshua Morgan
 3 Daniel Rebnord
 4 Joshua Landreneau
 5 Ben Trigg
 6 David Ashmore
 7 Hugh Taylor
 S David Zimmer
 C Theresa Kevorkian
 Coach: Malcolm Spencer
 Subs: James Boxall
 & Tyler Roberts

We would like to thank Joon Son Chung and his father, student and alumnus of St Catherine's respectively, who organised our participation and helped to fund the trip. Without their help, not only would the trip have failed to have been such a success, but it is unlikely we would have had this fantastic opportunity at all. Their support and generosity were very gratefully received.

Sir Sidney Frank Markham (1897–1975)

I received the following from Elizabeth Thomson who is researching for material for a biography of her father and discovered that S. F. Markham is listed as having rowed for St Catherine's in 1922.

He migrated to Wadham and rowed for them as well, I have photographs of him during the Eights Week or Torpids. However to pay for his education while studying at Wadham he became the researcher/ghost writer for Sir Sydney Lee, Shakespearean expert of the day, and wrote Vol II of the Biography of Edward VII and much more. I certainly do have a wealth of interesting info re Sir Frank: distinguished soldier, historian, President of the British Museums Association during WWII, rescued and catalogued treasures from Himmler's castle. Author 'Climate and Energy of Nations' 1942 . . . , politician 1928–1964 parliamentary personal and private sec to Ramsey Mac Donald and crossed the house with Winston Churchill, part of Ginger Group and Churchill's parliamentary personal and private sec. Taught Eisenhower British strategy 1941/2. Knighted on personal recommendation of Sir Winston 1953. Married Frances Lawman — 5 children etc.

1939 Torpids

I received an email from Charlie Labarge who had discovered amongst his late mother's belongings a copy of a 1939 Torpids Race Card. He was seeking an explanation of the mysterious pattern of crossed lines on the back (i.e., bumps charts). In return, he's sent me a copy of the front (below).

Reading down past the advert for Turner Brothers 'Athletic Outfitters', of 4 Turl St, pausing only to raise an eyebrow at the mention that they also supply Bee Keeping Appliances, we note that St Catherine's are listed as starting no.12 in Division 2 (divisions being of 13 boats plus the Sandwich Boat in those days, unlike the present 12 plus 1).

Torpids having begun the previous Thursday, this is the start order for Wednesday, the last of six days' racing (there being no racing on the Sunday). The week had gone well enough for St Catherine's who had started at the top of Division 3 and risen three places so far, with two row-overs.

PRICE TWOPENCE.
OXFORD UNIVERSITY
TORPIDS' RACE CARD
ISSUED BY
TURNER BROTHERS,
ATHLETIC OUTFITTERS,
4 TURL STREET.

Sporting and General Correspondents, Shipping Agents, Insurance Brokers and Travel Agents. Special Representatives for the 'UNIVERSITY' Policy which covers all accidents and 50 specified diseases.
BEE KEEPING APPLIANCES.

ORDER OF START, Wednesday, Feb. 22nd, 1939

1st Division 5 p.m.	10. New College II
1. St. Edmund Hall	11. St. John's II
2. Pembroke	12. St. Catherine's
3. New College	13. Balliol II
4. Magdalen	14. St. Edm. Hall II
5. Trinity	
6. St. John's	3rd Division. 3 p.m.
7. Balliol	1. St. Edm. Hall II
8. Exeter	2. Exeter II
9. University	3. Christ Church II
10. Christ Church	4. Brasenose II
11. Corpus	5. St. Peter's Hall II
12. Worcester	6. Queen's II
13. Merton	7. Oriel II
14. Brasenose	8. Magdalen II
	9. Merton II
2nd Division. 4 p.m.	10. Pembroke II
1. Brasenose	11. Keble II
2. Hertford	12. University II
3. Oriel	13. Hertford II
4. Jesus	14. Worcester II
5. Keble	
6. Wadham	4th Division 2 p.m.
7. St. Peter's Hall	1. Worcester II
8. Queen's	2. Wadham II
9. Lincoln	3. Brasenose III

The front of the 1939 Torpids Race Card produced for the final day's racing. The back contains bump charts (image courtesy of the Estate of Margaret Wade Labarge).

Our own Boat Club minute book for 1938–39 simply notes 'Mr Fred Dewey did not believe in holding meetings' so I've had to turn to archives of the *The Times* for more details, where a Special Correspondent reports:

'There was an unusually large attendance to watch the final day's racing in the Torpids at Oxford University yesterday, although conditions were by no means genial and the crews again had to contend against a strong southerly wind.' There follows a detailed account but the line which would cheered any of our supporters is 'St. John's II falling victims to St. Catherine's coming through the Gut'.

So, up four places overall and a welcome turnaround from almost a decade of steady decline from 10th on the river in 1931. But we were still the lowest 1st Torpid, and still behind New College's 2nd boat. This might have been the start of a St Catherine's revival but, alas, international events were about to intrude.

45 Years Ago

Michael Ellison, Men's Captain 1965–66

I went up to Oxford in 1964, intending to play Rugby and Cricket, and to read a little light Jurisprudence. In my first couple of days in residence, I was persuaded by Ian Lewis, a fellow Catz lawyer, to attend a Boat Club Sherry Party for Freshers. Ian was committed to joining the Boat Club, but was keen to have somebody he knew to talk to at the event. I went along, and ended up drinking so much of the Boat Club's Sherry that I felt a moral obligation to do at least some rowing. A year later, I was elected Captain of Boats, and Ian Lewis was Secretary. This was not a great deal to do with ability, but rather the dearth of experienced rowers who would be in residence or available to row during 1965–66.

We determined to try to make up for lack of experience and technical ability by training harder. I believe that we were the first Catz crew to boat six days a week and to undertake circuit training six days a week. We were aided considerably by the unexpected arrival of a few Freshers with rowing experience, something which did not happen often in Catz in those days. That then raised the challenge of persuading these experienced chaps that they should take any notice of a Captain of Boats whose main qualifications were that he was a decent Rugby League Centre and a competent slip fielder! John Corbett, an Australian Postgraduate with a good deal of rowing experience, had to be bribed to join the First Eight by the rest of the crew agreeing to be

guinea pigs for various aspects of his research studies in Psychoneurophysiology.

Despite all the difficulties, we managed to move up three places in Torpids and two places in Eights, although this outcome was aided by the fact that Catz was very much a Second Division Rowing College in those days.

I am absolutely delighted that I was led astray to join the Boat Club. It formed the central part of my life at Oxford for the whole of my time there — and I even managed to clock up a few games of Rugby and Cricket as well.

News from Alumni

Mike Ellison (M.64) Following my time at University, I continued rowing for a while with Hollingworth Lake Rowing Club, but I eventually decided that rowing round and round a reservoir for training did not have quite the same attraction as rowing on the Isis at Oxford.

I was a Solicitor in local government for thirty years, the last fifteen as Chief Executive of a Metropolitan District. Thereafter, I spent my time hearing major public inquiries for the Government, first as a Member of the Lord Chancellor's Panel of Independent Inspectors, and latterly as a full time Planning Inspector. I retired in March of this year, although for the last ten years my wife and I have lived in the South of France, from where I have commuted to various parts of the UK to hear my inquiries. Our two sons are both bankers. The younger one played Rugby for England Schools, and was a professional player with Swansea and then with Duvant, before deciding that it was time to enter the real world.

It is always a great delight to receive your Newsletters, which remind me of a very happy period of my life.

Peter Marx (M.66) What a delight to find your web site for college rowing — so many half remembered names from 40 years ago for me. I can add one curiosity for the year 1971–72. Geoffrey Lloyd was elected captain, but resigned at Christmas. The elders of the club asked me to take over, so I became captain and stroked the first Torpid. I was out of the country after Easter, so that meant a third captain for Eights. I think this is probably the only year where you will find three different signatures in the minutes. Thank you for a fine memorial.

Greg Hilty (M.78) (*I'm fairly sure it's the same one*) currently director of the Lisson Gallery and recently made several appearances on TV news discussing the fate of the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei.

C. R. S. Talbot (1944–2011)

Tony Hancox, former RS President

At the celebration of the life of Chris Talbot the Master and Fellows were represented by Tony Hancox, and the Rowing Society by Kevin Skinner, Anu Dudhia and Darren Chadwick, respectively Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Honorary Secretary.

The service took place in Olney parish church in Buckinghamshire, the congregation numbering over four hundred of family, friends and representatives of Chris' many interests which included Rowing, Rugby Football and Motorcycling, and former colleagues from the Civil Service and of charities, one of which was Headway, for brain injury. The last tragically appropriate since Christopher was fatally injured when riding his motorcycle.

Chris Talbot came up in 1962 to St Catherine's as one of the first College undergraduates to read Physics, immediately joined the Boat Club and rowed in the First Eight of 1963, 1964 and 1965. He became Treasurer of the Boat Club and some twenty years later became Treasurer of the College Rowing Society, which post he was holding at his death. His devotion to his alma mater was of the strongest, he and his wife attending recently the first legators' lunch at the College.

Printed in their celebratory Order of Service his family say that as St Catherine's aims to guarantee that no talented individual is discouraged from applying for a place due to financial constraints 'we would like to make a gift to St Catherine's student support to assist undergraduates in financial need.'

The College and particularly the Boat Club and the College Rowing Society send their support and consolation to Elizabeth Talbot and her family in their distress.

Coming Up ...

In the next issue there should be reports of this term's rowing (the river's been well-behaved so far) and progress of our University triallists. Also a look at the events of 10 years ago, when Matt Hilton and Fiona Howarth were captains (at least for some of the year), and hopefully some news on a new men's 1st boat.

Anu Dudhia

email: dudhia@atm.ox.ac.uk

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

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=93221115264

Diary

22–25 Feb 2012	Torpids
25 Feb 2012	RS AGM & Dinner
23–26 May 2012	Eights