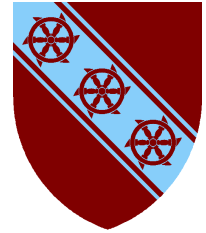




St Catherine's College Rowing Society
St Catherine's College
Oxford OX1 3UJ



19th December, 2009

In this issue . . .

It might not be obvious from the date, but this is actually supposed to be the first newsletter of Michaelmas Term (Sorry! It's been a busy time) where we mostly catch up on events over the summer. Apart from reports on Henley and International racing there's a distinctly historical flavour to this issue. In chronological order we have a photo from 1907, Geoffrey Sworder writes of the 49ers reunion, a 1950 blade has been spotted in Washington DC, some alumni from the 1970s took out a couple of eights before the Gaudy, Simon Evans recalls events of 10 years ago, and there are news items from alumni from the 1960s onwards.

Results

Henley Royal Regatta, 1-5th July

Silver Goblets & Nickalls' Cup (Open pairs)

Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04), with Peter Reed	
Thu	beat Walker & Huppi, USA Easily
Fri	beat Cowell & Edmondson 1 L
S/F	lost to Murray & Bond, NZ 2½ L



C. Graham ('Danny') Kaye, organiser of the Forty-Niners' reunion, continuing to organise things from the cox's seat (from an age when coxes wore blazers rather than lifejackets).

Henley Royal Regatta (ctd)

The Visitors' Cup (Intermediate coxless fours)

Martin Walsh (M.07) stroke of Isis	
Thu	beat Cambridge University 1 ft
Fri	beat Army R.C. & Thames R.C. ½ L
S/F	beat N.U.I. Galway, Ireland ¾ L
Final	beat Mercyhurst College, USA ¾ L

Rowing World Cup III, Lucerne, 10-12 July

Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04)	GBR 2-	2nd
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World Championships, Poznan, 23-30 August

Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04)	GBR 2-	2nd
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Forty-Niners' Reunion

Geoffrey Sworder, Secretary 1948/9 and Captain 1949/50

On the Saturday of Eights a selection of veterans of the 1948 to 1950 period attended an enjoyable dinner in the Senior Common Room, hosted by the Master.

On the Sunday morning some of them rowed an eight in order to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the record year of 1949 when all three eights recorded six bumps — something we believe has never been done before and cannot be achieved again because of the reduction of Eights 'week' from six days to four.



Some of the Forty-Niners, and their friends and relations.

Those rowing included A P Downing (3rd eight) and G N Sworder (1st eight) plus W C Wright (1950 1st eight); the numbers were made up by captains and ex-captains of St Catherine's and by members of G N Sworder's family. The two coxes were C G Kaye (2nd eight) and K Hack (1948 1st eight). On the bank

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

were supporters A C Hancox (1950 1st eight), A W Simpson (2nd eight) and A R Katritsky (3rd eight). Sadly eight of the veterans are known to have died, plus two coaches; five veterans have lost touch. Six veterans sent their best wishes, including G Garton who was captain in 1949 and B F Sylvester.

We still hope to celebrate the 70th anniversary in 2019!

Summer Racing

Andy Triggs Hodge (M.04) and Peter Reed, having got their Olympic Gold in the coxless four last summer, switched to a pair this year and were only beaten by one crew. Unfortunately that crew, the New Zealand pair of Murray & Bond, did turn up rather a lot, beating them in the finals of two rounds of the World Cup, and the World Championships (as well as at Henley), so a lot of 'silver'ware for the GB pair. Meanwhile the new-look GB coxless four took gold in the World Championships, defeating the same Australian four which Triggs Hodge *et al.* had just pipped in Beijing. A bit of head-scratching for the GB selectors, then.

Martin Walsh (M.07) had a good Henley. Stroke of the Isis crew in the Visitors' Challenge Cup (which is the intermediate event for coxless fours), in their first race they had to come from behind and equal the course record for the event to beat Cambridge University by 1 foot, probably *the* race of the Regatta. Fortunately, it got a little easier after that. Stroking a winning boat containing this year's OUBC President (Sjoerd Hamburger) won't have done his chances for selection for the 2010 Boat Race any harm either.

Gaudy Paddle



Women's VIII, left to right: Cynthia Grover (M.77), Gail Wiggins (M.78), Gill Smith (M.75), Rachel Slade (M.80), Julie Deacon. Also present: Belinda Bawden (M.76) and Ros Temple (M.81).

This year's Gaudy (on 27th June) was those who matriculated in the 1970s. There was sufficient enthusiasm to take out both a men's and a women's VIII for a pleasant afternoon's paddle beforehand.



Men's VIII, left to right: Colin Please (M.74), Phelim Daniels (M.77), Kevin Skinner (M.77), Roger Noel Smith (M.71), 'Jonah' Jones (M.78), Andrew Walter (M.78) and Gareth Williams (M.79). Also present: Ian Lund (M.79), Tony Mitchell (M.78) and Anu Duhia (M.77).

10 Years Ago ...

Simon Evans, Men's Captain 1999/2000

I must admit, when Anu first mentioned the boat club of ten years ago along with my name I thought he must be joking. Was it really that long ago? And this is despite the fact I went to a ten-years-since-matriculation reunion last autumn. The little grey cells are on the way out already, it seems.

Anyway, I had the good fortune to start rowing in 1998 under the 'inspirational captaincy' of Pete Murphy, a very successful year of 3 sets of blades for the men's Boat Club. Astute (and even not so astute) observers could see the smile on Pete's face when he uttered those words, and what he actually meant was that he'd been blessed with a load of experienced (final year!) oarsmen. They packed out the first VIII and most of the second VIII besides, so I was one of only two novice rowers still involved come Summer Eights. That left me with a 50/50 chance of being landed with the captaincy. Geoff Bryant didn't plan on rowing the following year anyway, but Pete assures me I was always his first choice.

1999 began with ranks of the men's Boat Club much depleted and our prospects looked distinctly bleak. I just about managed to press gang enough people into three novice VIIIs. And we needed the

new intake! As I remember, the ‘senior’ crew spent Michaelmas term rowing a IV. Torpids was called off due to high stream, which was probably a blessing given the rather inexperienced crews.

By Trinity term things were looking up considerably as the first VIII added Matt Smith in the stroke seat, a position he had just filled successfully for Oxford as the youngest oarsmen ever to win the Boat Race. We were also joined by Richard Law from the lightweights and suddenly anything seemed possible — even a bump or two at Summer Eights. Unfortunately events conspired against us and an ill-timed klaxon on day 1 robbed us of our chance to get away from the advancing Lincoln. Arguably the fastest boat on the river with three Blues, they came up and caught us pretty quickly on day 3.

Still, I claim as my protégés a future boat captain Matt Denmark and Oxford lightweight Michael Bull. Not such a bad year after all.

1950 3rd Eight Blade

Bill Witter (M72)

I have just spent the last two days in Washington DC on business and hanging on the wall in a tiny small snug off the main bar (!) of the Fairfax at Embassy Row Hotel I came across a blade awarded in 1950 to the Catz Third Eight who achieved 8 bumps. It appears to be the genuine article. I have no info as to how it came to be there.

I attach photos: not great quality as done on my cellphone. It hung above a Cambridge college blade: so they got the precedence correct at least!



The blade from the 1950 3rd Eight, in the bar of the Fairfax in Washington DC.

It turns out that we have a photograph crew in the Boat Club History, 8 bumps being a Club record which stood until 1971. The coach of that crew, Don Barton, replies:

Wish I could help, but all the crew seem to have disappeared without trace. As you know, five members of the 3rd VIII read theology — which must have been another record of sorts. I met Yinka Olumide

— one of the theologians — in Nigeria ca. 1964; he had then given up the cloth and was a big noise in the national broadcasting corporation.



The 1950 St Catherine's 3rd Eight. *From left to right, back row:* Yinka Olumide (4), B. P. Green (3), Alex Currie (2), Ian Heslop (bow), *middle:* David Daniell (6), John Bradshaw (str), Donald Barton (coach), Leslie Phillips (7), Desmond Hackett (5), *front:* Raymond Taylor (cox)

News from Alumni

Tom Rollason (M.66) On Oct 26 2009 I was sworn in as the new Master of the Worshipful Company of Founders of the City of London. We were responsible for all brass and bronze castings, bells (Big Ben etc) art sculpture etc and still have a very active membership. We have strong rowing interests on the Thames and have our own rowing barge, a lot harder than an eight in some ways. A very full racing programme is maintained. On ceremonial days the Master is carried in a canopied stern seat — am looking forward to that! *[photo duly requested]* It may be we can offer some experiences to London-based alumni? Also our livery hall is close to the Barbican and St Bartholomew the Great (of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*), and start of the well known hospital. Ideal for small receptions, conferences etc.

Annette Court (M.80) *I heard her name mentioned on the radio, having to apologise on behalf of Zurich Insurance for losing some customer data. A few Google clicks later and I discover that, yes, she is the same Annette Court who coxed the women's 1st VIII in 1983 and nowadays she's CEO of Zurich's European General Insurance (there's even a video of her on YouTube).*

Rachel Slade (M.80) Gareth [Williams, (M.79)] and I are both taking part in the Concept2 Indoor

Rowing Championship on Sunday 22 November in Birmingham. It's a 2k Erg race, poor mad fools that we are ... [*I've checked the results, and they did. Possibly inspired by the Gaudy paddle?*].

Angela Kukula (née Sweatman) (M.86) Angela Kukula and husband Stefan are pleased to announce the arrival of their daughter, Amy Hana, on 15th February 2009. Amy is still blissfully unaware that there is anything more to rowing than going 'gently down the stream'.

Caroline Trotter (M.95) Our daughter, Francesca Alice Bush, was born on September 18th. She is gorgeous and smiling lots now. Her dad (Mark) got a new job in Hampshire so we moved house when she was 3 weeks old and now live in Salisbury (lots of water but not many boats!).

Simon Evans (M.97) *In addition to contributing the article on the Boat Club of 10 years ago, Simon was also busy at the time working on a piece on 'Climategate' for Environmental Data Services (www.endsreport.com) where he's one of their science writers.*

Florence Williams (M.97) I returned from 6 months in South India earlier this year where I lived in an orphanage and had an excellent time teaching in the orphanage school. Since returning, I've moved to Wolverhampton where I've started a new teaching job as Head of Physics. It's all going well and Kevin and I are busy planning our wedding for summer 2010! There's not been much in the way of rowing in my life in the past few years — doesn't stop the fond memories though.

Darren Chadwick (M.03) Darren has recently been appointed a tutor in Sustainability for Human Sciences and so is regularly back in Oxford. He and Alex Zdravkovic can be seen on Isis most weekends in the double, taking care not to crash into the many sideways novice crews!

Lucy Rowland (M.06) [*We were both surprised to bump into each other in Edinburgh early in November*] As you realised I am in Edinburgh doing a PhD on carbon dynamics and climate change in the Amazon. In terms of sport I have joined a running club and have done a 4k cross country and 2, 5 mile road races. I'm having loads of fun but am not looking forward to the cold winters.

1907 Photograph

A large framed pair of photographs of the 1907 St Catharine's Torpid has recently turned up ('CathArine' only became 'CathErine' in the 1920s).

It has been donated by Rosemary Muffitt whose grandfather, Robert Ross, was cox of that crew.

We know very little of this period of our history, it's the Boat Club's equivalent of the Dark Ages, so this photo, with names and faces, represents quite a find. J.H. Spear is the only one who was previously listed in our database, as rowing in the 1909 1st VIII.



Framed photograph of the 1907 St Catherine's Torpid. The crew is listed as Bow: G.E. Scarlin, 2: J.H. Spear, 3: R.A.E. Pooley, 4: W. Lawton, 5: H.E. Hale, 6: O. Jones, 7: A.E. Minard, Str: H.S. Pugh, Cox: R. Ross.



Right hand photo, at the Start, near Haystacks Corner.

Coming Up ...

The subjects of next newsletter will have a rather lower average age with reports on this past term's rowing. Also a feature on the Boat Club of 20 years ago (when Ollie Hassall and Suzannah Rayner were captains), and details of the Torpids dinner. Any alumni news also welcome.

Anu Dudhia

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

Diary

3-6 Mar 2010	Torpids
6 Mar 2010	RS AGM & Dinner
26-29 May 2010	Eights