

NEWSLETTER

Covid 19 update from Laura - Club Captain



Hello. I hope you are all enjoying the fine weather which has arrived just in time for the first step in returning to rowing at the club. This Saturday (27 June), members who own private singles will be able to row for the first time since the end of March. If the plan works smoothly over this first weekend then club singles should be available to book the following weekend. I say “should” because there are still a few details we need to work out to make sure we can safely share equipment but the next stage of return plan is mostly ready to deploy.

Over the last 4 or 5 weeks, I and the committee have been working hard on developing a staged plan to get back to rowing activities. It hasn't been easy or straightforward interpreting the advice of the Welsh Government and Welsh Rowing and adapting it to the specific conditions at Llandaff. But we've managed it and I'm confident that we have a plan that allows us to enjoy rowing in a safe way for us at the communities we live in. Thank you to the all committee members for the hard work you put in to developing our plan.

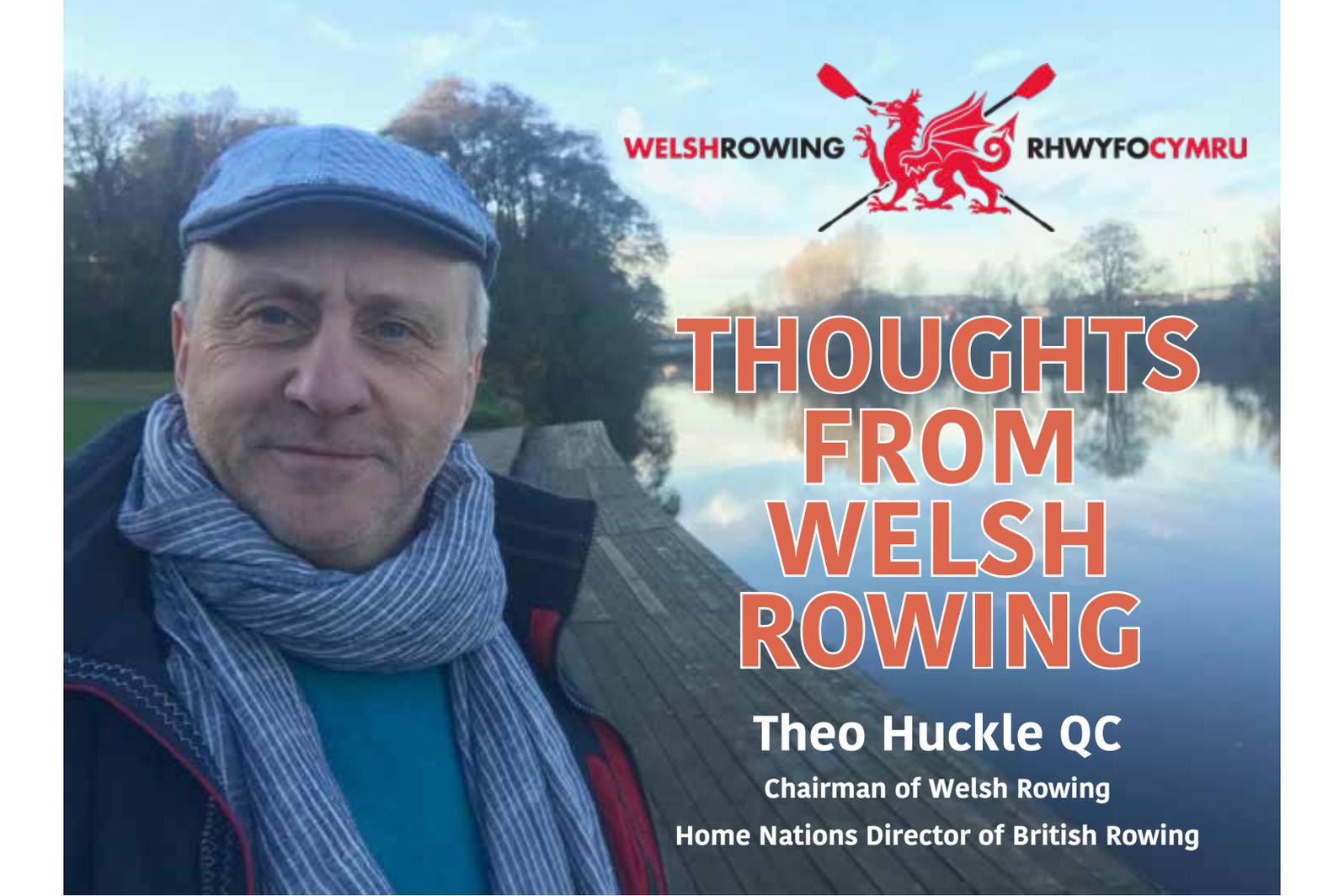
Looking out of my window at the beautiful sunshine this week it is hard to believe that we are still in the middle of a pandemic and that Covid-19 remains a threat. However, that is still the case and it is why the committee has taken a step-by-step approach to returning to rowing. Now more than ever we need to maintain social distancing and be very observant about good hygiene. Fortunately, rowing is an outdoor non-contact sport so we are one of the first

sports to make a return. But things are very far from normal and it will continue to be like that for quite some time. To maintain social distancing we can only single scull for now. We also need to reduce the number of people present at the club at any one time and keep a track of who is present, just in case we need to help contact tracers if someone falls ill – something I hope we never have to do. Restricting access to private singles this weekend is our way of testing that the new procedures work before expanding numbers further to club singles. Speaking of the club singles, I would like to say a huge thank you to Jamie Davis and John McTeague who have done fantastic work over the last month to repair our singles fleet. Thanks to them we have a fleet of club singles in a river-worthy condition. I owe them both a lot of beers.

As Welsh Government ease lockdown restrictions we will be able to open up more. However, getting back to gym based activities and crew boats is still months away in my opinion. I'm sure many of you may find this frustrating. I find it frustrating too but I see it as just another way that I have adapted my normal way of life along with working from home, Zooming my family in Scotland and planning my supermarket trips better (something I have surprisingly enjoyed during lockdown).

Anyway, enough from me for now. I hope enjoy the good weather and this latest edition of the newsletter. And whether you are on the water this weekend or not, stay safe.

Earlier this week, the club sent an email out from Laura regarding the first phase of getting us back on the water. The email consist of notes, documents and risk assessment. It was also put up on various club Facebook groups. This information can also be found on our website. To access, log into www.llandaffrc.com and click onto the 'members' button at the top. To log into our private section, the user name is 'fullmember' and password 'easyoar'. In the message regarding Covid 19, click onto 'see link' which will take you to the correct page and documents.



WELSHROWING

RHWYFOCYMRU

THOUGHTS FROM WELSH ROWING

Theo Huckle QC

Chairman of Welsh Rowing

Home Nations Director of British Rowing

For those who don't know me, I have been rowing at Llandaff since 1986, though admittedly (having once "given up" because of work commitments) with a break of 20+ years till my eldest, Manon, wanted to join as a junior and told me in no uncertain terms that I should be getting back in a boat, which is how I come to have, in the private shed, the pretty Carl Douglas single that is by far a better boat than I am a sculler. As our missed friend Martyn Kelly advised me, "If you want a nice piece of furniture...". I did. Ha! In 2018 I was delighted to join the board of Welsh Rowing. I thought it would be interesting and worthwhile, but probably pretty unexciting most of the time. (Little did I know!) Despite the aspirations of some of our rowers, the role of a governing body is about regulation of the sport (including river, lake, sea and indoor rowing), general development and control locally of national performance programmes (Start). After that we aim to let the clubs get on with doing what they do so well, with our wonderful volunteers sharing this sport with new entrants, developing our home-grown talent (and some imported), and providing the "glue" of social interaction for our community.

Then, I was honoured to be invited to become Chair of Welsh Rowing from the AGM last November, and I had plans, mainly around encouraging greater access to our sport, which I believe is the best sport there is for overall wellbeing lifelong. I grew up in the very "landlocked" Blaenavon, and went to school at West Mon in Pontypool, so it was rugby-rugby-rugby. (Graham Price had just left school, so I am indeed very old! Thanks!!) I still love that game, of course, but wish I had been able to get into boats back then, and am really worried about the musculoskeletal damage involved in playing modern rugby. On the other hand, in what sport other than rowing can a young man appear so 'macho' without 'any' physical contact, and both boys and girls (and other genders welcome - obviously!) develop superb fitness and lean physique? And at Llandaff there's a bar too. Perfect.

Like all of you, I had no idea then what 2020 would bring. For all of us in the rowing community the time since March has been extremely difficult. People have trained hard over the winter and we were looking forward to a summer season of racing and socialising. I love Henley!

And, to cap it all, the weather has been fantastic!

As Chair, I have tried to take the firm line that our job is to help people to get back to rowing as soon as possible. However, firstly we have to stay within the law, and, secondly, we have to make sure that all participants stay safe. We have wrestled with some pretty unclear guidance emerging from government, especially in the early days, in particular as to whether eg. private boat owners were entitled to access to their boats and the river to continue sculling as exercise. As a lawyer, I have been quite concerned about the civil liberties restrictions that some in authority (and even worse, the “interpreters” below them) have rushed to, and it seemed to me difficult to invite clubs to deprive owners of their property; of course the club may properly decide its policy as to access and usage, though an owner could, it seemed to me, take a boat away if they had somewhere to take it. I decided to leave mine where it was, in the private shed, and sit it out. Literally, I suppose! In the end, Welsh Rowing were forced to agree that our advice should be that clubs should in effect close, and we are extremely grateful for the support we got for that stance from LRC and the other clubs in Wales. You should not think we underestimate the serious wellbeing concerns arising out of this important part of people's lives being denied to them. We do, and that, again, is a driver for wanting to steer us back to being on the water and enjoying club activities as soon as possible.

One aspect of all this, though, is our reputation in the community. Rowing is a minority sport, seen by many – though as we know wrongly – as a “toff's game”, and the reputation of our sport in Wales would not have been helped by us, or even some of us, just “carrying on as usual”. I know I am not the only one for whom it rankles a little, shall we say, that cyclists seem to have “got away with it”, because of the encouragement of that form of exercise (apparently Cabinet Ministers in London seem to think its a safe and healthy form of exercise to be cycling around the overcrowded and polluted roads in central London), including now when the “locality requirement” for travel (5 miles within urban areas and perhaps a little further in more rural areas) doesn't apply to someone taking exercise from and to their home itself, so you are free to cycle 40 miles if you wish (only a short ride for the truly keen MAMIL (*middle-aged man in lycra*), I appreciate!). It is what it is, though, and we have had to “suck it up” and take an appropriately communitarian approach to getting through this with everyone else.

Now we finally see signs of getting rowing going again, thankfully.

We are still proceeding more cautiously in Wales, of course (and I should make it clear I do not criticise that, as some of the “led by the science” stuff coming out of Westminster seems increasingly open to question), so there are frustrating comparisons with progress in England. However, we are pleased this week to announce relaxed guidance (based on the Welsh Government announcements last week) that rowing in private boats and shared equipment is now permissible subject to strict requirements of risk assessment (by clubs and individual rowers themselves), “gatherings” limits, distancing and hygiene. There are details the clubs will need to work out based on detailed risk assessment, but it is a start, and we may hope that in a very few weeks larger gatherings of people will be possible to enable the use of communal areas and social interaction that we as social beings and club members value so highly. So bear with us: along with your excellent Committee, we really are trying to get you back rowing as fast as we can, and I look forward to seeing you back at the club in the very near future!

PS: we have one piece of fantastic recent news to cheer us up and something to look forward to, a global rowing event in Wales! Having won the competition to be the UK bid, Saundersfoot is very well placed, and well supported by Welsh Rowing, British Rowing, Pembs CC and the National Park Authority, for selection as the venue for FISA's World Rowing Coastal & Beach Sprints Championships in 2022. (We had of course been hoping for 2021 but something else is supposed to be happening then I understand.) If we can – as I am confident we can – beat off the Italian and Greek bids, see you there – and bring everyone you know!

#staysafestaysane

theo.huckle@britishrowing.org

Valerie Price is a member of the Masters squad and has her own wooden Salter. She also rows in a mixed quad with Rosemary Martin, Gareth Beech and Terry John.

Valerie is an artist and has a studio based in Cardiff Bay.

A Fold in the River (2013-15)

I am a sculptor by training but now focus mostly on drawing, my work responding creatively to the language of poetry and place, which involves an immersion in the landscape through walking. I work with poetry and literature as both inspiration, source material and content for my art practice. Sometimes this allows me to respond to wild and remote landscapes such as Russia (1990), Québec (1998, 2002, 2003) and Cambodia (2005), but always comes back to a close and intimate relationship to river and border landscapes.

In 2012 the poet Philip Gross approached me to work on a book with him, responding directly to the River Taff, as I had used his poetry before in my work. We had also collaborated on a multi-disciplinary exploration of the wetland environment, *Thinking Like a Wetland*, with academics from Bristol, Cambridge and East Finland for the *Journal of Arts & Communities* (2012-13).

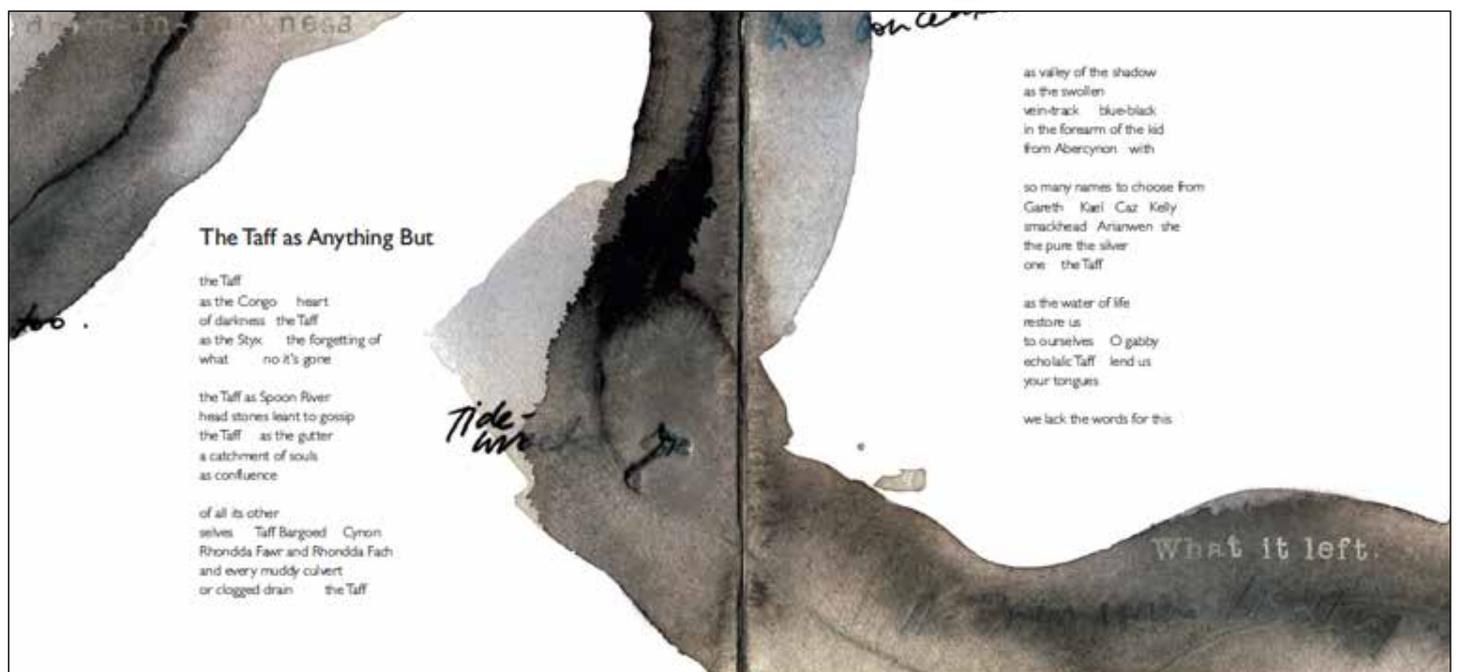
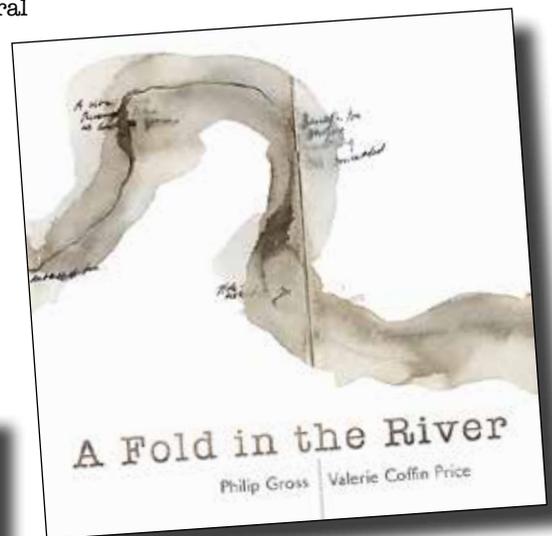
Philip had been living at Quakers Yard, on the River Taff, when he first joined the staff of the University of Glamorgan (now the University of South Wales). The cottage lay up the valley, in a deep and steep twist of the river, on the edge of the Pontygwaith Nature Reserve, just below Quakers Yard station. The first winter, the river flooded, coming half way up the garden...

... **AND SUDDENLY, FLOOD** — the river was a cat, a kitten — slightly feral — now suddenly today, a whiff of tiger.

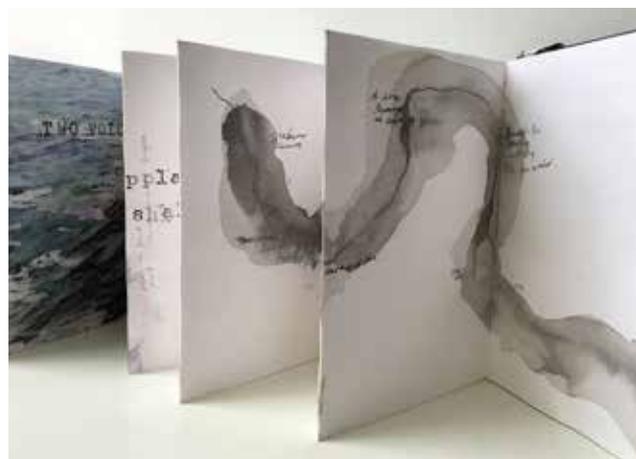
Just a weekend of rain begins it, but it must have been the weeks before that brought the hills to saturation point. Now, everything that falls sheets off, and there at the end of the garden is this... other thing. Brown thing, all muscles. Standing waves in it. And 'the end of the garden' has moved. Some metres closer, and two metres higher, overnight. It's not the volume of this new Taff (squared or cubed, not doubled) but the speed — breath-catching, like a high-speed through train when you're on the platform, well stood back behind the yellow line, but still...

Philip Gross
The River Next Door

A Fold in the River
is available from Seren Books



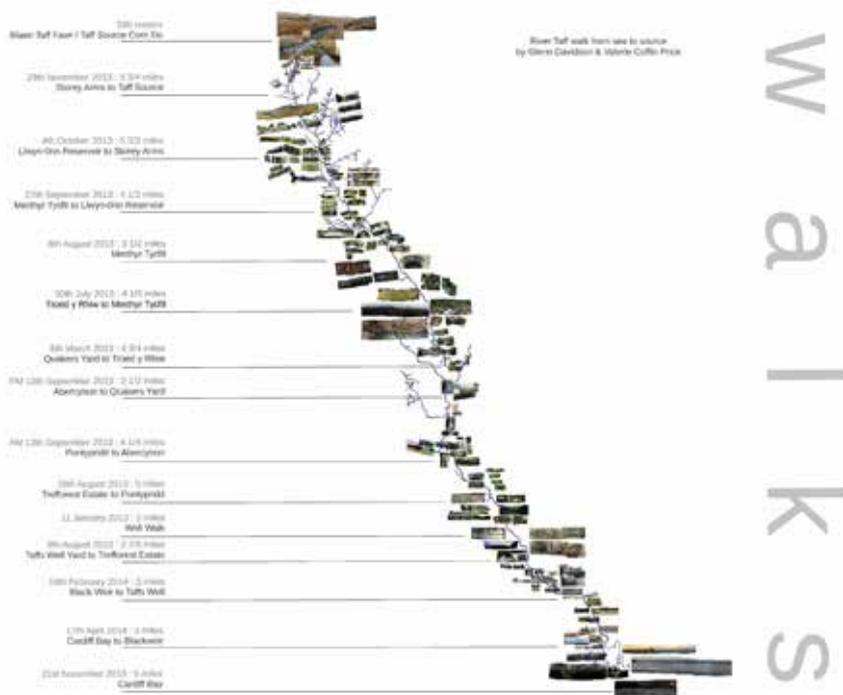
A lot of Philip's work takes place in notebooks and journals. The green notebook he started that year 'was not a diary, more a conversation with the place, the river in particular.' Some of that notebook became poems in the book; a lot more stayed in suspension, between prose notes and poetry, while my own folding sketchbooks are where my work took shape on this project. I often use these concertina sketchbooks which fold out to create a long panorama, or can be worked on in the more traditional format of two pages. In this case they were perfect, allowing me to encapsulate the twists and turns of the Taff and the interplay of art and poetry. To generate work I conduct walking research, thoroughly exploring an area and immersing myself in the landscape. For this project I walked the entire length of the River Taff, from sea to source, over a period of 15 months with another artist Glenn Davidson. In the process we produced 1000s of images and eventually decided to make these into another work, Walking North, so two works come out of the one set of research. My work on this project was funded by the Arts Council of Wales.



Walking North (2014-15)

This is an interactive, digital journey of the river Taff and its catchment using Prezi, and can be found here: [Walking North](#). The online map shows each walk and by clicking on the images you can follow our route. Or you can create your own journey through the photos.

More recent work includes re-imagining part of *The Rebecca Rioters* by Amy Dillwyn (2018) for Cardiff University; an imaginative journey down Berlin's River Spree for a collaborative poetry and sound project, *Berlin Water* (2016-17); and walking the south coast path of Wales with Dr Richard Keating, exploring the Severn Estuary, for *Arfordir | All Rivers Flow to the Sea*. I am currently working on this project and preparing another book for Seren Books with Philip Gross and Welsh language poet Cyril Jones, due out in January 2021. An artists residency in Canada later this year has been cancelled.



Naming a Boat... *what's in the name?*

Most Rowing Clubs have boats with individual names on them and Llandaff is no exception.

Invariably they are the names of people who have done amazing things for the club, their tribute have been gratifying and we have honoured them by naming a boat after them. They are part of the club's history and deserve to be remembered.

We retell their story so that you get an opportunity to understand the value of these individuals, the names on the bow of the boat that you row in. These obituary have been written by a current or ex member, who had a close friendship with these persons, and we will bring you more about the names on the boat in our next two editions.



Sian Jones : Womens Coxed Four, remembered by Sue Hoddell

Sian was a local girl who was brought up in Radyr. It was during her time at Radyr comprehensive that she started rowing through the schools rowing programme (1980-1982). Like so many of us, she was bitten by the bug. During her long and successful career in rowing she reached the top level of club competitive rowing and had many wins at top class regattas. She was an accomplished and versatile tower and even dabbled in coxing at times.

As well as competing, Sian also made many friends in the rowing world and some of the links that still exist between Llandaff and other clubs would have had Sian's involvement. She was also an active social member of the club and a great team player. When the club went through some trying times, Sian was there to help run the bar or organise events and volunteers.

Tragically, Sian died suddenly at the age of 29 whilst on holiday in Africa. The club was greatly saddened by the news and she was mourned by many. Like many popular club members, a boat now carries her name as a reminder of her and her time at the club.



Christine Barrow : Womens Light-weight pair/double, remembered by David Simmonds

Chris Mary Barrow was born and raised in Cardiff and a PE teacher by profession, Chris began her career in mainstream schools but moved to Woodlands High Special School because she believed passionately that pupils with special needs deserved the same opportunities.

A keen hockey player at a senior level for many years and an enthusiastic runner – she had completed the Dublin Marathon – she came to rowing in 2006 when she and her longtime friend and work colleague Rosemary Martin decided to enter the club's annual Pub and Club fun regatta. Teamed up with two other Marys, the crew - inevitably dubbed 'The Four Marys' - went on to row together for several years.

Chris, as she was more usually known, had a lifelong talent for making friends and inspiring loyalty; when she lost her hair after chemotherapy treatment, the other members of her then crew, in a moving display of solidarity, all wore bandanas in the club colours to match hers when they competed at their next regatta, where they won their novices.

As her illness progressed, she kept up her rowing. 'A session on the river gets my head straight'.



Dai 'Rear Gunner' Morgan : Men Coxed Four, and **Peggy Morgan** : Women Coxed Four : remembered by Kath Smith

Dai Morgan joined at the age of 6 years old, when he was told off for throwing stones at boats from the old bridge, after his telling off, they asked him to join the club and went on to cox. Over the years, he coached and rowed all over the world. He officiated at the British Empires in Lake Bala, North Wales and the 1958 Commonwealth Games. He was awarded the Queens Jubilee Medal for Services to Rowing in 1977. He officiated at the World Championships in Lake Bled, part of Yugoslavia in 1989. Dai was originally with Taff Rowing Club which later became Llandaff Rowing Club, in which he served as President, Chairman, Captain, Club Secretary, Treasurer – he did them all. He was also a member of the Watermen, in which he held a post until he passed away. Peggy Morgan was a Worcester girl and a Henley Rowing Champion, winning the Gold Cup. Peggy also held many posts at the club, but is best known for running the Tea Tent with her team at the club's regattas. She was also enthusiastic about and worked at many social events at the club. Dai and Peggy met through rowing, and had a big wedding at Worcester Rowing Club.

Kath Smith, daughter of Dai and Peggy, rowed at Llandaff and then rowed for the Army. Her family were also rowers at Llandaff. Her brother Karl, also rowed and later rowed with the Air Force. He now coaches at Ortago High School for girls, Ortago, New Zealand.

Lockdown training - let's not get bored



By Sue Hoddell

I didn't get to borrow an ergo from the rowing club. What a shame! I am not sure I expected to be away from the rowing club for quite so long. So my training has needed to get a bit creative. At the start it was easy, long walks as I normally do exploring the

footpaths around me in the wonderful Vale of Glamorgan. Decent bike rides too. Old routes retraced rather more often than I would normally choose and lots of new lanes explored as I go round in big loops. To make it a bit easier, I ride my mountain bike so this requires a greater effort for the same distance as a road bike ride. Then to break the monotony I started to run again, not the best for my arthritis but it makes sense. To save running in the heat I go before breakfast, very novel for someone who normally isn't fit to talk to until I've had my second cup of coffee.

Ok, what else can I add? With a friend of mine who will remain nameless we tried to get into our local tennis court. It was locked and there was no gap in the fence, we looked... hard. However, we discovered that the unused school playground was just big enough for a knock about and that the knock about lasts longer without a net to get in your way.

I can add in a HIT session. I have a routine as recommended by Dr Michael Mosley but then I discovered the skipping rope in the drawer. How the boxers make it look so effortless I have no idea but I just about manage to hurl myself over it for 1 minute intervals. Ok, I'm a sweaty mess after but isn't that how it's supposed to be.

As staying so close to home gets boring I move on to my 'duathalons'. I cycle to the Knap in Barry and then go for a long walk along the front and around the docks before I cycle home, all uphill. Then I run up to the allotment and lug watering can after watering can from the tap to the allotment to give my plants some much needed water and then run home, all downhill. As the sea warms up I contemplate cycling to the beach for a swim and cycling back. I think contemplating was enough with that one but I go for it anyway.

What comes next? Well, I'm delighted that tennis and rowing are back so I can kind of get back to normal but it's been good to stretch myself out some variety into my training. Still no ergos for a while and I'm still not upset about that. Winter heads are some way away so I'll enjoy the warmth and the great outdoors for a while longer.



My favourite dish by Terry John

During the past 15-16 weeks of lockdown, depending when you actually started self-isolating, the earlier days of panic buy, lack of food on shelves, and being stuck at home having to cook for yourself.

I like to share one of my recipes with you, this is one of my favourite dishes which I love to cook, so easy!

The amount of ingredients is quite generous for one person if like me living alone, or can be shared if your fortunate enough to be locked with your loved ones. So this is a recipe for one hungry active person or for two to share...

Ingredients

A couple of handfuls of your favourite pasta. I used fusilli

1/2 an onion coarsely chopped

1/3 Red pepper. Chopped chunky

A piece of good steak, I like to use beef medallion

2 cloves of garlic finely chopped

Double (or single) cream

Sunflower oil or vegetable oil

Salt and Black Pepper to taste

Method

Put water in saucepan and bring to boil. Once boiled put the pasta in and simmer on a medium heat.

Chop the vegetable, onion coarsely, red pepper chunky and garlic fine chopped.

With a little oil, fry the onions gently in a frying pan, add a little salt to keep the temperature down. You don't want to burn the onions.

Once the onions soften add the chopped garlic. Fry together gently for about 5 minutes.

In the meantime, slice the steak into small thin pieces. I generally use 3/4 of the medallion so I can have a steak sandwich for my lunch the next day!! But if you want to use it all then go for it..

Add the red pepper to the onions and fry until the pepper starts to soften.

Now add the steak pieces. Lightly fry so the steak remains rare to medium, try not to over cook the meat or it becomes tough.

As soon as the steak is JUST cooked add a bit of cream, just enough so it glaze like a sauce, not swimming in it! The pasta should now be cooked. Drain the pasta and put it back in the saucepan, then add the steak and veg to the pasta and stir together, adding a bit of salt and black pepper to taste.

Enjoy with some garlic bread.

Touring in Europe

BY IAN HALL

I mentioned in my piece on Venetian rowing in Issue 3 that City Barge had organised a number of rowing tours, or “raids”, in Europe. Venetian rowing gives the significant advantages of looking forward and standing up so you can often see over the bank, often not possible if conventionally rowing. The main disadvantage is that it is less efficient and you therefore cover less distance in a day.

I like to think of the boat as a means of transport, rather than an exercise machine, so a tour when you can step out of your boat and into a riverside hotel is the ultimate. The other requirement for Venetian boats is a good slipway at each end as they are too heavy to lift in and out.



A raid of ours down the Meuse in France and Belgium in 2009 met these requirements with excellent slipways at the start at the Aquatic Centre in Charleville-Mezieres and at the end at Anseremme. In between there were nicely spaced villages, each with less than 300m between mooring or beaching points and our small hotels. Not luxury, but the food was always fantastic. The river is canalised in lengths with locks to allow commercial traffic. The locks operated automatically by a remote control similar in size to a television control. We were lucky to have a fluent French speaker on board, as we were misinformed about the procedure for issue of these, and were 100km away from the issue point with the office about to close for the weekend when we learnt what we should have done. However, a solution was found and we were issued a unit and allowed to continue.

At this point in the Ardennes the Meuse meanders through deep valleys. It used to be the main transport route to carry the stone from the quarries in the area. Like the valleys in Wales, many of the villages have known better times but they are now increasingly popular with tourists. We were always welcomed and never worried about the security of



the boats. We rowed 15km to 25km per day, carrying our luggage with us and staying at Montherme, Revin, Haybes and Givet. At Givet we handed back our lock control and passed through into Belgium for our final day. We arranged lunch at Hastiere and a visit to the Chateau de Freyr in the afternoon before taking the boats out in the marina at Anseremme.

For our trip down the Douro in 2012, we were not able to arrange the logistics in the same way. There the villages and roads tended to be on the ridges, with only the river and the railway line in the valley. So we established a base and used the morning and evening railway services to travel between moorings as we moved down the river. We stayed on a quinta – a property where they made port, equivalent to a chateau in France - within walking distance of Pinhao station. They had an independent five bedroom self-catering house with a pool overlooking the valley which was ideal for our purpose.





Douro

We launched the boats from a slipway at Freixo-de-Numao and left them there for the night as we took the trailer back to Pinhao. Then, after buying a picnic for lunch, we took the train back up in the morning to start rowing. In the evening we moored at Vargelas and caught the train back to Pinhao for a swim and supper. The following day we were back on the train to Vargelas to pick up the boats. The next stretch included the Barragem da Valeira and its 32m deep lock, the second deepest in Portugal. We had to book our time through this lock, and we had to row straight through the rocky section below the dam as the river authority did not wish us to meet a cruise boat in this narrow section. Before the locks tamed the river here the boats carrying the barrels of port down to Porto used to run the rapids. There is old black and white film of these on the net which gives an idea of how dangerous this was, and even more incredible is the thought of having to drag your empty boat back up again.

In the evening we got to Tua, where we moored the boats and where there was a restaurant conveniently near the station for some refreshment as we waited for our train back to Pinhao. The row from Tua to Pinhao the following day took us through a different landscape. The steep rocky sides to the valley now gave way to the steep terraces of the port vineyards. Here the best port is made by traditional methods with harvesting by hand – the harvesting machines used in the new world could not be used on these terraces – and the grapes trodden by foot, often by teenagers after school to get pocket money. We visited just in time to watch the process, which the winemakers claim gives a more gentle pressing and a better start to the process. We certainly enjoyed the results of their labour, and it is no accident that all the local restaurants would have dark chocolate gateau on the menu to enjoy with a glass of their ruby port.

Back at Pinhao we spent a couple of days exploring small tributaries below the town and looking at the fantastic tiled pictures on the station before we had to take the boats out for their return to UK.

Another memorable trip was a circular tour round the waterways of Paris in 2015, organised by the local members of the European association of Venetian oarsmen, the CIVV. This was, apparently, a nightmare to organise as almost every stretch of river or canal required permissions from different organisations. We boated from the Parc Nautique on the Seine just below Pont de Sevres, and rowed

downstream through large lock, only a small drop but 175m long. Then on to Saint-Denis where we locked into the Saint-Denis Canal. Rowing up the canal you pass the Stade de France, and eventually into to a basin with impressive locks leading through to the Bassin de la Villette. Here we were able to leave the boats for the night and travel back to our hotel on the Metro.

In the morning we rowed into the Canal Saint-Martin, which is at street level and passes through a busy area, where we watched the crowds and the crowds watched us.



Paris

Then down through a lock and into a 2km tunnel which has the Boulevard Richard-Lenoir built over it. In the photograph you can see the round holes in the roof which let in light and are built into the central reservation of the road. At the far end of the tunnel it passed under the Place de la Bastille and into the Bassin de l' Arsenal where we moored the boats for the night.

On the Sunday we were to lock into the Seine and row down past Ile de la Cite. We had to start early as the police required us to be downstream of the Eiffel Tower by 10.00am as they didn't want us to be in the centre when the cruise bateaux started to churn up the water. We didn't want to be there then, either. It was a beautiful morning and we felt really privileged to be rowing past Notre-Dame, the Louvre, the Musee d'Orsay, the Eiffel Tower and the Statue de la Liberte. Then we lost our police escort and rowed on down to our starting point at the Parc Nautique for a buffet lunch. *Three memorable trips...*

If you would like to know more visit: www.citybargeclub.org



Paris

We are the Watermen... ...our history and our contribution?

Many of you might or might not have heard of the Watermen at our club. There have been talks and whispers on "Who are the Watermen" and "What does the Watermen do".

A member may say to you, 'oh yes, its in the Watermen room', to which you reply, 'Where's that?'. You go upstairs and into the bar and see a side room on the left, with a door plaque saying 'Watermen Room',

So who are and what is the Watermen? This is an article written by Roy Nicholls, about its history and what they have done for our club.

In 1946 Llandaff Rowing Club was formed with former members of Cardiff Rowing Club and Taff Rowing Clubs many of which had their rowing careers curtailed by the Second World War.

At the end of 1950, Cyril Yard a member at the club, suggested the formation of a small society comprised of senior members of Llandaff Rowing Club to Victor Cleeves the club's President. Victor was very much in favour of this idea and on 7th February 1951 Cyril Yard circulated a letter to a select number of members setting out his ideas and inviting them to a meeting just over a week later.

In his letter he set out a few ideas on qualifications for membership:-

1. A past official (Captain, Secretary or Treasurer) of the extinct Cardiff or Taff Rowing Clubs or the present Llandaff Rowing Club.
2. Or at least 20 years membership of a Rowing Club
3. Or at the express invitation of the Committee (if the Society should be formed)

If the society was formed it would provide occasional meeting of contemporary oarsmen. Furthermore the active members of Llandaff Rowing Club being aware of a revised interest by a band of senior members would be heartened in their endeavours to encourage and increase the popularity of rowing in Llandaff.

So on Friday 16th February 1951, twenty seven founder members met at Llandaff Rowing Club at 7.30pm to form a Society of Senior Members. The meeting decided unanimously to name the Society "The Llandaff Society of Watermen".

Consent for the formation of the society was sought from the Parent Club which was duly approved. Victor Cleeves was elected as the first Chairman, Hubert Johnson Vice Chairman and Cyril Yard elected as Honorary Secretary.

The conclusion of the meeting met with a comment made by Victor Cleeves that the success of the Society would be in

providing occasional meetings for contemporary oarsmen and bound in the interests of Rowing and the Parent Club in particular.

From the outset the aim was to give moral and practical assistance to Llandaff Rowing Club without encroaching upon the administrative or executive conduct of the affairs of the Club. Each member of the Society, donate personal finance and encourage voluntary fund raising affairs, which was incorporated into the rules back then and remains that way today.

Very quickly the notion of an Annual Outing to support regattas and Llandaff's competing crews at Monmouth, Penarth, Barry and other local regattas. The Society Dinner took hold, a tradition still maintained. In the early day a number of different venues for the dinner were chosen but since 1989, except 1995 when the Club was being redeveloped, all have been held at Llandaff Rowing Club thus ensuring the Club derives the best benefit from the occasion.

In the beginning with a relatively small core of members which was increasing year by year practical contribution to Llandaff Rowing Club consisted of providing prizes for the regatta draw, funding prizes for the children's races and organising and running the regatta bar. Steadily as activities and fund raising increased contributions were made to Llandaff Rowing Club by providing the Captains board in 1957 and in that year contributing to the Empire Games fund. In the early 1960's donations were made to purchase a coxless pair and the purchase of a bank tub. Another contribution to the Empire Games fund for Welsh Rowing crews competing in Perth, Australia in 1962 in which Jerry and Tim Luke from Llandaff were part of.

The remainder of the 1960's saw further monies handed over to Llandaff Rowing Club boat fund through monies raised from organising regatta and Xmas draws.

The 1970's were a relatively quiet time for the Society only providing monies for free weights and platform and curtains for the club room and the 1980's enjoyed considerable success on the water but 1987 was a particular memorable year as the Society was called on for help due to rule changes made by ARA (Amateur Rowing Association today known as British Rowing) with regard to shoes in boats. Boats no longer had plates and straps, but shoes were introduced as a new rule. The Society promptly made an emergency cash donation of £400.00 to ensure crews could compete in the season's events.

In the early 1990's financial pressure increased on the Club as the club grew, and as a result it turned to the Watermen for help. Llandaff Rowing club benefitted by the Society providing its first coaching launch "The Waterman" together with funding or purchasing launch engines, oars and other rowing equipment. And in 1996 the society provided £1000.00 for a kitchen fit out following the redevelopment of the club and clubhouse the year before. The Society's funds had now been all but exhausted and it was time to replenish.

From 2003 onwards, the Society provided financial assistance to individuals who may not have had the opportunity to pursue the sport of rowing as they wished. One such individual is Zak Lee Green a former Great Britain lightweight sculler who won a bronze at the World Rowing U23 Championships in 2010 and a silver medal in the World Rowing Championships in 2017.

Looking for ways to fund raise, 2005 saw the Society instigated the first Club Christmas lunch which has been and still is well supported by members, their families and friends, with a hundred tickets sold annually and a good time enjoyed by all. A 3 course lunch, followed by Carol singing and a gift from Santa, if you've not attended one yet, maybe this year you should try it out. The profits from this event have all been ploughed back into the rowing club and in 2012 gave £1000.00 towards a new launch engine.

The Society's latest projects have been the reframing of photographs of the Cardiff, Taff and Llandaff Rowing Clubs, the repair of the honours boards commemorating those fallen in the Great War and the acquisition the tables and chairs which currently adorn the balcony.



Jeff Atkins, Tony Curtis, Roy Nicholls, Jon Hine and Rob Coles during a visit to Ross Rowing Club

The Society has never been large in active members but has endeavoured to do its best with only two events per year to raise funds. A calculation shows that over the years in today's values it has gifted the equivalent of over £25,000.00 in the name of rowing and Llandaff Rowing Club.

Today the Society membership has extended and benefitted with the addition of those from other clubs such as Hereford, Ross, Gloucester, Bradford-on-Avon, Penarth, Mumbles and Monmouth. The Society's association with the members of these clubs enables us to share the hospitality of these clubs and continues to provide a bond of friendship across the sport of rowing.

In recent years, the position of Chairman is only held for one year in order of seniority. Members continue to fund raise and put their hands in their pockets to help the rowing members to thrive. It is vitally important to appreciate what these members do for the club, and next year 2021 the Society will have been in existence for 70 years and there is no sign of it retiring just yet. It will continue...

Attention: Go!

Calling all juniors!

Who can win the Llandaff RC #DioleNHS tech top design competition?

**We want to show our support for the NHS by selling some Tshirts
but we need a winning design for a Llandaff training tech top.**

If you fancy having a go at designing a top tech top, then email us a pic & we'll choose a winner!

The winner will get a free top & we'll also raise some money for the NHS.

Entries close on Tuesday the 30th June at 8pm. Get designing!

Good luck - pob lwc.

Please send entries to :- llandaffsponership@gmail.com