



# Cygnet Committee Annual Report

Marjorie Israel

1 January 2019

The Cygnet Management Committee presents its one hundred and twenty-eighth report for the year ending 31 December 2018.



*Centenary of the end of World War 1: Cygnet and BBLRC remembering all who lost their lives during World War 1, including 11 members of Cygnet - 11 November 2018*

## Club Members and Friends

Fourteen new members were elected during the year. Encouraged by new CSSC membership rules, the club continues to encourage non-Civil Servant members to apply for so-called "linked" membership of CSSC to further strengthen our association with the CSSC.

This year we lost Noel Davison, a very active Cygnet member from the time he joined in the early 1970s up to more recent years, both as a veteran rower as well as one of the Club's Honorary Executive Examiners for many years. Noel was also involved in rowing outside Cygnet with Molesey and Tideway, and as Secretary of the Fours Head. After a long battle with cancer, Noel passed away on 1st July. In his memory, the Fours Head introduced the Davison award to the standout performance from a small club.

Graham 'Barney' Frith passed away on 4th September; Barney joined Cygnet in 1961 and remained a stalwart attendee of Club social functions such as the Christmas lunch at the CSSC club until illness prevented him from doing so.

## Rowing

In 2018, the Club made good progress developing committed experienced and new novice oarsmen whilst being represented at all major Head races and most regattas.

The focus continued to be on boosting the membership by holding another two Learn-to-Row courses in April and September. The April course did not result in any new members but the September course was slightly more successful with four applicants voted in as full Cygnet club members.

The club competed at the Quintin Head as well as the Hammersmith Head, the Head of the River and the Veterans Head. Regattas on the itinerary for the year included Hammersmith, Chiswick (recording a win for the Tier 1 Coxed Four of G Furby, I Schofield, S Sears, Ni Rae, coxed by Ms H Steedman),

Borne @ Chiswick Bridge (another win for our Open Coxed Four G Furby, I Schofield, S Sears, N Rae), Barnes and Mortlake, Putney Town, Metropolitan. Richmond Regatta saw a record entry for Cygnet with four coxed fours and an eight without any rowers doubling up (24 members racing), and another win for the Coxed Four Tier 1 of S Livingstone, I Schofield, N Rae, S Sear, coxed by Ms G Hensher.

The Club also entered eights, fours, singles at St Neots, Henley Town and Visitors and Peterborough Summer regattas without wins. The Club finished the regatta season at Oxford Regatta with a win for the Coxed Four of S Sears, S Livingstone, I Schofield and R Harries coxed by Ms A Costantini.

A mini-squad of eight rowers from Cygnet and BBBRC travelled to Dusseldorf/Benrath in October to row the Rhine Marathon; all crews finished successfully on this warm and sunny day. Starting the winter season, Cygnet entered crews in the Pairs Head, the Fours Head and the et Fours head with good rows reported by all crews. Five scullers were entered in the Scullers Head.

## ***Coaching***

---

After interviewing different coaches and exploring various options, Ms Chihiro Calvin was taken on as Cygnet's Head Coach. She has a UKCC Level 2 coaching certificate and a long pedigree with clubs on and off the Tideway; her crews have an enviable list of medals and pennants to their name. Mr A Cox continued to coach the Novices who have been entered in regattas this season, with wins in some heats.

As ever, coxing continues to be an issue at Cygnet and this year we were very thankful for the coxing carried out by Rebecca Arnott and Cygnet members Robin Harries, Charlie Pretzlik, Gareth Furby, Jeremy Pugh and Matt Byrne, in addition to a wide variety of Barnes Bridge Ladies who helped out.

## ***Additions to the Cygnet Fleet***

---

At the 2017 Special General Meeting, the membership approved the purchase of a new Coxless Four which was duly procured from Janousek Racing Shells. Following consultation with the membership, it was agreed to call this boat the "Neil Jackson" - needless to say Dr Jackson was delighted and he put up a magnificent spread with excellent wine for the boat-naming in May. Mr I Golder has done a sterling job managing the maintenance of the Club boats; some boats have been to the boat mender for hull overhauls.

The fact that Cygnet continues to add to its range of top racing boats reflects both the success of the longstanding boat buying programme and the continuing generosity of members of old and new in furnishing the necessary funding.

## ***300 Club***

---

The 300 Club continued to be managed by Guy du Parc Braham. The usual draws were held through the year and new ground was broken with the publication of the results on the Website and through Twitter. It is recognised that the marketing efforts to promote this important fundraising tool carried out by Guy continued to have a positive effect on the sale of 300 Club tickets. The Committee hopes that this progress can be maintained in future years. By year end, Guy indicated that work restrictions force him to start handing over the day-to-day administration to another club member.

## ***General Meetings***

---

### **Annual General Meeting –Held at the Boathouse on Saturday 24 February 2018**

Was attended by Vice-President and Chairman N J Wylie, Vice Presidents Dr R P du Parcq, P L Rawkins, A Cox and A Rawkins also Ms M Israel, M Byrne, N Davison, K Gladstone, T Broadhurst, I Golder, C Cabrera, R Bailey, S D Bush, and J Berry. Apologies for absence were received from M Byrne, N Pickford, P Brown and J Pugh.

The existing eleven Vice-Presidents were re-elected. Re-elected were N J Wylie as Chairman; Ms M Israël, Hon Secretary; M Byrne, Hon Treasurer; and T Broadhurst as Assistant Treasurer. Mr N Pickford was voted Assistant Secretary and Mr C Cabrera as Social Secretary. Committee Members elected were P L Rawkins, Dr R P du Parcq, A Rawkins, I Golder and N Smith.

A Cox, P L Rawkins, N V Pickford and M Byrne were re-appointed Trustees and M Burman and T N Davison re-appointed Honorary Independent Examiners.

The Annual Report had previously been circulated and was adopted. The Captain had sent his apologies and had not sent a report. Mr Bush presented the Bungalow Report. The Annual Club Accounts were presented by Mr Broadhurst; these were accepted without qualification.

### **Ordinary General Meeting & Election of Captaincy held on Tuesday 17 July 2018**

Chaired by N J Wylie – Vice Presidents Dr R P du Parcq, P Rawkins, A Rawkins attended. Also attended M H Israel, Hon Secretary, M Byrne, Hon Treasurer, S Gibbons, V Todorov, C Cabrera, N Smith, R Bayley, B Dearlove, I Schofield, H Jonstrom, R Harries, J Pugh, A Almeida, K Gladstone.

Mr M Byrne, as outgoing Captain stated that the year had been very intense, starting with the resignation of coach T Male although many club members stepped up to assist with the coaching effort, including Ms K Simpson and Mr G Furby. He was pleased to report that the novices were learning to row and cox, which will assist the new captain. He wished his successor the best of luck. The meeting thanked Mr Byrne for doing an admirable job as Captain as well as Treasurer.

There being no other nominations, the following were elected to Office:-

Captain: C Cabrera; Deputy Captain: Niall Smith; Vice-Captain: Tom Broadhurst.

### **Special General Meeting held on 17 December 2018**

Chaired by N Wylie, Vice Presidents Dr R P du Parcq, P Rawkins, A Rawkins attended, also attended M H Israel, M Byrne, C Cabrera, R Bailey, A Almeida and A Freeland.

The meeting discussed a proposal from the Committee of Management; that the subscription fees for 2019 be raised by £40.00, which would be £330.00 for CSSC members and £400.00 for non-CSSC members. This proposal was carried unanimously.

## ***Club Management Meetings***

---

Four committee meetings were held during the year with a 80% attendance record. The dates of meetings were mostly set at the end of each meeting. British Rowing was advised that the number of members for whom affiliation payments were due was 62. Items of special note are detailed below.

## ***Civil Service Sports Council***

---

The Civil Service Sports Council continues to support the changes to CSSC membership that allow for linked membership. Informal feedback from CSSC HQ is that they are pleased with the way Cygnet is making use of the new membership categories. They have kept in touch through the year and we are determined to get as many members into CSSC as possible. It is still a challenge to get Cygnet's Learn to Row courses published on CSSC documentation, but we will persist in our attempts. The Hon Secretary attended the London Region Annual Conference.

## ***“Cygnet’s” Bungalow***

---

Again a successful year for our second important fund raising source. The premises were fully in use from May until September and also at several weekends. Two Sculling Camps were held by Cygnet. Management of the Bungalow being carried out by Mr D Bush as Bungalow Manager. Mr Bush will present a full report at the Annual General Meeting.

The Cygnet Management Committee expresses its heartfelt thanks to Mr Bush who is and who always has been a staunch supporter and now manager of the bungalow since it was built.

## ***The Website***

---

The website continued to be updated by Neil Pickford, with Club officers able to post information themselves. It provides most relevant information about the club and its activities. Club members can get access to members-only sections by requesting a password from the Webmaster, Neil Pickford. All members and friends are urged to log on to [www.cygnet-rc.org.uk](http://www.cygnet-rc.org.uk).

Members and friends alike can now also follow the club's activities with the official Cygnet Twitter account @CygnetRC, and through this have access to regatta results, Tideway news from the PLA and British Rowing initiatives. The website is also the main link for the Cygnet photo archive, which we can highly recommend to all members.

The Club recognises the increasing importance of social media and plans to recognise this in the new year.

## *Social Events*

---

The usual social events were held, such as the Club Picnic at Old Blades in Henley during Henley Friday and the End of Season dinner in August. This year, the Club Lunch at Leander Club in Henley on Thames was held on 10 November, a day before Remembrance Sunday. At the lunch, Club Historian presented a World War I Centenary Commemoration he wrote with input from Ian Mountain. The annual Clubs' Day, organised by the Social Secretaries of both clubs was held in August and it was very gratifying to see so many Cygnet members, old and new, attending this event.

The End of Season Dinner also saw the awarding of our two annual awards:

The G.P. Jeffries Cup for Cygnet Rower of the Year. This goes to the oarsman who has improved most over the past 12 months - and there were several to choose from but ultimately the award went to Mr H Jonstromer.

The Wally Whedal Cup for Cygnet Sportsmanship & Endeavour, also known as 'Clubman of the Year', is awarded to the rower who showed willingness and eagerness to lend a helping hand wherever needed: Mr R Bailey.

Before Christmas, older members attended a weekday lunch at the RAF Club, admirably organised by Lawrence McVeigh.

## *At the End of the Year...*

---

We look back at a year of mixed emotions. Hopes raised of better rowing times under the coaching leadership of Tim Male who inspired the rowers to train harder, eat better, run harder and generally filled everyone with hope of a season of wins and pewter did materialise, only to be dented by the departure of Tim at the end of Regatta Season.

The captaincy plans to compete at Quintin Head, Hammersmith Head and, as always, the Head of the River Race and the Veterans Eights head. The club continues to be active both on and off the water. The Captaincy follows the policies laid down by previous holders of office and encourages club members to be further involved in club organisation. There is a constant hunt for coxswains, experienced or willing to learn and it is hoped that coaching will continue on both a professional and amateur basis. It is expected that 2019 will involve a very active racing season and the need for a high level of individual fitness will be necessary, so circuits remain on the menu.

The relationship with other clubs both on and away from the Tideway are excellent, in particular that with Barnes Bridge Ladies Rowing Club remains as strong as ever. The camaraderie between members is remarked upon and Cygnet remains a very friendly and happy club.