

2026 Fixtures *for the one hundred & thirty sixth season*

January	25 th	Quintin Head (09.30)
February	14 th	Henley Fours & Eights Head
	28 th	Hammersmith Head (13.30)
March	28 th	Head of the River Race (12.15)
	29 th	Masters Eights Head (Time TBC)
April	25 th	Hammersmith Amateur
May	2 nd	Chiswick Amateur
	9 th	Borne@Chiswick Bridge
	16 th	Putney Town
	23 rd	Twickenham
	30–31 st	Peterborough Spring
June	7 th	Walton & Weybridge
	13 th	Barnes & Mortlake
	27 th	Richmond Amateur
July	11–12 th	Kingston

More events to be confirmed as the season develops

The social side

Charles Johnston

Club Day – Sunday 14th September

Due to particularly awful weather on the day, a change of plan for this year's Club Day: instead of side-by-side racing, members of both clubs did some much needed maintenance around the boathouse, with beers and pizza after.

End of season dinner – Friday 29th August

This year's event took place at Ye White Hart with, as always for the socials, another good turnout! After some fine dining and wining, the winners of our annual awards were announced thus:

- **Peter Rice-Evans** – G.P. Jefferies Cup, for Clubman of the year
- **Tom Clarke** – Wally Wheldal Cup, for Sportsmanship & Endeavour
- **Benjy Heffer** – Tim Senior Cup, for Novice of the year
- **Neil Pickford** – Senior of the Year Cup, for overseeing this years 60th Anniversary celebrations

The Rhine Marathon – Friday 3rd October

See "60 years and counting" report

BBLRC Annual Christmas Ball – Friday 12th December

Another good turnout for the annual inter-club Christmas party at the George IV in Chiswick, preceded by the traditional Waddle naturally.

Vets Christmas Lunch – Monday 15th December

Arranged, as always, by Lawrence McVeigh at the very splendid RAF Club in Pall Mall.

2026 Club events

February	15 th	AGM (Committee elections)
March	14 th	WeHoRR (12.45)
April	4 th	University Boat Races (from 14.20)
July	3 rd	Henley Friday at Old Blades

OGM date will be confirmed in the next edition



Dom & Tom take the silverware in the 2- at HT&V

Cygnets 300 Club



Mustafa Özyurt

Our principal fund raiser which keeps our fleet maintained and up-to-date. Tickets are just £10 each and there are ten annual draws with a top prize of £100. All members and friends are encouraged to participate and active oarsmen are expected to have a 'few' tickets. All winners and draws are posted on the club website. For more details and to buy tickets, contact [300club\[at\]cygnet-rc.org.uk](mailto:300club[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk)

Subscriptions & Donations

Matt Byrne

Active members: CSSC £450.00* • non-CSSC £550.00
Club friends: suggested minimum £20.00

Cheques "Cygnets Rowing Club" to: Cygnets RC Treasurer, Flat 102 Westfields, Railway Side, Barnes, SW13 0PL or for other payment details contact [treasurer\[at\]cygnet-rc.org.uk](mailto:treasurer[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk)

Cygnets Bungalow

Ross Stewart

The bungalow at No. 38 Hamhaugh Island, Shepperton, is ideal for a riverside holiday and is available for booking by members and friends between May and the end of October. Other periods and winter bookings may be available, please enquire with the secretary [bungalow\[at\]cygnet-rc.org.uk](mailto:bungalow[at]cygnet-rc.org.uk)

Other Contacts

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CYGNET ROWING CLUB

December 2025 Newsletter

From the captain

Jordan Hunt

First of all I would like to thank Dom and the outgoing captaincy for all of the hard work they have put in over the last year. We are certainly in a great place as a club and I really hope we can build on this and achieve even more success this upcoming year.

On this topic, I would like to congratulate all of the squad that competed at Henley Town & Visitors regatta, where there was some very competitive racing across the board. Particular congratulations to Tom and Dom in the 2- who beat the RAF and won their category.

Full Shed training returned in the first week of September. With midweek sessions comprising weights on Mondays, "exciting ergs" on Wednesdays and a more recent addition of pre-work steady state ergs on a Friday. These have been well attended, building a strong base into the new year.

The squad took a second trip to Henley, this time for Upper Thames Autumn Head in late October. A thoroughly enjoyable event for all involved against strong opposition, with very respectable showings in the Club 2-, 2x, 4- and Masters 4x divisions.

No Autumn sculling camp this year but Scamp will be back in the second quarter of 2026. Exact dates TBC

Fours Head Weekend

Cygnets entered a 4+ and 4x in Fours Head on the Saturday, and a 4- in the Veteran Fours Head on the Sunday. A very solid row was had by all, with a notable 27th out of 37 for the 4+ and very windy conditions well dealt with by the 4-.

Learn to Row

The LtR was back again on the 8th of September for another six week course. Huge thanks Sian, Charlotte and Clara who put the 11 applicants through their paces on the ergs and on the water. Sadly our aim of getting the new cohort racing in the Plum Puddings in December was kiboshed by Quintin who were only accepting entries from themselves and MAA this year. Nevertheless, a good portion of the LtR very much enjoyed it and are intending to sign-up as full members in the new year.

60 years and counting

Neil Pickford

In early October we held the last of our 60th anniversary celebrations with RG Benrath. 14 Cygnet oarsmen travelled to Düsseldorf to compete in the Rhine Marathon with another eight travelling to support them (*“only here for the beer”*).

Friday evening saw 60 people muster at the RG Benrath boathouse for dinner, drinks and presentations, including Ferdi Picker and Lawrence McVeigh the last two surviving ‘originals’ from 1965, when it all started.

Sadly the exceptional quality of our hosts was not matched by the weather for the race on Saturday. It was awful (enough to cancel Pairs Head back in Blighty) but the three CYG crews and one mixed CYG/RGB anniversary crew battled through the wind and rain, surviving to tell the tail over a few beers and dinner in the Schlüssel brewery in Düsseldorf Altstadt.

The Erntedank parade on Sunday Morning was also rather damp but it’s not often you get to take part in a traditional German harvest festival parade!

That brought the curtain down on the 60th celebrations but not on the inter-club relationship which we sincerely hope will last for the same again. *More details and photos can be found on the Cygnet website*



The fastest Cygnet crew battling the wind at the finish



Erntedank parade

Richard Du Parcq

Paul Rawkins

About a month before he died, Richard wrote to the secretary at Cygnet informing him that he would be unable to attend the forthcoming ordinary general meeting. Typically, he went into further detail, describing himself as a well-disposed old fart, living just across the river, active 1968–1990s, who now has a mystery set of medical symptoms which has been puzzling Kingston Hospital once or twice a week in recent months. His symptoms would defy diagnosis until very late in the day and he died on 25th August at the age of 82.

As it happened, the date of the OGM (23rd July) was a poignant one, coming just a week after Richard’s 56th anniversary as a member of Cygnet. His application form, dated 16th July 1969, informed the membership secretary that his full name was Richard Poole du Parcq, living in a basement on Kennington Road, while gainfully employed in the Management Services Department of the Metropolitan Police, where he would remain for the whole of his working life. He listed his previous rowing club as Exeter College, Oxford.

Richard was never under any illusion that he would make the blue boat. In his own words: my rowing owed more to enthusiasm, and great love of the sport, than to physique or any innate ability. Still, what Richard may have lacked in physical attributes on the water, he more than made up for on land, serving as captain twice (1979, 1989–90), secretary, treasurer and committee member, interspersed with coaching, coxing and even gym instruction. Along the way, he met and married CSLRC member Diane Clark in 1973; five children and six grandchildren would follow.

Richard’s enduring legacy will be the Ten-Year Boat Buying Programme which he devised in 1979 – it would transform Cygnet’s racing fleet. Yet his talents were not confined to Cygnet. He spent 35 years ‘before the flag’ as a licensed umpire, a role which suited him perfectly – he knew the rule book inside out – although he sometimes found the practical side more of a challenge. In later years (2005–22) he became Entries Secretary for the Fours Head, building a notorious reputation as an absolute stickler for the rules, despite much bleating from latecomers. A fellow official recalls: *Entries-related correspondence has been much duller since he retired and certainly includes less Latin.*

A senior club vice president, his devotion to public sector sport and recreation was rewarded with a Civil Service Merit Award in the 2000s. In 2022 British Rowing presented Richard with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contribution to the sport. Receiving it, he mused *“this may represent respectability ... something I haven’t always craved”*

John Ellis

Paul Rawkins

Not everybody craves the limelight; some like John Ellis, who died on the evening of 8th September aged 92, are destined to play a support role, and so it was that John often appeared alongside his wife Dame Diana Ellis, chair of British Rowing, at countless official events throughout her long term of office.

Although Cygnet was the main civil service rowing club post war, there were others, among them Crescent, another post office club based on the River Lee. Throughout the 1950s and 60s Crescent would often field crews for the annual civil service regatta, frequently walking away with the silver. For some Crescent members like John Ellis and Len Huggett, the draw of the Tideway was hard to resist and both would defect to Cygnet in the late 1950s.

A successful Cygnet stroke, noted for his long, graceful smooth technique, the early 1960s found John rowing in several club eights at a host of Tideway regattas and the Serpentine. In due course, John met Di, a fellow stroke, rowing for St George’s, who also boated from the civil service boathouse (and stroked the GB Women’s VIII at the European Championships in 1966) and another successful matrimonial union was struck.

John, probably wisely, never quite succumbed to the Last of the Summer Wine set, which met at the boathouse on Tuesdays and Thursdays. However, John and Len Huggett remained lifelong pals, often meeting up during retirement, Len ever full of bonhomie and John always on hand to see him safely home. It was a tried and tested combination.



Richard du Parcq



John Ellis

At the OGM in July it was agreed to make a significant addition to the fleet this year: a mid-weight Filippi, stern-loaded, coxed four. The purchase of such a high-end boat was enabled by a very generous legacy from Phil Brown, after whom the boat will be named.