

Curlew Newsletter

New Season Edition



**Tower of London
19/20 Committee**

Contents

1-4 Meet the new Committee for 19/20

5 Taster day

5 AGM

6 Tower of London

7-8 Alumni BBQ

9 Dates for the Diary



Welcome the new committee

We asked the entering committee members the following questions to get to know them all a little better.

What do you want to achieve in your committee role this year?

What's your rowing survival tip?



Matthew Richardson – Chairman

My aim for this committee, to ensure we move the club forward, from getting more people on the water, engaging with the alumni community, continue to invest in equipment and with social media push the reach of Curlew RC further and further. I think we are in an exciting time for those involved in the club.

Honestly, it's not rocket science, to get in a boat, turn up. I am not the tallest, fastest or thinnest rower, but when I was in any senior squad I just turned up, missing weddings, christening, family events. For me getting in the top boat was what mattered. My friends and family understood that.



Rebecca Jackson – Secretary

Capsize drill for everyone.

Oatopia flapjacks at every race and always bring spare kit.



John Stewart – Treasurer

Simplification of the clubs banking to ensure we're making funds work harder and we have a less complex banking relationship.

Bicarb.



Jess Phillips – Club Captain

To support our squad captains with their goals for the season, to help grow the club's membership and to ensure all members are given the opportunity to develop their rowing at Curlew.

Give every session maximum effort. If you want to be fast, practice going fast (another Fred classic)



Marcus Yarwood – Men's Captain

I will be happy if the men's squad is set up to be in an even better place by the start of next season, and everyone feels like they have the support to achieve their goals for this season.

Survival tip? Listen to Fred.



Kat Blomberg – Women's Captain

Building depth in the women's squad and continuing the momentum from last year's success!

Always have a spare rigger jigger.



Kamile Matulenaite – Women's Captain

Like any captain, I'd love to grow the women's squad this year and get some competitive boats out for the major races. But above all, I'd love to build a tight-knit squad that encourages one another to smash our goals.

I know that everyone in the boat is pushing at least as hard as me, so there's always room to push further



Joe Crotty – Intermediate Men's Captain

I'd like the dev squad to compete well in the head season and to win a pot this year!

My rowing survival tip is to train on the days you don't want to, as there'll be days when you can't, and you'll wish you did before. Also flapjacks.



Claire Postles – Intermediate Women's Captain

I want to fully represent the Devs in committee and make sure they have the support of the whole club. For the Dev women, I'd like to see them feeling more confident this season that they can achieve their best at races.

Rowing survival tip is to just listen to Nick the first time around. Invariably, you come to see he was right and, in the end, it'll save you time to do what he said in the first place.



Darci Dutcher – Membership Secretary

I want to help welcome new members to the club throughout the year and make sure that all the details of membership are handled smoothly that everyone can focus on the fun bits!

Roll with whatever happens.



Gemma Barker – Kit Officer

I want to make sure that all club members are looking mighty fly in their curlaw kit this year! If anybody has any specific kit requests, please do get in touch and I'll see what I can do.

A combination of knee length waterproof socks and sliders for ensuring dry and toasty toes when wading in on the tideway... it's also a very fetching look!



Angus Wilson – Regatta Secretary

Enter all the races

Eat breakfast



Stuart Beards – Social Secretary

Bring the various squads together throughout the year at the curlew socials.

Tape up and listen to Fred



Felix Hemsted – Boatman

Aim is to try and keep all the boats in working order - which is quite hard given that most rowers seem to want to break them!

Top tips: never let go of the blades, always bring a spare empty bottle with you on head races, invest in a good hat and buff for winter.



Giorgio Sdraffa – Alumni Officer

I want to make clear what the Alumni community stands for and what's in there for them too.

Be happy about everything rowing throws at you especially in comparison to your peers who don't have rowing in their lives!



Emily Wilsher – Information Officer

I'd like to have fun with the design part of the role and to end the year by not annoying too many people with my posts, pictures and emails.

Always do your first layer of sunscreen naked (In private). You'll never miss anywhere that way. You'll also never feel completely ready to race so don't worry.

Taster day

Sunday the 25th of August saw a new batch of eager novices come down to the docks to try out some rowing. We had tank sessions, rowing machine relay races, circuits, and finally onto the water for lake boats. It was a beautiful day, maybe even too hot as we all tried to hide under the marquee as a break from the sun. We had a great turn out and lots of signups to our next learn to row course.



AGM

I think this AGM will go down in history as the shortest the club has seen. We rattled through the summary of the year, the accounts, and the new (uncontested) committee members. The break for the bar wasn't needed as we saved the speeches, thank-yous and awards for that weekend's grand events.

If you would like to relive the night or read the year's round ups the full minutes are on the website.





Tower of London

It's very rare that you get the opportunity to wander around the Tower of London without bumping into a million tourists, or to have a personal guided tour, or to drink at the guard's pub within the Tower, and then, to top it all, watch the Ceremony of the Keys. Curlew really "lucked out" this year. Due to a club connection, Curlew RC had our summer party and award ceremony at the Tower of London. Yes, you heard that right, the Tower of London.

The summer party has always been a great end of season party. A chance to congratulate the squads for their hard work over the season. Also, it is an opportunity to thank the hard work and dedication of those volunteers who give up their time to help us row. We usually have our party at the clubhouse, but this year we were incredibly lucky. We were given the opportunity to an after-hours use of the Tower of London, complete with a tour of the Tower by a yeoman warden. Before settling down in the Tower pub, and watching the Ceremony of the Keys. The Club owes a lot of thanks to Darren Williams whose connections facilitated the whole evening. We have to thank our Yeoman warden who gave us a fantastic tour around the tower. Sadly, they locked the door to the Crown Jewels...probably for the best. We are from East London after all. The Tower was a magical venue for all our winner of awards. So, thank you all who made this wonderful evening possible. How do we top that next year? Stay tuned...

2018/19 Award Winners:

Dev male athlete of the year: Ken Hutt

Dev female athlete of the year: Maisie Richard Cottell

Senior male athlete of the year: Jake Wilson

Senior female athlete of the year: Kamile Matulenaite

Crew of the year: Men's 8+ Thames Challenge Cup

Committee award: John Stewart



Alumni BBQ

Sunday the 8th of September saw the annual Alumni BBQ. Rowers from the 60's through to the 00's came down to talk about rowing. Some even brought pictures. The curlew drag show looked great with some of the winners there in the room. A big thank you to Laura and Simon for the amazing food.

Below is a shortened version of alumni Tim Cooper-Jones great speech from the day, if you would like to read it in full it is on the website.

I appreciate the opportunity, on behalf of us Rowing Masters, or should it be Past Masters to say some words. Incidentally I was amazed to see that you can now become a Master at 27, which presumably puts most Olympic medallists in that category. I believe it has 13 sections from A to M. I suspect that most of us 'oldies' fit in bands G to H, which apparently stands for 'going towards heaven'.

I decided it might be fun to interpret this in three different directions, a bit like my rowing. First to recall what a wonderful heritage we have, then to reminisce a couple of instances from my own days, and finally to see if there is any thread of useful relevance to pass on to you magnificent rowers of today.

After a recent exchange with a Leander pal, who called Curlew a 'venerable' old club, I decided to investigate this more closely and indeed concluded, from all the useful stuff on the web, that the club can trace its origins as Curley to 31 years before Leander was formed. Therefore, it is indeed venerable and I think can justifiably regard itself as Leanders' East End elder brother.

It left me pondering...who or what was this chap Curley? Was it an old Norman name reference? Or from the Irish 'McCurley' clan? Was it a group of Deptford based watermen? No my research must submit to you a new suggestion in that the name derived from Curleys famous bone factory in Stratford? Apparently the original Mr. Curley was described as 'a thin young man with a brown face, brown eyes and a head of tightly curled hair who was an amateur boxer and always picking fights, especially with guys who were bigger than he was'? His workers were of similar build and several ex. Water and Lightermen, probably employed to dump the residue not turned into glue or fertiliser into the river? Could that be the trace element to the crew who borrowed one of Mr. Corbett's boats and took on the Argonauts at the first Greenwich Regatta?

However, I need also to remind you that those regattas weren't the 'namby panby' stuff that went on to form the Oxbridge based Gentleman's sport. Oh no it was a relative of the Doggetts Coat and Badge Watermans races which started in 1716. They were noted as extraordinarily long, tough and gruelling Sunday matches, heavily bet upon and usually ending in a 'rumpus and fracker' depending on the volume of grog consumed by the teams before, during and after the races.

But what of my own rowing days here which I recall included rescuing the air containers as they drifted downstream or got trapped underneath the pontoon; then there was the doubling of boat weight to steady balance as mud filled our wellies and waves spilled on board; and finally playing the most entertaining 'miss the barge in Erith' game which became even more exciting when it was being towed. Other instances included running aground at Poplar by my sister who was roped into coxing one morning and then refused to get back into the boat allegedly due to comments I made about her. And finally, the joys of speeding at full tide under the London Bridges on route to Putney, totally oblivious to the knowledge that bashing a pillar and sinking probably wouldn't be a good idea. Those days before Health and Safety stepped in.

Coming back to the spirit of Curley again, one of the most fun events I recall was a composition eight Peter Blaseby, our Club Captain at the time, put together as part of a Greenwich 'twinning' festival. This was to race a visiting crew from Reinickendorg, Peters' cunning plan consisted of 'borrowing' a few chaps from Poplar and Blackwell's elite squad and blending them with a few of us from Curlew and a couple of good friends of the club who happened to also have significant Elite experience. A couple of outings suggested that we were quite quick and needless to say we thrashed our very convivial but intentionally too well fed and by the Sunday morning extremely well-watered visitors, who were actually a pretty competent crew. This was much to the delight of an armada of supporters also guzzling quantities of booze and occasionally watching the race.

So finally, to offer some thoughts and lots of encouragement to the current crews. I think you're doing brilliantly well and don't get disheartened if you don't win every regatta, alas we didn't either! But I was re-watching some of your Henley YouTube's again and admiring the excellent techniques of both the mens and womens crews. You are clearly very well coached or, unlike me, just naturally gifted? But a great pleasure to watch, although I fear that by rowing in the V&A Docks you may be missing out on some of those important 'touch the barge' or 'power 10 into the bridge' exercises which formed the basis of our training. Nor the immediate access to several tankards of beer which would be awaiting you after clambering up the steep pontoon? Although I guess you may occasionally have the benefit of a few wafts of the perfumed air coming from Mr. Curley's glue factory?

The only small pearl of wisdom I can offer you all is the one offered to me in 1986 and I heard again from one of the Henley race commentators. In my case it happened to be my last ever regatta appearance as my wife and I were about to head to distant shores. It was the coxless pairs final at Twickenham regatta and after leading by several lengths we then lost by 2 feet to a newly formed Kingston/Leander duo of Stephen Redgrave and the late Andy Holmes. Afterwards they thanked us for the 'tough' opposition but admitted to taking the first 1,900 meters rather too comfortably before being shouted at from the towpath by their coach, Jim Clark to 'pull their fingers out'.

Jim's words to my mate and I were indeed similar to those I heard again on the Henley commentary... 'It's this simple get out there real fast, stay ahead and don't let the buggers catch you up'. Profound logic and so obvious but so hard to achieve. But I sense that brilliant seasons beckon you, so all you have to do now is keep ahead of the barges, dodge the pillars, keep sniffing the air and trust in the clarion call 'look out you Argonauts the Curleys are coming. Thanks again team for hosting us today.

Dates for the diary

27th Oct – Upper Thames Head

10th Nov – Docklands Head (this is on home turf so a great place to come down and cheer on the crews)

23rd Nov – Fours Head

14th Dec – Plum Pudding Races & the Christmas Party (Information email to be sent out soon)

A festive poster for a Christmas Party. At the top center is a small illustration of holly leaves and three red berries. Below this, the word "CHRISTMAS" is written in a white, sans-serif font. Underneath "CHRISTMAS" is the word "PARTY" in a very large, bold, white, sans-serif font. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below "PARTY". Below the line, the text "CURLEW RC" is written in a white, sans-serif font. Underneath "CURLEW RC" is a white rectangular box containing the text "SATURDAY 14 DECEMBER" in a red, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the poster, the address "Trafalgar Tavern Park Row, Greenwich Peninsula, London SE10 9NW" is written in a white, sans-serif font. The entire poster has a dark red background with a pattern of small, glowing red bokeh lights.

CHRISTMAS
PARTY

CURLEW RC

SATURDAY 14 DECEMBER

Trafalgar Tavern Park Row, Greenwich Peninsula, London SE10 9NW

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