



Tigeroars

Balmain Rowing Club
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Spring Edition 2011

BRC Lifers Lunch

On Sunday September 18 a reunion of Balmain's Life Members and Life Associate Members was held at the Clubhouse and much merriment and gentle conversation ensued.

For our first event the numbers were moderate but the memories and friendships were large.

This time the idea of a row was not taken up but many comments of 'next time' and a 'crew will be

organised' certainly seemed to guarantee a Balmain crew of Lifers would take to the water at the next reunion.

For those living too far away to return for the BRC lunch; and those with prior engagements were greatly missed. Your names were mentioned and each of you remembered.

The luncheon menu was a wonderful spread of

prawns, fish, chicken, vegetables and rolls followed by pavlova, mini cheesecakes all washed down by ice cold beer and wines.

A very special thank you was moved by George Neilson to the catering crew and a wish that the day was the first of many get-together's.

See you at the next reunion, and remember to bring your rowing gear.

Sincere thanks to Barbara Ramjan, Anne Craig and BRC's Events team for organizing, catering and hosting the first in the Life Members series of events.



From the President

As most of you would be aware Keith Swanson has recently experienced a serious bout of ill health.

The concerns expressed by so many BRC members serve to demonstrate the respect and gratitude we all feel for Keith, his tireless commitment to the upkeep of the Shed and his dedication to coaching generations of BRC rowers.

Keith is a unique character. I remember vividly our first meeting in 1970, more than 40 years ago. At the time, I was invited by Peter Phillips a workmate of mine and a BRC member to join a number of club members on a trip to New Zealand as a couple of people had withdrawn at the last minute.

A few weeks before departure I met some of the other participants at the Riverview but didn't know anyone else from BRC except Keith Swanson and Peter Phillips until meeting the other seven visitors to New Zealand at the airport. Frank Gardner, Richard Hunt, Warren and Cliff Fountain, Eric Matzen, "Ducky" McColm, Kevin Bertram. Ten of us, in all!

And required to fit into a "people mover" a Commer

van with ten seats.

We flew directly to Christchurch and I recall clearly two things: the beautiful cathedral in the centre of the city and immediately on arrival Keith arranged to attend the trotting club race meeting held that night.

Whilst the cathedral crumbled under the force of an earth quake; 40 years later some things remain the same. Keith has resumed his daily walk to the TAB this is strong testament to his return to health.

We drove south via the east coast the next day stopping off to meet Don Croot's mate, Rusty Robertson, at Omaru.

Rusty coached the local rowers on a stretch of water less than 500 metres long inside the breakwater at Omaru. We accepted Rusty's hospitality and over-nighted at Dunedin driving to Alexandra the following day to attend a weekend regatta.

We stayed at a motor camp a short distance from the rowing course on the local river which was far

from straight and had a considerable run in it.

BRC rowed in borrowed boats and benefitted from local knowledge enabling us to find the best line through the bends particularly helpful in navigating the water flow.

The local publican was a rowing supporter and offered wonderful hospitality zealously accepted by all BRC members, especially Keith who thought Mr Grubb and his offering of Lambs Rum was too good an opportunity to miss. However by the following morning he had changed the name of the rum to "Rams Bum" and restricted himself to plain food and soft drink for the short time we spent around Queenstown and Milford Sound.

There is insufficient room in this column to report all the events of such a memorable holiday but, as is obvious, we all survived the subsequent rollover whilst travelling back up the West Coast, having closely avoided the stump of a massive tree in the process.

From the President

Shortly before the accident we had overtaken the local District Inspector of Police, just after the accident he arrived on the scene and helped arrange our transport to the next town and hospital visits for those with cut heads.

As many of you will be aware Keith along with Richard Hunt has been a significant cog in most of the modifications, upgrades and renovations made to the BRC shed over many years. Without them and a willing band of helpers the shed would not be standing today.

“Swano” is one of a kind and most of my lasting memories of Keith relate to trips or away regattas.

A most memorable trip was to Grafton. Those who have driven it know it is a long trip for a day or two’s racing. I recall we drove straight through from Sydney to Grafton arriving just in time to boat for a sculling event. The start was up river from the boating/finish area and on arrival at the start line Keith, who was entered in the event, was advised by the starter he

was late and would not be allowed to start. Given the effort to travel to Grafton and to not have the opportunity to start, you might imagine Keith would be, (how should I put this?)... a little disappointed.

His comments, unknown to any of us other than the starter and Keith, were not taken as a compliment and whilst not allowed to race, he nearly beat the field back to the finish.

The matter subsequently took on a life of its own within the NSW Rowing Association requiring a brief written apology. This was eventually achieved at a BRC committee meeting a number of months later when a suitably worded letter was placed in front of Keith with the request,

“sign this”, and that was the end of the matter.

I am sure I speak for all members of BRC when I say how glad we are to see Keith looking well again with what is understood to be a good prognosis.

Finally I trust everyone has heard the news that our Co-Patron George Maxwell Neilson was presented with his OAM on a beautiful sunny morning at Government House by the the Governor Professor Marie Bashir in the company of his sister Coral his niece Kerry and myself.

Well done Keith & George

Go the Tigers!
David Longhurst

Photo shows : Keith Swanson at BRC in August this year



From the Captain's Table

BRC is slowly awakening from winter hibernation, large number of former rowers are emerging and returning for the season, new members joining existing squads, and many more new rowers starting through our Learn to Row program; all fantastic to see!

Our numbers were down a little at this year's JB Sharp but special mention must go to our squad of fantastic junior girls coached by Joe Grech for their success.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all our BRC coaches for contributing their time and skills to our BRC squads: Jeff Patterson, Patrick Holmes, Joseph Grech, Ian Craig, Allen Turner, Ron Beattie, Keith Swanson, Anne Craig, Barbara Ramjan, Owen Nix, Brian Guthrie, Barclay Wade and Josh Bray who has stepped in recently. Most of you would be aware of the positive effect a coach can have on both your rowing and general experience at the shed; we are extremely fortunate to have such a dedicated crew of coaches. If you are considering coaching for the club, but don't know if you are up to it yet, the best place to give it a try is in our Learn-to-Row program (in it's 4th week now at the time of writing this), and I would also like to thank Peter Hupfauf and Hamina Cameron for their efforts in organising this program.

Looking ahead to this season, we are beginning preparations for the upcoming busyness of the next 6 months. We are aiming to have at least 2 crews compete in Melbourne for the Head of the Yarra regatta toward the end of November, and also the Gold Cup regatta which has moved to November. Our annual Taree Training Camp is on again in January 2012 (watch this space!). Some of our juniors will have returned from Grafton (though we have not yet left at the time of writing this) and I hope the camp was a great experience for them. Later in February we will be looking forward to the State Championships, the National Championships in March, and finally the Club Grade Championships in April, BRC's big end-of-season regatta, paving the way for the master's end of season.

If you are dusting off the old gold and black zootie and intending to increase your fitness for the season, contact your coach and jump back into a squad! Now is the perfect time to get back on the water, and if you think you may need more than a row to gain peak fitness, pain in the park has started again on Thursday evenings (I may even join the regulars for a few sessions).

Liam James : Club Captain

Boat Classifications

There has been some confusion around the classification of boats system at the club.

Admittedly in our search for an effective and equitable system we have been unable to develop a process that has always been easy to follow or understand.

Hopefully the following will bring clarity to the ABC system.

The reason for this system is to

- ensure fair access to the water for every member
- allow every member to get the most out of their membership
- ensure that the boats are not damaged unnecessarily through overuse or the wrong type of use

It is not just a system of restriction, but a method to make sure boats are available for everyone when they are most needed!

So how does it all work?

Essentially, all boats are given a category: A, B, or C.

"C" grade boats are to be used by casual members and by full members. They are primarily for casual and beginner members to use, although anyone may both book and row them. These boats are durable and will survive better if they get knocked around a little bit (though we still want everyone to take care of them!).

"B" grade boats are for the use of full members, and generally a little lighter or narrower, but are still essentially club boats and for the use of all full members who are able to race (i.e. not beginners, and not casual rowers). The vast majority of the club will be rowing C and B grade boats only.

A" grade boats are lighter again, but generally much more delicate boats. These are the boats we set aside for rowers who are competing and training for special events - such as championship or selection regattas, special events such as the Head of the Yarra, or something similar. The only people who should be using these boats are those whose coaches have spoken to James or myself and requested their use to train for a specific event / race or something similar. There will only be a few "A" grade boats in the club, but they should not get a huge amount of use, to ensure they are kept in good condition to be used in such championship events.

The concept is the boats are not "better" or "worse" but more suited to each level of use. As mentioned above, the goal is to ensure fair access to the water for every member - in order for members at all levels to achieve the goals they have set for themselves. We will be taking lots of care this year to ensure the boats in each class are maintained and improved where possible, so if there is something you would like to see repaired/fixed up/refurbished or even replaced, please let us know and we will take it into consideration.

Finally - we are always looking for ways to improve the club and each season at BRC - so if you have any suggestions, come and have a chat with me, and we will see what we can do. However, the best conversations always seem to begin with "I'd love to help out to try and [insert suggestion here]" - because you know someone is serious about something if they are prepared to help you tackle it! Remember - we are all volunteers, and you will only get out what you put in!

Best of Luck for a fantastic season and see you at the shed.

Liam James : Club Captain

The Jenny Sergeant

John Sergeant is the Vice-Principal at St Andrew's College, a residential college within the University of Sydney.

In his youth, he was a cox, both for the University eight and for NSW U23; as coxing began to lose its appeal he took up sweep rowing.

For the past six years, John has coached the women's rowing crews from St. Andrew's College.

Outdated and sexist regulations deem the inter-college women's races are raced in fours over 1,000m. There is a fresher race and a seniors' race, so two crews need to be prepared. St Andrew's has been lobbying steadily for years to move to a single race in eights, over 2,000m, consistent with their male counterparts but it is difficult to achieve the unanimous agreement needed.

Joseph Grech, during his tenure as Club Captain supported by the BRC Committee approved the hiring of the Balmain facilities by the College for the short inter-college season in 2006.

The St Andrew's women continue to train at BRC and are always welcomed during March and April.

The College students' club owns the Flower of Scotland, which is a quick Sykes 4+ available to BRC rowers to race in. It is stern-coxed and suits a crew weighing about 75kg.



Recently, John realised College crews are often lighter than this (and too light for the Jeanette Cook), often the coxes are inexperienced, so a bow-coxed boat for a 65kg crew would be ideal.

Also it would be useful to the junior girls squad at Balmain of which John's daughter Genevieve is a member.

An "as new" boat fitting the above description was offered for sale in Brisbane, John persuaded his wife Jenny to donate the boat to BRC.

By way of thanks to Jenny for agreeing to the donation and her support of John's involvement in our sport, the boat was christened the Jenny Sergeant at BRC's recent AGM. (see photo above).

It makes good sense for both boats to be housed at Balmain, not least because the College season is so short but creates opportunities for their use by BRC members rather than depreciating. John remains optimistic the women will

receive permission to row in eights, so there is no sense in the College's rowing two fours. The women had one session this year in the Don & Shirley Croot and loved it.

Look closely at the Jenny Sergeant and some patched-up holes in the bow and stern canvases will be evident. The drilled holes were to avert bursting as floodwaters rose into the loft of the shed where it was stored on the Brisbane river. The Jenny Sergeant can be rigged as a quad or a four.

St Andrew's won both the women's races this year and last.

A boat-burning was held to celebrate their wins, and breaking the drought for the College mens crews.

Members of the Balmain Rowing Club committee had the opportunity to witness the spectacle.

BRC House Keeping

PLEASE may I ask you to take care when using club equipment.

Peter is our boat master and like the rest of the team is a volunteer. His role is more about assisting us to work together to maintain our boats. So, if something breaks, don't be scared to document the breakage and how the damage occurred on the whiteboard, or send Peter an email to advice him directly. Please remember to include your name and contact details when making a damage report on the whiteboard. It is not about apportioning blame but in most cases more information is needed in order for the damage to be repaired appropriately.

Thank You for your support.

Liam James : Club Captain



Photo shows : recent Working Bee (Learn to Fix) at Balmain Rowing Club

New BRC Rowing Gear

Spring is here and soon we'll be in the heat and scorching sun of Summer, so it seems about the right time to think about buying that UV50+ rash vest you didn't buy last year and give those arms a rest from the sweet red glow of sunburn and peeling.

This year, say goodbye to the Rowers tan and pick up a very stylish white long sleeve vest to wear under your rowing gear.

Made from a high tech breathable fabric with the BRC logo prominently displayed in black on an all

white background it's definitely the one item needed to keep you cool, avoid sunburn and completely protected. All sizes available, men's and women's sizing.

To place an order please email Barbara Ramjan at bramjan@usyd.edu.au and she will sort out your size and organize your top.

For those wanting a mid line tan, short sleeves are also available!

Both priced at a very reasonable \$44 per top.

Also coming to the BRC Clothing store is a fine line in leggings with the famous BRC stripes beautifully placed on the side seam to enhance the lean and long leg of the rower and finished in a jet black breathable and stretch material.

Hoodies in black with the BRC logo available as well as caps, socks, polos and zooties.

For all orders, questions, information please email Barbara Ramjan at bramjan@usyd.edu.au

Season Success : The Mouse Trap

On Thursday 1st September we held our first fundraiser of the season, a performance of Agatha Christie's 'The Mousetrap' at the Genesian Theatre, Kent St.

Club members, family and friends came together for the Opening Night of the production, which raised over \$1200 through ticket sales and an interval 'lucky dip' raffle!

Many thanks to all those who attended and brought non-club members along, and special thanks to Sally Arnold for coordinating the event.

BRC's Adaptive Rowing Programme

For those who don't know BRC has a very active and successful Adaptive Rowing Programme and our star recruit is Steve Knott.

Steve came to us through our Learn To Row programme and loved the idea of rowing and competing so much he joined up as an active rowing member.

Steve has had some very difficult times in his life (not least of which was being born in New Zealand!) and has conquered every one with a smile and determination.

As with many stories of difficulty Steve has a gem behind him, supporting him and urging him on to achieve at the highest level, in his wonderful wife Andrea.

There are very few people I know who would rise at 4:00am, quickly dress for work (even though she isn't due at work till 8:30) organize Steve, and leave their Lindfield home together and drive to Balmain so Steve can train.

Lately our very own Chris Hajos who lives at St Ives has helped Andrea by

being Steve's reliable and supportive taxi; Chris picks Steve up on his way to the BRC shed for training.

Steve is an ever willing member of Balmain and competed in any race he could at the last J B Sharp Regatta Series.

We wish Steve continuing joy in learning the art of rowing and sculling.

Photo shows : Liam James and Steve Knott



Learn to Row : Spring 2011

Spring Learn to Row started with perfect, sunny conditions on Sunday 4 September. Our club coaches and volunteer rowers have been doing a great job with the 12 LTRers who are progressing nicely in preparation for their mini regatta on Sunday 9 October. After a little racing on Iron Cove, our LTRers will be invited to join the club for the Start of Season Brunch and presentation of their graduation certificates.

ON !

BRC Events : October—January

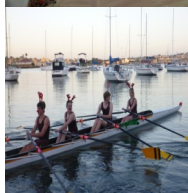


October 9 BRC's Start of Season Champagne Brunch

October 31 Saxophone Recital and Dinner



November 13 BRC'S Monthly Club Breakfast



December 3 BRC's Christmas Cocktails

December 25 BRC's Christmas Row



January 9 Taree Summer Training Camp

BRC's Event Programme July 2011 to June 2012

The Balmain Rowing Club Events team is led by June Henning and Barbara Ramjan.

The Club calendar is managed by June whose primary function is to facilitate and document all activities in the electronic calendar and avoid clashes by working closely with committee and club members; she also publicizes the events to BRC membership and the local community.

Our committed and capable Events team cater our Monthly Breakfasts, Season Celebration Brunches, Christmas Cocktails, and Club level fund-raising functions all these events are co-ordinated by Barbara Ramjan.

Elements of BRC's training camps are also managed by the Events team.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our team; please contact June Henning at events@balmainrowingclub.com.



We are celebrating
at the Club
the Start of the Season

with a

Champagne Brunch

on

Sunday 9 October at 11am

a luscious menu of

Fruit Parfaits, Smoked Salmon, Frittata, Bacon and Egg Pies, Selection of cold meats, Cheese and fruit platters, Brioche, home-made muffins and more ...

Cost \$15.00

RSVP : Tuesday 4 October 2011

Email: events@balmainrowingclub.com



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Balmain Rowing Club 130 Years Old

Not many locals know where to find us
The Tigers of Balmain are tucked away
By Elkington and Seidler's ugly house
With old Cockatoo island looking on.

A busy pontoon but not long ago
Swanno walked up Darling street armed with flyers
Advertising to keep the club alive:
Rowers Wanted at Balmain Rowing Club.

One year George Neilson was the last member
The last at the club, so he told council
There were heaps more - just at the Riverview
He stopped local Anglers taking over.

So now the club is thriving once again
Men, women, and kids paddle iron cove
Lots of lycra-clad rowers and their crews
Love flat water - and hate motor boat wake.

But the bloody shed is falling apart!
Piers topple into the water defeated by time.
Splash! So what are we going to do now?
Will we rally together and rebuild?
Of course we will!

Go you Balmain Tigers.

Matthew Braithwaite-Young

Sincere Thanks to :

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June Henning : Editor

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