

Bedford

Rowing Club

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2001

PRESIDENT'S PIECE



I was surprised, and honoured, to be made President of your club, and look forward to meeting those members, especially rowers, whom I do not yet know.

John Smith made a great deal of progress over the last five years, and I shall endeavour to keep up the momentum; he's a hard act to follow, and I am delighted he has agreed to continue on the committee.

A variety of fun evenings are planned which should raise much needed funds for essential projects, like changing room heating (Bill), and I do hope all sections will join in.

I should welcome words with any member who has ideas or suggestions to improve club arrangements and events, so that I can put them before the committee.

Tony Goodman

CAPTAINS REPORT *by Dick Garrett*

Firstly I would like to welcome Tony Goodman as our new President, already Tony and his wife Janet have come up with ideas for the social side of our

club, which is something for everyone to look forward to.

I would also like to thank our Past President, John Smith, for everything he has done for the club during his period as President, and a special thank you from me for all his help and support willingly given when I was first made captain.

Now on to rowing, I do not wish to talk about last year but move on to 2001 – 2002. A few changes have been made, firstly I have appointed Andy McCartney and John Lemon Vice Captains and am more than pleased with everything they have done so far.

The Ladies squad felt that they did not want a Ladies Captain but they would rather the men and ladies be one combined unit. Initially I did agree to this but after discussion with other members of the club, it was felt that a Ladies Captain was needed to make sure their views were put forward. At the time of writing this I have approached someone to do this but have not had an answer yet so watch this space!

The novice squad is being run by Dave Powell and they are already showing great promise for next year. But Dave needs help, so please, any volunteers should get in touch with him.

The Men's Senior squad is being looked after by John Lemon and myself although I should really mention Andy McCartney who not only is rowing in the squad but has put a lot of effort into making this a more professional outfit. Both John Lemon and Andy McCartney have been sorting the boat out and I would like to thank them for that.

Finally the Ladies squad is a little depleted from last year but they are concentrating on sculling again. I would like to thank Lesley Clinton, Sharon Noble and Andy McCartney for coaching.

I would like to finish by asking everyone who reads this newsletter:

“Can you help with coaching?”

We all need to do our bit to help the club!!!

SOCIAL CHAIRMANS REPORT by John Smith



John Smith with the picture that he was presented at the Club Dinner in September, thanking him for his five year term as Club President

As most of you will know by now, we have negotiated a new deal with Charles Wells that is an improvement on our previous arrangement and for two reasons. The up front single payment is increased from £20,000 to £30,000 and the period for this support is tied to barrelage rather than being fixed. This means that at our present rate of consumption, the period will be five years as before, however if we can by various means increase it, we will be able to approach them for a renewal much sooner.

Clearly there is a limit to how much more our regular customers can drink! There are two alternatives, both of equal importance. We must find ways to make the Club more appealing to our existing membership both rowing and social and we must try to increase our regular customer base.

Neither will be easy. Some functions have been organised in the run up to Christmas, which I hope you will support. This has made a start but what we really need are suggestions. If you have any ideas that will help us to increase our turnover please come and talk to me or indeed any other committee member. You can be assured that all suggestions will be investigated.

I have taken the liberty of including a few comments that I made at the AGM

You now have a new President. It took some effort to persuade Tony to stand. I am delighted that he eventually agreed and his nomination was supported unanimously by the committee. Tony is not a rower so that represents a break with tradition. He is a sportsman. More than that he is a sportsman's sportsman. He played rugby for the Harlequins for a number of seasons and has been President of Bedford Rugby Club. I believe that he

and Bruce Willey are the only two men to have been so honoured, certainly in recent times and in both cases have been exceptional people. In 1992, Tony was elected a Vice President of BRC, one of only a handful of non-rowers to be so honoured. I know he will be an exceptional President.

BRC has occupied much of the last ten years of my life. Much has been achieved and none of it would have been possible without the help and support of many people. The main building was completed under Ian Codrington's Presidency. His enthusiasm and support never wavered when even the most optimistic of us thought we may have bitten off more than we could chew. Past Presidents John Chasey, John Rose and Bruce Willey were always available to give wise council and encouragement. Many of you have been members for much of that time and almost without exception you answered the many calls for volunteers to do anything from clearing rubbish through cleaning and painting to more recently lifting the old floor and carpets in the bar. My sincere thanks to you all. Without your help, none of it would have been possible.

I would like to thank the committees and officers who have served you and in the last five years, particularly Club Captains Pud, Nobby and Dick who have all worked hard on your behalf and, of course, Dottie who continues to be the Steward that any club would die (or swing) for.

There is however one person who has made this all possible for me. Always there for me to talk to, never afraid to express an opinion (I am still trying to do something about that!) and sometimes curbing my more excessive reactions to some situation with a therapeutic ear bending. For her unwavering support and willingness to help whenever asked, my biggest thank you must be to my wife Susie.

Let me end by thanking the Club for the wonderful gift of the Bernard West picture and saying yet again that being your President has been a great honour, hugely rewarding and enormous fun.

DATES FOR THE DIARY & SOCIAL EVENTS

December

Christmas Quiz night & Party	Friday 14 Dec
Christmas Draw	Thursday 20 Dec
Boxing Day Scratch Eights	Wed 26 Dec

IN COMMITTEE

BRC/BRSC committees	Tuesday 4 Dec
Events committee	Sunday 16 Dec

COMMITTEE FOR THE 2001/2 SEASON

Following the Annual General Meetings of the Rowing Club and Social Club on 10 October, the elected Officers and Committee are:

President (BRC)	Tony Goodman
Captain (BRC)	Dick Garrett
Hon. Secretary (BRC/BRSC)	Gavin Dods
Hon. Treasurer (BRC/BRSC)	David Easterbrook
Membership Sec'y (BRC/BRSC)	John Lickfold
Safety Advisor (BRC/BRSC)	David Powell
Social Club Chairman (BRSC)	John Smith
Committee (BRC)	Lesley Clinton Will Everitt Lydia Swift
Committee (BRSC)	Gloria Butler

As noted in the Captain's report, he has nominated John Lemon and Andy McCartney to be his vice captains. The position of ladies captain has still to be filled.

ANNUAL DINNER DANCE 2001

A very enjoyable celebration of the last season...



...and last chance to indulge in alcohol before those long nights of winter training.
(surely shome mishtake? Ed.)

KIT NOTES

Orders for club kit are placed periodically. The next order will be placed in late November. Only pre-paid orders will be accepted.

Some items are in stock already. To see a list of these, and prices of all club kit on offer, please see the kit page on the back page of this newsletter.

SAFETY NOTES

Dave Powell has been elected the club water safety adviser for this year, undoubtedly his usual no-nonsense line will continue in this role.

As the clocks have now gone back and night rowing is with us again, club members are reminded to take particular care and remember these rules:

- BRIGHT white lights pointing to the bows, red light pointing to the stern
- Inexperienced steersmen or coxes need to be accompanied by a coach
- Don't take risks; if in doubt, stop.

The club has received a free copy of the new ARA water safety video. Dave will be organising a gala premier for all active rowers in the near future.

Grand Union/Great Ouse Canal Link *by R.E. Bright*

When I visited the Borough Council's recent exhibition in Harpur Street (as I hope you did), my reaction was of disappointment. There were platitudes but not much in the way of vision or of concrete plans. The impression given was that no-one had a real picture of where the town could and should be going. That could also be said of others, but in this case it is alarming for all of us.

Do the Council think we can ape Milton Keynes? Bedford has a smaller population and area: what could be viable in Milton Keynes may not be in Bedford. Bedford however has a history, a river (though small by Thames standards) and a reputation in sport and education. We need to develop our own town character based on Bedford's strengths!

Brian Howard is putting together opposition to the proposed canal route through Bedford which will make rowing in the town impractical – although the Council boasted of it at the exhibition and wanted more river sporting events! I will leave Brian to set out his case, except for two points. Firstly, a canal cannot be commercially viable. It is an expensive toy for a limited number who would wish to bring cruisers and hire boats from the Grand Union Canal onto the Ouse – but it would not take many

motor boats in unskilled hands to make the narrow Bedford river dangerous. Very few will stop in the town to spend money, so what is the benefit compared to the loss of a sports facility to Bedfordians?

Secondly, some think that a purpose built course at Willington will solve the problem. Forget it! Yes, if the course goes ahead and can actually be made financially sound, it will basically be for more senior crews. Beginners, schools (in their allocated sports time) and above all those interested in giving the sport a try, are most unlikely to travel all the way to Willington.

We will have to accept some concessions: the river is not ours exclusively. However with sense we can live with some visiting cruisers and a river bus. Some of us remember the two river launches that used to ply up and down!

What can I suggest positively? I wrote a long letter of comment to the Council with which I shall not bore you. However some of my thoughts are as follows:

- We have the remains of the Saxon Burgh (Kings Ditch) the castle and the medieval town centre excavations. We should make a heritage area around Castle Road, based on the museums and with plaques at the actual sites.
- We could improve the riverside with some shops and cafes, toilets, a better towpath, improved storm drains.
- Quiet areas such as St Mary's Gardens and Castle Mound should remain so, with minimal management or intrusion (such as extra bridges).
- Bus routes should be improved with vehicles designed for shopping bags/buggies and babies/the elderly and handicapped. Forget trams – with Bedford's population and the area suggested, they could not pay!
- Develop markets with an improved site, perhaps covered, with a café). How about a regular farmers' market?
- Ask younger people what leisure and shopping facilities (other than pubs!) they would like, then see that they happen.

I am sure that others can come up with ideas - especially the younger club members. Now is the time to bombard the Council with comments and ideas, especially in defence of our river and our sport. Please, don't leave it to others but write to them now. Write to them again if they do not respond. Hit them hard and often until they get

their act together. *"I've been meaning to do something"* does not work!

ROWING SUBSCRIPTIONS **PAID BY STANDING ORDER**

As many members already know, the Full Rowing Subscription was raised at the last AGM to £20.00 per month, with a commensurate increase for other classes of membership. Members who already pay by Standing Order will find a revised form for payment at the new rate enclosed with this newsletter.

Please complete the form and return it to the membership secretary, either by post or by handing it to the club Steward at the bar. Any other member who wishes to pay by Standing Order should simply ask the Steward for a form or telephone John Lickfold on 01234-268381.

RACKING FEES

Racking fees for single sculls are now £100/year. Please note that to rack a boat in the boathouse, you must also pay a full rowing subscription.

Racking fees for this season were due on 1st September, if you have not paid your fees up to date your boat may be removed from the boathouse, so please act now!

NATIONAL ROWING LEAGUE

In a previous newsletter the concept of the National Rowing League was introduced. The league is independently produced and for those with access to the internet is available at

www.nrl.org.uk

or via the club's own website links. With widespread flooding affecting many of the Thames-based head races last season, BRC lead the men's Premier League for most of last winter. However, later in the season some other clubs such as Thames, London, Molesey and Leander had the temerity to overtake us.

Follow the progress of the squads in the men's and women's leagues this season!

Change of address/phone number?

Please keep the Club informed:

Please write a note to **John Lickfold,**
Membership Secretary, Bedford Rowing Club,
Duck Mill Lane, BEDFORD, MK42 0AX

or e-mail membership@bedfordrowing.co.uk

NATIONAL DIARY DATES 2001/2

Fours Head	Sat 10 Nov 2001 (11.00h)
Women's Head	Sat 9 Mar 2002 (13.00h)
The Head of the River	Sat 23 Mar 2002 (09.45h)
Oxford/Camb Boat Race	Sat 30 Mar 2002
Henley Royal Regatta	3-7 July 2002
National Championships	19-21 July 2002

BEDFORD EVENTS 2002

Eights & Fours Head	Sun 10 th February
Spring Small Boats Head	Sun 7 th April
Bedford Amateur Regatta	Sat 11 th May
Bedford Sprint Regatta	Sun 14 th July
Autumn Small Boats Head	Sun 13 th October

Many thanks to all those who assisted at the recent Bedford Autumn Fours & Small Boats Head. The event ran very smoothly with your help. We are always on the look out for new helpers; please see Mike Perry or Gavin Dods for details.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES FOR MEMBERS

Ever have trouble trying to remember your own or other e-mail addresses? Is it a pain when you change job/ISP and have to remember to tell everyone your new address?

Help is at hand – as a member of BRC you can now have your very own 'bedfordrowing.co.uk' address that automatically diverts messages onto your chosen address. See the website for details, www.bedfordrowing.co.uk/members/

THINGS THAT WEREN'T MENTIONED IN THE NEW PRESIDENT'S JOB DESCRIPTION – PART 1



CAN ANYONE SHED ANY FURTHER LIGHT?

John Knights, one of our longstanding members has been given a copy of the attached picture by his brother, Bill, who wonders if anyone can shed any more light on what must be one of the earliest rowing photographs taken in Bedford.



An extract from the Centenary publication of the **Bedford and District Gas Company 1883-1933**

(in 1933, sixty years ago would have been 1873) reads as follows:

"We reproduce through the courtesy of Bedford Rowing Club, a photograph of a Bedford rowing four of about 60 years ago. Unfortunately the names of all the oarsmen are not at present to hand. The late Mr Robert Chetham is standing in the centre, and the late Mr CE Timaeus, for many years a Director of this Company, is second from the right. It is believed that the picture, taken in 1873, is of the Bedford Argonauts in which case the names are:- JD Baker, CE Timaeus, AW Poole, H Passmore (stroke), T West (cox). A reference to the Bedford Regatta race card of 1869 shows Mr Timaeus rowing for the Bedford Nautilus Rowing Club.

The Argonauts were a famous crew who were invincible at Bedford, Burton, Nottingham, Derby, and other provincial regattas, carrying off many trophies."

If you can contribute anything please drop the club a line.

BEDFORD ROWING CLUB KIT

Orders for club kit are placed periodically. The next order will be placed in late November.

Only pre-paid orders will be accepted.

Please leave a cheque payable to "**Bedford Rowing Club**" with a note saying what item in which size is required together with your contact details behind the bar for the attention of **Lydia Swift** or email **Kit@BedfordRowing.co.uk**

Until the order is placed, there is a range of kit in stock.

Items	Price
Blazer buttons – Large	£7 each
Blazer buttons – Small	£6 each
Cufflinks	£15 per pair
Ties – Silk	£10
Ties – Polyester	£5
Bowties (ready-made or “tie your own”)	£15

Items	Price
Club all – in – ones {for long legs add £3}	£41
Racing Vest with Bedford RC crest and embroidery	£18
Navy Wool V-necked Pullovers with crest	£30
Splashtops {for name embroidery add £2}	£58
Maroon Polo Shirts with trim & crest	£22
Long sleeve tight style tops - White or Navy Blue with Bedford RC crest and embroidery	£23
Navy long sleeve cotton tees with Bedford RC crest & embroidery & red/white arm trim	£20



Who needs kit, anyway? The picture above is ‘Miss January’ from a worthy initiative from Putney Town Rowing Club. A selection of their members have posed for a calendar to raise money for Steve Redgrave’s Charitable Trust. Just the thing for Granny this Christmas! See the webpage at: www.jkuksports.com/acatalog/Home_Naked_Ambition_160.html for further information