

LWRC

Making Waves

The LWRC Quarterly Newsletter

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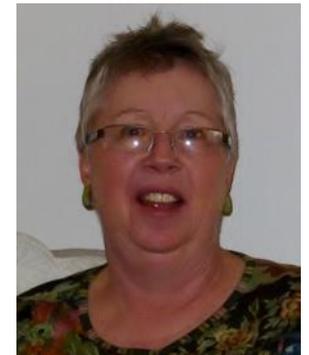
New Shoes on the Dock: Matt Oclander

Matt, an Army brat who has lived all over the country, considers Washington, D.C., to be his home because his parents still live there and he went to high school there. He began to row his freshman year of high school. As he describes it, “I wasn’t the healthiest of kids growing up, and I thought, Hey—you sit down while rowing. It must be easy! Boy, was I wrong.” He instantly fell in love with rowing and became successful enough to be recruited by several colleges. He eventually chose the Pacific Northwest as his destination, with two schools as his top choices. One was a large PAC-12 school with a storied program,

and the other was a quiet, small, Christian university hidden in Seattle. After visiting both, Seattle Pacific University won out. He rowed there until this fall, when he left their program and began coaching.

Matt had had some experience coaching juniors in D.C. He also had conducted LTR programs (with 30 middle-schoolers!!), coached boats that earned medals at USRowing Club Nationals, worked with crews at the Canadian Henley, and assisted with the USJNT Development Camp. Here at LWRC, he has taken on several LTR classes; he also coaches a masters group at Green Lake.

When Matt isn’t rowing, he’s studying international affairs and geopolitics, with a planned graduation date of spring 2016. He also enjoys playing music of all sorts.



To quote Matt again: “I love rowing. It has done so much good for me in my life, and I have found complete fulfillment in sharing that and helping people achieve the same joy that I get when I row a skinny little boat ... backwards ... really hard ... in the dark. ... ”

—Joani Harr

From the President: Change Is on the Way

By now, you've probably figured out the new locations of your favorite boats. And you've figured out some of the changes and additions to our coached program lineups. Think of these changes as a sort of boathouse spring cleanup.

Your LWRC board of directors has made a lot of other changes that you don't see. We created committees to oversee some of the building and operations tasks. Treasurer Janet Walker, president-elect KC Dietz, and secretary Marilyn Goo invested untold hours working to streamline our budget and to ensure that every penny we have is spent wisely.

This spring, our bookkeeper let us know that she plans to move on from LWRC. That prompted us to re-imagine how to organize our staff to get the necessary tasks accomplished. To that end, we have reorganized the LWRC jobs.

Coming soon, we will hire a part-time business manager to oversee the bookkeeping and financials for the club. Jeannie Czesla's current position will be transformed into that of member services manager and be expanded to 30 hours a week. We anticipate having two per-

sons fill this role, and you can expect to see somebody in the LWRC office on frequent Saturday mornings and weekday evenings. Our goal is to make sure that if you have questions or problems, a staff member will be available to help you.

As you may remember from Janet's recent budget-update article, LWRC doesn't have the resources to hire staff to do all the work that needs to be done around the club. We have many tasks you can volunteer for—everything from sweeping out the boat bays to brainstorming ideas for long-range fundraising.

Speaking of raising money, LWRC needs your help! If you have expertise, energy, or questions about how to sustain the club's future, please contact me. I'd like to gather a few members together to help prioritize our major fundraising needs and goals. You can contact me via email: rowermarcie@yahoo.com. I look forward to hearing from YOU!

—*Marcie Sillman*



Editor's Note: It's our newsletter

This summer issue of *Making Waves* contains several stimulating articles that will surely grab your attention. Some of them take us back into the past, while others focus on more recent events. Here at LWRC, we are blessed by the presence of many experienced rowers and coaches who can pass on the high points—and low points!—of their years of experience. We are also fortunate to have many newer rowers who bring a variety of skills and athletic experiences to our club. We are grateful to all those who contributed suggestions and articles to the newsletter.

Making Waves is the ideal forum for showcasing our collective experiences and promoting our sense of community. I invite each of you to think seriously about sharing your personal anecdotes with the rest of us—we'd love to hear from you, so don't be shy! And if you have suggestions for future issues but are a reluctant writer, we have solutions.

Just drop us a line with your suggestion at lwrcnewsletter@comcast.net.

—*Roberta Scholz, Editor*



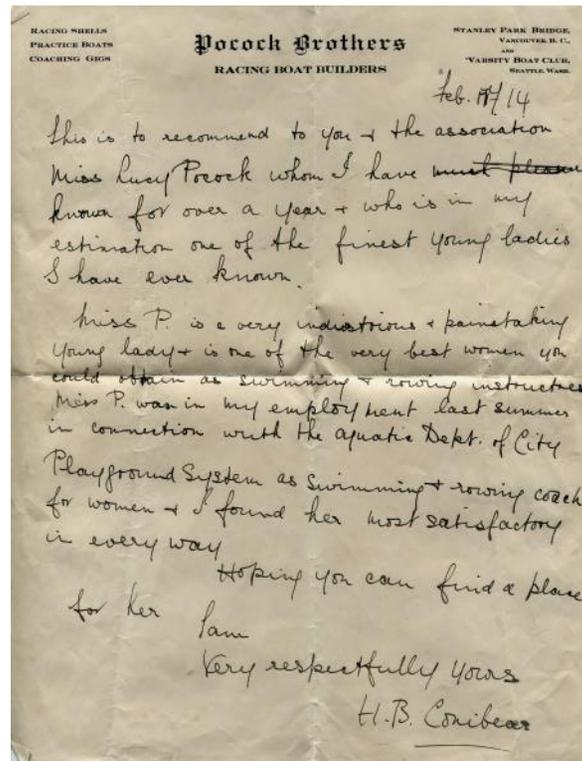
History and Legacy

Lucy Pocock Stillwell Pioneer in Women's Rowing

In 1912, Miss Lucy Pocock won England's women's sculling championship, to the delight of over 25,000 spectators. Raised around rowing and from a family involved in boatbuilding for over 12 generations, Lucy had been winning races since 1906. With her 10 guineas in prize money, she paid for passage to Canada for herself; her father, Aaron "Fred" Pocock; and her younger sister, Kath, to join brothers George and Dick in their shell-building business in Vancouver, B.C. Soon after, the Pococks came to Lake Union from Canada to build shells and work with the University of Washington crews under Hiram Conibear.

Though not an oarsman himself, Conibear had dedicated himself since 1906 to the establishment of a rowing program. An avid supporter of women's

rowing, he was greatly frustrated by conflict with the university's Board of Control. In 1912, women's crew racing was banned by the board—which considered women too frail, both in nature and physique. (Already, in 1910, Gymnasium



Director Jesse Merrick had banned the women from racing.) Women's rowing was reinstated a year later. In the fall of 1913, with support from Conibear, Lucy Pocock became an assistant coach in charge of the training table for the men's crew while also serving as women's crew coach. The regimen included swim tests, boat rigging, and oar handling. Women's locker rooms were established. The women were

Responsible for feeding the Husky crews, Lucy rowed almost daily across Lake Union to the farmers' market, then back to the UW. This must have impressed Hiram Conibear.



shown no favoritism in training and withstood the same ordeals as the men. There were no other women's collegiate rowing programs in the Northwest at this time; in fact, the University of Washington was the only coed college in the nation to offer women's rowing.

Women's rowing at the UW had already experienced a shaky start, with no separate locker rooms, limited access to equipment, and ongoing conflicts with the Board of Control. Women's rowing experience had



been limited to "form" contests, and it was a major victory for Lucy when she convinced the University's board to change its stance and permit racing. This was an outstanding first for women's sports over 100 years ago.

Today, Lake Washington Rowing Club is honored to have Lucy's

granddaughter, Heidi Danilchik, as a social member. Heidi has honored us twice this year by coxing the *Lucy Pocock Stillwell* in rowing tributes to the late Stan Pocock. Originally a flyweight four and now rigged as a quad, the *Lucy* was built in 1974 by Lucy Pocock Stillwell's nephew, Stan Pocock, and is owned by LWRC. Most recently, this beautiful cedar craft delighted an audience of thousands in the Montlake Cut during Opening Day festivities. This was doubly sweet, because Lucy's husband, Jim Stillwell, was the excavation contractor for the "Cut"—he came to know her from seeing her rowing.

—Jane Robinson Ritchey

Women 1910–1919

As the second decade of the twentieth century dawned, women's rowing at the University of Washington seemed firmly established. Hiram Conibear was very much involved with the women's program, and Gretchen O'Donnell continued to grow as an oarswoman, developing into an able assistant. Miss O'Donnell would prove to be a strong advocate ... for the women's crew until she graduated in 1912.

In fact, it was a series of strong-willed and dedicated women that would keep the program going—Lucy Pocock, Ethel Johnson, Helen Harrington—all with the solid, and at times outspoken, support from the student body (and Mr. Conibear). And although each year brought unique circumstances, by 1916 rowing at Washington was the most popular athletic activity for women on campus.

Unfortunately, in addition to the highs, this decade would bring some of the greatest lows ... including an end to racing, a temporary total ban on women's rowing, and the permanent adoption of form-only contests. World War I would add uncertainty and turmoil. [M]ost tragically for the entire Washington rowing community, Hiram Boardman Conibear would not live to see the end of it.

It would ultimately be the last decade in which women would row at Washington for over 50 years.

From Washington Rowing History
<http://www.huskycrew.com/1910w.htm>

Top left: Heidi Danilchik and Jane Robinson Ritchey

Bottom left: Heidi Danilchik (cox), Barbara Gregory (bow), Nancy Egaas (2), Jane Ritchey (3). Four seat is empty for better weight distribution.

Youth Rowing:

I Know What You Did Last Winter

This past winter, LWRC hosted a public middle school rowing program from January through March. The six-week Winter Enrichment Program at Salmon Bay K–8 School in Ballard allows its middle school students to choose an outdoor learning activity as part of the school’s outdoor education program. Most of the kids sign up for the skiing and snowboarding program, but last fall I wrote a proposal to include rowing as one of the activities the students could choose.

Twelve kids and a Salmon Bay teacher eagerly showed up in the boardroom in mid-January, ready to learn about rowing fundamentals from Hugh Lade and Theresa Batty—including



Hugh’s explanation of the physics of rowing. In just six brief Friday sessions, they learned the proper stroke on ergs and how to maneuver boats to their coaches’ strict standards. They rowed singles and doubles and even the coxed wherry double; for fun, they watched Buster Keaton cox his team to victory in “The Rowing Race!” On the final Friday, Hugh and Nemesio Domingo coxed two eights, with John Alberti and Barb Smith stroking, as the kids “raced” each other on Lake Union.

Over six weeks, only one student got wet—not from flipping a boat, but from stepping off the dock while trying to put an Aero into the water. Seattle School District guidelines require these young rowers to wear life vests. Theresa and Hugh did a remarkable job of teaching them sculling skills despite their being encumbered by PFDs. The kids didn’t seem to mind: week after week, they showed up with huge smiles, eager to get out on the water and row. Stepping onto the dock after their first time on the water, one student exclaimed, “Wow . . . that was just magic!” They were hooked.

One LWRC member described the program by stating, “That’s great—you guys are going

to change lives.” After seeing all the volunteer helpers and coaches encourage and teach these youngsters, I noticed many kids gaining confidence in their new sport while working in a collaborative and challenging learning environment. In current times, when future success relies on grit, curiosity, and character, this rowing program certainly fits the bill. You just can’t get this kind of learning in the classroom.

—Jeannie Cziesla

Jeannie’s sixth-grade daughter shares her WEP experience:

When I first heard we had rowing as an option for WEP, I knew that would be my choice. I wasn’t sure of what to expect on the first day, but after that day I couldn’t wait to go back the next week. I loved the experience of being on water: sailing past the land, bobbing about, feeling the oars turning in their rhythmic pattern—flat, feathered, flat, feathered.

I have always loved the water (boating, swimming, etc.), but I had never tried rowing. This was one of the most amazing feelings I have ever experienced, with the scenery passing by, the wind brushing my hair back out behind me, the waves rocking the boat in a lulling pattern. Many weeks after WEP, I still beg my mom to bring me out on the water again.

—Elise Cziesla

San Diego 2015:

The Moms Take on the Crew Classic

My first Crew Classic! We flew into sunny San Diego on Thursday: a spectacular seaside city of water, sand, palm trees—and swarming with people and traffic. Spring break!

At the rental car agency, I insisted on a fire engine—red car with black interior (our team colors!!). We headed to our hotel, sandwiched between two waterways near a naval base. A few years back, the Moms reportedly were treated to the sight of SEALs running down the beach in all their glory at all hours.

After settling in, we gathered poolside for our first pre-race inspirational meeting. By the end of the afternoon, we'd succeeded in clarifying our race strategy. The general plan was to be first at the finish line—that's ALWAYS the plan!!!

Early Friday, we headed over to the regatta site on Mission Bay. What a sight—tents, boats, trailers, and lots of spandex-encased people of every age and shape! We found our trailer and unloaded and rigged the trusty *Esprit*. Then it was time to check out the course.

Carrying the shell, we staggered an incredibly long way to the water. We all got in (not an easy task) and began our row to the start line, running through our warm-up and practice starts, trying not to look at the many distract-

tions. The start line lies next to Sea World: gondolas glide overhead, their passengers shouting (and sometimes throwing stuff) at you. You can hear the crowds inside Sea World, yelling and clapping.

It's a 2K straight shot to the finish line, with two big open-water gaps on port where the wind just really hits you broadside. It was blowing so hard that the buoys all tipped sideways, their flags touching the water!!! So we knew what to expect in our races.

Afterward, to alleviate pre-race anxiety, we checked out the vendors. So much fun stuff—clothing, ergs, jewelry, and food! Our work done, we headed back to our home away from home.

Saturday, race day—another perfect California day. Our heat for the Club Race included college clubs, so we had our work cut out for us. Fast start and finished third—all good, and into the final early the next morning.

Sunday's Club Race final—we're just going to move on from this and speak no more of it . . .

Finally, our main event: the Women's Masters D race. Wind is blowing, but not as hard as on the days before. Again: flag drops, and we're off! Flying start, and it's a dogfight down the

course. Marin in front of us—it took us almost a thousand meters to pull even. We hit our stride, lengthening and settling into our swing. Found the power and pulled ahead by one, two, three seats . . .

That's when our very controlled, quiet, and demure coxswain screamed: "WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY LANE???. GET OUT OF MY LANE!!!!" I confess I took a tiny peek from bow seat and saw, to my utter horror, a woman with a tiny child on a paddleboard slowly moving right into our path!!! Only the incredible skill of our coxswain (plus our adrenalin) allowed us to dodge that paddle boarder—and pass Marin before the finish line!!!!

We finished third overall but placed second, due to a disqualification. No shame in that, and we did avoid hitting a mother and child...

All in all, we had a helluva time. The post-race drinks and dinner never tasted so good!!

—Pati Casebolt

Marcy Heffernan assisted in writing this report.



Coaches' Corner

The Most Important Rowing Skill

More on stopping technique ...

Long ago and far away (early 1960s, New England), virtually every college crew turned or stopped their shells by applying a little reverse pitch to the blades, allowing the shafts to go underwater and drag the speed down. Sometime within the next 30 years, this practice was abandoned in favor of pressing the back of the blade against the surface of the water. The inconvenient truth is that this newer technique is only marginally effective in bringing a fast-moving shell to a full stop. We unnecessarily expose ourselves and our equipment to injury by employing this “new and improved” version of boat handling.

I regularly compare the two methods by matching speed alongside another boat and letting that sculler give the “stop the boat” command. Never has the blade-backing sculler brought his boat to a stop in a shorter distance than mine. Besides the slow reaction, blade-backing tends to push riggers up, which plays havoc with the set if port and starboard efforts are not balanced. Sweepers, check this out during your next row.

No matter what the speed of the shell, submerging the shafts will bring the boat to a stop

in less than one length. Can your stopping technique accomplish this at race speed? We all have experienced, or will experience, that moment when we hear an unexpected noise directly off our bow. We have no time to look around; we can only stomp on the brakes and hope. We want to feel that we are stopping on dry pavement, not sliding along a snow-covered street.

Reversing the blade pitch the correct amount (this changes as the boat slows) and raising the hands requires some practice. The maneuver itself is not difficult, though changing an existing habit can be. Develop a feel for pitch control at slow speed and with only one oar, as if approaching a dock. Then add the other oar(s), gradually increasing boat speed and boat deceleration rate. Want instruction or a demo? Ask an LWRC coach.

—Hugh Lade



Kudos: Big Climb Heroes

Team LWRC's 24 climbers made us proud to know them, finishing 16th of 216 teams who climbed the 1,311 steps to the top of the Columbia Tower on March 22. Leslie Zavisca and Tyler Peterson even did it twice! Special recognition goes to Owen Greene and Elise Czesla, who joined their mothers in the climb. Read more about it on page 16.

Finding My Father

By Colby White

*Late in life, a son
sees his father in a
different light.*



I was 55 when my father passed away at the age of 80, the victim of a stroke. I had to wait another 17 years from the time of his death to finally receive his unexpected “gift.” Somehow he resurrected himself and had me cheering for the man I had long ago given up on. Weirdly, I found Dad’s gift via a book that I was adamant about not reading.

In my formative years, it seemed I was looking at my father standing stoically in the distance, lost in thought. His persona was one of physical strength, power, and the emotions of a statue. The one time I remember Dad letting go was on a family vacation. He came into the cabin holding a six-pound trout he had caught. Overwhelmed with happiness, he was at a loss for words. All he could do was stand there with his silly grin and sputter, as if his parachute had opened, and tears flowed.

This sudden burst of unrestrained emotions caught me totally by surprise. There stood my shining knight without the armor. I was in love. I started crying. Everyone was dabbing their eyes. For those timeless moments, my father was a free man. But just like that, it was over—and he had vanished into the night, his armor well in tow.

My father never told me that he loved me. I finally pushed the issue toward the end of his life. I was bucking up some rounds of wood one afternoon while Dad sat and watched. I remember stopping and saying boldly, “Dad, you do not have to say it now. But before you die, I would like for you to tell me just once that you love me.” He was stunned. That evening he was in the kitchen with my mother when he announced, “You know what? Our son does not think we love him!” So much for my venture, but at

least I tried. Three weeks later, I got a call. It was Dad, who rarely, if ever, called. He said, “I love you,” and hung up. What a guy! But he did it.

I was probably in my mid-forties when I came to grips with the fact that Dad and I were never going to have a functional father-son relationship. It was never my job to prove myself worthy, deserving, and loveable as a prerequisite for fatherly love. My father had proved himself incapable of loving anyone, starting with himself. When my father died, I was not surprised when I did not so much as flinch. No tears or quivering lip. I did not rue the fact he was gone because there was not much to miss. With no more issues or agenda with my father knocking on my door, I was free to float with him in unconditional love, needing nothing in return. Dad had done his best, so had I, and so be it.

It wasn’t until 2013 that my father resurfaced. For the first time since my moratorium on sadness, I was suddenly awash in it. It happened one evening as I was nonchalantly leafing through some photos I had kept of him. Without warning, I was rendered helpless, grieving his loss, sobbing uncontrollably. My façade of “up to date with Dad” had been derailed.

I had known for some time that a book was in the making that chronicled the story of how eight young men, rowing for the UW, had stroked themselves to victory in the 1936 “Hitler” Olympics. My father, John White, ’39, was one of those men: a 19-year-old sophomore who helped make history in the wake of improbable odds. They beat the Germans and Italians in a sprint to the finish with less than one second separating the three boats. By winning a gold medal, my father, I knew, had done something special—but he

***Finding My
Father,
continued***



never wanted to talk about it. And I was too intimidated to ask. I was well into adulthood before I first held the gold medal to the light.

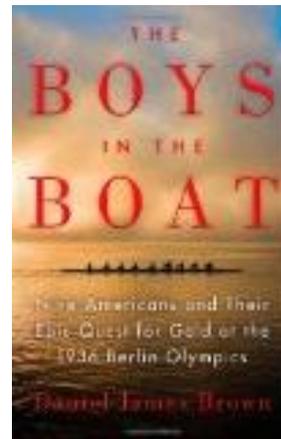
The book, *The Boys in the Boat*, became an overnight best-seller—a “must-read,” as my sister put it. But in spite of my recent meltdown over the loss of my father, I was back to my old self: not interested in rehashing old business. I just wasn’t going to read the book. For the next two weeks, the subject of the book didn’t cross my mind. But then the inexplicable happened. I had driven up to Mount Madonna Center, a yoga community I had belonged to for over half my life. I was walking over to the “free box,” looking for clothes I could distribute to the homeless, when there on top of the pile was a brand-spanking-new \$30 copy of *The Boys in the Boat*. I was numb with disbelief. This was beyond the realm of coincidental. Evidently, I was supposed to read it.

And read it I did. In fact, I couldn’t put it down. Here was a fraternity of still tender-age adults, who for the most part were survivors coming from broken, impoverished families. As story has it, my father went through college owning only a single sweater to keep him warm. Riding the razor’s edge seemed to be the norm for these “young Turks” being groomed to take the gold. In their favor, the razor’s edge instilled the discipline of mental toughness they would need if they were to reign supreme in one of the most brutally exhausting sporting events known to man.

In the book’s wake, I experienced feelings of disappoint-

ment, much of it for my dad. I felt I had let him down. I was never to know how my father felt about the injury that ended my own career as a UW rower. He never commented and I never asked.

The book became an elixir parading through my veins. The more I read, the more I was aware of a burgeoning sense of bonding with my father. The full impact of what he had accomplished had me cheering. The thought, “How about my father!” often dominated my day. My dad, the warrior, had reopened my future as his son.



Dad would never score high marks in fatherly finesse. But he unknowingly gifted me the tools to persevere in the darkest hour. And the determination never to quit on myself became a vision I believed in. For this, I honor him.

What was I trying to prove for all those years of pushing myself and never being satisfied? Simply put, I was trying to get my father to notice me, to greet me with respect, to put his arm around my shoulder

when we walked. The healing words “I love you.”

This was not to happen in his lifetime. But my father’s late gifts left me proud to say his name and to remember him as the man I now readily salute, honor, and embrace with love.

Colby White’s original essay appeared in the March 2015 issue of Columns magazine, published by the University of Washington Alumni Association. Reprinted here by the kind permission of Columns magazine. — Ed.

Boat Donations

Over the years, LWRC has been the fortunate recipient of donated equipment including racing shells, oars, furniture, boat bay doors, and televisions. Boat donations in particular have kept the club going over the years. Some of the boats have been new, some used, and some total reconstruction projects. Pocock Racing Shells under George Pocock, Stan Pocock, and—for the past 30 years—Bill Tytus, has contributed many boats. In 2013, Bill donated the *Frank Cunningham* and the *Jane Cunningham* to honor Frank. Along with that donation, LWRC established the Frank Cunningham Legacy Equipment Fund to ensure that the club always has at least one boat memorializing Frank.

Other members, family members, and friends have also generously offered boats for member use or to raise funds for the club. Susan Kinne donated two new Bay 21 open-water singles over the past three years. Last



year, KC Dietz and Janet Walker teamed up to buy another Bay 21.

LWRC has also received a variety of used racing singles, open-water singles, and trainers from club members. Some of these are put into the club inventory for member use, whereas others are sold. For example, a Hudson single donated by David Smith Bronstein in 2014 and a Van Dusen single donated by Lisa Berkman in 2014 are now club equipment. A wooden Pocock single donated by Sue Nelson and Joel Junker in 2013 was not put into service but was instead recently sold to a club member.

In years past, LWRC accepted all boat donations and still appreciates the generosity of those who want to donate boats. However, in 2013, storage of unsold donated boats was reducing private boat-storage income. As a result, the club initiated a screening process to determine whether a used boat will be accepted for donation. Criteria include usefulness as a club boat and, alternatively, potential for sale. The Board then decides whether to accept the donation. (Information regarding the screening procedure is available from the club office.)

—Marilynn Goo

Upcoming Regattas

USRowing NW Masters Regionals

June 26–28 Vancouver Lake, WA

Cascadia Masters Championship

July 18–19 Burnaby Lake, B.C.

Green Lake Summer Extravaganza

August 1 Seattle, WA

Look for more information in the weekly LWRC bulletins, or contact Damon Ellingston (ellingston@gmail.com).



Emergence by member Judith La Scola

Sand-carved etched plate: glass enameled with gold and silver leaf. Blown sand-carved fish. 2011

Lone Star Rowing



If you get the chance to row in Texas, you should be prepared for some significant differences from rowing in Seattle. In Austin, there are rowing opportunities

at Austin Rowing Club, Texas Rowing Center, and the Rowing Dock—all on lovely Lady Bird Lake. Rather than seeing hi-vis colors, you'll find boats filled with burnt orange-clad rowers displaying their loyalty to the University of Texas as Longhorns. That might be the only color they know.

The Dallas Rowing Club has a large facility on Bachman Lake, part of the final landing flight path for Southwest Airlines—which can put the jitters into a calm row.

The Houston area has three rowing clubs to choose from—Rowing Club of the Woodlands in the Woodlands, Greater Houston Rowing Club in Sugar Land, and Bay Area Rowing Club of Houston—but there are a lot of freeway miles between them. I rowed at BARC, and my double partner drove 30 miles to join me

there. Since we rowed three times per week, this amounted to 9,000 driving miles a year to row 1,000 miles. Bay Area Rowing Club is adjacent to the NASA center, so you can also row with actual rocket scientists.

The weather is severe—as in 90 degrees temperature and 90 percent humidity. Caution is required. Sunscreen is called for, and the mosquitos will have you looking for insect repellent. The question is: For optimal performance, which one should you apply first?

So hypothermia is not a problem in Texas, but aquatic life can be. First rule: Keep clear of alligators. Next problem: Watch out for jumping fish. I don't know why people bother with poles and lines—the mullet and menhaden just jump into the boat. One morning, over 100 menhaden jumped into my boat, perhaps wanting a free ride. Washing the boat became critical, otherwise the ensuing row would not have been very pleasant.

Despite these hazards, the most dangerous aspect of rowing in Texas might be fire ants. In carrying a boat to or from the dock, an anthill can be harder to see than a log in the water. And if you inadvertently step on an anthill, its disturbed denizens will crawl onto your foot

and up your leg, waiting until they're well dispersed to finally let you know what you've done. Then they bite in unison, leaving your leg feeling like it's on fire. A day later, pustules appear to help you count the bites; the scars remain for over a week. Well, that's still not as long as blisters last on your hands.

Nevertheless, there are similarities between rowing in Seattle and rowing in Texas: namely, the equipment and the stroke.

—Alex Parkman

More Kudos: KC Dietz

Our own KC Dietz was recognized by the Harvard-Radcliffe lightweight crew when a women's eight, the *KC Dietz*, was christened in May. KC coached there from 1984–1986, producing a perfect 18-0 record with two Eastern Sprints titles.

Read more about it at <http://www.gocrimson.com/sports/wcrew-lw/2014-15/releases/20150519ayxq3u>.

Congratulations, KC!



The Story of the *Harry Swetnam*



The eight-oared racing shell *Harry Swetnam* is unique in that it is both the last Pocock wooden eight ever built and the beginning of the plastic-boat era.

The boats we build today are constructed from little more than a roll of fabric and a pail of epoxy resin. What determines all their characteristics of size and shape is the "mold." Fabric is draped into the mold and soaked with resin; when the resin hardens, the composite of fabric and resin has taken the shape of the mold.

So the mold shapes the boat, but what shapes the mold?

In exactly the same way that a boat is built in a mold, the mold is built on what we call a "plug"—and it is the plug that shapes the mold.

The *Swetnam* began life as a purpose-built plug for the first variant of what is now our C8 model: boats you might know well as the *Nip* and the *Tuck*. A plug must not only be the shape of the desired hull, it must be sturdily built because in curing, the materials we use exert considerable force on the underlying structure. And the surface has to be very smooth because in the molding process, the surfaces replicate each other. So if we want a

smooth boat, we must have a smooth mold—which can come only from a smooth plug.

Way back in 1978 or 1979, Stan Pocock, experimenting with seemingly miraculous new materials of the time, set about to make a fiberglass eight. To get started, he decided to use the frame of a wooden eight and attach a fiberglass skin to that (replacing the red cedar skin) in order to produce a boat that would be lighter, stiffer, and far less fragile. To make a mold for these new skins, he built a good, sturdy, wooden eight—the Varsity 8 model—to be his plug. He modified it slightly at the two ends so that it would more easily release from the mold. He applied special primers and did a lot of sanding and polishing to produce a very smooth and shiny surface on the outside. From this plug, he made the original C8 mold.

Once a mold is complete, the plug is no longer of use, so the C8 plug sat in the back of the shop until 1988. That's when we moved the shop to Everett. We were about to cut up the old plug, but asked Stanley if he could think of any use for it: indeed, he could. He was looking for a good project to work on with his friend, Frank Cunningham. In his mind, taking that old plug and turning it into a boat seemed like a

great idea. That project kept Stan and Frank busy for almost six months.

First, they scraped and sanded to remove all the built-up primer from the underlying cedar skin. That done, they turned the boat upright and found a fair amount of work remaining in order to complete the frame. They added all the seat bearers, foot-stretcher parts, washboards, cheeks, deck ridge, and decks; then they proceeded to sand it all some more and started varnishing. Interestingly enough, the parts they needed were still in abundant supply at the shop.

By the time they got done, they had already decided what to do with their new boat. They had thoroughly enjoyed the project (Frank often referred to those days as being among his happiest). They easily agreed to name it for Harry Swetnam, who was an integral part of LWRC's early Olympic efforts—but that's a whole other story. Of course, it would belong to the Lake Washington Rowing Club.

Side note. When the Pocock company was building only wooden boats, summers at the shop were devoted to making the myriad parts needed to produce all the boats on the year's *continued on p. 17*

Wood versus Plastic



The last wooden eight to emerge from Stan Pocock's shop was named after longtime Husky crew trainer Harry Swetnam. Earlier this year, after a long hiatus, the Harry Swetnam was reclaimed from storage in the LWRC boathouse and spiffed up to take part in the memorial row for Stan. This inspired Nemesio Domingo to put together a crew to prepare for racing it in the Husky Open in April and Opening Day in May. Part of their training included a pre-race scrimmage with Mount Baker and Conibear in April. Nemesio describes below how it feels to maneuver a heavy wooden eight, contrasting it with the feel of a boat made of composite materials.

For our 2K scrimmage against the Opening Day lineups of Mount Baker men and Conibear women, we borrowed older versions of the *Nip* and the *Tuck*—composite shells. Our motley crew maintained a rate of 27–28 strokes per minute, but the well-trained and higher-stroking Conibear and Mount Baker crews finished at least 45 seconds ahead of us.

We rowed the *Swetnam*, a cedar classic, in the Husky Open and rowed the *John Steed*, a composite construction, on Opening Day—both with hatchet blades. There was enough overlap among members of the two lineups that anecdotal comparisons can be made regarding the qualities of both shells. The *Swetnam* definitely felt heavier on the first two strokes of the start; but once it got moving, it was not significantly slower in the first 500 meters against three hypercarbon, wing-rigger Pocock eights at the Husky Open. The wide hull and heaviness of the *Swetnam* were advantages in the rough water and wind at the start. It was a close, four-boat race until the 1,000-meter mark. While the *Swetnam* stayed within a deck of one of the plastic Pococks, the Ancient Mariners and Pocock Rowing Center steadily gained open water, finishing 47 sec-

onds ahead. The heaviness of the cedar construction does wear on the crew lifting the boat at the catch. (We rowed the body of the race at 27–28 spm, whereas the other three crews rowed at rates varying from 2–4 strokes higher.)

On Opening Day, we opted for the lighter shell, the *Steed*. Our rate for the body of the race was 31–32 spm, resulting in a time nearly 25 seconds faster than in the *Swetnam* at the Husky Open. In this race, the *Steed* finished within 12 seconds of the winning Ancient Mariners and within 4 seconds of Mount Baker.

It's a special feeling to move a beautifully crafted wooden shell, but in our recent experience a modern composite shell brought faster times.

—Nemesio Domingo

Zen in the Art of Rowing: Opening Day 2015

One rower's perspective



One of the most significant features we notice in the practice of archery, and in fact of all the arts ... is that they are not intended for utilitarian purposes only or for purely aesthetic enjoyments, but are meant to train the mind; indeed, to bring it into contact with the ultimate reality. Archery is, therefore, not practiced solely for hitting the target; the swordsman does not wield the sword just for the sake of outdoing his opponent; the dancer does not dance just to perform certain rhythmical movements of the body. The mind has first to be tuned to the Unconscious.

If one really wishes to be master of an art, technical knowledge of it is not enough. One has to transcend technique so that the art becomes an "artless art" growing out of the Unconscious.

—D.T. Suzuki in the introduction to
Zen in the Art of Archery by Eugen Herrigel, 1948

What is a race? Where do our minds go before, during, and after? What is the nature of time and our journey through it? What do our eyes see, our bodies feel, our ears hear? How do we leave "self" behind and become one with the boat? How do we forget the target, get in the moment, tune into the *Unconscious*, let the arrow fly, and know that it will land where it will?

"Ok, guys! We have about two more weeks to get ready. Practic-

es are Tuesday/Thursday at 5:30. Here's the lineup for today. ____ isn't here but will be on Tuesday, so ____ is stroking today." *What seat am I in? Who's in front of/ behind me?* " ____ is stroking, you're in 5 seat, and ____ is in bow."

Out on the water, down to starboard, sit up tall, keep the legs down, swing! "Five seat—you're burying your oar at the catch ... Check your hand heights, pull into your mark ... Stroke/4/7 seat, you're leaning away, into your

rigger ... Sit up tall ... Hold your legs down ... **Swing!**"

Breathe. Relax. Enjoy the moment. Feel the air as you move through it. Listen to the water. Look at the neck of the rower in front of you and the tab on his shirt. Gosh, his neck has a crease in it at the release. Keep your mind in the boat. Cool air, morning sunlight, city skyline, Mt. Rainier, scaup, mallards, Canada geese, cormorants, Western grebe. —*Keep your mind in the boat, sit up tall, reach at the catch, pull into your mark.*

Two weeks to go. Will the moment arrive? Early practice tomorrow. Andy Rees watching, seeing mistakes. "Reach! ... Keep your blades in the water—one more foot on each stroke ... After 200 strokes with one more foot, you'll be ahead." *What? We might win? No, don't think "win," think "rowing well!"* Lofty goal, tough to achieve. A few good strokes. Gosh! It's starting to feel pulled together—we actually might do well. *Let the arrow fly, and it will*

**Zen in the Art of Rowing:
Opening Day 2015, continued**



find the mark.

Despite the billion moments to get here, Opening Day arrives. Rowed the boat over on Thursday; have the world's best spot, right next to the docks. That's a win! Hey! There's Mt. Baker—nice uniforms. They look together. They beat us by open water in our scrimmage—can we come back? Ancient Mariners. Vic City—always come to win. *Head wandering out of the boat.*

Time slows down as the moment approaches. Take a drink. Take a pee. Stretch. Relax. Time to launch. “Hands on! ... Push away from the dock.” Time slows more. Bright blue sky, water, Cascade Mountains, Mt. Rainier, Mt. Baker (nice uniforms!). “Arms and back only, let's do a start and glide, start and 10 high, start—10 high—settle ... Shall we go around one more time? ... Let's move to the starting line ... There's Mt. Baker ... Good luck!” (*Really?*)

Last time: Lane 4, wind out of the south, boats blown into us at the start, whacked oars, terrible race. This time: Lane 1, no prob-

lem. *Uh-oh!*—wind out of the north! *Oh, shit!* Mt. Baker is being blown into us again at the start. “Vic City, up a foot; everyone else, hold; Lake Washington, up a foot; coxswain, put your hand down; Mt. Baker is being blown into Lake Washington; all boats, move up five strokes; Mt. Baker, point to starboard; coxswain, put your hand down.”

“WE HAVE ALIGNMENT!”

(But wait! Half our blades are squared and buried—last-minute change—and half are flat. *F**K!*)
“GO!”

Water swirls, boat leaps, 10 strokes—*We're in it*—boat picks up speed—*Who's next*

to us? Eyes in the boat, find a rhythm, breathe, boats disappearing, 500 meters, arms begin to hurt. What? *My arms never hurt before.* Horns blaring, nobody behind us, rowing hard—*Where is everybody?* Entering the Cut. Now legs hurt, sucking air, but feel good! Wait! We're on Vic City.

“I've got their 5 seat! GIMME THEIR 3 SEAT!” Husky Band playing us home. Cross the finish line. *What'd we get? Third? Fourth?*

Ichi-go ichi-e: It is one more row at a moment in time that will not be repeated.* Life is good. Tune the mind to the *Unconscious*. It is what it is.

Let the arrow fly and it will hit the mark.

—Dale Peschel



*The term can be traced back to an expression by 16th century tea master Sen no Rikyū: “one chance in a lifetime” (一期に一度 *ichigo ni ichido?*). [Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ichi-go_ichi-e](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ichi-go_ichi-e)

The 29th Big Climb for Leukemia and Lymphoma began on the fourth floor of the Columbia Tower at 08:30 on March 22. It is, in rowing parlance, a vertical head race with each of the 6,000 climbers starting individually at 10-second intervals and finishing on the 73rd floor—anywhere from 07:06 minutes to over an hour later after navigating the 1,311 intervening steps.

This was Team LWRC's ninth consecutive appearance and our largest showing, with 24 of us making it to the top—actually 26 X 1,311 steps, since Tyler Peterson and Leslie Zavisca each did 2 reps, winning the respective men's and women's "Hard-Core" awards. Amanda Lee set a new personal best.

We finished 16th of 216 teams, based on the fastest three times, two of which were posted by Tyler Peterson and the third by Ryan Ike. The rest of us, including youngsters Owen Greene and Elise Czesla, climbed for the honor of doing it.

Vivian Syme got the team's "Fastest Woman" award with 12:43.58, placing sixth of 206 women aged 50–59; Tyler was our "Fastest Man" at 10:08.28, 13th of 418 men aged 30–39.

Much as we enjoyed the physical challenge, the larger purpose was to raise funds to find cures for blood cancers, which have affected many of us personally.



Not too much the worse for wear: in the "Recovery Room" on the 40th floor after the climb. Back row, L to R: Emily Oxenford, Casey Humphrey, John Alberti, Sara Worsham, Josha Crowley, James Roe, Evan Jacobs, James Fountain, Tyler Peterson, Joe Tynan, Gerard Letterie, Jan Chow Front row, L to R: Darcy Greene, Owen Greene, Ryan Ike, Brooke Ike, Amanda Lee, Leslie Zavisca, Jeannie Czesla, Elise Czesla Made it to the top, but not in picture: Ada Chen, Maribeth Hobson, Vivian Syme, David Peabody



The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society had set a goal of raising \$2.6 million, and we exceeded that by raising \$2.92M. Team LWRC blew right through our original goal of \$7,500: we raised \$9,470! Jeannie Czesla was the top individual fund raiser with \$2,005.

Thanks to my teammates and our sponsors for making Big Climb 29 a huge success!

—John Alberti

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Summer Rowing Race Camp and Learn to Row (LTR) This year's camp runs from June 2 through August 1. It meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6–8 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:30–10:30 a.m. Volunteers are needed as coxswains and rowers. LTR classes are held every day except Friday. To help with Camp or LTR, please contact Elizabeth Burke at LearntoRow@lakewashingtonrowing.com.

Program Committee President-elect KC Dietz has been coordinating programs but needs assistance. To help, please contact board@lakewashingtonrowing.com and KC will get in touch with you.

Welcome Committee Be a buddy for new and trial members. Take them out on a row, show them around the boathouse, and answer any questions. This is a great way to meet new members! Contact Joani Harr, welcome committee chair, at joaniharr@aol.com.

Experience Rowing Classes (ERC) These three-hour classes give prospective rowers a taste of rowing and a chance to check out LWRC. They also build interest in our Learn to Row classes. Dates: July 12, August 16, and September 13 from 8:45 a.m. to noon. Contact LearntoRow@lakewashingtonrowing.com to let Elizabeth Burke know your availability. (Or use the member Volunteer Sign Up on www.lakewashingtonrowing.com.)

Boathouse Tours Prospective members often want a tour of the boathouse. The board is

considering offering tours on Saturday mornings. To help start this new program, please contact board@lakewashingtonrowing.com.

Boat Bay Sweeping Help sweep out the three boat bays on the first Saturday of every month. Various groups have been assigned weeks, as shown on the schedule posted above the log book, but anyone is welcome to help at any time. If you have some spare time, join in the activity. You might even make a new friend!

Development We need help in developing the next steps for building the LWRC 20/20 fund and the 2023 land fund. To help, please contact board@lakewashingtonrowing.com.

Say something about rowing or LWRC Submit a contribution for the September newsletter to lwrnewsletter@comcast.net.

—Marilynn Goo

The Story of the Harry Swetnam

continued from p. 12

order list—plus many extra parts produced "just in case." The rest of the year was spent assembling and finishing the individual shells. In 1985, the decision had been made to no longer build any wooden boats, but many of these parts were still on hand—a bounty that LWRC's Sow's Ear Boatworks enjoys to this day.

—Bill Tytus



The importance of community

We would like to thank the LWRC community for the support shown us last year when our son, Philip, perished in an attempt to rescue another man who was trying to commit suicide by train. Thanks to the efforts of Robyn Fischer, several of you contributed toward a beautiful floral arrangement for his memorial and also donated to the foundation created by his friends to honor him. As we sat at his memorial, I was comforted by seeing the familiar blue and white colors in that arrangement, and I felt embraced by the good will being sent from Seattle to Pleasanton. It was a great comfort.

And thanks to a generous contribution from Philip's foundation, the East Bay Regional Parks System is currently designing a pet-friendly trail along the Pleasanton Ridge, a trail that will be named after him. So our rowing community will also be present in this landscape.

Philip was recently named a Carnegie Hero for his selfless action. This is a very special honor, and we are proud that his heroism has been recognized at this level. We hope that you will share in our pride and feel connected to him.

—The Scholz Family

