



Captain's Report Oct 2018 to Oct 2019

It's been an extremely busy year for Queensferry Rowing Club for a largely new committee, with new initiatives introduced, new experiences explored and new members introduced to the Scottish Coastal Rowing community.

I'd like to start with a thank you to the committee who have given a great deal of their time without question, to build on the work that has gone into making Queensferry Rowing Club the welcoming and successful club that we all want it to be.

The committee is here to represent its members and the work that has taken place by members, beyond the formal committee, has significantly enhanced our club, engaged new members and helped to increase awareness of the breadth of tasks involved and the range of skills our members have. Everyone has a part to play and it has been one of the most satisfying elements of this year to see how many members have taken on responsibility, contributed ideas and shared their talents: from IT (managing the website, photography, video footage) to practical skills (shed and boat refurbishment), cooking, hospitality, awareness raising (green/nurdles), fundraising, scheduling, towing, training the list could go on and on... Thank you to you all.

Committee structure

One of the first tasks of the new committee was the setting up of sub-groups to take forward different areas of club development. Each of these sub-groups will provide a brief update as to the work carried out this year but across them all, I must commend the fantastic level of enthusiasm, commitment, creativity and energy that they have brought to their roles and the significant impact this has made in the continued development of our club.

Sub-groups reports delivered by:

IT – Barbara

Social + fundraising – Rebecca

Technical – Alan S (+ shed/maintenance)

Training – cox/skipper - Mike

Training and Technique – Marianne

Green – Rachel H

Youth regatta – Peter

Barbara's report

Club Events

On the Water

| Date | Event | No of rowers | Category |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| 8 December | Woudrichem | | Charity row |
| 1 January | Loony Dook | | Social |
| 13 April | Perth to Wormit | | Social row in company |
| 26 - 28 April | Loch Awe adventure | 10 | Community/ Long race |
| 11 - 12 May | PE Open Day | ---- | Community/come and try |
| 18 May | Broughty | 25 | Regatta |
| 1 June | QRC | 30+ | Regatta |
| 13 June | Newhaven Midsummer challenge | 6 | Row, run, sail challenge |
| 22 - 23 June | Arran | 10 | Regatta |
| 7 -13 July | Stranraer | 40+ | World Championships |
| 10 August | Ferry Fair | ---- | Community |
| 10 August | Shieldaig | 9 | Regatta |
| 24 August | North Berwick | 28 | Regatta |
| 31 Aug – 1 st Sep | Portsoy | 7 | Regatta |
| 7 Sep | Youth Regatta | 7 | Regatta |
| 21 Sep | C2C | 10 | Long race |
| 28 Sep | Monster the Loch | 10 | Long race |
| 28 Sep | Tweed | 7 | Social row in company |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Cancelled due to weather | | |
| 28 July | Inchcolm (rearranged date) | |
| 17 August | Troon (cancelled twice) | |
| 14 September | Alan Meldrum Community Challenge | 6 teams |
| | | |
| To be arranged season 19-20 | North-South Challenge | |

World's, regattas and longer rows

A world championship week, 8 regattas and 5 long rows, 2 social rows in company and 3 races, formed the core of our competitive events this year. Added to these, the community events of the Loony Dook, Ferry Fair, training for the Alan Meldrum Community Challenge and the multitude of local longer rows and day trips, it's been a busy year of rowing. The

weather curtailed the schedule, perhaps fortunately in some cases, as it was very busy at some points. Troon and the Alan Meldrum Challenge didn't survive the weather, a company row to Inchcolm from Kinghorn went ahead at the second attempt, but without QRC as the date didn't work for our rowers. Portsoy, in keeping with tradition, didn't complete its full schedule but our intrepid rowers had an exciting time nonetheless.

Attendance at regattas has been quite variable. North Berwick and Broughty Ferry proved to be very popular with well over 20 members attending both. Others stretched us to our limit and gave our crews a hard work out on the day.

Hard work and team work showed through for our men's and women's 60+ teams at Broughty as their training paid off to bring them gold and silver respectively. A strong showing for both teams at our own regatta, with a silver and bronze, set the crews up well for Stranraer and a bronze medal for the 50+ women helped to keep motivation levels high for all of us.

The main competitive event of the year was the Skiffie World Championships in Stranraer. More than 40 members took part in this event, a great representation from our club and a superb example of the enthusiasm and dedicated hard work put in beforehand. Regardless of positioning in races, the overall conclusion was of great racing and great hospitality. At times the racing was exhilarating and crews were challenged by the conditions. The club achieved 2 finals and 4 repechage in the adult races with the men's and women's 60+ matching each other every step of the way, 2nd in their heats and 6th in their finals. Our youth rowers came 4th in the Mixed Under 17 and won a bronze medal in the Men's Under 17 – the first World's medal for QRC. Charlie, rowing with Strangford, won a silver medal in the Men's Under 19. A great result for our young rowers and great pride in them from us all. Without a doubt, this was a team effort and QRC achieved 15th place in the final rankings, sixth places better than Strangford. Top ten next?

Some regattas are attended for the 'whole experience' such as Arran, Shieldaig or Portsoy, where the distance involved, and the need for an overnight stay, tends to limit club member attendance but the overall atmosphere, location and hospitality of these events make them a great social experience, in addition to the competition on the water.

We added two new events to the schedule this year – Loch Awe Adventure and Monster the Loch. Loch Awe was a wonderful mix of community come and try sessions with a competitive 14 mile race the following day. Monster the Loch was a mass participation race with human powered craft of all shapes and sizes taking to the water. Both proved to be great additions to the calendar and reinforced the feeling of community that comes from being part of Scottish Coastal Rowing.

A big thank you must go to those who take the time to write up the regatta/ event reports for the website. They are always a great read and it's fantastic to get different perspectives on events. Full reports for those who wish to read more are on our web-site.

Off the Water

We were delighted to be able to hold a number of development events this year to build on previous work and in response to members requests and interests.

Rowing Development – training, technique and technical adaptations

As a club, we aim to continue to develop our rowing, not only for those who race but for all who wish to enjoy and improve their rowing, whether at home, in regattas or during longer rows.

However, with the build up to the World Championships in mind, some of our most significant activities this session were the development days delivered by Broughty Ferry coaches and coxes. It is a testament to the commitment of club members that we had a very healthy turnout on a cold morning in December – the morning after the club Christmas party. I would like to extend grateful thanks to Gabriel, Ralph and Liz who spent the day with us and gave us, and our friends from North Queensferry, valuable training sessions throughout the day.

This was then followed up by an evening to review the video analysis and clarify our next steps. Thanks to John and Gabe for the video footage from Faithful, taken on the day.

This then became the basis of the next part of our development training with age category training being developed in addition to the open training organised by Sharon.

A second visit from Gabriel, Ralph and Liz took place in March and although weather stopped us from getting on the water, it proved to be a good opportunity to ask questions and clarify our understanding of our next steps.

Marianne's report

Our boats have been well used this session and a great deal of hard work has been put in, not just by our rowers but by the ever ready technical and maintenance teams who were called upon regularly, often at short notice, to carry out repairs and adjustments.

The technical sub-group rose to the challenge of adapting our boats for more comfortable and efficient racing as we saw the removal of the floorboards and new footrests put in place in time for training for the year ahead.

Alan S's report

A further presentation evening was delivered by Mike McDowall, looking at the technique and mechanics of rowing and how a crew can optimise the movement of the boat. Again, this was well attended and there was a great deal of appreciation for the time and effort that Mike put into his presentation and accompanying notes.

Mike McD's report

Expeditions

A presentation evening on the Oban-Largs expedition of July 2018, which was awarded the SCRA cruising log for the second consecutive year, took place to give club members an oversight into what is involved in planning such a passage and to encourage members to consider developing their skills in this area. The group (Queensferry Quines) Rachel Dillon, Barbara Agnew, Anne Flannery, Anne Purcell and Liz Furrie were also asked to present to Broughty Ferry Rowing Club.

Passage Planning

Following the presentation evenings, a series of passage planning sessions took place for interested members at the end of which the attendees identified a route and planned their passage. Last month, Douglas took this to the next step by planning and executing a successful trip to Loch Lomond. Douglas is now hoping to lead a club wide Loch Lomond trip next year and hopefully we will see the rest of the group begin to stretch their oars further as well.

Our club is building a growing expertise and reputation in passage planning longer journeys and this is becoming recognised by the SCRA who, following the Quines' expedition this summer from Lochcarron to Shieldaig via Skye and Rona, have been asked to support an SCRA passage planning development session next year, as well as acting as coordinators for the Forth section of the RowAround Scotland 2020.

Going Green

Another notable development over this last year has been our Green initiative. Rachel has been instrumental in taking this forward, liaising with Port Edgar and introducing a range of activities which have encouraged others to bring forward their own ideas. Thank you to Rachel for leading on this and we await news of our Green Flag submission, though I have no doubt that it will be successful. Perhaps we need to start fundraising for a flagpole?

Rachel's report.

Youth Development

This was also the year that our growing youth development took off with the club hosting its first Youth Regatta. Peter Locke, Louise Innes, Rachel Holburn and Marianne Sandison have been instrumental in the recruitment and training of our young members and it's been very welcome to see them become more involved in the wider life of the club, joining in with social rowing as well as training together as a team. The Youth regatta was a welcome addition to our club calendar. We look forward to it growing over the coming years and are grateful to those who have given of their time to support and encourage this section of our club.

Peter's report

Social and fundraising

Off the water activities involved a lot of fun beyond the boat and our social and fundraising team have done great work over the year to keep us and our visitors well fed and entertained.

Rebecca's report

Challenges & next steps

As always, with a continually growing club, there will always be challenges to be faced. We have 7 new family memberships and 23 new individuals since last year. Alongside our growing membership there is a continually growing calendar of events with members keen to try new things as well as revisit familiar and well-loved haunts.

Towers and skippers

This year, this has meant a growing pressure on a small number of people, particularly towers and skippers. Without these two groups, we would struggle to host social rowing and take the boats to events. I would encourage those who feel able to put their names forward for cox and skipper training. If you have a car that can tow, there is great instruction available from the experienced towers in the club.

Events

What has also been apparent is the challenge of meeting everyone's needs. With one boat, or sometimes both, away on the same day, or for a whole weekend, we have to consider how that affects the majority of club members who remain at home. Our calendar this year has been very packed and we perhaps need to consider the number of events that we can feasibly participate in and how many members attending make an event viable.

One of the strengths of our club is the rich diversity of rowing that we offer, from a leisurely social spin around the bay to participation in regattas and the long rows of Scotland's rivers, lochs and seas. Continuing to support that diversity with a growing membership and a growing events list is something for the next committee to consider.

Sub-groups

The sub groups have functioned well and the next committee could look to build on what have been established this year, developing a clear structure and lines of responsibility and accountability. Further sub-groups/ short life working groups could be considered e.g. a group focussing on securing grant funding/ exploring clubhouse accommodation options.

Constitution

A number of amendments to the constitution will be proposed this evening. With the growing and changing membership of the club a full review of the constitution by the next committee would also be helpful to ensure clarity in our practices.

Club Survey

Such a busy year, with a focus on the World Championships, we didn't get the chance to take the club survey forward. We need to look at what this can tell us about our members' wishes and interests.

Monkey Fists

£3000+ over 3 years; the team would like to spend it on a substantial project. Maria emailed members; some suggestions offered, more are welcome e.g. small boat, third boat, oars

RowAround Scotland 2020

10th anniversary of QRC?

Thanks to Mike McDowall for his 'archive search' we have a decision to make: our official anniversary is??

7 May 2010 - inaugural meeting of the 'Scottish Coastal Rowing Project - Queensferry'

3rd Sept 2010 - kit arrived; build continued until February 2011.

22 Feb 2011 - inaugural meeting to start the Rowing Club.

12 April - Ferry Lass was launched

28th Sept 2011 – first AGM to dissolve the SCRP-Q and adopt the constitution of QRC

Queensferry Rowing Club holds an important place in people's lives, impacting on mental, social and physical health. We have a highly engaged and motivated membership who are willing to work hard for their club. I look forward to a positive and exciting year ahead for the club.