



In this edition of Club News we are reproducing the four major reports that were presented at the recent Annual General Meeting. As all the information in the reports is important they are reproduced un-edited. The financial section of the Treasurer's Report is not reproduced here. If you are interested, I'm sure John James would be happy to send it to you.

Linda McDonald, Editor

Presidents Report

Even in the trying financial situation that we're living through, the club's financial situation remains positive, with a small amount being put aside for what I hope will be the eventual redevelopment of the clubhouse.

Our membership currently stands at about 205. For those of you with good memories – or with a copy of last year's annual report – I should now correct my 2008 report when I said we had about 250 members. It appears I counted the Roseville College members twice – the numbers for last year were 209.

This year the combined Roseville College and St Andrew's numbers dropped from 73 to 50, but our non-school membership rose. We welcomed 35 new members this year.

And our fleet was again improved, with the purchase of the two training singles, *Scud* and *Patriot*, the new double *Cay II*, new blades, and the order of a new Sykes quad/four. Again, some of our older boats were sold.

It's disappointing to report that we've made no progress on the redevelopment of the shed this year. The biggest barrier to meaningful progress is money. On my back-of-the-envelope calculations, counting money we have in the bank, and an optimistic guess at what we might be able to get from school partners and from grants, I'm always half a million dollars short of what we need before we even put a spade in the ground.

I don't see where that half million is to come from – other than from you, the members. That's 200 of us and \$500,000 to raiseyou can do the sums yourself.

As you know, there are other less-expensive options – things like don't do anything because the shed hasn't fallen down yet, or a major renovation that doesn't alter the profiles of the shed – but they all come with disadvantages.

One of the problems of this shed, apart from the fact that it doesn't have enough room for our needs, is that it's also too low. Even now high tides and a ferry wash mean that we get wet carpet. And if there's any truth in global warming, we will have even wetter carpets.

I personally would like to investigate the possibility of getting access to a little more land and over-water area to the west of the shed, increasing our staging area and putting in a bigger pontoon. If such things were possible - and that will largely depend on whether we can persuade both NSW Maritime and Lane Cove Council that we have a good case - we could give ourselves both space for more boats, and quicker access to the water. It would give us breathing space until we save more money.

On a more positive note; we have continued developing our Risk Management Plan this year with good effect. Many of the small changes around the shed – the fuel spill kit, the better stepladders, the signage including emergency information, and our better procedures for reporting accidents and for looking after visitors to our shed - result from this.

We also now have a regular safety audit which has cleaned up issues such clearing trip hazards (like riggers) from the floor, the appearance of the bright pink gate covers, fixing the steps to the beach and regularly repairing the rubber matting on the pontoon. Our thanks for this go to Tamsin Brew, for taking on the management of the safety audit.

Another highlight of the year was the trip that some of us made to Japan to row with our sister club, Seta, and to compete in the second All Japan Masters. Twenty of us went (16 rowers and 4 partners) and we had a MAGNIFICENT time. I hope we can repeat this in future years.

As always, one of the pleasures of these meetings is being able to acknowledge publicly people who have been great assets to the club.

Much appreciation should go to your committee of the past year, particularly Captain John Pyle, Vice-Captain Jacqui Wilkinson and Boat Master/Regatta Secretary Bob Smith. I know it seems that most things run easily in the club, but that's because a lot of people here are like ducks, paddling furiously under the surface. Thank you, John, Jacqui and Bob.

John James this year has been treasurer. John is one of those members who has given years of his time to this club. And this was publicly recognised this year when Lane Cove Council gave him a Sporting Citizenship Award. Congratulations, John.

Geoff Wannan and Bill Russo have been building managers this year – they nail things up, tack things down, and have generally been successful in preventing the clubhouse from falling down completely.

Stuart Halsall, Roseville College head coach – thank you for your help and co-operativeness. It is a pleasure to work with you and with your students.

Paul Tout, another person who continues to give years of time to the club, and George Lazarou. Thank you for your committee work this year.

This year we lose two exceptionally capable and valuable committee people, Vice-President Tamsin Brew and secretary Garry Jones. We will miss your talents, but I thank you for everything you have given us.

And to all the dozens of other members who give so much time and effort to make things work round here (this is always dangerous, naming names, but I'd like to try anyway): Laurie Ormerod, Linda McDonald, Helen Ritchie, Norma and Mike Perry, Kim Rudder, Justin Peters, Len and Sue Walter, Jim Hole, David Cay, Chris Pollett, Tony Wehby are just some of the people that I know have given much to the club. Thank you. Life round here is better because of you.

As I said last year, this club enjoys an extraordinarily high level of members volunteering to help in all sorts of ways. It is, I believe, one of our most valuable assets, and I thank you all for the extra effort you put in.

Sue Wannan, President

Open House at the Club 13 September

We need members to row with visitors, supervise ergs and generally promote rowing and the Club. From 10.00 to 3.00. We have volunteers for the morning, we need more from 12.00 to 3.00.

Contact Sue Wannan swannan@internode.on.net or put your name on the list at the club.

Captain's Report

The club has been well represented at regattas by the Masters. I am sure that you would all extend congratulations to those who have participated and to those who have competed against tough competition from other clubs. Congratulations to those who participated and well done.

Thank you to the coaches for giving of their time to impart their experience and improve our general skill level. They have been out early in a cold coaching boat, providing much needed advice and always with a smile on their faces.

This year we have some young girls from various schools without rowing program being coached by Paul Tout and many other coaches. These girls came to us via our Learn to Row program. Once again we extend our appreciation to those members who gave up their time to enable the smooth running of this program and the continuation of the Japanese rowers. North Shore members gave unselfishly to the cause to encourage rowing.

The lead up to the World Masters' Games is going well and I would like to thank those who took on the Herculean task of co-coordinating the club's various squads - Sue Walter, Justin Peters and John Childs. There is an event on the 26th September that is essentially a trial for the World Masters Games.

Please do not let the excitement of the World Masters Games 2009 overshadow the forthcoming North Shore Regatta. This year it is separated from the Head of the Yarra and our first time at going it alone.

Please give yourselves a thank you for assisting the committee when we modified our training times to accommodate the influx of rowers during our busiest time, the racing season.

And finally, I ask you to extend all assistance and advice to introduce all newcomers to the joys of rowing; we were all there at some time. Listening to the coach, I think that I still am!

John Pyle, Captain

CRAB Committee Report

The CRAB Committee is comprised of Peter Messenger, Martin Priestley, Justin Peters and Tony Wehby. As Chairman I want to record here my gratitude for the time and effort contributed by my fellow members to the tasks of the Committee; each is an experienced professional who again donated his skills to the Club. In addition I thank those Club members who have provided input for our consideration during the year.

Our role is to advise on matters related to the redevelopment of the premises and to coordinate the gathering and consideration of relevant information. It seems that each year I write that progress has been slower than might be hoped for by some members and this is again the case. This should not however mask the fact that much has been achieved on the planning front in what is a very complex environment.

Project Manager

During the year we considered the appointment of an external Project Manager to advance the process. We called for and received two formal proposals from professionally qualified firms and we had previously received a number of other proposals for this type of role. The primary objective of such an appointment would be to proceed to a Development Application.

Our initial significant responses to the proposals are that:-

- (a) it will require the expenditure of a substantial proportion of the Clubs available finances to reach a DA
- (b) there are a number of material uncertainties to be resolved before proceeding
- (c) the expected cost of development is higher than anticipated
- (d) having a financing plan for the total project should be a pre-requisite for the appointment of a project manager

As a result, no appointment has yet been made and financial planning for the project has been elevated for consideration.

Scouts

Members will be aware that we have been in negotiation with Scouts NSW about a possible joint development of the adjoining site. These negotiations have been reduced to a monthly report from Scouts as to their plans which have varied throughout the year. At present Scouts are moving toward developing the site alone and are formalising their plans and costs prior to submitting a DA. We are therefore working on the basis that the site will not be available for a joint development; this is disappointing and we will continue to have dialogue with Scouts in case the position changes.

Lane Cove Council and NSW Maritime

We met with both these groups during the year and received continuing encouragement to proceed. While both have extensive and expensive requirements to be met before approval for development can be granted there was no indication that it would not be achievable. Nevertheless approval will be a complex and demanding task

By way of example, I note from the August minutes of Lane Cove Council that the Sydney University Rowing Club development at Cunninghams Reach has just received deferred development consent, having been lodged more than 13 months ago. This is for a \$3.3m boatshed development just beyond the Figtree Bridge on non residential land offered by Council as being suitable for the purpose.

Future Activity

It is apparent at every step that money is the single biggest constraining factor to proceeding with the current preferred route of redeveloping the facilities on the present site (with some expansion to the west). While some members have argued that more advanced documentation might flush some funds out of our membership for this project this is by no means certain and will require the expenditure of resources to test the theory.

The alternate of a staged and less comprehensive development/improvement has also been suggested and will be given further consideration. While this would not achieve all the objectives of a new facility it might be a more realistic objective if funding is limited.

The CRAB Committee welcomes input from all members and looks forward to greater progress in the coming year.

Tony Wehby, Chairman, CRAB Committee

Your Committee for 2009/2010 is.....

President - Sue Wannan
Captain - John Pyle
Vice Captain - Jacqui Wilkinson
Hon. Treasurer - John James
Hon. Secretary/Public Officer - Charlotte Tanner
Boat Master - Bob Smith

Committee - Paul Tout
George Lazarou
Geoff Wannan
Bill Russo

Club Awards

The following awards were presented at the Annual General Meeting:

Alexa Hearn was presented with the **Stuart MacPherson Shield** for gaining the most points in NSWRA non-Masters sculling events in a season on 3:2:1 points basis.

Sue Walter and Pam Withnall were presented with the **Doug Bowden Shield** for gaining the most points in NSWRA non-Masters sweep events in a season on 3:2:1 points basis.

Tamsin Brew was presented with the **Masters Shield** for gaining the most points in Australian Masters' championship regattas and NSWRA masters events in club and championship regattas on 3:2:1 points basis.

Sue Walter was presented the **Spencer Grace Shield** which is awarded by the President to a member who has made a significant and valuable contribution to the club.

Treasurer's Report

The results for the year are lower than for 2008 but still acceptable in generating cash and yet maintaining the quality of the fleet and facilities. The major factor was a change in depreciation calculation from diminishing value to a straight line basis. With the proposals for rebuilding the shed moving slowly forward it is desirable that recognition be given to the shorter life of the leasehold improvements and hence the increased amortisation charge for the premises.

Our regatta in November 2008 was a weather disaster and most participating clubs were disappointed. Some costs were reduced by the cancellation and your committee resolved to set aside the surplus to assist participating clubs at our next regatta. A total of \$3640 has been set aside as a current liability in deposits to recognise this.

Donations are an important part of external income for the club. We benefited from donations channelled through the Australian Sports Foundation of \$4,720 all of which was spent on equipment renewal. In addition we appreciate receiving a grant of \$1,000 from Lane Cove Council which was for improving safety equipment at the club. In all donations of \$6,882 were received in the year.

The current reduced level of interest rates, whilst beneficial to borrowers, is not helpful to those with significant savings and we face a reduced level of interest receipts this coming year. Steps are being taken to find alternative secure investment opportunities for these funds pending the reconstruction of the clubhouse.

We welcomed 35 new members in the last financial year and it is important for the club to maintain a regular flow of new members to keep the club vibrant. Our Corporate regatta and Learn to Row activities both raise funds and help in this regard. Many members gave a lot of their time to make these events happen successfully and their work is appreciated.

With the World Masters Games taking place in Sydney this October the club is as busy as ever and I look forward to another successful year for the Club.

John James, Treasurer