

Tortoise Club Newsletter Michaelmas 2022

Dates for the diary:
Torpids Saturday: 25th February
Eights Saturday: 27th May
HRR Picnic: 1st July

Nick Carrell

Colonel Nick Carrell (1987), of the Life Guards and Adjutant General's Corps, rowed in the 1990 Men's 1st Torpid. After he was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2020 he sent his Oriel kit to the Captains of Boats with instructions that it was to be used by others. His wishes have been fulfilled; current rowers wear it proudly, and Henry Hawkins (Men's Captain 2020-21) and I both wore his Tortoise bow tie in our Covid-delayed Captains' photographs that now hang on the wall in 1.1.

Nick died on 8 March 2021; his thoughtful gift stands as an outstanding example of the intergenerational bond that rowing at Oriel has forged over the years: a chain of tradition, achievement, and support. His wife, Jilly, and their two daughters, Scarlett and Bibi, have since visited 1.1 and enjoyed an Oriel Regatta from the Boat House – where Nick's crew photograph will be well known by many Tortoises.

He is the one with a bag over his head.



Summer Eights 1988 M2, Nick Carrell in the 3 seat

Captains' Report

As always, OCBC has had a strong start to the year. The freshers' week BBQ kicked off the season with a great atmosphere and turnout; this was followed by a promising novice recruitment programme, leading to the welcome problem of having more novices signing up than we could physically get out on the water each week. Unfortunately, the first amber and red flags of the term came right in the middle of the Michaelmas Novice Regatta. However, our two men's and two women's crews still all managed to race despite cancellations and last minute changes, with one novice running straight from an outing with M2 to jump in the NM1 stroke seat.



Wyndhams provided a further racing opportunity for the novices, albeit slightly more chaotic than the Novice Regatta, and M1 were put to the test against the Tortoises, with the Tortoise crew (just about) coming out on top. Current members of OCBC enjoyed mingling with the Tortoise Club, both at Wyndhams and at the Tortoise Dinner. We are, as ever, extremely grateful for the Tortoise Club's support which allows us to continue to compete and to share the Oriel Spirit.

The seniors hit the ground running, following the summer training programme set by our new joint Head Coaches Daniel Brennan and Louis Lamont, we were ready to get our heads and feet in the boat and get down to training on the water again.

Transport remains an issue, with last year's drivers included in the many graduating rowers. However, thanks are due to Jack Delaney for driving his car three times a week, despite not rowing himself, allowing M2 to continue to have



M1 on their home turf at Wallingford Head

valuable water time at Wallingford. W2 are doing well in the capable hands of Phil Grūnewald, who helped last year's W2 row their way to blades in Torpids, a performance that they are hoping to match this year.

OCBC entered a W1, M1, and M2 into Wallingford Head at the end of 7th week. Sadly, due to a very high stream, entries were limited, and the organisers scratched W1 and M2. Although dubious coxing from the crew ahead forced M1 to spend a significant portion of the race in the middle of the river against the high stream, M1 felt that they rowed well, and while there is still work to be done, there has certainly been a vast improvement from where the crew started at the beginning of Michaelmas.

W1 and M1 both travelled to Cambridge for the Fairbairn Cup to finish the term. Further poor river conditions meant that 8th week's training was on the erg. This, along with changes in the lineups from Wallingford Head, meant that W1 and M1 each only had one session with the full crew before racing. W1 were glad to race after the disappointment of Wallingford Head, and felt that their focus on technical training throughout the term paid off, resulting in a solid row. The focus now is on training hard to increase speed and strength in order to begin working our way back up to headship in Torpids. Although M1's result, 9th College VIII, was not as high as had been hoped for, they felt that they raced well given the circumstances and are using this as motivation to hit the winter training hard over the vacation, to come back much fitter and stronger, ready to build up to Torpids.

The squad is returning to Oxford in -1st week, at the beginning of January, for a training camp before Hilary Term. With Torpids moved forward to 6th week this year so as not to clash with WEHoRR, it will be particularly important to get this extra week of training in.

Now all eyes are set on Torpids. W1 starts at 5th on the river, chased by Christ Church and chasing Pembroke. M1 holds the men's Headship, chased by a strong Christ Church crew. W2 is 35th on the river, and M2 is 29th. We look forward to seeing many of you at the boathouse, in Hall, and in the Bear.

Floreat Oriel!

Alex Abel and Amelia Monaghan

captains@orielrowing.org



W1 in TabLand ready to race

President's Report

Hearing Nick Carrell's story is one of the many times that I have been struck by the strength of the Oriel Spirit and the bonds that it forms. It is why being Tortoise President means so much to me, as it is an opportunity to give to those who came after me as those who came before have given to me. This has been my first full year as President, since being elected in November 2021. The biggest achievement in that time has been streamlining the donation process. Please do have a look at the OCBC donation page [here](#) and even better put it to good use so that Oriel can continue to accrue all of the Headships. We raised £20,800 in 2022 but must significantly increase this in order to strengthen our position as a club and grow the horizons of what we can achieve.



The Henley picnic last July was a great success, so many Tortoises were there that we struggled to fit us all into the group picture. It was a lovely opportunity to celebrate last year's success, the many Blades won, headships retained, and bunglines gained; swap stories such as the founding of the Millers and the purchase of George the taxidermy Turtle; as well as cheering on those Orielenses competing at Henley Royal that year.



To blood the new crop of freshers Wyndhams is always a uniquely Oriel event, a BBQ in a field, under the constant threat of bovine invasion, by a 400 yard stretch, getting in and out of shells in increasingly inventive ways. It was well run by the students and we very much enjoyed being hosted by them; my thanks to them for laying it all on. While M1 did give us some good racing over the short course I think that a picture paints a thousand words and I shall leave it at that.

The highlight of the Tortoise Club calendar is always the Tortoise Dinner, once again hosted in London Rowing Club, and with the after party just down the embankment in Vesta, we had a very good time. My thanks to Aysha Strachan for her help in organising everything. With a record attendance of 69, of which 28 were women, it really showed the health and strength of our club, and that we have been able to maintain and build upon the post covid momentum. We welcomed James Halsall as the Tortoise Council's new Treasurer, Cassidy Hoefst as our Webmaster, and awarded the position of OCBC Senior Member Ex-officio status, meaning that they shall be invited to join future Council meetings, even when they are not themselves a Tortoise. I believe Hal Frigaard once again raised his plate in no-hands-dessert victory; and great joy was had singing the night away in LRC before hitting the dance floor in Vesta.



The final piece of news is that we entered a coxed four into the Fairbairns invitation fours category, we even did a training outing beforehand (I know, sounds a lot like cheating). We finished 3rd in our category, it was good to Shoe some Tabs, and to bankride the first boats down the course. As always if anyone is interested in getting out on the water in a Tortoise Club crew do not hesitate to get in touch. Before the 80s Gaudy at the start of this term both a men's and a women's eight got in touch with the captains who got them back out onto the Isis for a trip down the tracks.

There is an incredible opportunity ahead of us, to fulfil our aims of celebrating and supporting Oriel College rowing to a greater extent than ever before; through our events; by getting out to row ourselves; and most importantly through the [Blades scheme](#). We have a happy and healthy boat club to get behind, led by Alex and Amelia; great momentum from recent years; and a strong foundation, both on the water, on the bank supporting, and in fundraising. I look forward to working with you over the next year to take this club yet higher.

Floreat Oriel!

Robert Boswall

tortoise-president@orielrowing.org

