



Newsletter

December 2011

We just get bigger and better!

This year has seen our events attended by more boats from more groups and we achieved the biggie ~ the Lord Mayor's Show flotilla ~ a fantastic year.

After much healthy discussion at the AGM in Barber's Hall we started the year with a plan to consolidate our main events, the first being the **Oxbridge Watermen's Challenge**.

On 26th March as the crews from Oxford & Cambridge prepared down in Putney the 10 TTRA crews formed up under Hammersmith Bridge in two divisions, what they didn't know was that LOCOG were watching to see what could be achieved on the river.

The first Division was sent on their way by Bill Colley (guest Umpire) with the second Division close behind.

The fastest time of the day, 16.51, was set by the men of the Scientific Instrument Makers. The mixed crew from the Tallow Chandlers (in their new cutter) completed the course in 17.34 followed by the ladies of the Scientific Instrument Makers (assisted by Dittons Skiff Club) in a time of 19.14



Once again the facilities at University of London Boat Club provided us with a great base to boat from and in which to hold our prize giving then watch the main event on television ~ hopefully they'll have a big screen for next year!

By now the plans for the 2012 Diamond Jubilee flotilla were being outlined and both the Pageant Master and the PLA asked if the **Tudor Pull** could be used as a rehearsal for 2012's event, who were we to refuse! On the sunny Sunday morning in May saw the crews from the TTRA and 'Jubilant' being joined at Hampton Court by boats from London Youth Rowing, Lower Thames RC and Extreme Rowing Ltd.



After the ceremony and taking of wine the Stela was paraded to 'Jubilant' for the paddle downstream.

At Richmond, where the bacon butties supplied by Richmond Bridge Boathouse were enjoyed by all, the advance party of 12 boats was joined by another 13 crews making this the largest flotilla we've ever had ~ wonderful!

After a short stop above Hammersmith to regroup the flotilla was joined by boats from the PLA, barges from the Dutch Barge Assoc., narrow boats from the Waterways Assoc. and canoes from the British Canoe Union ~ now the fun really started!

As we approached Battersea rail bridge a great peal of bells was heard, it took a few minutes before we realise this was coming from the lead barge carrying a massive sound system ~ all in the name of creating the atmosphere intended next year. It was wonderful as it drew peoples' attention to the river and for once we received cheers and salutes from the bank.

Everyone involved had a wonderful day, the river came to life with the colour of the boats, flags and uniforms and the sceptics were proved wrong as we all arrived together, on time at Tower Pier!

The Stela was handed in to the custody of the Governor of HM the Tower of London thus marking another successful Tudor Pull.



Our 'Blue Ribbon' event was next on the calendar ~ the **Admiral of the Port Challenge** with Sheriff Richard Sermon as the starter and presenting the prizes at Westminster Boating base. A wonderful entry of thirteen crews racing for three prizes in two divisions made for some very keen racing. There was some controversy over the lack of a tilt on the 'Jim Holt' resulting in a penalty of 10 seconds which changed the final results.

The Men's crew from the Watermen's Co. in 'Jim Holt' crossed the line in a time of 8.03 but their penalty pushed them back in to third place behind 'Lady Gillet' and the eventual winners the PLA in 'Penelope' in 8.04. The mixed event saw the Founders' Co. racing the Master Mariners' (Ahoy Ctre) with 'Belle founder' taking the trophy in 8.51. The four ladies crews battled it out with 'Water Forget Me Not' taking the prize in the time of 9.10.

Marvellous racing by all the crews followed by a splendid reception at the Westminster Boating Base, a definite must for the diary next year.

The **Port of London Challenge** was once again keenly raced by thirteen crews, 4 Ladies, 3 Mixed and 6 Men's. Unfortunately due to illness the Secretary had to hand over the organisational reigns to other volunteers on the day which lead to a little confusion in the boat numbering system. This didn't become apparent until the timers tried to identify the boats and their times. The results are therefore unclear and as such have not been released ~ for this the Secretary apologises and systems have already been put in place to ensure this does not occur in the future.

Safe to say there was some great racing and I'm reliably informed that everyone enjoyed the refreshments supplied by Mrs. Sec. on the cruise back downstream.

The Great River Race saw all of you out racing upstream in to the downpour. Well done to 'The Persuaders' in Buccaneer who won the Watermen's cutter trophy.

Earlier in the year the Chairman and I had been invited to a breakfast meeting by Alderman Wootton (Lord Mayor elect) and he had asked "I would like to arrive in the City on the day of the **Lord Mayor's Show** by rowing boat, can you arrange that?" after a split second to consider a reply, as the Pageant Master raised a sceptical eyebrow, we both said "Yes, of course!".

After over 160 years the Lord Mayor was to take to the river once more as part of the day of celebration following his election.

At exactly 8.30 on the 12th November Lord Mayor Alderman David Wootton walked down the pier at Westminster Boating Base to board 'Jubilant' as the crews of the escort of twenty five cutters, shallops, gigs and invasion boats gave a rousing three cheers.



The Port Health (City of London) launch 'Londinium III' led the flotilla off downstream closely followed by two Robin Hood 'Invasion' boats crewed by London Youth Rowing with the fully dressed cutters making a splash of colour through the grey mist of the morning with 'Jubilant' bringing up the rear in the time honoured fashion of the main parade.

The flotilla moved easily downriver on the ebb tide, so fast in fact that

they were in danger of arriving early, "Easy oars!" under Millennium Bridge and we were back on schedule.

On down under London Bridge to a salute only the Admiral of the Port of London receives ~ the bascules of Tower Bridge opening with a fireboat from the London Fire Brigade completing the picture. The crew of 'HMS Belfast' saluted as we passed and rowed on to RNR 'HMS President'.



'Jubilant' went alongside (on time), the Lord Mayor was piped ashore to the formal salute from the flotilla of "Toss Oars!", the band of the Royal Marines played and tots of rum were taken.

The Lord Mayor and various dignitaries were whisked away to their next duties for the parade whilst the flotilla came ashore to enjoy the hospitality of the RNR mess ~ bacon butties all round!

A fantastic morning paddle, enjoyed by all who took part. The Lord Mayor's Show has once again taken its rightful place on the River Thames and we've already been asked to do it all again next year ~ it'll soon be tradition!

What does 2012 hold for the TTRA?

Our AGM at the livery hall of the Master Mariners ~ HQS 'Wellington' ~ on Friday 30th January at 6.00pm.

The City of London Ergo Competition on 28th February in the Guildhall.

More details at www.lordmayorsappeal.org/events .

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant on Sunday 3rd June.

Plans are now fully developed for the largest flotilla the Thames has seen in centuries. I know you are all entered and should receive your invitation to take part in the New Year so prepare to spruce up your boats and lead the flotilla in to London.

Another date for your diary ~ Friday 27th July ~ the last day of the Olympic torch relay around the UK. We have been asked to organise a flotilla to escort the flame from Hampton Court Palace to Tower Bridge, that's easy I hear you say, it's the Tudor Pull! The plans have yet to be finalised so as soon as I know more I'll be in touch.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games.

No, I'm sorry they wouldn't accept cutter racing in the programme at Dorney. Those of you who have been lucky enough to get tickets ~ have a wonderful time; volunteers among you ~ may your feet not blister! the rest of you ~ may your eyes not become too square watching the TV.

There may even be other events to add to our usual racing calendar so don't eat and drink too much, keep up the training and we'll all meet on the river very soon.

Have a peaceful Christmas and here's to a wonderful New Year.

Malcolm

TTRA Secretary

Merry 
 *Christmas*