

# The 1927 Club

WALTON

## Walton Rowing Club's newsletter

### Callum sculls into the record books

Callum Gathercole has become the youngest person to row the Atlantic solo. He reached English Harbour in Antigua at 10 pm local time on 16th February, after rowing for 58 days and 15¼ hours from La Gomera.

Callum started rowing at Cranmore School in 2005 and was captain in 2008, when they won a silver medal in J13 quads at the Ball Cup regatta. In the same year he entered the Guildford Cycle challenge with his father Clive, completing the 80 mile course including all the main climbs in Surrey: quite a feat of endurance for a 13-year-old.



He then joined the junior squad at Walton, and quickly started winning J14 pots. In 2009 he represented Thames Upriver at the Junior Inter-Regionals with Harry Gaywood, Oli Knight and Ali Douglass; the following year he and Elliott Tarrant were very successful in J15 2x, as well as winning gold at National Schools in the quad with Oli and Andrew Bedford. At 15, the future Atlantic rower, with Harry, Ali and Andrew, broke the J17 quads record for the Boston Marathon. At 16, he represented Walton in the Fawley Cup at Henley and England in the



Callum and Elliott in action at JIRR in 2010

Home International at Strathclyde, and won two golds at the Nat Champs.

In 2012, with Morgan, Oli and Elliott, he set a new Schools Head record and—shadow of things to come?—won the singles trophy at the Boston Marathon and set a new junior record. He crowned his junior career by being selected for GB in 2013, winning gold at Munich Regatta but missing out on the A final at Trakai.

He then went to Bristol University to read aeronautical engineering, and represented Bristol at Henley in the Temple Challenge Cup the following year.

Since September Callum has taken a year out from his studies to prepare for his solo crossing. In 2012 Clive died of a brain tumour and Callum decided to raise money for brain tumour research and for the hospice that cared for Clive. Most of the crews rowing the Atlantic raise a few thousand pounds, or tens of thousands, for charity, but Callum and his team (mainly his mother Wendy) have raised a staggering £230,000—almost as much as all the other crews put together.

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Along the way he has faced headwinds that forced him to put down his sea-anchor for two days, a cargo ship which seemed not to notice him until the last moment, a leak which meant at one stage he was carrying an extra 150 kg of water, an oar that was snapped by a massive wave and – worst of all – his headphones breaking so that he couldn't listen to his music while he rowed!

The Club is proud to have supported Callum and his fund-raising efforts. If you haven't already donated, you can still do so via <http://www.justgiving.com/teams/waterbabies>.



On dry land after 58 days (photo Ted Martin)



MasE 4x (photo Ben Rodford Photography)

### Winter head-races

Meanwhile, back at Walton, the Club had a very successful day at the **Silver Sculls**, with 11 wins ranging from J14 to Masters E. **Kingston** "only" saw 6 wins, including the J17 coxed four which won the novice event. At the **Vets Head** we had wins from the E4x (Neil, Mike B, Steve, Glyn), F4+ (Roger, Mike E, Terry, Dave c Sarah) and Mxd C 4x (Ali, Graham, Richard L, Emily).

At **Teddington** there were wins from Aidan, Ethan, Oscar, Patrick and Jacques in the J14 quad, Rowan and Hal in the J14 double, Dave and Mike in their Masters E pair and Michael, Vince, Nick and Andy in the Masters E quad.

**Walton Small Boats Head** took place on 12th December and had 660 entries. Sadly, after two divisions had taken place, and most of the crews were already on the water for Division 3, the umpiring team made the decision to suspend all further racing because of the strong winds — a big disappointment for the crews as well as the organising committee. Medals were awarded on the basis of the two divisions that had completed, and crews in divisions 3 and 4 received a full refund. The Club's eight winners included J14, J15, J16, J17 and MasC crews; we also had two Walton-grown winners racing for Pangbourne Col-



J14 quad: winners at Hampton

lege: Rory Harris in J18 1x and Katie and Nina Giambone in WJ18 2x.

Weybridge Winter Head was cancelled, and the weather forecast for **Hampton** was also for very strong winds. Fortunately the event was able to run, although times were very fast and the river was back to red boards by the Monday. Aidan, Hal, Oscar, Patrick and Jacques won the J14 quads event and Tom and Ardan the J15 doubles.

The following day, at the **Hyne Cup** race against Weybridge, Walton won 16 categories, the Hyne Cup and the Allwork Cup for Novice eights (with a junior crew). The Murtough Cup (for IM3 eights) was declared a dead heat, while Weybridge won the Henry Stebbing Cup for women's eights on handicap.

### South East Indoor Rowing Champs

Brian Martin took Cranmore, Danes Hill and Walton contingents to this event in Abingdon. Ardan won his age-group (for his school) for the second year running, while Danes Hill and Cranmore between them took the first six places in the J13 individual event. The first- and second-placed rowers are already Walton members, so we look forward to their joining our squads full-time when they change schools.

### Forthcoming events

The Club will have entries at Kingston eights Head and at the Schools, Womens, Veterans and main HERR races at Putney. The juniors are also looking forward to repeating the Club's recent success at the Junior Sculling Head at Dorney in March.

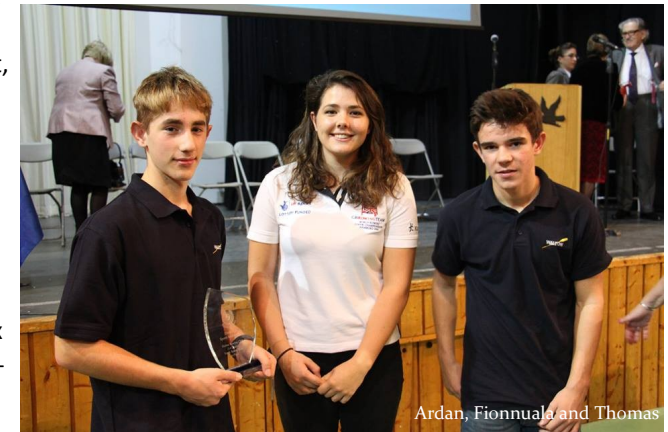
Plans for the Regatta season are currently being formulated, but it's good news to see a growing and keen women's squad, which is being organised by Carol Cornell with help from Lizzie Gill. Carol will be the overall Women's Masters Squad coordinator, while Lizzie will focus on coordinating training and racing for intermediates and novices.

### GB squads

Angus Groom was the surprise (well, not to him!) winner of the men's senior trials and has set himself up strongly

for selection for Rio, alongside Mat Tarrant.

At the senior and U23 trials in Boston earlier this month, Morgan Bolding was in the winning heavyweight pair, while Oli Knight, who has recently recovered from illness, came 14th. Ali Douglass was third in the lightweight singles, Annie Withers sixteenth in the women's singles and Katy Denham ninth in Women's lightweight. Morgan now hopes to be invited to attend the Olympic squad time-trials at Caversham next month, where Mat and Angus have already booked their places



Ardan, Fionnuala and Thomas

### Elmbridge SPOY

Ardan and Thomas were awarded the Elmbridge Youth Sports Team of the Year trophy for 2015, beating many strong teams from sports clubs and schools around the Borough. Star guest at the ceremony was Fionnuala Gannon, who represented GB in the JW4- at Rio in August and is the daughter of Walton member Ciaran Gannon.

### Boat-namings

In December we named three boats after girls who have gone on from Walton to represent their universities, and in Annie Withers' case GB at U23 level. Katy Denham was unable to attend (she was trialling that weekend!) but Hannah Traylen also named "her" boat.

On 14th February we named an eight after Simon Mephram, who suffered a fatal heart attack while racing for the Club at Molesey Vets Head exactly ten years earlier.





And on Sunday 21st February a coxless four will be named after Dick Thompson, club stalwart for over 40 years during which time he was captain and secretary. The President, Ken Roberts, will also be holding his annual drinks party that day, and all Club members and parents are encouraged to attend.

### Social events

A successful Christmas party (with a junior focus) and Burns Night supper were held at the Club, and Brian Martin is organising a raclette evening on Saturday 27th February—please sign up on the board at the Club.

### New boats ordered

Since we started the rebuilding programme six years ago the Club has had to restrict its boat-buying; we have been fortunate that Neil has been able to secure some very good deals on second-hand boats which have met our most immediate needs. But we do now have two new boats on order (a Stämpfli quad and lightweight double) and look forward to receiving these in the spring.

### Boating and landing

There are several times in the week when the landing-stage is very busy and queues are inevitable. All crews are asked to check their boats and adjust stretchers on

trestles BEFORE going afloat at these peak times. And after landing, please lift the boat off the water and onto trestles to wash it down as quickly as possible.

### New committee members

The Club AGM will take place on 17th March. The committee is keen to recruit fresh blood as most of its members have been on the committee for ten or twenty years, whereas well over half the Club joined within the last five years. If you are interested, please speak to any committee member.

### Member survey

It is over six years (just before the rebuilding) since we surveyed members as to their needs and the extent to which the Club meets those needs. Members will shortly receive an email with a link to a very short (one page) survey; please do complete this and help us to meet your ongoing needs.

