



Making Waves

The LWRC Quarterly Newsletter

Vol. 3, No. 4

Late Autumn 2017

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Lake Washington Takes on Boston

A Coxswain's View

For a coxswain, steering a boat at the Head of the Charles is as much a rite of passage as it is a measure of skill. I've met coxswains who boast of their repertoire of experience by the number of times they've raced on the Charles and which boats they've guided. As with any race, the goal is to be the fastest boat on the course; but from the stories I'd heard, videos I'd watched, maps I'd studied, and my first encounter with that twisting waterway, this is as much a coxswain's race as any other.

My first year as a coxswain at Seattle University, I never steered a head-racing course—straight lines were all I knew. From my first day in that ninth seat, I was told that steering a straight course is the number-one job of the coxswain. This is certainly true for spring racing, when coxswains are often seat-raced on their ability to hold an unwavering course. As a sophomore, I coxed a bow-loaded four in my first head race, Seattle's Head of the Lake. For the first time, I understood that being able to judge the best way to take a turn and gain



LWRC's men's 40+ coxed four placed 15th out of 28 boats.
Christian Roth (stroke), Jordan Tigani, Mike Rucier, Andy Rees, and Brooke McCulloch (cox) (Photo courtesy of Row2K)

speed from it was at times more important than holding the rudder straight.

Jump to five years later, and I'm back in a bow-loaded four on the other side of the country, with four guys whose combined years of rowing experience more than doubled my own age. Fours were not my favorite boats: I preferred

Takes on Boston, *continued*

eights because they're fast and you can see everything happening both ahead and behind the boat. However, this four was different: it became an opportunity for me to push myself as a coxswain once again and help build a boat that could really accomplish something on the water.

Leading up to the Charles, we trained three to four days a week before the sun came up, often dodging fishing nets along our waterways. We raced the Tail of the Lake, changed our lineup, redesigned strategies, re-rigged boats, and ultimately became the fastest crew we could be. October 21 came up on us fast—within the same week, we rowed our own Pocock in the dark and then one of Harvard's Resolutes in the sunshine. We brought our own oars—having the blue-and-white blades was not only a familiar sight for us but also a way of separating ourselves from the other crews on the water. We may have been in a borrowed boat on unfamiliar waters, but we were still *Lake Washington*.

The day before our race, we did a row-through of the course. I found the turns less intimidating than people had built them up to be, and my guys found their rhythm in this unfamiliar boat. Later that day, I met up with **Susan Kinne** to walk along the course together so she could bestow her experiential wisdom upon me. As we walked, we were joined by more familiar faces from LWRC: **Janet Walker** and **KC Dietz** walked with us to the Weld Boathouse, where we discovered pictures of KC with the lightweight teams she had coached from 1984–86.

Saturday: Race day. We had plenty of time to collect ourselves before heading to the course for our afternoon race. While eating breakfast, we turned on the live stream of the



Joan Linse, Susan Kinne, KC Dietz, Peggy Johnston

races and saw Janet, a Lone Ranger in her single, coming around the final big turn of the race. We left for the course, getting there just in time to see KC and Susan in their women's four, rowing under the name Early Lights—a play on their earlier days as lightweight rowers and their current practice of training on the water during the first light of day. **Andy Rees, Christian Roth, Mike Rucier**, and I continued to walk along the vendors' tents, stopping in for a quick hello to our friends at Pocock Racing Shells, before making our way to the Newell Boathouse and meeting up with our final oarsman, **Jordan Tigani**.

As pre-race nerves set in, I assigned jobs to keep the crew busy: checking over the boat again, measuring the spread

“We may have been in a borrowed boat on unfamiliar waters, but we were still *Lake Washington*.”

and pitch, tightening top nuts and checking foot stretchers. Finally it was time for us to launch. Among a dockful of crimson-clad Harvard supporters, and sporting navy and white with our blue blades, we launched. Nobody was there to wish us luck, but we were ready. Rowing to the start line was almost effortless; we found our stride easily, and every stroke proved that the work we had put in just might be enough. It was unseasonably warm, the sun was high, and the water was calm. But by the time our race was queued to start, a slight head wind had begun to build.

We started fast, found a good stride, and were roaring toward the first bridge—only to be forced down to a paddle to avoid a collision between two boats under the bridge. Restart, twenty to get it back, and we were on again. I kept my eye on the crew ahead of us that had

caused the collision; we began to close the gap between ourselves and the boats that had started ahead of us. The second and third bridges went by easily, a straight shot between the two of them. The fourth bridge, the Weeks, lies on a turn, and with this one it all comes down to the approach. I lined us up, had all the points the experts had told me to have, our line was good. Less than a length ahead of us was the crew who had caused the earlier collision, and their line was going to set them up for another collision under the Weeks. Again we powered down, a call no coxswain likes to make and no rower likes to hear. Constantly reassuring the guys that we were fine and this would get us a better time, we avoided the collision and got a line

“This feels like the shortest race I have ever done. I do not know where the meters went, because it felt like we were on the course for two, maybe three, minutes. Something was always happening....”

through the Anderson Bridge. After Anderson, we had 250 meters to get ahead and take the inside line for the big turn to port before the finish. Closing in on the collision-prone crew, I wanted to pass them—we all wanted to destroy them before the turn. I pointed our bow to their port side, called a ten for length and a ten for swing and we were walking. The inside was ours through the big turn, passing two more crews along the way. Jordan and Andy turned us around the final corner under the last bridge and we sling-shotted around the final bend and set our sights

for the finish line.

This feels like the shortest race I have ever done. I do not know where the meters went, because it felt like we were on the course for two, maybe three, minutes. Something was always happening, and I’ve never been pushed to make

such strategic calls and decisions for my boat so quickly. I’ve never had more fun steering a boat, and I’m incredibly happy I was in the boat I was in. The whole process leading up to this race had me feeling incredibly lucky to be a part of LWRC. I trusted my boat because I knew that they knew how to put it all down when it mattered, and they wanted a good time as much as I wanted to give them a course that would help them do it.

Rowers often thank me for coxing; it is all part of the decorum of sweep rowing. But this time, more than ever, I want to thank my boat. I want to thank Christian for always having a subtly cheerful attitude and having such ease in holding to a long stroke rate. I want to thank Jordan for

“It seems I’m constantly telling him what to do, and he always does it.”

always taking every stroke like it is the stroke that will make the difference between a first- or second-place finish—and for letting me cox him after having been one of his coaches for the past two years. It seems I’m constantly telling him what to do, and he always does it. I thank Mike for switching sides only once throughout our training process and for always having an opinion on how the workouts went. And last, but absolutely not least, I want to thank Andy for being the best bow I have ever had in a four. Throughout the race, Andy

was my eyes to the stern and did an incredible job of letting me know what was going on behind us so I could integrate that with what was ahead to get us to the end. This boat was Lake Washington at its finest, and I am happy to have been part of it.

—Brooke McCulloch



Editor’s Note

There’s a lot of excitement in rowing, as you’ll see from reading Brooke McCulloch’s riveting account of coxing the LWRC men’s four down Boston’s Head of the Charles course. Rachel Wong profiles Brooke, revealing some of the factors that contribute to successful coxing. Read these articles, and you’ll appreciate why a good cox is so vital to racing success.

In her profile of Natalie McCarthy, Tara Morgan brings us up to date on adaptive rowing. Natalie, a member of Team USA, participated in the mixed double in Masters Worlds.

True to its role as a nationally respected rowing club, LWRC also blazes the trail when it comes to innovation. Check out our article on constructing a triple!

—Roberta Scholz



Designer’s Note

Making Waves is meant to be read on-screen. Printable on letter-size paper at 94% size, it is laid out in monitor proportions (landscape), text is large, and underlined links are live. Use the full-screen setting in Adobe Acrobat Reader for the most legible view.

—Suze Woolf



Head of the Lake: It Takes a Village... ...Or a Rowing Club

A veritable army of volunteers ensures the success of our Head of the Lake Regatta each November.

For 38 years, LWRC and UW Crew have collaborated to host the Head of the Lake Regatta. It is a prodigious undertaking, commanding the effort of most of LWRC's membership, much of UW Crew's staff, most of our region's available USRA referees, and the cooperation of numerous other clubs.

It is not just boat races. This effort typically provides 200 lasagna dinners, 400 pancake breakfasts, and 1,000 pieces of merchandise to a sellout entry list that has now grown to 500 boats and over 2,500 competitors.

I set out to write an article about the people who make this event possible but soon realized that the scope exceeds what can be usefully contained in one article.

Hence this teaser for a series of indeterminate length and scope that will address the human beings behind Head of the Lake over this past decade. You will meet **Rachel Alexander** (and perhaps some of her predecessors); **Michael Callahan**, head of UW Crew; **Mike Rucier** and the buoy gang; **Dave Rutherford** and the launch crew; **Rachel Le Mieux** and the referees; **Liz Caluori** and Cafe Veloce; the lasagna-dinner crew; **Susan Kinne**; **Janet Walker** and the entry wranglers; timers; packet stuffers; medal makers; and

some of the other 200 Lake Washington Rowing Club volunteers that make this happen.

Stay tuned!

—**John Alberti**



aves — Late Autumn 2017



Setting up the day before. A sudden turn in the weather made for big challenges at Head of the Lake on November 5. Due to the cold temperature and brisk winds, Seattle Harbor Patrol advised canceling races at 9:30 a.m. Despite general disappointment, virtually all rowers and officials agreed that this was the best call. Safety first, as always!

LWRC veteran John Alberti served as chief timer for Head of the Lake from roughly 1997 through 2015, with a few years off in between. He has seen first-hand how truly vital volunteers are for the success of this annual regatta, the largest head race west of the Mississippi.

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HOTL cont.



Clockwise from top left: Palo Alto junior rowers de-rig their boats before heading home. Top right: Danielle Ellingston. Lower right: Perry Olix keeps warm on race day. Lower middle: Wispy Runde, dressed for cold weather! Lower left: A few rowers were treated for hypothermia.

Also check out our many sponsors at
<http://lakewashingtonrowing.com/home/hotl/hotl-sponsors/>

New Shoes on the Dock

Runner Finds Her Groove at LWRC



*Above: on the water
Top right: Leslie and Iggy*

Lesley Feldman grew up in the suburbs of New Jersey. After high school she moved around a lot, first earning a BFA at the College for Fine Arts at the University of Michigan, with a concentration in graphic design. After graduation, she landed a design job in New York City, where she worked for a year; then she lived in Germany for a year and returned to NYC for another year. Lesley lived in Seattle from 1998 to 2010, then moved to Paris for four and a half years and resettled in Seattle in 2014 with Iggy, her French mini wiener dog. She currently works independently as a graphic designer. One of her many jobs is designing all the materials for the annual Obliteride race, a fundraiser for cancer research at Fred Hutch.

While at the University of Michigan, she considered becoming a coxswain but couldn't stomach getting up at 4:30

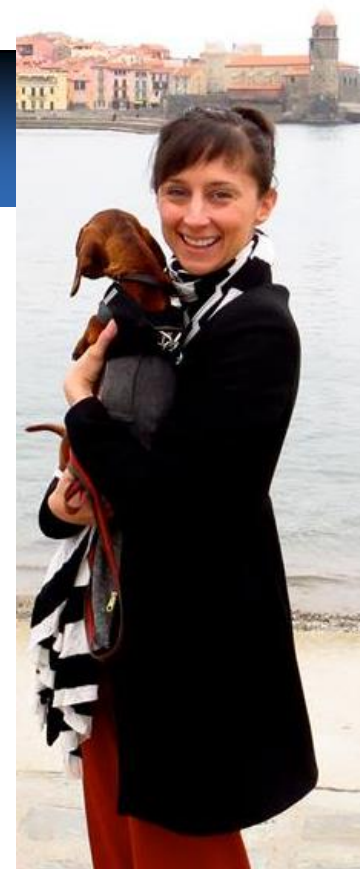
a.m. Until recently she was a casual runner, but injuries made it difficult for her to continue. She lives near the LWRC boathouse and frequently walks her dog in the area. One day, Lesley realized that rowing might be a good replacement for running because it is low-impact on the knees and spine. In addition, she always loved being on the water.

Lesley started with Learn to Row, then moved to Next Strokes with **Hugh Lade**.

"He kicked my ass and taught me so much about form and technique." She then added rowing with the Mixed Masters and in Theresa's Evening League program. Due to the weather, Lesley is not currently rowing in a coached program; however, she has been rowing with **Marilyn Goo's** Second Shift group. These women have been really helpful with the tips and tricks of "small lady" rowing.

Lesley states that everyone she's met at LWRC has been helpful, supportive, and patient when she feels she has no idea what she's doing. She is completely hooked on rowing now—it's the best part of her week!

—**Joanie Harr**



Adaptive Rowing

This fall in Sarasota, Florida, the FISA World Championships featured the best rowers from around the globe, including LWRC alum and blind para-rower **Natalie McCarthy** competing in the Mixed PR3 2X* with para-athlete **Russell Gernaat**. (This is a mixed-gender 2X rowed by individuals requiring adaptation but who



Natalie McCarthy and Russell Gernaat row a mixed double at Worlds

have use of their legs, trunk, and arms.)

McCarthy rowed and trained out of LWRC from 2009–2012 and intermittently since, after starting in rowing at Pacific Lutheran University in 2005. Twelve years after her first day on the water, I asked Natalie how she would compare that learning day to her final race on the world stage.

“Strangely, these experiences are not that different. My first day on the water and crossing the finish line at the championship were both exhausting and challenged me to find limits for myself that I did not know existed. Both were rewarding and overwhelming.”

As with every rower, the experience of improving and learning can be a mixed bag. What were some of her

“crabs” along the way? “Oh, there were hundreds—literal and metaphorical crabs!” She goes on to relate a story from 2012 of being cut for the fifth time from the US National Team, after having picked up and moved to Oklahoma City to train alongside athletes with the same goal. “It was hard: new place, new people ... I made it work and got into the best shape of my life to that point, and I was more successful and had more opportunities than I’d previously had. It was finally all worth it, and I would not change that decision for anything. Sometimes, it is making those massive lifestyle changes that it takes to really achieve a big goal.”

Does she prefer the 2K or head-race distances? “Competition is fun, and ultimately, I am on the water because I love the sport. I love head racing because I love the strategy and the time

you have to pace yourself and think through your next move. I love that if you make a mistake, you have thousands of strokes to make up for that. Sprinting? Well, it is very exciting and fast-paced. You really have to be comfortable with the idea of pushing your boundaries.” As for post-Worlds, McCarthy says: “I do love the sport of rowing

Adaptive Rowing, continued

and I always will. I'm not quite ready to hang up my oars forever." She will serve on the Athlete Advisory Council for the US Olympic Committee as the paralympic representative, pursue a law degree from Seattle University, and fit in a wedding with fiancé Alden Byrd, also a former LWRC rower.

—Tara Morgan



Courtesy of USRowing

Natalie rows for Team USA

Thanks from Team Seize The Oar!

From the entire team and staff at Seize The Oar, we want to say a huge thank-you for your welcome during our stay in September. While based at LWRC, we housed

our boats and equipment, ran three practices with the complete squad, and raced in Row for the Cure and Tail of the Lake with great success. Special thanks to **Janet Walker** and **KC Dietz** as well as to **Amy Hildebrandt** in the office, **Alex Parkman**, **Martha's Moms**, and **all the LWRC members** for sharing their storage and dock space with us.

Next up for Seize The Oar is a fully loaded season of winter training at our new partner training studio, Crossfit RE: Columbia City, prepping a fully inclusive NW Ergomania team—including a junior racing team. If you or someone you know wants to join our squad for NW Ergomania, or you'd like to be a team sponsor for the event, contact Coach Tara at coachtara@seizetheoar.com.



The Perfect Stroke

Asked to describe the perfect stroke, Natalie replies:

Well, I am not sure it exists. If it does exist, it is certainly not a phenomenon I encounter very frequently, so I may not provide the best description. I would say the perfect stroke is long through the water and initiates with the legs to allow for that suspension. There is a smooth swing out of bow, and it is very quiet. I often think the best strokes are sneaky and stealthy, not loud and clunky. All that said, any stroke where you feel confident and like you can really put some power behind it, is probably good enough. I have had the great fortune to row with some very amazing athletes, and I think everyone has a slightly different version of their perfect stroke; so whatever feels good and goes fast is my version of perfect.

—Tara Morgan

206-684-4071 Harbor Patrol

The number is posted on the bulletin board in the boathouse.

Member Profile

Brooke McCullough: Consummate Multi-Tasker

Brooke McCulloch, one of LWRC's youngest members, first joined in the summer of 2015 and has been an involved member in our community ever since. She coaches the Mixed Masters group alongside **Amy Hildebrandt** and performs various behind-the-scenes duties in the office, such as logging float tests and sending out the eBulletins. For the past two years, she has also designed the posters and managed the social media accounts for Head of the Lake.

One of Brooke's favorite aspects about the club is the independence that its culture allows for. "The structure of the club gives members the freedom to do what they want, and I love that. As a coach, I feel supported by the club in anything I want to do to help my group; all the resources I need to be successful are always on hand." On any given day, you can find Brooke assuming just about any role out on the water—coach, rower, or coxswain.

Brooke's rowing endeavors aren't limited to the Seattle area, either—she first experienced racing with a masters team when she re-

turned to her home state of Colorado to cox with Rocky Mountain Rowing Club in the summer of 2014. She cites this experience as being pivotal in her perspective on masters rowing, saying, "After that summer, I knew I was going to keep up with the sport after I graduated." This past summer, she reunited with RMRC to cox their men's 4+ at Masters Regionals in Vancouver.

Brooke's position as committed member and employee of the club provides her with a unique perspective for observing changes in the culture at LWRC as well as helping to put positive changes into motion. Going forward, she hopes to see a more structured team develop with the help of the coaches and the competitive rowers. Having started her rowing career as a Division I athlete with Seattle University's women's rowing team, Brooke says she loves the competitive aspect of our sport and does her best to encourage an ambitious racing environment at LWRC.

Although switching from collegiate racing to a masters team is a big adjustment, Brooke says she has thoroughly enjoyed the freedom of rowing without certain expectations: "I

found that I loved the masters environment and

I could really fall in love with the sport without the pressure that comes with being a collegiate athlete." Brooke's favorite memory of racing as part of the LWRC team was this year in Boston, coxing the Men's 4+ at Head of the Charles.

While the club still has a solid foundation of tradition dating back to its founding, younger members like Brooke help the club continue to progress and make improvements. It's safe to say that LWRC would not be where it is without members like Brooke working to make the club and its community stronger every year.

—Rachel Wong



Equality

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the first-ever women's national rowing championship. **Barbara Morry Fraumeni** represented Lake Washington Rowing club in that historic event, held at Green Lake. Read about it at <http://archive.usrowing.org/news/details/2015/06/15/a-moment-in-the-history-of-women-s-rowing-in-the-u.s.>



Happy Birthday to Us! This year, Lake Washington Rowing Club celebrates its 60th anniversary. Enjoy!



Regatta Captain

What a Year!

Well, folks, it's the end of another busy and wonderful year at LWRC, and our sixtieth one at that! I have had so much fun in my first year as club captain. We've had amazing representation at races, from Masters Regionals to Sound Rowers races to scrimmages amongst local clubs on our water. I have seen 22-year-olds racing with 70+-year-olds and dads racing with their daughters at costume rows and on Green Lake.

Thanks to amazing fundraiser efforts, we acquired a slew of new boats, keeping Sow's Ear busy as they were tuned up and outfitted. To make room for these new boats, we did some tidying up and organizing, and we increased our volunteer efforts to keep our boathouse in fighting shape. We opened our boathouse for National Learn to Row Day and managed to fill up all our summer learn-to-row classes that day!

Last, we decided to shake up the way in which we use our upstairs space, and an unofficial "fun committee" spearheaded efforts to host more social events for our members. Looking back over this recap, I realize that "busy" doesn't truly capture all the activity of 2017.

To wrap up, I just want to say one last **big thank-you** to everyone. You are the ones that keep our club running and make it a wonderful place to be. See you in 2018!

—**Teddi McGuire, LWRC captain**

And a huge thank-you to Teddi for all her hard work. Many members have commented on the great job she did.



Sow's Ear: Creating a Silk Purse

Innovative Ingenuity at LWRC

Quads are a joy to row: they zip along and are easier to balance than other types of shells. To hear the steady hum of water sliding against its longer hull (known by some rowers as “quadraphonic sound”) has no comparison. Four scullers with oars in unison—it doesn’t get much better.

But what happens when one of the quartet forgets to set the alarm and doesn’t show up? In most clubs, the remaining three will usually take out a quad and remove the two seat, transforming it into a sort-of triple. Such a row doesn’t quite rise to the ideal pleasure of rowing with a crew of four, however.

Fortunately, we have other options here at LWRC. Read on for a description of how we became a pace-setter for creating that curious craft known as a triple. —Editor

Rowing Legend **Frank Cunningham** moved to Lakeside School in 1968 and helped its growing rowing program build a boat-house in 1971. Poking around the UW’s Conibear Shell House, he found several broken and unusable boats. Husky coach **Dick Erickson** told him to take them. Cunningham had his eyes on one of them in particular, a lovely Pocock coxed pair. He noted, “It seemed a waste to put a coxswain in there. I measured the boat and found that the cockpit was within three-quarters of an inch of what we needed to add another seat. So, I thought, ...



*Awaiting their fate in
the Sow's Ear*

**Ingenuity,
continued**

let's make this a triple." It turned out to be very fast and immediately popular.

Enter **Susan Kinne**, LWRC member skilled at boat repair and who runs the Sow's Ear Boat Works at the nether end of the LWRC boathouse. She came up with the idea of putting two damaged and truncated boats together to make a triple. Taking over the labor from Cunningham, she built three such shells from salvaged fiberglass hulls. **Bill Tytus**, owner of Pocock Racing Shells, has embraced the idea and allowed her to take old broken boats from the Pocock "boneyard." Kinne describes her work as akin to dressmaking: the hulls rarely match up, so she must make darts and gussets so that they will join together neatly.

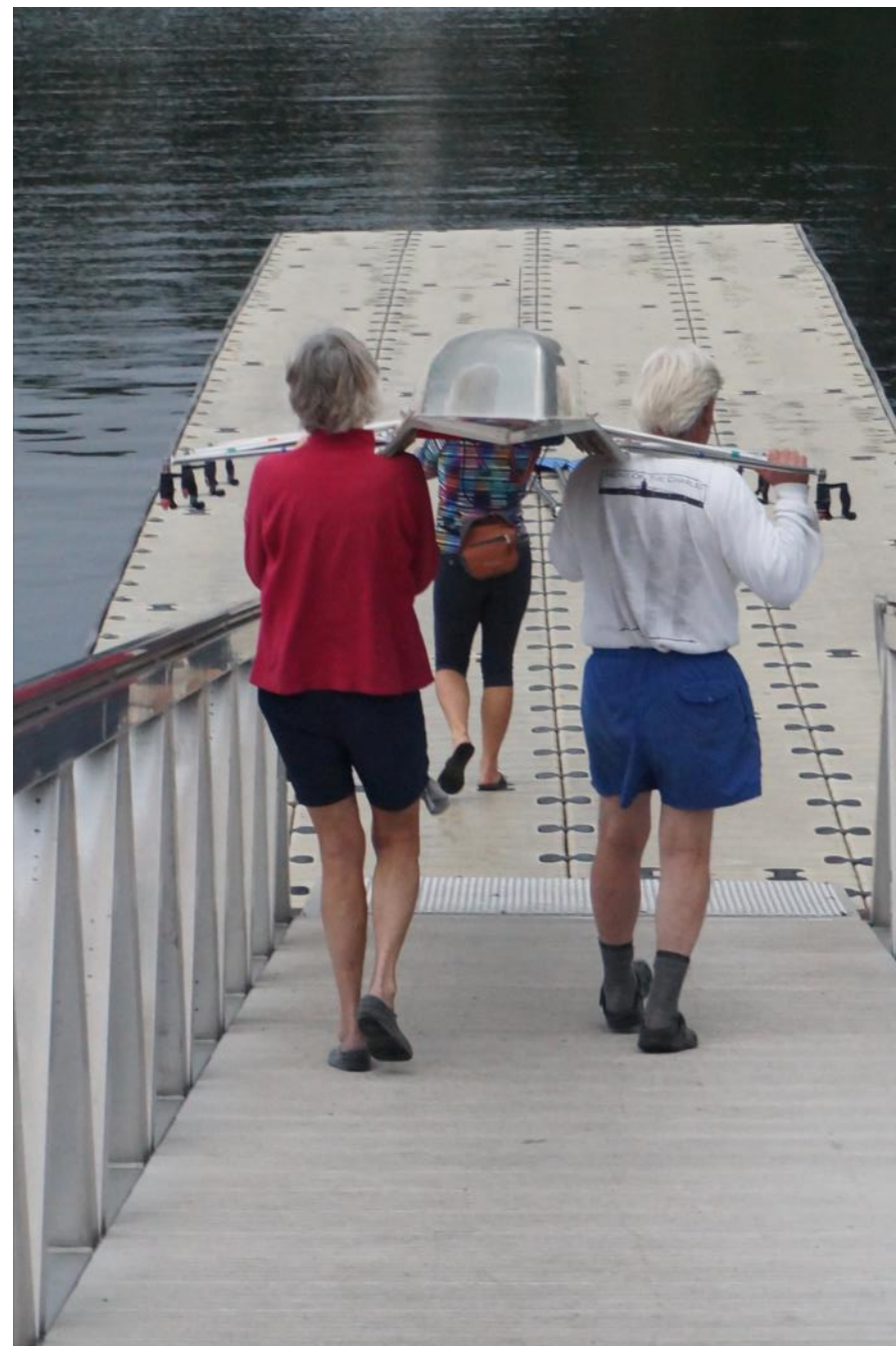
Kinne explains that the triple is not only a great boat to have on hand when someone doesn't show up, but it's also ideal for training novice scullers, who can be positioned between two experienced scullers. Here at LWRC, these boats are taken out several times a week and afford us the uncommon experience of being on the water as a threesome.

*The above description is adapted with permission from **Andy Anderson's** "Triple the Fun," appearing in the October 2012 issue of Rowing magazine.*

LWRC member **Dennis Williams** comments further:

Frank built that first triple, the *Cerberus*, in the 1980s from a bow-coxed cedar Pocock pair. It now has a crack in the hull that will require a time-consuming

Susan Kinne, KC Dietz, and Dave Rutherford take the Phoenix out for triple the fun.



Ingenuity, continued

repair. The Sow's Ear workshop is currently building a replacement wooden triple from a cedar coxed pair that **Susan Kinne** "got from a fellow in Boston, in trade for a copy of Frank's book." **John Robinson** is at work on it, and it will use the original custom-built riggers from Pocock.

LWRC has two additional triples, the *Lazarus* (from two heavyweight doubles, the *Rosencrantz* and the *Guildestern*) and the *Phoenix* (from a bow-coxed four). Susan and the Sow's Ear crew are working on a new project: joining the bow of the *Scud* with the stern half of the *Peregrine*. They also built a triple out of two doubles "for three guys in Atlanta."

Susan notes that two triples, originally from Canada, currently reside in Port Townsend. They may well have been among the triples in the Vancouver (BC) Rowing Club that originally inspired Frank Cunningham years ago. In the early twentieth century, VRC raced these boats regularly.

I posed this question to Susan: Do you think that a hermaphrodite triple—with a bow seat for sculling/steering and the stern pair rigged for sweep—will ever become part of our unusual menagerie of vessels? Her reply: It could be done, but this configuration might work better with a four—with the three seat left open.



Above: Head of the Lake 2005
Left: Rigging a triple (Graham Hill photo)

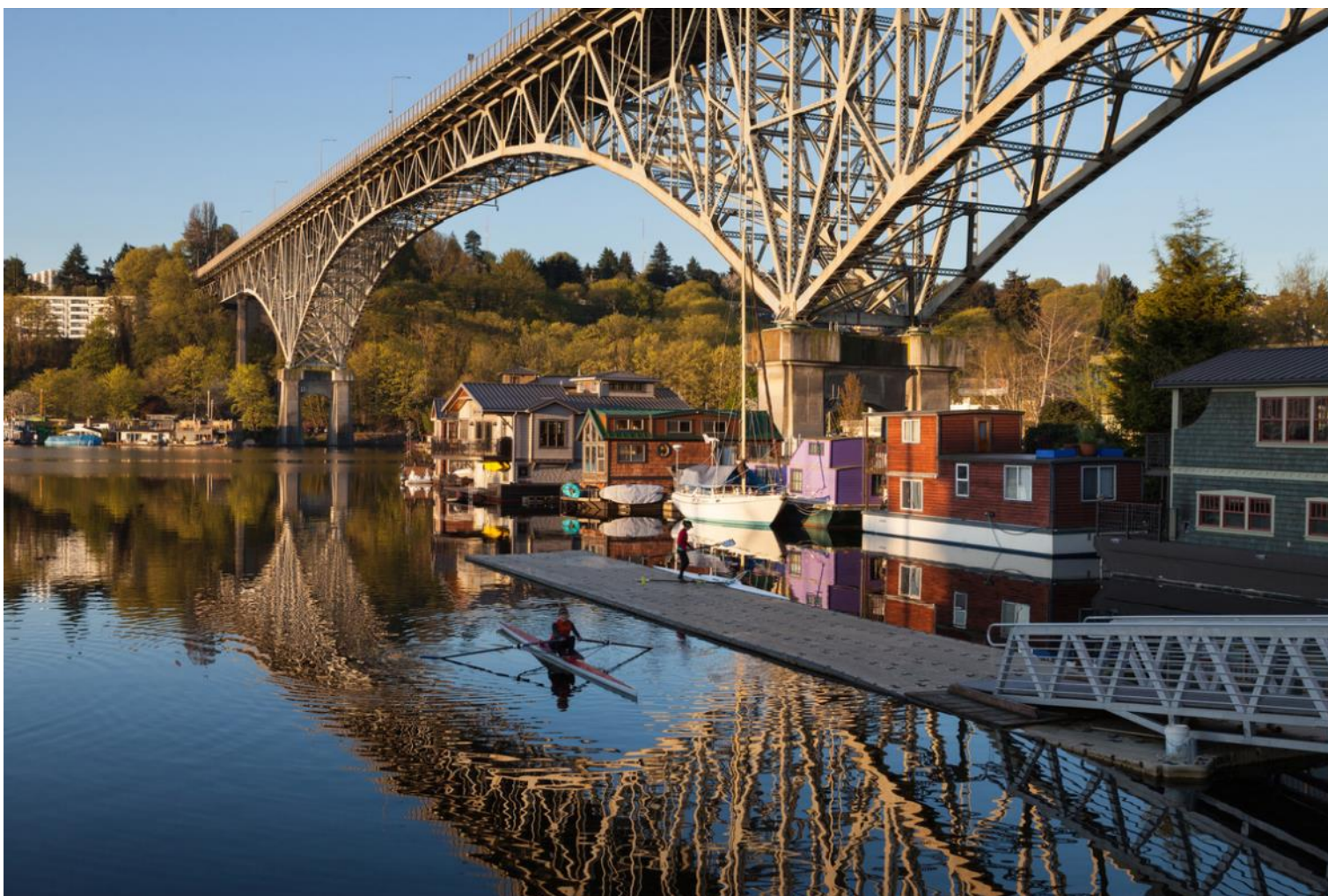


Pass the Word

Has an LWRC member done something worth recognizing, on or off the water? Help us share the news!

lwrcnewsletter@comcast.net

We Do Remember Summer...



*Bunny
Schmidley
(Judee
La Scola
photo)*

Check out our programs!

<http://lakewashingtonrowing.com/home/programs>