



# Making Waves

The LWRC Quarterly

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## 1963 PAN AMERICAN GAMES

# LWRC Rowers Head to São Paulo, Brazil

### 1962: Qualifying

The 1962 U.S. Rowing Championships and the 1963 U.S. Pan American Games Trials were held at the same time in the summer of 1962 in Buffalo, New York. This allowed eastern U.S. crews enough time to prepare for them, since the bodies of water they trained on were usually frozen over until March.

The winners of these championships would not only qualify for the Pan Am Games the following year, they would also represent the U.S. in the World Rowing Championships in Lucerne, Switzerland, later in 1962. Since we would need to pay our own way to Lucerne, we did not wish to go.

LWRC entered a four with, a four without, and a pair without in these Nationals—winning in all three categories. I was in the four without. The next Pan American Games (a quadrennial event) would be held in May 1963 in São Paulo, Brazil.



*(Photo courtesy Geza Berger)*

### 1963: Training

The LWRC four without (**Chuck Bower, Chuck Holtz, Ted Nash, and Geza Berger**, above) got permission from UW freshman crew coach **Dick Erickson** to join their workouts. Our four without would typically put our bow at the bow of the nearest freshman eight and never let them pass us. Neither would we try to beat them, since that would probably cause problems for the coach and ruin a good thing.

The weekday-afternoon turnouts took place mostly on wide-open Lake Washington and were subject to the characteristic wind and waves. We were pushed hard all over the lake by the freshman crews, giving us just great workouts.

**“We were in really great rowing condition.”**



The U.S. pair without (**Daniel Watts, Robert Clayton**) won silver, and the four with (**Roy Rubin, Gene Phillips, Walter Wiberg, William Flint, Bernard Horton**) got bronze. The pair with (**Ed Ferry, Conn Findlay, Charles Blitzer**; all formerly LWRC) got gold in Brazil. In Lucerne, the pair with finished fifth and in Tokyo (1964 Olympics) won gold. Ferry, Findlay, and Blitzer were former LWRC members who rowed for Stanford Crew Association at the time of these events. The pair without, four with, and four without were active LWRC members.

*(Photo: Creative Commons)*

For example: Two-mile time trials were held on a regular basis, starting from the I-90 bridge to Madison Park beach—and, once, all the way to the Laurelhurst light. On that race to Laurelhurst, things began to go dark on me at the end, and I was seeing stars. I felt I might be on the way to passing out. The frosh, however, never passed us.

### **1963: The Games**

The U.S. contingent of athletes, coaches, and support staff assembled in Miami and then took charter flights to São Paulo. Brazil had built a Pan American Games Village for all the countries involved in these Games. The accommodations were nice, and the weather was very pleasant throughout the duration of the competition.

Our shells, however, were stuck on a ship in a Brazilian port because the longshoremen were on strike. Travel time, and time spent in Miami, amounted to about five days by now—with no rowing workouts. So we decided to run

laps—and stairs—in the Village to get some kind of exercise. Our shells arrived a couple of days after we did, but by now it had been seven days without rowing—and competition was starting in another day or two.

Shortly before our own final, the members of my crew were sitting on a bench near a long dock at about the 1,000-meter mark. A group of Argentine rowers at the end of the

dock began to cheer wildly, since Argentina was winning and the U.S. was in third place in the coxed four race. Walking off the dock past us after the race had ended, they acted very disrespectfully toward us. We knew that Argentina was in our upcoming race, so we decided to do whatever it took to be ahead by the time we passed this dock.

Those hard workouts with the UW frosh on Lake Washington were a big reason why we felt confident despite our inability to practice on water for several days: we were in really great rowing condition. This gave us the confidence to decide on a very risky racing plan for the finals—to go for broke the first 1,000 meters, knowing we would still have enough left in the final 1,000 meters to hold off any challengers. The plan worked perfectly.

When our race came, we rowed as high and as hard as we possibly could, probably 38 to 40 strokes per minute, for about 1,000 meters until we reached that dock. We were ahead, probably by open water, but there was no wild cheering from the dock! We took it down to 32 to 34 strokes per minute and were able to maintain our lead at that rate. Then, with about 400 meters to go, we were greeted with loud cheering from the crowd in the bleachers: “BRA-ZIL! BRA-ZIL!” The four without from Brazil had really come alive and was closing on us. So we went into our sprint and won the gold. Argentina came in third, behind Brazil.

The rowing competition was held on a reservoir outside of São Paulo at an elevation of 2,500 feet. We did not have enough practice time to get used to rowing at that altitude. Although I rarely get headaches, after our final race I had the sharpest, most painful headache of my life. But a small, gold disk made it go away.

**—Geza Berger**

# Items of Interest

## Rowing on the Nile

Within the serene Egyptian landscape, the Nile River—especially its delta—offers refuge. But the 20 million residents of greater Cairo necessarily learn to cope in such close proximity to each other. Some of them, however, escape the crowds and tumult by taking to the water as rowers. And rowing clubs have their origins in Egypt’s political history.

Read more about finding peace on the water: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/02/world/middleeast/nile-rowing-cairo-egypt.html?searchResultPosition=1>.

## Extreme Isolation

Some of us take extreme measures to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world, especially during a pandemic. For others, isolation is an opportunity to test our grit. Jasmine Harrison, 21-year-old swim instructor and bartender from northern England, arrived in Antigua on February 20 after rowing solo for 70 days across the Atlantic. She is the youngest woman to row solo across *any* ocean.

We don’t have the resources to interview Jasmine ourselves, but *The New York Times* has kindly provided more information about her amazing feat: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/22/sports/row-atlantic-ocean-jasmine-harrison.html>.

—Contributed by Suze Woolf

## Editor’s Note



Our club would not exist without the volunteers who contribute countless hours each year. In this issue, we honor the Volunteers of the Year as well as the members of our Board, who steer our ship through highs and lows—including pandemics. We thank them all.

LWRC owes its existence to the Olympic hopefuls of the late 1950s and early 1960s, including several who represented the United States at the 1963 Pan Am Games in Brazil. **Geza Berger** describes his painful yet exhilarating experience there.

**Tom Kreyche** introduces us to Seattle’s seaplane heritage.

In British Columbia, indigenous peoples and public agencies (including police forces) join forces to bring their communities closer together via a shared goal of navigating local waters. As rowers, we understand how this sport forces us to set aside our differences and focus on our commonalities. Perhaps we should introduce it to politicians?

—Roberta Scholz

## Designer’s Note



*Making Waves* is meant to be read on-screen, laid out in monitor proportions (landscape). You can print it on letter-size paper at 94%, but text is purposely large, and underlined links are live. Use [the full-screen setting](#) (View > Read Mode) in Adobe Acrobat for the most legible view.

—Suze Woolf

# Welcome on Board!

New members of the LWRC Board were introduced at our annual meeting January 10. **Don Kuehn** takes over as vice president and **Allison Thomas** as secretary. **KC Dietz** continues as president, and **Janet Walker** as treasurer again manages our finances. **John Turvey** begins his term as member at large, and **Kelly Johnson** will fill out the rest of **Tom Ahearn's** term. **Megan Northey** and **Kelly Johnson** will guide us through the next year as co-captains.

*Clockwise from upper left: Don, John, Kelly, Janet and KC (Karen Rogers photo), Allison and Megan.*



## Volunteers of the Year

# Boathouse Maintenance Is in Good Hands!

**N**ancy Egaas was already an experienced rower when she joined LWRC around 1990, a few years before the Fremont boathouse was constructed. Her early experiences with the club included leaks in the Garfield boathouse roof and flooding in the warehouse boat bay when it rained. As a result, Nancy recognizes how lucky we are now to have a beautiful boathouse with power and water. She is passionate about keeping the boathouse in operating condition: she sees what needs to be done and takes on the necessary projects. And she usually doesn't bother to tell anyone that she has done them.

Over the years, Nancy's cleaning and maintenance projects have included painting the women's locker room, changing out the sinks, regrouting the shower, and cleaning the gutters. If she sees a

surface that needs painting, she takes care of it. She enjoys climbing on ladders—we finally had to order her to stop crawling around on the roof when no one was there as a spotter! This year, Nancy could be found painting walls in and around the boat-bay bathroom. She is responsible for turning the wall next to the bathroom door into a floor-to-ceiling chalkboard. In October, Nancy decided that we had too many cobwebs over the boat-dock doors, so she brought a ladder and shop vac to clean them. She also pulls weeds out of the boat dock and sidewalk whenever she sees them. When our water fountain quit working, Nancy donated the funds to buy a new one.

**Molly Corrigan** has been a member for around ten years, having graduated from Learn to Row. She is always one of the first to volunteer for cleanup-crew duty,

whether for a club event or the Head of the Lake. This year, Molly has been assisting Nancy with boathouse maintenance projects—with the unenviable task of keeping Nancy safe.

—Marilynn Goo



*Top: Nancy and Molly clean cobwebs. Middle: Nancy grouts the shower, works on the plumbing from below and above. Bottom: Sometimes they even row!*

Meet the Board!

## Kelly Johnson and Megan Northey Keep Us on Track



You've probably seen LWRC co-captain **Kelly Johnson** around the boathouse. She's there most mornings, either on the water or up in the gym. Of course, you may not recognize her under the mask, which obscures her ever-present, brilliant smile.

Kelly joined LWRC a decade ago. A friend, LWRC member **Jeff Bernard**, recruited her to row with the Evening League. She leapt at the opportunity to step away from her demanding job at Microsoft, if only for two evenings a week. "I was struggling with work/life balance," Kelly admits. She was finding it difficult to leave the office, and by joining an organized group "I was imposing a you-must-go-home on myself." She figured that when other rowers were

counting on her to fill out a boat, she wouldn't be able to skip regular practices the way she could skip a solo trip to the gym. Rowing would be a diversion, she thought, but it turned into a central focus of her life.

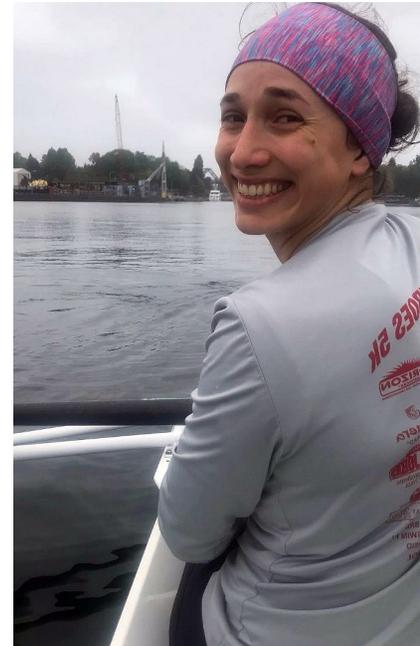
Kelly remembers that first Evening League practice. It was a Thursday, the day the group normally headed for burgers and beer once they got off the water. Jeff was the only person she really knew, but she says everyone was friendly, particularly the late **Jim Roe**.

"I remember, we sat down at the Nickerson," she says. "Jim, being Jim, in true sarcastic form goes: 'So, you want to row again, huh? How old are you?'" Kelly answered that she'd just turned 40. "And he says, ▼

I first met LWRC co-captain **Megan Northey** a couple of years ago. We both had enrolled in **Evan and Tyler's** winter early-morning erg class, and Megan happened to sit down at the erg next to mine. I can't remember the particulars of the workout that day (no doubt something torturous devised by Tyler), but I do remember glancing over at Megan's erg and being stunned by her splits, which were well below 2:00. She really didn't seem to be pulling that hard. It was just another day for Megan, whose quiet demeanor belies a woman of steel.

Megan grew up in the Puget Sound region. Even as a little girl, she liked to run: she'd run loops around her neighborhood. She remembers her parents being a little taken aback, but happy to see their daughter work off her excess energy. She loved running so much that she went to Western Washington University with the intention of competing in track and cross country, but fate intervened.

One day, she and a friend were headed out to the track. "We saw these girls on the ergs," Megan recalls. She thought it looked "fun." They'd just finished their workout, so Megan and her friend Kate hung around to chat about the unfamiliar sport of rowing. The rowers suggested the two ▼



## Kelly, continued

*“Bill told me it looked like I needed to find a higher gear.”*

“Oh, so you want to relive your youth, do you?” And he started to laugh.

At that, Kelly knew she’d met a kindred spirit. Roe didn’t really know her, but he got something right: Kelly wasn’t new to rowing. She’d started as a freshman at Western Washington University. Although she’d played basketball and tennis in high school, she grew curious about rowing after watching an Olympic regatta. She decided to try out for the college team. “I

showed up for the orientation meeting, and I was hooked!”

Kelly was—and is—a strong athlete, but at the time, rowing was just a college fling. After graduation, she abandoned the sport for distance running; she trained and competed in marathons. She didn’t get back on the water until 2011, when she joined LWRC. After a couple of years in the Evening League, Kelly decided to give **Bill Tytus’s** morning sculling group a whirl. She credits Bill with giving her a gentle nudge. “He told me it looked like I needed to find a higher gear,” she laughs.

Since then, she’s raced in all kinds of boats on all manner of courses. In the past few years, Kelly’s been drawn to open-water races. “Getting comfortable with being uncomfortable was something I aspired to,” Kelly says. In June 2019, she put that to the test when she and **Ivan Medvedev** raced from Tacoma to Port Townsend in the annual SEVENTY/48 race.

“I was familiar with how to train for a marathon, but never an ultra-marathon.” Kelly says. “And I was kind of looking at it like an opportunity to learn what it takes to train for something that long.” The duo ▼

## Megan, continued

women might like to try out for the team.

“We joined by accident,” Megan laughs now. It was a two-week tryout, and Megan recalls significant attrition among the aspiring team members. But Megan doesn’t like to quit things, and by the end of the tryouts, both she and her friend had persevered and made the cut. They decided they’d add the sport to their athletic dance cards, continuing their affiliation with the track team. But, as we know, rowing has a sneaky way of monopolizing your time and affections. Megan wound up focusing her attention on the sport, rowing all four years on a national-championship crew.

Although she loved rowing, Megan left it behind after graduation. After beginning her physical therapy studies at the University of Delaware, Megan wound up joining the school’s bicycle road-racing team. She needed a way to burn off the tensions associated with grad school, and it was easier to hop on her bike after a long day in classes or labs than it was to seek out a community boathouse. Ironically, cycling brought Megan back to rowing after she came home to Seattle to start her physical therapy career, working in acute care.

“I was in a hit-and-run accident near the shore of Lake Washington,” Megan explains. “I was taken to Harborview on a full back board.” The experience shook her, pushing her to reconsider competitive road cycling.

Now that she was back in the Northwest with its plethora of crew teams, Megan decided it was time to head back to the water. ▼

*“Rowing has a sneaky way of monopolizing your time and affections.”*

## Kelly, continued

finished the course in just over 12 hours, winding up in fourth place. Kelly was the first woman to cross the finish line, although, she says, “Ivan was in the boat, too!”

The SEVENTY/48 would be tough for any rower, but Kelly met the challenge just three years after a serious accident that sidelined her for months. In April 2016, she fell off a wall. Instead of landing on her head or back, Kelly decided—while falling—to pull her legs together to try to land on her feet. “I stuck the landing,” she says, but she broke both her heels. Kelly spent almost five months rehabbing, a process that was neither straightforward nor smooth. “What I got out of that,” she says, “is to make a clear choice every day to find a way forward.”

Those lessons in patience have served her well during this pandemic year. She compares the past 11 months to the middle of a rowing race, when every fiber in your body hurts and you’re just looking for the end.



Despite the challenges, Kelly’s grateful to have a good job when so many people have been put out of work, but she acknowledges this has been an intense year at Microsoft. Rowing has become even more important to her.

“LWRC has been a life raft,” Kelly says, “the thing that has made everything else possible.”

—*Marcie Sillman*

## Megan, continued

Initially, she landed at Green Lake, where LWRC member **Rachel Wong** was coaching. One thing led to another, and in 2017 Megan found us.

Given her experience, strength, and natural athleticism, Megan immediately found herself in demand to row with a group of serious competitors, traveling with them to San Diego and Boston for the big national races. She also took up sculling, training with **Bill Tytus** and **John Robinson** in the days before COVID-19, racing in singles and other small boats in both flatwater and openwater competitions. A few weeks ago, Megan crossed off another item on her rowing bucket list: she traveled to Florida in February to try out for the national team.

Despite her physical prowess and a demanding PT job at a local hospital, Megan always has time to stop and chat with people at the boathouse. She’s spent the majority of the pandemic year devising safety plans for the many rowers new to sculling, as well as ensuring that our gym protocols adhere to the latest health and safety guidelines. “The club means a great deal to me,” Megan explains. “I’m happy to help keep it going.”

And for Megan, LWRC has been an important touchstone during this long pandemic year, a difficult time for everybody. Despite the challenges, she says the pandemic has provided an opportunity to slow down and appreciate good health, friends, family, and rowing.

“Nothing we have should be taken for granted,” she says. “We’re really going to appreciate each other more.”

—*Marcie Sillman*

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

# Historic Sketch Comes Home

Washington Rowing and Eric Cohen present  
original artwork to LWRC

**S**tu Moldrem, staff artist for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, sketched members of the three-year-old rowing club as they prepared for the Olympic Trials in Rome in 1960. At the time, LWRC was located at the eastern end of the Montlake Cut, in a shed behind the A.S.U.W. Shell House.

**John Sayre, Rusty Wailes, Ted Nash, and Dan Ayrault** took Gold in the four without.

**Conn Findlay, Richard Draeger, and Kent Mitchell** won Bronze in the pair with.

**Ted Frost and Bob Rogers** competed in the pair without.

**Chuck Alm, Roy Rubin, Al Stocker, Mike Yonker, and Kurt Seiffert** competed in the four with.

Shown: *Bernie Horton, Jay Hall, Conn Findlay, Dick Draeger, Ted Frost, Kent Mitchell, Bob Rogers, Pete Paup, Dick Blieden, John Fish, Roger MacDonald, Chuck Bower, John Sayre, Geza Berger, Ted Nash, Al Stocker, Ed McCrory, Lou Gellerman, Dan Ayrault, Roy Rubin, Mike Yonker, Chuck Alm*

Not shown: *Stan Pocock, coach*

Thanks to Eric for facilitating this gift, which now graces the Board Room.

(See our December 2020 issue for more details on this event: [https://cc0f58f3-2631-43b2-aacc-6e774c54b002.filesusr.com/ugd/e389c3\\_6d05700245c347c6babba01cab7eaf28.pdf?index=true](https://cc0f58f3-2631-43b2-aacc-6e774c54b002.filesusr.com/ugd/e389c3_6d05700245c347c6babba01cab7eaf28.pdf?index=true).)



## Board Notes

### Update from your Board of Directors

The Board's winter 2021 focus areas will be:

- ▶ Developing programming for 2021 that prioritizes member safety, following COVID-19 restrictions but allowing us to keep our sense of community at LWRC
- ▶ Establishing safety guidelines and workshops to keep members safe while rowing in small boats, especially in the dark
- ▶ Developing different ways to bring in new members without the benefit of our traditional Learn to Row programs this year
- ▶ Developing instructional content for member education regarding common questions (e.g., proper boat-carrying while launching/landing, member safety, etc.)

*As always, the Board welcomes all members to join our monthly meetings. Please contact Allison Thomas, Secretary, with any questions*

*([amthomas2448@gmail.com](mailto:amthomas2448@gmail.com)).*

*—Allison Thomas,  
LWRC Board Secretary*



# Rowing to the Olympics

*In our December issue, John Sayre described his experiences at the 1960 Olympic Trials and Games. Here, he provides the background for those successes.*

In 1958, Husky crews had been banned from national collegiate competition through no fault of their own. They were penalized because of rules violations committed by the Husky football program. As a result, their coach, **Al Ulbrickson**, promised the varsity crews a trip to the Henley Regatta if they could finish the season unbeaten. They did exactly that.

Sayre recalls:

*We flew to England. On the first day, we saw the race course, met the supermen (our impression) of the Trud Club from the Soviet Union, and took our first practice. As we unpacked our rowing gear, we found a note from George Pocock wrapped around each oar handle. The note said: "Rowing a race is an art, not a frantic scramble. It must be rowed with head power as well as hand power. From the first stroke, all thoughts of the other crew must be blocked out. Your thoughts must be directed to you and your own boat—always positive, never negative". Men as fit as you, when your everyday strength is gone, can draw on a mysterious reservoir of power far greater. Then it is you*

*can reach for the stars. That is the way champions are made. That is the legacy rowing can leave you. Good luck."*



*Returning from practice. On race day, the weather was rough. Sayre commented: "We love that rough water. It felt just like Lake Washington."*



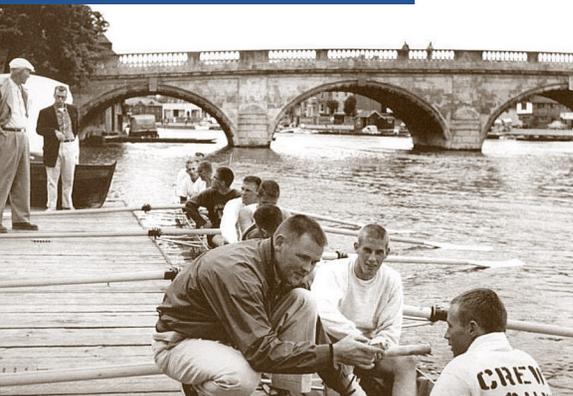
*The Swiftsure, crafted by **George Pocock**, was flown to Helsinki and then placed aboard a Soviet train to Moscow. After the UW victory on the Khimki Reservoir, coach **Al Ulbrickson** telephoned the shell's anonymous donor for permission to leave the eight in Moscow as a goodwill gesture. The donor agreed.*

*This was a tough challenge.*

*Unfortunately, they drew a formidable opponent in the first heat: Leningrad's renowned Trud Rowing Club.*

*Race day came. It rained like mad. At the start the Soviets immediately moved out on us. Our crew did not get a good start. Our rowing was ragged; it did not feel right. We never made a serious move on the Soviets. They won by at least two lengths of*

Television sports journalist Keith Jackson accompanied the crew to both Henley and Moscow. At the time, he worked for KOMO TV4 in Seattle. Jackson covered the events via radio and later went on to fame as a sportscaster of great renown. He considered the Huskies' comeback win over Leningrad Trud his greatest memory in sports.



*open water. We were crushed. We were like a bunch of whipped dogs. Coach Ulbrickson had to send me to the showers so I wouldn't be seen weeping in public. The other crewmen were in a similar condition. We had rowed so poorly that the "mysterious power" did not have a chance to help us.*

The Soviet crew went on to win the Challenge Cup easily.

Unbeknownst to the Huskies, the U.S. State Department had been angling for an opportunity to send the crew to Moscow for a rematch, as a sort of cultural exchange. Soon the invitation came, and two weeks after Henley, the UW oarsmen were on their way to the Soviet Union to face Trud once again. They knew from their Henley experience that their opponents would try to jump the start, so they followed suit in their practices. On race day, they learned that they would face not only Trud but also four other strong Soviet crews, including one from the Soviet Army. The Huskies understood that the invitation to race in Moscow was an attempt to showcase Soviet superiority. These young Americans were the first U.S. athletes to compete in the Soviet Union.

John Sayre continues:

*As we lined up at the start line, next to the Trud Club crew on our port side, suddenly four other crews appeared on our starboard side. I looked at them and said to*

*John Bissett, our coxswain, "Who the hell are these guys?"*



Husky rowers were treated like VIPs during their stay in Moscow.

*Crew races are started with the French command "Êtes-vous prêts? Partez." At the first word, you get ready; at the final word, you go. To our astonishment, the four crews on our starboard took off at "Êtes." I relaxed, thinking, "False start; they will be called back." But they kept rowing. I was stunned. The four crews to our starboard had been given a several-second headstart. The Trud Club, on our port, was waiting for us to start. I was furious: the Russians had cheated, and the one thought in my mind was to catch the unknown bastards who had jumped the gun. They were now rowing with a serious lead on us.*

*This time our start was powerful. The nervousness disappeared, and in a power-packed effort we shortly caught the four crews who had started early. Then we passed them. The "mysterious power" had emerged for us. I then glanced to the right at our real nemesis, the Trud Club. We were ahead of them as well! I said to myself, we are ahead, and we are going to stay there. We continued rowing powerfully, increased our lead, and won the race with over two lengths of open water. We tossed our coxswain into the Moscow Reservoir, celebrating our victory the old-fashioned way.*

After graduating from the UW, John Sayre joined future

## Olympics, continued

founders of the Lake Washington Rowing Club to begin preparing for the 1959 National Championships and Pan Am Games. In the 1960 Olympics, with fellow crew members **Dan Ayrault**, **Ted Nash**, and **Rusty Wailes**, he stroked the U.S. four without coxswain to an amazing come-from-behind victory.

*Thanks to John Sayre for sharing his memoirs with us. For a more detailed account of the Moscow races, see <https://blog.foster.uw.edu/master-stroke/>. Additionally, the Husky Crew archive contains more information plus*



*The race took place on the Khimki Reservoir outside Moscow. Interestingly, the reservoir was also a major source of drinking water for Moscow.*

## Marine Affairs

## Progress at Vancouver Lake Effort to save the lake for water recreation continues

### Feeling competitive?

USRowing sets tentative 2021 regatta schedule

It's been an empty year, as far as regattas go. We dare to hope that 2021 will bring a return to on-the-water competition. In that light, USRowing has optimistically begun planning a *tentative* schedule for the current season.

Northwest Masters Regional Championships are slated for June 18–20 at Vancouver Lake. (Confirmation date for this regatta is April 19.)

Thus far, however, no projected date or location for Masters Nationals has been announced.

Since 2018, efforts to address the European milfoil problem at Vancouver Lake have been under way. Last year, the lake was successfully treated with chemicals, and now the work continues. Plans for 2021 include:

- ▶ Continued monitoring for milfoil and other invasive plants, with treatment as needed
- ▶ Commercial carp netting to reduce stirring up of bottom sediments
- ▶ Collaborating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to address water quality, siltation, and impaired habitat
- ▶ Upgrading and revising the Friends of Vancouver Lake website to share information from various agencies

Read more about these efforts at <https://www.clarkcountytoday.com/news/planned-treatment-underway-of-urasian-milfoil-weed-infestation-at-vancouver-lake/>.

**Check out our  
programs!**

<http://lakewashingtonrowing.com/>

**Harbor Patrol  
206-684-4072**

Also on the bulletin board in the  
boathouse

## Seaplanes and Rowing Shells: Common Roots

*We've shared local waters for decades*

**T**he history of seaplanes in Seattle is linked with William E. Boeing. After leaving the East Coast for

Washington state to invest in the future, initially in the timber industry, he later became fascinated with airplanes. He witnessed airplane demonstrations at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition and the 1910 Los Angeles International Air Meet. Inspired, he took flight lessons and purchased a seaplane—a popular choice,

since airports were nonexistent. He formed the Pacific Aero Club and built a hangar-boathouse on Lake Union at the foot of Roanoke Street, where a commemorative plaque now marks the event.

After his plane was damaged, he and his friend, George Westervelt, decided they could build their own improved version faster than they could get spare parts. In 1916, they founded Pacific Aero-Products Co., buying an old boat works

on the Duwamish River, south of downtown Seattle, for their factory. A year later, Westervelt sold his share in the company to Boeing, who renamed it The Boeing Company. The aircraft business soon boomed because of World War I.

Meanwhile, Dick and George Pocock were building racing shells for the University of Washington and for regional clubs. When rowing programs were suspended during the war, the brothers went to work for Boeing, building seaplane pontoons—a natural fit, since airplanes of that era were mostly of wooden construction. Dick eventually left to build shells for Yale, but George stayed on longer at Boeing and became foreman of the assembly department.

With the end of the war-fueled boom cycle—and lured by rowing—George also left Boeing to re-open his shop in the on-campus A.S.U.W. Shell House, at the east entrance to the Montlake Cut. That facility had been built in 1918 to house seaplanes and train Navy pilots; it later became the home of the legendary 1936 UW crew. In 1957, the facility became home to the Lake Washington Rowing Club. (*See related stories on pages 1 and 10.*) George and his son, Stan Pocock, donated the fledgling club's first shells.

Another early local seaplane pioneer, Lana Kurtzer, relocated his flying service from Elliott Bay to South Lake Union in 1931. Kurtzer Flying Service was among the largest in the country, training thousands of pilots and providing air charter services. Eventually purchased by Lake Union Air and then by Kenmore Air in 1933, it continues to operate as Kenmore Air near its original location at the southwest corner of Lake Union. Kenmore Air has a fleet of about 25 aircraft and provides air taxi services from Lake Union to several destinations in the Northwest.

*(continued on page 15)*



*Boeing's first airplane  
at the Roanoke Street  
hangar on Lake Union*

# Building Community on the Water

Canadian indigenous peoples bond on the water



## Marine Affairs

**“When I started I was really nervous ... But it kind of grounds you in a way and it connects you with culture.”**

**R**owers understand the value of using the water as a medium for building self-reliance and for creating a sense of community. We willingly surround ourselves with an environment that is sometimes hostile and sometimes friendly. We learn from its adversarial nature, and we draw on its generosity in the good times. Being on the water is, for many rowers, the ultimate spiritual experience.

What started out in 1997 as an effort to improve relations between British Columbia law enforcement and First Nations peoples has come full circle, not only encouraging national participation by many services personnel but also sparking new interest in indigenous canoe culture among the bands themselves.

The original goal – reconciliation through cultural understanding – remains paramount. At first an annual multi-day, long-distance water journey, it now focuses on getting youth out on the water and is hosted each year by a different band. They want to follow one elder’s plea: “You can’t undo the damage done to past generations, but you can help our youth.” It is now less

*(Ed Hill photo)*





Sechelt Big House 2017



If you thought carrying an eight was hard, try a 20-person canoe!

an adult long-haul marathon and more a kids-dogs-elders community festival. Relationships have been built that would never otherwise have been possible.

There are far too many individual stories to retell here. Linda Blake, current board president of Pulling Together Canoe Society, recounts some surprising highlights: canoe culture revival among inland lakeshore bands, indigenous police recruits, and Royal Canadian Navy sailors buying their own 20-person canoe.

For all of us who love being on the water in human-powered boats, pulling together, this effort is another example of how much good can come from it. Watch the video “Where the Canoe Takes Us” at <https://vimeo.com/95229732> or at [www.pullingtogether.ca](http://www.pullingtogether.ca).

— Suze Woolf

*(continued from page 13)*

Seattle Seaplanes, a smaller commercial operator, is located in the southeast corner of the lake, tucked into the shore a couple of docks south of LWRC’s Garfield Boathouse. Seattle Seaplanes owns a handful of aircraft, operates air taxis, and offers flight instruction as well.

In addition to these commercial operations, there are also privately owned seaplanes operating on the waterways around Seattle. Together with drydocks, yacht moorages, tugboat traffic, and paddleboarders, they contribute to the busy traffic found on Seattle’s downtown “working lake”— and they can make safe navigation for rowers a constant challenge. In the next issue, we will explore the ways in which seaplanes and rowers coexist.

—Tom Kreyche



This common goldeneye was diving just off the rocks at Jack Block Park, eventually coming up with a crab. He apparently knew what he was doing, going back to the same place repeatedly. (Chuck Pell photo)

Frank is always with us:

## THE BACK PAGE

### CORRECTION



Our December 2020 issue mistakenly identified the exquisite cedar lightweight quad hanging in the Fremont boathouse. The *Lucy Pocock Stillwell* was built by Lucy's nephew, **Stan Pocock**. For more information on Lucy herself, a pioneer in women's rowing, see <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/boys36-lucypocock/>.

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