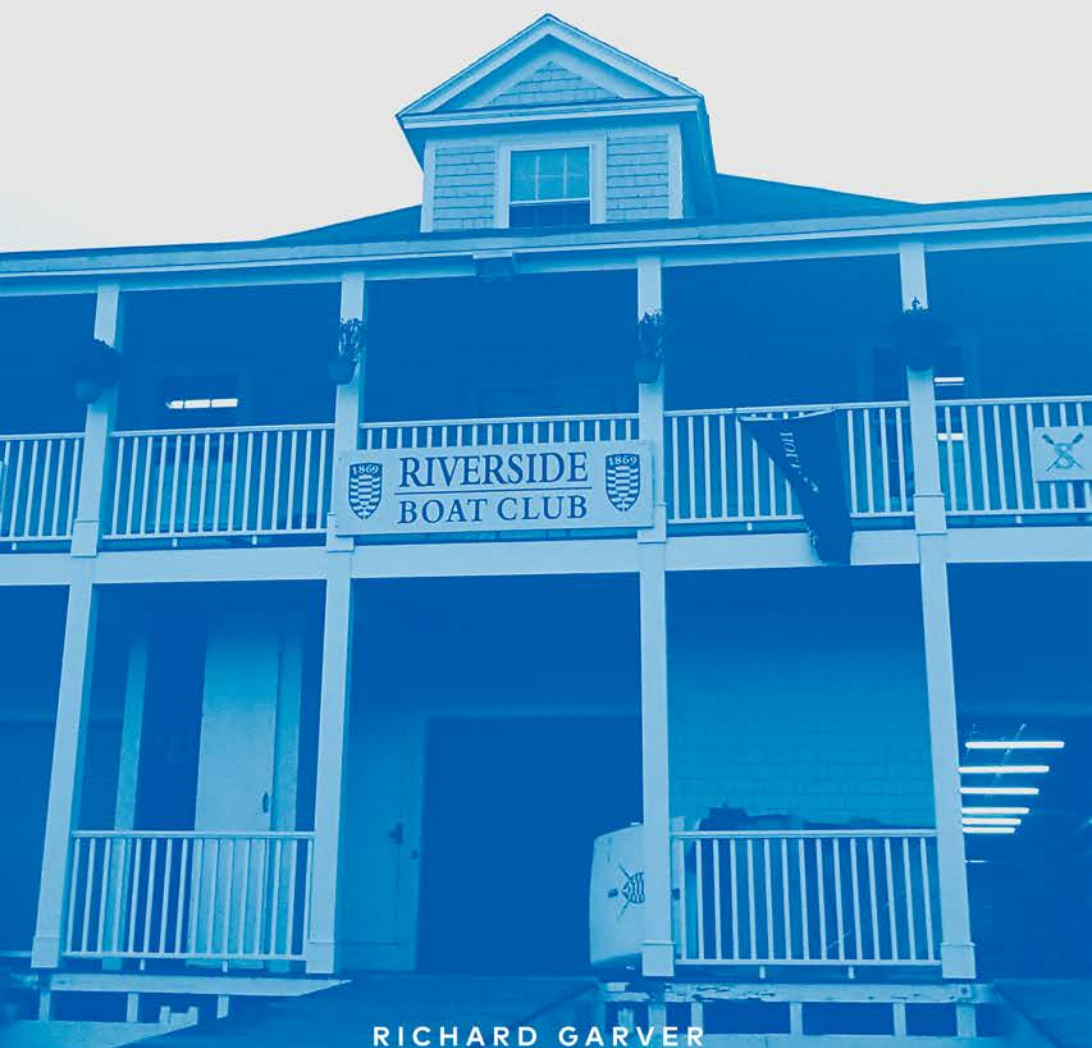


RIVERSIDE BOAT CLUB

THE FIRST 150 YEARS



RICHARD GARVER

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Preface

How should the history of Riverside Boat Club be approached? After 150 years, it encompasses a wealth of stories. It can be told in terms of its competitors and their exploits. It can be told in terms of the organizational evolution that made their successes possible. It can be told through the stories of its many memorable individuals and personalities.

At the same time, the history of Riverside reflects larger trends within the sport of rowing and in the Boston area's demographics and economy over the course of its 150 years. It also involves the transformation of the Charles River from an industrial estuary into the centerpiece in the region's recreational landscape. Each of these developments required adaptations that shaped the club that exists today.

The narrative that follows attempts to place Riverside Boat Club's notable individuals, its competitors and its organization within these larger contexts, beginning with its evolution from a small trade-based Irish immigrant neighborhood organization into one of the region's prominent centers of amateur athletics and rowing excellence at the end of the 19th Century. Throughout this era, Riverside's leading figures proudly embraced its founders' Irish pedigree. World War I was followed by decades of declining participation in Boston area club rowing, by the end of which the club was virtually moribund. Starting in the 1970s, however, changes in the sport and in the composition of Boston area rowers provided the opportunity for the club to re-invent itself. A new breed of members led it into an era in which it consistently produced elite competitors even as it supported a growing range of rowing programs for a continuously

expanding membership. Among the club's most notable transformations in this period was that from an organization run by and for local male scullers to one in which women of diverse backgrounds emerged as some of its most prominent figures and most successful competitors.

Today Riverside Boat Club is the last of the 19th century Boston area immigrant neighborhood clubs still in existence. It has become a robust organization of enthusiastic rowers, many of whom continue to step forward to be its volunteer leaders. With a sense of custodial responsibility, they are conducting a comprehensive planning program intended to insure that the club prospers well into the future.

Because Riverside's history has unfolded over 150 years, reconstructing it requires drawing on a range of sources. Recounting its early history would not have been possible without the Boston and Cambridge Public Libraries' digital collection of their cities' presses, which gave 19th and early 20th Century rowing extensive coverage. It has also drawn on innumerable members' recollections and documents. As history will always be, it is a work in progress, and it is hoped that readers will be encouraged to bring forward additional material for inclusion in subsequent editions as well as corrections of this edition.

Richard Garver

Club Historian, Riverside Boat Club
August, 2019

Genesis

Riverside Boat Club was founded in 1869 by printers, many of them Irish immigrants, employed by The Riverside Press. It was one of a number of working class rowing clubs that proliferated in the Boston area following the Civil War as rowing emerged as one of the country's most avidly followed sporting activities.

America's earliest rowing clubs appeared in New York City in 1834. By the end of the decade there were clubs in Boston, Philadelphia, Providence and Detroit. Long-forgotten formal and informal organizations, such as Boston's Tiger Boat Club, organized in 1837, appeared and vanished.¹ Their boats were lapstreaks of various dimensions, with oars set in thole pins mounted on the gunwales. Their rowing was largely social and recreational, "companionable exercise." Racing was an incidental diversion. In that spirit, in 1843 Yale students purchased a whitehall, a type of water taxi used by watermen to ferry passengers from Whitehall Street in lower Manhattan, and formed a rowing club. Harvard students followed suit in 1844.² Over the coming years they formed clubs based on their graduating classes and other affiliations. In a characteristic blend of sociability and exercise, club members liked to row down the Charles River to Boston for dinner and entertainment. In general, however, Boston gentlemen did not value physical exercise. Statesman Edward Everett deplored their inattention to "manly outdoor exercises, which strengthen the mind by strengthening the body." Rowing enthusiast Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. observed that society would drop a man who could run around the Common in five minutes.³ It was against this background that Harvard rowers' somewhat disreputable reputation among the college's administrators was solidified in 1850 when some of them got into an argument with Boston police that ended with the fire department being called out.

Union Boat Club is the lone surviving Boston rowing club from the period. It began life in 1851, roughly coincident with Philadelphia's Bachelor's Barge Club

(1853), University Barge Club (1854) and Undine Barge Club (1856), with one heavy four-oared gig stored at a bathhouse at the foot of Beacon Hill. At the time, the Charles River was a tidal estuary. Salt marshes punctuated by industrial uses lined its Cambridge shore. On its Boston side, the river's Back Bay was bisected by a mill dam in the alignment of present-day Beacon Street from Beacon Hill's water edge to what is now Kenmore Square, constructed to harness the estuary's tides. At low tide its exposed mud flats could be unpleasantly smelly. In addition to rowing on the river, Union's members, who had a boathouse of their own by 1856, favored moonlight rows in the harbor with women friends and perennially rowed to their hut on Squam Island in Gloucester's Annisquam River.⁴

At the same time, rowing's competitive potential had been clear since the early 1800s. The first documented race in this country, in 1811, was contested by New York watermen. American society was permeated with wagering. Professionals were soon racing each other for stakes and prizes. The first formal races in the Boston area were an East Boston regatta on the Chelsea River in 1842.⁵ The event was staged again the following year, with boats from New York taking part. By 1852, rowing competitions had become popular enough with the public to be staged as a real estate promotion. The father of a Yale junior class rower was a director of the struggling Boston, Concord and Montreal Railroad, which skirted Lake Winnepesaukee. Hoping to promote his railroad and his lakefront real estate holdings, he sponsored a race between Yale and Harvard's junior class boats in what was the country's first intercollegiate sporting event. A Union Boat Club four won its first trophy in an 1853 race in Hull. The City of Boston added the City Regatta to its July 4th celebrations in 1854. The Charles River Amateur Boat Club Association was formed in 1855 and held its own regatta. Rowing clubs began to form wherever there were navigable stretches of water.

Because club memberships were small and among them they owned so few boats of one kind, races might be contested by pairs, fours, sixes, and even tens. Handicaps were given out based on the number of oars in a boat, generally fifteen seconds per oar for a three-mile race. Outrigger shells made their first appearance on the Charles in 1856.⁶ By 1860, there were more than a dozen formal regattas a year throughout the country. In the meantime, intercollegiate competition had progressed to the point that a College Union Regatta was contested on Lake Quinsigamond in 1859.

The Civil War considerably dampened enthusiasm for competitive sports of all kinds, but it redoubled at its conclusion. In 1867 there were some 48 match races and regattas. The New York Athletic Club was founded on the Harlem River in 1868, modeled on the London Athletic Club. By 1869, the year Riverside Boat Club was formed, there were approximately 90 American rowing clubs, club memberships were booming, 65 regattas were held throughout the country, and racing for prizes was attracting increasingly large crowds. Its membership reaching 150, in 1870 Union Boat Club built a four-story boathouse at the base of Beacon Hill. Collegiate rowing, expanding on a separate track, also drew widespread attention. By 1875 no few than twelve colleges took part in a race, including, in the order of their finish, Cornell, Columbia, Harvard, Dartmouth, Wesleyan, Yale, Amherst, Brown, Williams, Bowdoin, Hamilton and Union. Following a collision, in 1876 Harvard and Yale withdrew from the competition, choosing to conduct their own race in Springfield in 1877 and then in New London in 1878. Rowing was on its way to becoming America's most popular spectator sport.

Its celebrity was the result of a unique confluence of factors. The country was prosperous. Cities were growing rapidly, providing pools of potential participants and spectators. Enthusiasm for rowing also benefited from the transportation and communications revolution underway across the country. The rapidly expanding national railroad network extended sporting rivalries to a regional and even nationwide scale. The railroad companies themselves, eager to fill passenger seats, sponsored and advertised regattas from which they hoped to profit not only from the sale of tickets to and from the events but from the spectators who followed the racing on specially built grandstand cars pulled up and down the two to four mile courses. Meanwhile, the new national telegraph network was making results instantly available to an emerging form of journalism, sporting weeklies, which promoted rowing rivalries. With the ground prepared for the American public's embrace of athletics as mass entertainment, the only established sports available to capture its imagination were competitive rowing, prize fighting and horse racing.

Each involved competing for stakes and each appealed to wagering. The impact of the press was on display in the coverage of the first trans-Atlantic rowing event in 1869, in which an Oxford coxed-four defeated Harvard on a 4½ mile Thames River course in London. According to an enthusiastic account in *The*

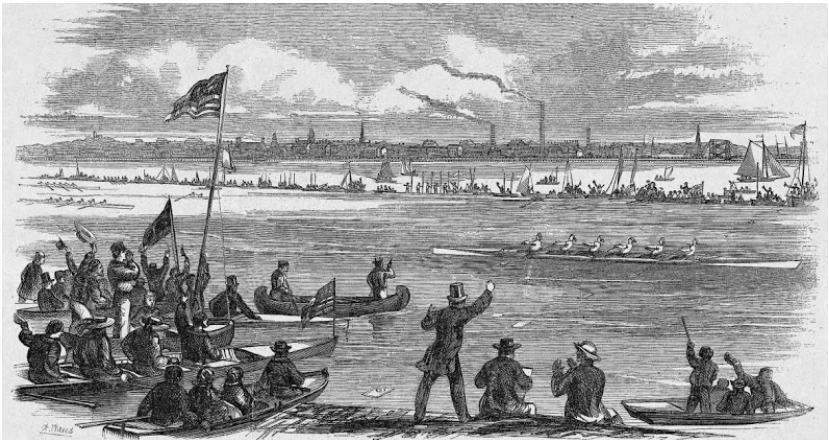
London Times, the race attracted one million spectators, including the Prince of Wales, Prime Minister Gladstone, Charles Dickens and John Stuart Mill. Blanket newspaper coverage of the event throughout the United States gave an enormous boost to the sport's popularity. The number of organized American rowing clubs, which had stood at ninety in 1869, reached 289 in 1873, and the number of regattas expanded to 159.



Coverage of the Harvard Oxford Race

The demographic, economic, transportation and communications developments that were transforming rowing into a celebrity sport were particularly influential in Boston. The city was in transition from a Yankee mercantile town of 61,400 in 1830 to an immigrant, industrial city of 250,500, thirty-five percent of whom were foreign born in 1870. The newcomers were predominantly Irish, a population that began arriving in overwhelming numbers in 1845 as the result of Ireland's devastating famine. They settled for the most part in waterfront areas, drawn by jobs as longshoremen, railroad workers, or in industry. Within Boston proper, the most destitute clustered on the slope of the once elite Fort Hill (the site of International Place in the Financial District today) and the North End as well as in the working class West End. The waterfront edges of Cambridge, Charlestown, Chelsea, East Boston and South Boston, each situated on uplands separated from each other and from downtown Boston by marshes, bays and rivers, became immigrant enclaves.

Less distressed than those in Boston proper, by the late 1850s these communities were, to varying degrees, “zones of emergence,” within which first and second generation Irish and other immigrants were attaining a degree of economic and social stability. Many of their residents were determined to combine neighborhood pride and ethnic solidarity with recognition by mainstream society. Responding to rowing’s celebrity, they formed neighborhood-based clubs from which their residents could compete on a metropolitan stage for prizes and fame. In a well-publicized early example, in 1858 a Fort Hill Boys boat manned by Murray, Shea, Driscoll, O’Neil, Murray and Murray, together with five other crews with Irish surnames, took on students from Harvard’s divinity, law and scientific schools named Crowninshield, Crowninshield, Elliot, Ellison, Gilston and Agassis. Other immigrant neighborhood clubs included the Winnisimmet Boat Club of Chelsea (1862), the Monument Boat Club of Charlestown (1865), and the West End Boat Club (1867). Some boosted their competitive profile by hosting professionals, who rowed in crews or as individuals, while other professionals competed without club affiliations.



Harvard students beating the Fort Hill Boys and five other crews in an 1858 sixes race on the Charles River, with Cambridge’s factories in the background.

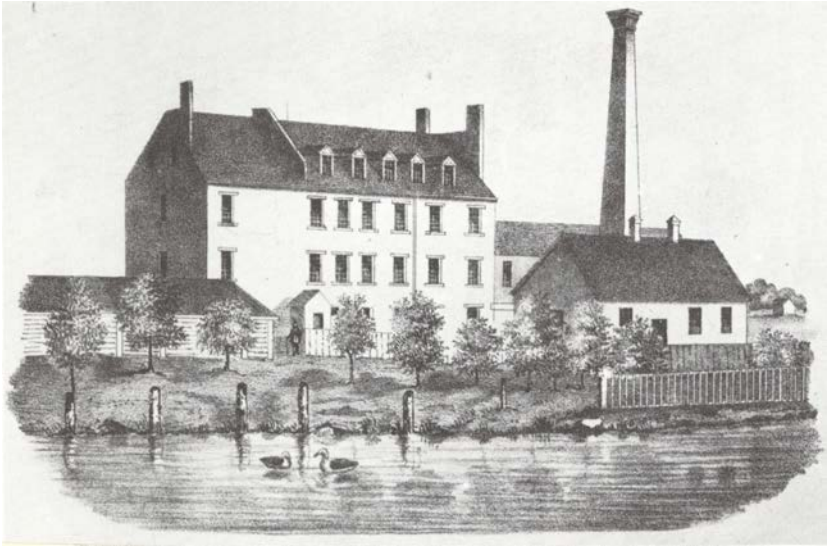
The growing popularity of rowing with the Boston public was evident in Boston’s July 1869 City Regatta. The event included races for the area’s top professionals. Committees of financial backers served as their managers. Announced for 7:30 AM to catch the slack tide, the regatta attracted an estimated 40,000 spectators, who thronged along the made land at the foot of Mt. Vernon Street, the waterside of Beacon Street and the Back Bay mill dam. City officials and bands

crowded spectator boats. The spirit along the course was like that in the stands of Churchill Downs.

THE BIRTH OF RIVERSIDE BOAT CLUB

This was the context in which John P. Facey, its first president, John J. Thorogood, John Curley, P. H. Hickey, Edward McDermott, Alexander McKenzie, Charles Chase, and Henry G. Davis founded Riverside Boat Club as a trade-based sports organization in 1869. They as well as the rest of the thirteen original members were predominantly Irish and all were employed at The Riverside Press. The company was owned by Henry Houghton, who had purchased it from Little, Brown in 1867 and who would go on to form the prestigious Boston publishing company Houghton, Mifflin & Company. It was located between River Street and Western Avenue in the Cambridgeport neighborhood of Cambridge, on one of the few areas of solid riverfront land within the marshes that stretched along the Cambridge shore from East Cambridge to Watertown. The company's workers for the most part resided in the surrounding Cambridgeport neighborhood. A homogeneous New England village in 1850, it had become a more complex community whose native population, residing for the most part on the area's higher ground, had been joined by 2,100 Irish and 500 Canadians, many of whom lived along its lower edges bordering the marshes. By 1875 another 1,600 Irish and 1,000 Canadians had arrived in Cambridgeport and the neighborhood was well on its way to becoming an industrial suburb of Boston.

The club's first quarters were a dingy mill building on the press grounds. Unlike the boathouses of many rowing clubs of the era, which floated on the estuary's tides, it accommodated the river's rise and fall by means of a floating dock. By 1873 Riverside's boathouse was reported to be well kept and to house thirteen boats; its membership had reached thirty, all of them The Riverside Press employees; and it conducted an annual regatta over a one and one-half mile course between the River Street and Brookline Bridges. Reflecting Cambridgeport's growing population, however, it soon opened itself to members not affiliated with the print works. Nevertheless, the club's membership continued to be working and middle class men and its leadership to be consistently Irish-American.



The Riverside Press

Despite an economic depression that stretched from 1873 to the end of the decade, over the next ten years Riverside was joined by a profusion of community-based, working class rowing clubs. Sandwiched among maritime and industrial buildings in each of Boston's waterfront immigrant neighborhoods, in settings similar to Riverside, they included South Boston's Shawmut (1869), City Point (1872) and Central (1878) Boat Clubs; East Boston's Columbian (1879), Jeffries Point, Atlantic, and Everett (1878) Boat Clubs as well as the East Boston Athletic and Rowing Club; the West End's Lakeman (1871) and Leverett (1873) clubs; and Cambridge's Bradford Boat Club (1875). Additional rowing clubs formed in Chelsea and Lynn. Like Riverside, they tended to share a strong Irish identity and to be a touchstone of neighborhood pride.

Relations among these clubs were both competitive and fraternal. They conducted races in singles, six-oared racing boats and whitehalls. Eight-oared boats, which had been raced in the 1840s and mid-50s, including in the 1852 Harvard-Yale race, were re-introduced from England by three Philadelphia clubs in 1872 and replaced six-oared boats in the Harvard-Yale race in 1876, but they do not appear to have become an important part of club racing on the Charles River until the 1880s (6). Instead, four-oared workboats, a distinctly Boston institution perhaps reflecting the social origins of most of its rowing clubs, attracted the highest level of interest among oared events. The 1876 July

4 City Regatta, which featured a six-mile race for workboats, was reported to have attracted another crowd of 40,000 spectators. Riverside raced successfully in local regattas, particularly in workboat events. Its regattas became major attractions. An 1877 newspaper article refers to the large crowd that came to watch its 1.5 mile race between Brighton and the Brookline (now the BU) Bridge, which included events for doubles with a prize of \$50 and sweep boats racing for \$20 for first and \$15 for second. Another article reports on a four mile race contested for \$20 by two Riverside doubles.

Boston's rowing clubs continued to have both amateurs and professionals among their members, although the distinction was sketchy, since prizes were awarded to both. In contrast to England, where an amateur came to mean a gentleman with the leisure to row, in this country the differentiation was between professionals who made their living on the water or who had no other livelihood than rowing and workingmen whose jobs prevented them from training as regularly as the professionals. George Faulkner, an Irish immigrant who was to become a talismanic Boston and Riverside rowing figure over the next several decades, was considered a professional because, as a teenager he rowed for a teamster company.

Rowers, professional and otherwise, regularly placed competitive challenges for cash stakes in local newspapers, such as the following posted in an 1878 edition of *The Boston Globe*.

“The Lakeman Crew No. 1 (that year’s New England champion workboat crew) do hereby challenge any crew that took part in the four-oared working boats in the Silver Lake regatta, May 30, to row them a three-mile race...for from \$250 to \$500 a side, the Chelsea, West End, or Riverside crews preferred...”

Some notices highlight rowing's contribution to the solidarity of Boston's trades, such as one in 1878 for a four-oared workboat race for \$250 among four express mail companies and another for a professional pairs race backed by marble workers.

While the racing was competitive, the area's workingmen's rowing clubs shared a sense of community. They held joint outings, such as the Walden Pond picnic hosted by Riverside, Farragut (Lynn), and Moulton in 1882, which reportedly attracted some 1,500 attendees. In addition to a variety of athletic events,

including a two-mile walk, a 100-yard dash, a three-legged race, a ladies' rifle match, a tug-of-war, tub races, and a four-oared workboat race won by the West End club, there was music and dancing. An 1887 joint Riverside-West End Boat Club festivity featuring trick rowing, such as standing on one's head in a single, brought together over 300 oarsmen and was followed the next year by a West End water carnival, in which Riverside joined Bradford as sponsor. One of the features of these affairs was the West End club's famous "trick boat" Downie, which it defied guests to row without taking a spill.

As sporting exemplars of their respective neighborhoods, rowing clubs became centers of their communities' social life, sponsoring dinners, dances and other festivities. An 1886 newspaper story describes a Riverside "entertainment" and dance at the Prospect Street skating rink at which over 500 people enjoyed vocal quartets, whistling solos, and clog and reel dancers.

Social events were not only fraternal but had a flavor of local, ethnic politics, as is clear in the following May 1880 *Boston Globe* report on the Shawmut Boat Club's annual dinner.

"(150) guests and friends of the club sat down to the tables, which were overflowing with viands, intended to appease the appetite of the most hungry of mortals.... The heavy part having been disposed of, speech-making was in order and was indulged in by Police Commissioner Walker, Senator Fitzgerald, Hon. P. B. Hennessey, Councilman Murphy, Hon. J. O. A. Shevlin, and others, who responded in their turn to toasts proffered by the toast-maker of the occasion, J. S. Mahoney, the affable secretary of the club. Midnight neared ere the above part of the programme was concluded, and the boys, somewhat stiffened from the continuous sit of three hours, with the aid of beautiful music finely rendered, gave vent to their sociality in pleasant and not soon-to-be-forgotten strains....more than one of the many guests, expressed in not doubtful tone, that the Shawmut club may always live to encourage and foster good fellowship and honesty among oarsmen."

Certainly Riverside Boat Club was integrated into local politics. During the mid-1880s, members included an alderman, the assistant city clerk, the clerk of the Common Council, and Councilman John H. H. McNamee. Riverside would maintain ties to city government for the next forty years.

The Rise of Amateur Rowing

Rowing's celebrity continued to grow through the 1870s. It was one of only three sports, in addition to riflery and yachting, included in the 1876 Centennial celebration in Philadelphia. Boston professionals Patsy Reagan and George Faulkner beat the famous Ward brothers and an English entry to win the pair event and the \$1,000 prize that went with what was



George Faulkner, standing, and his pair partner Patsy Reagan

deemed the world's championship.⁷ They were the only Americans to win an event at the regatta. Professional sculler Edward "Ned" Hanlan of Toronto won the singles race. Attracting enormous crowds to his over 300 races in North America and Europe, Hanlan would become the sporting world's first international superstar, followed soon by another athlete with an Irish following, Boston boxer John L. Sullivan.

Even as rowing was reaching its popular ascendancy, however, controversies over the roles of gamblers in fixed races and the unclear relationship between amateurs and professionals were undermining its standing with the public. As concern about the professionals' credibility grew, disputes over competitors' amateur status in an 1872 Schuylkill Navy regatta led to the establishment of The National Association of Amateur Oarsmen, the first national sports governing body in America. Union Boat Club, which had raced enthusiastically in its formative years but had become a largely recreational rowing and waterborne

GEORGE FAULKNER

Six year old George Faulkner and his family, after being quarantined in St. John, New Brunswick during a typhus epidemic, arrived in Boston from famine stricken Ireland in 1847, the worst year of the Great Hunger. They settled on Noodles Island, now East Boston.

At around sixteen or seventeen Faulkner began rowing for a Commercial Street company that offloaded ships' cargo. It was his job to race other companies out to ships arriving in Boston harbor to secure the work, an occupation that might require him to row forty miles a day. Faulkner would eventually purchase the company and run it well into his 80s.

Two years after taking part in his first rowing race at the age of fifteen in 1856, an impromptu affair between stevedore boats for a side bet of \$10, Faulkner participated in his first regatta on the Charles River in the six-oared Shamrock. With popular interest in rowing booming following the Civil War, he raced professionally with great success in both sweep and sculling boats, including his famous victory with Charlestown's Patsy Reagan, with whom he had been racing since 1868, in the pairs event at the 1876 National Centennial regatta in Philadelphia. The popularity of rowing was so high at this point that Faulkner's 1877 match race with Michael Davis, an Irish immigrant sculler and rowing innovator from Portland, Maine, attracted 30,000 spectators to the Charles. Davis shocked Boston by defeating him.

After retiring from competition, Faulkner became one of the most respected coaches of his day, including stints as a coaching adviser to Harvard crews.⁸ After he revised its stroke, the college's 1885 crew overcame years of defeat by Yale. Though Harvard resumed losing to Yale the following year, Faulkner continued to appear in its launches into the 90s.

Under Faulkner's coaching Riverside reached its competitive peak at the turn of the 20th Century. The club's 1903 senior eight, repeating as New England champion, was considered the best it had put on the water to-date. Not without controversy, his senior Riverside eight won the 1906 national championship.



George Faulkner with his father in 1857

adventure club, played a role in the discussions that led to the formation of the association. In contrast to England's amateur rowing association, the N.A.A.O did not encompass collegiate rowing, which remained on its own track. The organization held its first national championship in Philadelphia in 1873.

Amateur rowing gained additional converts from Boston's neighborhood-based clubs in 1882, when half the members of the Shawmut club broke away to form the Crescent Boat Club. Crescent restricted itself to amateur oarsmen and was located on the Back Bay in the vicinity of what is now Bay State Road. Its Daniel J. Murphy was the first New Englander to win the national amateur singles championships in 1885. Under James Casey, South Boston's Central Boat Club reorganized as an amateur club in 1884.

On the whole, however, New England remained the region of the country most devoted to professional rowing. It was the professionals and the betting associated with them that dominated popular attention. A match race between George Faulkner and Portland's Michael Davis in 1877 attracted 30,000 spectators to the Charles. In 1878, six thousand people took off work for the funeral of Faulkner's 1876 pairs partner Patsy Reagan, who died in a train wreck returning from a \$2,000 match race with Davis at Silver Lake. Thousands of dollars were wagered on a match race in the mid-80s between Shawmut's John J. Murphy and the West End's Andrew O'Brien. Reflecting New England's enthusiasm for the professionals, Boston's annual City Regatta was devoted primarily to their races.

Riverside does not appear to have been the home of illustrious professionals. In fact, interest in racing waned at the club, allegedly because of the professionals' dominance of local events. The Charles River, the Muddy River—accessible through the milldam tide locks up to Brookline Avenue, the Mystic River and the harbor islands all offered attractive destinations to rowers interested in picnics, swimming and camping. Like those of Union Boat Club, Riverside members' interest shifted to pleasure boating, including canoeing. While the club owned a six-oared shell, three four-oared workboats, a double and some singles, and a number of members had their own singles, the club's fleet was increasingly devoted to boats for recreational rowing such as canoes and whitehalls.

Participation in sports had concentrated in the working classes in the 1860s and 70s, notwithstanding organizations like Union Boat Club. By the mid-80s, however, amateurism spread enthusiasm for athletics across the social

spectrum. One result was the appearance of clubs offering a range of sports rather than a single activity like rowing, as had been characteristic of earlier sporting organizations. A second was the formation of athletic clubs by the city's upper-middle and elite classes, whose pre-war ambivalence toward vigorous exercise had been replaced with esteem for a concept borrowed from Church of England priest Charles Kingsley, "muscular Christianity". Both developments were reflected in the formation of the Boston Athletic Association in 1877. As a general sports club, the BAA offered a range of activities, including rowing, for which it built a boathouse adjacent to Union Boat Club's at the foot of Beacon Hill, as well as a magnificent athletic palace on Boylston Street in Back Bay at what is now the site of the Boston Public Library's Johnson addition. On a smaller scale, Ernest Longfellow and his fellow Brattle Street gentry formed the Cambridge Casino in 1882. Its facilities included a boathouse at the foot of Hawthorn Street as well as tennis courts and a bowling alley.

As the appeal of amateur and collegiate rowing rose, the popularity of professional racing, undermined by stories of sabotaged boats and poisoned food, declined even in New England. Other sports successfully competed for the public's attention. Track and field and bicycling attracted growing numbers of participants, and baseball was well on its way to being America's ascendant spectator sport. There was increasing concern in New England rowing circles about the sport's future. In the winter of 1887 a number of leading local amateurs proposed to promote their sport by forming the New England Amateur Rowing Association. Riverside Boat Club was among the area clubs invited to join. Invitations were also extended to clubs in Arlington, Chelsea, Lowell, Gloucester, Portland, Fall River, Providence, and Manchester. The Association was formed in April 1887, and Riverside's president, J. Frank Facey, son of founding president, John Facey, was selected as its secretary.

The elevation of amateur rowing proved to be Riverside Boat Club's turning point. At this point, the club had 52 members, one of whom was the recently joined George Faulkner. At the NEARA's first New England amateur championship, held June 17, 1887, a Riverside boat coached by members from its active racing days and manned by Eugene Sullivan, T. F. Riley, William Balmer, and William Kivien won the senior four-oared workboat race. The regatta proved to be a great success and Riverside's victory was celebrated by a banquet at Austin Hall in Cambridgeport at which Cambridge Mayor and former Harvard oar William

J. FRANK FACEY

Frank Facey was born in 1863. His father was Riverside's first president. Like him, Frank began his working life at The Riverside Press, enrolling as a compositor in the Typographical Union. Facey joined the club in 1882 and raced in both sweep boats and singles during the mid-80s. After serving two years as club secretary, in 1885 he followed in his father's footsteps, becoming Riverside president. Facey formed his own successful printing company, located on Prospect Street in Cambridge, in 1888.

Frank Facey had considerable political gifts. In addition to roles in Cambridge electoral politics recounted here, including serving as city councilor, election commissioner and member of the Cambridge Public Safety Committee, he became a national figure in the administration of amateur athletics of all kinds, serving as the New England Amateur Rowing Association's secretary for 45 years, as the chair of National Amateur Rowing Association committees, and as a delegate from the New England Amateur Athletic Association to the Central A.A.U. In 1943, still participating as a delegate to the National Amateur Athletic Union, Facey died at age 80.



J. Frank Facey in 1943

E. Russell and Riverside Press President H. O. Houghton led city aldermen, the president of the city council and some 125 other guests into the hall to strains of an orchestra. Speeches extolling the credit Riverside had brought to Cambridge and to the printing company were followed by jig dancing and songs by an Irish quartet. The four blue stripes on the oar in Riverside's emblem are said to be in tribute to the four's famous victory.

Responding to the formation of the NEARA, organizers of the 1887 Boston City July 4 regatta increased the number of amateur races from one to three. Riverside's four-oared workboat won the silver cup offered as first prize by the City of Boston. In 1888, the NEARA introduced events for juniors and intermediates, substantially increasing clubs' competitive interest. Races were generally three miles long, 1.5 miles upstream from in front of Union's dock to a turn and back, giving spectators a chance to see both the starts and finishes of races. Riverside's four-oared workboat again won the New England championship in 1888. At the club's annual regatta that July, the club offered gold medals for singles race winners and silver ones for sweep winners. As an added attraction, the regatta featured the club's last attempt to master the trick boat Downey.

On the water, it was engaged an intense rivalry with Cambridgeport's other boat club, Bradford, whose 1890 "big eight" newspapers cited by as the period's standard of excellence. The two clubs challenged each other into the early 1890s to fours' races for prizes that threatened the amateur code and attracted considerable public interest.

As the amateur rowing movement took hold and as local oarsmen transitioned from workboats to the four and eight oared shells favored elsewhere in the country, Riverside's membership as well as those of several other area boat clubs nearly doubled. Local oarsmen began to achieve success on the national stage. William Caffrey of Lawrence won the national amateur senior sculling championships in 1890. Frank Smith of Riverside was second. Caffery repeated his victory in 1891. Reflecting the growing interest in amateur rowing, George Weld established the Harvard Rowing Club in 1890 as a facility open to all undergraduates. Its designer was Robert S. Peabody, 1866 varsity crew captain.

By 1891 the amateur movement was securely established, and the NEARA voted to expel any club that participated in professional races or held professional

races as part of their annual regattas, up to then a common practice of the West End, Everett, and Columbian clubs. For allegedly selling his medal after winning the single sculling trophy in the 1894 Labor Day regatta, the NEARA challenged Riverside's John Ryan's amateur status. After lengthy deliberations, he was exonerated. By 1896, professional racing had been eliminated from the Boston City regatta altogether, although professional sculling match races continued to draw huge Boston crowds well into the 19-teens.

The amateur movement did more than bring Riverside into its own as a competitive rowing club. To a greater degree than other boat clubs of the period, it evolved into a general athletic association. For example, in March 1891 the club held a tournament in which amateur athletes from the area competed in sparring, wrestling, tug-of-war and track. It awarded thirteen gold prizes, followed by an entertainment in Union Hall. Boxing was particularly prominent.

RIVERSIDE'S NEW BOATHOUSE

In the meantime, The Riverside Press had become one of the leading printing houses in the nation. Needing to expand its plant, the company informed the boat club that it required its site. Although Riverside carried a large debt, under the leadership of treasurer and future president James T. McNamee, in 1886 the club purchased a replacement parcel of land wedged between The Riverside Press property and the Cambridge Electric Company's coal yard at the foot of Albro Street. In preparation for building a new boathouse on the site, in March 1887 Riverside obtained a charter as an incorporated organization with the mission, "To encourage and further aquatic and athletic sports and to promote a friendly and social spirit and interest among its members." Club president J. J. Sullivan and treasurer McNamee established a building fund and raised contributions by holding social events such as a bazaar in Union Hall and an entertainment in the Prospect Skating Academy featuring a tug-of-war between Riverside and Bradford Boat Clubs, followed by a dance.

In 1889, Riverside celebrated its twentieth anniversary and its growing stature with a party at Armory Hall in Brattle Square. The hall overflowed with well-wishers. Riverside's membership surpassed 85. To accommodate them, the club hired Cambridge architect John A. Hasty to prepare designs for a boathouse with expanded space.⁹ Completed at a cost of \$3,000 in the spring of 1891,

it was a two-story shingle structure 65 feet in length and 40 feet wide. Its first floor provided boat storage, dressing rooms and a shower. The second floor, devoted to indoor sporting events like boxing and to social gatherings, contained an assembly hall with a frescoed ceiling and incandescent electric lights, “gentlemen’s and ladies’ parlors and ladies’ toilets,” and a porch with river views. The building had steam heat.

Riverside celebrated the opening of its new boathouse with a May 4 banquet and dance, the first of the countless social events its second floor would host in the coming years. An 1892 article refers to a series of ladies nights. Over a hundred members and as many guests were reported to assemble on Sunday afternoons to enjoy each other’s company.



Riverside's new boathouse, approximately 1892

Housed in an attractive new boathouse, Riverside Boat Club reached the top of the local athletic club hierarchy. In 1893, the 1890 and '91 national amateur sculling champion, Lawrence's William Caffrey, joined. Caffrey would stroke many of its eights. The club took on a coach, professional sculler Jerry Casey, from a South Boston multi-generational rowing family. Riverside's rivalry with Bradford Boat Club reached a crescendo in a July 4, 1893 match race between the clubs' eights staged on Lake Quinsigamond. All Worcester was reported to have “gone crazy” over the event.



Riverside's 1894 National Championship Intermediate Eight

Riverside gained the advantage in 1894, when its intermediate eight won the National Championship in Saratoga, New York, the first national banner won by a New England eight, although Bradford's prestige was burnished by Joe McGuire's victory in the junior sculling event. (His banner hangs today in Riverside's assembly room.) The club's winning crew consisted of Ludlow Berkeley, Hugh Finnegan, M. A. Sullivan, William Hagan, Fred Hynes, William Parrock, Thomas Frawley and Joseph Hobbs, with Patrick Anglin coxing. In truth it was not much of a race. The only other entry stopped after falling behind after a quarter-mile. Nevertheless, news clippings tell of throngs of triumphant Riverside club mates and friends meeting the train from Saratoga in Fitchburg and celebrating the entire journey back to Cambridge. A celebratory banquet at the boathouse featured Cambridge mayor Bancroft and local other dignitaries.

The club secured its advantage in 1895 when members of Bradford's "big eight" switched allegiance to Riverside and another new member, East Boston's Joe Whitehead, previously of East Boston's Columbians, won the 1896 national singles title in Saratoga. Again, "the Riverside cheer was given with a will" at the various stations along the return route. A large crowd met the victor at Union (North) Station and his silk championship banner was on exhibit for a week at 6 State Street in Boston. The club's 1897 eight, averaging 145 pounds, defeated Chelsea's Millstreams and the BAA for the New England championship.

In addition to attracting the region's best rowers, the club's new, larger boathouse allowed it to expand the scope of its athletic activities. In 1892, it was reported to be purchasing gymnasium equipment, including a wrestling mat and what was called a punching board. It organized the Bridge Athletic Club for young members, many of whom participated in gymnastics and track. Tug-of-war was hugely popular at the time and Riverside had a team in training. Participation in track and field was heavy. Newspapers announced that two of the area's well-known race walkers and long-distance runners would compete under its colors. The club's athletic committee put together a track team for the Gloucester Games, including sprinters, jumpers and competitors for the mile run, the mile walk, and the shot put. Boxing remained paramount, however. The club sponsored matches in local social halls. Riverside's Jimmie O'Brien was the New England amateur 105 pound boxing champion in 1891 and 1892. The club held a "monster athletic carnival" at Spy Pond in 1894, at which sparring matches between New England amateur boxers were the feature of the day. As its rowing and athletic profile rose, the club's membership reached 150 in 1895.

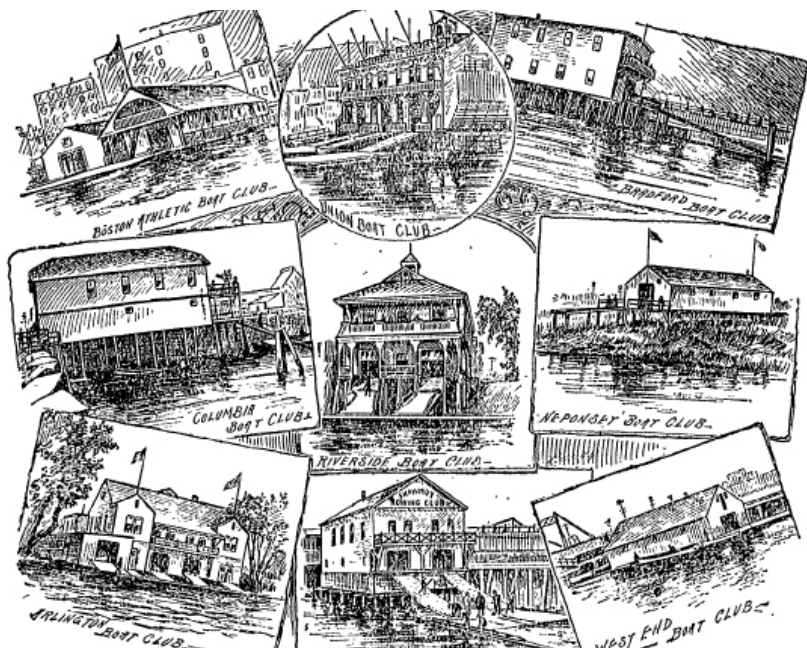
Riverside During the Golden Era of Boston Rowing

By 1900, Boston was a major industrial city. The country's second largest immigration port, its population reached 560,900, of whom, counting native-born children of immigrants, 246,100, or nearly half, were Irish. It was a turbulent time, rife with labor discord and bitter politics. Class and ethnic groups formed social and benevolent organizations of all kinds to promote the welfare of their members and offer sources of identity and pride within a fractious society.

Across the Charles River, Cambridgeport had evolved into one of Boston's industrial suburbs. Compared to others, however, it was a solid middle and working class community that provided employment to 15,000 people, of which manufacturing supplied over 7,000 jobs, for the most part filled by its population of second and third generation immigrants.¹⁰ Printing and binding, such as The Riverside Press, as well as metal and musical instrument production provided skilled jobs. Other major employers included woodworking, confectionary, laundry and food producing businesses. The neighborhood's businesses offered relatively favorable working conditions, work hours and wages. Although Frank Facey was a Typographer's Union member, union organizers did not consider the district fertile ground. Cambridgeport's residential pattern was characteristic of the time. Its ethnic groups formed residential enclaves. Its 14,000 Irish clustered around their two churches and their social and benevolent organizations, of which Riverside Boat Club was one, in an area south of Massachusetts Avenue and west of Central Square popularly known as "Paddy's Hollow."

As the Boston area's population rose, the fraternal spirit of the era combined with the popular enthusiasm for athletics to bring the number of its boat clubs and oarsmen to its peak. In addition to organizations dedicated to the established racing boats of the time, there were barge clubs such as the North

Ends, the Puritania club, the Ramblers, the Coreys, the Lafayette club and the Coopers, which held their own competitions. Two new rowing clubs appeared whose social origins distinguished them from the established neighborhood-based clubs. Both were outgrowths of the efforts by Catholic churches to recruit young male parishioners by offering athletic activities and social facilities. In the West End, St. Joseph's church built a floating boathouse near Craigie Bridge and began a rowing program. In 1900, the Mission Church in Roxbury formed the St. Alphonsus Athletic Association and opened a large gym and social hall. Given the importance of rowing in the area's sporting scene, the association initiated a program despite its landlocked location. In need of a boathouse, it entered into merger negotiations with Bradford. When they failed because Bradford insisted that the merged clubs keep its name, St. Alphonsus purchased Weld's first boathouse from the City of Cambridge, which had acquired the structure to make way for riverfront improvements, and in 1909 transported it downstream to a site it purchased on the Boston side of the river just above the Brookline (B.U.) Bridge.



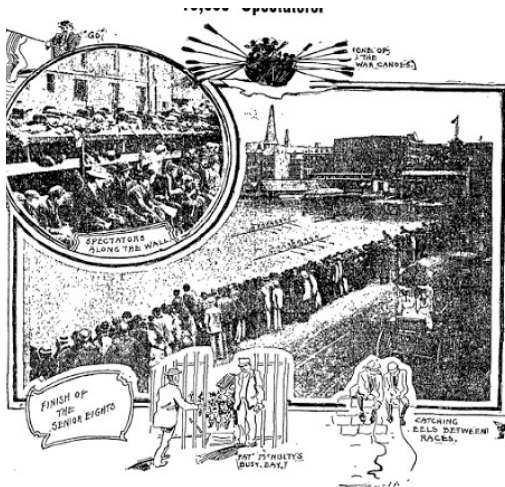
Local boathouses in 1895, with Riverside at the center

While the middle and upper classes had their own rowing venues, such as the boathouses of the Boston Athletic Association and Cambridge Casino, most local rowing organizations continued to be manifestations of their working and lower middle class neighborhoods, with social programs that were as strong or stronger than their rowing programs. The names of some of the presidents convey their continuing Irish affiliation: Healy (Shawmut); Rowan (Jeffries Point); Foley (Columbians); and Phelan (Bradford).

It is testimony to the centrality of the social missions of rowing clubs like Riverside that Riverside's 23 year-old president, Thomas Hynes, was reported to take an active interest in both "rowing and in the social advancement of the club". A subsequent article describes its President Cleary as "one of the popular young citizens in this classic city. Although not much of an oarsman he strictly attends to the social interests of the club." Perhaps in an allusion to strife among its members that was said to have threatened the club's future in 1897, he was reported to have "the faculty of keeping the boys together in the most discouraging conditions".

On the competitive rowing side, the number of opportunities to race expanded as participation in the sport rose. Boston's annual July 4th City Regatta continued to serve as the New England championship, but the recent institution of Labor Day provided the occasion for an annual NEARA fall regatta, which kept rowers in training to the end of the season. The Metropolitan Amateur Rowing Association, formed in 1895 to oversee local racing, introduced an annual spring regatta. In addition, each club put on its own annual regatta. Riverside's version featured races for single and double whitehalls, single sculls, and four-oared workboats.

With rowing interest at its peak, Boston area amateur rowers went from success to success over the next ten years. Bradford's Joe McGuire won the national sculling title in 1897, Riverside's Joe Whitehead finishing second. Worcester's Edward TenEyck, already the victor in the 1897 Henley Royal Regatta Diamond Sculls, won the U.S. national elite singles title in the 1899 NAAO national championships, held that year in Boston. The regatta committee set up a quarter mile long grandstand holding 2,000 spectators on the Back Bay seawall to accommodate the public's enthusiasm for the sport and their local heroes. In 1900, Frank B. Greer, having switched allegiance from the Jeffrie's Point Boat



Spectators at the finish line in front of Union on September 3, 1901

Club to the East Boston Athletic and Rowing Club, won the national senior singles championship.¹¹ Perhaps the greatest rower ever to come out of Boston, Greer won the newly designated national elite singles title in 1903, again in '04 and '05, and a fourth time in 1908. He was also singles champion at the 1904 St. Louis Olympics, although the event had no

overseas entries. Altogether, local scullers won the national senior and elite single sculling titles in eight of the sixteen years between 1890 and 1905.

Popular enthusiasm for the sport extended to scholastic rowing. In 1893, the Boston Athletic Association sponsored rowing programs at seven area schools, expanding the initiative to 13 the following year. Under its auspices, public and private schools—many of them long forgotten—raced against each other over a mile-length course in first and second boat fours hosted by local clubs. During the 1906 season, for instance, Roxbury Latin rowed out of Union Boat Club under the direction of a professional on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 2:30, while Brookline High School and Browne and Nichols School boated at 3:30; Nobles and Greenough rowed Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 2:30; and Stone's at 3:30. Boston Latin, Ballou and Hoblgand, Cambridge Latin, English High, and Volkmann rowed out of the Boston Athletic Association's boathouse. Other scholastic rowing programs included the Free School, Rindge Technical, Merchant Arts, Waltham and Dorchester High Schools. It is not clear whether Riverside hosted any of them in this period.

As the spring season approached, culminating in the heats and finals of the Interscholastic Rowing Association's annual championship over two weeks at the end of May or in early June, schoolboy rowing received great public attention. Newspapers featured pictures of the leading schools' captains and reported their evolving lineups. In 1900, the BAA, maintaining its commitment to schoolboy

rowing, donated a \$250 winner's trophy. Brookline High School retired it in 1911 by winning the championship a third time. Attesting to scholastic rowing's popularity as well as to the unregulated nature of automobiles at the time, the *Boston Globe* reported that for the 1913 championships "the rooters occupied both the Cottage Farm and Harvard Bridges. The esplanade from the start to the finish was crowded and automobile parties followed the races along both sides of the river." In 1915, BAA president A. Paul Keith donated a new trophy as a memorial to his relative, theater impresario and civic benefactor B. F. Keith, whose Washington Street family variety theater is considered to be "the mother house of American vaudeville." Mayor Curley presented the trophy to that year's winner, Rindge Technical, on the theater's stage.

With its level of competition success and popular interest, the onset of the 20th Century was local rowing's golden age. Nevertheless, there were intimations of problems to come. New sporting interests proliferated. Cycling, for instance, was a mania. What had been a daring feat by wheelmen peddling high wheel "ordinaries" became a popular craze among both men and women pedaling "safety bicycles" constructed along the lines of today's bikes. In keeping with the fraternal spirit of the times, participants shared their enthusiasm in organizations like the Cambridgeport Bicycle Club. Promoters, capitalizing on the public's interest, built a large outdoor velodrome at Sidney and Main Streets that hosted professional racing.

Perhaps suffering from the competition from other recreations, several boat clubs, including those in South Boston and East Boston, experienced diminishing participation and sustained themselves through their social activities. While East Boston's clubs produced many of the area's best oarsmen, they debated whether to restrict their memberships to local residents or to recruit oarsmen from elsewhere. As illustrated by Frank Greer's switch in allegiance and Joe Whitehead's defection to Riverside, they jockeyed to capture the neighborhood's best oarsmen, competed to offer social facilities, and by 1900 had begun to explore consolidation.

Some clubs were disrupted by generational changes. There were reports that Bradford was in financial trouble and that younger members committed to restoring the club's ascendancy had formed a club within the club, electing their own officers and holding their own meetings. By 1903, the NEARA was

concerned enough about the health of some of its members that it formed a committee to investigate. With reservations, it found that the West End and Crescent clubs remained viable, but South Boston's Central and City Point clubs were expelled. In the meantime, the Boston Athletic Club resigned.

In contrast, Riverside Boat Club, its reported internal problems apparently resolved, was firmly established as the leading club in the region. Under the coaching of Jerry Casey, its eight, averaging 145 pounds, won the 1900 New England Amateur Rowing Association championship. *The Boston Globe's* long-time rowing reporter and NEARA figure Eugene Buckley proclaimed it "the first racing club in America." In 1902, he reported that, "Never in the history of rowing was there greater activity shown in turning out racing crews than is the case at present (at Riverside)". Seat selection for its intermediate and senior sweep boats was more competitive than ever. Riverside's 1903 senior eight, coached by George Faulkner and again New England champion, was considered the best the club had put on the water to-date. It's J. Peterson, coached by Faulkner as well, was a force in the senior single in 1904.

Reflecting the continuing movement of competitors among clubs, in 1906 St. Joseph's crack senior four made news by going over to Riverside as a group. At the same time, Joe Whitehead and Joe Hobbs left the club, recruited by Bradford's Joe McGuire in his effort to resurrect Bradford's "big eight". Nevertheless, Riverside confirmed its ascendancy when its senior eight claimed the 1906 national championship on August 11, 1906 in Worcester.

It was a claim that was not without controversy. Riverside and New York Athletic Club rowed to a disputed finish in the championship race. After an interval, the NAAO announced that the race would be re-rowed, even though it was after sunset. Riverside appeared to win. In the race's aftermath, a disgruntled NYAC filled charges claiming that Riverside had replaced oarsmen who had been drinking prior to the decision to re-row the race with fresh rowers. The NAAO conducted a formal investigation. At its hearing in Boston on March 9, 1907, NYAC's representative claimed that canoers who had been at the finish line as Riverside prepared to head to the start of the row-over had asked how the boat would do given the intoxicated condition of one of its members. In a sworn statement they reported that a member of the crew answered, "Don't worry about us, for we have three fresh men in the boat." Once NYAC finished

making its case, Riverside's witnesses were sworn, beginning with esteemed coach George Faulkner, who recounted scurrying around in an automobile to reassemble the boat after the decision was announced to re-row the race. He testified that he was positive that no one but the oarsmen who took part in first race were boated in the second. Three members of the crew corroborated his statement. At the hearing's conclusion, the NAAO lead investigator stated that, "The Riversides have presented a very strong case, and with the testimony to come, I cannot see how their standing can be affected....I believe the Riversides told the truth." The club's 1906 national championship was upheld.

Riverside's young scullers were also coming on strong. The club selected its intermediate singles entry for the 1908 nationals, to be held in Springfield, by holding a much publicized race among four of its members—reported to be the first time in Boston rowing history that there were four men in one club that were so competitive in their class. Up-and-coming Carey Faulkner, George Faulkner's son, defeated another second generation oarsman, Joe Ryan, prominent Cambridge boat builder William Davey's son Frank, and J. Brassil to represent the club in the intermediate singles. Faulkner won his event. To celebrate, Riverside presented him with a gold watch and made him a life member. In 1909 he was the New England senior champion.

Over the decade to come Riverside's scullers were ascendant. Frank Davey won the New England singles championship in 1912. Together with Cary Faulkner, his brother William, and Yale oarsman Henry Livingston, they formed a quad that won the U.S. national championship in 1913. Again held in Boston, the

RIVERSIDE-UNION RACE THRILLS GREAT CROWD ALONG THE CHARLES

**Former Winner by 18 Inches--Duluth Carries Off Two Events
--Canadians Hold Their Own in Day's Racing.**



Riverside's quad defeating Union in the National Championships. Page One, The Boston Globe, August 9, 1913

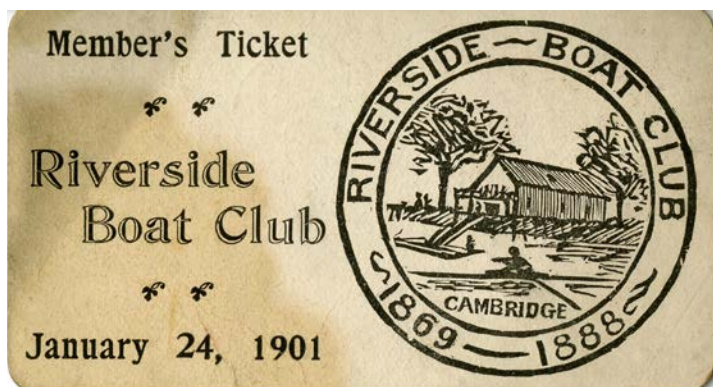
event was the largest rowing competition in the country to that date, with over 91 competitors from this country and Canada competing in 13 races. The Faulkners, Davey and Livingston repeated as national champions the next year in Philadelphia.

In addition to producing some of the area's best rowers, Riverside continued to be a thriving general athletic association. It initiated annual track meets at Spy Pond Grove in Arlington in 1901. The club's first meet included 125 participants in the 100-yard dash, the 440, 880 and one-mile runs, and the broad jump. In December 1909, it held a ten-mile cross country run. Above all, however, the club was identified with amateur boxing. An 1896 article describes the boathouse as swarming with "crack boxers" and asserts that Riverside's Ben McArthur is the area's best ever. "The club can outclass any amateur organization in America as far as boxers go." During winter months, Riverside's social committee held regular, sometimes weekly evening "smoke talks" at the boathouse featuring speakers and boxing matches. They were attended by "all the best local stars in athletics and in the theatrical profession." The club's annual boxing tournament in Cypress Hall on Prospect Street remained extremely popular.

In 1902, it hosted the New England Amateur Athletic Association boxing championships, which entailed 25 to 30 bouts over the course of two evenings. A 1906 article reported on Riverside's New England amateur middleweight boxing champion as well as its bowling and pool champions. Interest in the club was so high that it capped its membership 125. At times the waiting list was twice that number.

Boston area neighborhood boat clubs continued their camaraderie even as they remained intense competitors. During the summer, they held Sunday open houses, oarsmen rowing to each other's boathouses for social get-togethers. Riverside's reception for its junior single and junior eight, winners of the 1900 Labor Day regatta, attracted numerous guests, including a leonine appearance from Frank Greer and delegations from St. Josephs, St. Alphonsus, Columbians, Jeffries Point, Bradford, Chelsea's Millstreams from Chelsea, and West Lynn. In 1904, *The Boston Globe* referred to Riverside's Friday evening dances. "Boating parties from down the river make landings at their float and take part in the merrymaking." The club retained its role in Cambridge's social scene as well. Seasonal events, such as its Thanksgiving Ball in Cambridgeport's Union Hall

on November 29, 1893, were prominent, just as they were among all the athletic clubs of the day. The club's April, 1901 Union Hall minstrel show--the now deplored blackface theatrical phenomenon that was an entertainment staple of the time--featured comedy and music from both club and professional performers. It held its 25th annual ball in Malta Hall in April 1904. A 1908 minstrel show, with "many girls taking part," followed by flying rings, hand-balancing demonstrations and a dance, was said to be a great success.



*Riverside dance ticket. Presumably the image is of the club's original boathouse.
(Cambridge Historical Commission)*

As an outgrowth of its role as a center of Cambridge social life, Riverside continued to be something of a political club. Former president Frank Facey, who had risen from membership in the Cambridge common council and the city's Public Safety Committee to Ward 4 Democratic chairman and then to chairman of the city Democratic Party, conducted a program to naturalize and register immigrants to vote. His organizational ability was credited with the 1902 election of Riverside's John McNamee's as Cambridge's first Irish mayor. In recognition, the new mayor appointed Facey registrar of voters.

Riverside and the Creation of the Charles River Reservation

In 1873, the Commonwealth's board of health designated the Charles River estuary as the most polluted and dangerous hazard in Massachusetts. By the 1890s, the river banks between the Brookline Bridge, a wooden trestle structure built around 1894, and Watertown consisted of tidal marshes punctuated by riverfront industries such as The Riverside Press and the adjacent Cambridge Electric Company; Harvard's coal yards, the only university riverfront property at the time; the Watertown Arsenal; and the Brighton slaughter house, located between the Arsenal and North Beacon Street Bridges. A mid-1880s oarsman described this stretch of the river in the fall as a "dank, dark ditch." Outgoing tides dropped the water level at least five feet. It swept through bridge pilings like a mill race until at low water the river was so narrow that two crews could not race abreast. A Riverside rower was quoted in 1905 saying that the club's members "find occupation for their leisure moments fishing Harvard oarsmen out of the river" when the tide fetched them up against the Western Avenue Bridge. "There was a time when a rescue meant the present of a new sweater or a pair of rowing tights, but now it is scarcely 'Thank you'."

Below the Brookline Bridge on the river's Cambridge side were portions of a seawall for a failed speculative landmaking venture, constructed in 1883. Further downstream, the river bank was, in the words of an 1892 report of the Cambridge Park Commission, "most unsightly, the most offensive, and the most menacing and is susceptible of the greatest improvement by being made attractive, valuable and healthful." On the Boston side, the river's West End shore was an industrial waterfront except for the frontage of the Massachusetts General Hospital and Charles Street Jail. On the river's southern shore, the filling of the Back Bay to create a new residential district was largely complete. A seawall to the rear of the houses on the river side of Beacon Street formed a popular vantage point for viewing races. Its granite blocks, where throngs of

spectators stood to cheer their favorites, can still be glimpsed to the right as one drives east from Charlesgate on Storrow Drive. The Harvard (Massachusetts Avenue) Bridge was constructed between 1887 and 1891. To accommodate commercial river traffic, a central section rotated out of the way, which accounts for why one of the bridge support is different from the others. The replacement of the low-slung West Boston draw bridge with arching Cambridge (Longfellow) Bridge was authorized in 1900.



An 1870s view of the Western Avenue Bridge from The Riverside Press

By the 1880s, a regional movement was underway to create parks for the recreation of the area's growing urban population that would transform the river. In doing so, it would also reconfigure the Charles River rowing clubs and dramatically impact Riverside Boat Club. The first of the projects, Charlesbank Park, opened in 1889. An enormously popular recreation facility located at the foot of the West End where the Esplanade tennis courts and baseball fields are today, it contained a running track and gymnastic equipment.

In January 1893, the newly formed Metropolitan Park Commission issued a report proposing a regional park system that would include public reservations along the length of both sides of the Charles River, which would be dammed to create a fresh water basin, and the Muddy River. The City of Cambridge, however, stood somewhat aloof from the Commission. It put forward its own



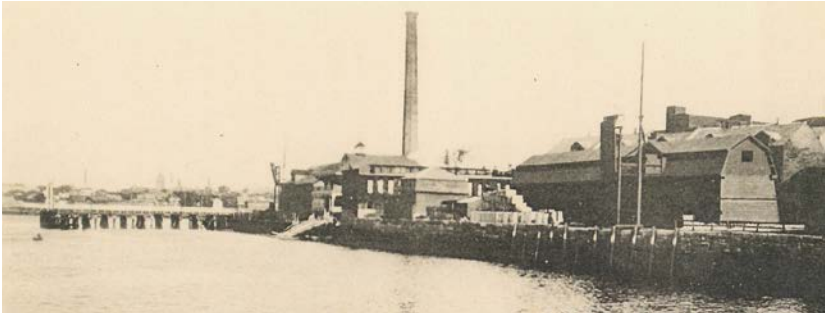
The Back Bay seawall in 1882, from which crowds watched races in the 1890s. Childe Hassam.

plan for its riverfront, proposing a dam upstream from Craigie's Bridge, an esplanade between the West Boston bridge and the Brookline Bridge, a park and swimming beach above Brookline Bridge known as Captain's Island (now Magazine Beach), and a tree-lined Charles River Road

extending upriver past Harvard that would require the relocation of Riverside's boathouse.

Pursuing its plan, the city acquired most of its riverfront by eminent domain in January 1894. To make way for the river road, the Cambridge Casino moved to a site opposite DeWolf Street in 1895 and Weld's Harvard Rowing Club relocated to a new bulkhead in 1897. The disruption it caused probably explains why Riverside voted to let Harvard's '97 class crew use its boathouse in preparation for the college's spring class races. In 1901, Harvard demolished its 1869 boathouse and its crews moved across the river to Newell Boathouse. As Cambridge's riverfront improvements progressed, the Harvard Rowing Club replaced the one it had recently relocated with the present Weld Boathouse, a 1906 design, again by Robert S. Peabody, and the Cambridge Boat Club replaced the Casino Club following a fire in 1909.

Cambridge completed its esplanade seawall in 1899, although the made land behind it, now the riverfront campus of M.I.T., would lie fallow for several years. Meanwhile, the acquisition of the right-of-way for the Charles River Road between River Street and Western Avenue was impeded by the presence of The Riverside Press. In 1901, however, the City acquired this portion of the parkway alignment, including Riverside's boathouse. The club would need to relocate but the City permitted it to continue to use the building until construction of the road required the site.



The river frontage between River Street and Western Avenue in 1900. Riverside's boathouse and ramps are visible just downstream from Western Avenue

On the Boston side of the river, the Metropolitan Parks Commission's proposal to create a one-hundred foot wide embankment along the Back Bay side of the river from Charlesgate West to the foot of Beacon Hill, where it would widen to 300 feet before linking to Charles Bank Park, moved more slowly. In 1906, however, the implementing Charles River Basin Commission required Union Boat Club and the Boston Athletic Association to make way for its construction by relocating from their boathouses behind Brimmer Street to the B.A.A.'s floating boathouse on the Cambridge embankment below the Harvard Bridge. The project was completed in 1909. Union opened its present boathouse in the widened section of the embankment that year, freeing its former site to be developed for squash and social functions. The Back Bay portion of the embankment, however, proved too narrow and too unembellished to be popular.

Ironically, some of the area's rowing clubs did not survive the movement to provide the public with waterfront recreation. The metropolitan park commissioners required South Boston's City Point Club to make way for the Strand in the 1890s. The Crescent was forced to relocate to a site at the foot of North Beacon Street in Brighton. There was talk in 1904 that the park commission would build boathouses for both Bradford and Riverside on land near the Magazine Beach powder magazine, but in 1906 Bradford's boathouse was moved out of the way of the impending construction of a new Cottage Farm (the present BU) Bridge. The commission served notice in the spring of 1909 that the club must either renovate its building or remove it from the park reservation. Despite efforts to raise the money necessary to rebuild within the new parkland, it was soon reported that, "It now looks as though (Bradford) have to vacate the location granted for the boathouse on the east bank of the Charles

River just above the Cottage Farm Bridge owing to the lack of funds to meet the requirements of the park commissioners.”

Meanwhile, the plan to stabilize the river level with a dam was nearing realization. Despite the advocacy of Beacon Street resident and 1885 Harvard crew captain James Storrow that it be constructed where it would eliminate the tidal flow in the Back Bay, in 1899 the legislature, responding to widespread opposition from other Beacon Street property owners, authorized it to be built just downstream from the Brookline Bridge. The project would no doubt have jeopardized the future of upstream boat clubs like Riverside by cutting them off from the Back Bay. The legislation was strongly opposed by Harvard and Boston's rowing clubs, however. In a glimpse of the continuing strength of Yankee institutions in Massachusetts politics, representatives from Harvard, Union Boat Club, the Boston Athletic Association, and Weld Boat Club, together with an officer of the New England Amateur Rowing Association representing the Charles River's other clubs, formed a committee to draft a substitute authorization that would place the dam at the Park Commission's recommended location above Craigie Bridge. The legislature approved it in 1903. A temporary dam, requiring the displacement of St. Joseph's boathouse to a pier near the Cambridge Bridge in 1905, was in place in 1908 and the permanent dam was operational in 1910.

With the river's water level stabilized and the riverfront parks nearing completion, in 1911 the BAA gave up its floating boathouse on the Cambridge shore, replacing it with a building believed to be an 1890s public canoe club, which it barged from Duxbury to a site within the Cambridge esplanade just below the Grand Junction Railroad's bridge, the location of the present Boston University boat house. As a rowing venue, however, the new basin failed to live up to expectations. If anything, the water was choppiest than before the dam was built. A year after it was completed a report called the basin “a windswept lake of magnificent distances,” and a local architect stated that it “resembles a huge bath tub, and the oarsman feels like a piece of soap in it.”

Meanwhile, upstream, ten years after Cambridge took title to Riverside's boathouse, it had not yet made way for the Charles River Road in 1911. The club had only recently settled with the City on a payment of \$7,000 as compensation for the taking and planning was underway for a new facility when, at about 1:00 A.M. on May 2, 1911, a watchman at the Cambridge Electric Co. spotted a fire in

the building and called in the alarm. The glow from the blaze, which could soon be seen for miles, attracted a large crowd. At one point, it spread to the adjacent electric company coal bins but was quickly contained. A club member trying to salvage Riverside's equipment was treated for smoke inhalation. The boathouse was destroyed in less than an hour. All of Riverside's boats were lost, including four eights, two doubles, two four-oared workboats, two fours, at least thirty singles, as well as a number of whitehalls. The fire also consumed seventy-five banners and trophies, including those for national championships won four years earlier at Worcester and in Saratoga in 1894, which may explain why only three NEARA banners hanging in the club date before 1912. The loss was valued at \$3,000, about half of which was attributed to the City of Cambridge as owner of the building.

On May 5, an emergency membership meeting instructed a committee to locate temporary quarters until a new boathouse could be constructed. The St. Alphonsus Athletic Association invited the club to share its new facility for the time being. Riverside considered purchasing Bradford's building, but decided instead to build a new boathouse. On June 10, the club held a fundraiser at the Scenic Temple featuring moving pictures, music, illustrated songs and sketches. Winter quarters were rented on Massachusetts Avenue. Club member John McAuliffe was at work on the new boathouse's design and by December the Cambridge Park Commission had received the club's proposal for a site on a small spit of land within the proposed Captain's Island Park. On February 12, 1912, the city granted Riverside a twenty-year lease for the site. The City of Cambridge, as owner of the building when it was destroyed, settled with the club for \$7,000. With these funds in hand, Riverside filed building plans with the City in April.

The new structure, Riverside Boat Club's present boathouse, was quickly under construction. It is unclear what rowing activities the club was able to carry on that season, but under president Thomas Riley and vice president T. F. Toomey amateur boxing tournaments, including Riverside's annual tournament in Cypress Hall, continued. The club's new boathouse, a two-story, hip-roofed structure 50 feet wide, 70 feet deep and resting on wooden pilings capped with concrete piers, was completed at a cost of \$7,600 in September 1912. For the moment, the boathouse was surrounded by the mud flats that would become the western end of Captain's Island Park. The first floor housed the club's

boats as well as a training room, showers, lockers and a dressing room. The second floor was devoted to a large assembly space and dance hall with a raised band area, still visible in the downstream corner, a checkroom, and men's and women's parlors. The original layout can be deciphered today by tracing the wainscoting along the walls.

Cambridge's plan for the riverfront parkway was consummated in 1914 when the last section of the Charles River Road and its supporting seawall, between Western Avenue and River Street, were constructed. The Charles River's transformation into the centerpiece of the metropolitan park system had been completed. As an unanticipated consequences of this remarkable public undertaking, Bradford and other boat clubs had been lost but Union, Cambridge, and Harvard Boat Clubs, the Boston Athletic Association, Harvard University and Riverside Boat Club were rowing from new boathouses. The 1916 Cambridge Atlas shows Riverside at its new location adjacent to the men's, women's and boy's bathhouses, the latter in the converted powder magazine, within the recently constructed Captain's Island riverfront park.

Coping with Club Rowing's Decline

The social changes that were beginning to trouble local club rowing in 1900, such as growing participation in other sports and recreations, accelerated as the century's second decade got underway. Searching for a new home, Bradford Boat Club consulted with the promoter of a proposed Brighton Rowing Club about consolidation, but nothing came of the idea.

On the other hand, Union Boat Club remained strong. It sent a crew made up of Harvard graduate oarsmen to the Henley Royal Regatta in 1914, where to the embarrassment of English rowing it and Harvard made up the final in the blue ribbon event for eights, the Grand Challenge Cup. In 1916, looking for better water, Union built a second boathouse near the location of the present Harvard Business School. It was little used, however, and was later moved upstream to become the Browne and Nichols School boathouse.

The United States' declaration of war against Germany in April, 1917 had a profound impact on American life and, as a consequence on rowing.¹² The national championships, which were to have been held in Lynn, were cancelled, as well as those of 1918. Once the war was over in 1919, however, major regattas again drew large crowds and collegiate racing resumed its prominence.

1919 was Riverside Boat Club's silver anniversary. It celebrated with a banquet at the boathouse attended by over 200. President Joseph M. Murphy presided. J. Frank Facey was toastmaster. Philip Calvin, 70 years old and one of the club's first members fifty years earlier, spoke. The dinner was followed by music and a speech by Harvard crew coach Bill Haines. Cambridge Mayor Edward Quinn made a presentation to George Faulkner, former professional sculler, Harvard crew coach, and talismanic rowing figure whose legacy extended to his sons Cary and William, Riverside's 1919 national double sculls champions.¹³ James Fox of St. Alphonsus Boat Club presented Faulkner with a four foot section of

the bow of the pair, still emblazoned with the name “Boston,” in which he and Patsy Reagan won the Centennial Regatta in Philadelphia in 1876.

1920 was an Olympic year. The club held dances every Tuesday and Friday evening to raise money for Cary and William Faulkner and Jeremiah Shea to compete for selection, albeit unsuccessfully, in the singles as the United States’ single sculler.



Cary and William Faulkner

The social changes accelerated by the war included recognition of women’s contributions to the nation’s all-out mobilization, giving momentum to the adoption of the 19th Amendment granting women suffrage in 1920. They also encouraged women’s growing participation in sports. Although women had rowed recreationally and had, from time to time, raced singles in the United States since at least 1860, Boston’s 1924 Labor Day regatta put on the first modern women’s singles event in the country, a half mile race between Helen Court of Wachusett Boat Club of Worcester and A. S. Mollard of Philadelphia’s Pennsylvania Barge Club. By 1930, events for “the fair sex,” as newspaper accounts called them, were regular features of local regattas.

Nevertheless, popular participation in club rowing continued to decline. Reflecting the trend, the BAA leased its boathouse below the Brookline Bridge to M.I.T, which renovated it in 1927. Neighborhood rowing clubs disappeared throughout the Boston area. Those in East Boston merged or folded, as did

those in the West End. Although Riverside's senior eight won the New England championship in a special match race with St. Alphonsus in 1923, the club did not hold a regatta after about 1920. Union Boat Club's Russell Codman Jr., heir to his family's real estate company and Boston Mayor Curley's Fire Commissioner, enjoyed considerable prominence as a single sculler, winning the national championship in 1925 and competing at Henley and the 1928 Olympic Trials, but after 1920 national competitive success shifted from Boston to Duluth rowers trained by TenEyck and then to Philadelphia and New York.

Rowing's declining prestige affected local scholastic rowing as well. High schools were switching from fours to eights to provide more opportunities for participation, but the programs' costs put them in jeopardy even as M.I.T. and clubs like Union and Harvard Boat Club became reluctant to offer them space in their boathouses. While Cambridge's Rindge Tech and Cambridge Latin High Schools sought donations to pay for eights, Riverside saved their fours program in 1925 by offering them the use of its boathouse, but in 1927 Cambridge discontinued high school rowing. Private school rowing, on the other hand, remained strong. Cambridge's Browne and Nichols School, rowing from Riverside Boat Club in place of Cambridge public schools, sent an eight that included future Governor Bradford and furrier George Kakas, father of Riverside international competitor Ted Kakas, to the 1927 Henley Royal Regatta, where it was the first winning U.S. schoolboy crew.



The Charles River approximately 1925. The Cottage Farm (now BU) Bridge is in construction. The BAA's boathouse is below it. St. Stephen's boathouse is just above it. Riverside is above Magazine Beach.

Meanwhile, the Commonwealth continued improving the Charles River. In 1923, the City of Cambridge transferred the Charles River Road to the Metropolitan District Commission, which renamed it Memorial Drive in honor of those killed in World War I. The River Street Bridge was built in 1926 and the Cottage Farm (the present B.U.) Bridge replaced the Brookline Bridge in 1928, a year after the construction of the Weeks footbridge. A mishap during its construction destroyed a portion of St. Alphonsus' boathouse.

RIVERSIDE DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The Great Depression that arrived in 1929 further eroded local rowing. Although private secondary schools continued to compete, budget pressures brought most public high school rowing programs to an end. By 1930, club rowing in Boston was, in the words of *The Boston Globe*, moribund. That August, in recognition of Boston's 300th birthday, the NAAO held its 58th national championships on the Charles River. The event also served as the U.S. Olympic trials for all but the eights. Philadelphia clubs, which had won eleven of fifteen events in 1929, captured every men's event and all six Olympic berths, while participation from local clubs was limited to Union Boat Club in the championship singles (represented by Russell Codman Jr.), lightweight singles, association singles, dash and the quad; Shawmut Rowing Association in the lightweight eight; one other entry in the lightweight singles; Jerry Shea, an Irish immigrant transit motorman who was shortly to defect from St. Alphonsus to Riverside and would become one of its leading figures, in the association singles; and a single entry in the double. West Lynn entered the intermediate eights and Delna Carlstrom of Worcester won a trophy donated by entertainer Rudy Vallee in the only women's event, a quarter-mile dash for scullers. Riverside appears nowhere in the program.

Over the next few years, the Boston area membership of the New England Amateur Rowing Association was reduced to Riverside Boat Club, Cambridge Boat Club, Shawmut Rowing Association, St. Alphonsus Boat Club, Union Boat Club, and M.I.T. and Harvard's club manifestations, Tech and Weld Boat Clubs. Members from outside Boston included clubs from Lynn, Waltham, Worcester and Springfield. By 1935, the local clubs participating in the NEARA's annual July regatta were reduced to Riverside, Cambridge, Shawmut, Union and Weld Boat Clubs, joined by the West Lynn, Shrewsbury and Worcester Rowing

Clubs. The City of Boston still put up prizes for the association's annual July 4 championships, but canoers now shared an equal number of events with rowers. By 1938, St. Alphonsus appears to have gone under. As other local clubs disappeared, the regattas available to competitors became scarcer. The NEARA's championship races often had few entrants and were sometimes abandoned for lack of competition.

While club rowing was in decline, however, collegiate rowing continued. Boston University's first men's crew, the Independents, was organized in 1936 by a group of students that had rowed scholastically for Browne and Nichols School. They initially boated from Union Boat Club in equipment borrowed from Harvard and M.I.T., and then from a shed on the site of a former coal dock on the university side of the river.

Despite hard times and its diminished profile, working class Riverside Boat Club carried on. Its machinists, carpenters and truck drivers launched at 7:00 in the evening, after completing long workdays. Only two of Riverside's 1931 senior and junior oarsmen were said to have attended college, neither of whom rowed there, and only one of its 1937 senior crew had a college background. Dues that year were less than \$1 per month. Boxing remained a regular activity on the second floor. Now rowing for Riverside, forty-six year old Jerry Shea, nicknamed "The King of the Charles," and his brother Jack won the 1931 national intermediate doubles championship. He also stroked the Riverside senior eight that won the 50th annual NEARA championship on the Charles in 1935.



Jerry Shea stroke, Dr. J. A. Keenan bow

Riverside held its annual ball in October 1935, with music supplied by Doney's Society Orchestra playing dances such as "Of Course I'm Irish: My Name Is Quinn," "Midnight Oarsman," and closing with "Let'er Run." Nevertheless, membership had dwindled to around 75. Attempting to revive itself as well as the sport, that September the club held its first regatta in fifteen years, awarding a winners' cup named after then Governor James Michael Curley. The course ran from Weld Boathouse to Riverside and drew several hundred to the riverbank. Shawmut was the big winner on the day, but the highlight for the spectators was a celebration of Boston area clubs' past rowing glory, an "Old Timers" race. Nineteenth century rivals, some of their clubs now disbanded, joined each other in eights. Riverside's winning boat included Bradford's Joe McGuire, the 1897 national singles champion and now a 64 year old retired Boston police captain; Fred Hynes, national sculling champion in 1893; 1888 New England champion and a member of Bradford's famous "Big Eight" Dick Fleming, 73; and Jimmy O'Brien and Bob McKinley, both Riverside former national amateur 105-pound boxing champions as well as rowers. With the old timers as its closing act, Riverside's fall regatta quickly became the most popular club event on the Charles. In its second year, McGuire, Fleming, and Bradford's 1894 New England singles champion Pat Berkeley raced their singles to a blanket finish over a three-quarter mile course. McGuire stepped out of his single and into the stroke seat of a Riverside eight, Fleming seated himself in the bow, and they were joined at two seat by Jerry Shea, the youngest man in the boat at fifty. Overtaking a boat of younger former St. Alphonsus rowers, they finished in a dead heat. By 1937, Riverside's September "Old Timers and Club



Jimmy O'Brien bow, Dick Fleming stroke in 1940 at a regatta celebrating O'Brien's fifty years competing for Riverside

Regatta" was an established fan favorite. Fleming returned at 78 years of age, and was back again in 1938 in a race honoring 75 year old Frank Facey. Fleming was in Riverside's 1939 boat and joined Jimmy O'Brien in a double in the 1940 event, held in O'Brien's honor.

1936 was an Olympic year. Robert B. Cutler, a recent Harvard oar, put together a Riverside four-with to compete at the national championships in Philadelphia for the right to represent the United States in Berlin. Bob was

at stroke seat. The boat's coxswain Ed Bennett and its three other oarsmen, Bill Haskins, Paul Austin and Bob's brother Roger were members of Harvard's current varsity crew. They were trained by Bob's Nobles and Greenough coach Lawrence (Monk) Terry, a Riverside member. 1936 was a dominating year for Tom Bowles' University of Washington crew. His freshmen, JV and varsity swept every race and his varsity eight would win the Olympic Gold Medal. True to form, Washington's four beat Riverside in the trial's preliminary heat in Philadelphia. In the final against Washington, University Club, California and Cornell, however, Riverside, lining up in the inside lane, made up the stagger and came out of the turn just over a length ahead. Rowing at 38 to 40, they had another length and a quarter by the finish to qualify for the Olympics. It was the only race a Washington boat lost that year. Unfortunately, the U.S. four suffered from confusion about the starter's command in its opening heat in Berlin and was narrowly eliminated by France, the eventual silver medal winner, in the reps.



Riverside's 1936 Olympic four-with. C Ed Bennett, Bow Bill Haskins, 2 Roger Cutler, 3 Paul Austin, Stroke Robert Cutler

Back in this country, the Cutler brothers continued to compete as Riverside scullers until war intervened, Robert racing against Philadelphia's Joe Burk and other leading rowers of the day and in a double with brother Roger in regional and national regattas including Canadian Henley, Philadelphia's Peoples

Regatta, the Middle States Regatta and the New England Amateur Rowing Association championships.



Tom Casey with the Saltonstall trophy. Steve left, Jim right.

Among Riverside's best oarsmen in this period and certainly its most colorful were three brothers from Ballough on the Sneem in County Kerry, Ireland, Steve, Jim and Tom Casey. In 1938, Steve "Crusher" Casey, recently arrived in Boston with Tom and Jim, won the world heavyweight wrestling championship at Boston Garden, a title he would hold until 1947. Looking for a place to row, the three gravitated to the club with the Irish and the pugilistic pedigrees. Soon known as "the

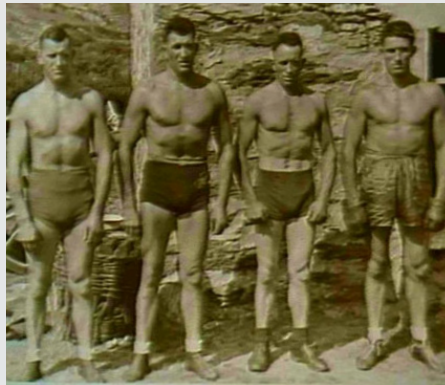
famous Caseys," in 1940 they issued a challenge through *The Boston Globe* to any four in the country to race them on the Charles. They were to be joined by another brother once the challenge was accepted. After watching the Caseys train, however, no one responded until Union Boat Club's Russell Codman, Jr., by now 45 years of age, agreed to a singles race. *The Boston Globe* sponsored the event, offering \$1,000 in prize money. Former Harvard oar Governor Leverett Saltonstall put up a cup for the winner. The principals raised \$2,000 in stakes. Arranged for November 10, the race attracted an enormous crowd, reported to have included young Jack Kennedy. Tom Casey, age 25 and famed for his blistering cadence, finished first, Jim was second, Steve third and Codman fourth. Tom is said to have gone on to win every race he entered.

It was in this time frame that the Charles River basin took its final form. A controversial design process for doubling the width of the embankment along its Back Bay edge and a lagoon got underway in 1928. The completed Esplanade was dedicated to the basin's early advocate, former Harvard oar and later banking and civic figure, James Storrow, in 1936. Regrettably, in 1949 the Commonwealth authorized a limited access roadway through the park that cut it off from residential Back Bay, then widened it in 1954-55. In an act of disrespect to the park advocate's legacy, the road was named Storrow Drive.

THE CASEYS

Steve “Crusher” Casey was one of seven brothers. They all excelled at rowing, racing victoriously in Ireland in the 1930’s, as did their sister. Four of them, Steve, Tom, Paddy and Mick, representing Ace Rowing Club, won an Olympic berth in the straight fours at the All-England Rowing Championships in 1936. In keeping with rowing’s long association with pugilism, however, Steve, Tom and two other brothers had also been successful professional boxers and wrestlers in Ireland. England disqualified them from the Olympics for taking money for wrestling.

Following Steve and his brothers Jim and Tom’s years as Riverside’s “famous Caseys”, Jim Casey remained in this country, helping to introduce rowing facilities at Clear Lake, Texas. As for Steve, it is testimony to his popularity on both sides of the Atlantic that his statue stands today in Sneem, while in this country his bars, Casey’s in Boston and Casey’s Too in Hull, were favorite watering holes for locals, Irish immigrants and rowers alike. All seven brothers were inducted into the Irish Sports Hall of Fame in 1982. Their story is told at length in *The Legend of the Caseys (The Toughest Family on Earth)* by Jim Hudson.



Four fighting Caseys, Crusher second from the left

WORLD WAR II AND THE POST-WAR YEARS

As in 1917 and 1918, rowing competitions were generally suspended after the country's entry into World War II. Riverside Boat Club's reduced membership and the depleted character of its rowing during the war years is captured by a spring 1945 diary entry which records that young Jack Hubbard,

“rowed A.M. + P.M., the latter c (coached by?) an old man named Shay (sic. Jerry Shea?) once single scull champ of England. Jack is now a member of that Riverside Club made up of old Irishmen. He gets a kick out of it = pd. \$8 dues. O’Leary the coach at Bel Hill got him in. They are going to make up a crew to row Union Boat etc and Jack may be in it. An incongruous boatload including ‘Crusher’ Casey 255 lbs, an ex-pugilist, and an old man of 65 weighing only 107 but sinuous, named Kelly I think.”

The 107 pounder may have been Jimmy O’Brien.

With the war over, on September 9, 1945, Riverside Boat Club once again put on its Old Timers and Club Regatta, the first inter-club event on the Charles River in four years. Despite the return of veterans like Bob Cutler, its active membership was down to thirty or forty. The club's commitment to keeping dues low left it in shaky financial condition. Joseph Ambrose, president and club manager, promoted twice-a-week public dances to bring in funds, some of which he paid to himself as a salary. Foreshadowing disagreements to come over the club's operating philosophy, Riverside's most prominent long-term members, such as William Faulkner and Jerry Shea, opposed paying for services that had traditionally been voluntary and Ambrose's salary and his presidency were brought to an end.

Riverside's diamond jubilee year having fallen during the war years, the club celebrated it with a banquet and regatta in 1946. The regatta featured a race for double sculls, in which Jimmie O'Brien and Jack Manning rowed for Riverside, and another for quads, for which the club awarded a cup honoring George Faulkner. While Shrewsbury Boat Club took it home, the results foreshadowed things to come. A Cambridge schoolboy, Frank Bane, stroked a Riverside junior double that finished second to Nichols Boat Club, then rowed seven in a junior eight that was third to Nichols and Shrewsbury. The youth movement Bane

would establish soon restored Riverside, in the words of *The Boston Globe*, to “undisputed supremacy of rowing in New England.”

A meeting of rowing supporters and school officials at the club in January 1947, in which they resolved to resume high school rowing, was pivotal to this development. Riverside’s representatives William Faulkner, Joseph Ambrose, John Toomey, and William O’Leary offered to let Cambridge Latin High School row from its boathouse. Union Boat Club, Harvard, M.I.T. and Boston University agreed to cooperate. Faulkner worked with Cambridge school officials to resume the rowing programs at Cambridge Latin and Rindge Technical High Schools that had been folded since the depression. Although their inexperienced boats were beaten soundly that spring by Shrewsbury High School, which had continued to row during the war and had won more than one national championship, at the close of the scholastic season Frank Bane recruited the best rowers from the two schools, as well as a football player from Bowdoin College and another from Syracuse University, from which the club boated a junior quad and an eight. With Bane at bow, the club’s junior quad finished a close second in the Peoples Regatta in Philadelphia in July. With Bane at stroke, its junior eight won Riverside’s September regatta. In September 1948, he stroked a winning junior double, but Riverside was second to Shrewsbury, loaded with its high school stars, in the junior quad and the junior eight. 1949 culminated Riverside’s progress. In addition to Bane, the club’s leading rowers, Joseph Noonan, Bob Rodrigue, Ray Jedrey, Jim Canty, Jack Bolles and Jim Lang, were undefeated in area regattas and lost narrowly to Vesper in the People’s Regatta. In 1950, a junior quad consisting of Bane, Lang, Rodrigue and Tom Dewire won the New England and Middle States titles. The same boat, with Charles Brown in place of Rodrigue, won what was termed an informal American Henley involving Union and Riverside in July of that year. The most notable feature of the regatta, however, was an added race, the first United States trial of “plastic” rowing shells, said to have been invented by an M.I.T. graduate named Chester Patterson. The two so-called plastic boats finished behind a wooden single, but they were deemed a success and it was predicted they would prove useful for training purposes.



Intermediate 4x: Frank Bane at bow with F. McGonigle (2), Tom Dewire (3), and Vincent Lang in stroke after a victory over NYAC.

The Metropolitan District Commission resumed investment in the Charles River reservation following the war. It constructed Magazine Beach's athletic fields between 1947 and 1953. Upstream, in 1947 it extended Memorial Drive, which required Cambridge Boat Club to move to its present location. Because industrial waste and the untreated discharge from municipal sewers, no longer flushed by the tides, had by now rendered the dammed Charles River unsafe for swimming, in 1952 the commission built the present pool and bathhouse as a memorial to military veterans.

In 1951, the country was at war again, this time in Korea. While Riverside again won the New England quad title when Frank Bane secured a furlough from the Air Force to train for the race, by 1952 the draft had left it with almost no one to compete except Cambridge high school rowers George Bateman and Tom Dewire, who won the New England novice doubles championship. By 1953, however, some of the club's pre-war competitors were returning from the service. Riverside resumed its calling as the rowing home for young men from the neighborhood, as is illustrated by the make-up of its eight that year: Stroke, Vin Lang, Cambridge; 7, Thomas Faulkner, Waltham; 6, Tom Dewire, Cambridge; 5, Francis Bane, Cambridge; 4, Frank McGonigle, Charlestown; 3, Robert Shea, Cambridge; 2, Robert Burke, Framingham; 1, George Bateman, Somerville. In 1954 it had forty active rowers, half from Cambridge, of whom only around twelve were on the water most evenings. William Faulkner and Fred O'Connor provided coaching. As a vestige of better days, the club owned 45 boats, including

FRANK BANE

Frank Bane, Sr. was born on Ellery Street near Harvard Square in 1930. He attended Cambridge Latin High School, graduated from Boston College and, following dental school, practiced in Cambridge for 42 years.

Frank's contributions to Riverside, which he served as club president and as trustee, began in his high school years, resumed following his return from military service in 1953, and continued during the next twenty years. Devoted to the club's identity as a Cambridge working class rowing institution, he recruited local young men whom he and Jim White coached two or three days a week. His legacy includes the fact that, no doubt through his influence, a notable number of his young protégés would become physicians and dentists, including John Keaney, Greg Curtain, Scott Pruitt, and his four sons Steven, Brian, Francis and Michael.

While Frank maintained his traditional orientation to the club he was devoted to, in the 1970s Riverside's leadership began to shift from the old guard that had sustained it as a small, locally-based men's sculling organization to newcomers, many from outside Boston, who were committed to attracting a sufficient number of ambitious new rowers, including women, to put it on a self-sustaining basis. While the transition was conflictful, Frank came to value the club's revival and to appreciate the role women played in its leadership and on the water. He died at the age of 84 on September 17, 2014. It is therefore fitting that his daughter Bridgid now rows from the boathouse.

four eights. Dues were \$6 per year. To supplement its scanty income, it made the boathouse's second floor available for banquets and weddings.

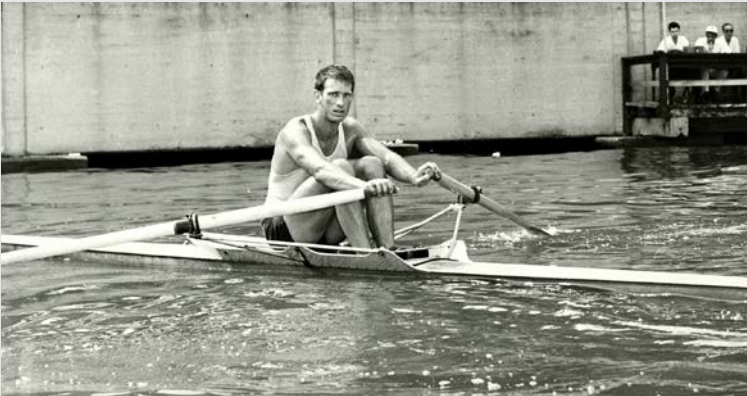
Riverside finished third in the 1954 People's Regatta in Philadelphia and then hosted the N.E.A.R.A. annual regatta, with thirteen races over a three-quarter mile course downstream from the Weeks Footbridge. Nevertheless, the club struggled to attract rowers. Attempting to sustain it, Frank Bane actively recruited local young men to compete for it. It is a measure of his success that Riverside won New England and Canadian Henley novice and junior championships in 1960.

Notwithstanding Riverside's orientation to its surrounding neighborhoods, the club dramatically altered its competitive profile in 1960 when Presidents James White and Tom Kudzma brought in rowers from outside the immediate vicinity, oarsmen who were to achieve unprecedented results on the national and world stage. One was Seymour Cromwell, an M.I.T. naval architecture graduate student. Recruited by Kudzma, who had an M.I.T. background, and Jerry Shea, who was coaching at the club, Sy won the 1960 Canadian Henley singles championship and the Canadian national championship, three events at the United States national championships in 1961, including the elite single sculling championship, a title he retained in 1962, and the 1963 Pan American Games singles title. The second newcomer was Don Spero. Competing for Riverside before decamping to Columbia graduate school, Spero upset Cromwell for the 1963 national singles national title. Cromwell finished second. Spero and Cromwell then won the elite double. Stroke Ted Kakas, two teammates and a coxswain he recruited from his Syracuse crew and another oar from MIT won the four-with championship, beating the U.S. Pan American Games gold medal four by open water and giving Riverside the most winners of any club in the event and making 1963 perhaps the club's most successful year at the national level to that date. Kakas' four fell just short of winning the 1964 Olympic trials at New York Athletic Club. Another M.I.T. graduate, Robert Lea, was selected as an alternate and would enjoy considerable success on the national level. Kakas went on to earn a spot in the 1966 U.S. eight that competed in Bled, Yugoslavia. Spero would be the U.S. single sculler in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and world singles champion in 1966. Cromwell and Spero have been enshrined in the United States Rowing Hall of Fame.

SEYMOUR CROMWELL

Sy Cromwell rowed collegiately at Princeton, graduating in 1956. Recruited to Riverside from MIT, where he was a graduate student, he would become perhaps the greatest male rower to emerge from Riverside. In addition to his victories in 1960, he won three events at the 1961 United States national championships, the 1962 U.S. elite single sculling championship and the 1963 Pan American singles title. Eventually shifting to Nonpareil Rowing Club of New York, he would win seven national titles in the single and several more in the double. In an international career extending to 1966, Sy won the 1964 Diamond Sculls at the Henley Royal Regatta, a silver medal in the single in the 1964 Olympics, and silver and bronze medals in two World and two European Championships.

Sy was an early promoter of women's rowing. He assisted Harry Parker in coaching the Red Rose eight that finished a surprising second at the 1975 World Championships and whose Gail Pierson would become his wife. He died of pancreatic cancer in 1977. Riverside's Cromwell Cup is named in his honor.



Sy Cromwell 1961

Despite these successes, however, club rowing in the Boston area remained at a low ebb. A 1960 report in *New England Rowing News* prepared by Tom Kudzma indicated that only 57 men affiliated with Massachusetts' remaining rowing clubs, Riverside, Union, Cambridge, M.I.T, Shrewsbury and Springfield Boat Club, competed that year. Of those, 28 were from Union, predominantly sweepers, and fifteen were from Riverside, predominantly scullers led by Cromwell, who accounted for 17 of Riverside's 34 entries. The other four clubs produced only 14 competitors. When the American Henley was held on the Charles River in May 1961, for which Riverside hosted the evening party, the participating local clubs were reduced to Riverside, Union, Cambridge, and Weld Boat Clubs. The same four clubs represented Charles River rowing in the 1962 New England championships. Union had 26 competing N.A.A.O. members, Riverside 14, which placed it 16th in the country in that regard, and Cambridge none.

While sweep oarsmen outnumbered scullers in Massachusetts, Riverside's members were predominantly scullers. Looking at the club as an inexpensive place to house their singles, they kept dues and fees below those of the other Charles River clubs—\$12 for an annual membership and \$10 for a rack—and didn't make the investments that would attract a wider set of rowers. The club's operations grew threadbare. It owned but one single. Oars were scarce. The boathouse was decrepit. There was no hot water and its one shower worked by pull cord. Unpaid coaching was provided by Fred O'Connor, William Faulkner and John H. McCafferty, a club trustee from the late 1930s through the 50s. Ted Kakas joined in 1963 because Union Boat Club would not offer the four he planned to race at the 1963 nationals early morning access and required that they accept its coach. Opting for Riverside, they rented a boat from Boston University, brought a coaching launch down from Oneonta, New York, and arranged for coaching from M.I.T. freshman coach Dick Erickson.

Scrambling for revenue, the club leased its second floor hall to a caterer. With the floor off-limits to them, members converted a space off the locker room into a club room, probably the project that miss-aligned the boathouse's interior bearing walls and produced the subsidence it suffers from today. In stark contrast to Riverside's better days, the boathouse was dormant in the winter. Its January 1962 newsletter encouraged members to train by running or swimming. Social activities virtually ceased, although the club did manage to hold a banquet to honor Jerry Shea at which a trophy was inaugurated in his

name to be awarded to the New England senior singles champion.



Coach Ernie Arlett in front of "Northeastern's boathouse"

Riverside Boat Club was dangerously close to extinction. To save itself, in 1965 it took the drastic step of leasing its downstream bay and the boathouse's entire second floor to Northeastern University's fledgling rowing program for a period of ten years at \$1,000 per year, plus responsibility for maintaining the boathouse and paying for the club's utilities and insurance. Sebastian, the university's talented boatman, took care of the club's boats. The club had obtained a life-sustaining source of revenue. At the same time, the lease severely curtailed its members' use of their own

building. Northeastern locked off its space for its exclusive use. Club members were confined to the two upstream bays and the first floor changing facilities. Under coach Ernie Arlett, the university replaced the boathouse's antique heating system, leveled the floor in the downstream bay, added a new one-story bay, built out the second floor shower and changing facilities, and improvised tanks from two outdoor wading pools—the weight of which contributed to the bow in the boathouse's second floor. The wainscoting on the second floor was painted in red and black stripes. Northeastern's name was over the door and the building was generally referred to as the Northeastern boathouse.

Despite its maintenance agreement with the university, Riverside's portion of the building grew increasingly decrepit. The slab floor was buckling and the changing area was in decay. The decline in its rowing was on display in the 1964 NEARA championships, in which the club's only senior entries were in the four-with and the pair-with events. Cambridge and Union Boat Clubs dominated the 78th Riverside Sculls regatta in August 1966. The club's membership was down to perhaps twenty, many by now middle aged or elderly. Including Frank Bane, Jim White, Jack Walsh and Tom Dewire, there were perhaps no more than ten active members.

Occasionally another rower, not having the local sponsors required for admission to Union or Cambridge Boat Clubs, drifted up from M.I.T. One of them, who arrived in 1967, was a young naval architecture graduate student with a boat building and boat repair background named Ted van Dusen. Foreshadowing the clashes to come between the club's conservative old guard and a new, more cosmopolitan generation of oarsmen, many of them attracted to the area for college, graduate school or professional careers, Ted brought his hirsute appearance and ideas about making boats out of plastic into a club that was loyal to the wooden boats built in Charlestown by Jerry Shea's brother Pat.

Given the club's conservative orientation, it is striking that, at the instigation of an English member who was concerned about American rowing's homogeneity, in September 1967 it placed a notice in the newspapers stating that it would welcome "any application from athletically inclined and keen Negro youths between, say, 17 and 22, and we shall provide coaching and equipment. The N.A.A.C.P. has kindly offered to help us look for talent." The initiative was not widely supported, however, nothing appears to have come of it, and its proponent soon left for Cambridge Boat Club. Instead, Riverside hewed to its mission as a club for local rowers. Annual dues in 1967 were \$18. Hoping to repeat the success of his junior quads, Frank Bane continued to bring in local teenagers to row at Riverside during the summer, recruiting them through their high school football coaches with the pitch that rowing workouts would be good training for football in the fall. Bane and Jim White coached them in sculling two or three days a week, but they were no match for the competition from Philadelphia, where scholastic rowing remained popular. Bane's son, Frank Jr., recalls that during the mid-1960s there were so few people around the boathouse that he and his brothers invited friends and classmates to join them for summer evening rows.

"There were no 'boat reservations'. There was no one else interested in rowing. Every night you had a choice of any club boat to row of the old wooden rowing fleet we possessed. We had two doubles. The 'Cutler' double made in 1936 by Greene and a massive wood double made by Pat Shea of Charlestown that had been made for Steve 'Crusher' Casey but rejected as too clumsy! The quad was an old Davies built boat with metal oar-locks, plenty of grease, and a leak that would fill the bottom of the boat after a six mile row."

With so little activity at the club, Cambridgeport youngsters used the boathouse as a hangout. Nevertheless, one of Bane's Matignon High School recruits, Frank O'Leary, took to the sport, went on to row at Harvard, and is still rowing at the club today.

In July 1969, Riverside managed to hold a Grand Centennial Regatta. Given its limited number of competitors, Ted van Dusen rowed in the senior lightweight single at noon and in the senior light double at 12:45. It is a measure of the club's place among the other Charles River organizations that in 1971, when a young man named Jim Sullivan arrived from New York State and, intrigued by the boats he saw in the basin, inquired at Union if he could learn to row there, he was told he would be welcome after three club members sponsored him. When he said he didn't know anyone in town, he was told to go up to Riverside. "They'll take anyone." Knocking on the door, Sullivan was greeted by van Dusen, by then club president, who put him in a gig, and by 1972 he was rowing a double in the Head of the Charles with Jim White.



Poster created by Tom Kudzma for Riverside's 1969 Centennial ¹³

As one of the members who would eventually transform Riverside Boat Club from a declining, socially conservative, locally based men's sculling club into a growing, co-ed, multi-program organization, Ted also initiated the participation of women rowers at the club. In 1971, he invited Sally Harvey, a just-graduated student he had come to know at M.I.T., to row as his guest and provided her with a single so she could pursue her interest in the sport. Sally finished third in the Head of the Charles that year and was second in the lightweight single and first in the dash at the 1972 national championships. She applied to become a Riverside member but didn't receive the required votes. Those opposed cited the costs of providing changing facilities to women members. Instead she was offered "permanent guest" status. Finding the club to be, in her words, moribund, and preferring to be a full-fledged, dues-paying member of a more active

organization, Sally submitted an application to join Cambridge Boat Club, the only rowing establishment on the Charles River to admit women at the time. Ultimately, Sally took a job in Washington D.C., was readily accepted as a member of Potomac Boat Club, and went on to national champion quads in 1973 and '74.

In an echo of Riverside's diminished circumstances, in 1972 Houghton Mifflin closed The Riverside Press and razed its buildings. Most of the site became Riverside Press Park. It remained to be seen whether the boat club the press's workers had founded would have the same fate.

Turning point

In the mid-1960s developments began to unfold in rowing that would become the basis for Riverside Boat Club's eventual revival. Locally, in 1965 former British sculler and now Northeastern coach Ernie Arlett inspired rowers from Cambridge Boat Club like D'Arcy MacMahon to organize a head race on the Charles River as an entertaining end to the local season. What would become the Head of the Charles Regatta, the largest rowing event in the United States, proved to be an inducement to local rowing. In 1967, M.I.T. opened its present boathouse and leased its old one below Cottage Farm Bridge to Boston University.

At the same time, interest in the sport was reviving across the country. New clubs and college programs sprang up far outside the sport's traditional geography, some of whose graduates migrated to Boston, where they looked for a place to row. At the international level, men's lightweight racing was introduced in exhibition events in 1970 and gained inclusion in the World Championships in 1974. The cadre of rowers that international acceptance attracted to the sport would make a major contribution to Riverside's restoration.

The development that would have the greatest impact on Riverside's future, however, was the rise of women's rowing. As the 1970s arrived, colleges began to initiate women's programs. Radcliffe College women led by Martha McDaniel organized an intercollegiate crew in 1970. That same year, Gail Pierson, Sy Cromwell's fiancé and a quiet revolutionary, prevailed on the Head of the Charles Regatta committee to introduce women's events. Then in 1972 Congress passed Title IX, which mandated that colleges provide equal programs for men and women. Although not specifically directed at sports programs, the act produced a surge in women's collegiate rowing. Boston University, for example, added women's crew in the mid-70s. A women's college rowing

national championship was established in 1980. The result was a growing pool of young women who wanted to continue to row after college.

Women's rowing in the United States gained additional momentum with the decision to send its first women's team, of which Gail Pierson was a member, to the 1973 World Rowing Championships. If the watershed moment for the place of women in college athletics was Chris Ernst and her crew teammates' widely publicized disrobing in Yale's athletic office in 1976 in protest of their lack of training facilities, the watershed moment for women's place in American rowing as a whole was the announcement that events for women would be included in the 1976 Olympics in Montreal. Treating the 1975 World Championships as a run-up to the games, Harry Parker agreed to coach the U.S. eight. Known as the "Red Rose Crew," with Gail Pierson, today Gail Cromwell, its de facto captain, the U.S. team shocked the rowing world by finishing second to ascendant East Germany. Parker agreed to put together the 1976 American women's Olympic eight, which would bring home the bronze medal. Women started heading to Boston to compete for a place on the national team.

They faced a problem when they arrived. The NAAO required competitors to have club affiliations. Cambridge Boat Club couldn't accommodate the influx. Without an alternative, the arriving Olympic aspirants formed the Boston Rowing Club, otherwise known as the Eastern Rowing Camp, which operated from Weld Boat House. It was against this background that in October 1977 Ted van Dusen, a member of the U.S. quad that year and one of the strongest advocates in the club for bringing women to Riverside, once again proposed a young women, in this case a female medical student training for the Head of the Charles, for provisional membership. Again the club permitted her to row as a guest, but, despite President Jim Moore's request for reconsideration, her application was denied and she eventually joined Cambridge Boat Club.

Nevertheless, there was growing interest within the club for adding women members. Pattie Pinkerton, training for the national team, became its first woman provisional member in June 1979. In September, provisional memberships were approved for Kathryn Reith and 1975 Red Rose crew member Jacqueline Bachman, although without access to the club's first floor changing facilities. Pinkerton and Reith were members of Riverside's winning junior quad with cox and junior double at the Canadian Henley in 1980. The stage was set for Riverside's chapter in the America's women's movement.



Pattie Pinkerton, Kathryn Reith, center, with members of their 1980 coxed quad

Another development that would transform Riverside was the impact of East European training methods and the success of Karl Adam's Ratzeburg crews on this country's preparation for international competition. International performance standards reached levels that were difficult for American rowers to meet through the traditional college and club pipelines. In the 1962 world championships the United States managed only a third and a fifth out of seven Olympic events. The first adaptations to the new competitive environment were made by Vesper Boat Club in the East and by the formation of the Lake Washington Boat Club in the West. Under the guidance of Jack Kelly, Jr., Vesper's 1964 Tokyo Olympic eight consisted of experienced oarsmen from diverse clubs and colleges, anticipating the national camp system. In 1968, however, the U.S. again failed to win a single Olympic event. In response, it conducted a camp for the selection of the 1972 U.S. eight and coxed four. Operated by Harry Parker, it set the stage for an evolving series of national training and selection systems that motivated rowers to remain in the sport after college. Those who gravitated to Boston became potential Riverside members. One who was already rowing there, Ted Van Dusen, narrowly failed to make the 1976 Olympic team and rowed in the United States quad at the 1977 World Championships.

Even as Riverside began to attract male and female rowers oriented to international competition, however, it continued to recruit local young men to race for it. Under the guidance of Jim White and Frank Bane, Riverside youngsters, including Bane's four sons, competed in regional and national regattas against

clubs like the New York Athletic Club, Fairmont Rowing Association, Vesper Boat Club and the Union Barge Club.

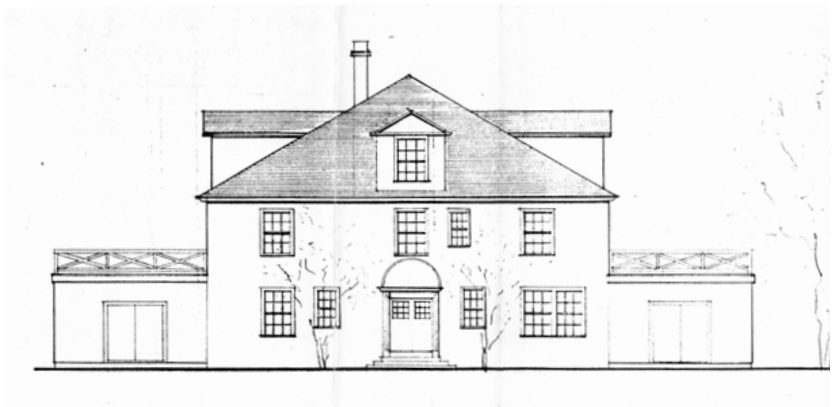


The Bane brothers: Michael, Brian, Francis and Stephen

Under the impact of broader developments in the sport, Riverside's membership began to expand. By the mid-1970s, they were starting to feel cramped in the two bays and first floor facilities they had access to under the club's lease with Northeastern. Although the university's rent had risen to \$7,800, relations between the two organizations grew strained, particularly over its neglect of the club's facilities. At their monthly meetings, members began to discuss how they might regain full possession of the boathouse. Jim Sullivan prepared a spread sheet exploring alternative membership levels and fees. With revenues rising, Bane and Van Dusen, working together despite personal differences, added some good boats to the club's fleet, including a Stamphli quad that was considered the best boat on the river at the time.

At the same time, Northeastern, needing more room for its program, began to consider moving to new quarters. Faced with the loss of its long-time tenant, Riverside formed a building committee chaired by architect Robert Cutler, and voted to work with the university on expansion plans. The committee developed alternative designs, among them sketches for an addition capable of having a floor added at a later date and another for a separate building dedicated to boat storage. In August of 1978, with Riverside and Northeastern on better terms, a motion was passed to ask the university to construct an addition in exchange for a rent reduction. But in December the Metropolitan District Commission, whose ground lease to the club was to expire the following year, rejected the

idea. Conversations continued nevertheless. In July 1979, the university told Riverside it would need two additional bays and men's and women's locker space. At the same time, the club's membership, including its new women members, was approaching 75. Forced by space constraints to consider capping its total enrollment, Riverside concluded that it needed an additional bay for its own use. In December, it presented a proposal to Northeastern for a long-term lease with provisions under which it could build new bays on either side of the boathouse. The university accepted the lease, which called for an annual rent of \$10,500, in April 1980. The parties discussed two alternative designs prepared by The Associated Architects of Boston, each distinguishing the Northeastern Boathouse from the Riverside boathouse, and each consisting of seven bays.



One of the architectural drawings of a boathouse addition.

CRISIS

In June 1980, the Metropolitan District Commission upset Riverside Boat Club and Northeastern University's discussions when it announced that a boathouse expansion would be inconsistent with goals and policy guidelines adopted in 1978 by the Charles River Basin Advisory Committee and that, accordingly, it would not approve an addition to the boathouse unless it were open to the public. With Riverside's permit lapsed, the MDC also raised the issue whether, in light of the "windfall" lease payment from Northeastern, to increase the club's \$500 per year ground rent. The commission encouraged Northeastern to construct its own boathouse. A potential site had been identified in Brighton, but coach Buzz Congram preferred a location more accessible to the campus.

BOB CUTLER

Bob Cutler began his rowing life in 1926 as a coxswain at Dedham's Nobles & Greenough School, which operated out of Riverside Boat Club at the time. Following in the foot stretchers of his father and uncle, who both captained Harvard crews, he alternated as stroke of the 1933-35 crimson JV and varsity crews. In 1933, Bob competed in the Diamond Sculls at the Henley Royal Regatta, where his father had stroked the Union Boat Club in the all American final of the 1914 Grand Challenge Cup. Having upset the University of Washington's entry at the 1936 Olympic trials in Philadelphia for the right to row in Berlin, Bob's four-with failed to make the finals. He had better luck with his return to the United States. A passenger on the huge German trans-Atlantic air ship Hindenburg, he arrived safely on its last flight before it exploded while landing in Lakehurst, New Jersey.

After serving in the Navy during World War II, Bob established a successful architectural practice.¹⁴ The new Head of the Charles regatta lured him back into a boat in 1967. Returning to Riverside, he competed in head races from the Merrimac to Maine's lakes, usually finishing in the top ten at the HOC. In 1971, he raced in the HOC's first parent-child double event with his son Chris, who rowed as a Harvard lightweight, who also competed at Henley, and who remains a longtime Riverside member. Bob was still sporting his stripes at the '86 Bled and the '88 Glasgow FISA Masters Regattas. He rowed his last Head of the Charles at age 81 in 1995.

Robert Cutler was a pivotal figure in Riverside's transformation from a moribund men's sculling club to the organization it is today. Drawing on his architectural credentials, he served it as chair of its Building Committee in the 70s and as a trustee in the 80s when he, with others, championed the admission of women members. In 1995, recalling his experiences at Riverside, Bob wrote "Riverside has been a series of happy coincidences in tune with Heraclitus (the Nobles/Harvard education showing through): 'nothing is permanent except change.' " He remembered the cold-water showers as a Nobles rower, and being "a board member fighting for the admission of women as Riverside members...enjoying the euphoria Les Girls and their achievements have wrought." He concluded, "Viva Les Girls, Heraclitus and Riverside's hot-water showers." Bob died in 2010 two months shy of 97.



Bob Cutler racing in the Head of the Charles Regatta

The university hired architect Graham Gund to develop a proposal for the powder magazine site at Magazine Beach and offered Cambridgeport residents a number of benefits if they supported it, but they and City Councilor and State Representative Sandra Graham, who looked at Northeastern as an interloper from Boston, told the university to go back across the river.

Riverside's future became even more challenging when, in October 1980, the MDC sent the club a notice alleging sex discrimination. It informed the club that the commission would not grant a new permit unless the situation were cured. The origin of the complaint was a campaign conducted by a faction within the boathouse intent on driving out its female members. Despite broad support for adding women, some individuals conducted a regime of personal, sometimes physical harassment. When intimidation didn't succeed, they attempted to exclude the women through revisions to the club's membership policies. They proposed constitutional amendments that would limit provisional memberships to twelve months and establish that any provisional member not obtaining the three-quarters vote required to become a senior member would cease to be a member of any type and could not reapply. Given the small number of senior, voting members at the time, it appeared they and the new members they recruited for the purpose—some non-rowers—formed a block large enough to meet the 25 percent required to veto the women's senior membership applications. An alternative constitutional provision was put forward permitting reapplication. Members who had not been at the club for years showed up to vote in its June meeting. Neither provision received the necessary two-thirds majority, leaving the crisis unresolved.

The crisis crystallized tensions between Riverside's more socially conservative members, many with local roots and some of whom were former club officers, and its more liberal members, some new to the club, with origins largely outside the immediate area. In addition to Ted Van Dusen, the latter included club president Jim Moore, vice president Jim Hanley and trustee Robert Cutler. Long-time Cambridge stalwart Jim White allied with them. Up to this point, relationships among the two constituencies had remained civil, based in part on a Missouri Compromise-like strategy of admitting a member proposed by one faction for every one proposed by the other. As consideration of provisional members Pattie Pinkerton and Kathryn Reith's applications for senior membership approached (Jackie Bachman, selected for the 1980 Olympic team, had withdrawn from the club), however, relationships between their supporters

and opponents grew toxic. Some of the women's advocates were physically threatened, sugar was dumped into an automobile gas tank. The deteriorating civility within the club appalled most of its members.

With the two women's applications for senior membership up for consideration in November, Moore, Hanley and Cutler devised a counter-strategy for securing their approval. Jim Sullivan had discovered from State records that three of the opposition's young allies had not been 18, as required, when they were accepted as senior members. It was agreed he would file a complaint. When the decisive meeting was convened, Pattie and Kathryn were stationed at the hotel pay phone across the street. Cutler conducted a masterful formal inquiry into the complaint, interviewing each party and confirming the facts. Moore then obtained a vote to have the memberships of the three rescinded as well as another to censure the opponent who had obtained their admission. Finally, in the evening's climax, the meeting was opened for applications for senior memberships. The opponents placed urgent calls for friends to hurry to the boathouse, but by the time they arrived they found that club members had voted 20 to 2 to grant Pattie Pinkerton senior membership. Called across the street to join the meeting, she added her vote to make it 21 to 2 to admit Kathryn. The opponents were livid. There was pushing and shoving and Cutler had to be safely escorted to his car. He, Moore, Hanley and members of the same mind had successfully opened the door to women's becoming senior members at Riverside.

In an epilogue to the membership saga, in 1982 the club raised funds for Pinkerton and Reith to row a double at the Henley Royal Regatta, the first to include women's events, albeit on a demonstration basis. Pinkerton went on to become Head Women's Rowing Coach at the University of California at San Diego. Reith became the Executive Director/Media Relations officer of the United States Rowing Association.

Although Riverside's leadership had successfully dealt with the MDC's discrimination complaint, the prospects of expanding the boathouse received another shock when the club learned that, under the Massachusetts constitution, the grant of parkland that would be required to enlarge the building would require a two-thirds vote of the legislature, a daunting prospect given attitudes in Cambridgeport. In the face of this news, some argued

that instead of providing space for its growing membership by working with Northeastern on a boathouse expansion, the club should recover the full use of the building by evicting the university. Others raised the specter of rising dues if Northeastern left. Matters came to a head in August 1981 when Commissioner Moran informed Riverside that the terms of its lease with Northeastern were objectionable, that in his opinion the club provided no public benefit, and that he opposed its being maintained as a private facility. At this point, Representative Graham re-entered the fray. In an October meeting with club officers and the commissioner, she objected to the impact of a large construction project, but instead of opposing expansion she asked that it be scaled back to one bay. She requested that the river bank be cleaned up but opposed the MDC's imposition of a public rowing program. Although the addition of one new bay would not meet Riverside and Northeastern's combined needs, in November the MDC granted the club its permit and approved its lease with the university. President Rufus Perkins appointed Will Melcher to organize boathouse renovations, starting with the peeling paint in the first floor locker room.

Reinventing Riverside

The challenges Riverside Boat Club confronted between 1975 and 1980 forced it to recognize the need to improve its executive capacities. Throughout the club's existential crisis, all decisions had been made by senior members voting in monthly meetings. Their average recorded voters totaled a little over twenty, only a handful of whom were active rowers. In August 1981, club officers distributed a draft revised constitution for discussion in the September membership meeting. It proposed replacing Riverside's monthly meeting with a system in which a board would meet monthly as the club's executive body, while members would meet periodically to consider general business, including the approval of new members. The offices and committees established by the existing constitution were retained. Despite the concerns of some, the new constitution was adopted in the October meeting by a vote of 19 to one.

On the rowing front, Ted van Dusen represented the U.S. again in the quad in the 1981 World Championships. Pattie Pinkerton and Kathryn Reith proved to be the vanguard of a growing number of women members at Riverside, many of whom contributed to the club's revitalization in succeeding years and some of whom remain active today. Jim Hanley, Ted van Dusen, Will Melcher, Jim White and likeminded members' support drew women seeking a place to develop their rowing like Anna Jones, who would go on to become Community Rowing Inc.'s first director. Encouraged by Anna and Ted, Lynn and Charley Osborn joined in 1982.

Meanwhile, discussions with Northeastern on alternative expansion configurations and the possibility of dividing the boathouse's ownership through a condominium continued, even as concern grew over the university's neglect of the building. The porch had become so structurally unsound that the university was ordered not use it. The dock was in danger condition. The

building had not been painted since the university occupied it in 1965. Despite these issues, in 1982 Riverside approved a new Northeastern development plan, but in August Vice President Jim Hanley reported that the university was pursuing other sites.

The club needed to come to grips with the consequences if the university departed. With the powers but also the political exposure the club's new constitution conferred on it leadership, club president Rufus Perkins, vice president Jim Hanley and allies like Will Melcher, Charlie Osborn and Ted van Dusen began the process of turning Riverside into an organization with the revenues that could go it alone. The club had approximately 75 members at the time. Equipment was limited: three club singles, two doubles, two quads, a four with, and gigs. A few members were oriented to competition—there were six to ten of them on the dock most mornings—but the majority were long-standing, less active scullers whose goal, supported by stalwarts of the prior era, was to minimize the cost of storing their private boats in the space left to them by the Northeastern lease. To that end, annual dues were \$50, well below those elsewhere on the river.

To raise Riverside's competitive profile, Will Melcher proposed, against some resistance, to replace its traditional racing shirt with its block letter R with something more graphically powerful and to require members to compete in



Will Melcher and Jim Hanley in their stripes.

it as well as to row with identifiable blades. To select a new shirt, he asked a design committee to organize a contest. Eight entries were pinned up. Allegedly inspired by the horizontal blue and white stripes worn by the lounging rowers in Renoir's "Lunch at the Restaurant Fornaize," nick-named "Rower's Lunch,"



*Riverside rowers, early 80s, including, Back row: Ned Cooke, Dan Chernoff, and David Lee
Second row: Bill Randall, Maria Lane, Ted Littlefield, and Jim Bidigare
Third row: Pattie Pinkerton, Will Melcher, Jim Polcari
Fourth row: Susan Gwynne-Timothy, unidentified
Front row: Bob Cutler, Deb Fine, Carolyn White, unidentified*

and by the shirts of Venetian gondoliers, Melcher brought in a photo from a Riverside scrapbook of an early oarsman wearing stripes—probably from rival Bradford Boat Club, which wore striped shirts. Will's proposal won, and the club's distinctive blue and white stripes began to attract attention at area races.

Given the club's limited revenues and its tradition of volunteered services, Perkins, Hanley, and Melcher's most consequential initiative was to propose hiring a paid coach. If adopted, Riverside would be the only club on the Charles River offering professional coaching. On the other hand, annual dues would have to be increased to \$75 to cover the cost. After a vigorous debate conducted with his usual calm efficiency by Rufus Perkins, in 1982 Hanley, provided an introduction by van Dusen, approached M.I.T. head women's coach Doug Clark about the position. Clark, a former Canadian National Team sculler, had been Canada's Rowing Coach of the Year in 1975. His lightweight women's eight had recently won the national championship. As it happened, he and Tech's athletic department were in conflict about the future of the program. He agreed to coach Riverside the following summer for \$15 an hour.

Arriving at the boathouse on May 20, 1983 for his first day of work, Clark was confronted by a member of the old regime who threatened to assault him if he returned the following day. Faced with pockets of hostility and the resignations of some resentful members but supported by Hanley, Melcher, Cutler and others with ambitions for the club, Clark's strategy was to overcome naysayers by attracting young, competitive rowers drawn to his vision for Riverside Boat Club: that it would produce the best club rowers on the river. His stated ambition was that Riverside would be represented in the 1984 Los Angeles and 1988 Seoul Olympics, not just by individuals but by entire boats. To that end, the club purchased an ergometer and installed it in the first floor changing area. Members found that winter indoor training not only improved performances but increased camaraderie.

Jim Hanley succeeded Rufus Perkins as president in May 1983. With Northeastern's lease set to expire at the end of December, he submitted a list of repairs that would be required if it were to be renewed and informed the university that its rent for the coming year would be \$42,000, a demand that some, recognizing that the university had saved the club during the late sixties and seventies, found harsh. More far-reaching, he informed it that club

members needed to regain access to the second floor. Coach Buzz Congram objected vehemently, but once it was made clear that Northeastern would be evicted unless there was a satisfactory lease and the repairs were made, work on the porch and painting commenced.

Pursuing the idea of making Riverside self-sustaining by attracting ambitious men and women with a club philosophy of rowing excellence, Clark introduced novice, junior, elite, and masters sculling programs. The club bought used college equipment and initiated a sweeps program. Clark coached both scullers and sweep rowers on weekday mornings and afternoons. On Saturday he held a novice sculling clinic. He introduced a sculling ladder and oriented training to the Canadian Henley and the Head of the Charles. Under his coaching, Riverside made progress at the novice and intermediate levels and swept the Bay State Games sculling competition.

Clark effectively secured his leadership of the club's rowing program once and for all by settling the matter on the water. He proposed that the leading rowers from the opposition camp would race his protégés Melcher, John Marden, Kevin Galie and Michael Coor in quads on the Power House stretch, the winner getting to use the club's Stamphli for upcoming competitions. The losers would be relegated to its slower Pocock. In effect it was a race for preeminence in the club. Rowing the Stamphli in the first race, Clark's antagonists won by a length. Switching boats, they lost by two to three lengths. Returning their boat to its rack, they receded from the boathouse.



Doug Clark at work

CHARLEY & LYNN OSBORN

Lynn and Charley Osborn, who both rowed at Princeton, were married in 1981 and joined Riverside in 1982, where Charley taught Lynn to scull. They housed their van Dusen double, a wedding present from Charley's parents, at Union Boat Club because Riverside, constrained by Northeastern University's lease, didn't have room for it. But when Union told Charley he couldn't row with a woman except as a guest he called Riverside Captain Ted van Dusen, who told them to row their double up to the club that afternoon. It resides there today.

Unusually for married couples, Charley and Lynn rowed and raced together. Because she was five foot eight and Charley was six foot six, their boat required some creative rigging, which Linda Muri applied her MIT aeronautical engineering training to help engineer. Handed a last minute Head of the Charles entry in the men's open double in 1983, they finished in the top half of the race. They would win the mixed double event in the Head of the Schuylkill in 1988.

Sharing business degrees, Charley and Lynn both became key contributors to Jim Hanley's program to transform the club, including producing a report that suggested Riverside could become self-sustaining once Northeastern's crew left the boathouse. Even as he studied for his doctorate at Harvard Business School, Charley spent countless hours helping to guide the club to financial independence, serving as vice-president from 1987 to 1992 and as head of the both the membership and strategic planning committees. With his degree in hand, he served as club trustee from 1992 to 1995.

At 42, Charley was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease). After four valiant years, he died in 2001 at the age of 46. Riverside's Osborn Scholarship, awarded annually to a member who demonstrates his commitment to the club, honors his legacy. That legacy includes passing his and Lynn's dedication to rowing on to their two sets of twins. Each rowed at Arlington Belmont High School, two rowed collegiately, and Lynn has raced with each of them in the Head of the Charles Parent-Child Double event. Lynn's commitment to Riverside continues today. A member of the Presidents' Committee from 2006, chair of the club's Development Committee since 2011, and a trustee from 2013 to 2016, on November 2016 the membership elected her Riverside's fourth woman president.



Charley and Lynn Osborn heading to the start, 1983 HOCR

Clark proved to be a great recruiter. The figure he cut on the river communicated his pride in imparting rowing skill to Riverside rowers. Will Melcher remembers him announcing through his megaphone as he motored past boats from Union or Cambridge, “We will bury you,” all the while offering helpful tips. Soon a number of their members were joining Riverside to get the benefit of his coaching. In particular, Clark’s instruction, his programs and Riverside’s new-found support for women began to attract enthusiastic rowers like Maria Lane to his elite group.



Training: Vaclav Stejska, Ted van Dusen in singles, Maria Lane and Susan Gwyne-Timothy in the double

With Riverside’s growing range of programs and professional coaching generating an increasing interest in rowing at Riverside, the club was at a cross-roads. It could attempt to replace Northeastern’s revenue by incurring the costs needed to attract additional rowers with new and larger programs, with the goal of becoming the dominant Charles River rowing club, or it could retain its niche as a small, local sculling club, with the implication that the lost revenue would be replaced from other sources. Tufts University pressed faculty member Jim Hanley to allow it to replace Northeastern.

Given the underlying divisions among the membership, board meetings grew contentious. Hanley credited Clark, whose professional background was business management, with teaching him how to navigate what both expected to be a turbulent decision-making process. From his salaried position he contributed not only dynamic coaching but a template for a revitalized organization, including a strengthened committee structure. In addition to the standing Membership and Regatta Committees required by the constitution,

nine others would report to the board, including equipment, maintenance, history/archives, building, grounds, and social committees. He also suggested strategies for coping with the stresses that could be anticipated from the changes underway. To put the club's choice of direction on clearer terms, Hanley appointed a Strategic Planning Committee of 18 members, chaired by Jim Bidigare and Charlie Osborn, and charged it with assessing the club's equipment needs, physical plant, membership structure and fees, and possible new income-producing ventures; drafting goals for the club; and developing short- and long-term recommendations for putting the club on a self-sustaining basis. Based on calculations developed by Charlie and Lynn Osborn, the board doubled the dues to \$150 and the rack fee at \$75, numbers more comparable to those of other clubs. Locker fees were \$25 and the initiation fee was \$100. To those who proposed that they be allowed to own their racks, objected to paying Clark, and opposed paying dues for services they didn't use, Riverside's officers responded that these charges were the cost of being a member of an attractive club, not users' fees.

By November, with it increasingly apparent that the university would not have a new boathouse to move into until at least 1986, a new two-year lease was agreed to that gave Riverside use of the second floor as of January 1984. Under the agreement, the university warehoused its boats at the completion of its season, making space for Riverside to borrow and rent equipment for the summer.

Hanley was re-elected president for the 1984 season. By spring, the club's membership had virtually doubled to 141 and a waiting list had been instituted. The club was solvent. Having gained access to the boathouse's second floor, the men moved into the upstairs lockers, while its women took possession of the first floor facilities. With membership interest growing, the club established a points system to track the volunteer contributions of provisional members seeking senior membership. Clark established pilot summer sweeps and sculling programs that were intended to feed college rowers into the membership.

Organizational changes kept pace. To limit the dues increase its programs would otherwise require, the club formed a charitable, non-profit subsidiary, Friends of Competitive Rowing. Board meetings now had formal agendas. Improved governance together with the evolving composition of the club's membership began to transform the club's culture. While many of its newer male members



Riverside's new racing medal

activities and issues. As an example of women's transformation of the soul of the club, Clark cites the encouragement he received to install Ted Littlefield, the impaired but dedicated Northeastern custodian of the boathouse and grounds, as cox of their eight, to Ted's enormous gratification. Riverside's displayed its new identity on a medal, to be awarded at club races, designed by Bob Cutler, Will Melcher and Maria Lane. Proclaiming the club's transformed identity, it depicted male and female rowers in a mixed double.

tended to be "too cool" to engage in Hanley and Melcher's program to revive the club, Clark found that its women were enthusiastic proponents of his emphasis on "rowing better than anyone else on the Charles" and that they brought "energy, passion and commitment" to the organization. Women like Anna Jones, Maria Lane and Lynn Osborn participated enthusiastically on committees, contributing innovations such as the first Riverside Guide and a newsletter informing members of club

Given the extent of the changes underway, it was inevitable that discussions about Riverside's direction and leadership would grow heated. There were complaints that board decision-making was not sufficiently transparent. Hoping to retain less active and non-resident members, a group of members, including Captain Ted van Dusen, put forward an alternative to the recently adopted fee structure that would reduce general dues by introducing a sliding scale based on usage of club equipment and coaching. They also proposed that the club institute a non-resident supporting membership and a family membership to include spouses and children. The dues proposal failed but the club constitution was amended to provide for supporting and family memberships. It was in this context that the Strategic Planning Committee proposed that once Northeastern vacated the boathouse the club could support a membership of 200 or higher and put forward a five year financial plan which ostensibly included setting aside funds to restore the boathouse.

With Clark refining their technique, six Riverside scullers competed in the 1984 Canadian Henley. Dan Chernof medaled in the junior and senior lightweight single. Ted van Dusen and Dennis Ruane narrowly missed selection as the U.S. double in the Olympic trials. In the Head of the Charles Regatta Ned Cooke had the club's highest finish, third in the club single. John Marden placed fourth in the championship single. On November 3, Riverside added what it hoped would be its first annual club championship to its regatta agenda of a May Spring Fling race for area scullers, the RBC Sprints, and the Cromwell Cup. There was a palpable sense of excitement about the club's future as the social committee mounted the first annual banquet in its modern era following the racing season. Held at a local hotel, it included a speaker, awards, and an exhibit on club history organized by club historian Ned Cooke.

In the spring of 1985, the board voted to increase club membership by another 50. Dues were raised to \$225 and the rack fee to \$125. Nevertheless, after achieving small surpluses from 1982 to 1984, the club projected a \$4,000 deficit despite Northeastern's rent accounting for half the budget. As it instituted a 500 mile rack policy favoring its more ambitious rowers over inactive members, tensions escalated, focused primarily around the allocation of club resources to its various user groups but fueled as well by long-standing personal conflicts. Hoping to address them, the Strategic Planning Committee conducted a survey, which revealed that members were generally satisfied with Riverside's equipment, coaching and rowing programs and that they wanted elite, competitive club and recreational rowing to receive equal emphasis, with each having its own objectives and resources and each receiving professional coaching. However, reflecting personal tensions, they were dissatisfied with club management and the conduct of meetings as well as member involvement and the dissemination of information. Nor were members happy with the boathouse. Although Northeastern had stabilized the porch, the building remained seriously deteriorated. Concern about the boathouse's structural integrity was so high that the club decided against holding aerobics classes on the second floor until shims could be inserted to support it.

Despite these concerns, Riverside's leadership, formally adopting the goal of "Quality Rowing at All Levels", remained focused on developing the programs and buying the equipment necessary to put the club on a sustainable financial basis once Northeastern departed. Although the board voted to hire an engineer to carry out a structural assessment of the boathouse, it put off expenditures on

the building in favor of programmatic improvements, including new equipment, and, recognizing that professional coaching set Riverside apart from the other clubs on the river, funding Clark's salary.



Although it was not entirely recognized at the time, Riverside's commitment to expanding its membership coincided with growing interest in rowing across the country. The founding of Community Rowing Inc. in 1985 was a local manifestation of the phenomenon. The resurrection of rowing at Brookline High School was another. In response to interest at the school, in 1986 Riverside offered to provide space and boats and to administer its program, which initially involved 47 boys and girls. It became a varsity sport under Riverside's direction in 1988 and was transferred to the school's control in 1989.

It is probably not coincidental that both these initiatives as well as the growth of rowing at other local clubs tracked the Commonwealth's progressive clean-up of the Charles River, funded with federal grants provided by the 1972 Clean Water Act. Between 1988 and 1991, the annual volume of combined sewer overflow discharged into the river declined from 1,742 million gallons to 900 million

Fortuitously, the club's ambitions also coincided with renewed efforts by United States Rowing and the United States Olympic Committee's to raise the level of the country's international competitors. The organizations funded two training centers. One was in Seattle. The second was the former Boston Rowing Club, which, with both formal and informal support from Harvard University, became the Boston Rowing Center. Rowers were drawn to Boston in hopes of making the national team. Riverside's programs and Clark's coaching attracted a number of them. Future Hall of Fame member Anne Marden trained with Clark for the 1984 Olympics. Molly (Hoyle) Haskell enrolled in Clark's summer program in 1985. Having come to Boston to compete for a national team boat but discouraged at BRC, she received the encouragement of Clark, Hanley, van Dusen and others and, in her words, "found a home at Riverside".

On the strength of developments like these, 1985 proved to be Riverside Boat Club's breakthrough year. It raced and medaled at the Bay State Games, its own Riverside Sprints and Cromwell Cup, regional races from New England to Philadelphia, and finished third in the National Championships team points



Dan Chernoff

trophy behind Vesper and NYAC, with wins in the senior lightweight double (Ted Marks and Rick Gales), senior heavyweight double (John Marden and Bill Randall), intermediate lightweight single (Ted Marks) and the mixed double. Doug Clark took a large contingent to the Canadian Henley, where the club won nine women's events, including six junior sculling titles. Each women sculler placed in the top three in her event. Among them, Carey Beth (C. B.) Sands, another future United States Rowing Hall of Fame member, won the junior and senior lightweight women's single, she and Ruth Kennedy won in the junior and senior lightweight double and quad, and Izzie Gordon, Deb Fine, Maria Lane, and Mary

Anczarski placed second in the quad. On the men's side, Dan Chernoff and Jeff Parks won not only the junior but the senior lightweight double event. The club's accomplishments began a long run of Riverside sweep and sculling success at the Henley regatta. Dan Chernoff performed well in national team speed orders. The transformation of the club begun by Jim Hanley, Doug Clark and their supporters was confirmed that fall in the Head of the Charles Regatta. Although the race organization does not have records confirming the winner of the regatta points trophy in 1985, Clark clearly remembers Harry Parker pulling alongside Riverside's dock to congratulate the club on winning it, the first club ever to do so.

With developments like these reinforcing the proposition that the club could survive without Northeastern, Riverside's board formally voted not to replace it with another tenant. The club would go it alone.

At the same time, its rapid transition from a small, local sculling club to a larger,

JIM HANLEY

Born November 5, 1949, Jim Hanley grew up and began his rowing in Worcester, Massachusetts. After earning a dentistry degree, he settled with his wife Marian in Concord and set up a practice, then took a position at the Tufts School of Dental Medicine in 1983. He joined Riverside in 1972 and served as its president from 1983 to 1986 as well as a trustee over multiple terms. It was during his presidency that Riverside pivoted from a small, all-male sculling club dependent for survival on leasing most of its building to Northeastern University to an integrated, multi-program, competitive, self-sustaining organization. Along the way, he gave encouragement to decades of rowers, notably Riverside's first women, mentored members who became its leaders, and befriended many more.

The twinkle in his eye and Jim's ever-present smile imparted an atmosphere of easygoing warmth and support to the club. At the same time, he was incorrigibly competitive. A sculler at heart, he always tried to put his green Van Dusen in the lead, whether in a morning warm-up row, in sculling group pieces in which he was known to cheat on his rating, or in one of the innumerable regattas in which he raced. In later life he joined the men's masters group that revitalized sweep rowing at the club.

Jim was a man of strong commitments: to his family, to teaching dentistry, to rowing and to Riverside Boat Club. Even when he was diagnosed with cancer it didn't curtail either his rowing, his personal warmth or his culminating his career in 2014 with the deanship of the University of New England's College of Dental Medicine. He was Riverside's longest serving member when he died in May 2015. His family buried him with his threadbare Riverside rowing shirt and his Head of the Charles medal. Jim Hanley continues to be fondly remembered today for his enthusiasm, his ready laugh and for the encouragement he gave to so many. As Igor Belakovskiy put it, "Jim took his work seriously. He took Riverside seriously. But he never took himself seriously."



Jim Hanley rowing his 1x

multi-discipline, highly competitive rowing organization continued to provoke strains within its membership. Northeastern University still controlled half the racks in the boathouse, leaving little space for club equipment. Members who did not have their own boats had to compete to use the few club boats there were, with boat speed the criteria used to decide priority for access. If you weren't fast you hardly rowed, and you couldn't get faster because you couldn't use the equipment. The problem was compounded by the "sprawling" summer sweeps program, which was accused of monopolizing the best equipment. As a consequence, the most pressing membership issue was turnover. The January 1986 membership meeting turned bitter. There were complaints about the two-year length and the cost of Clark's proposed contract, his dual role as coach and club manager, and the allocation of his time among its members. Jim Hanley announced he would step down as president at the end of the year. Doug Clark returned to Canada to coach its national team's quad. Club captain John Marden replaced him, but there were continuing disagreements about how much, given anticipated building costs, Riverside could afford to pay for coaching once Northeastern departed, about the distribution of coaching time, and about whether the coach's duties included club management.

The need to address the range of issues the club's resurrection presented led to the formation of three comprehensive planning programs at the outset of 1986. Under Rufus Perkins' calm, thoughtful leadership, a committee chaired by Jim White reviewed coaching and equipment needs. Jim Moore's building committee evaluated boathouse improvements. In February, the Strategic Planning Committee, led by Bidigare and including Dan Chernoff, Molly Hoyle, Anna Jones and Jim White, distributed a report that put forth three alternative growth scenarios. Each was based on an alternative philosophy, defined by the total membership size and the proportion of competitive versus recreational rowers. At that point, of the 250 authorized total membership Riverside had 157 rowing members, 33 percent of whom were classified as competitive and 67 percent as recreational. Assuming small annual dues and fee increases, each scenario was projected to produce a positive financial outcome by 1990.

At the club's March meeting, members broke into groups to discuss the report. Two of the three groups voted not to pursue the recreational scenario. On the whole, there was a willingness to consider higher dues if both recreational and competitive members got more coaching and rack space for their money. The

board responded in May by endorsing the scenario based on the then current ratio of 33 percent competitive and 67 percent recreational members. To supplement its revenue, the club initiated a fund raising drive, changing the Friends of Competitive Rowing's name to the Riverside Campaign to better communicate that it was a charitable organization.



On the competition front, Riverside hosted the 1986 Bay State Games rowing events, placing first in the open four, the boy's scholastic four, the women's open eight, and the men's open double, and first and second in the women's open single. Bob Cutler won a bronze in the 60-and-over singles at the World Masters' Championships in Bled, Yugoslavia. Bill Randall rowed in the national championship quad. Dan Chernoff and Jeff Parks won the championship double event at Henley. Reaching the club's highest level of participation in the World Championships to-date, four Riverside scullers represented the United States at Nottingham, England. Dan Chernoff and Jess Parks rowed in the lightweight men's double event, the first time since the club's 1936 Olympic four-with that a boat made up entirely of Riverside oarsmen represented the United States at the world championship level. On the women's side, women's lightweight rowing had been introduced to the World Championships in 1985. At the 1986 championships Carey Beth Sands and Chris Ernst of the New Haven Rowing Club won the women's lightweight double event, the first gold won by United States women scullers. Led by Sands' first place in the lightweight women's single, the club finished second in the Head of the Charles points trophy competition behind Harvard and ahead of Yale. Four Riverside rowers placed in top three, including Maria Lane's third in the women's club single event.

As Riverside concluded its 1986 racing season in November with its club championship and banquet, new management was in place and Doug Clark had been succeeded by interim coaching. The club had a multiplicity of programs. Membership had grown substantially. There was a waiting list for rack space. Social events enhanced club cohesion. At the same time, the club's operating costs had risen to almost \$80,000, of which dues and fees covered \$40,000-\$42,000. Rent from Northeastern provided much of the balance. Although the university planned to occupy the boathouse another year, Riverside faced a continuing challenge to control its costs and increase its revenues.

In 1987, the club initiated yet another program, one that would become integral to its identity in the coming years. Steve Sawyer, enrolled in graduate school at Boston University and an aspiring national level rower, augmented University of Massachusetts coach Dave Trond's summer program with a men's Lightweight Development Camp. ¹⁵ In Molly Hoyle's words, Sawyer brought an energy that "made the entire boathouse levitate." Since the club didn't have enough quality equipment to boat the talent he began to attract, he would connive to borrow boats, sometimes from clubs Riverside had just beaten in heats, and partnered with Vespoli and then with Schoenbrod. Under his charismatic leadership the program won club races, placed in the top three of most of the Canadian Henley events it entered, and did well in the Head of the Charles. As local sweep rowers turned into oarsmen who caught the attention of the Boston Rowing Center, Sawyer formed a cooperative relationship with the Boston Rowing Club in which his program operated as a pipeline for high quality lightweights from around the country. It attracted rowers to Riverside's other programs, which took it as a model for recruiting and training their participants. In 1988, Sawyer took charge of the summer program as a whole.

On the women's side, C. B. Sands and Chris Ernst were again selected to be the 1987 United States lightweight double, finishing third at the Copenhagen World Championships. At the local level, Riverside validated Doug Clark's vision for quality rowing at each level of the sport by again winning the Head of the Charles Regatta Points Trophy and repeating in 1988. Over a fifteen year period, the club had transformed itself from a rowing backwater into a competitive force.

The New Riverside

Northeastern University moved into its new boathouse in 1989. One of its legacies was Ted Littlefield, whom the university had hired to do chores around the boathouse and who remained at Riverside after it moved out. Despite both physical and mental disabilities incurred from a motorcycle accident, his devotion to the property inspired a respect for the building and its grounds that influenced all the club's members.

With Northeastern's departure Riverside Boat Club emerged from the challenges of the late 70s and early 80s with the mission—quality rowing at all levels—the full use of its boathouse, the programs, and a revised system of governance that would cement its stature over the coming decade. Consistent with women's growing significance at the club, it added Jeanne Flanagan, another future Hall of Fame member, and Cecily Keifer to its coaching roster. As for its financial health, faced with the loss of the university's rent, President Jim Tapscott, Jim Hanley, Jim Ames, and Charley and Lynn Osborn worked to develop a membership and financial model that would put the club on a self-sustaining basis. With its boathouse to itself and growing success on the water, there was a palpable sense of excitement among the club's members, whose total approached 125.

On the competitive front, C. B. Sands, now paired with Kris Karlson, won the 1989 World Championship women's lightweight double in Bled, Yugoslavia, while Molly Hoyle rowed in the women's open double. Meanwhile, men's lightweight rowing at Riverside was growing in significance. 1987 camp members James Manson, James Pierce, Thomas Hartley, Greg Wilkins, Eduardo Montalvo and Robert Hermann progressed to the U.S.'s 1989 and '90 World Championship lightweight sweep teams. The program's rapid results attracted other rowers seeking to break into the national program. With the quality of its athletes rising, Riverside's 1990 eight became the first non-Canadian boat to win the senior event at Canadian Henley. The club maintained its Head of the Charles

Points prominence, its men placing first and its women third in the regatta points trophy competition.



Kris Karlson and Cary Beth Sands

In 1991, the Pan American Games were held in Cuba. The United States' team that arrived in Havana disembarked from the first United States ship to land on the island since Fidel Castro's revolution. Riverside representatives included Steve Gantz and Marvin Giles, who won a silver in the men's lightweight pair event. They were joined by Molly Hoyle, Cindy Ryder, Karen Carpenter and Linda



Fidel Castro congratulates Linda Muri and Molly Hoyle on their Pan Am Games silver medal in the women's double.

Muri, another future Hall of Fame member. Ryder won gold in the women's open single. Hoyle and Muri teamed up to win the silver medal in the women's double and Carpenter was a member of the winning women's quad. Back home, the club's lightweight women won three events in the U.S. nationals. Six Riverside boats won at Canadian Henley, and the club's men finished first or second in every lightweight race at the regatta.

1992 was a banner year. The club added a quad development camp to its summer programs. Matt Collins stroked a lightweight straight four that made the finals at the World Championships and James Manson rowed in the eight. Riverside's "A" eight won a silver medal at the Nationals in Indianapolis. It was the only crew Riverside's Killer B's, featuring an "Atomic Death Stomp" thirty stroke burst at the 1,100 called for by vociferous former Northeastern coxswain Sean Wolf, didn't beat. The club's senior lightweight men's four-with, four-without, and pair were gold medalists at the Canadian Henley.

Riverside's women's sweep program was winning as well. President Jamie Ames augmented the club's support for it by hiring Simmons College head coach Nikolay Kurmakov, the club's second immigrant coach from the dissolved Soviet Union and a former Ukrainian member of its national team. He and Kiefer coached Riverside's women to top results in the Northeast Regionals, winning all events entered. Their crews placed in every event at the nationals. Linda Muri won in the elite quad as well as the senior pair and the senior coxed four in Canada. After a hard summer of trial racing, Cindy Ryder and Mary Mazzio returned Riverside to the Olympic stage at Barcelona as the U.S. women's double, finishing in the B group.

Riverside's women continued not only to be among the club's most successful competitors, they played increasingly instrumental roles in its operation. Lisa Kunze was appointed by the board to be Riverside's first female captain in 1992. She standardized the captain's tests and organized boat maintenance to make members more responsible for the equipment they used, all the while making improvements to the boathouse. Since the club did not have a rigger, Lisa took on the work as well until Linda Muri was formally hired as its first salaried rigger.

Cindy Ryder continued her success in 1993, competing as the United States women's single sculler. Patricia Belden and J. Belantoni were the United States lightweight double in the World University Games. The men's lightweight

program was even stronger than in 1992, winning the senior lightweight eight, four-with and without, and pair events at the National Championships. Several Riverside athletes were members of the gold medal U.S. light four and eight at the 1993 World Championships. As for the Head of the Charles, the club's lightweight eight placed second to the United States boat in 1995. Robert Cutler rowing in his last one that year at the age of 81.

Success on the water continued to attract new members to the club. A large influx from Community Rowing enabled it to launch a masters sweep program. Riverside's total average membership, including supporting members, grew to between 150 and 180, numbers that were not affected by an increase in annual dues from \$350 to \$370. Approximately sixty percent were men and forty percent women. In 1994/5, President Jamie Ames was able to allocate over \$130,000 to exterior and foundation repairs, the installation of a new heating system and the purchase of new boats, financed in part by a \$70 assessment. There was a cash reserve of \$150,000.

Developments like these generated growing confidence in Riverside's future. Significant challenges remained, however. In 1996, the club overran its \$118,000 budget by \$20,000. As its operation grew more complex, its governance challenged its volunteer leadership. The club asked a committee chaired by Jack Peters to compile a report that would provide an overview of its overall condition, including the size of its membership, its dues structure and the state of its boathouse. The completed report highlighted the high turnover rate among members who did not own their own boats. It observed that, in comparison with other Charles River clubs, Riverside did not enjoy social members who offset rowing members' fees. Committee member Jim Hanley noted that despite the governance structure established by its constitution the club had become over-reliant on one or two officers. The danger of burnout discouraged members from stepping forward to run for these positions, while the concentration of power stifled committee chairs' and the membership's participation in the club's operations.

As for its programs, Peters' report found that scullers remained Riverside's largest component. Members paid a \$40 fee to participate in Bulgarian immigrant Jordan Valclev's coached sessions. There were active men's and women's masters programs. The men's and women's lightweight programs together

had an enrollment of 20 to 32 athletes per summer, although their numbers dropped substantially in the winter. The report suggested that USRowing's termination of its support for lightweight rowing in 1995 presented Riverside with the opportunity to become "the lightweight center" for the country. The sculling fleet was deemed adequate for the demand, but there was a shortage of heavyweight sweep boats. As for the boathouse, the report noted problems with the foundation system, but the resulting differential settlement was not considered an immediate problem. On the other hand, many elements of the building, including its roof, its bathrooms, its lighting and its fire protection, were considered poor.

Despite these issues, Riverside continued to enjoy impressive results on the water through the balance of the 1990's. Jeff Mork and Josh Crosby won a national elite pair's championship in 1996. Carol Skricki won the 1996 nationals in the women's senior single sculls event and went on to be a national team sculler in 1998 and 1999. In 1997, Jamie Koven became Riverside's second Royal Henley Diamond Sculls winner, as well as the World Championship gold medalist in the open single. Kate Ackerman rowed in the U.S. quad at the World Championships in Aiguebelette, France as well as the World Games in 1998.



Jamie Koven

After a brief downturn following U.S. Rowing's withdrawal of support for lightweight rowing and Steve Sawyer's departure for academia, the club's lightweight development camp was reinvigorated in 1996 under Rich Branch and Mike Willey, a development that was reinforced by the International Olympic Committee's decision to add the lightweight four to its events. Branch and Willey produced eight oarsmen and a coxswain who dominated the men's lightweight four as well as the eight and pair at the club nationals and the Canadian Henley. Riverside's men's lightweight camp program retained its stature following the program's transfer to Northeastern University assistant men's coach Joe Wilhelm in 1997. In 1999, a Riverside boat composed of Erick Kenney, Tom Keister, Jason Banks and Sean Wolf, who had vacated his coxswain's seat, won the national elite lightweight four-without cox title, while the club's intermediate lightweight men's four and eight won their event at the Canadian Henley. Altogether the club's lightweight men won five elite and senior national championships. Meanwhile, the club added women to the program. Its lightweight women, coached by Dave O'Neil until he left to become head women's coach at the University of California in 1999, medaled in all ten women's lightweight national championship events.

The club's other divisions prospered as well. In 1997, twenty-three rowers, including future club leaders Caro-Gray Bosca and Kate Sullivan, moved as a body from Community Rowing Inc. to Riverside, providing the foundation for its club and masters women's sweep programs. Ukrainian Nikolay Kurmakov, previously the coach of the club's women's lightweight camp, took the reins of the programs and produced dynasties. Competition for seats grew fierce. By 1999, there were thirty-two participants and ten on the waiting list. With Nik's soft-spoken guidance, his "ladies" produced multiple Head of the Charles wins and Intermediate and Senior victories at the National Championships as well as the team points trophy. The men's sweep team, which had had difficulty luring scullers out of their singles, also began to attract post-collegiate rowers and to produce results, winning two national senior championships

Membership surged. Having never having added more than eighteen new rowers a year between 1979 and 1996, Riverside accepted 42 in 1997, 33 in 1998, and 56 in 1999, bringing the total number of senior and provisional members to 217. Women's growing presence at the club culminated in 1997 in the election of Riverside's first woman president, Maura Conron. Maura launched a capital

campaign to raise \$50,000 toward addressing the boathouse's deficiencies, enabling the club to replace the deteriorated ramps to its dock. When the boathouse connection to the Metropolitan District Commission's sewer system failed, Patricia Belden took on the project of building a new line.

In addition to her impact as club president, Maura Conron coached Brookline High School to success. Its boys' first varsity and all three of its girls' boats were victorious in the 1996 Quinsigamond Championships. One of her BHS rowers, Laura Larsen Strecker, would go on to row at Radcliffe, won gold in the eight at the 2008 World Rowing Under 23 Championships and make the senior team in 2009. The program grew steadily, eventually attracting 150 students to its try-outs. Riverside had to ask Brookline to limit those using the boathouse to eighty.

Riverside added another dimension in 1999 when Boston University, which occupied what had been the Boston Athletic Association's and then M.I.T.'s boathouse, decided to rebuild, displacing its tenant Simmons College. Simmons coach Nik Kurmakov approached the club about moving the program to Riverside, possibly in an expansion. After some internal debate, the club offered the college the opportunity to bring its trailer to the boathouse and row from its docks, an arrangement that continues today.

ADAPTING TO SUCCESS

As Riverside Boat Club prepared to enter the 21st Century, its members trained on a Charles River whose compliance with Federal boating standards had improved from 39 to 83 percent of the time. Working with The Charles River Watershed Association and the Friends of the Muddy River, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency's mitigation of sewer discharge continued to reduce them from 900 million gallons in 1991 to 213 million gallons in 2002.

Notwithstanding their issues, Riverside's array of programs continued to produce notable results in 2020. The summer lightweight development camp attracted women like Heather Moon, Julie Nichols and Sarah (Howlett) White, who would go on to success on the water and become full members. Several elite lightweight women, including Marika Page, now trained at the club year-round. As a result, Riverside won first place medals in the double and quad at

the 2000 Canadian Henley. In addition to their Canadian title, Meera Bhatia and Marika captured the national lightweight doubles title. As for Nik Kurmakov's women's sweepers, they won the Canadian Henley eight event as well as the Head of the Charles club eight, a title they would win multiple times. Since this was prior to the regatta's splitting out the club and collegiate eight events, Riverside women of varying ages, for the most part holding down full time jobs and some mothers of children, were beating club entries from top colleges.

At the international level, Marney Jaastad won a silver medal in the women's lightweight quad at the 2001 World Championship. On the men's side, Sean Wolf and Tom Keister were the 2000 U.S. lightweight pair. Erik Limpitlaw and Erik Koep were the 2001 United States lightweight men's pair and Kent Smack and David Gabel rowed its open double.



Smack and Gabel, 2001 U.S. Double

Even as the club's expanding programs produced success on the water, however, the operational challenges of integrating their growing size and the problem of controlling the club's costs were, as Jim Hanley had anticipated in Jack Peters' 1996 report, straining the management capacity of Riverside's volunteer leadership, even as turnover on the board brought in new generation of officers. Factionalism undermined the shared sense of commitment to the club that had been the basis for its revival. Although summer development camp programs had helped the club grow by attracting athletes trying to break into the national selection system, year-round members chafed at what they saw as

their participants' entitled, disengaged attitude and at their commandeering of club equipment. The camp programs, the energetic open and masters women, the less cohesive open and masters men, and the scullers, among whom were members who had led the club's revival in the 80s and 90s, competed for status and equipment. Captains Cheri Ruane and Shanon Ames struggled to obtain rowers' cooperation. Some of the women who had been its highest achievers during the 80s and 90s found the club no longer suited them and left for elsewhere.

Bothered by what he found, Kevin McDonnell, a lightweight sculler who had joined the club after moving from Los Angeles to finish his Ph. D. at M.I.T., saw the potential of a competition along the lines of the Long Beach Rowing Association's 5,000-meter head races to improve Riverside's social atmosphere. In the fall of 1999, he organized a Head of the Charles practice race series in which rowers from all the club's programs competed against each other, followed by congenial post-race breakfasts. Under Kevin's cheerful supervision, the races soon became a popular annual event, dubbed the Head of the Kevin in recognition of its organizer's contribution to the local rowing culture.

Still, the divisions inherent in the club's program structure needed addressing. In 2002, it conducted a comprehensive evaluation. It found that they operated largely independently of each other. As they grew, so did their demands on the club's equipment. Relationships among their participants, particularly between those enrolled in its summer camp and resident members, had grown contentious. The outcome of the evaluation was the discontinuance of summer programs.

At the same time, Riverside wanted to maintain its commitment to athletes aspiring to rowing's highest levels. Kevin McDonnell, having risen from the position of Riverside sculling coach to become director of coaching, introduced the High Performance Group, a year-round program he devised with input from former camp members now sitting on the board. It was Kevin who initiated the preparation races for the Head of the Charles regatta that bear his name and which, under his cheerful supervision, have proven so beneficial and so much fun that they have become their own much anticipated regatta, one that will celebrate its twentieth anniversary in 2019.¹⁶ In his capacity as coaching director, Kevin introduced the High Performance Group, a year-round program

he devised with the input of former camp members now sitting on the board. Designed to attract competitive women and men with coaching and intense training focused on the development of small boat skills, with an emphasis on single sculling, the program resolved many of the issues of competition among the club's programs and transformed its athletes into full members who participated in its affairs.

By the end of the 2002 season it was clear that the approach was paying off. The program averted conflicts and produced results. Its high performance women were particularly successful. Among the athletes it attracted who progressed to U.S. national teams were Simmons College alumna Wendy Campanella, Liane (Malcos) Keister, Cindy Bishop, Marika Page, Hillary Seager, Stef Sydlik, and Hanna Moore. Campanella joined Abigail Cromwell and two other rowers to win a bronze medal in the lightweight women's quad at the 2002 World Championships in Seville, Spain.

On the men's side, Jon Douglas was a member of the men's lightweight eight that placed second in the World Championships, while Nick Tripician rowed in the men's open four-with. Tom Keister and Sean Wolf won the national championship in the elite lightweight men's pair and a silver medal in the open men's pair, while Liane Malcos and Bryna McConarty won the elite pair by over



2002 Club Crew of the Year, Liane Malcos and Bryna McConarty

30 seconds. At the Canadian Henley Regatta, Riverside women won the senior lightweight single and lightweight quad (Hanna Moore, Layne Salter, Maria Jones and Sarah White). Malcos and McConarty won the senior pair and rowed in the winning four and eight on the way to being selected as 2002 The

Independent Rowing News' Club Crew of the Year. In the fall, the High Performance Group's women's lightweight eight won the Head of the Charles Regatta. Riverside women comprised nearly one third of the Head of the Charles championship double field. Riverside's non-elite scullers and sweepers achieved rewarding results as well.



Wendy Campanella and Cindy Bishop

Kevin McDonnell left his head coaching position in 2003. He remained an active member of Riverside's leadership, however, as it strove to maintain the High Performance Group's standards while meshing it with Riverside's other programs. Wendy Campanella won a bronze in the lightweight quad at the 2003 Pan American Games and Cindy

Bishop, who had learned to row at Riverside just four years earlier at age 29, earned a bronze in her single. The club's other programs continued to succeed as well. Riverside's women returned from the National Championships with eight titles, twenty medals, and the women's point trophy. The Lightweight women won the senior quad event at Canadian Henley and Riverside's women's club eight won at the Head of the Charles, while John Tracey won the senior masters single and the lightweight women repeated in the eight. Now a national team member, Liane Malcos won a gold medal in the straight four in the 2003 World Championships.



Cindy Bishop, Henley Royal Regatta winner

Adrian Smith and Tom Keister assumed the leadership of the High Performance Group in 2004. After her deep disappointment at finishing second at the 2004 Olympic Trials, Cindy Bishop became the first American to win the women's single event at the Henley Royal Regatta, a success she consummated by beating the reigning Olympic and World Champions to win the Head of the Charles Regatta. Kent Smack represented the United States in the quad. With the intention of introducing

potential future members to the club, the women's sweep team accepted collegiate summer rowers. The team won the national championship elite club four-with and women's eight events. Riverside's women's eight and quad won at Canadian Henley, as did Heather Moon in the lightweight single. In the 2004 Head of the Charles, the lightweight women's eight completed a three-peat, Heather Moon won the lightweight single, and Marika Page and Layne Salter won the championship double. On the men's side, Tim Vogels brought home Head of the Charles gold in the club single.



2004 U. S. Olympians Liane Malcos and Kent Smack

2005 was equally rewarding. Seven of Riverside's athletes competed at the World Championships in Gifu, Japan. An all-Riverside boat of Rob Zechmann, Greg Ruckman, Matt Muffleman and Sean Wolf rowed the men's lightweight quad; Marika Page was the U.S. lightweight single scull; and Heather Moon rowed in the women's lightweight quad. The men's lightweight eight won both the Head of the Charles and the Canadian

Henley. Riverside's women eight, which included Radcliff undergraduate summer program member and future Olympic Gold medalist Esther Lofgren, won a gold medal again at Canadian Henley as well as the Charles women's club eight title, one of the multiple times it would do so. Since this was prior to race organizers' splitting out the collegiate eight event, Riverside women of varying ages, most of them holding down full time jobs and some the mothers of children, were beating club entries from top colleges. Jen Warwzonik and Charlie Burckmeyer won their respective Head of the Charles Club Singles events.



2005 U.S. Quad, Rob Zechman, Greg Ruckman, Matt Muffleman and Sean Wolf



In addition to reconfiguring its programs, Riverside addressed itself to its management systems. As Jack Peters' 1996 report had suggested, the distribution of responsibilities and the engagement of its members in the club's increasingly complex operations needed to be improved. Members with organizational and budgeting backgrounds needed to step forward. One who did, Treasurer Dustan Bonnin, put financial controls in place that enabled Riverside to be recognized as a charitable, non-profit organization. Patricia Belden was another. After serving as the club's second woman captain, in 2003 she was elected its second woman president. She and Rob White strengthened the committee system by reinforcing board members' roles as liaisons with committee heads, who would in turn receive budget allocations and were delegated responsibilities for club operations. They established the expectation that decisions in areas such as equipment turn-over would rely on the analysis of data on costs and benefits and that decisions would be based on open and transparent discussion. Women like Kate Sullivan, Caro-Gray Bosca and Mary O'Neill became active committee chairs and club officers. Sarah White, in her capacity as secretary in 2003 and vice president in 2004/5, re-established the Membership Committee and charged it with vetting provisional members, which facilitated membership voting at quarterly rather than monthly meetings. In addition to maturing the club's governance and member involvement, Patricia and Sarah strove to create an atmosphere that was more inviting to a full range of ages and began an outreach out to club alumni.¹⁷ The net effect of these developments was that members' participation in the club's operations improved.

In 2006, Rob White formed the Presidents' Committee to develop a cohesive long-term strategic plan for the club. Once again, a Riverside committee was charged with developing a plan encompassing the club's membership, fleet, boat house improvements and finances. The board selected Patricia Belden, Lynn Osborn and Chris Daley as its initial members. Helen Fremont became the club's third woman president in 2008. Drawing on her legal training, Helen helped establish policies in areas such as coaching responsibilities and privileges and trailer driver requirements, as well as overseeing the inception of the club's Junior Summer Sculling Program.

On the water the club produced another all-Riverside World Championship entry in 2006. Coach Bruce Smith, who had coached the men's sweep program

the previous year, combined the light sweep men with some High Performance Group lightweight men to form a formidable eight. They finishing fifth, within three seconds of the winning time, at Eton, England. Three rowers with Riverside backgrounds were selected to be members of the United States team at the Princeton Training Center: Liane Malcos in the women’s quad, Matt Muffleman in the lightweight four-with, and Esther Lofgren in the women’s four.

Coached by Nik Kurmakov, Riverside’s College partner Simmons College entered a period of sustained success, placing third in the 2006 Head of the Charles collegiate coxed four event and following it with silver medals in 2007 and 2008. It won the 2007 and 2008 New England coxed four points trophy and its novice eight and varsity four won the 2008 Eastern College Atlantic Conference Championship.

At the 2007 World Championships Riverside’s lightweight eight again represented the United States again. Liane Malcos was 2-seat in the women’s quad, while Esther Lofgren, still a Harvard undergraduate, won a gold medal in the U.S. U23 quad. At the Canadian Henley the club’s men’s lightweight eight won again, as did its women’s senior quad of Jen Warzonek, Ashley Blake, Megan Musnicki and Siobhan Steynand, Jen Warzonek won the open single 500m dash. Riverside’s women’s lightweight eight completed a Head of the Charles three-peat, while four of its single scullers were winners: Heather Moon in the lightweight single, Dave Gabel in the masters’ men’s single, Igor Belakovskiy in the men’s club single, and Alex Kazanovicz in the women’s club single. Priscilla Hoffnung, with a CRI partner, won her section of the senior masters double.



2007 U.S. lightweight eight: Will Daley s, John Nichols 7, Andrew Diebold 6, Jeff Forrester 5, Greg Ruckman 4, Tyler Resch 3, Gavin Frase 2, Tim Larson bow, Leigh Heyman coxswain

2008 was again an Olympic year. Bruce Smith's High Performance Group produced another crop of United States rowers. In the July World Championship, Matt Muffleman, with Will Daly at six, stroked the United States lightweight eight to a gold medal. Esther Lofgren, now training at Princeton, stroked the women's four to a silver. Rob Zechmann represented the United States in the lightweight single and Alex Rothmeier and John Nichols rowed the lightweight pair. Will Daly continued on to the Beijing Olympics as a member of the U.S. straight four.

In domestic regattas, Sean Wolf and Andrew Hashway, both lightweights, won the United States Elite Nationals open double, following Andrew's silver medal and Sean's fourth place finish in the lightweight single earlier in the day. Riverside winners at the Canadian Henley included Heather Moon again in the lightweight women's single, the club's men's lightweight four, and its men's and women's lightweight eights. It was the men's fourth win in a row. Riverside won five gold medals in the Head of the Charles, including Heather Moon in the lightweight single, John Yasaitis and Bob Sproull in the grand masters double, Priscilla Hoffnung in the women's senior masters double, the men's club four with, and the women's club four with, which set a course record. There were silver medals in the women's champion single, the men's masters single, and the women's masters' single and bronze medals in the lightweight men's single and the men's masters single.

Riverside rowers' achievements continued in 2009 and 2010. Hillary Saeger and Stephanie Sydlik won a bronze in the women's lightweight quad at the 2009 World Championships. As the new decade arrived, Nik Kurmakov continued to produce successful women's sweep boats. Sculler Tina Vandersteel, one of a group of working women, mothers, and good friends who go back fifteen years at Riverside, all highly competitive athletes, including Sarah White, Ashley Lanfer, Alex Bailey, Bryna McConarty and Kate Ackerman, won the 2010 Head of the Charles masters' single title, as she would again in 2012 and 2013. Priscilla Hoffnung won another of her six first place medals in the sixty plus and seventy plus events.

Preparing for the Future

By 2010, the issues that had led Rob White to found a Presidents' Committee in 2006 with the charge of establishing Riverside's path forward had grown even more challenging. The club's membership, 305 in 2007, had grown to 350. It offered an increasingly wide spectrum of coached rowing programs, from youth to elite levels. Their impact on the boathouse and the management of boat usage and scheduling strained the club to the point that some form of full-time, paid manager needed to be considered.

The state of Riverside's physical facility presented increasing challenges as well. As the club sought to re-establish itself in the early 80s by offering programs that would attract an expanding membership, Riverside devoted its budget to coaching and equipment rather than repairs. By 2010, the first floor concrete slab was breaking up, interior walls were subsiding, the porch had structural issues, and the dock was deteriorating. Recognition that the boathouse needed major remedial expenditures raised questions regarding what other physical improvements should be undertaken to upgrade the facility for the long-term. The boathouse could no longer accommodate all of its members and its tenants' boats, which spilled out onto trailers and the adjacent lawn, raising the question of increasing its capacity.

Despite Rob's efforts, Riverside's board continued to focus on day-to-day issues. More strategic deliberations were complicated by antagonisms among key club figures. The election of Igor Belakovskiy as club president in 2011 presented an opportunity to move forward. A former High Performance Group rower, a highly competitive club sculler and Riverside's vice president the previous three years, Igor's credibility extended throughout the boathouse. He and Lynn Osborn formed a Development Committee intended to engage a cross-section of members through a sub-committee framework that could credibly assess the club's programmatic direction, develop a business model that could test assumptions about the equipment and coaching that would be required,

and propose a development approach to the boathouse that would meet the club's future needs. With Igor as ex officio member, the committee enlisted Lisa Kunze as programming chair, Dick Garver as facilities chair, Severine Imbert de Smirnoff as fundraising chair, Amelia Booth as community chair, and Marianne McCormick as communications chair. Each assembled a team of supporting members. Igor Lasic was appointed Board Liaison to the committee.

Lynn Osborn agreed to coordinate their efforts. To initiate the process, she interviewed 75 senior members and surveyed the membership about their priorities for Riverside. In January, 2012, the committee conducted a town meeting at nearby Morse School at which Lynn summarized their feedback: members appreciated the scale and style of the club and didn't want them to change. Attendees offered broad support for addressing critical building issues and improving the boathouse's amenity, which they recognized would entail expensive improvements, but felt strongly that the club's overall character be retained. The Development Committee was encouraged to develop strategies meeting these goals.

The committee reported on its progress in a follow-up meeting on May 29th. To frame the discussion, Lynn Osborn opened the meeting by quoting the club's recently adopted mission statement:

Riverside Boat Club strives to support the attainment of its members' rowing goals, from recreation to the highest level of international competition, and to promote the art and enjoyment of rowing, by providing safe facilities, quality rowing equipment and coaching in a friendly, collaborative, social community.

Lisa reviewed her survey of the club's programs, providing a numerical breakdown of types of rowers by member category and program usage and summarizing the factors that affect their rowing activity, including the number of seats in the fleet and the availability and stability of coaching. To optimize the composition of its fleet in relation to its members' demands, she recommended that the club define each program's scope and size, develop equipment plans to serve them, conduct annual program evaluations, and develop fee structures reflecting each program's impact on the club's operating budget. Lisa also suggested administrative changes that would enhance rowers' experiences, including hiring a boathouse manager who would schedule launch, boat and

trailer usage, oversee day-to-day maintenance and daily use of the boathouse, and be a consistent face for the community.

Dick reported that since the January town hall meeting the facilities committee had obtained a structural engineer's assessment of the boathouse and an inspection of its pilings. The boathouse's exterior walls and the pilings they sat on were found to be structurally stable, but its interior walls were subsiding because they rested on beams below the women's locker room whose pilings had broken. While the pilings under the eights bay, added to the boathouse in 1967, were sound, they would not be sufficient if Riverside were to add a second level above it. As for the building's capacity to house the boats stored on trailers and on the lawn, the obstacles preventing full use of the ground floor for boat storage included the furnace and water heaters, the women's locker room and the entryway and stair configuration.

Design Committee members Cindy Larson and Neil Harrigan, both architects, presented three alternative concepts for accommodating the club's boat storage needs and improving the boathouse's amenity. Because construction outside the current boathouse footprint would raise complex permitting issues, the alternatives were calibrated to minimize it. Chris Dyke's firm, the construction company Skanska, prepared estimates of their costs, which ranged from \$2,800,000 for one that made repairs essential to maintaining the boathouse's integrity to \$4,000,000 for one that included indoor space for eights and fours.

At the meeting's conclusion, Igor Belakovskiy laid out the committee's next steps. The club would launch a major capital campaign in support of its vision for its programs and facilities. The Development Committee would make recommendations regarding the club's future membership level and fleet composition, and it would approach Simmons and Brookline High School about their interest in participating financially in boathouse improvements

The club kicked off the capital campaign in July, 2012. Conceived and organized by Severine Imbert de Smirnoff, its stated goal was to institutionalize the idea of annual giving among every Riverside member. As a companion to the capital campaign, Sarah Schwegman's committee upgraded Riverside's communications, including establishing an internet-based newsletter, The Riverside Press. The club held a fundraising dinner titled An Olympic Event at Cambridge Boat Club in September 2012 at which Harvard lightweight coach

Charley Butt and Riverside Olympian Natalie Dell were the keynote speakers. The event raised \$60,000, while the capital campaign, which included a Leadership Donor program intended to attract large contributions, produced an unprecedented \$225,000 in commitments in its first year.

Igor Belakovskiy stepped down as Riverside president in 2013 after three years in the position. Vice President Mike Farry, elected to succeed him, committed to maintaining the Development Committee's progress. On April 12, 2013, Igor, Lynn and Dick met with Simmons College President Helen Drinan to explore the idea of a long-term relationship in which the college's boats would be stored in an expanded boathouse that Simmons would substantially finance. President Drinan agreed to contribute to the cost of preliminary designs for such a project and to participate in the design process. In a similar discussion with Brookline High School, its representatives indicated that while Brookline did not have the college's financial resources they also hoped to remain at the club.

With Simmons College's commitment in hand, the club's Design Committee initiated a two-phased facilities design process. Phase I would develop alternative architectural concepts, one of which would expand the boathouse's storage capacity sufficiently to bring all of Riverside's boats inside. The second would add the capacity needed to house Simmons' boats. The club would retain an architect who would work under the committee's direction to develop the two concepts, estimate the cost to build each of them, initiate the permitting process, and assist Riverside in selecting a preferred option. Simmons would participate in the Design Committee's oversight of the work and reimburse the club for one-third of the costs of Phase I of the design process, estimated to be between \$20,000 and \$40,000. At its conclusion, Riverside and Simmons would together decide whether and on what terms the college would become the club's partner in the development, at which point the club would initiate Phase II, the preparation of building plans. It was made clear that in any such arrangement Riverside would retain control of the club and that it would not entertain a "condominium-style" relationship. The committee issued a Request for Proposals and Qualifications for design services in March, 2014, on the basis of which the club selected Peterson Architects, a firm specializing in boathouse design.

Meanwhile, Pete Morelli, Lisa and Lynn continued their work on a sustainable business plan encompassing program and overhead operating costs, the

financing of facility improvements, capital assets including the fleet, depreciation, reserves, endowment, and contributions to capital and annual operating budget. The Development Committee updated the membership on its progress at a December 2014 town hall, highlighting the progress on design and regulatory approval, on sustainable business and financial plans, and on how the two would be brought together to select the optimal relationship between the boathouse's design, the club's program configuration and an operating plan that maintained Riverside's character while putting it on a long-term sustainable basis.

In the meantime, the need for boathouse repairs had become increasingly pressing. The porch was found to be resting on a rotting beam. The ramps that connected it to the dock were pulling the porch away from the boathouse, a condition aggravated by the pressure of river ice on the dock during the winter. In January 2015, Building and Grounds Committee chair Kier Evans oversaw the replacement of the beam the porch rested on. He and Carson Burrington identified a solution to the ramp problem in which the dock would be attached to its own pilings, allowing it to move independently, while the ramps would rest on their own pilings, stabilizing their relationship to the porch. The project was estimated to be \$240,000, some of which would be paid for by insurance coverage for ice damage.



A Rendering of Peterson Architects' Full Build Alternative

The club's architect, Jeff Peterson, delivered the Phase I feasibility study in April, 2015. One of its two required options opened up boat storage space on the ground floor by replacing the women's facilities with new space above a

reconstructed eights' bay. The second accommodated Simmons College boats by constructing a mirror image two-story addition on the upstream side of the boathouse. Both alternatives provided handicap accessibility by adding space for an elevator at the front entrance of the building. The latter, more ambitious alternative was estimated to cost between \$8 and \$9 million.

Because any expansion of the boathouse footprint would require the approval of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the club's landlord, and the State Legislature and because both schemes would require a long-term lease from DCR if the club were to finance their construction, the Development Committee set up discussions with DCR Commissioner Jack Murray, State Representative Jay Livingston and State Senator Anthony Petrucci to test their level of support for Riverside's ambitions. Each was favorable.



As Riverside pursued a comprehensive plan for a sustainable future, it continued to produce results on the water. In 2011, USRowing, recognizing Riverside's success in developing national team athletes, named it one of its training center partners. The club hired Bob Gillette as men's High Performance Group coach, with Judith Vogel as his assistant, while Tom Keister and his wife Liane continued to coach women's HPG. Under their coaching, a lightweight men's pair of Phil Henson and Phil Grisdela represented the United States at the



Natalie Dell

2011 Under 23 World Rowing Championships in Amsterdam. Hillary Saeger won a second women's lightweight quad bronze at the World Championships in Bled, Slovenia. Alumna Natalie Dell, after training for three years at Riverside, won a silver medal in the women's quadruple sculls, followed by a bronze at the 2012 Olympics, while alumna Megan Musnicki and Esther Lofgren rowed and

won gold in the perennially undefeated women's eight in 2010, 2011 and at the London Summer Olympics in 2012.

On other program fronts, the club hired Jeff Forrester as men's sweep coach, laying the foundation for years of success. The club approved a boys' summer program, to be operated by Brookline coach Katy Ruderman, that built on the club's program for girls.

In 2012, Andrew Hashway represented the United States in the men's lightweight eight and Hillary Saeger in the women's lightweight quad in the World Championships. A Riverside lightweight women's quad of Joan Buck, Lauren Ayers, Larissa Gulich and Mary Foster won their event at the nationals regatta.

In 2013, the High Performance Group's coaching staff was reorganized to place Tom Keister in the position of coaching director, overseeing Judith Vogel as his women's assistant and Margaret Shumway as the men's coach. The women had a breakthrough year. Lauren Schmetterling and Emily Huelskamp were



Emily Huelskamp and Lauren Schmetterling

called to the national team. Emily rowed bow in the 2013 World Championships straight four and would win in the pair at the 2015 Pan American games in Toronto. Lauren, who graduated from Colgate University in 2010, had tried out with the women's national team. While she was not selected, coach Tom Terhar recognized her raw talent and recommended she come to Riverside to develop her rowing. Lauren proved to be indefatigable. Rejoining Terhar in 2013, she, along with alumna Meghan Musnicki, raced in the eight at the 2013 World Rowing Cup III in Lucerne, Switzerland that won gold and set the current World

Best time of 5:54.16 in the final. Altogether, Lauren would go on to win nine international gold medals and be USRowing's 2015 fans' choice national team athlete of the year. Hillary Saeger, who had medaled in the women's light quad in the 2009 and 2011 World Championships, won a silver in the event in 2013. On the strength of the women's HPG breakthrough year, the program grew to twenty women, some of them recommended to Riverside by Tom Terhar and others attracted by the program's success.

Among the program's participants, Lauren Ayers was a Canadian Henley winner. Other Canadian results included Riverside eights, fours and pairs making the finals and Mike Farry finishing second in his single.

At the 2013 Head of the Charles Regatta, Riverside recorded the second most top three finishes of any club, eleven, and tied for third for the most golds, won by Tina Vandersteel in the senior masters single, Priscilla Hoffnung in the veterans double, Pete Morelli in the masters single, and Kevin McDonnell and Rob White in the masters double.



The MacMahon Cup, the Head of the Charles Regatta points trophy

In 2014, Margot Shumway assembled a men's lightweight quad composed of HPG rowers Andrew Neils and Jake Georgeson together with Peter Schmidt from Philadelphia and Kyle Lafferty from Craftsbury, both of whom came to Riverside for the opportunity to make the national team. They finished first in the World Championships B-final in Amsterdam. Hillary Saeger once again was a member of the women's lightweight quad. Riverside confirmed

the breadth and quality of its rowing in the fall. On the strength of its men's and women's sculling across age groups, the club won the 2014 Head of the Charles Regatta points trophy. First place winners included Jim McGaffigan in the senior masters single and Mike Farry, the first of four top ten finishers in the masters single event.

Youth rowing at Riverside was also enjoying a period of sustained success. High school rowing was surging, fueled by competition at the state, regional and

national levels and by the prospect of recruitment to the growing array of men's and women's college programs. The number of participant schools in Greater Boston expanded to include Boston College High School, Boston Latin, Wayland-Weston, Arlington/Belmont, Acton/Boxborough and several other schools. Riverside's long-standing high school partner, Brookline High School, reprising its success in the heyday of Greater Boston scholastic rowing at the turn of the 20th Century, sent boats to the high school national championships from 2009 through 2015. In 2013, its boys double of Jack Ruske and Jordi Cabanas won a national title. In 2014, Cabanas and Aviv Preminger won the youth double in the Head of the Charles. Josh Bilchik and Jordi Cabanas would follow with a youth national doubles championship in 2014 and 2015. All three joined college programs. According to Kathy Ruderman, their coach, the environment of excellence at Riverside was a significant factor in her team's success. "We have elite athletes who are going to the world championships training out of our boathouse, so it's an opportunity to rub elbows with the best of the best in the sport." Meanwhile, Simmons College was placing among the top three or four teams in the New England Women's Athletic Conference every year since 2013.



With Jeff Peterson's Phase I study alternatives in hand, in 2015 Riverside was ready to assess their feasibility. On September 18, development team representatives met with Simmons College officials to determine whether the club's preferred course, the full build alternative, which included a bay that would house the college's boats, provided a basis for the two parties to move to Phase II of the design and permitting process. To their disappointment, Simmons officers indicated that while the college hoped to continue to row from Riverside's dock, the unanticipated costs of building playing fields at DCR's Daley Field in Brighton left it unable to make a capital contribution to the club's building project. Although disappointed, Riverside's representatives reiterated their support for the college's program and suggested that, since there was still much work to do with the regulatory agencies to determine whether the club would be able to expand its footprint, Simmons' position be left open and that the two parties meet again the following fall.

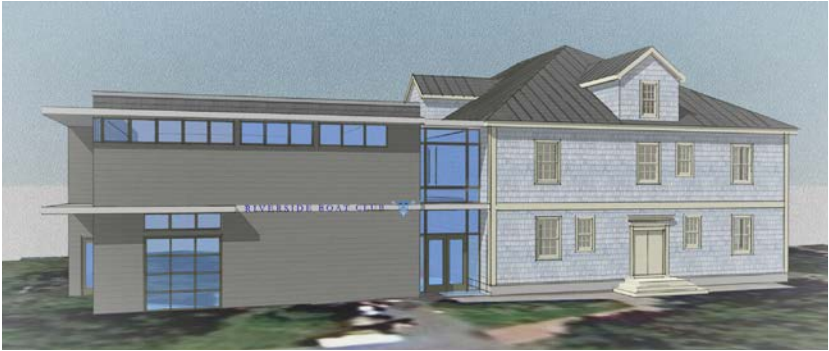
To that end, on September 21 club representatives met with recently elected Governor Charlie Baker's new DCR commissioner, Carol Sanchez and

Cambridgeport's elected state representatives. Each assured the club that they were supportive of Riverside's ambitions to make investments that would not only address the building's structural issues but enhance it as a rowing venue for all.

The next step was to present the club's preferred alternative to Charles Sullivan, the director of the Cambridge Historic Commission, which, because the boathouse is considered a contributing feature to a National Register eligible property, Cambridge's Charles River parkland, would have jurisdiction over Riverside's project. While supportive of the club's need for additional space, Sullivan informed club representatives that because the proposed design's upstream bay and new entryway obscured the façades of the original building it could not be approved. He suggested that Riverside consider an approach that would add a new downstream structure that would leave the original structure intact and be clearly differentiated from it.

On the club's operational side, Riverside's total membership surpassed 400, with much of the growth attributable to its juniors and summer programs, the number of senior, provisional and family full year memberships remaining constant at 200. The club's 2015 budget rose to \$401,000. With the goals of improving its day-to-day operations and of putting its fundraising capacity on a professional basis, the board acted on the idea, in discussion since 2011, that the club hire a program manager. To be introduced on a trial basis in 2016, the role would combine management of the club's programs and the pursuit of funding opportunities with that of HPG coach. Judith Vogel was selected for the new position.

In light of the Historic Commission director's determination, in February, 2016 the Development Committee began consideration of an alternative approach to expanding the boathouse's boat storage capacity. Neil Harrigan shared sketches with Jeff Peterson in which the existing eights bay would be replaced by a two-bay, two-story addition containing the elevator that would be required for accessibility. In addition to facilitating permitting, the approach would lower the expansion project's cost. It would also reduce its impact on the club's ongoing operations during construction since the existing building could continue to function while the addition was built. Peterson prepared a preliminary plan and images of the concept.



Riverside's revised concept

On July 21, 2016, Riverside's development committee representatives met with yet another new DCR commissioner, Leo Roy, together with the club's local elected legislators to seek support for its project. Roy was currently embroiled in Simmons College's restoration of the agency's Daley Field, which was under attack from the Charles River Watershed Association and a local state legislator on the grounds that the project constituted the alienation of a public asset. Roy did not warm to the idea of another private organization expanding into state parkland. The meeting ended without a conclusion.

Even as Riverside's approach to DCR's commissioner met resistance, however, its planning and engineering division was preparing construction plans for the restoration of Magazine Beach Park, including the area around the boathouse. The design process involved a close advisory relationship with a Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association committee led by Cathie Zusy. Based on the collaborative relationship the committee had developed with Riverside, including its support for the restoration of the park's historic powder magazine, Dick Garver was invited to join as club representative. With the park design nearing completion, he convened a meeting in December, 2015 involving DCR's design team, Cathie Zusy, and Riverside's Neil Harrigan, Captain Caro-Gray Bosca and Carson Burrington in which the parties worked out a park design that incorporated Riverside's expanded boathouse, a fenced perimeter area and trailer parking. DCR's planning and engineering division proceeded to prepare final park plans reflecting Riverside's expansion.

The prospects for that expansion brightened somewhat in 2017. In the course of informal contacts between DCR Commissioner Roy and club members he

sent the signal that he might consider Riverside's proposal, but only under the condition that all of its boats be removed from the parkland and that the club provide a public bathroom, two outcomes not contemplated in the club's proposal. Once the leadership's initial consternation had subsided, Lynn Osborn, elected club president in November 2016, developed a concept that addressed both conditions: the construction of a free-standing boat shed upstream of the boathouse with transparent walls to maintain the public's views of the river and incorporating a public bathroom.

Nevertheless, it was becoming apparent that Riverside's plan for renovating and expanding its boathouse entailed permitting and financing challenges that would take time to resolve. Even as the club continued to look for a path for reaching its expansion goal, its 1912 building posed safety and operational issues that could no longer be deferred. Recognizing that its new development approach meant that improvements to the building in the short term would not be undone once expansion got underway, the club adopted an incremental approach toward addressing the building's issues. They would be tackled by projects that reflected their urgency and the club's capacity to fund them, even as it continued to undertake the design, financing and permitting steps required to produce a boathouse that would meet the club's long-term needs.

To that end, Riverside formed an Engineering Committee led by board member Neil Harrigan and Building and Grounds Committee chair Carson Burrington. The committee defined a program of urgent boathouse improvements. The first, most ambitious project was to rebuild the first floor slab. While the floor in the 1967 eights bay addition was sound, that in the original building, a concrete slab laid on the river bank, had broken up, making it unsafe for members using stepladders to access the higher racks or carrying their boats in and out of the building. In March 2017, the committee began preparations for replacing it. Based on soil borings carried out to identify the support system the new floor would require, Cowen Associates, the club's long-time engineering consultant, prepared a design, a construction plan and a cost estimate. Because the new floor would have a higher grade than the subsided floor, a new rack system preserving the existing number of spaces to the extent feasible would be required. The project was estimated to cost in the range of \$150,000.

The second project would be the replacement of the club's deteriorating docks. Subsequent incremental projects would include repairing or replacing the front steps, upgrading interior lighting, and repointing the boathouse's chimney.

Given the magnitude of the costs of these projects, the preponderance of which would be absorbed by the capital account funded through donations, fundraising remained a priority. By the end of 2016, the campaign initiated in 2011 had reached a total of \$555,000 in contributions. Riverside's 2017 fall gala, at which Gevie Stone, Olympic silver medal women's sculler for whom Riverside scullers had volunteered to be training foils, was the speaker, raised an additional \$97,000 in gifts.

On its operational side, the board reviewed the benefits compared to the financial impact of its 2016 trial program manager position and concluded that as structured it was not operationally or financially viable. The position was suspended with the goal of reconceiving it to better meet the club's needs and budget. Judith Vogel remained in her position as High Performance coach.

Another outcome of Riverside's commitment to analyze the cost impacts of its programs, such as wear and tear on boats, was the recognition that Brookline High School's annual fee was below the costs of the program to the club. With the school's prior four-year agreement expired, the club proposed a new one reflecting the program's actual costs and offering the opportunity to engage in Riverside's capital improvements. After extended discussions, Brookline's athletic director informed the club that the school could not sustain the rent increases that were projected. With mutual regret, Brookline's relationship with Riverside came to an end after thirty-one years. Faced with its departure and remaining supportive of scholastic rowing, the club issued a Request for Proposals from high school programs interested in rowing from Riverside in the fall and in potentially becoming its partner in the improvement of the boathouse. Based on its submission and Interviews conducted in August, the scale and operations of Boston College High School's program appeared to be a potential fit and it was offered a trial tenancy. The relationship proved mutually satisfactory and in 2018 the school was offered an agreement running through 2022.



On the water, Riverside rowers produced some notable racing results between 2015 and 2018. The club sent seven athletes to the 2015 World Championships, a lightweight women's quad consisting entirely of Riverside HPG athletes, Lauren Ayers, Mary Foster, Hillary Saeger, and Erin Roberts, which advanced to the A final, and three members of the United States' men's lightweight eight which finished third.



2015 women's lightweight quad

2016 was particularly eventful. First of all, it was an Olympic year. On behalf of its members, the High Performance program arranged for the team to train in Florida during February and the first weeks of March. Although none were eventually selected to Olympic boats, with this kind of support seven Riverside athletes represented the United States at the U23 and Senior World Championships.

As for Riverside's other coached programs, in June nine rowers and two coxswains from ten different universities joined Riverside's women's sweep team to train for the U23 and the senior summer racing season. Led by coach Jeff Forrester and captain Graeme Calloway, the men's team, reinvigorated by an expanded and enthusiastic group of year-round rowers styling themselves the "meat wagon," raised its training to a new level. The club's masters program also took a significant step forward. After a seven year hiatus in their program, its women joined forces with the men to launch the club's first mixed sweeps program. Trained from May through August by 1984 Olympic gold medalist, now M.I.T. varsity women's coach, Holly Metcalf, and by Karen Chenausky in the fall, it attracted an active roster of 16 women, 36 men and eight to ten coxswains. The combined team brought Riverside programs to a new level by jointly chartering a bus to and from the Canadian Henley regatta, with results commensurate

with their commitment. At USRowing's Masters National's regatta in Worcester, they combined with open rowers to win three women's and seven men's golds, six silvers, and 12 bronzes.

As for the club's scullers, Mike Farry probably had the busiest summer, joining the High Performance Group in winning the men's lightweight quad event at Canadian Henley and winning the open A men's single at USRowing Master's Nationals. Mike also joined Igor Belakovskiy as training foils for U.S. women's single sculler Gevvie Stone, who gave them great satisfaction by winning a silver medal at the Rio Olympics. Racing in the single, doubles and quads, Alexis Belakovskiy won six Masters Nationals medals, she and Ilana Zieff going one-two in the Open A Single. Ilana also finished second in the A women's lightweight single. In one of the regatta's more exciting races, Andrew Hashway and Niles Kuronen teamed up for a 0.041 win in the A Double. Kelley Woodacre, Meghan Brundage, Beatrice Simms and Sarah Leach won the Club A Quad. In total, including sweep entries, Riverside won eleven gold, five silver and 12 bronze medals.



Mike Farry in training

The quality of rowing at Riverside was reconfirmed at the 2016 Head of the Charles Regatta. Powering through the wind and rain, its 77 entries again won the regatta's points trophy. Of its scullers, Andrew Hashway defended his 2015 masters singles title. Sean Wolf and Pete Morelli defended their 2015 masters double title. Ashley Lanfer and Sarah White won the women's masters double.

The men's sweep team club eight, crossing the starting line in a driving rain, finished in fifth place overall but, as the regatta's top club crew, was awarded

the special medal for the second year in a row, while Its four secured a 2017 entry. With results like these, the team upped the ante, making the decision to take an eight and a four to the 2017 Henley Royal Regatta in England. As for Nik Kurmakov's women's sweeps, with new members bringing the team to twenty-four rowers, its lightweight four, defending its 2015 title, finished second behind Western Ontario and more than a minute ahead of the third-place boat while its eight finished eighth.

The club's men's and women's masters team fielded a remarkable forty seats in the regatta. Its men's grand masters coxed four successfully defended its title. The paparazzi's favorite, however, was the Men's Masters eight. As they clashed oars with Fat Cats at the Eliot Bridge, an epic ejector crab launched Jeff Angler into the Charles. With hundreds of spectators as witnesses, he bobbed to the surface, pulled himself back into the boat, and off they rowed to finish the race in 14th place. Photos of the crab blew up the internet.

Not counted in Riverside's points total but worthy of note, Lauren Schmetterling, HPG alumna, Olympic gold medalist, and who with alumna Megan Musnicki was rated second and fourth best women rowers respectively by World Rowing, returned to Riverside in the fall to explore the mysteries of sculling. The Head of the Kevin got the best of her—two bridges and one oarlock failure—but Lauren recorded a commendable fourth in the women's championship single and won coveted the Riverside Bridge Award.

As the 2017 season opened, Chris Rogers and Peter Schmidt's lightweight's double won the national selection regatta for the opportunity to race at World Cup II in Poznan, Poland. Their double, the first Olympic boat class entry produced by Riverside since 2001, finished fourth in the B final. To prepare for USRowing's August World Championship trials, Judith Vogel conducted a summer lightweight development camp, revisiting the concept of it had so successfully employed in the 1990's.¹⁵ In early July, she brought four lightweight men in from other high performance programs, arranging accommodations for them during the camp. Chris Rogers and Peter Schmidt emerged as the US lightweight men's double and advanced to the C final, while Brendan Harrington, Jacob Georgeson, Will Young from the Southern California Scullers Club, and former Brookline High School rower and scholastic champion Jack Ruske rowed in the C final of the men's lightweight quad event. Meanwhile, Jillian Zieff successfully tried out for a Schuylkill Navy women's quad, which finished first in the B final, even as

her sister Ilana participated in the Maccabiah Games, winning two golds (4-, 4x) and two bronzes (2x, 2-). With Judith Vogel joining the US World Championship coaching staff, a remarkable nineteen members of the 2017 US National Team and staff were present or former members of Riverside Boat Club.

Meanwhile, Riverside's men's sweep team, having committed to taking an eight and a coxed four to the Henley Royal Regatta, embraced a demanding training program, doing pieces as a group eight or more times a week even as they balanced full-time work or school. After obtaining racing experience by scrimmaging other local crews heading to Henley, the four won its required qualifier, entitling it to be one of sixteen crews racing in the Britannia Challenge Cup. Pre-qualified for the Thames Challenge Cup, the eight won the elite eight event at the warm-up Reading Town Regatta. At Henley the four lost by a canvas in the opening round to Stratford-Upon-Avon. Riverside's eight, handicapped by a dead cox box, stayed within a couple of seats of vaunted Tideway Scullers until the two boats reached the enclosure but ultimately lost by three-quarters of a length. Notwithstanding their disappointment, everyone involved considered the experience a rowing career highlight for which they expressed their gratitude to Riverside for its support. Back together for the Head of the Charles Regatta, the team's eight claimed the club special gold medal for the third year in a row. In the club coxed four event, which had not been won by an actual club in years, Riverside's entry won its event by ten seconds.



From left to right, top row to bottom row: Brad Sherman, Charles Wu, Alex Barat, Gjis Hoogerwerf, James Primes, Evan Meisler, Alex Brown, James Leech, Jon Dwyer, Giuliana Vetrano (cox); Sarah Iuey (cox), Cal Brooks, Xavier Morelle, Graeme Calloway

CATHERINE WIDGERY

Catherine Widgery took up sculling at CRI at the age of 57 in 2010. She quickly took to the sport, entering fall races and winning bronze medals at Schuylerskiff and Head of the Fish and a silver at Silverskiff. That winter she was struck by the autoimmune Reiters Disease, which afflicted her with body-wide arthritis, leaving walking difficult, rowing impossible and led to a total hip replacement. Despite her surgeon's doubts that she would ever row again she bought a used Van Dusen, joined Riverside Boat Club and resumed sculling in June 2013, five months after turning 60. That fall, she entered the Head of the Charles Regatta. Starting bow #39 out of 40 boats, she won the Veterans I category. Since then her explicit goal has been "to be the fastest woman single sculler in the world at 65."

Off the water Catherine is a designer of public art with a world-wide practice. Her particular interest is in working with communities to create environmental experiences which capture the spirit of a particular place. Riverside, in addition to being her rowing home, has given Catherine the opportunity to extend that interest to the Cambridgeport neighborhood, advising it on the design of Magazine Beach Park's reconstruction, a role that led to friendship with the community's leader.

In pursuit of her personal goal, Catherine won the major 2018 regattas: Northeast/Mid-Atlantic Regionals, US Nationals, Worlds Masters and the Head of the Charles Regatta—despite fracturing her fibula eleven days before the race—as well as Head of the Hosmer, Cromwell Cup, Derby Sweeps and Sculls, and the CRI Fall Classic. She also medaled in team boats.

Because there is no road map for becoming a high level older woman rower, Catherine accepts advice but consults her body to know when to rest and when to push. She and a number of over-60 women would like to share what they've learned in a blog for masters women and men rowers, particularly their knowledge that “one can start late and yet excel and that health setbacks should not mean you give up.”



Catherine Widgery hauls in the medals at the 2018 nationals

Nik Kurmakov's women's sweep program had one of its largest enrollments in recent years, with twenty rowers on the year-round roster, joined by ten U23 rowers during the summer. Its best finishes were second in the women's open coxed four, the intermediate coxed four and the intermediate eight at the Independence Day Regatta and third place in the women's senior eight, senior four and U23 four at Canadian Henley. The Masters' team started their season with its men going to San Diego for the Crew Classic, followed by the combined team's dominant showing at Canadian Henley Masters, where it won the most medals and regatta points, the first time it had achieved these goals.

Riverside's scullers, coached by Sarah Baker, Karen Chenausky and Cian Noone, produced numerous medal winners at Masters Nationals, a gold in the U23 men's double and second in the senior men's quad at Canadian Henley. At the 2017 Head of the Charles Regatta they recorded a second in the women's championship lightweight double, a second and fourth in the men's championship lightweight single, and a third in the women's championship double. Their success across boat classes and age groups contributed significantly to Riverside again winning the Head of the Charles Regatta points trophy.

In 2018, HPG coach Judith Vogel conducted a women's lightweight double selection camp in collaboration with Cambridge and Potomac Boat Clubs. Of the women who trained at the camp, Riverside's Jen Sager and Jillian Zieff won a silver medal in the lightweight women's pair at the World Championships and Hillary Saeger rowed bow in the United States' fourth place lightweight quad. On the men's side, Kevin Meador was the United States' men's single sculler and Sam Hausman rowed in its lightweight quad. Among the club's many other scullers, Catherine Widgery had a particularly notable year. A multiple medalist in the 2014, '15, '16 and '17 Masters Nationals, EuroMasters, Silverskiff and Head of the Charles Regatta, she won three golds at the 2018 Nationals Masters, six golds at EuroMasters, three golds at World Masters, and gold in her single and silver in Riverside's mixed eight at the Head of the Charles Regatta.

On other program fronts, the club reintroduced a summer juniors program, conducted by Amelia Patton, following the hiatus created by Katy Ruderman's departure after Brookline High School chose not to remain at Riverside.



Riverside's board took up the decision whether to replace the boathouse's crumbling first floor slab and install new racks in January, 2018. The low bid for replacing the floor pushed the cost of the combined projects to \$520,000, only a nominal share of which could be absorbed by the club's operating budget. If the work were to be undertaken, the club would have to draw on its capital reserves, built up in large part by Leadership Donor gifts. Guided by Lynn Osborn's perspective that the floor had reached the point that it presented serious safety and operational issues and that costs would only increase in future, the board voted to proceed. Realizing that the project presented an opportunity to address the boathouse's principal structural issues, the Engineering Committee added the installation of pilings supporting the beams at the northwest corner of the building and the subsided interior bearing walls to the scope.



Slab demolition

Before work could get underway, all the boats and equipment housed on the first floor would have to be moved out. With a remarkable degree of cooperation, club members met the schedule for removing their private boats. Tina Vandersteel offered her family's barn on Cape Cod for the storage for seventeen of them. All over the metropolitan area, boats appeared on slings in back yards and basements. Once the project was underway in March, 2018, Neil Harrigan logged a prodigious number of hours managing the contractors.

The vacated first floor presented a unique opportunity to remove decades of outdated materials and to upgrade the boathouse's interior. With the goal of minimizing the period until the boats could be returned, the membership pitched in with a greater number of volunteer hours than had ever been contributed to one project, insulating exterior walls, drywalling, painting, rebuilding the sweep oar lockers, and much more, tasks requiring hundreds of hours of coordinated carpentry, insulation hanging and painting within a compressed period of time. With the work completed in the first week in May and the new racks about to be installed, the club celebrated with a "slab party."

Next in line was the replacement of the club's deteriorated docks. After an extensive evaluation of alternative systems and vendors led by Caro, Carson and Paul Martin as well as permitting and regulatory efforts headed up by Renee Lanza, the new dock was installed at a cost of \$220,000 on June 23.

In the meantime, the boathouse development project took another turn. Simmons College, its Daley Field project completed, signaled a renewed interest in collaborating in an expansion that would provide it with a long-term home. Boston College High School expressed similar interest, each indicating it would entertain a proposal setting forth what its respective financial obligations would be. Riverside's representatives responded that they would return with proposals once they had conducted the community outreach needed to assure them of public support for the project.

Accordingly, in September Development Committee members met One-by-one with neighborhood representatives, the director of the Cambridge Historic Commission and the incoming director of the Charles River Conservancy. While none of them objected to the idea of a freestanding sculling shed, the neighborhood made it clear that it would oppose any expansion of the boathouse beyond the two-bay concept that had been mutually agreed upon and was reflected in DCR's Magazine Beach restoration plan.

As it stands at the end of 2018, then, Riverside Boat Club has prepared a conceptual plan for a two-bay expansion plus an adjacent, upstream boat shed that would bring more boats inside, expand second floor space, provide new locker facilities, make the club handicap accessible, and provide a bathroom for the public. The next step is to present proposals to present to Simmons College and Boston College High School that would make the project feasible while

preserving a governance structure that would assure the club's control over its future for the long-term. Once suitable terms have been agreed to, Riverside will again present its plans to the Commonwealth for approval.¹⁷

Riverside Boat Club at 150

Since its founding as a Cambridgeport trade-based rowing club in 1869, Riverside Boat Club has ascended to athletic and social prominence, fallen into steep decline, and re-established itself as one of the country's leading rowing organizations. Its shifting fortunes have tracked the changing place of rowing in American popular culture. The club came into prominence in the late 1880s during a period of growing enthusiasm for the sport, participating in the emergence of amateur athletics, including not only rowing but boxing and the other popular sports of the day. By the turn of the 20th Century, at the peak of rowing's popularity in New England, Riverside was the region's most successful rowing club. Social, cultural and economic forces that emerged following World War, however, displaced rowing from a leading place in the national sporting scene. Boston area club rowing declined, eventually leaving Riverside as the lone survivor of the many Boston workingmen's boat clubs formed in the 1860s and 70s. It too came perilously close to extinction, surviving only by renting most of its building to Northeastern University during the 1960s and 70s. Although it was not recognized it at the time, Northeastern's nascent program was a harbinger of rowing's impending revival as a sport for athletes from outside its traditional social milieu and collegiate base. Its expansion, accompanied by the emergence of women's rowing and the transformation of world and Olympic competition in the 1970s, provided Riverside with the opportunity to turn itself into the vibrant organization it is today.

In addition to the shifting place of rowing in American popular culture, Riverside's history reflects changes that unfolded in the Boston area's economy and demographics from the mid-19th Century onward. As one of many working class clubs formed in waterfront neighborhoods following the massive immigration triggered by the famine that struck Ireland in 1848, Riverside had an important place not only in Cambridge's athletic scene but in its social and political life. Through the 1960s the club's identity remained solidly anchored in Cambridge's working class community and its Irish heritage. However,

as Boston's economy evolved from its 19th Century basis in its port and in manufacturing to one driven by educational and professional attainment in the second half of the 20th Century, Riverside attracted a new, more diverse and cosmopolitan generation of rowers, male and female, and with them revived rowing ambitions. Not without conflict, its officers brought a new club into being. Adopting the mission that guides it today—quality rowing at all levels—the club made the investment in programs and resources that would again attract a self-sustaining membership. Among its most notable adaptations was the integration, after a rocky introduction, of women as senior members. They would provide not only a major share of the club's success on the water and many of its leaders but much of the dedication and commitment that has brought the club to where it is today. In a sport traditionally dominated by heavyweight men, their impact gives the Riverside story a special dimension. As for its place within the community, having gone from being a center of neighborhood life to an at-best indifferent relationship to its neighbors, Riverside has again become a contributing citizen of its Cambridgeport neighborhood.

Riverside's history has also been impacted by the transformation of the Charles River from an industrial estuary into the centerpiece of the Boston region's park system. The City of Cambridge's riverfront parkway project, an outgrowth of the metropolitan park movement that arose at the end of the 19th Century, put the club's traditional Cambridgeport competitor Bradford Boat Club out of business and threatened Riverside's survival but ultimately furnished it with the location for a new boathouse within a riverfront park. The cleanup of the river itself that was instigated by the National Clean Water Act of 1972 has added to the appeal of rowing at Riverside and the other clubs located along its banks.

Each of these sporting, demographic, economic and civic transformations was animated by distinctive Riverside Boat Club figures, from exemplars of rowing's rough-and-ready professional days to the international athletes that train at the club today—a few of whom are profiled here.

Each transformation presented Riverside with challenges. As this history recounts, the club surmounted them and the controversies they generated to become the vibrant organization it is today because in each era members with a strong sense of commitment to the club stepped forward to steer it through sometimes difficult adjustments. Through their leadership the club has re-

emerged as one of the country's leading rowing centers, consistently producing competitors, both men and women, for international, club, masters and youth racing, as well as a large community of recreational rowers and partnerships with college and a high school programs. The range and quality of rowing at Riverside today are attested to by the Head of the Charles Regatta points trophies it has won in recent years.

Operating the club that makes these athletes' accomplishment possible continues to be the responsibility of elected board members and the volunteer committees they oversee. Riverside's 400-plus members is split roughly evenly between women and men. Having moved past the divisions and personal animosities that arose within the club at times in the past, they exhibit a camaraderie and an inclusiveness that makes the club a second home for many and gratifies incoming members.¹⁷ Their volunteerism permits the club to limit the costs of maintaining its facilities and to focus its \$525,000 annual budget on making competitive equipment and qualified coaching available to its programs. In anticipation of major investments in the boathouse, members support a fundraising program with an annual target of \$150,000. To-date their contributions have secured the boathouse's structural integrity and restored its rowing facilities—its dock, ramps, first floor and racks. Looking forward, plans are in place for housing the club's expanded fleet and those of the schools it hosts, for becoming handicap accessible, and for refreshing its 100-plus year-old boathouse.

Riverside Boat Club can expect new challenges in the coming years, not least the execution of its building plans. As it approaches its 150th anniversary, however, it has achieved a level of competitive, organizational and financial health that suggests it will thrive well into the future.







Appendix A: Riverside Presidents

PARTIAL LIST OF PAST RIVERSIDE PRESIDENTS

1869	John P. Facey	1946-47	Joseph F. Ambrose
1873	John J. Curley	1951	Frank Bane
1885-88	J. Frank Facey	1954	Robert Roderigue
1889-90	Frank W. Smith	1960-61	James White
1891-92	John J. Sullivan	1962-64	Tom Kudzma
1890s	Harry A. Davis	1965-70	Frank Bane Sy Cromwell
1890s	James T. McNamee	1971	Ted Van Dusen
1894	Hugh Finnegan	1978-80	James Moore
1895	Arthur Gove	1981-82	Rufus Perkins
1896	E. D. Thayer	1983-85	James Hanley
1897	Cleary	1986-87	Rufus Perkins
1897	Thomas W. Hynes	1988-91	Jim Tapscott
1899	Charles Horan	1992-95	James Ames
1901	Frank E. Davey	1996	John Condon
1902	Fred Hynes	1997	Maura Conron
1903	James H. Phelan	1998-99	Rudi Vandershoot
1904	Richard J. Foye	2000-02	Savas Gunduz
1905	J. J. Culhane	2003-04	Patricia Belden
1907	John Brassil	2005-07	Robert White
1908	Frank E. Davy	2008-10	Helen Fremont
1912	Thomas Riley	2011-13	Igor Belakovskiy
1919	Joseph M. Murphy	2014-16	Michael Farry
1932-34	Fredrick O'Conner	2017-20	Lynn Osborn
1934-39	John Toomey		
1940	Joseph F. Ambrose		

Appendix B: Notable Riverside Athletes

RIVERSIDE SENIOR & ELITE NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

- 1896 Men's Senior Single Sculls, Joseph J. Whitehead
- 1906 Men's Elite Eight *
- 1913 Men's Elite quadruple sculls, Cary Faulkner, William Faulkner, Frank Davey, Henry Livingston
- 1914 Men's Senior quadruple sculls, William Faulkner, John Livingston, Frank Davey, Cary Faulkner
- 1919 Men's Elite Double Sculls, Cary and William Faulkner
- 1936 Men's Elite Four with Coxswain, Robert B. Cutler, J. Paul Austin, Roger W. Cutler, William Haskins, c. Edward Bennett
- 1961 Men's Elite Single Sculls, Seymour Cromwell
Men's Senior Single Sculls, Seymour Cromwell
- 1962 Men's Elite Single Sculls, Seymour Cromwell Men's Senior Single Sculls, Robert Lea III
- 1963 Men's Elite Single Sculls, Donald M. Spero
Men's Elite Double Sculls, Seymour Cromwell and Donald M. Spero
Men's Elite Four with Coxswain, Ted Kakas, David Norris, Giles van de Bogert, Bill Weber, c. Richard Hersh
- 1977 Men's Senior Single Sculls, Ted Van Dusen
- 1985 Men's senior double, John Marden, Bill Randall
Men's senior lightweight double, Dan Chernoff, Jess Parks

- Women's Elite quadruple sculls, Molly Hoyle, Boston Rowing Center comp.
 Women's Elite Eight, RBC/BRC composite, Molly Hoyle
- 1986 Men's Elite Quadruple Sculls, composite with
 University of Rochester/Boston/Cambridge, Bill Randell
- 1987 Women's Elite Lightweight Double Sculls, Cary Beth Sands
 composite with Chris Ernst, New Haven Rowing Club
- 1988 Men's Senior Lightweight Eight
- 1989 Women's Lightweight Double Sculls composite,
 Cary Beth Sands with Kris Karlson
- 1990 Men's Senior Lightweight Four with Cox, Greg Cerveny,
 Dave O'Neil, Mike Fieleke, John Kennel, cox Sarah Trilling
- 1991 Women's Elite Lightweight Four
 Women's Senior Lightweight Four with Cox
 Women's Senior Lightweight Pair
- 1992 Women's Elite Quadruple Sculls
 Linda Muri/Boston Rowing Center/MIT composite
- 1993 Men's Senior Lightweight Eight
 Men's Senior Lightweight Four (Ted Armbrecht,
 Troy Solberg, Oli Rosenblatt, Andrew Bagley
 Men's Senior Lightweight Four with Cox
 Men's Senior Lightweight Pair, Oli Rosenblatt, Dan Dougherty
 Women's Elite Single Sculls, Cindy Ryder
 Women's Elite Quad, Cindy Ryder, RBC composite
- 1995 Men's Senior Single Sculls, William Fisher
- 1996 Men's Elite Pair, Jeff Mork, Josh Crosby
 Women's Senior Single Sculls, Carol Skricki
 Women's Senior Dash, Carol Skricki

- 1997 Men's Senior Single Sculls, William Fisher
 Men's Senior Dash, David Loeckner
 Men's Senior Lightweight Four, Tom Whelton, Derek Byrnes, Jeb Fowler, Tom Cahill
 Men's Senior Lightweight Pair, Tom Whelton, Derek Byrnes
 Women's Senior Lightweight Eight
 Women's Senior Lightweight Four with Cox
 Women's Senior Lightweight Single Sculls, Marney Jaastad
 Women's Senior Lightweight Double
- 1998 Men's Senior Lightweight Four with Cox, Scott Jason, Matt Johnson, John McGowan,
 Ted Haffner, c. Zack Taylor
 Women's Senior Lightweight Eight, Meera Bhatia, Jessica Vandevusse, Diana Sabot,
 Laura Berman, Helen Hill, Heather Lutz, Shanley DiSorbo, cox Jen Lykens
 Women's Senior Lightweight Double, Diana Sabot, Lauren Berman
 Women's Senior Lightweight Quad, Diana Sabot, Laura
 Berman, Brandi Ebright, Meera Bhatia
- 1999 Men's Elite Lightweight Four without Coxswain, Eric Kenney, Tom Keister, Jason
 Banks, Sean Wolf
 Men's Elite Lightweight Four with Coxswain, John McKenna, M.J. Curry, Erik
 Lipitlaw, Brian Barrett, c. Jeff Lindy
 Women's Senior Lightweight Eight
 Women's Senior Lightweight Double
 Women's Senior Four with Cox, Pam Cyr, Jeanne Sussman, Fay Dearborn, Kerry
 Swift, cox Martha Strom
 Women's Senior Lightweight Quad, Laura Harrison,
 Sarah Hirst, Elizabeth Alt, Brandi Ebright
- 2000 Women's Elite Lightweight Double Sculls, Meera Bhatia and Marika Page
- 2002 Men's Elite Lightweight Pair, Tom Keister, Sean Wolf
- 2003 Women's Elite Four with coxswain
- 2004 Men's Elite Lightweight Pair, Matt Muffelman, Jeff Forester
 Women's Elite Eight
 Women's Elite Four with Coxswain

2008 Men's Elite Open Double, Sean Wolf and Andrew Hashway

* Elite category introduced in 1899

** Due to the unavailability of USRowing records after 2009, accurate information is not available from this date forward.

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RIVERSIDE UNITED STATES NATIONAL TEAM MEMBERS

Including club members and alumni

1936 Olympic Games

Robert B. Cutler, J. Paul Austin, Roger W. Cutler, William Haskins, c. Edward Bennett, four with cox

1962 World Championships

Seymour Cromwell, single sculls

1963 Pan American Games

Seymour Cromwell, single sculls, gold medal

European Championship

Seymour Cromwell, Double sculls

1964 Olympic Games

Seymour Cromwell, double sculls, silver medal
Robert Lea, alternate

1966 World Championships

Seymour Cromwell, double sculls
Ted Kakas, eight

1977 World Championships

Ted Van Dusen, lightweight quadruple sculls

1986 World Championships

Jess Parks, Daniel Chernoff, lightweight double sculls
Carey Beth Sands, women's lightweight double sculls, gold medal

1987 World Championships

Jess Parks, alternate

Carey Beth Sands, women's lightweight double sculls, bronze medal

1989 World Championships

James Pierce, lightweight eight

Carey Beth Sands, Kris Karlson, lightweight double sculls, gold medal

Molly Hoyle, double sculls. Silver medal

1990 World Championships

Thomas Hartley, James Manson, Greg Wilkins, James Pierce, lightweight four

Eduardo Montalvo, lightweight eight

Robert Herman, alternate

Carey Beth Sands, women's lightweight single sculls

Cary Beth Sands, women's lightweight double sculls, silver medal

1991 World Championships

James Pierce, lightweight four

Edward Montalvo, Thomas Hartley, Robert Herman, David

Collins, James Manson, lightweight eight, bronze medal

Pan American Games

Marvin Graves and Stephen Gantz, lightweight pair, bronze medal

Cynthia Ryder, women's single sculls, gold medal

Molly Hoyle, Linda Muri, women's double sculls, second place

Karen Carpenter, women's quadruple sculls, gold medal

1992 Olympic Games

Cindy Ryder, Mary Mazzio, women's double sculls

World Championships

Matthew Collins, lightweight four

James Pierce, Noel Warner, James Manson, lightweight eight

1993 World Championships

Jonathan Moss, Thomas Beetham, Matthew Collins, lightweight four, gold medal

Jeffrey Moag, Steve Gantz, Steward Stokes (cox), lightweight eight

Cynthia Ryder, women's single sculls

Linda Muri, alternate

1994 World Championships

Jeffrey Moag, Matthew Collins, lightweight pair

Jonathan Moss, Thomas Beetham, Steve Gantz, lightweight eight

Linda Muri, women's lightweight four, gold medal

1995 World Championships

Peter Schwab, Gregory Klingsponr, Jonathan Moss, lightweight eight

Pan American Games

Jonathan Moss, Greg Klingsporn, lightweight four, gold medal

Jonathan Moss, Steve Gantz, lightweight eight, gold medal

Linda Muri, women's lightweight four, gold medal

1996 World Championships

Jonathan Moss, Stephen Gantz, Gregory Klingsporn,

Martin Schwartz, lightweight eight

1997 World Championships

Jamie Koven, single sculls, gold medal

Jeffrey Mork, lightweight eight

Kate Ackerman, women's lightweight quadruple sculls

1998 World Championships

Martin Schwartz, lightweight eight, silver medal

Linda Muri, women's lightweight pair, bronze medal

Carol Stricki, women's double sculls

1999 World Championships

Linda Muri, women's lightweight pair, gold medal

Carol Stricki, women's double sculls

Pan American Games

Marny Jaastad, women's lightweight quadruple sculls, silver medal

2000 World Championships

Thomas Keister, Sean Wolf, lightweight pair

Martin Schwartz, lightweight eight

Linda Muri, alternate

2001 World Championships

Kent Smack, David Gabel, double

Erik Limpitlaw, Erik Koep, lightweight pair

Marny Jaastad, women's lightweight quadruple sculls, silver medal

2002 World Championships

Jon Douglas, lightweight eight, silver medal

Nick Tripican, four with cox

Wendy Campanella, women's lightweight quadruple sculls, bronze medal

2003 World Championships

Liane Malcos, four without cox, gold medal

Pan American Games

Cindy Bishop, single sculls, bronze medal

Wendy Campanella, quadruple sculls, silver medal

2004 Olympic Games

Kent Smack, men's quadruple sculls

Liane Malcos, sweep alternate

World Championships

Julie Nichols, lightweight quadruple sculls, bronze medal

2005 World Championships

Rob Zechman, Greg Ruckman, Matt Muffelman, Sean Wolf, lightweight quadruple sculls

Marika Page, women's lightweight single sculls

Heather Moon, women's lightweight quadruple sculls

Liane Malcos, women's eight

2006 World Championships

Cameron Booth, John Nichols, Will Daly, Jake Goodman, Greg Ruckman, Pete Morelli, Jon D'Alba, Sam Saylor, Bracknell Baker (c), lightweight eight

Matt Muffelman, lightweight four

Liane Malcos, women's quadruple sculls

Esther Lofgren, women's four

2007 World Championships

Gregory Ruckman, Jeffrey Forrester, Andrew Diebold, John Nichols, William Daley,
Tyler Resch, Gavin Frase, Tim Larson, Leigh Heyman (c), lightweight eight
Hannah Moore, women's lightweight quadruple sculls
Liane Malcos, women's quadruple sculls

Pan American Games

Hannah Moore, women's lightweight double sculls

2008 Olympic Games

Will Daly, lightweight four
Liane Malcos, alternate

World Championships

Matt Muffelman, Will Daly, lightweight eight, gold medal
Rob Zechman, lightweight single sculls
Alex Rothmeier, John Nichols, lightweight pair
Esther Lofgren, women's four, silver medal

2009 World Championships

John Dise, Anthony Fahden, Andrew Diebold, Matt Muffelman, men's lightweight
eight, silver medal
Alex Rothmeier, John Wainright, lightweight double sculls
Hilary Saeger and Stephanie Sydlik, women's lightweight quad, bronze medal
Esther Lofgren, women's four, silver medal

2010 World Championships

Will Daley, Anthony Fahden, men's lightweight men's four
Pete Morelli, men's lightweight quadruple sculls
Matt Muffelman, Skip Dise, men's lightweight eight
Natalie Dell, women's quadruple sculls
Esther Lofgren, Meghan Musnicki, women's eight

2011 World Championships

Kyle Lafferty, Lightweight men's pair
Will Daley, Anthony Fahden, lightweight men's four
Hillary Saeger, women's lightweight quadruple sculls, bronze medal
Natalie Dell, women's quadruple sculls, silver medal
Esther Lofgren, Meghan Musnicki, women's eight, gold medal

2012 Olympic Games

Anthony Fahden, men's lightweight four

Will Daley, alternate

Natalie Dell, women's quadruple sculls, bronze medal

Esther Lofgren, Meghan Musnicki, women's eight, gold medal

World Championships

Andrew Hashway, men's lightweight eight

Will Daly, men's lightweight pair

David Smith, men's lightweight quadruple sculls

Hillary Saeger, women's lightweight quadruple sculls, silver medal

Meghan Musnicki, Esther Lofgren, women's eight, gold medal

Paralympic Games

Dorian Weber, legs trunks and arms mixed four

2013 World Championships

Dorian Weber, Tobin McGee, men's lightweight four, bronze medal

Will Daley, Anthon Fahden, men's lightweight four

David Smith, men's lightweight quadruple sculls

Hillary Saeger, women's lightweight quadruple sculls, silver medal

Emily Heulskamp, women's four, gold medal

Meghan Musnicki, women's pair

Lauren Schmetterling, Meghan Musnicki, women's eight, gold medal

Esther Lofgren, women's quadruple sculls

World Rowing Cup

Lauren Schmetterling, women's eight

2014 World Championships

Andrew Neils, Jake Georgeson, Peter Schmidt, men's lightweight quadruple sculls

Will Daley, Anthony Faden, men's lightweight four

Hillary Saeger, women's lightweight quadruple sculls

Meghan Musnicki, Lauren Schmetterling, women's eight, gold medal

2015 World Championships

Peter Schmidt, David Smith, Tobin McGee, men's lightweight eight, bronze medal

Will Daley, Anthony Fahden, men's lightweight four

Hillary Saeger, Lauren Ayers, Mary Foster, Erin Roberts, women's lightweight quadruple sculls

Meghan Musnicki, Lauren Schmetterling, women's eight, gold medal

Pan American Games

Emily Heulskamp, women's pair, gold medal

2016 Olympic Games

Anthony Fahden, men's lightweight four

Will Daly, alternate

Meghan Musnicki, Lauren Schmetterling, women's eight, gold medal

World Championships

Jacob Georgeson, Peter Schmidt, Chris Roger, Tobin McGee, men's lightweight quadruple sculls

Ashley Amos, women's quadruple sculls

Paralympic Games

Dorian Weber, legs, trunk and arms, mixed four

2017 World Championships

Chris Rogers, Peter Schmidt, men's lightweight double

Brendan Harrington, Jacob Georgeson, Jack Ruske, men's lightweight quadruple sculls

David Smith, Andrew Neils, men's lightweight four

Jillian Zieff, women's lightweight quadruple sculls

Emily Huelskamp, women's quadruple sculls

Lauren Schmetterling, women's eight

2018 World Championships

Kevin Meador, men's single sculls

Sam Hausmann, men's lightweight quadruple sculls

David Smith, men's lightweight pair

Jen Sager, Jillian Zieff, women's lightweight pair, silver medal

Hillary Saeger, women's lightweight quadruple sculls

Emily Heulskamp, women's quadruple sculls

Notes, Sources and Acknowledgments

NOTES

- 1 In 1840 a Boston printer placed an image produced in 1837 by Fitz Henry Lane, the country's leading marine artist, on the cover of sheet music dedicated to Tiger Boat Club. Lane's lithograph, now owned by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, shows the club rowing among the vessels in a crowded Boston harbor. In keeping with the comradely spirit of such organizations, the sheet music was titled "Arouse Ye Gay Comrades."
- 2 When a member of the Harvard class of 1839 proposed buying a boat, claiming that there was no college rule prohibiting it, the college responded that students were not allowed to keep domestic animals and that "a boat was a domestic animal within the meaning of the statute."(*Building Old Cambridge: Architecture and Development*, draft text, Cambridge Historical Commission.
- 3 Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., father of Supreme Court Chief Justice Holmes, from a series of articles published in the *Atlantic Monthly* beginning in 1857 and compiled 25 years later as *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, Every Man His Own Boswell*, Boston, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1896, p. 207.
- 4 Union's Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. was a rowing enthusiast. His description of his outings captured the activity's recreational side in the late 1850s: "In (my single) I glide around the Back Bay, down the stream, up the Charles to Cambridge and Watertown, up the Mystic, round the wharves, in the wake of steamboats, which leave a swell after them delightful to rock upon; I linger under the bridges,--those 'caterpillar bridges,' as my brother professor so happily called them; rub against the black sides of old wood-schooners; cool down under the overhanging stern of some Indiaman; stretch across to the Navy-Yard, where the sentinel warns me off from the Ohio,--just as if I should hurt her by lying in her shadow; then strike out into the harbor, where the water gets clear and the air smells of the ocean,--till all at once

I remember, that, if a west wind blows up of a sudden, I shall drift along past the islands, out of sight of the dear old State-house..." Holmes' rows were apparently not always so relaxed, because he reports, "When I have established a pair of well-pronounce feathering calluses on my thumbs, when I am in training so that I can do my fifteen miles at a stretch without coming to grief in any way, when I can perform my mile in eight minutes or a little less, then I feel as if I had old Time's hand in chancery, and could give it to him at my leisure." He was in his late 40s at the time. Holmes was a noted physician and at another point writes that, "it is in the boat, then, that man finds the largest extension of his volitional and muscular existence."(Oliver Wendell Holmes, *ibid.*, pp. 199-206)

- 5 The First Chelsea Regatta took place on the Chelsea River in East Boston in early August, 1842. Four eights raced each other, as did other craft, including fours and sculling boats. Each crew was identified by the name of its boat. In the first heat, the Red Michael (13:37) defeated, in order, the Star, the Washington and the Bunker Hill. The second heat produced the same results, with the Red Michael winning in 13:55 for a large silver goblet. The 6 oared Star beat the 6 oar Washington (15:25) for the silver goblet 2nd prize. Pulling for time, the 4 oared Exchange finished in 17:21, the 2 oars cross handed in 14:30 and a skiff cross handed in 25:00.
- 6 Outriggers had been introduced in England in 1828 and significantly improved in the 1840s. Sliding seats were successfully fitted to a Nassau Boat Club gig and tested and declared successful in a Hudson Amateur Rowing Association regatta in 1870. Because of the longer stroke they produced, their use led to the invention of the swivel oarlock by Portland's rowing innovator Michael Davis in 1875.
- 7 Patsy Reagan, who lived on Boston's Fort Hill as a child, took up racing in a winning North End four at sixteen. While working as a teamster, he began racing in whitehalls with George Faulkner in 1871 and continued to compete with him in fours into 1878. Reagan also successfully raced single sculls. In 1878, he was undefeated as a sculler. That fall Reagan accepted a challenge put forth to Boston scullers by Michael Davis, the Irish immigrant rower from Portland, Maine who had soundly defeated George Faulkner in match race on the Charles River in 1877, to race him over a four-mile course with a turn for \$1,000 and the New England sculling championship. Their race, held on Silver Lake outside Boston, was sponsored by the Old Colony Railroad, which had invested in recreational property on the lake and was hoping to promote sales. Reagan lost. The train returning spectators from the race ran into a freight car, throwing its cars off the track and igniting a conflagration which killed nineteen

people, including Reagan and George Faulkner's wife, and injured almost two hundred. (Stewart Stokes, "It Was a Fearful Stoke, but They Made Their Old Boat Hum," student thesis, Colby College, 2000)

- 8 During the mid-19th Century, college rowing, like other sports, was organized on a club basis. Clubs elected a captain who was responsible for boatings and arranged for coaching, usually that of a former rower. Financial support and direction came from alumni. Coaching by professionals was eschewed in favor of a British-based model of the "gentleman amateur" coach. As college rowing grew in popularity, however, the pressure to win increased. Despite Harvard's reminder that, "it had been once agreed by Yale and Harvard that professional coaches or trainers would not be employed," (New York Times, March 17, 1880) in 1880 Yale, which had lost to Harvard in fifteen of their last nineteen races, controversially broke tradition by hiring a sculling professional, the rowing innovator from Portland, Michael Davis. His crews were victorious in 1881 and 1882 but Yale reverted to amateur coaching after it lost to Harvard in 1883. The direction of condemnation was reversed in 1885 when Harvard captain James Storrow, to maintain a veneer of amateurism, arranged for George Faulkner to be retained in a vague capacity in which he observed his crew and gave him advice, which Storrow then communicated to his rowers. The 1885 crew, with a stroke revised by Faulkner, beat Yale but lost badly in 1886. Faulkner continued to appear in Harvard coaching launches into the 90s. Nevertheless, from 1886 to 1905 Yale beat Harvard in eighteen of twenty dual races. In 1894, after being thrashed by Yale, Harvard rowers gave up control over their program to the college athletic department.
- 9 The club's aspirations as an athletic organization were clear from an architect's rendering of the facility it proposed to build published in an NEARA pamphlet in 1890.



- 10** Records indicate that Cambridgeport's 13,500 native-born and third generation immigrant residents, a quarter of its population, supplied the bulk of its clerks, office workers, managers and professionals. Manufacturing employed over seven thousand workers, for the most part drawn from its population of 5,000 first and 9,000 second generation Irish immigrants. The balance of Cambridgeport's population included English, Canadians, African-Americans, Italians, Russians and Swedes.
- 11** Except for TenEyck, locals considered Greer and McGuire to be the fastest amateur single scullers in the world. They were so prominent in 1901 that match races between Boston and Canadian rowing hotbed Halifax, in which Greer and McGuire were the Boston scullers, were second in public interest only to the national championships. They continued their duel in 1902, McGuire beating Greer in a regatta on the Kennebec River in Bath, Maine. To the extent that there was a world champion amateur sculler, it would have been 1900 Olympians Henri Barrelet of France and Frank Greer in 1904, or the FISA champions in the intervening years, none of whom were American. The professional world champion single scullers of record from 1896 to 1905 were Canadian Jake Gaudaur and Australian George Towns.
- 12** World War I's immediate impacts on American rowing included the departure of British collegiate coaches like Yale's Guy and Penn's Vivian Nichols, rowing professionals and brothers who returned home in 1914 to enlist in the war effort. Once the United States' entered the war, rowing was largely suspended. As a result, University of Pennsylvania rowing coach Joseph Wright put on hold his attempt to introduce a 150-pound class to collegiate rowing at an inaugural race scheduled with Yale for May 12, 1917. Lightweight rowing, which would prove to be central to Riverside Boat Club's modern competitive history, made its postponed collegiate debut following the armistice in a special race contested by Navy and Penn in the 1919 American Henley in Philadelphia. Lightweight club rowing was inaugurated with a senior double sculls event at the Middle States Regatta a year later.
- 13** Tom Kudzma, who would run NEARA regattas into the 1970s and teach at Lowell Tech, was the most prolific regatta poster artist in the United States, producing images that won international recognition for their creativity over the course of several decades.
- 14** The other members of Bob Cutler's Olympic four excelled as well. Coxswain Eddie Bennet was a long-serving Massachusetts judge. Paul Austin became the CEO of Coca-Cola. Bowman Bill Haskins was a successful Boston businessman. Bob's brother Roger worked for the board of Brigham and Women's Hospital.

- 15 Since the 1990s, lightweight rowing has been a core program at Riverside Boat Club, producing some of its most notable competitors on both the men's and women's sides. As of 2018, however, lightweight rowing's future is in doubt. After several years in which the declining number of entrants produced finals-only races, in 2015 FISA dropped the men's lightweight eight from its world championships. In 2016, under pressure to add women's races but to limit the total number of events, the International Olympic Committee removed the lightweight men's four, an iconic event that had produced some of rowing's most memorable races, from the Rio Olympics in favor of the women's four. In response, a number of national federations cut their funding for these events. It is unclear what impact these decisions will have on participation in lightweight rowing. The Ivy League has a tradition in the sport that goes back to 1918, but there are concerns that the absence of opportunities at the top level of the sport will detract from its appeal to high school athletes. Although colleges have not cut the program, on the 100th anniversary of lightweight rowing, lightweight sweeps rowing is in jeopardy across the board.

- 16 The race series fondly known at the Head of the Kevin has managed to retain the feel of a spirited inhouse event even as it draws rowers from around the region. The entrants race over the HOC course on three successive weekend mornings to accumulate points based on their times relative to standards based on those of HOC winners in categories from women's and men's singles to eights. Each morning's racing is followed by a sumptuous breakfast prepared by club members. The third contest is capped off with a much anticipated ceremony in which awards are given to those who accumulated the highest point total in each category over the three weekends.

- 17 In December 2014, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Riverside's landlord, notified the club that it was instituting a new lease policy for organizations occupying its waterfront land. On the face of it, this was good news. DCR would replace the club's year-to-year permit with a multi-year lease, a requirement of any institution lending funds to a club. On the other hand, its lease payment calculation methodology was problematic. It proposed to set the club's base annual payment through a formula combining leased land area, water sheet area and membership size. The club's rent would then rise annually from that base at a prohibitive five percent a year. The Charles River rowing and yacht clubs had attempted to mount a joint effort to lobby for relief, but had not succeeded. In 2017, however, the Wellington Medford Yacht Club successfully organized a coalition of twenty metropolitan area

rowing and yacht clubs, including Riverside and each of the Charles River boating organizations except Union Boat Club, to engage a lobbying firm that would attempt to obtain legislation revising the state's rental methodology. Despite resistance from the state administration, the legislature passed and Governor Baker signed a bill that rolled each club's base rent back to 2015 and limited annual increases from that point to three percent. It was a major victory.

- 18** It is perhaps a reflection of the social atmosphere of Riverside as well as of the experiences rowers share at the club that it has produced a number of married couples, including Jen and Andy Saccheti, Kelly and Dave Shultz, Wendy and Nick Tripican, Hannah and Pat Godfrey, Cindy Ryder and Chip Mathes, Bee Baker and John Tracey, Sarah and Rob White, Alex and Evan Baily, Tim Vogels and Heather Moon, Lisa Kunze and Jeffrey Schafer, Igor Belakovskiy and Alexis Sneff, Liane and Tom Keister, and Lib and Pete Morelli.

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