

Isle of Seil Coastal Rowing Club

Firstly, many thanks to Mary Norris for being the club's treasurer for ten years. The club extends its sincere condolences to Mary, on Ray's death. He was one of *Selkie's* boatbuilders and also coxed and rowed *Selkie*.

Carol Collis has volunteered to take on this responsibility; David Rowlinson and Julie Johnson are the new additional signatories on the account. As always, our thanks go to our tame accountant, Jean Ainsley, for scrutinising the accounts.

Thanks to Mike and Steven for letting us keep the skiff in the boatyard, gratis. At Christmas, we make sure a couple of bottles go their way.

Between the last AGM and this, over 40 outings have been put on Spond, of which over half had to be cancelled because of lack of a full crew. It was also a bad year for high winds.

I realise that not having a set time or day is not ideal; whilst tides are predictable, outings have to be based around a reasonable wind forecast which is often only three days ahead. The skiff can only be launched and recovered easily about an hour or two either side of high water as it gets so squidgy towards low water. It would be easier if the crew were younger and stronger!

Highlights this past year have included photobombing /saluting the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh with tossed oars by the Bridge - they even took a photo of us! Only one trip through the bridge to Puiladobhrain and Goat Island took place last summer, and one to 'Russian Bay.' Later in the year, we landed on 'Conversation Island' by Ballachuan and caused a social media meltdown by some on Seil Noticeboard following our comments on the dire state of Aaron's Rod, a landmark which had been toppled by cows. We were made to feel very uncomfortable and unwelcome with all the comments about entitled incomers.

During the year, we undertook a litterpick along the shore at the golf club, at 'Russian Bay' Conversation Island and Eilean Gamnha for which we received a GRAB Trust grant. Further fundraising included our Burns Supper and the British Legion Jumble Sale; thank you to all those who provided bric-a-brac, David and Carol who manned the stall and Ann who took the unsold stuff to LORI/ Re-Store afterwards.

The club was invited to Luing's Pizza and Quiz night, and to Appin's Winter Party, where a few of us networked with other rowers.

Our lifejackets (second hand some years ago) were serviced at the beginning of the season, with the help of Gerard, Annie and Julie. However, they were replaced in September with brand new ones, for which we received a welcome discount. We were, however, unlucky with various grant applications for them. The old lifejackets were gratefully received by RNLI Oban for training purposes.

Another outing of note was the one on Hogmanay, when the stroke suffered a medical emergency in Balvicar Bay in strong winds. The skiff returned to the boatyard under two oars, and the casualty was then seen as a matter of urgency at the medical centre and then

by an ambulance crew. I'm pleased to say that he is now well recovered - and also being monitored.

The skiff was showcased on July's page of the British Legion Calender of Seil.

The club did not enter times for the one crew who entered the '5 miles from Home' international time trial; the route was changed on the day because of strong winds - *Selkie* went up the Sound rather than towards Degnish Point as in previous years.

Maintenance this year was very brief and done outside at the Boatyard in good weather. Thanks to David for painting inside the skiff - Sue was relegated to the gunwhales as she was recovering from an appendectomy and could not bend.. One of the plywood oar blades was also repaired.

Once again, Sue would love to be relieved of her duties - sadly it is no longer a pleasure, but a chore to be in charge of this community asset after over 12 years at the helm.