



NO PASSENGERS

AND THE WILL TO WIN



THE SPIRIT OF THE GEELONG COLLEGE BOAT CLUB

Written by James Mephan Ferguson

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Cover. The crew in the photograph is the 1992 Geelong College Senior Girls 1st IV. Head of the River Champions, Head of the School Girls Champions and Champion School Girls IV of Australia at the National Championships.

The Pegasus within the blue circle was worn on singlets by the 1st VIII and by the Athletics team. It was also worn on the sweaters of the 1st XVIII.

Quotations

1. "Enjoy your rowing, win or lose."
Steve Fairbairn
2. "If you lose say nothing. If you win say less."
Albert Bell
3. Bob Dennis rowed in the 1st VIII with the author in 1940. Fifty years later he wrote the following in a letter: "Fergie, what a wonderful experience were our rowing days and what a great preparation for later years."

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FOREWORD

Scott Chirnside

With a new boat shed and recently appointed senior coaches and Directors of Rowing, it is timely that we all, both older rowers and current students, remember that the marvellous facilities and amazing characters that make up our Boat Club did not just fall out of the sky. This book goes a long way to help us realise why there is a sense of history that permeates rowing at The Geelong College.

I am lucky to be old enough to have been coached by Albert Bell and Robert Purnell and young enough to have coached with David Ramage, Geoff Sykes, Alan Darker and Richard Morris, among others. Through all of these times it is hard to actually say why we did what we did in rowing, except to say somehow history and the people and students around us gave us a sense of belonging.

It has often been the envy of the other sports in the school, that the Boat Club always attracted characters such as J H Campbell, and indeed Norman Morrison, who led Collegians with charisma and personality and never had the need for a lot of rules and regulations. It is also to our sports credit that it did not just draw those of ample size and boldness to its ranks, but often was the starting place of the quieter and the smaller who went on to lead businesses, professions and even government.

One thing, however, that has really made all of us belong to The Geelong College Boat Club is the absolute commitment to those around us in training and in racing, a commitment that still stands today.



Scott Churnside



Girls 1st IV 1975 The First year of Geelong College girls rowing. S.S.Marshallsea cox, C.C.Swinburn stroke, M.L. Quigley 3, L.A.Wall 2, M.J.Grant bow, D.W.Scott coach

PREFACE

This book has been written for several groups of readers: for Boat Club members so they can understand the spirit and tradition of the Boat Club in particular and The Geelong College in general; for Old Collegians so they can enrich the memories of their time in the Boat Club; for those who disapprove of the popularity of the Boat Club, and for policy makers, so that they can appreciate the place of the Boat Club in the school, and its contribution to the development of young people; and for other schools and rowing clubs so they may have a description of the events that led to the present regatta programmes.

The author's research has indicated that it was the Morrison family, in particular Norman Morrison, who developed the spirit of the College. This is the spirit of the Boat Club and most of it has survived to the present day. The high standard of rowing, particularly since 1936, is largely due to the influence of four great coaches; Steve Fairbairn, Bill Pincott, Charlie Saleh and Albert Bell. As a result, the majority of the text describes the Morrison family and the coaching up till 1972 when Albert Bell retired. Since then successive Principals; Peter Thwaites, Peter Gebhardt, Paul Sheahan and Pauline Turner, have recognised the worth of the coaches and Directors of Rowing, and have supported the Boat Club. The excellent rowing standard in recent years can be attributed to the heritage created by such people as Norman Morrison, J.H.Campbell and the four famous coaches. The worthy victories of boys in Head of the River regattas in the post Albert Bell period have not been extensively described, stroke by stroke. The coaches deserve high praise. The spirit, the heritage and the support of all associated with the Boat Club have been factors in winning titles. Hopefully readers will appreciate the dedication of school and club coaches who have given so much of their time in an honorary capacity and who have had "out of pocket" expenses.

Some of the text may appear to be the author's personal opinion. This is not necessarily so. Statements have been derived from correspondence, interviews and conversations with many people associated with rowing. They represent the memory and feelings of a majority, with little disagreement from others. Definite facts have come from official records and published material. The text is not a formal history because the lack of records prevents

many facts being substantiated. The wording is conversational, with anecdotes of characters who influenced the spirit of the Boat Club.

Boys have addressed masters as "Sir," but when talking among themselves they respectfully referred to masters and coaches by their Christian or nick names. These names of teaching staff and coaches have been used in the text to capture the feeling of conversation in the boat shed and in the boats.

The term "No Passengers" in the title was often used by both Albert Bell and Bill Pincott when they were talking about ideal crews. The term "The Will to Win" is commonly used by coaches in many sports; it was a favourite saying of Old Geelong Collegian, Jim Sprigg, who was the President of the Mercantile Rowing Club for many years. These terms indicate the spirit of the Boat Club; teamwork and determination.

The section on style in the appendix may be too technical for those who have not participated in the sport of rowing; they may pass over these pages. Coaches may benefit from the historical study of style and avoid the prejudice that inhibits the creation and adoption of improved technique and improved equipment. It could also benefit coaches to read the quotes of famous coaches and envisage them chatting to their crews.

The help given by many people is appreciated; without this help the research of material for the book would have been impossible: The College Archivist, the Rev. E.C.McLean, the staff of the Community Relations Office, the Old Geelong Collegians Association, Frank Covill of the Geelong Grammar School, Gordon Sargood of the Melbourne Grammar School, Bill Waterfield of the Victorian Rowing Association (V.R.A.), Karen Threlfall, Bob Aitken, Ian and Neil Everist and a very long list of friends of the College who have lent material (scrap books, photographs and newspaper cuttings) and offered information by interviews, letters and telephone conversations. The research has shown the importance of the school magazine, *The Pegasus*, as an accurate record of events. The assistance given by Louise Monotti is especially appreciated; she spent many hours typing the text, and offering constructive suggestions.



Norman Morrison



W H Pincott



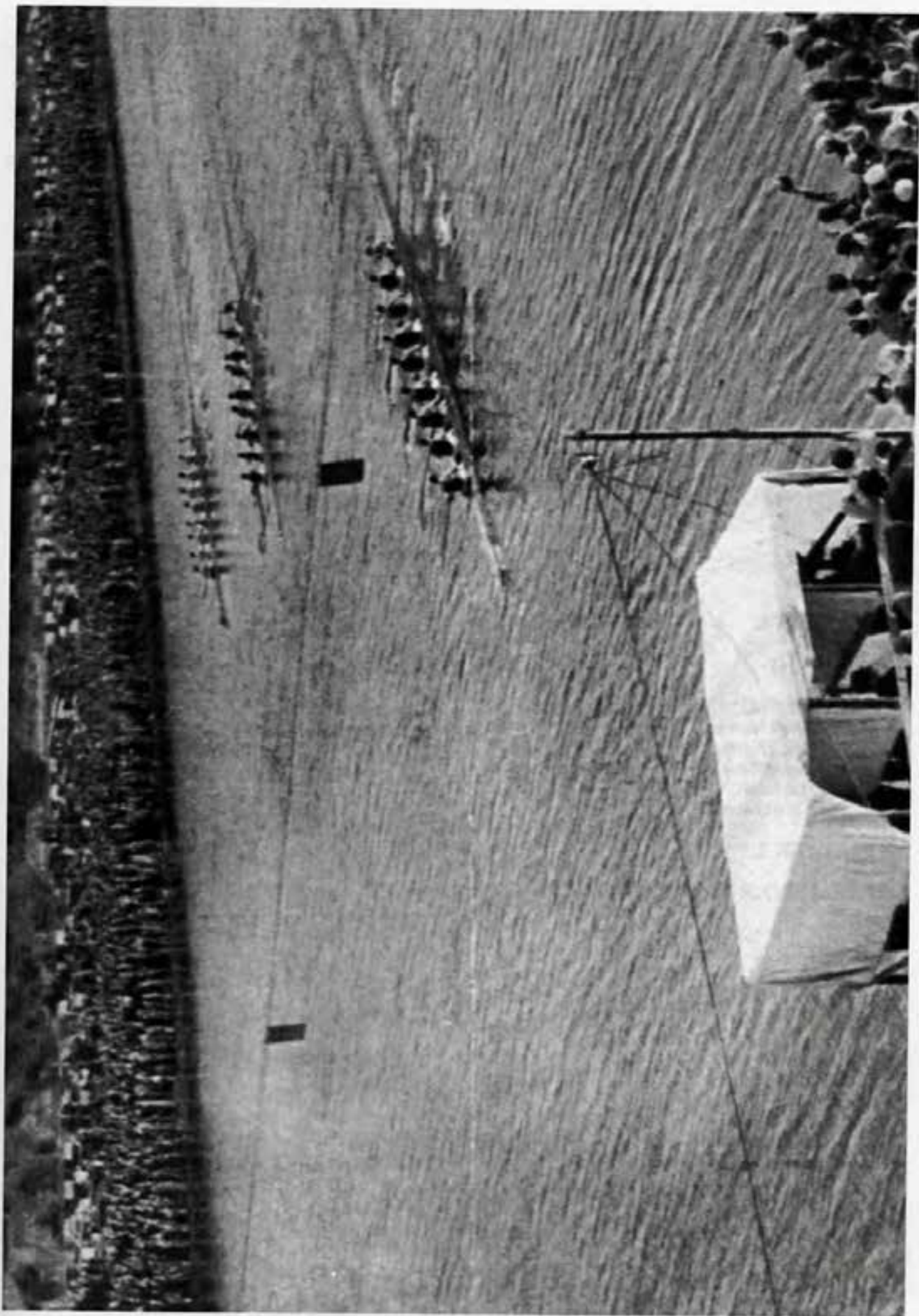
J H "Misty" Campbell



Albert Bell/Charlie Saleh

The book is dedicated to their memory and influence

These five men created the spirit of the Geelong College Boat Club. They demanded the highest standards of sportsmanship. They inspired oarsmen to give of their best even when they were exhausted and promoted physical fitness and a healthy life style.



Head of the River in 1936—our first HIOR victory

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CHAPTER 1

The Beginnings

The Development of the Sport

Wherever there is a good stretch of water, people will want to row, paddle, sail or otherwise propel boats. They will simply enjoy messing about in boats. This has been the case even before recorded history. Whenever two or more boats line up along side each other, there is an urge for crews to race. Young people in particular are keen to compete. There are records of boat races in ancient history; the Trojans rowed in galleys called 'quinqueremes'. These boats had five rows of oarsmen, on five levels, on each side of the boat. A Trojan boat race is described in Virgil's Aeneid, book 1 as:

Every muscle is strained, they bend to
their benches with glee,
Brass bound timbers are shaken by
huge strokes dealt to the sea,
The waters recede beneath them, the
limb and the feverish lip,
Quiver with quick drawn breath, and
the sweat drops o'er them drip.

There could be other descriptions of boat races in ancient history such as dragon boat racing in China and races between Maori war canoes in New Zealand. Boat races have always aroused great interest in any community.

The sport of rowing is relatively modern. In Britain there were watermen on the Thames, Tyne and Clyde Rivers who earned a living, by physical effort, rowing on the wide rivers. They transported both passengers and goods. Of course there were races between these watermen which attracted great public interest. Bets were made and large amounts of money changed hands. The first recorded regatta on the Thames was in 1775. As large bridges, railways and roads were built, and steam and motor boats became common, there was less work for the watermen and they were no longer seen on the rivers.

Early in the nineteenth century the Eton and Westminster schools started rowing as a sport, and some of the gentlemen went on to Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Thus rowing began as a sport for the upper classes. Bumping races started in 1815 on the narrow rivers at Oxford and Cambridge. The boats did not line up abreast but

were in line ahead formation in the middle of the river. There was an equal distance between the bows of each boat and the boat in front. When there were many boats in a race the line of boats would stretch for a considerable distance along the river and a cannon would be used to start a race. When a crew caught up to the crew ahead of it causing a bump, both crews would retire from the race. Next day when the crews lined up, these two crews would change places. At the end of many days of racing, the crew occupying first position had the title of 'Head of the River'. All crews would have enjoyed their rowing, win or lose. The first Oxford-Cambridge boat race on the Thames River was held in 1829. Both the bumping races and the Oxford-Cambridge race are still held today. Gradually, rowing clubs were established throughout England and people of all socio-economic groups participated in the sport.

The sport of rowing started along similar lines in Australia. There were professional boat men on the Paramatta River and on the wide northern rivers of New South Wales; and to a lesser extent on the Yarra River in Melbourne. Races between professionals were staged in Melbourne as early as the 1840s. The boats used for these early races were wide and heavy, with the oars being worked in rowlocks on the gunwhales. Gradually the boats built for racing were lighter, with less beam and with out-riggers.

It would have been inconvenient for an individual to own a heavy boat, store it on his own property and transport it to water. Several rowing clubs were established in Melbourne and Geelong so that members could pool their resources and share the use of the boats. Most of the activity would have been 'messing about in boats', but there were some races both on the Yarra River and the Barwon River in the 1840s and 1850s. Many of these clubs lasted only a few years.

The oldest existing rowing club in Victoria is the Melbourne University Boat Club, founded in 1859 by Professor M H Irving. The Professor later became Principal of Hawthorn Grammar School and he introduced rowing at that school. Some rowing clubs were formed by employees of particular industries; bank employees formed the Banks Rowing Club; the Mercantile Rowing Club was formed by people working in mercantile companies involved in shipping, wool broking, warehousing, etc; public servants formed the Civil Service Rowing Club which later amalgamated with the Melbourne Rowing Club. Other clubs were established in suburbs and towns where there

was suitable water. Members came from all walks of life and the sport became egalitarian. The early administrators of the sport enforced a strict amateur status. Oarsmen were forbidden to receive money for competing; prizes had to be trophies, not cash. The generally accepted definition of an amateur is one whose activity is a pastime from which he does not receive remuneration. Some nineteenth century senior club members unsuccessfully urged that boat builders and men who performed hard labouring work should not have amateur status. The sport of rowing has until recently maintained an amateur status with no money for competing and no cash for prizes.

Early Days in Geelong

The early settlement of Geelong was concentrated around Corio Bay and the water was used for aquatic activity. It was more suitable for sailing as it was sometimes too rough for row-boats. The first recorded regatta was in 1844 and another big regatta was held in 1847. Competitors raced in sailing boats, whale boats and life boats from ships and gigs. Some of the competitors came from the crews of ships which were in port. There were both amateurs and professionals competing.

At that time, the Barwon River was narrow - mostly less than 50 metres wide - winding its way around bends. Today the south bank has been straightened along the 1500 metre course and at no point the river is less than 70 metres wide. It is 100 metres wide at the Judges' box.

The Barwon Rowing Club was established in 1870. The original temporary committee consisted of Edward Lascelles, Charles Shannon, Frederick Pincott, Edward Lennon and three others. Lascelles and Shannon were young men just starting out in the profitable wool-broking business in Geelong. Charles Shannon was for many years the Captain of the Club and was referred to as the 'father of rowing' in Geelong. Later he was to become the first Chairman of the Geelong College Council. Pincott was the Principal of a legal firm and Lennon was the Principal of the Matthew Flinders School. The committee members were well educated men and well respected in the Geelong community. All except Shannon and Lennon were involved in the several rowing clubs of Geelong that had been disbanded. This competent committee was able successfully to establish the Barwon Rowing Club.

The Corio Bay Rowing Club was established in 1873. There were old boys of both The Geelong College and Geelong Grammar School in both clubs. There is a long list of rowing clubs which have supported schools and the two clubs in Geelong invited boys from both schools to join their clubs. The Barwon Rowing Club invited boys from the College and the Grammar School to take part in a scratch fours race in 1873 with Grammar winning. Old boys from both schools approached their respective Principals to request the formation of boat clubs in their schools. The Geelong Grammar Boat Club was established in 1874, but the Principal of the College was against the proposal. In 1877 another race took place, arranged by the Barwon Rowing Club, between the College and Hawthorn Grammar School. The College crew consisted of G E Morrison (the Principal's son) (bow), W Longden (2), J Ware (3), H Osbourne (stroke) and R Rede as the (cox). Hawthorn won this race.

The Principal, George Morrison, would not heed the pleadings of the old boys to start a boat club. He was probably more concerned about the academic standards, discipline and the financial status of the school. He was not against sport and there are stories of him becoming very excited when the College teams were playing. Organised sport started in 1861, the foundation year of the College, with a football team. Annual matches against Geelong Grammar and Scotch College date from 1868. Cricket did not start in 1861 because of the lack of a suitable turf, but there was a team in 1865. The first College Cup for athletics was in 1868. The Cadet movement started in 1884 because of the fear of a Russian invasion, and the College Cadet Corps was established in 1885. Rifle shooting competitions were part of Cadet Corps activity and shooting was taken as seriously as other sports. The Cadet movement arranged inter-school athletic sports. Before the Boat Club was formed, the boys probably had some rowing and some racing supervised by staff and club members, although there is no record of such activity.

1888 - Boat Club Established

A group of Old Collegians led by Dr H R Salmon came to Dr Morrison in 1888 with the necessary money to buy a pair, a four oared gig and two pleasure boats. A gig was a narrow clinker boat with room for only one person on each set. Timbers protruded from the gunwhales so that each oar could work on a horizontal sill with the vertical protrusions or poppets providing pivot points. A gig could travel faster than a pleasure boat.



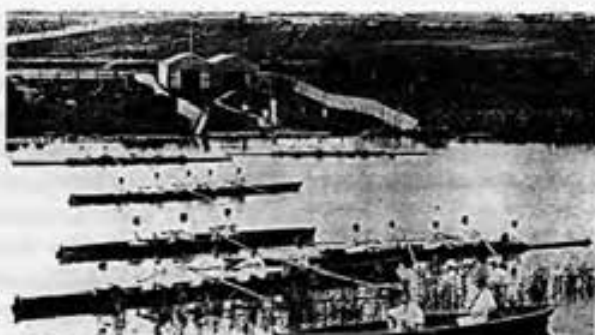
1. Dr George Morrison: First Principal of The Geelong College.



2. Gig four and pair, 1889. Note, there are no riggers, no slides and there are poppets on the gunwales.

The Principal at last agreed to establish the Geelong College Boat Club. The fourteen year start conceded to Geelong Grammar took almost half a century to overcome. In 1931, the 3rd VIII - coached by that great character, Archie Shannon - was the first College crew to defeat a Grammar crew.

When the new boats were delivered, they were stored in the Barwon Rowing Club shed until the College built a shed at Marnockvale. It was built on the north bank of the river near the start of the present day 1500 metre course. In 1889 a second four oared gig was bought so that two crews could race in identical boats. Races started at Pakington Street and finished at the new shed at Marnockvale.



3. Two Bay Shed, 1890. Nearest the camera is a pleasure boat, a gig 4, a racing 4, a gig pair, a gig 4 and two racing fours. The three racing fours were probably owned by the Barwon Rowing Club.

Pleasure boats came in various shapes and sizes. They were mostly wide and heavy and two or more people could sit beside each other on the seats. The oars worked in rowlocks on the gunwales. The boats were probably all clinker built. Clinker built boats were built with overlapping planks, like weather boards in timber houses. The Barwon Rowing Club did have pleasure boats at that time and on occasions took lady passengers out on the river. From the 1890s, school regattas were held at the Willows, about two kilometres downstream from the Breakwater, with both rowing and swimming races. All the competitors and officials were transported by boat, downstream, across the breakwater to the popular riverside picnic area known as the Willows. Pleasure boats were part of the fleet used to carry all these people.

The next improvement in technology was to fit outriggers to the boats. At the end of a rigger there was a horizontal sill and two vertical poppets. Marlin twine was strung across from the top of the poppets to prevent the oar coming out of its working position. Out-riggers allowed the use of longer oars resulting in better leverage and making these boats faster than gigs. All the above boats had fixed seats. The out-rigger, fixed seat boats were still in use for beginners in the late 1930s.

Sliding seats on wheels were invented in England in 1871. Steve Fairbairn rowed at Geelong Grammar in the late 1870's and was a member of the Barwon Rowing Club while still at school. He was quick to realise the advantage of slides and tried rowing in leather shorts on a greased seat to achieve some sliding on his seat. He went to Cambridge where he rowed and later coached with great success. The style which he developed was revolutionary, upsetting the proponents of the orthodox style. He claimed to have invented swivels; he certainly considered swivels to be superior to poppets.

The ultimate improvement was to supersede the clinker built boats with smooth carvel built crafts. In carvel construction the planks were butted flush together to produce a smooth surface. Carvel construction was used mostly in larger boats and ships. For racing boats a thin veneer of cedar timber was used. These boats, called 'best' or 'streak' boats, were lighter and faster than clinker boats, though they were easily damaged. The Victorian Rowing Association allowed them to be used only for important senior races. After World War II, marine bond-wood was available and clinker boats were no longer made. Finally fibreglass and Nomex honeycomb replaced bond-wood; what next?

When Norman Morrison came home to Geelong to take up the position of Vice-Principal in 1891, the College fleet consisted of two pleasure boats, a pair and two four oared gigs, all with fixed seats.

CHAPTER 2

The Morrison Years

The Morrison Family

It is difficult to detect any difference between the spirit of the Boat Club and the spirit of the College. The spirit was created by Norman Morrison in particular and the Morrison family in general. Dr George Morrison had admirable aims when he founded the College in 1861. All aspects of the policy were consistent with Christian ethics. Discipline was strong and boys were encouraged to try hard at their academic work, with the threat of punishment for not trying hard enough. Sport, adventure, debating and cultural activities were also encouraged. Boys were brought up to respect their elders, and not to consider people who carry out menial work to be inferior. Patriotic sentiments were strong, perhaps pro-British yet proudly Australian. Old boys were able to go out into the world and successfully take on responsibility with integrity.

B R Keith, in the school history, "The Geelong College 1861-1961," used the following words to describe the founder of the College:

"George Morrison was born in 1830, in Morayshire, Scotland, one of a family of six brothers, every one of whom went on to obtain high university honours. One of George's brothers, Dr Alexander Morrison, was Principal of Scotch College, Melbourne. Alexander was also involved in the establishment of Ormond College in the University of Melbourne. George arrived in Melbourne in 1858 and was at once appointed mathematics master at Scotch, but after six months left to take charge of the Matthew Flinders National School in Geelong. There, in a year or two, he earned such a high reputation as an able teacher and director that he was the obvious choice for the position of Principal of the new Geelong College.

George Morrison was a tall, erect figure, spare but powerful, clad in a frock coat and bearing in his hand a silk hat, a chalk box and a short cane - this was 'Mov' or, as he was well known to later

generations, 'the Doctor', on his way up to the classroom.

There was authority in the heavy creak of his great roomy boots. There was discipline in every line of his figure. His broad, massive head, wide browed, wide-eyed with its square jaw concealed beneath a full beard, denoted strength and inflexibility. But with it all there was a gentleness and suavity of manner, of which his dour exterior gave no hint.

Of course he was a Scot. Every tone and line of him proclaimed the fact. Indeed it was to his Scottish strength of mind and business ability that the College owed most of its success. That he brought to the work a certain amount of Scottish sternness was inevitable, but it was always used in moderation.

Scholarship was always the Doctor's chief aim, though the sporting side was never neglected. Nobody was keener on the maintenance of College superiority on the playing field. Delightful word pictures have been painted of old time football matches. The 'Chariot', a four wheeled wagonette, driven to the ground by Hugh Mackay, with old 'Mov' sitting in it, grimly expectant. His interest in the game, and his excitement as the tide of battle flowed first one way and then the other, were equalled only by his exultation when the game ended with the College victorious. Mrs Morrison played a great part in the work which was begun there in 1861. She always took a lively interest in the school and her marvellous memory for names and faces lent a great deal of charm to the visits of the old boys."

The Doctor's five sons were pupils at the College. All participated in sport and adventure with much success and at the same time they all followed successful academic careers. George E. Morrison, who became known as "Chinese Morrison," rowed when he was at school. As a young boy he walked to Queenscliff and back in a day (nearly 70 km) and before he left school he walked from Geelong to Adelaide (700 km). He interrupted his studies at the University of Melbourne travelling to Queensland where he was horrified to see the

Pacific Islanders working like slaves in the cane fields. He signed on as a crew member on a boat sailing to the islands to bring back natives. He wrote an article describing these events, denouncing the practice of slave trading. David Syme, the proprietor of the Melbourne Age, published his article.

George went on to New Guinea and explored inland for some distance into territory that no white man had visited. He was forced to retreat when a Papuan attacked him with a spear. A piece of the spear, about 75 mm long, remained in his body. More than a year later, whilst a medical student at Edinburgh, this piece of spear was removed by Professor Chiene. From New Guinea he went, via Thursday Island, to Normanton on the Gulf of Carpentaria. With the piece of spear in his body, he walked from Normanton to The Geelong College (3200 km in 120 days) on his own and unarmed. As this trip was in the wet season, he had to swim long distances across flooded rivers.

G.E. Morrison graduated in Medicine from Edinburgh and was for a time a surgeon at the Ballarat Hospital. He went to the Rio Tinto mines in Spain, and later went to China and walked from Shanghai to Rangoon in Burma (4380 km), unarmed and wearing Chinese clothes. Chinese Morrison wrote a book, "An Australian in China," describing this great journey. The Times newspaper in London appointed him as their Peking correspondent. As a journalist he assembled a large library of books dealing with China. The world's great leaders consulted him because of his understanding of Asian affairs.

'Chinese Morrison' was one of the greatest adventurers Australia has produced. His experience and influence was surely responsible for adventure becoming an important part of College life. Boys had complete freedom on Saturdays. They had to declare their intention on a Thursday night and after breakfast on Saturday morning, went to the kitchen and were given a sugar bag with some bread, sausages, fruit, tea, etc and some simple cooking implements. They would walk up the Barwon or Moorabool River valleys, or travel by bicycle in any direction and perhaps ride more than 50 km from the school. Alternatively, they could row down the Barwon River, on occasions reaching Barwon Heads, picnicking either at the Willows, Cormorant, Campbell's Point or other places along the river. This freedom put much responsibility on the boys. There is no evidence of accidental deaths or expensive and extensive rescue operations by the Police. The Geelong Grammar boys enjoyed

their Saturdays in a similar way. During holiday times there were hiking and exploration excursions sometimes lasting weeks, with teachers giving up their vacation time to lead the groups of boys. When John Bechervaise was a master at the College he led spectacular excursions. These expeditions, whether on Saturdays or during school holidays, whether on foot, on bicycle or in a boat, required planning, a resolve to achieve an objective and hence much stamina.

Chinese Morrison's influence encouraged adventure as part of College life for nearly a century. After the 1940s, as the population increased, there was more traffic on the roads and water skiers took over the river downstream from the sheds. As a result, the enjoyable Saturday excursions were no longer possible.

Reginald Morrison was captain of football and cricket at school and an outstanding athlete. He played with the Geelong Football Club team before going to Edinburgh where he graduated in Medicine. He represented Britain in Rugby Union before returning to practice medicine in Melbourne.

Charles Norman Morrison was born in 1866. At the College he emulated his two older brothers. Norman Morrison went to the newly established Ormond College in the University of Melbourne where he stroked the Ormond crew and won a Blue for football. In 1888 he graduated Master of Arts and joined the staff of Brighton Grammar School. Norman was involved in military training gaining a commission in 1890 in the 2nd Infantry Battalion. Morrison was so highly valued as an officer that the military authorities made efforts to induce him to accept a position as a permanent army officer. However, the call to teaching was great and he came back to the College.

Arthur Morrison followed Norman to Ormond College graduating Master of Civil Engineering. Arthur taught at the College for a short time before going overseas to practice his profession. While he was teaching at the College groups of boys could be seen in the school grounds learning to use survey instruments such as theodolites.

Clive Morrison came next, graduating in Arts and Law. In 1891 and 1892, the Melbourne University won two inter-varsity boat races with Arthur and Clive in both crews. Two other old Collegians, J Bell and W Neale, were in these crews. The long list of Old Collegians who rowed in intercollegiate, intervarsity, interstate and international crews started to grow.

One of the Doctor's three daughters, Alice, married Justice Henry Bourmes Higgins, the famous judge who sat on the historic case between H V McKay and the unions and who introduced the concept of the 'basic wage'. Their son, Mervyn Bourmes Higgins, graduated in Law from Ormond College and rowed in the Ormond crew. He went on to further his studies at Balliol College at Oxford. He returned home to enlist in the AIF and became the Adjutant of the 8th Light Horse Regiment. He served at Gallipoli and later in Sinai. In the Official History of Australia in the 1914-1918 War, Sinai and Palestine, H S Gullett mentions Captain Higgins' 'bold leadership'. He was killed in action 23 December 1916 at Magdhaba in Sinai. In his will he left money for the 'Mervyn Bourmes Higgins' trophy for the inter-collegiate boat race at the University of Melbourne. His bequest also provided money to present silver pots to the members of winning crews for many years.

The following story is an example of Higgins personality, his attitude to class distinction and his way of dealing with people. A Sergeant had a message to meet Captain Higgins at the Cairo Railway Station. When they met, Captain Higgins took the Sergeant to a hotel for lunch. At the door of the hotel there was a notice reading "Out of bounds to other ranks unless on duty". He escorted the Sergeant to a table and ordered beer. An English Lieutenant came up, clicked his heels and said to Captain Higgins "Sir! Did you not see the notice at the door?". Captain Higgins gave the reply that would be expected from a sportsman, a lawyer, an Australian and a grandson of George Morrison: "Yes, I can read. The notice says, 'Out of bounds to other ranks unless on duty'. Sergeant Lawrey is on duty." He then turned to the sergeant and said, "Now Les, would you like another beer?". The English Lieutenant had to retreat, embarrassed and annoyed. The purpose of the meeting was to offer Les a commission which he was happy to accept.

Hugh MacKay was a member of the College family, almost it seems, a member of the Morrison family and certainly a trusted servant and friend for forty-five years. He was the groundsman and coachman, sometimes described as 'the power behind the throne'. He urged the Doctor to buy the 'cow paddock' and other land for sporting activity. This would result in the school owning as much land as was possible in the block bounded by Aphrasia, Talbot and Noble Streets and Claremont Avenue. The extra land was bought and the 'cow paddock' area was known by that name until the 1930s when it became the Mackie oval. Hugh was respected by the boys, as were other non-teaching staff, cleaners, housekeepers and domestic staff.

The Morrison family forged the spirit of the College, based on Christian ethics, with heritage and traditions valued by generations of Geelong Collegians. The aims of the school have survived with little change; hard work at study, much effort and enjoyment at sport, participation in adventure and cultural activities, encouragement of activities such as Cadets and scouts and the rejection of snobbery. The spirit of the boat club is the spirit of the College.

The Norman Morrison Era

The 24 year old Vice-Principal, Norman Morrison, immediately demonstrated his style, winning the respect of the boys, creating enthusiasm for rowing and insuring that all boys joined the Cadet Corps. Norman quickly learned the names of all the boys, and both boys and staff referred to him as "Normie." B.R.Keith further describes him:

"He was tall, erect, athletic, he was a striking figure. There was something about him which immediately inspired confidence. Boys at school developed an enduring admiration for him as a man and a loyalty rising to hero-worship. He remained always a boy at heart, full of mischievous charm in lighter moments."

Like his father, 'the Doctor', he worked to maintain high academic standards in the school and was a disciplinarian. Corporal punishment was accepted as normal in those days. B R Keith continued:

"His anger, which was evidently assumed as the occasion demanded, has been described by one of his pupils: "His occasional sudden and volcanic outbursts of annoyance in the classroom or on the parade ground would fill us with momentary terror and his shouted and very uncomplimentary remarks concerning ourselves, our friends and relatives (great, great grandmothers in particular!), our appearance, brain power, etc would be listened to with bated breath. His gusts of laughter were almost certain to follow after, as the humour of his remarks or our appearance of subdued humility, appealed irresistibly to him."



4. Norman 'the Skipper' Morrison

Norman ran the school without rules or regulations, both as Vice-Principal and Principal. Often when encountering exuberant behaviour, Normie would regard it as high spirits, causing no harm, and would allow the boys to enjoy their youthful fun.

One night when walking through the boarding house after 'lights out' Norman found some boys in one of the dormitories engaged in fun and games and enjoying a midnight feast. He stopped to enjoy the time with them, until on hearing the footsteps of the house master approaching, he said, "Here he comes. Lights out!", and walked off in the other direction.

JH Campbell was at school during the the Norman Morrison era. Years later JH was the House Master

of the 'Cottage'; the boarding house later known as 'Warrinn'. JH ran the house without rules or regulations. The boys knew what was right and what was wrong, however, if JH considered it really necessary, he would apply disciplinary punishment. JH adopted the Norman Morrison approach to handling exuberant boys. Anyone walking along Noble Street or Claremont Avenue after 'lights out' would hear thumps and bumps, shouts and peals of laughter coming from the old timber building. JH would be in his sitting room, beside the fire, listening to recordings of classical music. When Mackie House was built next to the Cottage, the Mackie house master would complain about the noise coming from the Cottage.

On the river, the Boat Club was expanding. The old boys presented the school with a racing four in 1890 and in 1896 presented a second racing four called Pegasus, a carvel built boat with slides.

There was plenty of training on the river, with races between College crews and probably races against the Grammar School. As the school population was so small, the same boys were needed for both crews and cricket teams. When afternoon classes had finished the boys had cricket practice before going down to the river for rowing. This situation lasted until the early 1930s and many boys were awarded colours for both cricket and rowing. When the cricket season ended, the entire time between classes and the evening meal was devoted to rowing. The school regatta, usually held downstream at the Willows, was a popular annual event, with both the swimming and rowing races. The whole school travelled to the Willows by boats, some of which were borrowed from the Barwon Rowing Club. Details of events, crews and winners were not recorded.

On the 15 February 1898, Dr George Morrison died. The school was running along steadily and Norman Morrison was groomed to take charge, so the transfer from father to son occurred with minimum disruption. The only notable change was that Norman Morrison was no longer called 'Normie' but 'the Skipper'.

The Saturday rows downstream, often crossing both breakwaters, continued to bring great pleasure to the boys. Often, when the weather was hot, the crews would pull in to the bank, strip off their togs and dive into the water. On at least one occasion the Skipper grabbed the boys, one by one, and threw them into the river. The boys then ganged up and threw the Skipper in. What other Principal would allow this?

While the College boys were enjoying these long days on the river with the Skipper, Grammar boys were similarly enjoying their days with J L Cuthbertson, their Classics master and poet, who came to the Grammar School from Oxford in 1875.

Bird-nesting was a popular pastime on Saturday excursions. This would be considered very wrong today, but the boys learned to identify the birds, their nests and their eggs. A large and valuable collection of eggs was placed in the school museum.

Soon after the Skipper took over the helm, he appointed six new members of staff including Roy Lambie, L StG P Austin and A H MacRoberts. Roy Lambie, an old boy of the school, coached crews for over 30 years. L StG P Austin was also very active in the boat club as a coach and rowing master.

In 1902 the first eight oared boat was added to the fleet - the Lorna Mary. It was presented to the school by J L Currie, one of the original pupils of 1861. The launching and christening was a happy occasion. Mrs Currie, after whom the boat was named, smashed a bottle of champagne with a silver hammer and said, "I name this boat the Lorna Mary and wish her and her crews and The Geelong College every good luck and prosperity.". With Austin as coach and the new eight, the standard of rowing improved and the College could compete against other schools.

The College crew competed in the Henley Regatta in Melbourne in 1904. They rowed in a boat borrowed from the Barwon Rowing Club and were defeated by Wesley College. Next year they were able to row in their own boat, but an epidemic of measles was a handicap and they lost to Geelong Grammar. They tried again in 1906 but the public schools decided at the last moment to withdraw from Henley. This would have given the College a 'row over' but there was no desire to win by this means, so the College withdrew. The following year it was expected that the race would lapse so the College did not enter. At the last moment Scotch College entered and won by a 'row over'.

The College joined the Associated Public Schools in 1908. This enabled the College to compete in scheduled sport, cricket, football, rowing, athletics and shooting. About the same time the school became the property of the Presbyterian Church after 45 years as the property of the Morrison family, and a Council was formed to control the school. Charles Shannon was the first Chairman of Council.



5 The christening of an eight, 1905. No record can be found of the name of the boat, or the name or names of the donors. Note the third bay added to the shed. Above the shed, in the distance is the corner of Shannon Avenue and Fyans Street.

On Friday 12 November 1909 the Skipper went out to his farm at Mount Moriac and in the dusk of the evening set out for some shooting. He was later found beside a wire fence with one leg and his gun entangled in the wire - dead. This accident was a sad end to the Morrises' years at the helm of the College. At the same time, Mrs George Morrison, who had been managing the boarding house, retired. Hugh MacKay who managed the property also retired. They passed on an excellent school to their successors. Fortunately the Morrison tradition and spirit continued

CHAPTER 3

Hope and Despair

Hope

Two events occurred before Norman Morrison's tragic death. As noted in the last chapter the Geelong College joined the Associated Public Schools of Victoria (APS) in 1908 and W H (Bill) Pincott became a College coach. These events gave hope for a successful future for the Boat Club.

The APS provided a schedule of sporting events between the schools, encouraging healthy competition. It was a great challenge, as the College was a small school and the first teams were usually disadvantaged in age, weight and height. The College did not complain; both coaches and boys knew they had to try harder and enjoyed being the 'under dogs'. Indeed it took many years for the 1st VIII to win the Head of the River and the cricket and football teams to win premierships. However, although success was hard to come by, hundreds of boys enjoyed their rowing and the exhilaration of rowing in crews.

Bill Pincott was originally appointed as an assistant coach in 1904 but his ability to produce winning crews meant that soon he was in charge of the 1st VIII. He had a profound influence on Geelong rowing for some 50 years.

High hopes were held for the Boat Club with Bill Pincott as coach of the 1st VIII and L StG Austin as rowing master. The Principal, Austin and old boys coached and gave support.

The third significant event of this period was the appointment of W R Bayly as the Principal to succeed Norman Morrison, 'the Skipper'. Bayly was educated at Prince Alfred College in Adelaide, returned to that school to teach and rose to become senior resident master and acting Principal. He was a fine scholar and a fine sport, rowed in the Adelaide University crew in inter-varsity races and was a dramatic orator having great impact on his audiences whether he was castigating boys for poor performance or inspiring good performance. It was a shock for him to discover that there were no rules or regulations in the school. However he took care not to interfere with old customs, even though without any guide as to what these customs were. Bayly was an admirer of Norman Morrison. They had met in Adelaide when Norman Morrison

was a member of the Geelong football team. Bayly was at once a supporter of College rowing and coaching was one of his top priorities.



6 W R Bayly: Principal, Oarsman and Coach.

Hope Realised

The College first competed in the Head of the River in 1908. The College beat Wesley in the heat and met Scotch and Xavier in the final. The race resolved into a match between College and Scotch, with Scotch winning by one and a half lengths. Everyone felt it was a great effort to come second in the final at the first attempt. The old boys were so delighted that they presented the crew with cups in memory of the event and in recognition of the plucky fight put up by the crew. Two old boys presented a rowing machine to the Boat Club to assist with coaching. Melbourne Grammar defeated College in the heat in 1909, this was a disappointment to all who saw the crew training. The College again met Melbourne Grammar in 1910 in the heat. During the race on the Yarra there was confusion just before the Morell Bridge where a buoy had been placed in the middle of the river. This may have caused a coxing error costing the crew one and a half lengths. There is still a need today for

coaches of Geelong crews to sketch a map of the Yarra course showing the hazards and to take their coxes up stream to view and study these problems from the banks and the bridges. Fortunately, coxes today have more racing experience and are less likely to steer their crews into trouble.

In 1908-09-10 there were no picnics down stream in first term until the cricket matches finished. Many regretted this. In 1911 a new cricket programme was introduced in which some cricket matches were played in third term. This allowed a longer time in first term between the last cricket match and the Boat Race at the end of term in May. As a result crews were better prepared for the Head of the River and there was time for picnics down stream. In third term the school regatta and the athletics sports were held before the second series of cricket matches. Two new four-oared boats were bought to allow three crews in heats at the school regattas. There were races for three grades of fours and a race for two eights.

Races between the College and Grammar 2nd Vllls were held from 1913. Also in that year, combination races were introduced on the Barwon River between the College, Grammar, Barwon and Corio Bay Rowing Clubs.



7 Spectators at the first Head of the River races on the Barwon River in 1911. The photograph was taken from the Moorabool Street Bridge. Races finished down stream from the bridge.

Again in 1911, College met Melbourne Grammar in the heat. This was the first Head of the River regatta to be held on the Barwon River. It was one of the many occasions when College had a weight disadvantage; this time 8 kg average per man. College again lost their heat in 1912 and 1913. Bill Leggett a member of the 1912 crew enjoyed his rowing both at school and at Ormond College, as he prepared himself for a life of distinguished service. He served in both world wars and was awarded the MC and DSO. In 1942 he was the Commanding

Officer of the 2/40th Battalion which was sent to West (Dutch) Timor. They were dreadfully outnumbered by the Japanese force which savagely attacked them. Many young men were killed and Lt. Col. Leggatt was taken prisoner-of-war. Upon his return to Australia he entered Parliament and was a minister in Bolte governments. As Sir William Leggatt, he was Victoria's Agent General in London.



8. 1913 1st VIII. l to r, back row: A W Gunn, J G H Sprigg, W H (Bill) Pincott, G S McArthur, N A Longden, sitting: A A W Hooper, T Murray, G A N Mitchell, W J Reid and N R Campbell cox.

Jim Sprigg was President of Mercantile for many years. He was a charismatic character developing a great rapport with young people, and made a great contribution to the sport of rowing. G S McArthur as Sir Gordon, was a Cabinet Minister and father of boat club members Stewart, Alistair and Jock.

Roy Lamble was another master who made a valuable contribution to the Boat Club. He was dux of the College in 1897 and joined the teaching staff from 1903 till 1915 and from 1928 till 1947. He coached crews, led adventure expeditions during school holidays and organised the first rowing camp at Barwon Heads in 1914. Boats were borrowed from the Barwon Rowing Club for the row down to the Heads. This camp no doubt gave the crew added strength and they defeated Xavier in the heat of the 1914 Head of the River. Roy Lamble served in World War 1 and was awarded the Military Cross, but when he commanded the Cadet Corps from 1932 till 1947 in his humble way he did not wear the decoration. He felt the troops under his command really deserved the honour. After Speech Day in 1936 some boys indicated they would like to row down to Barwon Heads. Roy, who knew the way through the lakes without running aground, agreed to cox the crew.

Despair

Late in 1914 a period of despair started. The Great War was to bring appalling loss of life. The Principal resigned, Roy Lamble and A H McRoberts joined the army and the rowing master and coach, L StG Austin resigned. The resignation in 1914 of the Principal, W R Bayly was a serious setback. He returned to the Prince Alfred College in Adelaide as Principal of his old school where his reputation as an excellent leader continued. His feelings for The Geelong College were expressed in material form shortly after his departure when he presented the College with a new racing eight, named the W R Bayly. This boat was used for Head of the River races and later for the practice fleet. His gift was a token of warm friendship.

The Vice-Principal, W T Price, became Principal. More masters resigned, leaving only two of the 1914 staff when Price retired in 1919. During war time it was difficult to recruit staff. Bill Pincott ceased coaching. As a result of these difficulties, academic standards declined, sporting standards were affected and there was a problem with discipline. A severe drought in 1914 made it financially difficult for country families to keep their boys at school. Falling enrolments resulted in financial problems for the school. By 1918 there were only 152 boys on the school roll.

At the 1915 Head of the River, newspapers commented on the presence of young men in khaki among the crowd. The Commander of the army camp at Broadmeadows realised that it was the last chance for these boys to see the races and he granted them leave. When they arrived in Egypt they of course missed the school and their rowing, and groups would gather for photographs.

In the Barwon Rowing Club there is a photo of nine members in Egypt, three of whom were later killed in action. Old Collegians killed were C M Storrer, J C Paul and R Barnfather. The other old boys in the photograph were S D Walker and Harold Hurst. Five old boys among the nine club members indicate the strong relationship between the College and Barwon Rowing Club. The appalling loss of life continued with eighty-six Old Collegians killed. The Geelong Grammar crew that won the Head of the River in 1914 was considered to be an excellent crew. All but one of this crew were killed in action during the war. These young men, at the threshold of adult life, would have made a valuable contribution to Australia after the war had they survived. Almost all men aged between 18 and 22 enlisted and many of the 23 to 35 age group in

addition. As a result there were shortages of manpower and materials at home.



9. Old Collegians, members of the Light Horse Regiments in Egypt, 1915. Five of these men - E A E Gregory, C H Lyon, H E Mack, H Purnell and C M Storrer - were later killed in action. Among the fifteen old boys were Lt Robertson (Red Robbie, later Lt Gen Sir Horace Robertson) and Major E A E Gregory (the second in command of the 8th Light Horse Regiment who was killed at Gallipoli).

The war time years were difficult, but rowing continued. There is mention of form regattas between 1912 and 1916. The 1st VIII was defeated in their heat at each Head of the River. Oral history records that the Principal came down to the river in 1916 and told Bill Pincott to put a certain boy in stroke seat. Pinny handed his megaphone to the Principal and said, "You coach the crew." That was the end of Pinny's term as College coach. However, Pinny gave many years of his valuable service to Geelong rowing; to Grammar in particular, but also to both the Barwon and Corio Bay Rowing Clubs and to the Melbourne University. His talents were not completely lost to the College.

Henry (Tracker) Young took over as 1st VIII coach in 1917. While at the College he played in the 1896/97 cricket teams and the 1895/96/97 football teams. He played in the Geelong football team with Teddy Rankin and many judges considered these two as all time greats of the Geelong Football Club. Teddy took over from Hugh MacKay as head groundsman in 1908 and coached the College football team. Henry Young was a member of the Corio Bay Rowing Club and stroked successful senior eights. In his first year the crew won their heat against Xavier and came third in the final. The crew lost in 1918 and did not row in 1919 due to an influenza epidemic. It was not until late 1919 that all the service men were repatriated and able to resume their civilian work and be available to coach crews. And so ended the war time difficul-

ties which had had such a devastating effect on the College.



10. Henry 'Tracker' Young: Old Collegian, College Coach and famous footballer.

CHAPTER FOUR

Recovery

The Start of The Rolland Years

At the beginning of 1920 three returned men joined, or rejoined the staff. The Rev F W Rolland MC as Principal, A T Tait MC and A H McRoberts. By 1930 four more returned men were appointed to, or rejoined, the staff; T Henderson MC, R Lambie MC, J H Campbell, C C Shinkfield and also four younger men K Nicolson, L J Campbell, V H Profitt and B R Keith. By the time the great depression struck there had been a strong improvement in academic achievement, sporting standards and discipline. Further able men were appointed in the 1930s, so students who were at school in the period between the wars were privileged to be influenced by men of integrity and dedication.

The Rev. Francis Rolland MC was referred to as 'the Head', addressed to his face as 'Sir' and called 'Frank' behind his back. Born in the St George's Manse, Geelong, and educated at Scotch College and Ormond College, he spent a short time as a parish minister before going to Beltana to provide a missionary service to a vast arid area of South Australia. As a man of vision, he saw the need for medical as well as spiritual support for people in the inland. He was skilled in obtaining financial support for his visions and, as a result, a hospital was built at Oodnadatta staffed by ladies who were qualified both as deaconesses and as nurses. These remarkable women at times had to act as ministers and doctors, and had to be able to ride camels! Frank Rolland actually preceded John Flynn in the inland. Frank joined the AIF as Padre of the 14th Battalion. He was mentioned in dispatches and was awarded the Military Cross (MC), a very unusual award for a Padre. He was appointed as Principal without teaching qualifications. His vision of how the school should develop and his ability to appoint outstanding staff, ensured his reputation as a great principal. There were many similarities between Frank 'the Head' Rolland, and Norman 'the Skipper' Morrison. Both encouraged sport in the school and Rolland's experience as an inland missionary and his wartime service enabled him to encourage the continuation of adventure activities in the school. Like 'the Skipper', 'the Head' knew every boy in the school personally and took a keen interest in each boy's development.

'The Head' was an outstanding sport, excelling in

tennis. He was awarded a blue for tennis at University and represented Victoria in interstate matches. During the cricket season he would go out to the nets and a boy might say, "Care for a bowl, Sir?". The Head would dismiss the best batsmen in the school. Next he would take a bat and treat the best bowlers in the school with disdain. During the football season he would go out onto the field - wearing his suit, top coat and felt hat - and leap up into the air. His sure hands would ensure a mark and he would then kick the ball a great distance down the field.

Rolland's grand vision for the College was to ensure it was rich in tradition and renown; a school from which might go men of integrity, who would be leaders in the outside world. He engaged architects to design elegant buildings which were both functional and adequate. The Dining Hall is one of the last, if not the last, of the great traditional 'English Mediaeval' halls to be built in Australia. The cloisters around the quadrangle are also very elegant.

By 1930 there were about 250 boys enrolled. A H (Bully) McRoberts became Vice-Principal after the war. Later the boys called him 'Boop'. He was a good history teacher, a strong disciplinarian and the chief flagellator. Corporal punishment did not prevent a friendly relationship between boys and their masters. The boys took sport seriously and if a boy did not attend and barrack at football matches or at the Head of the River he would be in dreadful trouble with the other boys. School spirit was high and old boys went on to excel in commerce, business and in the professions.

Shed Moved

The location of the rowing shed at Marnockvale was considered to be unsatisfactory. The old boys persuaded the Council to approve the moving of the shed to a site alongside the Barwon Rowing Club. The shed at Marnockvale originally had two bays, but a third bay was added when there were more boats. The move was made in three trips in 1921, with one bay at a time loaded on to a low loader and hauled by a steam traction engine. Also in 1921 the Corio Bay Rowing Club shed was moved from the bay foreshore near the bottom of Yarra Street, to the river. This enabled members of both clubs to give support to the College. The reserve by the Moorabool Street Bridge became the centre for Geelong rowing. Later the Corio Bay shed was moved back to the bay on Western Beach, where it still stands and is now used for motor

boating activity. Corio Bay found it necessary to carry out their race training on the river, using space for their boats in the College shed. A corrugated iron shed was built after World War 2 as the Corio Bay race training shed and finally the present Corio Bay structure was built in the 1960s, and the training shed became the Geelong Rowing Association shed.



11. One bay of the shed hauled by a steam traction engine from Marnockvale to the present site.

The old College shed became inadequate and difficult to maintain. In the winter of 1933 the College boats were stored in the Barwon Rowing Club shed and in Strachan's wool store. The old shed was demolished and a new shed built to provide more space for boats and extensive changing space and showers upstairs.



12 College shed, relocated from Marnockvale. Barwon Rowing Club (l) and Grammar shed (r). Monument moved after World War 2.



13. Rowing sheds in 1995 from l. to r. Barwon Rowing Club, College, Grammar, Geelong Rowing Association (formerly Corio Bay Rowing Club race training shed). The Corio Bay shed is further to the right out of picture.

Rowing 1918 to 1935

After winning the heat in 1917 there was hope of more success with Henry Young as coach, but the crews coached by Young and his successors lost every heat until 1936. However, the boys still enjoyed their rowing with Saturday picnics to the Willows, trips to Barwon Heads, school regattas, house regattas, combination races and Easter camps. In 1918 the Boat Club had grown to the extent that a 3rd VIII was boated after the 1st and 2nd crews were settled. By 1929 there were four senior eights and seven junior fours at the school regatta and four house IVs in tub boats for the house regatta. So, with heats and finals there was plenty of racing. In some years these school and house regattas were combined and held at the Willows. Bonds of friendship were established; bonds which lasted a life time. A good crew member has to develop self discipline and this enables old oarsmen to be good team members in their life's work.

Harold Hurst returned from the war and coached the 2nd VIII in 1920. Harold made a valuable contribution to the Barwon Rowing Club as well as coaching the College. He devoted much time to Scouting, brought Nauruans to Geelong, billeted them at his home and arranged for them to enrol in courses at the Gordon Institute of Technology. Many of these Nauruans became leaders in the small island nation. It was through Harold's initiative that the Geelong-Nauru scouting group and the Eumerella Scout Camp were established. Henry Young, the first's coach died suddenly in January 1923. Harold Hurst became coach and T Coleman, another Barwon man, coached the seconds.

Bill Pincott was very active in the Barwon Rowing Club at this time, both in administration and in coaching. In 1922 the Club won the Victorian Rowing Association Junior Premiership; the first time it had been won by a club outside Melbourne. Pinny coached a crew which entered for both Junior and Senior eights at the Barwon and Ballarat regattas. They won all four races, a double double. This was a remarkable achievement. Cliff Collyer, who stroked this famous crew coached the 1st VIII for nine years from 1924 to 1932.

In 1925 the football team, coached by a youthful Vic Profitt, won the premiership. This was encouragement for the Boat Club as it showed that a small school could indeed win a premiership.

A further stage in the development of the Boat Club occurred when a 4th VIII was boated in 1926. The coaches in that year were C Collyer - 1sts, A L Storrer - 2nds, Archie Shannon - 3rds and L J Campbell - 4ths. Roy Lambie rejoined the teaching staff in 1928 and helped by coaching novices on the river. L J Campbell was the rowing master.



14. Roy Lambie (left) 15. L J 'Frosty' Campbell - with bicycle and megaphone

Archie Shannon was an enthusiastic worker and supporter of both the Barwon Rowing Club and the College. He was a respected member of the Shannon family and was on the Board of Management of St George's Church. He had a habit of using language which should not have been used in front of ladies. One day a boy came up to him and complained about blisters on his hands. Archie appeared disinterested and just replied, "Pee on them!" About this time Archie borrowed decked fours from the Barwon Rowing Club so that House races could be held using decked, rather than tub fours. This was much appreciated. A decked four was a practice boat, heavier than a racing boat, with ply-wood instead of canvas on the bow and stern.



16 House race. Warrinn (now McArthur) versus Shannon, rowing in decked fours borrowed from the Barwon Rowing Club 1932.

In 1927 Clark replaced Storrer as coach of the seconds and Lex Rentoul assisted with the coaching until he went to Ormond College to commence his studies. The 2nds lost by only one metre. In that year the football team won another premiership. Hopes were high for a win on the river. In the late 1920s, College crews were not disgraced. In 1927 and 1928, the firsts lost their heats by only a length. The seconds lost by only one metre in 1927 and by a canvas in 1926 and 1929. The thirds lost by only a canvas in 1928.

By the end of the decade the Great Depression had started but the College felt, optimistically, that success would come. John McCabe Doyle, an old boy and Barwon member, took over coaching of the seconds in 1930. His contribution to the Boat Club was significant. He noted Fairbairn's saying, "mileage makes champions". The 2nd VIII would row from Queens Park to the breakwater, a fifteen kilometre row each night, while Cliff Collyer's 1st VIII would paddle up to the top of the course and back to the shed, about a 4 kilometre row. One day the 1sts and 2nds had a race with the 2nds winning easily. John was told not to race with the 1sts again! At the same time Archie Shannon would steer his 3rd VIII up to the junction of the Barwon and Moorabool rivers, then proceed up the Moorabool. This river becomes so narrow that the oars could not work in the water but on the stumps of the trees, tufts of grass, weeds and other items on dry land. Archie would get out of the boat and walk over to the Fyansford Hotel for some refreshment. The boys would have to turn the boat by carrying it around over dry land. Archie would return with eight bottles of ginger beer for the boys. Rows to the Willows, the Lakes and Barwon Heads added to the toughness of the crews. Finally in 1931, Archie's 3rd VIII defeated the Grammar 3rds. What a long wait from the informal races in 1873 and official races from 1888, to this event in 1931!

At last a College crew defeated a Grammar crew. In 1932, John Doyle's 2nd VIII defeated the Grammar 2nds; the first 2nd VIII to win. This victory was a week before the Head of the River. During this week a member of the 1st VIII became ill and could not row. Vernon Wood, a brother of the late Very Rev G A (Pat) Wood, was promoted to fill the vacancy in the 1st VIII. As a result, Vernon rowed in both the 1st and 2nd VIII in the same year.



17. Second eight, 1932, the first 2nd VIII to defeat Geelong Grammar seconds. M S Bartlett, (bow), I H Pattison, J H Petrice, A D Butcher, J C Bartlett, V C Wood, I M Henry, G O'D Armstrong, (stroke), C J Cooke, (cox). J McC Doyle was the coach.

The cricket team had a successful season in 1932. They were undefeated, but Melbourne Grammar won the premiership by one point. Lindsay Hassett made 644 runs in the five matches. In 1935 George Milne took 46 wickets for an average of 8.93. It was not till 1946 that a cricket premiership was won. After 1933 all APS cricket matches were played in first term, so that it was no longer possible for a boy to represent the school in both cricket and rowing in one year.

After the 3rd VIII and 2nd VIII won in 1931 and 1932 hope was high for a win in the Head of the River, but more patience was required. All four crews had to withdraw from racing in 1933 because of influenza. L J Campbell, coach of the 1933 crew, became ill and Dick Emms, yet another Barwon man and successful sculler, coached the 1934 and 1935 crews. The 1934 crew was defeated by Melbourne Grammar by three lengths in the heat with Melbourne Grammar losing to Geelong Grammar by two lengths in the final. In 1935, College met Geelong Grammar in the heat. A westerly gale was blowing on the Yarra and the College, rowing in the centre station, ran into this head wind first while the Grammar crew on the north station had some shelter from the bank of the river. The College had a weight disadvantage of 11 pounds, or over 5 kg per man. As the Grammar crew crossed the line, the College was six lengths

behind. At that moment a dreadful hail storm struck and the wind speed increased. It was a sad moment to see the College crew struggle to the line. Charlie Saleh, in Sydney, listened to a description of the race on the radio and said, "I would like to coach the College". The desire to help, or coach, the 'under dogs' is an admirable Australian sentiment and it was a strong part of Charlie's makeup.

Success at Last

In 1935 Charlie Saleh's mother was ill. Charlie accompanied her from Sydney to Geelong so that her other son, Dr Michael Saleh could look after her. Charlie went down to the Corio Bay Rowing Club to see their operation. The rowing community in Geelong was quick to realise the successful New South Wales coach was in town. Old Collegians in the Barwon Rowing Club approached Charlie and asked him to coach the College. Charlie pointed out that coming from Sydney, he did not have a job in Geelong. He was assured that a job would be found and Charlie accepted. He came down to the river late in 1935 to see the talent available to him and was introduced to the boys. Charlie said, "Where are the rest of the boys?". It was a shock for Charlie to learn that there were no other boys. He was used to coaching Newington, a much bigger school in Sydney.

During training the crew noticed they were rowing a greater mileage than in previous years. They enjoyed rowing under Charlie, as all of Charlie's crews did. By the time of the boat races there was a quiet confidence. The crew met Scotch in the heat. When the six man stepped into the boat, instead of treading on the keel he trod on the bottom of the boat. This caused a split in the cedar shell and water started to pour in. The boat was lifted out of the water and the split hurriedly repaired. Meanwhile the Scotch crew had arrived at the start and paddled back down the course. As they passed the finishing line, the judge fired his gun. This caused a pall of doom to fall on the crowd. The Scotch crew, coached by Arch Dobbie and stroked by Harvey Nicholson, made a sporting offer to race. This fine gesture enabled College to win their first heat for 19 years. The margin was two and a half lengths. There was great elation next day when the College won the Head of the River for the first time. The bow man Sandy Collins was the first Collegian to cross the finishing line. Sandy's father played a vital part in encouraging Charlie Saleh to coach the College. A great old Scotch Collegian, Sir Arthur Robinson, who was Chairman of the Scotch College Council and a

supporter and benefactor of Scotch, was delighted to see College win. He donated a considerable sum of money to the College, which was used to purchase a four named the Sir Arthur. From that day onwards, no school took a College crew lightly.



18. The victorious Head of the River Crew, 1936. T M Collins, bow, T H Kelsall, I H Silke, J A Forbes, C W Robertson, D M Calvert, D A Cumming, A W Douglas, stroke, N C Reid, cox. C G Saleh, coach.

In 1937, College was overpowered in the heat by the Xavier crew who won the Head of the River. It was generally considered that the College crew was the second best in the competition, but losing to the best crew in the heat prevented them from coming second in the final. Again in 1940 the crew was defeated in the heat by the ultimate winners. In 1938 and 1939 crews lost their heats but were not at all disgraced. After the 1940 season, Charlie went to see the Head and said that his duty to Australia was to enlist in the army. Charlie recommended that Albert Bell be appointed coach. Charlie had coached Albert in Corio Bay Rowing Club crews.

So ended the long period of recovery from 1919. The depression had passed, many buildings were erected, the quality of teaching was excellent, discipline was strong, sporting performances admirable and at last the College had won a Head of the River title.

Charlie Saleh

Charlie Saleh's parents were born in Jerusalem and Bethlehem and they belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. The family migrated to Sydney around 1905 and the children were brought up in a typical Australian way. Michael Saleh graduated in Medicine from the University of Sydney. After a somewhat adventurous career he settled into prac-

tice in Geelong. His family were brought up as Anglicans and his boys went to Geelong Grammar. Charlie did not follow an academic career but directed his energy into rowing with the Sydney Rowing Club. He started as a cox and went on to be a successful sculler and stroke of lightweight crews and finally a successful coach.

In May 1940, Charlie joined the 2/3rd Light Anti Aircraft Regiment and saw action in the Middle East and New Guinea. Charlie Saleh was discharged in 1943 on medical grounds. He was suffering from malaria and other tropical diseases and some degree of war neurosis. It took many months for him to recover. In 1944 he coached The Geelong College crew. On some days he was so weak that he could not call out to the crew. J H Campbell drove Charlie along the bank. Charlie would whisper with difficulty and J H would call out through the megaphone. What dedication to rowing!

After Charlie came home from the war, he married Margaret Prouse, a former Morongo student. It was a happy marriage and they had two children, Brian and Julie. In 1945 Charlie became a newsagent in South Melbourne. In the days before television, the late afternoon was a busy time for newsagents as many people bought the afternoon newspapers. Charlie had to pay extra staff at this time so that he could go to the river to coach two crews each afternoon; firstly the Scotch crew and then a Mercantile Rowing Club crew. He coached in an honorary capacity.

It is a sad reflection that many members of the rowing community were quick to mock Charlie. He suffered racial and religious prejudice. He lived by Christian ethics. Some of the old 'die hards' in the Mercantile Rowing Club condemned him for not coaching the Victorian orthodox style. He deserved better. His war service was meritorious, his contribution to the sport of rowing was great and he gave pleasure to those who rowed in his crews.

Charlie coached Scotch College for seven years and won three Head of the River titles. His first season at Mercantile was successful but for the next two seasons his senior VIII was consistently overpowered by the Corio Bay 'Harmony VIII', coached by Albert Bell. He coached the 1949 intervarsity Melbourne University crew and one or two crews from the Yarra Yarra Rowing Club and then dropped out of club rowing. In the late 1950s he coached Xavier College for several years without success. Like many other coaches, he was less successful in his latter years.

Saleh's Influence

Many of those who rowed in Charlie's crews became successful coaches. Oarsmen who rowed under Charlie's pupils also coached winning crews. Indeed Charlie's influence has been passed on by generations of coaches. Those mentioned in the following pages have had outstanding careers, not only with Head of the River crews, but also intersarsity, interstate and international crews, and they have coached and contributed to the administration of rowing.

Albert Bell and the Searle brothers were coached by Charlie during his four very successful years at the Corio Bay Rowing Club. These men combined what they learned from Charlie with what they learned from Bill Pincott and coached winning crews for many years. In the years 1945 to 1960 Albert produced many fast College crews, ending this period with five wins in six years; the golden age of College rowing. In the late 1940s Albert coached very successful Corio Bay Crews including the 'Harmony VIII' which was undefeated in senior eights for two seasons. This crew, with Albert as coach, represented Victoria in the 1948 King's Cup race. Many members of these Corio Bay crews became coaches. The 1957 College crew is often claimed to be the best College crew of all time. Four of this crew - David Ramage, Derek Norwood, David Caithness and David John - rowed as a four, winning many senior four oared races for Corio Bay. In 1962 they won the silver medal at the Commonwealth Games in Perth with Albert as coach. Bill Searle coached some excellent crews from Geelong Grammar and Corio Bay. Ernie Searle continues to coach; age has not wearied him!

Charlie Saleh coached Mercantile Rowing Club crews for only four years. The history of the Mercantile Rowing Club shows the Club did not have the success expected from a big club before 1950. After 1950 Mercantile, and indeed Victoria, entered a golden age. Charlie deserves credit for much of this success. Bob Aitken and Jim Ferguson rowed under Charlie in the 1940 College crew, and after war service they joined the Mercantile Club. Bill Wallace, Lawrie Moll and the Shears brothers rowed under Charlie at Mercantile. As these Mercantile oarsmen approached retirement they started coaching each other; alternately coaching crews and rowing in crews. They discussed matters among themselves and consulted Charlie for advice. All became successful coaches of club, university and school crews.

Robert Aitken rowed in the King's Cup crew of 1951-52-53, winning in 1952-53, coached the King's Cup crews of 1956-58-59-60, victorious in 1956-58. Bob coached the Australian VIII winning the bronze medal at the 1956 Olympic Games and coached the Scotch crew in 1963-64, winning in 1963. Bob served as President of the Mercantile Rowing Club, the Victorian Rowing Association and the Australian Rowing Council and was awarded the honour MBE for services to rowing.



19. R R Aitken MBE

Herb Shears coached the winning King's Cup crew of 1953, which included three Old Geelong Collegians, Bob Aitken, George Barrett and Neil Everist. Bill Wallace went to Adelaide after a successful time as a Mercantile coach. South Australia had performed poorly in King's Cup races for many years. In Bill's first year as South Australian coach his crew nearly won. The Victorian crew, coached by Hubert Frederico, just beat Bill's crew.

The author's experience is an example of how Charlie's influence was beneficial. Queen's College had not won the Inter-collegiate Boat race at Melbourne University for 20 years. Jim was asked to coach the 1948 and 1949 Queen's crews. He put much thought into the coaching and made long telephone calls to Charlie several times each week. Charlie's influence resulted in the 1948 crew winning easily. After Queen's won again in 1949, Jim made a bold move appointing himself as coach of a University senior eight. He was still an under-graduate. Four former Geelong College oarsmen were in the crew: A. L. Bennett, I.C. Everist, A.G. Barrett and R.W. Buntine. The crew rowed once, sometimes twice, each week during the winter of 1949. They

did not row during the September vacation. In third term, as exam time approached, they rowed only once each week. There was only about one week between the last exam and the first important regatta. Despite little training they won the Senior Eights at the V.R.A. Regatta in late November. The following week they won the Grand Challenge Cup at the Henley Regatta. Two thirds of the crew did not live in Melbourne, so the crew were unable to row from early December until late January, missing the two regattas held on the Australia Day long weekend. The crew returned to training three weeks before the Champion Eights. A week before the Champion Eights, Jim went to Queensland for his wedding and Charlie Saleh was asked to take over the coaching. They won the Champion Eights of Victoria and the Senior Eights at the Ballarat and Barwon Regattas. All but three of the crew were selected in the Victorian King's Cup crew, coached by Ray Todd. After the King's Cup Regatta the crew borrowed the College's new racing boat; "Pegasus II" and won the Inter-Varsity race on the Lower Yarra with Jim as coach. In the 1949/50 season the crew were undefeated in the six regattas at which they entered. They were the Champion Senior Eight of Victoria, Inter-Varsity Champions, and won the Senior Eights at four important inter-club regattas.

The student crew again entered in the V.R.A. and Henley regattas in late November 1950, again with little training due to the pressure of exams. The Mercantile crew defeated them by 2 feet (about 0.6m) at the V.R.A. regatta. The two crews rowed a dead heat at Henley with Mercantile winning the re-row by a canvas. After that the crew disbanded as four members graduated and left Melbourne. Robert Aitken, Lawrie Moll and Bill Wallace were in the Mercantile senior eight in the years 1949 and 1950, with Herb Shears as coach. These four oarsmen rowed in many crews under Charlie Saleh's coaching during the previous four years, and became outstanding senior coaches.

In 1951 George Barrett, Jim Ferguson and David Olliff rowed in the Mercantile senior eight. All but three of this crew were selected in the 1952 King's Cup crew. The New South Wales crew were selected to represent Australia at the 1952 Olympic games, at which they won the Bronze Medal. Before leaving Australia they represented N.S.W. in the King's Cup race and were soundly defeated by the Victorian crew. Old Geelong Collegians in the victorious Victorian crew were Robert Aitken, George Barrett and Neil Everist. Thus the success of both the University, Mercantile and Victorian crews in this period was influenced by Charlie Saleh. In

the following years Victoria won many titles in national and inter-state regattas, and many Victorians represented Australia in international regattas, winning some gold medals. Many of the coaches were pupils of Charlie Saleh.

David Boykett rowed in two winning Scotch crews under Charlie Saleh's coaching and then rowed with Mercantile under some of Charlie's pupils mentioned above. David rowed in seven King's Cup crews, winning four, won gold in the eight at the Commonwealth Games in Perth in 1962, bronze in the eight at the Olympic Games in 1956 and rowed in the Australian eight at the 1964 Olympics Games. David coached three King's Cup crews, winning two, coached the Australian eight for the World Rowing Championships at Bled, Yugoslavia in 1966 and coached the Scotch crew for seven years, winning once.

Don Macmillan rowed under Charlie Saleh and Albert Bell at the College and rowed and sculled at Corio Bay. After his athletics career, including national championships and Olympic Games representation, he became a successful rowing coach at the College before joining the Scotch staff. In his first five years at Scotch he coached the 2nd VIII, winning each year. He then coached the 1st VIII for nine years, winning four times.

Lawrie Moll, another of Charlie's pupils, was in Geelong for three weeks in 1955. The College 2nd VIII had no full time coach and were struggling. One expert noted that when Lawrie took them over he converted a rabble into a winning crew in only three weeks. Lawrie became a soldier settler farmer and was lost to rowing clubs. However he did start a boat club at the Derinallum High School.

Roger Moore worked in Albert Bell's engineering works in school holidays. Albert noted Roger's personal attributes and asked him to cox crews. Roger coxed the 1954 1st VIII. Next year he stroked the 5th VIII, even though he was lighter than the cox. Being small and light is no barrier to the enjoyment of rowing and becoming a coach and administrator. Roger joined the Yarra Yarra Rowing Club and asked Charlie Saleh to coach. Roger rowed in the 1961 Victorian lightweight IV for the Penrith Cup at the King's Cup Regatta. With Charlie Saleh's help, Roger coached the Monash University crew that won senior eight races. As a result, Roger was appointed King's Cup coach and his crew won the coveted cup in 1963. Roger moved to Sydney and coached Sydney University, and coached a winning NSW Penrith Cup crew in 1969. He continued his coaching in Adelaide and contributed to

the direction of the sport with the South Australian Rowing Association. Roger had great satisfaction when any of his oarsmen went on to become winning coaches. Brian Richardson was such a coach. Roger coached Brian in Adelaide and Brian went on to have outstanding success as an oarsmen and coach. Roger was an Australian selector with Old Collegian, the late, Justice Jim Howden. In 1966 Roger coached a four which competed in five European countries before the World Rowing Championships in Bled, Yugoslavia. They won at Mainz, were second at Klagenfurt and sixth at Copenhagen. Peter Philp, David Palfreyman and Dick Garrard rowed in this crew, all of whom have since become successful coaches. On this trip Roger watched the German crews coached by Carl Adams. Roger was able to talk to Adams and learn something of his principles and apply them to his crews.

There is a long list of oarsmen who rowed under Charlie Saleh's pupils who became top coaches after rowing in national and international crews. The achievements of some of these men are described below.

Peter Philp started his rowing at the College in 1959, rowing in the 8th VIII, before transferring to Scotch. He rowed in the Scotch 1st VIII under Bob Aitken, in 1963 and 1964, winning the Head of the River in 1963. Peter went on to row with Mercantile, rowing in senior VIII's. Sometimes the selectors left him out of crews in favour of bigger men, so Peter went to the Melbourne University Boat Club to coach lightweights. He coached the Victorian lightweight IV which won the gold medal at the World Rowing Championships at Lucerne in 1974, and coached the Victorian lightweight IV for the Penrith Cup in 1973-75-77, winning in 1973 and 1977. Peter coached the College 1st VIII from 1992-1997, winning the Head of the River in 1993.

Others who rowed under Charlies' pupils, represented Australia, and later coached include: Hubert Frederico, David Palfreyman, Dick Garrard, Graeme Boykett, Simon Newcomb and Graeme McCall.

Bob Buntine rowed under Albert Bell at school and under Charlie Saleh, Jim Ferguson and Lawrie Moll at the university. Bob joined the staff of Kings School in Sydney. Kings had not won the Head of the River for many years. Bob coached them for four years and each crew won.

Alan Darker rowed under Charlie's pupils at the Mercantile Rowing Club, and after coaching victo-

rious girls crews from Geelong Grammar, he has coached the College girls 1st IV. It is noted elsewhere that the 1992 1st IV were absolute champions.

There are hundreds of rowing coaches who coach for the love of the sport and have out of pocket expenses. When crews go interstate and to international regattas much of the cost is born by supporters of rowing. Oarsmen have benefited from the coaching by those mentioned above and, if the sport is to thrive, oarsmen have an obligation to put something back into rowing.

From the facts mentioned in this section, it can be appreciated that Charlie Saleh's influence on Victorian rowing has been significant. The College should acknowledge the contribution of the man who coached the first winning College Head of the River crew.



20: King's Cup Regatta 1966. The three most prestigious trophies in Australian rowing. Left: Jeff Sykes holding the President's Cup for sculls. Jeff was influenced by Charlie Saleh's pupil - Albert Bell. Centre: David Boykett holding the King's Cup for eights. David rowed in two Scotch College winning crews coached by Charlie Saleh and rowed under some of Charlie's pupils at the Mercantile Rowing Club. Right: George Xouris holding the Penrith Cup for lightweight fours. George was coached by Charlie Saleh's pupil, Don Mackay, at the Mildura Rowing Club and later by some of Charlie's pupils at Mercantile.

CHAPTER 5

World War 2 Years

In the early years of the war life was not greatly affected and the 1940 Head of the River was much the same as it was in the years before the war. In May 1940, France capitulated, the British army was evacuated from Dunkirk, and the Germans conquered and occupied Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium. Britain and the British Commonwealth alone had to face the might of Germany. At the same time, Italy entered the war on the side of Germany. Because of this grim situation, Charlie Saleh - among many others - felt it was his duty to volunteer. At the age of 35 Charlie would have been considered too old for front line duty.

In September 1940, England was bombed causing dreadful loss of life and property. The gallant fighter pilots enabled the 'Battle of Britain' to be won. Young, fit and able Australians felt they should volunteer for war service. However, many of those who left school at the end of 1940 considered it right to spend a year at the University before enlisting. The 1941 Head of the River was the last regatta of the pre-war format. Bill Pincott freely gave advice and moral support during Albert Bell's first year as coach of the 1st VIII. The College and Grammar crews often rowed together and the two crews stayed at the same hotel when they went to Melbourne for the Head of the River. It was like one big happy family. A powerful Scotch crew which won the title defeated the College crew in the heat.

In the northern summer of 1941, Germany invaded Russia. In December, Japan made the unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbour and launched the brutal offensive through South East Asia. Those who left school at the end of 1941 felt they should enlist without delay. In 1942, Australia was in dire danger of being invaded. The bravery and dedication of the Australians in both Timor and New Guinea, and of the Australian and United States Navies in the Coral Sea, prevented invasion. In the years 1936 through to 1942, forty-five boys rowed in 1st VIs. Of these, forty-one enlisted in the armed services, five were killed, Alan Blackwood was awarded the Military Cross, Ivor Buchanan was awarded the DFC and George Barrett, David Borthwick and Rod Lyall were mentioned in Dispatches. Four Masters enlisted. Lt Col Harry Dunkley was awarded the DSO and MC.

Young old boys who had always helped to coach junior crews were really missed during the war when they were away with the Services. Petrol, food and clothing were rationed and other materials were in short supply. There were restrictions on transport. Albert Bell, now too busy with essential work for the war effort, was unable to continue as coach. A member of the Barwon Rowing Club, E S Kishere, coached the 1942 and 1943 crews. He was not a young man but coached with energy and enthusiasm. It was somewhat of a shock for the crews to be coached along the same lines as the Victorian orthodox style. Four members of the teaching staff, L J Campbell, John Carrington, Des Davey and Roy Lamble, assisted with the coaching.

School resumed in 1942 only 9 weeks after the assault on Pearl Harbour and Singapore fell in the first fortnight of term. By this time Japan had captured a vast area of South East Asia and islands to the North of Australia. As a result it was decided to abandon a formal Head of the River Regatta and schools made whatever arrangements they could. Invitations or challenges were made for informal races and these were held in a friendly spirit. The two Geelong Headmasters probably conferred and decided that races in Geelong for first eights would be shortened from one mile to half a mile (about 800m) and that racing boats would not be used. The Head Master of Wesley was also the coach of the Wesley crew, so it may have been his influence that first eights from Melbourne schools rowed in racing boats over a distance of one mile (about 1,500m).

Xavier came to Geelong by train, borrowed a boat for a race against the College which the College won. Races at the end of the season were considered to be the most important event of the year. The Scotch College 1sts and 2nds came to the Barwon River for this final event. The results for both the 1sts and the 2nds were: Geelong Grammar 1st, Geelong College 2nd and Scotch College 3rd. A R.A.A.F. crew from the Wireless and Air Gunners' School at Ballarat came to Geelong to row against Grammar. Compared with other schools, Geelong Grammar was more disadvantaged by the war. Petrol rationing prevented the use of a bus to transport crews to the Barwon River where the better boats were kept. Grammar also lost rowing training time because of increased Cadet activity. Despite these disadvantages, Grammar had a successful season having defeated College, Scotch and the R.A.A.F. crew. As College defeated Xavier, Grammar could be considered to be ahead of Xavier. The Wesley crew was undefeated in Melbourne.

In 1943 the 1st VIII used the racing boat, the "Pegasus." After much argument it was agreed that there was no reason why the crew should not row in it. The College 1st and 2nd Vllls went to Melbourne to row against Scotch. Geelong Grammar issued an open challenge to the Melbourne schools to race on the Yarra River. Wesley was the only school to accept the challenge. Geelong Grammar went to Melbourne by train, borrowed the Queen's College racing boat from the Melbourne University shed and defeated Wesley over the mile course (just over 1500m). At the end of season regatta on the Barwon, Geelong Grammar defeated all four College crews. The Geelong Grammar 1st VIII won all their races in 1942 and Wesley won all their races in Melbourne but there was no race between Geelong Grammar and Wesley. In 1943 Melbourne Grammar won all their races in Melbourne but did not race the undefeated Geelong Grammar crew. It could be argued that no crew could claim to be Head of the River champions in 1942 and 1943. In the next four years the six schools rowed three heats and a final resulting in the title "Head of the River" for the winner of the final races.

By the beginning of 1944, the war news was improving. Lae had been captured and the Australian Army was advancing up the Ramu and Markham Valleys, driving the Japanese up the north coast of New Guinea. The Americans were freeing the Pacific Islands from the Japanese and the allies were gaining air and sea supremacy. The conditions under which men had to fight and live in the tropical jungles were dreadful and tropical diseases were prevalent. At that time it was not known that Australian prisoners-of-war were being brutally treated, starved, beaten, forced to work long hours (even when sick) and denied medical facilities and supplies. When news came of old boys who were killed in action 'the Head' felt deep grief.

The Head of the River was held again in 1944. Because of the difficulty of transporting boats the two Geelong crews rowed each other in a heat on the Barwon and the Melbourne schools rowed heats on the Yarra. This continued until 1947. Charlie Saleh returned from the war and coached the crew despite being very weak and sick as a result of his war service. Charlie Saleh became very excited on race days and the resulting excitement sometimes had an adverse affect on his crews. J.H.Campbell was skilled in preventing boys from becoming over confident, "too cocky", and he ensured that they had a cool head. Often Albert Bell's last words to his crews, as they left the stag-

ing for a race, would be; "Keep a cool head." Charlie and J H complemented each other. The 1944 crew defeated Grammar on the Barwon, then travelled to Melbourne, borrowed the Ormond College boat and won the final of the Head of the River. There were still few big boys at the College in 1944. The 3rd VIII had an average weight of nine stone, six pounds (61 kg). The 4th VIII had boys from Year 7. A satisfactory arrangement was introduced on the Barwon to enable close races between a large and small school, the Grammar and the College. The two 1st Vllls raced each other, the College 2nds raced the Grammar 2nds and 3rds, the 3rds raced the 4ths and 5ths, the 4ths raced the 6ths and 7ths. The same arrangements continued in 1945. In that year, the final of the Head of the River was rowed on the Barwon and Albert Bell was able to resume coaching. Charlie Saleh came down from Melbourne frequently and with Bill Pincott gave support to Albert.



21. Head of the River 1944. l to r. back row: E R Ashton, I E Cameron, I M Mellusain, D R Macmillan, D W Mackay, W F Humphreys, sitting, N J Spalding, C G (Charlie) Saleh, G H K Tippett and A L Bennett, cox.

Those away on active service missed their rowing and whenever they were near a rowing club or rowing school, they would gather men in their units who had rowed, borrow a boat and take to the water. Charlie Saleh was able to boat a crew on the Nile whilst his regiment was in Egypt. Old Collegian Pat, later the Very Reverend G A Wood, was the Padre at the East Sale RAAF base. He borrowed a boat from the local club and coached a crew. This crew entered at an informal Henley Regatta in Melbourne in 1943. One of the crew was posted to another base the day before the regatta so Pat took his place. Oars were loaded into the bomb bays of a Beaufort bomber, which flew to Melbourne, landing on the air strip at Fisherman's Bend. They borrowed a boat and won their race. They flew back to Sale after the race so Pat could take the Church Parade the next morning.



22. 1944 crew in action.

It is well known that King George V donated a gold cup as the trophy for a boat race between servicemen from the British Commonwealth countries who were still in England in 1919. The race was won by the AIF Number 1 crew, stroked by a Medical Officer, Captain Clive Disher, an old Scotch and Ormond man who was a supporter and later Patron of the Melbourne University Boat Club. The King's Cup is now the trophy for the inter-state VIII's race. It is not well known that a similar race was held at the 1945 Royal Henley Regatta. The war in Europe was over but the war in the Pacific was still raging and most of the Australian men were in the Pacific area. However, Lex Rentoul was in the RAAF in England with a relatively small number of Australians and he selected and coached a crew. As they rowed up to the start of the race, the band recognised them and played 'Waltzing Matilda'. They could not resist looking in the direction of the band and saw the Australian flag being raised. This was an emotional moment as they felt so proud. The whole world recognises the Australian flag as representing a nation which will play its part to resist aggression and tyranny. With Old Collegian Lex Rentoul as coach, they won.

CHAPTER 6

General Topics

Trips to Barwon Heads

In this chapter topics are described covering many years rather than the chronological periods in the book. The following diary entry could have been dated in any year between 1870 and 1950.

'Wake up 4.00am. Breakfast in the Chem lab. On the water at 5.10am. Arrive at Barwon Heads at 8.30am for a second breakfast. Spend rest of morning on surf beach. Leave to row back after lunch. Afternoon tea at the Willows. Back at shed at 6.00pm.'

The average speed on the 30 km row to Barwon Heads was 9 km/h. This was good progress as they had to get out of the boat and carry it over the two breakwaters and avoid running aground in the lakes.

In 1908 the United States Navy made a visit to Australia and the school was taken by train to Queenscliff to see the fleet pass through the Heads. Between the time of European settlement of Australia and the second world war there was always the fear that another nation would settle and claim land, or invade and capture the land. The Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, felt the British government was not going to do enough to defend Australia. He befriended the United States and invited the U.S. fleet to make a visit. This caused some ill feeling in the United Kingdom but the visit resulted in much interest for the Australian public.

Several boys were gated (confined to barracks) for some misdemeanour and found the punishment unbearable. They went down to the boat shed at Marnockvale, took out a boat and rowed some 30 km down to Ocean Grove. They ran along the beach to Point Lonsdale and saw the United States fleet pass through the heads. It was an impressive sight as the ships sailed in 'line ahead' formation with a black plume of coal smoke emitted from each ship. The boys returned by the same route to face the music. Norman Morrison, 'the Skipper', was an army officer who pressured every boy to join the Cadet Corps and these cadets were absent without leave whilst confined to barracks. In the army this crime would result in a severe punishment. The Skipper was impressed with their enter-

prise and stamina. He felt they had been sufficiently punished and told them to be good boys in future.

One Saturday in the 1930s a crew rowing to Barwon Heads ran aground in the lakes. When they got out of the boat the water was only ankle deep and their feet sank further into the mud on the bottom. It took some time to move the boat back to the channel so they could row on. Arriving at Barwon Heads they decided to wait until the tide came in before setting out for home, lessening the chance of running aground in the lakes. The water was delightful so they swam and generally enjoyed themselves. By the time they reached the lower breakwater it was dusk and they arrived back at school at midnight to find a worried housemaster.



23. Crew aground in the middle of Lake Connewarre, 1932.

At Easter time the 1st VIII often rowed to Barwon Heads on Good Friday and stayed at a boarding house. On the Saturday and Sunday they would spend some time rowing, bird nesting and enjoying the beach. They would row back to school on the Monday. On one occasion the Ormond College crew borrowed the "Una" and rowed to Barwon Heads with the College crew. This was probably the initiative of Lex Rentoul.

After Speech Day in 1936 Roy Lambie sat in the cox's seat of an eight and steered the crew down to Barwon Heads. He knew the way through the lakes without being grounded. Roy would have been over 55 years of age. It would be assumed that he would want to relax after a year of teaching. This is yet another example of a staff member giving up his vacation time to help the boys.

The Environment

Oarsmen have always enjoyed the beauty of rivers. The beauty of the Barwon River has brought special pleasure to the Geelong rowing community. Statutory authorities, with frequent name changes, have had the responsibility for the development and maintenance of the river. Discharge of waste from industrial premises has been controlled and water quality has improved. The Authority, together with local government, have built walking and bicycle paths, planted trees and developed picnic and play grounds. The rowing community, including past students from both the College and Grammar and members from both clubs, have taken an interest in the river environment and made suggestions and requests to the Authority. Relations between the Authority and the rowing community have been friendly and helpful for many years. Between the two great wars members of the rowing community, planted trees often with the help of working bees from schools. These same people planted the first roadside plantations in Victoria, on the Prince's Highway between Geelong and Melbourne.

Archie Shannon used to drive his car down to the river on hot summer nights to spend time working on the maintenance of boats and draw buckets of water from the river to water the young trees. Today the river is used not only by rowers but by surf clubs, canoe and kayak clubs, dragon boat crews, swimmers, scout groups and others.

Both College and Grammar boys spent time bird-nesting. This practice would be considered as vandalism today, but it was done as a scientific exercise in the early days. George Belcher, a Geelong identity, wrote a book on the local bird life and this book was regularly consulted. A valuable collection of birds' eggs was assembled in the school museum. Alf Dunbaven Butcher, who rowed in the 1932 2nd VIII, the first 2nd crew to beat the Grammar 2nd VIII, identified and catalogued the eggs. As a science graduate he became Director of the Fisheries and Wildlife Service in Victoria and was the Chairman of the Council of the Melbourne Zoo. Dr Norman Wettenhall, who was Chairman of the College Council, enjoyed rowing and hiking along the river on Saturdays during his time at school in the 1930s. He made a collection of books, prints and hand coloured drawings of Australian birds and wildlife that could be valued at over \$3 million. He plans to sell the collection and use the proceeds to establish a foundation with the aim of promoting the knowledge and understanding of our natural environment.

When Albert Bell was coaching from the motor boat, JHC, in the 1950s, the crew would row up to Queen's Park. While the crew were turning their boat by the bridge, Albert would carefully move the JHC into the large bay on the Newtown bank. The crew wondered what Albert was doing. He was inspecting waterlilies. He knew each bloom personally and derived much pleasure from noting how the buds opened, developed their full beauty and finally withered. For some years after this, water-skiers were able to use this part of the river and their propellers cut and destroyed the lilies. About 100 metres downstream from the start of the boat race course, on the north bank, there were some arum lilies. Albert Bell admired them and he used to call out through his megaphone, "We'll have a start from the lilies."

One afternoon when David Ramage was coaching the crews, a moor hen was hit by the blade of an oar. It was stunned and floating head down. The crew were upset and called on David to rescue it. It regained consciousness in David's hand. The ungrateful bird defecated on David's trousers, not realising that rowers do care for wild life and the environment!

Sartorial Matters

For many years, up till the 1970s, there was no change in the togs for sport. White shorts - usually rather baggy - were worn for rowing, football, athletics and tennis. A green singlet or t-shirt - usually somewhat faded - was worn for rowing and athletics, whilst a green woollen sweater was worn for both football and warmth on the river on cold days or on hikes.



24. House crew, coached by Barroon Rowing Club member. From l. to r: Coach, Garry Armstrong, Boyd Ferguson, Vaughton Andrews, Graham McKenzie, Cliffe Cooke. The Grammar shed is in the background.

The law required men to be covered from neck to knees on the beach. It was not till the late 1930s that trunks were permitted and they had to have a skirt on the front. On one hot day in the early 1920s, a crew was rowing up to Queen's Park. They took their singlets off and rowed with bare bodies above their shorts. An irate lady wrote to the Head to express her disgust. She said she knew they were College boys because there were green, white and blue markings on the blades. The Head told a school assembly that in future boys must not remove their singlets.

One Saturday a crew rowed downstream, crossed the breakwater and picnicked at the Willows. When they came to Sparrovale Farm, an irrigated dairy farm, they pulled into the bank for a swim. On a barge there was a large boiler house and a marine steam engine which drove a large centrifugal pump. Water was delivered through a pipe, half a metre in diameter, mounted on timber stools. The pipe ran across the paddocks, terminating at an irrigation channel. The boys were curious so they inspected the plant and walked out on top of the pipe. A moment of embarrassment occurred when they saw a young girl approaching. The girl said the Grammar boys did the gentlemanly thing and scurried along the pipe, over the levee bank, back to their boat. It is not known how she was able to identify the naked bodies as Grammar boys. They could have been College boys as both schools enjoyed their days on the river in the same way.

Rowing and Study

Sometimes people think rowing will retard scholastic achievement. This is not necessarily so. Rowing, along with other extra-curricular activities, contributes to the overall development of young people.

The author has three photographs on his study wall of successful intervarsity (I.V.) crews each with the magnificent Oxford and Cambridge Cup in front of each crew. To win the I.V. race is a considerable achievement as usually there are some international and interstate oarsmen in the crews. Of the twenty-two men in the three winning crews, all but one graduated, two were Rhodes scholars, two became professors, one a judge, one a knight and one a state governor, one a Senator and Cabinet Minister, one the Principal of an independent school, two graduated with Masters degrees in Engineering and three furthered their study to become medical specialists. Old Geelong Collegians in the crews include George Barrett,

Alec Bennett, Bob Buntine, John Button, Ian Everist, Jim Ferguson as well as five Old Geelong Grammarians. Typically, half of the I.V. crews came up from the two Geelong schools. Rowing did not retard their academic progress; they planned their lives with time scheduled for each activity: study, exercise and training, conversation on many topics during meal and supper time and sleep. Their social life perhaps was somewhat curtailed. During the periods of intense study as exam time approached, members of senior crews would devote half an hour to a strenuous run, perhaps every day, and have one weekend row.

Boats

It is difficult to compile an accurate list of boats making up the College fleet. The dates of manufacture were often not recorded and the dates of retirement were rarely mentioned. Before 1896, boats had no names. The original fleet, in 1888, consisted of a pair, a four oared gig and two pleasure boats. Gigs had fixed seats and no outriggers; the oars worked in poppets on the gunwales. Pleasure boats were wide common row boats. Two or three people could sit beside each other, on the seats. The oars worked in rowlocks on the gunwales. A second four oared gig was added in 1889 and a racing four in 1890. The specifications of the racer are not known. It probably had out-riggers but no sliding seats. By 1894, there was another four oared gig and another pair. The Pegasus, a racing four, was built in 1896, the first boat to have a name. It had sliding seats and out-riggers. The Sidar and the Khalifa were built in 1899 and the Eric and Gordon in 1911; these four boats were clinker-built tub fours with out-riggers and were in service until the late 1930s. They could be changed from fixed to sliding seats and back to fixed seats. Usually two were used with fixed seats and the other two with sliding seats. In 1900 the Lorna Mary, the first eight was presented by the Currie family and named after Mrs Currie. It was a clinker-built boat and was still in the shed in the mid 1930s. When the College joined the Associated Public Schools Association in 1908, a new practice eight was built and by then the fleet had grown to three eights, seven fours, three pairs, and two pleasure boats. The fleet grew at a steady rate in the first 20 years, but only four names were recorded, and it is not known when boats came to the end of their lives. The leading coaches of the day were adamant that novices must learn to row in fixed seats before they could row with sliding seats. The boats were designed for small boys and the length of slide movement was small. Two boats with the

sliding seats were used for house races, with two heats and a final.

Nine clinker built eights were bought between 1900 and 1938: Lorna Mary 1900, Bayly 1916, Rex Bell 1918, Una 1921, Norman Morrison I 1923, Shannon 1924, Norman Morrison II 1935, Rebecca 1936 and Pegasus I 1938. The Lorna Mary was a solid boat, dark in colour and would have been used by the 1st VIII until 1916, when the Bayly was commissioned. The Una was christened in 1921. It was donated by Noel Russell who was still at school. In the previous year Noel's brothers, Jim and Eric, donated a tennis court, so the Russell family were generous benefactors. The Una was named after their sister. At the christening it was noted that now three eights could row abreast. Those present in 1921 would have enjoyed returning to the river in the late 1950s when the first five eights would assemble for the last run down the course each afternoon. Each crew would be trying to move out ahead of the senior crew along side. The five crews abreast was a spectacular sight.



25. Christening the Una, 1921. The three bay shed, which was moved from Marnockvale can be seen in the background.

As the Una was one of three eights in the shed in 1921, and the Lorna Mary was one of them, either the Bayly or the Rex Bell must have been disposed of by 1921. It is reported that the Bayly was used by the 1st VIII and later by junior crews, but no record had been found of the life of the Rex Bell. It appears that the eights, Bayly and Rex Bell had short lives. The Bell family were College supporters who owned a property at Linton. A tub pair was built in 1936 and called the Rex Bell. Was this a reincarnation of the eight?

Clinker construction resulted in strong boats. The Una was very strong and heavy and could have lasted for a century. To avoid back injury, it really needed 16 boys to lift it. On one occasion Archie

Shannon was steering the Una and approached the staging at too great an angle. The bow ran up onto the staging, almost up to four seat. It slid back into the water. There was no structural damage, no leaks, just some varnish rubbed off. In those days there was one vehicle lane on the breakwater and water ran over it to a depth of about 100 mm in the summer months. On one occasion a crew tried to row over the breakwater. The Una scraped on the rocky road-way and the bow cantilevered for some 4 metres past the road. No damage resulted. What a boat!

The Rebecca and the Una were practice boats with wide beams. The Rebecca was considerably lighter than the Una. The A N Shannon, presented by Archie Shannon, was called a semi-racer as it was lighter than the Rebecca and had a slightly narrower beam. In the late 1930s, when school started in February, the 1sts would row in the Shannon, 2nds in the Rebecca and the 3rds in the Una. Four or five weeks before the Head of the River the 1sts would move into the racer, the Norman Morrison II, 2nds into the Shannon, 3rds into the Rebecca and a 4th VIII would be formed from novices and row in the Una.

Ronald Ronaldson, a member of the well known engineering family of Ballarat, rowed in the 1923 1st VIII. His family presented two clinker built tub sculls called R1 and R2. These sculls had little use until Charlie Saleh came to coach the 1st VIII. Charlie encouraged boys to scull whenever they had a chance.

Two tub fours, the Barwon and the Moorabool were built in 1936 and used for house races. Two more tub fours, the Sir Arthur and the L J C were built in 1939 and then four house crews could race abreast in tub fours.



26. Sir Arthur Robinson's gift enabled the four house crews to race in tub fours. J Anderson, (bow), J Morrison (2), J McDonald (3), J Ferguson (st) and J Schuter (cox).

Norman Morrison I and II and Pegasus I were clinker racing boats, lighter and narrower than the Shannon. The narrow beams of the racing boats may have made them faster but they required more skill to achieve balance. During the 1st VIII's first week in the racing boat, Charlie Saleh took the crew at out 6 o'clock in the morning, when there was no wind and the water was 'mirror' smooth. This enabled the crew to quickly master the balance of the narrow boat.

Norman Morrison I was acquired by the Corio Bay Rowing Club and renamed Our Ladies. Albert Bell's famous Harmony VIII used the boat when they were undefeated in senior eights for two seasons after the war. Norman Morrison II remained in the shed, unused for some years. Later it was realised that it was in good condition and could be used to develop the skill required to balance a racing boat. Norman Morrison II was involved in a collision and damaged beyond repair. Pegasus I was sold to a Brisbane school in 1950.



27. The Rebecca was the last of the clinker boats to be in use. In 1956 it was transported to the Griffith's Rowing club in NSW by semi-trailer on a load of super phosphate.

Before World War II the Victorian Rowing Association regulated the design of boats. Each boat was inspected and a branding iron was used to burn 'VRA' and a number on the stern post. This may have prevented a crew having the advantage of a better designed boat, but it held back progress in boat design. Dimensions specified in the regulations meant boats and oars would have been suitable for the small oarsmen of the 19th century. The average weight of inter-colonial eights was about 65 kg, whereas for today's interstate eights it is more like 85 or 90kg. After the war, boat designers and builders were able to provide longer slide movement, place the swivels further outboard, and make longer oars. This enabled the taller oarsmen to row with good technique, develop their potential power, feel comfortable and achieve higher speeds. Greater participation in international com-

petition enabled people to observe developments in boat design and then introduce the latest advances throughout the world. After the war, marine bondwood was available, enabling carvel boats to be built. The smoother surface of carvel boats made them faster than clinker boats. The bondwood was stronger than the thin cedar planks of the clinker boats, and much stronger than the thin veneer cedar used for the 'best' carvel racing boats.

There was no boat building during the war and when the war finished there was a shortage of boats. The College bought the Breeze, a second hand clinker practice boat that belonged to a Melbourne club. It was in the fleet for several years until enough bondwood eights were built. The clinker eights and fours had all been dispensed with by the early 1960s.

Pegasus II was the first bondwood boat in the College shed. It was built by Towns in Sydney for the 1950 Head of the River. The Melbourne University crew borrowed this boat to win the intervarsity boat race on the lower Yarra, half of the crew being old Collegians.

Alan Sykes, who was a strong supporter of Albert Bell, started to build bondwood boats in Geelong. Pegasus III was the first of Alan's bondwood eights, circa. 1953. It was a light boat, perhaps too light, and it had a relatively short life. The second eight was the A B Bell, c. 1954, a heavier than average practice boat which had a long life and was a satisfactory racing boat for the 3rd VIII for many years. The Riverina was built for the 1955 Head of the River. Alan built many more boats, similar to the Riverina, until he retired. Each of these boats had a life of some 25 years.

Five old boys who lived in the Riverina were camped on a river bank whilst on a fishing excursion. As they sat beside the camp fire they talked about their happy days in the Boat Club, and decided that they should contribute some money for a boat, hence the Riverina. This boat won the Head of the River for three years in a row; 1955-56-57. The A T Tait was built for the 1st VIII in 1958, however Albert Bell was sentimentally attached to the Riverina and decided to use it for the 1958 Head of the River. The 1st VIII came second in the final, but the seconds won in the A T Tait. Albert then used the Tait to win the Head of the River in 1959 and 1960.

From 1961 till 1973 Alan Sykes built six more bondwood eights; Claremont, Gray, J H Bromell,

Wimmera OGCA, J H Campbell, Arnold Buntine and Austin Gray, and also five bondwood fours; Century, Red Robbie, Gray, Steele and Lindsay Macmillan, and also two tub pairs; Norman Purnell and Syd Thomas.

The Catherine Gray, a bondwood four, was acquired in 1973. It was built by S & B in Sydney. The Gray, Claremont, and Catherine Gray were all presented by Austin Gray. In that year Alan Sykes' son, Jeff, started to build boats. At the time of writing Jeff Sykes is the leading boat builder in Australia, employing a large staff of skilled craftsmen. Jeff's international racing experience and his overseas visits have enabled him to keep in touch with the latest developments around the world. Most of his staff participate in the sport of rowing and therefore understand the customers' needs. A similar situation exists in the surfing industry in Torquay, where both management and staff are surfers. They export surfing gear to many countries. Brian Singer, a former Boat Club member, is one of the very successful entrepreneurs in the surfing industry. The Geelong rowing community is fortunate to have Jeff Sykes' boat building and repair business close to the river.

Since 1973, Jeff Sykes built seven bondwood eights: named Robert Purnell, David Ramage, Stewart McArthur, Lex Rentoul, S.P.G., Jeff Sykes, and Percy Barrow, and a bondwood four, Ed Davies. In 1979 Jeff Sykes started to build fibreglass boats: 4 eights, Bob Morell, Bob Grant. Paul Sheahan and Peter Philp, 10 fours, David Olliff, Richard Morris, Anne Young, Sarah Bullen, Peter Cronk, R B Jamieson, Neil Everist, Margaret Lethbridge, Alan Darker, Alison Gray, 2 tub sculls, Helicon and Minerva and two boats that could be rigged as either double sculls or coxless pairs. In 1990 Jeff built 4 boats using "Nomex" honeycomb construction: 2 eights, J.H. and Pegasus and 2 fours Andrew Gibson and Ad Astra. From 1993 to 1997 Jeff Sykes has supplied fibreglass boats in kit form and the school boat man, Bob Morse, has assembled them in the College shed, 2 eights, Don "Butch" Mackay and Richard Murphy, 3 fours, Maggie McOuit, Joy Simpson and Rob Kemp, and 6 tub sculls, The Albert Bell Club, Louise Monotti, Richard Carr, Tom Clarke, Andy Brown and Scott Chirnside.

It is interesting to trace the work of maintaining and building boats. Before the 1939-45 war, Old Collegian, Archie Shannon, carried out most of the maintenance, and occasionally the school carpenter would be called for. There was no boat building during the war, and after the war there were short-

ages of labour and materials. There were long delays between the ordering and delivery of boats. George Towns and Gus Green in Sydney were the favoured boat builders. Some boats were built in Melbourne but they were not much in favour. Albert Bell recognised Alan Sykes' skills and encouraged him to build boats. Albert and Norman Purnell (Robert's father) assisted Alan to manage his business affairs. During Albert's time as coach he called on Alan to maintain the fleet. When Jeff Sykes left school he worked with his father for a short time before starting his own business in 1973. Today Jeff's firm is a leading Australian boat builder for the sport of rowing. In recent years Jeff's boats have been used by Australian crews in Olympic Games, winning 2 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze medals, and in World Rowing Championships winning over 20 medals.

When Alan Sykes retired Frank Steven became the boatman, spending weeks at a time in the shed and at other times working at the school. He was followed by Percy Barrow who served for 15 years. By the end of Percy's time the growth of the Boat Club and the increase in rowing activity necessitated a full time boat man. Bob Morse has been the boatman since 1990.

Boats have been named after Headmasters, masters and staff, coaches, benefactors, eminent old boys and districts where old boys live. Sir Arthur was named after Sir Arthur Robinson, who was chairman of the Scotch College Council. Red Robbie was named after Lt. Gen. Sir Horace Robertson, an old boy who commanded the Occupation Force in Japan when the war ended.

Transport of Boats

When boats were taken to Melbourne before the mid 1930s they were moved to the South Geelong station on a cart, consisting of two long stringers, mounted on one axle, with two cart wheels of about 1.2 m diameter. The crew pushed the cart up to the station where the boat, or boats, were loaded onto a flat-top truck. The train delivered the boats to a siding at the Morgue in Batman Avenue near the present site of the swimming centre. The boats were floated across the Yarra River to the boat sheds where riggers were fitted.

In the 1930s a structure was built to fit on top of a bus. This enabled crews to travel with their boats, oars and riggers. They could travel easily to

Melbourne for a regatta and return on the same day. Other schools and clubs used this means of transport until trailers were preferred.



28. College and Grammar boats arrive in Melbourne for the 1940 Head of the River. Boys from both schools wore Sunday best suits for the journey. The two men with backs to camera are Charlie Saleh in a dark hat and Bill Pincott with grey hair and a lighter coloured hat.

Clubs Started by Old Boys

Old Collegians can enjoy rowing after leaving school by joining rowing clubs. Rowing encourages a healthy lifestyle, develops physical fitness and cultivates life long friendships. Those who take on the responsibility of holding office in a club gain executive experience. This is of value later in life, when they become senior executives in industry and commerce. Those who remain active in clubs gain an understanding of young people and their problems and are able to advise, assist and encourage young people. A rowing club is a youth club. Old Collegians have contributed in the fields of coaching and administration. Many achievements have been noted in the preceding pages and more achievements will be described in following chapters.

Jim Sprigg is a good example of an old boy who devoted over half of a century to rowing. Jim sat in class with J.H. Campbell, rowed in the 1st VIII under the coaching of Bill Pincott in 1913, served in the 1914-18 war and then joined the Mercantile Rowing Club. He held almost every office in the club and was President for several decades. He was a charismatic character and had great rapport with young people. His enthusiasm and friendly manner enabled him to motivate members to work for the club. At a regatta he would sit near the finish, calling out to every Mercantile crew as they rowed up to the start of race and barracking as they rowed to the finish. He knew every member of the

big club; he knew of their problems and would offer advice to help them, and in the event of a bereavement would be quick to offer sympathy.

Old boys were involved in founding four rowing clubs in Victoria. Don 'Butch' Mackay, who rowed in the winning 1944 crew, started the Cardross Rowing Club on a lake south of Redcliffs, near the MacKay brothers' properties. They won some races but the club was small and it was only a 20 minute drive to the Mildura Rowing Club, so they took their boats and oars in to Mildura and became members there.

The Yea Rowing Club was established in the early 1950s, the result of the enthusiasm of Pat Harrison. Pat was a member of the Victoria Police who started rowing at St. Patricks College in Ballarat. When Charlie Saleh was coaching Mercantile, Pat Harrison was at the Yarra Yarra Rowing Club. Pat would ride his bicycle along the bank with Charlie to observe his coaching style. Charlie was happy to explain his methods to Pat. Worrall Jones was the Club Secretary and an active rower. Worrall rowed in the 1952 1st VIII under Albert Bell and provided strength to the Yea Club. They had some success winning senior races and took part in trials for the 1956 Olympic Games. The V.R.A. allowed the club to conduct an annual regatta for several years, and the Yea High School entered in High School Regattas. They rowed on a stretch of fast flowing water on the Goulburn River about 10 km from the town. Worrall lived further away so the tyranny of distance was a problem and Pat Harrison was transferred to Ballarat. As a result the club disbanded in the early 1960s.

Bill Humphreys rowed in the 1944 winning crew under Charlie Saleh and for a short time at Mercantile, again under Charlie. In the 1960s he was the engineer for the City of Horsham. He and others founded the Horsham Rowing Club. As City Engineer, Bill was able to get Council approval to design and construct a rowing course. This required the building of a weir across the Wimmera River to provide an increased area of water. The banks of the river are now landscaped, providing garden and parkland for public recreation. The well established Dimboola Rowing Club is only half an hour's drive away, so the Horsham and Dimboola regattas are now held on a weekend in November and rowing is well established in the Wimmera.

A rowing club at Hamilton has been established, again with old Collegians providing the initiative; Bill Bramall and Roger 'Nobby' Heard, and also Dr

Alan Marshall, an old Scotch and Ormond oarsman. The Horsham and Hamilton Rowing Clubs continue to be viable.

High schools in Geelong have competed in the High Schools Head of the River, rowing in boats from the Barwon and Corio Bay Rowing Clubs. The author initiated rowing at the Bell Park High School in 1966 with a small group of boys. In most years it was difficult to boat a 2nd VIII. Many of the Bell Park boys rowed for the Barwon Rowing Club, served on the committee and held office. By the 1978-79 season Barwon had 53 active oarsmen, about half being present and past Bell Park boys. In that year the club was the Champion Club of Victoria, winning the Junior and Country Premierships. Three former Bell Park boys were selected for the King's Cup squad and one rowed in a winning King's Cup crew. Geoff Hunter was a Bell Park cox and he became a coach. He coached seven Australian Light-weight IVs for World Rowing Championships in the years between 1983 and 1992. He also coached five Penrith Cup crews, three of which won. Geoff is now director of rowing at Geelong Grammar. Rob Gardner also began as a Bell Park cox and later rowed in Light-weight IVs representing Victoria in the Penrith Cup and Australia at two World Rowing Championships. Rob now is coaching College crews. Andrew Cleary is another Bell Park oarsmen who is coaching College crews. When ladies started rowing at the Barwon Rowing Club, Rob Kvant, an old Bell Park boy, initiated rowing (and coached) at the Matthew Flinders Girls High School. Old Collegian Louise Monotti started the Oberon High School rowing, using boats from the Corio Bay Rowing Club.

Michael Aikman and Don Gibb coached crews from Camberwell High School, rowing from the Hawthorn Rowing Club. The Camberwell and Bell Park High schools defeated the Melbourne High School on numerous occasions in the High Schools Head of the River. These were notable achievements as Melbourne had the advantage of many more older, stronger year 12 boys. John O'Hara was coached by Michael Aikman at the Camberwell High School and has been coaching College crews in recent years. Don Gibb served on the High Schools' rowing committee for many years. Michael Aikman coached at Scotch, and Haileybury became a rowing school after Michael was appointed Principal. Sadly there are now no crews on the water from Camberwell or Bell Park High Schools. This is probably because there are few staff members in government schools with rowing experience, and support from rowing clubs is

sometimes inadequate. In private schools there are many staff members who have rowing experience and clubs similar to the "Albert Bell Club" and Parents' Support Groups give financial help and encouragement.

There are some lessons to be learned from the closing of rowing clubs in small towns and government schools. A club cannot survive with only one person being the driving force. Many young rowers are not prepared to give time to coach beginners. Few government schools have alumni associations. It takes many years to build up tradition. The College Boat Club does not suffer from these difficulties and Collegians appreciate the status quo and maintain it. The College has its own shed and a large panel of coaches and a long tradition of good rowing. The Albert Bell Club and other benefactors enable new equipment to be provided each year.

CHAPTER 7

The Dawn of a Golden Age

Undesirable Features pre 1939

Before the 1939-45 war the Head of the River received much publicity resulting in great community interest in Victoria. The newspapers gave more coverage to the Head of the River than to football. School colours and badges decorated the windows of the big department stores. On the Saturday night after the final, chorus girls in theatres would wear the colours of the winning school. Huge crowds attended the final day of racing.

The steam locomotives hauling special trains to Melbourne were decorated with school colours and badges. College boarders ran down to the locomotive sheds as early as 2 am on race day to find the locomotive that would pull the boat race train to Melbourne. The College, being closer to the engine sheds had an advantage over the Grammar School, so arrangements were made to allow Grammar to show their colours. In some years each school would have a side of the locomotive, and sometimes each school took its turn on alternate years to decorate the locomotive. The engine driver and his firemen would wear school caps and football jumpers.

Some Headmasters disapproved of the community importance of the event. They noticed some boys developed an inflated idea of their importance. They felt that rowing should not be regarded as more important than other sports. Young old boys attended the boat races, consumed alcohol and behaved unacceptably.

Some old boys also felt that the Head of the River attracted too much attention. Students in Ormond and Queens Colleges at the University of Melbourne decided that a practical joke would help to rectify the situation. The two ring leaders were Old Geelong Collegians; Bill Barrett, a former captain of the school now Dr Barrett and Lindsay Cartwright, a former prefect and now the Reverend L A Cartwright. Wesley met Scotch in the heat of the 1944 Head of the River. All the tipsters felt that Wesley would defeat Scotch easily, which in fact they did. There were many old Scotch boys in Ormond, so the Ormond crew put on Scotch singlets and Ormond jumpers over them.



29. The famous A2 passenger train locomotives decorated for the journey to boat races in Melbourne.

The Queen's College crew put on Wesley singlets and Queen's jumpers over them. The two University crews rowed upstream for an innocent training row. When they rowed around the bend out of sight, they removed their jumpers. Just before the real race was due to start they moved onto the course and raced for the finish. During a race the crowd see many cyclists on the south bank of the Yarra before the crews come into view. University students provided this sight. More uni-

versity students moved among the crowd at the finish and stirred up excitement. The bogus Scotch crew easily won this race. The spectators rushed to the sheds to welcome the crews to the staging and by the time the real race came down the course there were no spectators and no cheering. Jim Blake, the likeable journalist, rushed to the Herald office and arranged for large head lines in the afternoon paper stating Scotch's spectacular upset win.

Improved Regatta Programmes

There were also many unsatisfactory rowing aspects of the pre-war programme. The first eights rowed from early February till early May, and if they lost their heat they had only one race for the year. If the second best crew met the best crew in the heat they could not have the honour of being runner up in the final. The seconds and junior crews rowed the Geelong Grammar crews on the Barwon, but the Geelong junior crews did not compete with Melbourne junior crews. Crews rowed over short distances as there was still a fear that rowing over longer distances was a health hazard. It took a long time for the programme to catch up with the advances in boat and oar design and in the science of sports medicine.

Arthur Mitchell coached the College seconds in 1939 and took this crew to Melbourne for an unofficial race with Scotch. This was the first College 2nd VIII to row in Melbourne. Rowing masters were given somewhat of a free hand when the 1942 Head of the River was abandoned and the Headmasters told them to make whatever arrangements they could. Two improvements were introduced in 1942 and 1943; losers' finals were held in Melbourne where four schools competed and 2nd VIIIs rowed on the same day as the 1st VIIIs raced. All schools competed in the 1944 Head of The River, with three heats, a final and a losers' final, and the same programme was used for both 1st and 2nd VIIIs. The 1st VIIIs rowed over a mile and the 2nd rowed over half a mile. Also in 1944 the Junior Regatta was held in Melbourne which has continued until this day. Junior regatta races were over distances of one half, one quarter and one third of a mile. In 1946 the 3rd VIIIs rowed in the Head of the River regatta for the first time. Construction started on the Swan Street Bridge over the Yarra River in 1948, and the Head of the River has been held on the Barwon River since then, with the exception of 1957. In 1949 the College 4ths competed at the Junior Regatta in Melbourne. In 1950, the 'Invitation' regatta was introduced, held on the Barwon on the morning of

the Head of the River, with races between the Geelong crews and Scotch. This lasted for several years. In about 1955 APS crews started to enter in VRA club regattas. In 1956 the 2nd VIII races were held over three quarters of a mile after some eight weeks of training. To prepare for this they might row in three mile races in one day at the Barwon and Henley regattas, after only some three weeks of training. In 1958 the 4th VIIIs rowed at the Head of the River regatta, and the 5th VIIIs competed in 1959. In 1967 the 2nds raced over one mile. In 1978 the course was surveyed for metric measure. The 1500 metre course is only a few metres short of the mile, and the 800 m is about half a mile. The 2nds rowed 1500 m and the 3rds, 4ths and 5ths rowed over 800 m from 1973. In 1981 repechage races were introduced. Heats were held on the Friday morning and repechage races in the afternoon. Semi-finals were early on the Saturday morning and the final of the Head of the River was held at 1 pm. This repechage system ensures that the four best crews are in the final, and this arrangement should remain indefinitely. Since 1991, five boys eights and three girls fours have rowed over 1500m, and in 1996 five girls fours competed at the Head of the River Regatta.

It took many changes over a period of half a century to achieve an excellent programme; conditions are fair to all schools, the standard of rowing is high, the event is enjoyed by both rowers and parents and the Headmasters are happy with the arrangements.

Rowing 1946-1954

Dr Arnold Buntine returned from war service with the rank of Lt. Col. and succeeded the Very Reverend Frank Rolland as Principal. There was no need for extensive change and the spirit of the school continued. Various excellent extra-curricular activities were under the control of masters who zealously guarded their territory: J H Campbell, rowing, George Logie-Smith, music, Major Lamble and Lt. Col. Harry Dunkley, cadets and John Bechervaise, exploration. Dr Buntine supported these men and their efforts. Many Boat Club members enjoyed the activities. After a long Saturday on the river members of the 1st VIII would sit in the back row of the House of Music with J H Campbell and sing the 2nd bass parts of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. They were happy days. Masters in charge of subjects worked with enthusiasm: Tam Henderson, Science, Brian Lester, Maths and so on. They too had Dr Buntine's support.

The College was still a small school with little growth in 1946-47-48. The first three crews rowed in the Head of the River regatta. The 4th VIII rowed Geelong Grammar 4ths and 5ths until 1948 when the 5ths and 6ths were boated. In 1946 there were 115 members of the Boat Club. Rod Lyall, home from the war, coached the 2nd VIII until he started his university studies. Rod was shot down in Europe, captured, escaped, made contact with the underground movement and was able to return to England. He was mentioned in dispatches. Ian Everist, Don Bridges and Syd Thomas members of the Corio Bay Rowing Club "Harmony eight", and Neil Everist and Don Macmillan supported Albert Bell by coaching junior crews. Many more young old boys and members of Corio Bay coached in the following years.

The 1946 crew was very strong. They defeated Geelong Grammar in the heat on the Barwon, and went into the final on the Yarra with confidence. They knew a third Head of the River was a possibility. In the final, before the half way mark, the four man caught a crab and the crew lost over a length. The shock of this resulted in an inspired super-human effort. They almost caught up to Charlie Saleh's Scotch crew losing by only one foot.

In 1947 the College defeated Geelong Grammar by a canvas in the heat; and in the final, Wesley, rowing in a new bondwood boat in the favoured centre station, beat College by a third of a length.

In these years rowing was confined to the Barwon River, after school on week days, and all day on Saturdays. There was no regatta experience. This post war period was probably Albert Bell's best coaching years. He understood the principles of boat propulsion having been coached by Bill Pincott and Charlie Saleh. Albert's choice of words and his diction made him an excellent communicator. Not only did he pass on his knowledge to his crews, but he also stressed the highest standards of sportsmanship, and inspired his crews to give of their best. As a result the boys respected him. As the sole selector he was able to choose the boys he wanted for the 1st VIII and his judgement was good; he made few mistakes. He was not frustrated with selection committees consisting of members with different views from his own and who would use their voting power to negate a coach's wishes.



30: Albert Bell

High wool prices in the early 1950s enabled the College and the Boat Club to grow. There were few high schools in country areas and the College was predominantly a boarding school for country boys. However, there were still fewer big boys in Year 12 compared with other Public Schools. As time passed, more day boys enrolled.

On one occasion Albert Bell coxed the crew in the Shannon and rowed upstream past the Queen's Park Bridge. The boat struck a snag causing a leak. They were able to return to the shed but there was water in the boat and Albert had a very wet bottom. He did not appreciate this and never again rowed upstream far beyond the Queen's Park Bridge.

The first coaching launch, the J H C, enabled Albert to coach the crew from a dry seat! Each day after school, the 1sts and 2nds would row together to Queen's Park, and then row hard to the breakwater, usually against a head wind. This developed toughness in the crews. There was still time to row up to the start of the course and back making a 22 km row each afternoon. On a Saturday the crew would make several trips to Queen's Park. On one day in 1958, Alan Scott, a tough Riverina boy with a dedication to fitness went up to Albert after they had put the boat away for the day and said "You old b.....! You should have let us row up to the start of the course and back once more and that would have made it 50 miles for the day." (about 80 km). Albert believed in Steve Fairbairn's saying "mileage makes champions"

Bill Pincott used to say that selecting a crew was like fitting a jig-saw puzzle together. There should be trials and inevitable errors. Albert Bell would make many changes to his crew during a season. For the workouts from Queen's Park to the breakwater the 2nds would be given a start of about two lengths. Sometimes the 1sts could not catch the 2nds and this would result in some of the 2nds being promoted to the 1st VIII. The 2nd VIII coach had the difficult job of rebuilding his crew after losing strong rowers. Often he would have to promote boys from the 3rds and selection changes went on in all the crews.

Gordon Frank became the master in charge of physical education in 1951. He designed exercises in the gym for the rowers. Ed Davies and his successors continued his work and today the advances in sports science are applied to rowing. After the strenuous exercises in the gym the crews would run four laps around the oval with maximum effort. Crew members became successful middle distance runners. With so much work, both in and out of the boat, crews were exceptionally fit.

Graham Sargood taught Physics and coached novices on the river. His efforts were vital in the dawn of the golden age. He left at the end of 1956 but boys who benefited from Graham's coaching as novices rowed in the crews that won five titles in six years, up to 1960.

The 2nd VIII, coached by Don Bridges, won in 1954. Old Collegian Don rowed in Albert Bell's Harmony VIII and represented Victoria in the 1948 Kings Cup Race. Both the 1sts and 2nds entered in the Barwon Regatta in 1956, and on the day before the regatta the 2nds beat the 1sts by more than one length. Albert made so many changes that the boys thought he was playing musical chairs. He was concerned that if his crew lost their heat they would have only about a 3 km row for the day. On a regatta day the two crews would row as much as 30 km before lunch to prepare for the afternoon races. This was the prelude to the golden age.

CHAPTER 8

The Golden Age

Five out of Six

The boat club was in a healthy condition at the start of 1955. Alan Sykes had been working on the maintenance of the fleet. There were four bond-wood racing eights, one clinker racing eight, four clinker practice eights, four tub fours, two tub sculls and one motor boat for coaching. It was the first year that a 9th VIII was boated.

Albert Bell developed the art of bringing his crews up to their best form on race day. He did not like his crews to win races early in the season and become over confident. Actually J H Campbell would have prevented boys becoming too cocky! He liked to surprise the opposition with his crew's form at the Head of the River Regatta. The win of the 1st VIII in 1955 gave a lift to the Boat Club and created confidence in the following years.

In 1955 the 2nd VIII started the season without a coach and had to tag along with the 1st VIII on week nights which was not satisfactory. Neil Everist was working in Melbourne but was able to come down to the river on Saturdays to help. Neil coached the 2nds in 1949 and 1950 before rowing in King's Cup and University crews. Another King's Cup oarsman, Lawrie Moll, came to Geelong for a few weeks and took over the coaching of the 2nds achieving a remarkable improvement, enabling them to win. This win shows the importance of having 2nd VIII coaches who have had rowed in senior crews and/or have had years of coaching experience with both club and school rowing.

The 1sts, 2nds and the 4ths, coached by Robert Purnell all won in 1955, indicating that the golden age had arrived.



31. 1955 1st VIII Head of the River. Standing: D M Caithness (2), W W Lawler(4), G G Wills (3), J G Pennyfather (bow). Seated: W A W Wood (6), F S McArthur (st). A B Bell, B S Kinder(7), D E H Norwood (5) in front A T John (cox).

On many occasions in 1956 the seconds beat the firsts in trial races or on rows from Queen's Park to the breakwater. Albert would drop boys from the 1st VIII and the 2nds coach had to motivate these lads to prove their worth and realise there can be great enjoyment in rowing in a second eight. On the morning of the Head of the River the 1sts and 2nds did three practice starts of about 20 strokes. Old boys who were watching expressed some concern that the 1sts could not gain one inch on the 2nds. They need not have worried as in the afternoon both crews left all pursuit behind, the 1sts won the Head of the River easily and the 2nds also won convincingly.



32. 1956 second eight, billeted in Warrinn during Easter. Standing H R Dickinson, P H Troy, J M Ferguson, S G Langdon, J M Bell, D M John, I D Blair. Below: D C Wale, D S Robson, J R Wills.



33. 1956 1st VIII Head of the River. D B Ramage (4), J McDonald (3), D T Campbell (bow), D R Messenger (2); seated D M Caithness (6), F S McArthur (stroke), A B Bell (coach), D McDonnell (7), D E H Norwood (5); below: A T John (cox).

The 1957 Head of the River was held in Melbourne. Melbourne Grammar was the firm favourite having defeated the College at the Henley Regatta. College defeated Melbourne Grammar in the heat and won the final of the Head of the River with ease. This was sad for the Grammar School as they were considered to be the second best crew but having lost the heat could not row in the final.



34. 1957 1st VIII Head of the River. Standing: B N Wood (bow), P H Troy (3), H R Dickinson (4), D B Ramage (2); seated: D M Caithness (6), D R Messenger (stroke), A B Bell (coach), D McDonnell (7), D M John (5), below: A T John (cox).

Scots College, Sydney, came down to Geelong in March 1957 to race the College, and Hale came over from Perth at the end of term. College defeated both these visitors. The crew continued to row after the Head of the River in preparation for the Hale visit. With no changes to the crew, no musical chairs, the combination consolidated and they felt that they had their best rowing of the season.

There was a large exodus of boys at the end of 1957. The 1958 boat club was young, with few strong, experienced oarsmen. The response from the boys was to make super-human efforts. One of the exercises in the gym was called "the frog". Each oarsman jumped down, landing on all fours like a cat. Alan Scott had an injured wrist and he was told not to do this exercise because of the risk of aggravating his injury. Alan could not bear the situation in which he was not working as hard as the rest of the crew. He would lie down on his back and ask the cox to tie his feet to a pole in the gym. Then he would do about 30 sit-ups while the rest of the crew did their frogs. The 1sts were equal second in the final of the Head of the River, the 2nds and 3rds won at the Head of the River Regatta, coached by Jim Ferguson and Robert Purnell. The 4ths and 5ths, coached by Bob George and Don Macmillan were unbeaten in their three regattas. Another regatta was held in 1958 in which the Melbourne and Camberwell High Schools, Brighton Grammar and a Ballarat crew raced. Geelong Grammar was the moving spirit in staging this regatta. In the May vacation the 1st VIII made a visit to Perth. The result of the race in WA was: Geelong College 1st, Scotch (WA) 2nd, Guilford Grammar 3rd and Hale 4th.

The 1959 crew won the Head of the River with a convincing win over Melbourne Grammar. Don Macmillan joined the staff of Scotch College in 1959 and he coached the Scotch 2nds. Using oars from the College his crew defeated the College 2nds by a canvas. Don's 2nd VIII crews won for the next five years, as he was able to apply what he had learned from Charlie Saleh and Albert Bell. Without frequent changes thrust on the crew, combination was easily established. Scotch was a bigger school with more boys available for selection. In those years Don's 2nds defeated the College 2nds by small margins.

The 1960 1st VIII won the Head of the River, defeating Geelong Grammar in the heat and Scotch and Wesley in the final. Geelong Grammar, Scotch and Wesley were all less than a canvas behind the College crew, indicating small margin between the four crews.

After the Head of the River in 1960 the Mildura Rowing Club provided a cup for the 'Head of the Commonwealth Schools'. They hoped to attract entries from Adelaide and Sydney as well as from Victoria for the Easter regatta. There were four crews in the race at Mildura, the Scotch and Geelong Grammar 1st VIII's, a combination of 1sts and 2nds from Wesley and the College 2nd VIII.

The College 2nds won, defeating Scotch and Grammar by a canvas, with Wesley further behind. The crew stayed in the fruit pickers hut on Don Mackay's property. On the Sunday night there was a barbecue on the fruit block where the Geelong Grammar crew were staying. The Grammar, Scotch and College crews enjoyed this social event. The Scotch crew took the race at Wentworth on Easter Monday very seriously, they did not like being beaten by a 2nd VIII at Mildura. The College 2nds and Scotch 1sts battled it out with neither being able to gain a lead; Grammar was left behind. Before the bridge the Scotch crew sprinted and gained a half length lead. The College stroke, Ali McArthur watched them with an eagle eye; like a tiger about to spring on its prey. He remembered his coach pointing out that the bridge was as far from the finish as the mills were from the finish on the Barwon, and that the sprint to the line should take place after the bridge. When College sprinted they raced past Scotch winning by half a length.



35. 1959 1st VIII Head of the River. Standing: J H Quinton (2), M L McDonald (bow), W J P Selle (4), A F McClelland (3); seated: A R Scott (6), T W Spoot (stroke), A B Bell (coach), A B Trodel (7), H T Bromell (5); below N F Walter (cox).



36. Geelong College winning the 1959 Head of the River.



37. 1960 1st VIII Head of the River l to r: J H Campbell, H McDonnell (cox), C H A Whitehead (stroke), R J Bade (7), P Mayne (6), H T Bromell (5), A V E Lawson (4), A F McClelland (3), J H Quinton (2), M L McDonald (bow).



38. 1960 second eight, Head of Commonwealth Schools. Standing l to r: D M H Burney, R A Agnew, J S Robson, R A Both, sitting: J I Mactier, A H McArthur, J M Ferguson, H C Forbes, P.N. McLennan, front; R P Edge.

The 4ths, coached by Bob George, also won in 1960. Gordon Cowey coached the 6ths who defeated the College 5ths and Grammar 5ths in the same race. Dave Edge coached the 7ths who also defeated the Grammar. It was the first year that a 10th VIII was boated, coached by G Young, they too defeated their Grammar opponents. Nineteen-sixty was a very successful year.

Rowing was so popular that the cricketers were concerned about depleted numbers. Efforts were made to prevent boys with cricketing ability from joining the Boat Club. One lad relates how he was sent to the nets to bat. He took a wild sweep at the first ball and missed. He tried a similar shot at the second ball, missed again and hit wicket. He was allowed to join the Boat Club. Before he could step into a boat he had to prove he could swim. He had to swim beside the staging under the watchful eye of J H Campbell. When he seemed to have difficulty J H said "If you put your feet on the bottom you will make it." He did, and was admitted to membership of the Boat Club.

CHAPTER 9

Albert Bell's Third Age

Winds of Change

To win five Head of the River titles in six years made 1955 to 1960 indeed a golden age; but College did not win another Head of the River until 1976. Albert continued to use methods that he had successfully used until 1960. He ensured that his crews had a high level of physical fitness. Neither the College nor the Corio Bay Rowing Club had large numbers of big, strong oarsmen, so to compete against stronger schools and clubs, Albert ensured that his crews were fitter than their opponents. Gradually other schools and clubs realised the importance of physical fitness, and research in sports science and sports medicine enabled higher levels of performance. Albert was quick to appreciate the value of qualified physical education teachers, using the expertise of Gordon Frank and Ted Davies from the early 1950s. By the mid 1960s the fitness of other school crews had risen and it was difficult to achieve a superior fitness in College crews.

Before 1960, Albert produced fast crews without rowing in third term or during school holidays. Some schools indulged in a considerable amount of rowing training in third term and often rowed during holidays. Albert confined his coaching to first term only. He was not interested in taking crews to Easter regattas, where they could gain valuable experience. The APS had introduced regulations on several occasions to limit the periods of training. There had been reports of some schools getting around these regulations. Now rowing camps are held in the summer vacation, totalling up to 10 days. These camps are enjoyed by all schools and rowing during school term occurs within acceptable limits.

Rowing 1961-1972

The 1961 crew did well to finish second in the Head of the River final to Wesley and the second VIII came third in their final. The 1962 crew came third in the heat and the second VIII went to the Mildura and Wentworth regattas where their opponents were from King's College, Adelaide. The King's first VIII expected an easy race as they only had to defeat a second eight, but they were in for a shock; a two length loss, and again the College were Head of the Commonwealth Schools.



39. 1962 2nd VIII Head of the Commonwealth Schools. Standing; D E Gardener (bow), K T Andrews (3), A J Forbes (4), J R Irvine (2); seated: A J Paterson (7), G M Cotton (stroke), J M Ferguson (coach), R J Lawler (6), J H Champ (5); below: D Roydhouse (cox).

About ten days before the 1963 Head of the River, the second VIII beat the first VIII by about two lengths over 1500 metres. Albert made four changes unsettling both crews. More changes were made over the following days, yet by race day the first VIII had the same seating as the combination that was defeated by the second VIII ten days earlier. In the Head of the River the first VIII came third in their heat. The second VIII were second to Don Macmillan's Scotch crew in their final. The third VIII, coached by Robert Purnell, were victorious. Ken Smith, a member of the Barwon Rowing Club took over coaching of the fourth VIII for the 1963 season.

After the 1963 Head of the River the second VIII competed at Mildura and Wentworth winning the open eights and were second in the Junior eights at both regattas. On these trips to Mildura the crews again stayed in the pickers' shed on Don Mackay's fruit block.

At the end of the 1963 season Albert Bell, the 2nd VIII coach and Robert Purnell the coach of the 3rd VIII announced his retirement. J H Campbell retired from teaching and from 23 years as Rowing Master.

In 1964, Ken Smith coached the first VIII. Three enthusiastic young old boys, Robin Edge, David and Rodney John coached the second, third and fourth eights. Michael Henderson, who rowed under Charlie Saleh at Xavier, coached the fifth VIII. Albert Bell, David Salmon, David Ramage and Neil Everist frequently came down to the river to support Ken Smith. Terry Dowd became Rowing Master and soon Lindsay Macmillan came down to assist Terry. A new face appeared in the

Boat Club in 1964, that of Richard Morris who coxed the fourth VIII and in the following year the first VIII. Some of the momentum of the golden age was still evident in 1964. The first VIII defeated Scotch and Xavier in their heat and came second to Melbourne Grammar in the final of the Head of the River. The second, fourth and fifth eights all won their heats.

Lindsay Macmillan took over as rowing master in 1965 and gave valuable service for five years. The only success in 1965 was Michael Henderson's fourth VIII. The first VIII were third in their heat and second in the losers' final. The junior crews lost all their races at the Junior Regatta in Melbourne.

Several old boys and Albert Bell had an informal dinner at the Carlton Hotel late in 1965 at which Albert Bell was persuaded to return to coach the first VIII. At this dinner it was also proposed that the Pegasus Club be formed, but apart from several dinners this club did not become permanently established. It was not until a dinner in 1975 that the Albert Bell Club was formed and a committee elected. This committee soon drew up a constitution and the Club has supported College rowing ever since. Albert coached seven crews from 1966 to 1972 but none won the Head of the River title. The numbers in the Boat Club declined to 100 by 1972 when the eighth VIII consisted of beginners. But the boys who rowed in these years enjoyed their rowing - win or lose. There were some wins: Robert Purnell returned in 1966 to coach the second VIII and his 1968 crew won. The third VIII coached by Syd Thomas, won in 1966, and the fourths, coached by Peter Miller, won in 1967. Neil Turner became rowing master in 1970 and in the same year Richard Morris coached the fifth VIII, the first of his good crews. Richard became rowing master in 1972 which was Albert's last year. As Albert's retirement approached, his crews were often beaten by Robert Purnell's second VIII and morale declined.

In Albert Bell's long coaching career he engaged in excessive seat changing. This was to some extent the influence of Pinny. It is strange that Albert did not appreciate the value of keeping a combination together for a long time. Albert's three best crews, the Harmony eight, the 1957 Head of the River crew and the 1962 Commonwealth Games crew, all enjoyed their best rowing after a long time with the same combination.

Don Macmillan was the guest speaker at an Albert Bell Club dinner in 1990 and in his well researched

speech pointed out that many successful coaches failed to produce winning crews in their later years. Reasons can be suggested to explain this state of affairs. The most important reason may be the pressure of life's responsibilities. Young coaches are mostly not married, still students, or in junior positions at work, and they have abundant energy, enthusiasm and time. In later life the demands of family, work and community service result in less concentration on rowing. This was acute in Albert's case.

Some may think that coaches become soft in the brain as they age. Young coaches can use words harshly, be quite insulting to crew members in front of their peers. Vic Profitt was a good teacher. Those of us who were taught to solve quadratic equations by Vic can still solve these equations more than 50 years later. Vic was also revered as a football coach. If Vic thought that a boy was not giving of his best either in class or on the football field he would say "If your brains were dynamite they would not blow your cap off". Boys would respond by raising their effort in order to win approval from the man they respected. Many young coaches use this technique to good advantage. The same coaches tended to become more mellow in later years. Albert did not use this technique. Albert had a grim expression on his face, his jaw fixed, as he concentrated on the task in hand, whether it was coaching a crew, dealing with a problem at work or listening to discussion at a meeting. He spoke firmly but did not carry on like politician's in the 'bear pit' of Parliament House. There was no need for Albert to shout; he did not require a megaphone. When in the coaching launch, with the motor running, he would speak and every word could be heard hundreds of metres away. Boys had no idea what was going on in Albert's mind behind the stern expression on his face. This was enough to make boys strive to give of their best. Albert did not lose this ability in his later years.

In the early days coaches did not have the opportunity to adjust equipment or choose the dimensions of oars, riggers or slides. Boats and oars were in the shed and coaches had to do the best they could with them. Some older coaches, including Albert, have not been able to take advantage of modern design which allows adjustments to be made to angles and dimensions. If a swivel obviously needed adjustment Albert would call on Alan Sykes. Alan had a heavy piece of pipe with steel jaws welded at one end and he would apply this weapon to bend the rigger.

Many older coaches have been slow to accept the winds of change. However, their maturity and experience can be used to advantage. Perhaps more could be made of the consulting services of retired coaches taking care to avoid the older man dominating the younger coach.

Albert was always happy to advise younger coaches and they were aware of Albert's willingness to help. But Albert could have benefited from listening to older members of the coaching panel, particularly in selection matters. During the first week of the 1956 season, David Ramage was in the 4th VIII on the Thursday night. Robert Purnell, 3rd VIII Coach observed him and promoted him to his crew. On Friday the 2nd's coach noted David and promoted him to the 2nd VIII. During the Saturday morning row from Queen's Park to the breakwater, the 2nd's coach said to Albert "look at David Ramage". Albert seemed not to hear. He could have been concentrating on the beauty of the river and the wonders of nature which could account for the distant expression on his face. When the crews came into the staging for lunch, Albert went straight to David and said "I want you in the 2 seat of the 1st VIII after lunch." Subsequently David's rapid promotion proved to be correct.

During the golden age there was remarkable ability in the coaching panel. The members had coached winning senior crews in interstate, intervarsity and VRA regattas. When Gordon Cowey, an Olympic oarsman came down to coach a College crew he was given the 6th VIII. Albert would have benefited from consulting these coaches.

Albert Bell

The Bell family originally came from the Maybole, Ayrshire, Scotland. Albert was born in 1910, educated at the Swanston Street State School and the Geelong High School. From 1924 till 1937 he worked for several employers in the fields of auctioneering and marketing. During the worst of the depression he worked on wool presses whilst employed by Strachan & Co. He joined Winstanley and Coghlan in 1937. This firm of general engineers fabricated plant and equipment for many companies in Geelong and carried out ship repairs. Albert later became a partner in the company which then traded as Winstanley Bell & Co.

Albert joined the Corio Bay Rowing Club and was coached by Charlie Saleh and Bill Pincott. Albert rowed in champion junior eights that won convincingly. If the war had not started these crews would have moved into senior class.

During the war, Albert's firm was busy working long hours on essential work for the war effort. He had to give up coaching the College crew after the 1941 Head of the River. However he did find time in the weekends to coach the Everist brothers, Robert Purnell and other young novices in a tub four on Corio Bay. As a result when the war finished Corio Bay was able to boat the 'Harmony eight' that was undefeated for several seasons and represented Victoria in the King's Cup in 1948. The crew included Old Collegians Ian Everist, Don Bridges and David Salmon.

By 1945 Albert was able to resume coaching the College. His crew was unlucky not to win the 1946 Head of the River. Up till 1954, the end of Albert's first age, he devoted much time to coaching both the College and Corio Bay. He took an interest in all the young lads in both the College and Corio Bay. He was Secretary of Corio Bay for 25 years.

His golden age went past 1960 with the Corio Bay four, all from the 1957 Head of the River crew. They won the silver medal at the 1962 Commonwealth Games, missing out on gold by half a metre. During this great age Albert spent less time coaching juniors but still took a keen interest in each and every junior.

Albert was a loving husband and father, who took a close interest in the activities of his daughters Jan and Rosemary, especially their Girl Guides activities. Through Guiding, Albert met Doreen. Sadly Albert's first wife, Jean, died in 1966. In 1968 he married Doreen and enjoyed a happily married life until Albert died in 1982.

Albert was involved in a vast amount of community service:

- Geelong Try Boys Brigade, Vice President 30 years
- Geelong Ambulance Service, Vice President 15 years
- Geelong Branch, Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers, President & Life Member
- Geelong Hospital, Committee of Management and Life Governor
- Geelong Hospital Gala Board, Secretary 8 years
- Represented Geelong Hospital at Torquay and Portarlington Community Health Centres
- Chairman of Appeal for :
 - Family Cottage Units at Kardinia Children's Home
 - Geelong Branch, Anti-Cancer Council
 - TPI Building in Myers Street
- Grace Mackellar House, Life Governor

- Gordon Institute of Technology, Member of Council in years before being acquired by Deakin University
- Geelong Springing Inaugural Committee 1979
- Fyans Building Society, Director from inception till 1982 when it merged with Pyramid Building Society
- Geelong and District Community Service Award, 1975
- Rotary Club of Geelong, Member from 1949, Secretary for 8 years, President 1962/63
- Formed Rotary Club of Belmont
- Rotary District Governor 1968/69
- Paul Harris Fellowship, Rotary's Highest Honour
- Masonic Lodge, Member

This extensive service to the community in addition to his business commitments explains why he gradually reduced the time devoted to coaching crews.

When Albert was not concentrating on one of his responsibilities; work, rowing or community service, the serious expression on his face relaxed. During the preparation for the Head of the River the coaches from both the College and Grammar would have Saturday lunch at one of the nearby hotels. Albert showed sincere friendship at these enjoyable occasions.

Albert Bell, like Bill Pincott, was interested in the development of boys not only in rowing but also in all aspects of life. If Albert passed a member of the 10th VIII in the street he would greet him with obvious friendship. Both Albert and Pinny promoted the highest standards of sportsmanship.

Albert Bell's Influence

Coaches are delighted and feel rewarded when oarsmen whom they have coached in turn become successful coaches. Albert's influence, like Charlie Saleh's influence, has resulted in his teachings being passed down through successive generations of oarsmen who became coaches. In the section on Charlie Saleh's influence (pages 18-20) the detailed performance of many oarsmen who were successful as rowers and coaches has been described. To various degrees those who were influenced by both Saleh and Bell were Jim Ferguson, Roger Moore, Peter Philp and Bill Searle.

There is another long list of men who rowed under Albert, without rowing under Charlie Saleh, who

have been successful coaches, and in turn their pupils have taken up coaching. There is a very long list of College coaches who rowed under Albert Bell or Albert Bell's pupils. Those who coached for many years include Bob Morell, Syd Thomas, Bob George, Brian Wood, Robert Purnell Don Bridges, Peter Miller and Gordon Cowey. Bob George coached two Penrith Cup crews, winning one and losing one by a fraction of a second. He also coached two Victorian Youth Vllls.

Amongst Albert Bell's pupils who have had successful careers are David Ramage and Jeff Sykes. After leaving the College, David won many senior races with the Corio Bay and Banks Rowing Clubs. He rowed in four King's Cup crews, winning three. He won silver at the 1962 Commonwealth Games and rowed for Australia in the 1964 and 1968 Olympics. David coached the College 1st VIII nine times between 1973 and 1991, winning in 1976 and 1990.



40. Three successful Head of the River coaches - Charlie Saleh, David Ramage and Albert Bell

Jeff Sykes started his rowing career as a cox with Corio Bay and at the age of 17 represented Victoria as the sculler for the President's Cup (the Australian Sculling championship). Later, as a lightweight, he won the President's Cup twice. He won the Penrith Cup for lightweight fours. Jeff was the Australian lightweight sculling champion six times and double sculls champion twice. Jeff rowed in the Australian lightweight eight at Moscow Olympic Games and won a bronze medal at Copenhagen in 1978. His international and national experience enabled him to give valuable service to the College as 1st VIII coach for five years (1979 to 1983).

David Salmon coxed the 1st VIII and the Corio Bay 'Harmony VIII' under Albert Bell, and for a short time coxed the university crew under Jim Ferguson and Charlie Saleh. David successfully took over as coach of the Melbourne University crew from Jim, and the winning run continued. David later coached Carey Grammar. Sometimes he would cox the College crew to gauge the crew's performance and discuss it with Albert.

Michael Aikman and Jim Howden rowed under Albert Bell in the Head of the River, under Jim Ferguson at Ormond College, David Salmon in intersarsity crews, and under Bob Aitken in the eight that won bronze at the 1956 Olympics. Michael's contribution to school rowing has been significant. Jim Howden continued his rowing and coaching and was an Australian selector. Ian Macmillan is another old boy who rowed under Albert Bell at the College. He rowed at the University and played a significant part in coaching at Caulfield Grammar.

Six members of the "Harmony eight" kept up their involvement in rowing after retiring from formal competition. They and other Corio Bay Rowing oarsmen who rowed under Albert have given valuable coaching service to both Corio Bay and the College. In addition many College oarsmen have coached College crews immediately after leaving school. Their service, even if it was only for a year or two has been valuable. Sadly many of Albert's College crew members were country boys and went home where they were too far away from a rowing club or school to row and coach. Jeff Sykes and David Ramage have given outstandingly valuable coaching service with 1st VIs, David winning the Head of the River twice. In addition special mention must be made of Corio Bay members who coached winning College crews; Don Bridges, Robert Purnell, Bob Morell, Bob George, Syd Thomas, Peter Miller and Gordon Cowey.

If old boys who have rowed under Albert are asked to comment on Albert's influence they will firstly state the character building aspect of rowing under Albert. They learned to be good team members, to give their best and to enjoy rowing in a crew with no passengers and with the will to win. Albert urged his crews not to boast if they had won and not to complain or make excuses if they had lost. He inspired boys to strive to achieve excellence in performance and to value the noble aspects of sportsmanship.

CHAPTER 10

The Modern Age

The modern era of the Geelong College Boat Club followed immediately after the Albert Bell days and there was a significant change in the operation of the Club. The spirit of good sportsmanship that Albert Bell had encouraged continued, with coaches taking a close interest in each rower as they endeavoured to maintain the character building aspects of the sport. The Modern Era will probably extend well into the 21st century, in fact until another war or disaster changes the situation.

Before the war, sporting teams had to make a four or five week sea voyage to compete on the other side of the world. Today they can travel by air in 24 hours. As a result more nations and more oarsmen compete at Olympic Games, World Rowing Championships and International regattas. Innovations in the design of boats and oars are observed at these international events and then better designs are adopted by boat builders throughout the world. Schools can procure equipment using the latest design. Jeff Sykes has played a significant part in manufacturing 'state of the art' boats and oars in Geelong.

Old Collegian, Jim Howden was the Chairman of Selectors for Australian rowing and played an important part in the appointment of Reinhold Batschi as Director of Australian Rowing. Jim, in consultation with other selectors and senior coaches, identified the need for uniform control over Australian rowing. At international events they assessed people who had the qualifications to become a director of rowing. In mid 1978 the Federal government approved the expenditure of money to appoint a director of Australian Rowing. Old Collegian, Bob Aitken, was then the Chairman of the Australian Rowing Council and chaired a meeting in John Coates' office in Sydney at which Reinhold Batschi was interviewed and appointed.

Reinhold Batschi initiated changes in national regattas and introduced selection regattas, held in three states, before crews were selected for international events. He also encouraged rowing in small boats and ensured there was a uniform style throughout the country, incidently similar to Charlie Saleh's style. His initiatives have resulted in many medals being won at Olympic Games and at World Rowing Championships. People who have rowed and coached at international regattas

have returned to coach school crews thus improving the standard of school rowing. Years ago successful coaches tended to be people who had long experience in club rowing; today successful coaches tend to be people with international experience.

Sadly participation in club rowing, at below elite standard, has declined, especially among men. This may be partly due to the variable working hours in recent years. It is now difficult to select a club eight with all members being able to be present at every training row. In schools and universities crews can train at times that are free of classes and lectures.

A Ramage led Revival

David Ramage took over the coaching of the 1st VIII in 1973. He immediately instigated changes that resulted in a revival of the Boat Club. Richard Morris as Master-in-Charge of Rowing was a young teacher but was able to initiate and gain approval for changes. Both the 1st and 2nd Vllls started their training on the Barwon River at rowing camps in the week before school resumed in February. The boarders stayed at the Ramage home as the school boarding houses had not opened for first term. Nikki Ramage cooked large quantities of food for the hungry boys. The crews entered in more regattas: Barwon, Ballarat, Henley, Scotch-Mercs, Mildura, Wentworth and the National Regattas. Rowing camps were held before Christmas at Lake Bellfield, Warrnambool and Nelson. Richard Morris produced eleven rowing films shown in a packed Morrison Hall on 'boat race' eve. The House Regatta was held in the last term so crews had more time to train. Dances and barbeques were held to encourage club spirit. Prep. school boys were invited to the river late in 1973 to experience the spirit of the Boat Club. As a result a 9th VIII was boated in 1974. The Physical Education staff continued to assist with programmes out of the boat to ensure a high standard of fitness.

David's initiative soon showed results. Bob George's 5th VIII won in 1973. Next year the 1st VIII were first in the Intermediate Final. The year 1975 felt like the dawn of another Golden Age. The 1st VIII won 11 of their 14 races, and took second place in the final of the Head of the River. At the National Regatta in Brisbane they won the Schoolboys' eights and represented Victoria in the Youth Eights, winning that championship. The 1976 crew despite being light and having to race into a head wind, won the Head of the River. When David retired in 1978 his record showed how the standard of the 1st VIII improved under his coach-

ing: 1973 first Losers Final, 1974 first Intermediate Final, 1975 second in the Head of the River Final, 1976 Head of the River, 1977 second in the Head of the River Final. David's success was due to his long experience in school, club, interstate and international rowing. His youthful enthusiasm and friendly manner enabled him to inspire boys. His crews enjoyed their rowing. Richard Morris coached a winning 4th VIII in 1978; an indication of the good coaching standard in the Club. The changes introduced by David Ramage enabled the Boat Club to perform with excellent standards after his retirement.



41. 1st VIII 1975. Australian Youth Eight Champions and Australian Schoolboys Eight Champions. D J Cooper (stroke), N J Myers (7), I A Steel (6), P A Cassidy (5), W M I Robertson (4), G G Fairnie (3), S M Gillett (2), A G Morrison (bow), J S Sloan (cox) and D B Ramage (coach).



42. 1st VIII 1976. Head of the River: standing - S L Bell (bow), J A Hutton (2), A W N Cameron (3), J D Olliff (4), seated: A G Morrison (6), D J Cooper (stroke), D B Ramage (coach), B A Amezdroz (7), G C Emmett (5), below R G Carr (cox).

Girls join the Boat Club

The Geelong College became a co-educational school in 1975; a development that has been widely considered to have been a success. Soon after the girls started, Arthur Grainger, the senior Chemistry master, was asked how things were going. He replied by saying that there was a marked improvement in the behaviour of the boys. The girls joined the Boat Club to find that there was still some prejudice to overcome. Coaches concentrated on the senior boys' crews. At the same time, girls started to row at Morongo, Geelong Grammar and at both the Barwon and Corio Bay Rowing Clubs, resulting in a shortage of coaches in Geelong. Many men in the rowing community claimed that the girls would break equipment and not care for the boats and oars. They claimed that schools and clubs would not be able to build changing rooms and toilets. They thought that rowing would change pretty girls into big, unattractive women with large muscles. All of these claims have been proven to be erroneous. Women have been rowing for many years, maintaining their femininity as well as enjoying their rowing. Women have made significant contributions to the operations of clubs, holding office and coaching crews. They have improved the running of social events. At the time of writing about 70% of rowers in Victorian clubs are women.

Women have been rowing in Victoria for over 100 years; prior to the 1970s mostly in women's clubs. The YWCA Rowing Club was founded in 1910 to become a large and successful club. By 1973 there were 12 women's rowing clubs in Victoria, seven being in the country, but none in Geelong. Joan Baretta started to scull on the Barwon River in the early 1960s, as her brother was a member of the Barwon Rowing Club. Joan, an athlete, was the Australian half mile champion and represented Australia at Commonwealth Games. When she trained on the river bank her attractive running style was generally admired. One evening at dusk, in the mid winter of 1965, Joan went out in a scull. She did not return. Next morning the scull was found washed up at the breakwater. Her body was found many days later in the river. This dreadful tragedy discouraged women's rowing in Geelong in the following years. In April 1973 the Australian Ladies Rowing Championships were held in Geelong and the officials and competitors were pleased with the facilities in Geelong. There were 22 clubs from Australia and New Zealand competing. This event created interest among the ladies in Geelong. On the initiative of Bob Morell a meeting was held in July and women started to row at the Corio Bay Rowing Club in 1974 and at the Barwon Rowing Club in the next year. Men in both clubs coached the women. As they had no experience in

coaching women they coached them in the same way they coached men. Geelong women's crews were soon very successful in club regattas.

A lone girl sculler started to row on the lagoon at Geelong Grammar in 1972 and by 1975 there were 32 Grammar girls rowing on the lagoon. When the College girls started rowing on the Barwon River in 1975 they had few crews to compete against. They had to change at the school and travel to the river in their togs. The Vice-Principal, Doug Stott, coached the 1st IV in 1975 with Nikki Ramage coaching the few girls who were not selected in Doug's crew. The 1st IV entered in the school fours at the Scotch-Mercs Regatta. As they raced to the finishing line the commentator had difficulty overcoming an attack of speechlessness when he saw that the College crew were girls and were forcing the boys from St Patricks College, Ballarat, to a close finish. The College girls rowed against boys at the APS Junior Regatta as there were no other girl's crews entered. Doug Stott accepted the position of Head of St Peters Collegiate Girls School in Adelaide and could not make a full time commitment to coaching in 1976. His coaching style had been appreciated by the girls. There were four IVs in 1976 with Nikki carrying out the bulk of the coaching. They entered in three regattas.

Nikki started to row with the Corio Bay Club in 1974 and she was able to gain the help and support of Bob Morell and other Corio Bay Rowing Club coaches: Robert Purnell, Bob George, Dave Olliff and others. At this difficult time Glen Amezdroz, who also served as Master in Charge of Rowing, and Richard Morris gave valuable support. The APS Junior Regatta at the end of the season became the most important event of the season for the girls 1st IV.



43. Girls Rowing: 1976 Back Row: S J Marshallsea, K S Grove, E A Cox, C T McGlone, V E R Cook.
Centre Row: H M Cameron, K J Ingsen, M J Grant, F R Rousseaux, P J King, G Campagnolo
Front Row: K E Hope, S M Emmett, Mrs N Ramage coach, L M Wall, Mr D W Stott coach, S E M Leach, D M George.

Robert Purnell's daughter, Helen, has recollections of those early years of girls rowing.

"Those were the days of summer when it was hot and even hotter when we had to row. I remember being one of a number of girls crowded into the old Benders bus and having to endure the trip with my face in very close proximity to boys' sticky bodies and sweaty armpits. How nice to arrive at the river and feel it safe to breath again.

Having grown up with my father virtually eating, drinking and breathing rowing I found it terribly exciting to have the opportunity to find out what it was really like 'from the inside'! I grew up listening to stories about happenings in the boatshed change rooms, the songs and antics of the pre and post regatta frenzy. I was finally going to meet the people behind the names, 'Perc' and 'J H' and the mysteries behind the war cry, and other boating songs. I thought!

Heading for the change rooms we were 'cut off at the pass' and directed to our 'special' area for changing - behind the war memorial monument between the College and the Barwon sheds. Interesting concept for us adolescents to deal with, even more interesting for the boys who soon discovered where the vantage spots were! The 'tanks' in which we first hit the water were tremendous compared to the boys' sleek eights and were almost forgotten when the boat trailers were loaded for the trek to Melbourne. Were we ever to be taken seriously? When we started to win it opened a few eyes- including my father's!"

Sarah Bullen joined the staff as a physical education teacher and took up coaching in 1977. As she had no previous experience in rowing, Nikki Ramage took Sarah out in a tub pair on many occasions, often before breakfast. Sarah quickly learned the techniques of rowing and became a successful coach. At this stage Robert Purnell was contributing an increasing amount of support. Nikki coached the 1st and 2nd IVs while Sarah coached the 3rd and 4th IVs. The 1st IV were the only cup winners at the Scotch-Merces Regatta in 1977. Sarah Bullen coached the 1st IV in 1978 with Judy Walker,

Nikki Ramage and Robert Purnell coaching the other crews. At last each crew had a regular coach. The 1st IV won all six of their finals. The 1979 crew won the Ladies Youth Fours at the YWCA Regatta. At the Mildura and Wentworth regattas the 1st IV defeated four men's crews. One of the men exclaimed, "Hormone tests for the sheilas." By 1979 changing rooms were built for the girls; no longer did they have to change behind the monument! More success came in 1980. The 1st IV won their final at the APS Junior Regatta for the fourth year in succession, 1977-80, making The Geelong College the top girls' rowing school. The energy and enthusiasm of Nikki Ramage and Sarah Bullen was rewarded with this success. In these first six years of girls rowing the girls' crews won many races leading up to the APS Junior Regatta and there were many laughs and much enjoyment. Old girls returned to the river to coach soon after they left school and girls' rowing was well established at the College despite opposition from some people in the school.



44. Girls Rowing 1977 - Standing: H Purnell, E Cox, S Emmett, P King, S McFarland, J Ledoux, A Lees, M Tinney, S Wieland, K Ingpen, S Crowl, F Scott, L Rawson

Kneeling: L Plumridge, A Herman, E Wilson, M Benjamin, C Gibson, M Peerman, K Purnell, E Elliott



45. Girl 1st IV 1978 - S Wieland (stroke), M M Tinney (3), J A Ramsden (2), S A McFarland (bow), M Lees (cox), Mrs S Bullen (coach).



46. Girls 1st IV 1979 - N R Mockridge (bow), K M Braithwaite (2), M M Tinney (3), H E Purnell (stroke), S Laidlaw (cox), Mrs S Bullen (coach).



47. Girls 1st IV 1980 - S.M. Laidlaw (cox), K M. Braithwaite (stroke), N.R. Mockridge (3), F.M. Purnell (2), S.D. Macmillan (bow), Mrs S Bullen (coach.).

Girls' Rowing Comes of Age

A journalist wrote a newspaper article in the late 1970s claiming that the standard of girls rowing was low. There was a shortage of experienced coaches, and boys rowing had a higher priority and higher status. The situation started to change in 1981 when the girls competed at the Head of the River Regatta. Also at this time several experienced coaches, men and women, including some with international experience, started to coach the girls at several schools. There was a dramatic increase in the standard of girls rowing.

Dr Anne Chirnside, an old Morongo girl and sister of Old Collegian Scott, coached the 1st IV in 1981. Anne commenced rowing at Melbourne University in 1973. She transferred to the YWCA Club and later returned to the University. She competed at the World Championships in 1977 and 1979 and at the Olympic games in 1980. Anne felt she benefited from the coaching of David Palfreyman and the influence of Reinhold Batschi. Anne coached the 1st IV for 5 Years, winning three years in a row in 1981-82-83 with crews of very high standard. She married and became Dr Anne Young during this time.

The two Geelong schools were the only APS schools to enter girls crews in the Head of the River in 1981. As there was no trophy, the Albert Bell Club and the Pincott Club at Geelong Grammar Schools, not members of the APS, were invited to row in the Head of the River Regatta. The Melbourne Girls Grammar School (Merton Hall), Lauriston and Morongo accepted. Lauriston and Merton Hall competed against the two Geelong schools in one race for the Head of the River title. Morongo entered in the 2nd Division. The following year Carey and M.L.C. joined the list of schools participating the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Divisions.

In 1981, for the first time, girls participated in the rowing camp on the Barwon River before school resumed in February. With Dr Anne Chirnside coaching, and with assistance from Karen Jarrett and encouragement from Scott Chirnside, Glen Amezdroz, Richard Morris and others, the 1st IV rapidly improved. Their regatta experience included winning the Senior B Fours at the Victorian Ladies Rowing Association Regatta. It was an exciting experience for the girls to row in the Head of the River Regatta; to hear the roar of the crowd and to feel the support of the College barrackers. To add to the occasion an Air Force F111 jet aircraft made a low pass over the 1500m rowing course. Winning on this historic occasion was something they would never forget. They won! There were emotional scenes when they came in to the staging and the girls in the Geelong Grammar crew came over to the College shed to congratulate the winners. This gesture indicated the good spirit of the sport. The trophy was presented in a dark corner of the College shed, hidden from public view, because of opposition to girls rowing by some people!

The College's success was repeated in 1982 and 1983. In 1982, at the YWCA Regatta, the 1st IV defeated six crews to win the Senior B Fours. Old Collegians, club members and teaching staff who took up coaching also played a vital part in the success of the club. They provided the material for Anne to mould into winning 1st IVs. Anne's attention to detail ensured good technique and fitness. This was enough to win many races. She inspired the girls to give of their best. This enabled them to win races with 'gutsy' efforts when the competition was strong.

MLC won in 1984 with a crew coached by Sue Palfreyman. Pam Westendorf was also coaching at MLC. Pam rowed with Anne in the 1980 Olympic crew with Sue coxing.

Caulfield Grammar and Wesley entered in 1985, at

which time the APS told the schools not in the association, that they could no longer compete in the Head of the River Regatta. These schools recognised the need for a regatta with similar prestige to the A.P.S. Head of the River; a regatta that would be a climax to the season. In desperation the Principal of Morongo called a meeting which resulted in MLC hosting the first Head of the Schoolgirls Regatta at Ballarat in 1985, organised by Sue Palfreyman. Eighteen schools and 500 competitors took part. By 1997 about 40 schools and more than 1275 competitors raced in 170 boats over two days on the Barwon River. The regatta events include eights, fours, sculls and quad sculls. Thus the girls had experience in both eights and small boats. The 1st IVs division has become a prestige event to win. In the six years from 1988 to 1993, girls who competed in the Head of the Schoolgirls Regatta have represented Australia at the World Championships winning gold, silver and bronze medals. In addition, eight crews rowed in World Junior Championships winning medals: 3 gold, 2 silver and 1 bronze.



48. Girls 1st IV 1981 - Winners of the first girls Head of the River (l to r): K M Braithwaite (stroke), S D Macmillan (3), Dr Anne Chirnside (coach), L S Monotti (cox), K Jarrett (coach), F M Purnell (2), D M Hale (bow).

Girls' rowing had grown to the extent that nine IVs were boated in 1985. However there was still feeling in some quarters that girls rowing was not important. The girls would barrack for the boys when they were racing but felt that few boys would barrack for them in the same way. After Dr Anne Young retired from coaching, the girls continued to enter in regattas, usually qualifying for the finals, and winning some finals. The 1986 1st IV was coached by Diana Hale who rowed in Anne's 1981 and 1982 crews. Bob Morell coached the 1st IV from 1987 to 1989. His 1987 crew won the Head of the Schoolgirls 1st IV title and, with Frank Stone as co-coach, the 1st IV won the APS Head of the River in 1989. Alan Darker, a former Mercantile Rowing

Club member has coached the 1st IV from 1990 to 1997. His 1992 crew won the Australian Schoolgirls Fours Championship, the Head of the Schoolgirls and the Head of the River; an outstanding crew. Karina Weiland rowed in this crew and was selected in the Australian Women's Eight at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics Games.



49. Girls 1st IV 1982 Head of the River (l to r): T.E. Smit (3), D.M. Hale (2), S.G. Mulligan (stroke) carrying L.S. Monotti (cox), U.J. Read (bow), Dr A.E. Chirnside (coach). Steve Fairbairn said, "Enjoy your rowing; win or lose." The smiles indicate greater enjoyment for winners.



50. Girls 1st VI 1983 - Holding the Geelong Ladies Challenge Cup (l to r) U.J. Read (bow), J.M. Henderson (2), L.S. Monotti (cox), T.E. Smit (3), S.J. Golding (stroke).

Also in 1992, the 1st and 2nd IVs combined to row in an eight. They won the schoolgirls division of the Head of the Yarra for the second time and were runners up in the 1992 Head of the Schoolgirls' Regatta. The 3rd IV, coached by Joy Simpson, won in 1992-94 and 1995-1996.



51. Girls 1st IV 1987 - Winners of 1st fours at the Head of the School Girls Regatta (l to r) A E Cassidy (stroke), K N Smith (3), S.L. Denehy (cox), Mr R C Morell (coach), V L Price (2), L C Hatton (bow).



52. APS Junior Regatta 1988 winning crews- Back Row:

D M Richardson, S J Black, W G Dennis, M J Magarey, D R Ashby, C J Starkey, C T Pearson, R B Stevenson, A D Day

2nd Row: M R Bagu, J McKenzie, E C Fisher, S R Dougherty, N A Reid, A D Day, A J Hatton, H G Idle, Mr D A Thornton, Mr D A Curnow

Front Row: N J Graham, R N Farrell C P Campbell, F D Fitzgerald, M E Ganley, D J O'Donnell, T N Dumbrell, K M Olsen, K M Evans, A F Moser, J R Colls, W L Weddell.



53. Girls 1st IV 1989 Head of the River winners - (l to r) S J Haebich (2), Mr R C Morell (coach), S E McCann (stroke), J M Kent Hughes (cox), K L Sears (3), F J Stone (coach), S S Stevenson (bow).



54. Girls 1st IV 1992 - Winners of the Australian Schoolgirls Four Championship, Head of Schoolgirls Regatta and Head of the River (l to r): A L Spurling (bow), F C Bourke (2), K N Wieland (3), S E Farrow (stroke), S L Fisher (cox), Mr A E Darker (coach).



55. Girls row in an eight. Winners of the School Division of the Head of the Yarra and runners-up Head of Schoolgirls regatta 1992 - T.L. Eason (bow), A.J. O'Hara (2), S.R. Olsen (3), C.A. Hood (4), A.L. Spurling (5), F.C. Bourke (6), K.N. Weiland (7), S.E. Farrow (str) S.L. Fisher (cox).



56. Alan Darker

Girls' rowing is now well established with coaching, equipment, venues, competition, administration and is well co-ordinated by Margaret Lethbridge who has been in charge of girls' rowing. The year 1997 has been the end of an era with the retirement of Margaret Lethbridge, Alan Darker and Peter Philp. In 1998 Danielle Karis became the co-ordinator of girls rowing, Rob Gardner the coach of the senior girls 1st VIII and Matthew Dingle the coach of the senior boys 1st VIII.

Boys' Rowing from 1979

Jeff Sykes took over the coaching of the 1st VIII in 1979, with Glen Amezdroz as master in charge and David Olliff, Richard Morris, Scott Chirnside and

Andrew Browne coaching the five senior crews. Bob Morell coached the 2nd VIII from 1982. Richard Wait came to the College from England, as Director of Rowing, in 1983. He had both rowed in, and coached British crews in international regattas. He encouraged sculling and rowing in small boats and instigated land training in winter months to keep up a high level of fitness. Andrew Gibson coached the 4th VIII in 1983. Jeff Sykes' crews did not win a Head of the River in his five years at the helm, but all of his crews performed well and benefited from Jeff's fine sporting attitude and his ability to achieve good technique. Richard Wait coached the 1st VIII in 1984 and 1985, maintaining the good standard set by Jeff Sykes. Richard Morris coached the 1st VIII from 1986 to 1988. Despite a lack of big wins from 1979 to 1988, a high standard of rowing was retained. During this period Richard Morris was in charge of rowing until 1985. Frank Stone was the Director of Rowing from 1986 to 1991, and Simon Harrison was in charge in 1992. Richard Morris resumed the responsibility of administrating the Boat Club in 1993, and is still in charge at the time of writing.

David Ramage returned to coach the 1st VIII in 1989. His 1990 crew won the Head of the River in fine style. Peter Philp came back to Geelong in 1991 and assisted Alan Darker to coach the girls 1st IV. Next year, 1992, Peter coached the 1st VIII. His 1993 crew won the Head of the River and the 1994 and 1995 crews came second in their finals of the Head of the River. The 2nd VIII won in 1992, coached by Mr David Curnow. It was 34 years since "the Muckies" won the 2nds Head of the River.



57. Boys 1st VIII 1990 - Head of the River (l to r): J.E. McConnell (cox), J.T. Nerius (stroke), M.J.R. Magarey (7), D.R. Ashby (6), D.P. Crowe (5), P.A. Lawson (4), C.T. Pearson (3), S.H. Nicholls (2), B.J. Mitchell (cox), Mr D Ramage (coach).



58. Boys 1st VIII 1993 - Head of the River (l to r) J.H.L. Alexander (bow), R.J. Davis (2), M.E. Keeble (3), A.A. Givoye (4), S.H. Olsen (5), M.A. Pigdon (6), B.G. Miller (7), J.R. Connell (str), G.G.D. Lethbridge (cox), Mr P.E.N.L. Philp coach

At the time of writing, the strength of the Boat Club is high. College crews are respected by opposing crews. To have coaches of the calibre of David Ramage, Peter Philp and Alan Darker is fortunate. The ability of these coaches can be attributed to the influence of Bill Pincott, Charlie Saleh, Albert Bell and to the pupils of these three coaches. The influence can be traced even further back to Steve Fairbairn. The senior coaches are ably supported by the coaches of other College crews, most of whom have been exposed to the same influences. The strength of the Boat Club is also due to good administration and the support of the Albert Bell Club.



59. Richard Morris Director of boys' rowing. Robert Purnell Patron of Albert Bell Club. Margaret Lethbridge Director of girls' rowing.

Other Regattas

Events have been described to explain how the Head of the River regatta has developed. Other regattas have been introduced by the A.P.S. and other organisations to provide competition for

school crews of different levels. The Scotch-Mercs Regatta started in 1959 as a Mercantile Rowing Club initiative. There was a long association between Scotch College and the Mercantile Rowing Club. The senior Scotch crews racked their boats in the Mercantile shed and trained from Prince's Bridge for many years. As a result many old Scotch Collegians joined the Mercantile Club and before the 1939-45 war, Mercantile crews trained in Scotch colours. The reason for the introduction of the Scotch-Mercs Regatta was to give school crews the opportunity to row in open competition, and to give clubs another regatta at which to qualify for premiership points. These objectives were soon achieved and the regatta had the largest number of competitors of any regatta in Australia. By the 1980s the large numbers of school crews entering in VRA regattas caused management problems. Discussions between the VRA and the APS resulted in VRA Schools Junior Regattas being run since 1988. At least three regattas have been conducted each year, but the venues and dates vary to comply with the main VRA regatta programme. A VRA main regatta and a VRA Schools Junior Regatta may be held on the same day but at different venues. The aim of these junior regattas is to provide younger school crews racing experience away from the pressures of the major regattas and at the same time ease the expansion of the major regattas. With the growth in school rowing and the number of schools involved, some of the VRA Schools Junior Regattas are nearly as big as the VRA major regattas. The criteria for competition at VRA Schools Junior Regattas is for crews of levels equivalent to APS eights Divisions, 6th VIII and below, and girls fours Divisions, 6th IVs and below. Events are also offered in Open, Year 10, Year 9 and Year 8 categories.

The APS and VRA also have conducted "Round Robin" regattas. Each crew has three races against the crews from each of the other schools. There are no finals and no trophies. This type of competition gives racing experience and has the advantage of guaranteeing three races for each crew. When an event has heats, semi-finals and finals, a crew that loses their heat has only one race, limiting their race experience.

The high standard of school rowing has enabled a long list of Old Collegians to participate in elite rowing after leaving school: Olympic Games, World Rowing Championships, National Championships, King's Cup, Intervarsity and other regattas in overseas countries. It would be too difficult to compile a list of these Old Collegians without omitting some names and thus causing offence.

All crews, boys and girls, now have ample racing experience with regattas conducted by the APS, the VRA, the Head of the Schoolgirls, womens' regattas and house regattas. There will probably be further changes to regatta programmes in the years ahead as requirements change.

Finances

After the 1950s the cost of purchasing new boats and oars was rising along with the cost of maintaining the shed. Fewer people were able to donate boats. A meeting was called in 1967, chaired by the Principal, Peter Thwaites, and present were the Bursar, the Master-in-charge of rowing, the 1st VIII Coach, members of Council and six Old Boys.

It was decided to establish a Committee of Management consisting of the Principal (chairman), Master-in-charge, 1st VIII coach, Neil Everist and Stewart McArthur. After Peter Thwaites retired Neil Everist chaired this committee, however the Principal continued to attend the 7.30am breakfast meetings. The committee has overseen the conduct of the Boat Club, analysed the requirements of replacement and maintenance of boats, oars and equipment and made recommendations to Council. The formation of the Albert Bell Club in 1975 and the establishment of the Parents' Rowing Support Group later, resulted in financial assistance. The cost of a racing eight and a set of oars has risen from \$1,900 in 1967 to \$32,000 in 1997. Other costs include coaching boats and engines, rowing ergometers for use in training and measuring rowers' power, a truck to tow the boat trailer (this vehicle has other uses in the school), electric megaphones, bicycles, etc. In the Rolland years the 1st VIII was served steak with the evening meal. It was thought that boys needed to consume extra protein in order to race over one mile without straining their hearts. Steak was served to five VIII's by 1974, causing the Bursar to be concerned about the cost. This matter was on the agenda of the committee and now a more scientific and economical diet has been adopted.

A New Shed in 1966

The shed that was built in 1934 had three bays with boat racks stacking boats three high. This was adequate for the 1934 fleet: a racing eight, three practice eights, four tub fours, a tub pair and two tub sculls. The shed was filled to capacity by the 1960s, and when girls started rowing in 1975 the situation became worse. The boys changing area was halved

in 1978 when it was subdivided to make a changing space for girls. In 1976 the move to replace the existing shed started. By 1981 the shed was deteriorating despite the fact that it was being well maintained and painted. In that year there were 10 eights, 8 fours, 2 pairs and 2 sculls.

Glen Amezdroz, the Master-in-charge, produced a draft report estimating future needs. He noted that a comparison of the numbers of boys available for selection in the 10 rowing A.P.S. schools, the College had the second smallest number (82) after Carey (68) with Melbourne Grammar (195) and Scotch College (255). The size of the College Boat Club could be expected to rise. Glen, in 1982, estimated a fleet of 10 eights, 10 fours, 8 coxless pairs/double sculls and 16 single sculls. His estimate proved to be conservative as in 1997 there were 11 eights and 16 fours required. In addition there were tubs and sculls available for beginners.

By 1990 the preliminary designs for a new boat shed were being considered by the Planning Committee of the Council, however competing priorities kept it fairly low on the list of urgent projects. A Boat Shed Sub-committee was convened by the Principal, Paul Sheahan, and this committee met regularly. The school architects, McGlashan and Everist, were instructed to prepare a design with some reference to the style of the existing shed but using materials requiring less maintenance. After several alternatives were considered, a decision was made to accept a construction presented by Steven Hope-Johnstone, a former oarsman who is a specialist in lightweight steel construction. An improved design of boat racks enabled boats to be stacked five high, providing 67% more space for boat storage.

In his will, J.H.Campbell, who died in 1989, bequeathed \$10,000 to the Albert Bell Club. This money was set aside as a nucleus of funds for the long-held dream of a new boat shed. The College Council decided that, if the Albert Bell Club raised \$100,000, the new shed would be built. The Club quickly raised this money and the old shed was demolished after the 1995 season. The new shed was completed at the end of 1995 and was immediately immersed by a major flood. On 3 February 1996 the new boat shed was officially opened by Robert Purnell, Albert Bell Club Patron.



60. Neil Everist



61. New Shed November 1995

Conclusions

The Morrison family created good traditions that have been passed down from one generation to another. These traditions are the spirit of the College.

1. The achievement of high academic standards has always been the principle objective of the College, so that Collegians can perform their life's work competently.
2. Christian ethics have been encouraged so that Collegians will always act with integrity

at work, in community affairs and in their families.

3. Cultural pursuits have been offered in art, hobbies, music and drama, so that Collegians can enjoy an enriched life.
4. Debating and public speaking has been encouraged so that Collegians can lead and influence others at work and in community affairs.
5. Outside of the school buildings, physical development and character building has been achieved through sport, adventurous activities and in the past cadets.

These traditions and objectives have not changed. There is more choice in sport today. When the school was small, boys were compelled to play the only sport provided. The cricket and football teams and the crews were coached, but there was little or no coaching in athletics, tennis and swimming. Competition with other schools was rare in tennis and swimming. The situation is much better today. Many regret that the Cadet Corps, and shooting as a sport were abandoned.

It is interesting to note how some of the traditions, created by the Morrises, exist today. Rowing and adventure have gone together for years. At recent rowing camps at Falls Creek the rowers have trekked on mountain bicycles across alpine country. In the Morrison days the adventure was rowing past the two breakwaters to Barwon Heads.

Over a period of about 75 years, Norman Morrison, Bill Pincott, J.H. Campbell, Charlie Saleh and Albert Bell were responsible for the development of the spirit of the Geelong College Boat Club. The description of their efforts and influence accounts for about three quarters of this text. The successful, on going activities of the Boat Club has been achieved by coaches who have been influenced by these five men. As a result crews have been taught good technique, have benefited from the character building aspects of rowing and have been encouraged to adopt the highest standards of sportsmanship.

Today, both boys and girls enjoy rowing with excellent equipment and coaching, ample competition and in a pleasant environment. Albert Bell said; "If you lose, say nothing. If you win, say less." In other words, "Don't make excuses if you lose, and do not boast if you win." Remember Steve Fairbairn's saying, "Enjoy your rowing; win or lose."

APPENDIX 1

Style

Rowing was nurtured in England, in particular at Cambridge and Oxford Universities where there were many participants in the sport and much competition. Successful oarsmen became coaches and they developed style. Gradually, good style was adopted and bad style rejected.

Geelong rowing benefited from men who came from Oxford and Cambridge. J L Cuthbertson coached Steve Fairbairn at Geelong Grammar in the 1870s. Fairbairn went to Cambridge and became a legendary coach in England. He returned to 'Meltham', a pastoral property by Pollocksford Bridge, and became active in his old club, Barwon. Both Cuthbertson and Fairbairn contributed to the administration and coaching at the Barwon Rowing Club. James Ford Strachan was one of the first group of boys who enrolled at The Geelong College in 1861. Strachan went on to Cambridge and rowed in the winning intervarsity crew of 1870. He was voted the best oarsman in the race. His oar was presented to The Geelong College in the 1930s. On his return to Geelong, Strachan rowed with Barwon and no doubt contributed to the development of style there. Bill Pincott came under the influence of Cuthbertson, Fairbairn and perhaps Strachan. As a result, the Barwon Rowing Club developed good style which lasted for years. The question may be asked, "Why did the Geelong Clubs not win more champion eights and senior premierships?". This can be explained by the fact that most of the College and Grammar boys were boarders and left Geelong when they finished school. Many club members left Geelong after winning junior races; few remained to graduate to senior ranks. A study of the names of men who rowed in international, interstate and intervarsity crews showed that Geelong trained rowers have made a significant and vital contribution to Australian rowing.

Two men, A B Sloan and Charlie Donald, had a major influence on the development of style in Melbourne. After a rowing career at the Mercantile Rowing Club, Sloan became a coach at Mercantile and Scotch College. Donald transferred from the Wendouree Rowing Club to the Albert Park Rowing Club as a young lad. After a rowing career at Albert Park he coached Albert Park and Wesley College, perhaps with more success than Sloan. Donald and Sloan had most of their wins in their

earlier years but still won some Head of the River titles in later years.

Before 1935, both the Geelong and Melbourne styles may have been described as 'orthodox'. The name is to some extent inappropriate as there are many variations of the orthodox style. The criticism of orthodox coaches is that they regard the upper and lower legs and arms and the back as rigid inflexible links in the body machine. The eyes must look ahead, not at the blade or at girls on the bank. Preferably, all crew members would be the same height and weight. Timing would be perfect and the height of the blades over the water would be uniform, as one would expect from well drilled guardsmen. Orthodox coaches would defend their poor record in racing by saying, 'Oh! Yes, but they look pretty'. Each part of the stroke would be considered a separate function, with no idea of one function flowing into the next. A strange theory developed in Victorian orthodoxy. When the blades entered the water the crew would try to lift the boat. Coaches would call out 'Up steady swing'. One old oarsman recalled how a crew was being beaten by small margins, so the coach instructed the bow man to row his blade in before the rest of the crew. He would try to lift the boat with a great movement of his shoulders, hoping to make it easier for the crew to row their blades through the water. Energy was wasted in trying to lift the boat instead of propelling it forward.

Between the two great wars, Mercantile and Albert Park dominated championship races and senior premierships in Victoria. But in those years Victoria did not perform well in King's Cup races. New South Wales won the cup four times in a row from 1933 to 1936. A contributing factor to Victoria's poor performance in these years was the fact they did not row a sufficient distance on each outing. An afternoon row would consist of a paddle up to the start of the course and back, about 5 km. Meanwhile a New South Wales crew may have rowed 15 km on an afternoon and 30 to 60 km on a Saturday.

The results of the intervarsity races were similar to the results of the King's Cup races. Melbourne won the intervarsity race three times in the years 1920 to 1930, but failed to win in the years 1931 to 1938. Sydney won only once between 1920 to 1932, but won six out of eight races in the years 1933 to 1938.

Bill Pincott realised that something was wrong with Victorian rowing. He developed a style some-

what different from the Victorian orthodox style, having been influenced by Fairbairn and perhaps to a lesser extent by Cuthbertson and Strachan.

To celebrate the centenary of Victoria and Melbourne, the Grand Challenge Cup was promoted as a great event at the 1934 Australian Henley Regatta. A crew from the London Rowing Club came out to Melbourne and enjoyed the hospitality of the local rowing community. This did not prevent them from winning their races by big margins. Steve Fairbairn had some part in the coaching of this London crew; one of the last crews to benefit from the coaching of Fairbairn.

Wally Ricketts began his rowing career as a cox with the Barwon Rowing Club. At the College, Wally coxed the 1915 crew with Pinny as coach. In 1918 he played in the 1st XVIII and rowed in the 1st VIII under coach Henry "Tracker" Young. Wally graduated in Science and joined the staff at Melbourne Grammar School where he taught Chemistry and coached the 1st VIII. He coached three winning crews in a row in 1930-31-32, with what could be called Barwon orthodox style. Most orthodox coaches were inflexible in their beliefs, considered their ideas infallible and argued against other ideas with religious-like fervour. Not Wally Ricketts. Using the Fairbairn/London style he coached three more winning crews in a row in 1938-39-40 and also in 1945. In 1949 he coached a great winning crew rowing a style developed on the West coast of the United States of America. David Olliff rowed in this 1949 Melbourne Grammar crew and later coached The Geelong College crews.

To return to the 21 years, 1920 to 1940, the Head of the River was won thirteen times by either of the two Geelong schools or Melbourne Grammar, and only five times by Scotch or Wesley. Ricketts and Pincott as coaches had greater success than Sloane and Donald in school rowing during this period.

Old Collegian, Lex Rentoul, was the coach of Melbourne University in 1934. Rentoul, Ricketts and Pincott and other University people observed the London crew's style and asked questions in order to understand why they were so successful. Rentoul introduced Fairbairn/London ideas to the coaching of his Ormond College and University crews, Ricketts did likewise at Melbourne Grammar and Pincott at Geelong Grammar. Pinny took a close interest in the University crews and in 1937 their coach, Lex Rentoul, was unable to travel to Brisbane for the intervarsity race, and his place was taken by Pinny. After the 1940 Head of the River, the Scotch old boys were concerned that Scotch had not won the Head of the River since 1927. Pressure was applied and Harvey Nicholson was appointed coach. Harvey had rowed in Ormond College crews under the coaching of Lex Rentoul. He was a keen old Scotch Collegian who coxed the 1934 crew, stroked the 1936 crew and was also a successful athlete. He introduced the Fairbairn/London style to Scotch and his crew rowed a great distance in training which resulted in victory in the 1941 Head of the River. Harvey noted one of Fairbairn's quotes, "Mileage makes champions". By the time the 1939/45 war started the Fairbairn style was dominant in school and university rowing in Victoria.

It was Fairbairn's belief that if the oarsman has an understanding of how the oar can propel the boat,



60. These pictures show two styles. The top pictures are of the stroke of Charlie Donald's last Wesley crew in 1940; Charlie's interpretation of the orthodox style. The lower pictures are of the stroke of the winning 1940 Melbourne Grammar crew coached by Wally Ricketts, in Wally's days of the Fairbairn/London Rowing Club influence. Note the Wesley crew were rowing in poppets and MGS in swoivels.

his subconscious mind will direct the body to work effectively. A coach's job is to ensure that the oarsman has this understanding. In a Fairbairn crew, some oarsmen's heads and shoulders may move in the arc of a circle rather than move in the line of the boat. Some oarsmen may turn their heads in various degrees to see their blades. This does not matter much. When looking ahead, the field of his vision is about 160° , so an oarsman can see how his oar is working in relation to the crew members ahead of him. Anyone who is experienced in selecting pair oared crews should be able to understand Fairbairn's ideas. Frequently a pair is unsuccessful despite the fact that two oarsmen have geometrically similar bodies and similar style. Quite often a pair with very different body shapes and very different rowing style can be champions.

In 1936 Charlie Saleh left Sydney to coach crews at both The Geelong College and the Corio Bay Rowing Club. He was a successful coach in Sydney and continued his success in Victoria. When asked what style he coached, Charlie would say, "Charlie Saleh's common sense rowing." Charlie considered he owed his success to L C Robson, the Principal and coach of Shore, the Sydney Church of England Grammar School. Robson stroked the winning 1st IV at Sydney Grammar School in 1914. He served in the 1914-1918 war and was mentioned in dispatches and awarded the Military Cross. He was a Rhodes Scholar and graduated MA from Oxford University. Later he received the honour CBE. The golden age of Robson's coaching was in the years 1928 to 1939 when his crews won the Sydney Head of the River six times. The race was suspended in the war years 1941 to 1945 and in 1946 one of Robson's pupils, Bill Thomas, coached Shore to five wins in the years 1946 to 1954. Thomas was also a successful University, New South Wales and Australian coach. During the post war period, Thomas kept in close touch with Robson and on occasions both names appeared on programmes as the coaches of a crew. It is probably not right for Saleh to give all the credit to Robson. Old boys from many schools rowed with clubs in Sydney and many club members coached many schools. As a result good style was spread widely among the Sydney clubs and schools, and this accounted for success of New South Wales crews in the 1930s and 1940s. Charlie Saleh brought Sydney style to Victoria. Today when one observes the style at the Olympic Games and World Rowing Championships there is little variation from pre-war Sydney or Saleh style.

It is interesting to note that Charles Saleh used many of Fairbairn's expressions, especially words

from the oarsman's song. In the song Fairbairn referred to willow, whale bone and steel. These materials are elastic, they deflect when subjected to force or bending moment and return to the original shape when the force is released. They are not rigid, inflexible materials.

"The willowy sway of the hands away
And the water boiling aft,
The elastic spring, and the steely fling
That drives the flying craft.

The steely spring and the musical ring
Of the blade with the biting grip,
The stretching draw of the bending oar
That rounds the turn with a whip.

The lazy float that controls the boat
And makes the swing quite true,
And gives the rest that the oarsman blest
As he drives the blade right through.

All through the swing he hears the boat sing
As she glides on her flying track,
And he gathers aft to strike the craft
With a ringing bell note crack.

From stretcher to oar with drive and draw
He speeds the boat along.
All whalebone and steel and a willowy feel,
That is the oarsman's song."

The poem expresses in beautiful words how the oarsman can time his blade to the water like a cricketer or golfer times his bat or club to the ball. He enjoys the feeling of power generation as the blade is driven through the water and his mind follows through as the hands move (float) away and the water is boiling aft. The hands float away to the balance and the forward movement is relaxed and not rushed. In Steve Fairbairn's book "Chats on Rowing", first published in 1934, he shows a picture of an oarsman rowing with the inside hand controlling the oar and the outside hand placed on the hip. The caption for this photograph says, "The best way to teach a man that he must control the oar with the inside hand." On every outing Charlie Saleh would give his crew several short periods of one hand rowing. After each of these sessions the oarsman would feel greater control. It is surprising that few coaches use this exercise.

Conibear was an American football coach who was asked to coach a crew. As he had no experience, he read books on the orthodox style. He went to the medical school and set up skeletons in the positions which were advocated in the books. Then he threw

the books away and developed style from common sense. Like Fairbairn, he realised that every man has his own natural, efficient style and should not be drilled to conform to particular style. Conibear's influence resulted in the United States of America winning every Olympic gold medal for Vllls from 1924 through to 1956. Wally Ricketts, and to a lesser extent Charlie Saleh, studied the American style and applied the principles.

Albert Bell rowed under both Bill Pincott and Charlie Saleh. He was more influenced by Pinny than by Charlie, and his very successful crews from The Geelong College and Corio Bay were much more like Pincott crews than Saleh crews.



63. Albert Bell

When Ian Everist was rowing in the 1950 Melbourne University crew, Bill Pincott wrote the following letter to Ian. It is another example of Pinny's interest and support in University rowing. Pinny was an old man at the time and his letter sums up his life's contribution to style.

"Over half a ton of weight in the boat, if used to the best possible advantage, should be a valuable asset but, on the other hand, it can become a direful liability. The telltale indication that a crew is not using its weight at the right moment, and from the right position, is the amount of water moved in front of the blade. Some crews endeavour to



64. Bill Pincott

catch up with the pace of a fast running boat by using a shoulder lift off the seats, standing on the stretchers. A belated leg drive is attempted only when the bodies are lifted on top of the seats. This goes on to the seats and not on to blades. Let the boat run out under you when coming forward and on no account pull your half ton of weight (the weight liability) forward against the run of the boat with the toe straps, but just sit relaxed and resting and let the boat itself put you on your feet. The bodies are continually moving forward easily to the efficient length, the arms fully extended, grips light, with the buttons attached to the pins, with a fixed and determined resolve to control the pace of the slides with the feet only pressing against the stretchers. Over the last few inches the seat is almost stopping so that you would not break eggs placed at your front chocks. The hands are nestling the buttons on the pins which are to be attacked. The looms are aligned to the water.

You have arrived at the all important moment and position, the slowest and best controlled part of the whole business. So what happens next with an alert brain? Absolutely the quickest part of the stroke, but how? Definitely

kick the blades into the water immediately with all the force and power you have in your make up, extending the power pressure drive until the legs are flat and held down. But that is not all. Simultaneously, immediately you kick, transfer the half ton weight from the seats direct on to the handles, the whole of the potential body weight thus applied going through non stop, not lifting up, onto the back chocks. Active puddles having been obtained with the blades right in the water and covered up. Keep leaning on the puddles without jerking or ripping. Up to this moment the arms are still straight, merely connecting flexible links, but the time has arrived when you must bend them up so that the handles can be rowed up to the chests. The outside arm and hand are working overtime at this stage. The finish becomes automatic by this method.

At the commencement of the stroke do not try to rip the boat past the fixed puddle with your arms. They are unable to do this job. If you attempt, you will lessen your cleavage for a hard finish. The most delicate part of the finish is where the high pressure cleavage ceases. In a split second the oar is lifted out of the water and converted into a very relaxed and proficient balancing stick. During the propulsion part of the stroke, if the leg mistimed, the boat still runs on and you lose your fulcrum. Consequently the blade must back water and the oar handle becomes antagonistic to you instead of your best friend and keeps coming with you to the death. Always have a lump of joy on the end of your blade and not untold agony. True rhythm is the poetry of motion and a joy forever. Always remember the ringing puddle is impossible to obtain off a seat.

Rating should be only as high as your biggest and heaviest can really and efficiently do the job in hand. Everyone should be able, after resting, to jump into the driver's seat, so to speak, and very definitely stand on the accelerator at one and the same time."

Not all Fairbairn crews rowed with shoulders moving in the arc of a circle, following the oar handle coming forward and with eyes on the blade. Photographs in Fairbairn's book show the bodies working in the line of the boat and the eyes looking ahead, as did crews coached by Bill Pincott and Albert Bell.

Before the mid 1960s most crews rowed a long stroke. Oarsmen tended to reach forward past their strong and comfortable position and sway back at the finish. Some of Pinny's crews rowed the oar handle almost up to their chins as they laid back so far. The long strokes of former years probably were the result of short slides. As boats were built with longer slides, oarsmen could effectively work their oars with less body swing. The United States of America VIII almost eliminated lay back when they won the gold medal at the 1956 Olympic Games, rowed at Ballarat. At the finish of the stroke their shoulders appeared to be ahead of their hips. They looked cramped and uncomfortable and this feature of their style has not been copied. Some swing at the finish is desirable, particular in a head wind. Albert Bell's crews were successful in a head wind; he used to call out, "Sit back and draw." In a tail wind, a crew can sit up and tap it along.



65 Stewart McArthur (stroke) and Duncan McDonell (7) in the winning 1956 crew, showing how Albert Bell's crew had the long lay back; a Pincott influence.

Joe Gould rowed at Sydney Grammar School, with the Sydney Rowing Club and in the New South Wales Police VIII which represented Australia at the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936. He went on to a successful coaching career and was a selector for New South Wales and Australian crews. He wrote the following notes which give further understanding of the Sydney style:

Start of the Stroke

Having arrived at the front chocks with the slide controlled, the body in a strong relaxed position, the arms extended and not stiff, the blade rolled off the feather, the body perfectly relaxed and not in an over reached position, we are now ready for the stroke. If you are correctly rigged you will find your oar handle is about level with the small of the back of the man in front. You will not miss any water. You row the blade into the water ahead of the run of the boat, combining a speedy movement of shoulders and legs combined. Properly timed, the blade will open a cavity in the water deep enough for a five gallon keg of beer. This initial movement will be felt on the small of the back followed by the draw home of the hands. You will find that the hands are always slightly behind, having been drawn into a point about 25 to 50 mm above the navel, if correctly rigged. (Not into the chest which indicates that the oarsman is rigged too high.)

Finish of the stroke

From the position at the back chocks, legs flat on front of the slide, and the roots of the thumbs have been drawn into the 25-50 mm above the navel, the hands are tapped down in a rounded motion, and to all intents and purposes a fly is brushed off the knees, and as the straightening continues the body rocks through from the back chocks until it is necessary to steady the slide in preparation for the next stroke. The roll off the feather is controlled by the inside hand. Hands should be one hand apart. Knees do not break until the body is rocked through from the back chocks, past the perpendicular, and weight transferred to the stretcher.

CREW LISTS.1ST VIIIS.

	1908	1909	1910	1911
Bow	Pearce J V	Pearce W B	Gunn A D	Birnie N E S
2	Kininmonth J.G.	Dunlop W A S	Kininmonth J C	Mitchell G A N
3	Phillip E J	Reid G C D	Reid G C D	Reid G C D
4	Blair J D	Kininmonth J C	Young C L	Strachan L N
5	Pullar P G	Pullar P G	Hearne E	Campbell N L
6	McCulloch W B	Blair J D	Blair J D	Cochrane J R S
7	Gibson J B	Hearne J D	Collocott F M	Collocott F M
Stroke	McNeillage G C	Gibson J B	Dunlop W A S	Herman F G
Cox	Atherton G D	Broughton J M	Broughton J M	Carr G G
Coach	Pincott W H	Pincott W H	Pincott W H	Pincott W H

	1912	1913	1914	1915
Bow	Hooper A A W	Gunn A W	Gunn A W	Waugh A J C
2	Calvert C M	Longdon N A	Webb C M	Stoker E A J
3	Pillow H F	Reid W J	Campbell A F	Hawkes T B
4	Mitchell G A N	McArthur G S	Mitchell R S M	Carr G G
5	Bennett O B	Sprigg J G H	Reid W J	McArthur G S
6	Leggatt W W	Mitchell G A N	McArthur G S	Mitchell R S M
7	Reid J W	Hooper A A W	Hooper A A W	Webb C M
Stroke	Morrison G N I	Murray T P	Mitchell G A N	Mackay E E
Cox	Carr G G	Campbell R N	Crawley R L	Ricketts W N
Coach	Pincott W H	Pincott W H	Pincott W H	Pincott W H

	1916	1917	1918	1919
Bow	MacPherson W R	Webb R C S	Carmichael J K	Carmichael J K
2	Waugh J H	MacPherson W R	Steele J G	Bell C C
3	Campbell R N	Campbell R N	Ricketts W N	Horne J A T
4	Reid L E	Campbell I A	Peter W C	Adzen P
5	Carr C G	Trimm A E A	Robertson J W	Robertson J W
6	Macmillan W E	Riggall E G M	Riggall E G M	Steele J G
7	Hawkes T B	Hawkes T B	Langslow W L	Peter W C
Stroke	Campbell I A	Macmillan W E	Macmillan W E	MacPherson W R
Cox	Bell C C	Bell C C	McArthur C E	Taylor K J
Coach	Pincott W H	Young H J	Young H J	Young H J

	1920	1921	1922	1923
Bow	Waugh W L	Waugh W L	Waugh G F	Waugh G F
2	Hope D W	Hope D W	Gray A J H	Hindle W B
3	Russell N K	Campbell T W	Ronaldson R B	Fallow H C
4	Adzen P	Kennedy D McR	Rentoul A L	Anderson H A
5	Gilmour F W	Macmillan J R	McKay R C	McKay R C
6	Macmillan J R	Pern G G	Lockwood R C	Rentoul A L
7	Pern G G	Russell N K	Sproat A D	Sproat A D
Stroke	Bell C C	Bell C C	Anderson H A	Greeves E G
Cox	Taylor K J	Murphy I S M	Murphy I S M	Dickson D M
Coach	Young H J	Young H J	Young H J	Hurst H E

	1924	1925	1926	1927
Bow	Hope G W	McColough S V	Philip N L	Reid J A
2	McKenzie D M	Campbell J C	Roadknight D F	Cumming H D
3	Swinton J P	Hope G W	Simms L A	Sinclair A J M
4	Troup H Mcl	Reid R B	Cumming H D	Ferguson F K
5	McKay R C	Moodie W J	Troup W M	Troup W M
6	McCann E W	Troup H Mcl	Mcl Reid R B	Reid R B
7	Storrer C G	Storrer C G	McColough J	Philip N L
Stroke	Fallow H C	McKenzie D M	McColough S V	Roadknight D F
Cox	Dickson D M	Tait J O	Tait J O	Tait J O
Coach	Collyer C J	Collyer C J	Collyer C J	Collyer C J

	1928	1929	1930	1931
Bow	Gough R W	Gillespie W M	Watson J K	Watson J K
2	Hennings R P	Nimmo J F	Gough J H	Stoker J P
3	Pyle A R	Barr J S	Stoker J P	Funston F G
4	Matheson A D	Melville W T	Robertson S W	Robertson S W
5	Waugh J B	Waugh J B	Funston F G	Tippett H C
6	Lamont M J	Forster A E	Forster A E	Biggin G M
7	Read G S	Matheson A D	Coto J H	John D L
Stroke	Adam J R	Gough R W	Hinchliffe A R	Hinchliffe A R
Cox	Fallow C	Fallow C	Emerson E M	Emerson E M
Coach	Collyer C J	Collyer C J	Collyer C J	Collyer C J

	1932	1933	1934	1935
Bow	Carstairs R J	Houston J W R	Wills L	Gerrard J A
2	Reid G W	Petrie J H	Thomas J A	Simpson J G
3	Shannon C S	McClelland J C	Funston N J	Herald A R
4	Wood V C	Hutton J S	Ferguson J B	Calvert D M
5	Fallow C	Bartlett C J	Matheson D W	Wong D R
6	Duffy D G	Reid G W	Hutton J S	Funston N J
7	Watson J K	Shannon C S	Morris K N	Cumming D A
Stroke	McKenzie G G C	McKenzie G G C	McKenzie G G C	Radcliffe R E
Cox	Emerson E M	Emerson E M	Robertson T K	McKenzie B C
Coach	Campbell L J	Campbell L J	Emms R	Emms R

	1936 H o R	1937	1938	1939
Bow	Collins T M	Collins T M	Collins T M	Dennis R J L
2	Kelsall T H	Wettenhall R H A	McDowall K S	Cartwright L A
3	Silke I H	McDowall K S	Forsyth T J	Blackwood A F
4	Forbes J A	Laidlaw T T	Barrett J W	Meakin A R
5	Robertson C W	Forbes J A	Laidlaw T T	Matheson A L
6	Calvert D M	Moreton F J H	Forbes J A	Koch W C
7	Cumming D A	McPherson I H	McPherson I H	Borthwick D W P
Stroke	Douglas A W	Kelsall T H	Douglas K S	Barrett J W
Cox	Reid N C	Buchanan I S	Buchanan I S	Lyall R
Coach	Saleh C G	Saleh C G	Saleh C G	Saleh C G

	1940	1941	1942	1943
Bow	Dennis R J L	McKinley G A	Sutherland H H M	Foreman J W
2	Hawkes T V	Morrison J R	Grutzner P W	Spittle M A
3	Blackwood A F	McDonald J A C	Hope Johnstone D G	Ostberg C F
4	Cartwright L A	Anderson J H	Nall K S	Fullagar R K
5	Ferguson J M	Ferguson J M	McDonald J A C	Errey E J
6	Exell G T	Exell G T	Charles R P	Rolland D B
7	Barrett A G	Strickland J A	Russell D K	Shuter J C C
Stroke	Aitken R R	Hawkes T V	Vanrenen D S	Grutzner P W
Cox	Lyall R	Martin W A	Buchanan G A	Buchanan G A
Coach	Saleh C G	Bell A B	Kishere E S	Kishere E S

	1944 H o R	1945	1946	1947
Bow	Ashton E R	Hooper J A	Hooper J A	Ramsay I D
2	Humphreys W F	Stewart J O	Sutterby T R	Chesswas K J
3	Mackay D W	Morris R C	Morris R C	Sweetnam J R
4	Macmillan D R T	Salmon W A	Macmillan D R T	Buntine R W
5	McIlwain I M	Wagstaff R M	Spalding H J	Spalding H J
6	Cameron I E	Macmillan D R T	Moreton K J	Purnell R W
7	Tippett G H K	Barrett N L	Wagstaff R M	Wotherspoon J D
Stroke	Spalding N J	Simpson L N	Barrett N L	Caffrey J W
Cox	Bennett A L	Bennett A L	Salmon D R	Galbraith C J
Coach	Saleh C G	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B

	1948	1949	1950	1951
Bow	Ramsay I D	Anderson W C	Moore L D	Moore L D
2	Burgess J B	Sykes N L	Negri P J	McNaughton K D
3	Morris D J	Campbell I R D	McNaughton K D	Baird C S
4	Varley J E	Lawler T G	McFarland F G B	Cole B L
5	Purnell R W	McIlwain A F	Baird C S	Aikman A M H
6	Lawlar D B	Lawler D B	Cole B L	Hodgson W B
7	Johnson S W G	Morris D J	Aikman A M H	Gibb J G
Stroke	Jeffreys R J	Mackay I R	Fleming P G	Howden J G
Cox	Lilburne H M	Lilburne H M	Button J N	Sutherland I T
Coach	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B

	1952	1953	1954	1955 H o R
Bow	Dearnaley F A J	Waugh J G	Wills G G	Pennefather J G
2	Partridge E L	Saxton J O	Barber G L	Caithness D M
3	Raymond P	Langlands K C	Saxton J O	Wills G G
4	Campbell N T	Stott B H	Wood W A W	Lawler W W
5	Jones A W	McDonald N R	Davidson G J	Norwood D E H
6	Howden J G	Wood W A W	Macmillan I W	Wood W A W
7	Buntine J M	Buntine J M	Kinder B S	Kinder B S
Stroke	Macmillan I W	Macmillan I W	McDonald A W	McArthur F S
Cox	Sutherland I T	New J F H	Moore R L	John A T
Coach	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B

	1956 H o R	1957 H o R	1958	1959 H o R
Bow	Campbell P T	Wood B N J	Burrows T M	McDonald M L
2	Messenger D R	Ramage D B	Lawson R A S	Quinton J H
3	McDonald J	Troy P H	King G R	McClland A F
4	Ramage D B	Dickinson H R	Scott A R	Selle W J P
5	Norwood D E H	John D McL	Bromell H T	Bromell H T
6	Caithness D M	Caithness D M	Selle W J P	Scott A R
7	McDonell D	McDonell D	Troedel A B	Troedel A B
Stroke	McArthur F S	Messenger D R	Sproat T W	Sproat T W
Cox	John A T	John A T	Pennefather R	Walter N F
Coach	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B

	1960 H o R	1961	1962	1963
Bow	McClelland A F	Geddes A G	Whitehead C W	Patterson W M
2	Quinton J H	Mactier J I	Burger R O	Greene D M
3	McDonald M L	Berney D H M	Birks D M	Forbes A J
4	Lawson A J E	Lawson A J E	Hinchliffe T A	Lawler R J
5	Bromell H T	Robson J S	Forbes H G	Hinchliffe T A
6	Mayne P C	Mayne P C	John R J M	Urquhart I W
7	Bade R J	Bade R J	Berney D H McN	Paterson A J
Stroke	Whitehead A C H	John R J M	Lehmann W L	Cotton G M
Cox	McDonell H	McDonell H	Downey D W G	Wright R E
Coach	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B

	1964	1965	1966	1967
Bow	Lyon A A	Burger D R	Young P A	Koch D F
2	Robson R McK	Kidd N F S	Cole S J H	Longton G
3	Gardner J B	Langsford B H	Simson R D	Bartlett P L
4	Drew A J	Drew A J	Kidd N F S	McIvor D J
5	Hinchliffe T A	Gardner J B	Beel C N	Beel C N
6	Lawler R J	Webster R J	Dennis W L	Gardner R F
7	Ellerman D A	Greene R McK	Fraser W L	Simson R D
Stroke	Koch W A	Campbell N J H	Leishman L	McLarty E J
Cox	Wright R E	Morris R M	Atyeo D L	Hooke D H
Coach	Smith K	Smith K	Bell A B	Bell A B

	1968	1969	1970	1971
Bow	Dennis T C	Betts M J	Simson E D	Simson E D
2	Cole J S H	Young P C	Abrecht D G	Longden G N
3	Turnbull P T R	Urquhart A C	MacDonald K I	McKenzie J McL
4	Fraser P F	Cole J S H	Thomas R H	Lindquist G J
5	Bartlett P L	Anderson D R	Hastie R B	Adam P C
6	Gardner R F	Webster P A	Moore R W	Abrecht D G
7	Young P C	Ellis D W	Sutton D B	Sutton D B
Stroke	Webster P A	Seward H G	Seward H G	Webster C M
Cox	Grove I S	Chatham T R	Colvin A S	Slattery W T
Coach	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B	Bell A B

	1972	1973	1974	1975
Bow	Amezdroz S W	Eastoe J B	Hope Johnstone R I	Morrison A G
2	Abrecht D G	Pyle G M	McKenzie J D	Gillett S M
3	Hunt R L	Crosby W S	Myers N J	Fairmie G G
4	Brown J B	Ware S B	Ware S B	Robertson W M I
5	Longden W	Chirnside S M	Cassidy P A	Cassidy P A
6	Longden B W	Ware A D	Holt A W	Steell A
7	McKenzie J M	Amezdroz G D	Duff S J	Myers N J
Stroke	Webster C M	Fenner C D	Steell A	Cooper D J
Cox	Silcock T H	Johnston I D	Johnson I D	Sloane J S
Coach	Bell A B	Ramage D B	Ramage D B	Ramage D B

	1976 H o R	1977	1978	1979
Bow	Bell S L	Bidstrup D E	Monteith S W	Emmett A W
2	Hutton J A	George D R	Tinney J W	LeDeux A J
3	Cameron A W N	Philip A L	Gibbi R	Walpole M D
4	Olliff J D	George R J	Philip R A	Leach R J M
5	Emmett G C	Emmett G C	McNaughton B E	Nelson T S McD
6	Morrison A G	Pescud W J	Philip A L	Neville C J D
7	Amezdroz B A	Amezdroz B A	Magee R G	Inglis A C
Stroke	Cooper D J	Cameron S J	Watson J K D	Thoms C M
Cox	Carr R G	Pavia D G	Kearney S M	Carr N L
Coach	Ramage D B	Ramage D B	Ramage D B	Sykes J R

	1980	1981	1982	1983
Bow	Hayden D M	Golding S J	Verrill R D J	Buchanan A J P
2	Edgar A M	Baillie K L B	Baillie K L	Caithness T J
3	Ledeux F G	Kerr A K	Benjamin T J	Findlay A G
4	Gorell P R	Gorell P R	Wolf P G	Wolf P G
5	Walpole M D	Edgar A M	Emmett R J	Benjamin T J
6	Hale J R	Hale J R	Splatt S C S	Smith C K G
7	Emmett A W	Gorell B M	Gorell B M	Paton S N
Stroke	Neville J D	Scott A R	Lawrance S J	Dawson D J
Cox	Lamont S R	Pearce S G	Royal S L	Royal S L
Coach	Sykes J R	Sykes J R	Sykes J R	Sykes J R

	1984	1985	1986	1987
Bow	Ganley J R	Ganley J R	Briggs A C	Cameron H A V
2	Dawson D J	Wickham P S	Prussner S D	Cave S A
3	Purnell A N R	Prussner S D	Benjamin S P	Bell P G
4	Wickman P S	Marks R D	Cameron H A V	Hynes M A
5	Marks R D	Benjamin S P	Prussner G L	Wylie N J
6	Kinens M P	Rollinson R B	Wylie N J	Selle L J
7	Paton S N	Wylie N J	Lamont A P	Lee S M
Stroke	Wylie S G	Wylie S G	Purnell A N R	Prussner G L
Cox	Whiting C J	Carr H J	Carr H J	Buchanan D H I
Coach	Wait R C	Wait R C	Morris R M	Morris R M

	1988	1989	1990 H o R	1991
Bow	EdgeS W	GrevilleM L	MitchellBJ	Mitchell S A
2	MittonD W	NichollsS H	NichollsS H	SpinksR I
3	KennettM J	KleissN P	PearsonCT	WillsC G
4	WilliamsA A	HowieA J	LawsonP A	CroweP A
5	SelleS J	SelleS J	CroweD P	PearsonC T
6	HynesM A	WilsonM E	AshbyD R	AshbyD R
7	DunstoneM J	CurtisP I	Magarey M J R	MagareyM J R
Stroke	McCannN D	McCannN D	NevinsJ T	NevinsJ T
Cox	RoyalC L	BlameyG R	McConnell J F G	ShirlowS A
Coach	MorrisR M	RamageD B	RamageD B	RamageD B

	1992	1993 H o R	1994	1995
Bow	SuttonT S	AlexanderJ H L	Peat S J	Anderson S C
2	PigdonM A	DavisR J	Frost J M	McDonald A C
3	ElderM J	KeebleM E	Coulson L T	Miller J A
4	ConnellJ R	GivoyeA A	Petting S	Keeble W J
5	MillerB G	OlsenS H	Macleod T I	Chisholm J R
6	CroweP A	PigdonM A	Chisholm J R	Dimmick M E R
7	MitchellS A	MillerB G	Dimmick M E R	Gordon W J M
Stroke	SpinksR I	ConnellJ R	Jarman N C	Peeters A H
Cox	BekkerM J	Lethbridge G G D	Thomas S B	Pearce H R
Coach	PhilpP E N L	Philp P E N L	Philp P E N L	Philp P E N L

	1996	1997
Bow	MillerJ A	Earle N M
2	SuttonM D	Eagles C A
3	BurnettN W M	Muhor A A
4	TenabelC J	David T M
5	MitchellC A	Bailey R M
6	KeebleW J	SeecktsN J
7	LockwoodB J	Connell M B
Stroke	AyerbeT J	Leach T K
Cox	LethbridgeS E	Harris T A
Coach	PhilpP E N L	Philp P E N L

GIRLS 1st IVs

	1975	1976	1977	1978
Bow	Gant M J G	Hope K E	King P J	McFarland S A M
2	Wall L A M	Schofield J L	McFarland S A M	Ramsden J A
3	Quigley M L	Leach S E M	Emmett S M	TinneyMM
Stroke	Swinburn C C	Wall L A M	Purnell K A	Weiland S C
Cox	Marshallsea S J	Marshallsea S J	McGlone C T	Lees A M
Coach	Mr D W Stott	Mr D W Stott	Mrs N Ramage	Mrs S Bullen

	1979	1980	1981 H o R	1982 HoR
Bow	Mockridge N R	Macmillan S D	Hale D M	Read U J
2	Braithwaite K M	Purnell F M	Purnell F M	Hale D M
3	Tinney MM	Mockridge N R	Macmillan S D	Smit T E
Stroke	Purnell H E	Braithwaite K M	Braithwaite K M	Mulligan S G
Cox	Laidlaw S M	Laidlaw S M	Monotti L S	Monotti L S
Coach	Mrs S Bullen	Mrs S Bullen	Dr A E Chirnside	Dr A E Chirnside

	1983 HoR	1984	1985	1986
Bow	Read U J	Blair D M	Seller L N	Hatton K N
2	Henderson J M	Simonsen C A	Henderson C M	Haydon J L
3	Smit T E	Seller L N	Le Deux E M	Price V L
Stroke	Golding S J	Hynes J A	Wait A L	Smith K M
Cox	Monotti L S	Thompson M D	Fisher J	Hay A J
Coach	Dr A E Young	Dr A E Young	Dr A E Young	Ms D M Hale

	1987	1988	1989	1990
Bow	Hatton L C	Cassidy A E	Stevenson S S	Spurling A L
2	Price V L	Haebich S J	Haebich S J	Olsen K M
3	Smith K M	Hale A R	Sears K L	Buckley J M
Stroke	Cassidy A E	Sears K L	McCann S E	Fitzgerald F D
Cox	Denahy S L	Tucker S J	Kent-Hughes J M	Messenger K J
Coach	Mr R C Morell	Mr R C Morell	Mr R C Morell Mr F J Stone	Mr A E Darker

	1991	1992 HoR	1993	1994
Bow	Weiland K N	Spurling A L	Bridgeford A M	Jolly B R
2	Olsen K M	Bourke F C	Rogers K M	Bourke R J
3	Spurling A L	Weiland K N	Olsen S R	Bone M
Stroke	Farrow S E	Farrow S E	Davis K J	Davis K J
Cox	Hatton A J	Fisher S L	Connelly O J	Rushworth G M
Coach	Mr A E Darker Mr P E N L Philp	Mr A E Darker	Mr A E Darker	Mr A E Darker

	1995	1996	1997
Bow	Davis K J	Wookey S A	Urquhart K L
2	Mol V A	Moreton E M	Steel S F
3	Jones M L R	Walker G M	Walker G M
Stroke	O'Loughlin R K	Galbraith B J	Tyack M K
Cox	Fidge F D	Brown K J	Hammond C L
Coach	Mr A E Darker	Mr A E Darker	Mr A E Darker Mr R J Gardner

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The author: James Mephan Ferguson.

There has been a long association between the Ferguson family and The Geelong College. James Mephan was a boarder for 12 years and his brother, Boyd, for 11 years. They both had identical careers; matriculating in subjects in the Mathematics and Science streams, and were Prefects, House Captains and Lieutenants in the Cadet Corps. Both rowed in the 1st VIII and represented the College in Debating teams. Neither were good spellers! Their father, Mephan Ferguson, was on the College Council for 21 years and donated money to enable the Dining Hall and other facilities to be built. Boyd was killed in New Guinea in 1943 whilst in command of a Company of Infantry. After war service James went up to Ormond College to study Engineering at the University of Melbourne and later the degree of "Master of Engineering" was conferred on him and he became a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers, Australia.

Ferguson rowed in winning Ormond College and Inter-Varsity crews and in senior eights with the Mercantile Rowing Club. He has had a long career as a coach of university, school and club crews.