

Convener's report for the AGM 2013

Welcome to everyone here. We have had a pretty eventful year and we have a lot to look forward to in the coming season too.

On the racing front we attended Coigach regatta which had much better weather than the previous year, we attended Portsoy which had more skiffs than ever although the racing had to be curtailed, and we had our own regatta in August which had fabulous sunny weather and great racing despite collisions.

A group went down to the North Berwick regatta in the school minibus and really enjoyed it. The racing was quite tough, having to row back from an offshore island against a rising wind with a strong tide across the course.

Apart from racing we were asked by the Lord Lieutenant Janet Bowen to represent Ross and Cromarty at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant on the Thames. This was a major expedition and a lot of fun. It took us to places we had never thought we'd go and we met lots of new people who have been helpful to us since. The connection with the Lord Lieutenant continues and may yet bring us surprises.

Lots of new members continue to take up rowing with us and it's great to see them enjoying what we enjoy, getting a bit of exercise in very beautiful surroundings and seeing the area from a new place. We enjoy the companionship of rowing in a crew and the satisfaction of rowing a fast piece in perfect time.

Oar and swivel making continue, to perfect feathering oars so that those who want to feather can do so in comfort.

This time last year was born the idea that this small village could play host to a World Championship for the St Ayles Skiff, an audacious idea which the Scottish Coastal Rowing Association took up and awarded us the event after we put in an impressive bid. Now we have at least 5 crews flying in from Vermont, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tasmania and the Netherlands, plus 30 to 35 Scots and English clubs descending on us for a very busy week in July. We will have a marquee for 1500 people on the pier and two big dances on the Friday and Saturday nights. We will have two days of social rowing plus four days of racing culminating in a prizegiving on the Saturday night. It's going to be epic.

That concludes my report and I will hand over to Fiona for an update on the planning for the Worlds.