

St.Catharines Rowing Club

President's Report to the Annual General Meeting, January 16, 2018

It has been my privilege to represent you as President this past year. Thank you to our Board of Directors and Executive for their leadership, to Club Manager and Head Coach Mark Welsh, Boathouse assistant Ryan Malkowski and to all our Youth Rowing School staff for all your efforts this past year. Thank you to Scott Anderson and Susan Nichol who are stepping down from the board after many years of service and leadership. A special note of thanks to Mark "Tex" Thomas who retired earlier in 2017 after 40+ years of being involved in the sport. Thank you Mark for your many contributions to our club and sport.

I want to recognize and thank our many highly skilled and dedicated coaches for all their efforts on and off the water. Our club is very fortunate to have upwards of 200 volunteer coaches leading our athletes and rowing programs each year.

The year started with our Board undertaking an extensive strategic planning and review process to create a plan to guide us moving forward. A special thanks to Shona Scott and Rick Crooker for helping lead us through this process. The finalized plan and areas of focus can be found on our website.

In March we received the news that Niagara won the bid for the 2021 Canada Summer Games with the Rowing events to be held on Henley Island. We look forward to the many benefits of hosting these games including the development of the on island training facility.

We have had a busy and successful year within all of our programs: Youth Rowing School, Adult Recreational, High School and Club Competitive rowing. These programs serve over 1000 participants and we continue to be the largest rowing club in the country. It was a year of "largest ever" for our club; largest ever Mother's Day Regatta and largest ever corporate rowing event with 180 participants, 12 coaches, 36 athlete volunteers and 12 eights on the water for four sessions. This all in the span of 6 hours! We also experienced one of our largest boat christenings thanks to a much need grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The summer season ended on a high note with the SCRC winning the efficiency trophy at the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. We celebrated Canada's 150th, RCHR 135th, and the SCRAA 60th in style with our much sought after anniversary singlets. We also got a new look off the water with the purchase of a new athlete tent, a new awning to provide shelter at the workshop, a greater social media presence, new racking in the boathouse and a new motor shed!

We had wonderful representation on National Team and Canada Summer Games teams and SCRC alumna Kristen Kit won a silver medal at world rowing championships as coxie of the women's 8. We look forward to working more closely with Brock University and Rowing Canada identifying and training the next generation of national team athletes within the newly created Niagara RCA NextGen Hub.

At the Row Ontario awards this past November Michele Fisher, Emma Dockray, and Rich Neufeld were recognized and honoured. We look forward to celebrating our SCRC alumna Wendy Wiebe who along with her 2x partner Colleen Miller will be inducted into the Rowing Canada Hall of Fame later this month. Jack Nicholson will also be honoured posthumously as an inductee in the builder category.

We will continue work on policy development and implementation to ensure the operational success of the club and continue our work on resource allocation to all of our programs to ensure we have the coaching support and equipment needed to be successful. We will continue to work with both our provincial and national rowing associations as they transition their programs for high performance athlete development and as their resource allocations change. We are challenged with the new fee structure now adopted by both Row Ontario and RCA and are working hard to minimize the financial impact this will have on our club. We continue to look to ways to make the sport of rowing accessible and we will continue to do all we can to support our athletes and maintain and continue to create opportunities for them to excel.

Thank you to our many donors and supporters, especially our long time partners and donor organizations the Henley Island Helpers and the St.Catharines Rowing Alumni Association, who have helped us this past year with equipment purchases and support for our athletes. We look forward to another great year – our 115th of Forging Ahead.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Kerr
President