



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***SPECIAL NAMING AT WINNIPEG ROWING CLUB:
THE RILEY BOATHOUSE***

July 29, 2014 (Winnipeg MB) -- It's an event 122 years in the making... and it's happening this week...

The Winnipeg Rowing Club is pleased to announce that the boathouse at 20 Lyndale Drive will be named “**The Riley Boathouse**” in honour of the Riley family, who have been longtime supporters of rowing here in Manitoba. A celebration to name “The Riley Boathouse” will take place:

**Wednesday July 30, from 5:00pm – 7:00pm
Winnipeg Rowing Club @ 20 Lyndale Drive**

It is long overdue to pay tribute to the Riley Family, without whom the Winnipeg Rowing Club would not be what it is today.

THE RILEY STORY

In May of 1892, at the age of 17, Conrad S. Riley joined the Winnipeg Rowing Club. For the next 22 years he was a force in the sport, winning countless races at national and international competitions.

In 1900, C.S. Riley participated in one of the club's great early moments, when he stroked the WRC's Eight to victory over the famed Argonaut crew from Toronto. In 1901, Riley's same crew travelled to Philadelphia and captured first at the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen (NAAO) regatta in Intermediate Eights. National success came in 1902, when Riley and Fred Bole won the national Junior Doubles title at the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen (CAAO) regatta.

In 1904, the WRC traveled to the Henley Royal Regatta where Riley (bowing the Four) competed for the 1904 Stewards' Challenge Cup, but was defeated in the final. He finally realized his Henley dream in 1910, when he stroked the WRC's Four and beat the defending champions, Thames R.C., in the semi-finals, before capturing the cup by defeating Mainzer R.C. from Germany in the final.

In 1912, the WRC swept all seven events at the NAAO regatta, with Riley stroking three of the winning crews. In 1914, Riley hoisted the inaugural Lipton Cup at the North West International Rowing Association (NWIRA) regatta, when the WRC claimed the aggregate championship – a championship and coveted trophy that is still competed for annually.

In addition to his athletic contributions to the WRC, Riley served as a club administrator, organizer, and coach, and held the office of vice-captain, captain, vice-president, and president. He was instrumental in establishing and financing the Building Company which built the "old" clubhouse at 144 Lyndale Drive. C.S. Riley was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 1974.

Passing the sporting tradition on to his children... in 1907, C.S. christened his son, William Culver Riley, in the Paget Cup – a rowing trophy that Winnipeg won earlier that year. Culver's first row was at two years old, in his father's lap in a double. Also a great contributor to Manitoba's sporting community, Culver was president of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, one of the founders of Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation, and an organizer of the Pan Am Games.

More on page 2...

Another son of C.S. also contributed to the Riley family legacy in rowing. In 1946, at the age of 24, J. Derek (Derry) Riley joined the Winnipeg Rowing Club, and competed for over six decades. He achieved early success by capturing Junior Singles titles at the Northwest International Rowing Association (NWIRA) Championship Regatta, and the Royal Canadian Henley. He also won the Senior Pair twice, before winning his first of seven NWIRA Singles crowns. His finest hour at NWIRA was in 1961, when he won first place in every event he entered. He also represented Canada in the Men's Double at the Olympics in 1952 in Helsinki, Finland.

Derek chaired the Rowing Venue at the 1967 Pan Am Games in Winnipeg, and worked tirelessly to build the sport of rowing in Manitoba. In the early 1990's, he was instrumental in raising \$750,000 to construct the "new" boathouse for the Winnipeg Rowing Club at 20 Lyndale Drive – the boathouse currently enjoyed by many today.

Derek Riley was inducted into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame in 2009, and earlier this year, received the prestigious Order of Canada. Today, the Riley name features prominently at the Winnipeg Rowing Club, with names of racing shells such as *Spirit of the Riley's* and *Derek Riley*. The Riley Family is also recognized as presenting sponsors of the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame Museum.

In between C.S. and Derek, many members of the Riley family rowed in WRC's red, white and blue, served as volunteers, and provided financial support to allow the Club to maintain its tradition since 1881.

At 133 years old, the Winnipeg Rowing Club is the second oldest sporting organization in Western Canada. It has been in operation since 1881, stopping only twice – during WWI and WWII. A long-time tenant of the banks of the Red River in downtown Winnipeg, the WRC survived the North-West Rebellion of 1885, the General Strike of 1919, the Great Depression of the 1930's, the Great Flood of 1950, and the Flood of the Century in 1997. Over the years the clubhouse has been destroyed by fire, wind, and water, but has always managed to maintain its long and proud tradition. Today, the WRC is a non-profit organization with a rich and successful sporting history, fostering generations of camaraderie and friendships. Members range in age from teenagers right up to the 80's, and the club offers programs for all skill levels. www.winnipegrowingclub.ca

-- 30 --

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