

Jimmy Hopkins

It is with much regret that we have to inform members of the death of Past President, Jimmy Hopkins, at the age of ninety.

Jimmy was born in Hammersmith and joined Son of the Thames Rowing Club as a 14-year-old cox in 1947. Sons was then based in the old West End Boathouse, next to Furnivall.

On leaving school at fifteen, Jimmy was apprenticed as an Oar and Scull Maker to the firm of Aylings in their workshop at Putney, a building now occupied by Chas Newens. In the days when all blades were made of wood, Aylings was the dominant supplier of oars to rowing clubs both at home and abroad.

During his compulsory military service, Jimmy was part of the 1956 invasion of Egypt by the UK and France in a dispute over the Suez Canal. He was involved in tank transport and reached the rank of sergeant.

After the army, Jimmy returned to Aylings until 1960 when he left to work for Hammersmith Council - where he stayed until retirement.

Jimmy's active rowing career was at Sons of the Thames between 1947 and 1965, and Auriol and Auriol Kensington between 1965 and 1987. Off the water, he gave fifty-years of service to the committees of the Head Fours and of Hammersmith Amateur Regatta. In the days before personal computers, he would work out complex regatta timetables by manoeuvring scraps of paper around a tabletop. Jim was President of Auriol Kensington between 1995 and 1999 and of the Head Fours from 2007.

In his service to the Amateur Rowing Association (now British Rowing), Jimmy qualified as an ARA Umpire in 1970 and acted as such for the next twenty-seven years, also qualifying as a multi-lane umpire. Further, he was the Hammersmith area representative to the ARA between 1983 and 1992. In recognition of his work, Jimmy was awarded the ARA Medal of Honour in 1991.

Jimmy was proud of the fact that his son, Ian, rowed to a high standard and had reached seven Henley finals. His daughter, Sandra, looked after him devotedly in his later years when he was plagued by ill-health.

Jimmy Hopkins gave over sixty years of his life to our sport, efforts that only ceased when his health failed. Well rowed, Jimmy.

James Frederick Hopkins, 23 January 1932 - 12 July 2022.

