

**Article written by Jack Fitzgerald for the  
admission of the 1904 Blackhead Regatta  
Crew into the Regatta Hall of Fame**

### THE BLACKHEAD CREW

The Blackhead Crew of 1904 stands among the giants of Regatta History. Yet, the memory of that great crew and their achievement has all but faded from public consciousness. Very few people today are even aware that the tiny community of Blackhead ever participated in the Royal St. John's Regatta.

Blackhead was an unlikely community to compete at the Regatta. According to the Daily News of August, 1904 there were only a half dozen families at Blackhead. Yet for the decade starting with 1904 they sent crews to the Regatta. The Regatta spirit was strong in the community. In those days crews generally did not practice either long or hard for the Regatta. But the rowers from Blackhead would row from their community to Quidi Vidi Harbour. From there they would walk to Quidi Vidi Lake to practice and become familiar with the race course. On Regatta Day the entire community would set out in boats at 6 am for Quidi Vidi Village. They carried with them a supply of food for a traditional type boil up at lakeside. Although, they were few in number, their spirit was apparent at lakeside during the races. They provided a strong and loud cheering section for their men, and regularly waded out into the water to greet the crew after they rowed in over the finish line.

The small band from Blackhead had much to cheer about on Regatta Day 1904. This was just three years after Outer Cove set the famous 9:13 record. It was the era when Outer Cove, and fishing communities like Torbay, Middle Cove, Logy Bay and Petty Harbour put strong crews in the Regatta.

When the little boats from Blackhead tied up at Quidi Vidi Harbour before 8 am it was overcast and they did not know what to expect from the weather. However, the clouds dispersed, the sun shone brilliantly and by the time the races started it was an ideal day, similar to Regatta Day of 1901 when Outer Cove rowed into history.

As usual betting was heavy at lakeside. The favoured crew in the Fishermen's Race was the crew from Outer Cove. Participating in that race were four crews: Blackhead in the Togo; Petty Harbour in the Doctor; Logy Bay in the Red Cross and Outer Cove in the Blue Peter.

The next day the Daily News reported, "It was generally felt the Blue Peter would carry off the Palm and few would bet against her, however; but the victory fell to the Togo (Blackhead) which was only considered in the running for second place."

Not only did Blackhead outclass the favourite Outer Cove crew by two boat lengths but recorded the significant and outstanding time of 9:21 1/5. Many observers impressed by the performance of the Blackhead men suggested they could have beaten the 9:13 record. However, coming up the Pond their pace slowed to wave to their supporters on Shore. This was an outstanding time even for that period. Most times in that era were in the 10 minute range.

However, the true measure of Blackhead's greatness lies in the fact that their time of 1904 remained the second best time during the reign of the Outer Cove 9:13 from 1901 to 1981. Approximately, 1,000 crews competed in Regattas during this 80 year period and the crew from Blackhead stood at the top second only to Outer Cove.

Later that day only two crews faced off for a championship

race. Outer Cove hoped to regain its lost pride by winning this contest over the crew from Blackhead. When word spread among spectators that Mike Healy had a sore hand (rowed so hard in the Fishermen's Race that his hand bled) the betting again shifted in favour of Outer Cove. There was even some doubt that Blackhead would row.

According to press reports the race was not a disappointment. The two crews turned the buoys together and were neck to neck coming up the Pond. Blackhead gained a few feet on Outer Cove and maintained this close lead to the finish. For the second time that day, and this time under trying conditions, Blackhead made another excellent time-9:24. This too, remained a remarkable time over the next 80 years of Regatta History. The Daily News referred to the injured Blackhead rower. The paper said that by the finish of the race Healy, "... was in excruciating pain."

For their victory the Blackhead Crew was awarded silver medals and a coat each from the Newfoundland Clothing Company. Members of the crew were:

A.G. Williams, Cox  
M.Healy, stroke  
G.Cook  
M.Healy  
J.Healy  
W.Healy  
J.Cook.

In 1905 the competitive spirit was still strong between Blackhead and Outer Cove. These were the only two crews competing in the Fishermen's Race that day and Outer Cove were again the favourites. Yet, Blackhead took the lead from the start and remained a half boat length ahead until turning the buoys. They pulled ahead and won the race by three boat lengths. Their time an impressive 9:40  $\frac{4}{5}$  and a very good time even in those days. For this win the Blackhead Crew were awarded gold medals and two dollar gold pieces. The two crews were scheduled to compete in the championship but several Blackhead rowers became very ill and the crew was forced to withdraw. Outer Cove rowed for time only and recorded a time of 10:30  $\frac{2}{5}$ .

In 1906, G.Lewis replaced Williams as cox. This time they rowed in the Red Lion and again won the Fishermen's Race winning the prize for the best time of the day 9:34. The Daily News commented the next day that if Blackhead had been steered better they would have recorded a better time. There was no championship race in 1906. It had been on the program but was dropped by the Committee.

Blackhead rowed for another six or seven years but did not win any races. It appears the community was too small to sustain crews over the long haul as other fishing communities were able to do and Blackhead dropped out of participation in the Regatta. The feat of Blackhead in that 1904 Regatta remained a part of the oral folklore of Regatta History but in time faded completely. Today, only a handful of people at Blackhead have any memory of the great Blackhead rowing crew of the early part of this century. I put them forward for admittance to the Regatta Hall of Fame so that future generations will know and appreciate the contribution of the tiny

community of Blackhead to the Royal St. John's Regatta.

Costumes, Ja  
Collars, Side Com  
etc.  
**Geo. Kov**  
August 4.

**"OLD HOME"**

**THE OLD HOME C**  
I have arranged for  
of all "Old Homers" on  
noon, August 6th, and  
foundland Company have  
tickets to all "Old Home

Special Trains will leave  
Saturday afternoon, August  
6 o'clock, going as far as Kel-  
turning, will leave Kel-  
To the General Pu-  
desiring to join in the Out-  
Homers' Excursion Retu-  
one first-class fare to all  
St. John's and Kelligrews  
for above train.

The Committee have all  
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join and give the "Old H  
joyable outing on Satur-  
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August 11

**CHEFOO, Yesterday**  
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defences of northern and  
Port Arthur have fallen  
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night of the 28th when the  
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during the assault  
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against the eastern  
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and mines displayed.  
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under their feet. The J  
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declares that his soldiers  
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tired to the eastward.

**ROME, Last Night**  
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Tokio announcing that  
mored cruiser Kaigun  
The announcement has  
tion here.

**ST. PETERS**  
Night.—A correspondent  
clared Press here that  
just received a telegram  
giving alarming news. It  
that Alexieff who had go  
on his way to Vladivostok  
Liao Yang yesterday, and  
Koropatkia with regard

**TOKIO, Last Night**  
hap telegraphed that in  
fight at Yang Tsung and  
his losses were 6 officers  
wounded, 930 men killed.

**LONDON, Last Night**  
ported that Kuraki has  
triumphed in three days  
and that the Russian army  
pletely routed. The key  
is now held by Japan.  
said to be seriously wounded.  
Russians were unable to  
the determined fighting  
at night.—Koropatkia re-  
Russian defeat was very  
appalling. The war  
combination of the war  
war started, but the

and it would have been better had they  
remained ashore. The race between the  
Red Cross and Blue Peter, however, was  
exciting, but the "Peter" won by about  
two boats lengths. Time, 10 minutes, 22  
seconds.

**CHAMPIONSHIP.**

This race was the most interesting and  
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a sore hand and at the finish suffered  
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**FINIS.**

After the latter race the laborers and  
tradesmen were presented with the two  
dollar gold pieces, donated by Hon. Sir  
E. P. Morris, by Hon. J. Harvey, Presi-  
dent of the Regatta Committee. The  
silver medals won by the champions in  
the Togo, were also distributed. The  
1904 regatta is now over and fortunately  
without any serious accident. The large  
number of spectators seemed to enjoy  
the day and will now look forward to  
next year's. It is the only day when  
citizens of all classes and creeds meet  
together to witness such manly sport. A  
word of praise is due the Committee, for  
their untiring efforts. The Pres., Hon. Mr.  
Harvey has proved to be the right man  
for the position and we trust he will live  
long to occupy the office. Two other  
gentlemen—Treasurer Coen and Secre-  
tary Noonan also deserve the thanks of  
all citizens. Yesterday their work was  
anything but enviable, but they have  
entire satisfaction to all.

**LATEST  
FOREIGN NEWS.**

**PARIS, Tuesday.**—It is believed  
that the position of Port Arthur is much  
less critical than supposed the past day  
or two. The general supposition is that  
the Japanese efforts are being directed  
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around Port-Dalry harbor, rather than  
to advance to the attack.  
**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Tuesday.**  
—Serious disorders have occurred here,  
and the population is intensely excited,  
owing to the continued rise in the prices  
of all merchandise. The troops have  
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The Daily News  
August 4, 1904

The Brigade race was poorly con-  
trolled, the C.L.B. winning by about five lengths.  
Although but two boats have competed  
the last few years, it is one of the most  
popular of the programme. Both corps  
have their enthusiastic supporters, who  
are prepared to back their favorites,  
win or lose. Among the betteres yester-  
day, it was thought that the C.L.B. would  
win. A pleasing feature of the contest  
was that Rev. Fr. Maher, late chaplain  
of the C.C.C. was one of the judges.  
When the gun fired the C.C.C. in the  
Red Cross made the better start, and  
kept slightly ahead until half way down  
the pond. The C.L.B. in the Blue Peter  
then took the lead and kept it until the  
race was won. Time, 10 minutes, 22  
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**PRESENTATION OF PRIZES.**

At noon, His Honor the Administrator  
and Private Secretary Carter arrived,  
and evidenced keen interest in the con-  
tests. At the presentation of prizes, His  
Honor occupied a prominent place. The  
President, Hon. John Harvey, in ad-  
dressing the spectators, said it was not a  
day for making a speech and he would be  
very brief. On behalf of the committee,  
he expressed a welcome to those who  
had made their homes in other lands,  
but not the least in whose minds is our  
"Derby Day." He congratulated the  
winners on their creditable work. Some  
people had prophesied that the races  
were declining, but he was confident  
they were not, as there were more entries  
for this year's regatta than for two or  
three years. He then called for three  
cheers for His Honor the Administrator,  
and the lady Mayoress, needless to say  
they were given with a vim. Vice-Pres.  
Hiscock then called the winners who  
received their prizes at the hands of Mrs.  
Shea. The following are the names of  
the successful ones:

**AMATEUR**—(Blue Peter)—T. Whitten, cox; P. Brown, stroke; A. J. Croucher, J. Calnes, F. Brocklehurst, W. Greene, J. Hustins. (Gold medals).  
**TOGO**—A. G. Williams, cox; F. Miles, stroke; E. F. Harvey, C. E. Jeffrey, T. Hallett, S. Ebsary, W. Butt. (Silver medals).  
**FISHERMEN**—(Togo) Blackhead—A. G. Williams, cox; M. Healey, stroke; G. Cook, M. Healey, J. Healey, W. Healey, J. Cook. Gold medals presented by H. E. the Administrator and 22 gold pieces by Sir E. P. Morris).  
**FOOTBALL**—(Blue Peter); B. S., T. Whitten, cox; W. Cooper, stroke; A. Doyle, W. Brophy, W. Adams, J. Connolly, E. Higgins; (gold medals).  
**TOGO**—(C. E. I.), A. G. Williams, cox; M. Jenkins, stroke; F. Miller, J. Crocker, E. Goodland; (silver medals).  
**MERCHANTILE**—(Blue Peter); Job's, T. Whitten, cox; J. Keogh, stroke; J. Rendell, J. Gunn, J. Silck, J. Bendon, E. Harvey; (gold medals).  
**DOCTOR**—(Knowling's); C. H. Hayward, cox; P. Brown, stroke; W. Holwell, P. Knowling, F. Crossman, M. Jenkins, F. Rowsell; (silver medals).  
**BRIGADE**—(Blue Peter); C.L.B., A. G. Williams, cox; S. Piety, stroke; T. Hallett, F. Miles, W. Seyler, S. Ebsary, W. Butt; (the Administrator's Cup).  
His Honor the Administrator then briefly addressed the audience, thanking them for their hearty cheers and wishing them a pleasant afternoon. After a short interval the programme was resumed.

**TRADESMEN.**

Two boats entered in this race, Blue Peter and Red Cross. The start was a good one, both boats getting away together. When near the Committee tent the Blue Peter began to lead and reached the turning post first. Owing to some mismanagement the "Peter" collided with the buoy and several seconds were lost. Owing to this unfortunate occurrence the race did not prove as interesting as anticipated. The finish saw the Red Cross first with a lead of almost half the pond. Time, 10 minutes, 8 seconds.

**UNION.**

The boats that entered in this contest were the Togo and Blue Peter. Much interest was centered in this race and betting was about even. When leaving,

set were exciting, and the regatta would be "dead." It proved quite the reverse, however, and seldom, in recent years, has more enthusiasm been manifested. Shortly after 9 o'clock hundreds began wading their way to the banks of popular old Quidi Vidi, and although the starting time of the first event, many thousands were present. Early in the morning it was feared rain would fall, but at 10 o'clock the clouds cleared, and from that time until late in the afternoon "Old Sol" had no mercy on the excited throng. Although spectators felt the rays of the sun, on the laxe there was a delightful breeze to cool the heated brows of the contestants as they put forth every effort to reach the

**Winning Post First.**

The committee are to be congratulated, as if they had the fixing of the weather they could not have made it more favorable. Another pleasing feature was the large number of ladies on the "course." Whether the absence of appetizing liquors was responsible for it, we are unable to say, but never before have so many of the fair sex remained throughout the day. Their bright gowns made the surrounding attractive, and the display of native colors, "pink, white, and green" was commented on and admired by all. Owing to the absence of rain for some time past, the water was rather sluggish but the time compared favorably with that of past years. Many old familiar faces were missed, but many new acquaintances were made and friends who had not met for years renewed their friendship and passed an enjoyable day. The Old Home Weekers, many of whom had not witnessed the Regatta for some time, evinced as much interest as did the others. Following we give a brief account of the races as they took place:—

**AMATEUR**

At 10.15 the familiar bugle-call was heard, informing the crews in the Amateur race to get ready. A few minutes later the boats sped from their places towards the committee tent. Three boats had entered—Togo, Red Cross and Blue Peter. The crew of the Red Cross entered simply to make a third boat. They had very little practice and in consequence were not considered in the running for first place. The others were the favorite boats and a close contest between them was expected. At 10.40 the boats were in position and the judges boat, in which were the Judges, Time Keepers and Press Representatives, taking its position, the gun was fired and the boats got away. The Peter and Togo kept well together and there was very little difference in the time of their turning the buoy. The "home stretch" was a hard strain on both, as they worked their hardest. As they passed the band stand both put on a spurt and seemed to almost fly along the water. The Blue Peter's crew proved to be the stronger and reached the winning goal about a boat's length ahead of their opponents, the Red Cross being well in the rear. The time was 9 minutes 46.45 seconds, being 17.25 seconds quicker than last year's.

**FISHERMEN.**

Four boats started in the fishermen's race, viz., Togo (Blackhead), Blue Peter (Outer Cove), Doctor (Petty Harbor) and Red Cross (Logy Lash). It was generally believed that the Blue Peter would carry off the palm and few would bet against her. Fate did not favor her, however, and the victory fell to the Togo, which was only considered in the running for second place. A pretty start was made but the Peter and Togo soon forged ahead. The Togo turned the buoy first and was straightened up two or three strokes ahead of the Peter. She continued to gain slowly, but the return and won by about 2 lengths. The Blue Peter being second, Red Cross third, and Doctor last. The winning crew received the congratulations of all for their splendid work. There are not more than half a dozen families at Blackhead, and this being considered, makes her feat all the more creditable. The Togo's time was 9 minutes 51.55 seconds.

**FOOTBALL.**

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Costumes, Ja  
Collars, Side Com  
etc.  
**Geo. Kov**  
August 4

**"OLD HOME"**  
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**CHAMPIONSHIP.**

This race was the most interesting and exciting for the day. Two boats entered—the Togo with the Blackhead fishermen, and the Blue Peter with the Outer Cove fishermen. The former crew, having won the fishermen's race, was looked upon as having an easy contest. A minute after the start, however, it looked differently as the Blue Peter began to lead and the crew rowed with a dashing stroke. The Togo managed to catch the latter, however, before the end of the pond was reached and both racers tumbled the buoys together. Coming home the two boats were side by side, and speculation was rife as to which would win. About one hundred yards from the winning post the Togo was a half boat's length ahead. The Blue Peter's crew put on a "spurt" at this point and began to gain, and when the race finished the difference between the boats was only a few feet, the Togo winning. Time, 9 minutes and 24 seconds. One of the crew in the Togo in this race rowed with a sore hand and at the finish suffered excruciating pain.

**'FINIS'**

After the latter race the laborers and tradesmen were presented with the two dollar gold pieces, donated by Hon. Sir E. P. Morris, by Hon. J. Harvey, President of the Regatta Committee. The silver medals won by the champions in the Togo, were also distributed. The 1904 regatta is now over and fortunately without any serious accident. The large number of spectators seemed to enjoy the day and will now look forward to next year's. It is the only day when citizens of all classes and creeds meet together to witness such a many sport. A word of praise is due the Committee, for their untiring efforts. The Pres., Hon. Mr. Harvey, has proved to be the right man for the position and we trust he will live long to occupy the office. Two other gentlemen—Messrs. Coen and Secretary Noodan also deserve the thanks of all citizens. Yesterday their work was anything but enviable, but they gave entire satisfaction to all.

**LATEST FOREIGN NEWS.**

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**PRESENTATION OF PRIZES.**

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**TOGO**—A. G. Williams, cox; F. Miles stroke; E. F. Harvey, C. E. Jeffrey, T. Hallett, S. Ebsary, W. Butt. (Silver medals.)

**FISHERMEN**—(Togo) Blackhead—A. G. Williams, cox; M. Healey stroke; G. Cook, M. Healey, J. Healey, W. Healey, J. Cook. Gold medals presented by His Honor the Administrator and 25 gold pieces by Sir E. P. Morris.)

**FOOTBALL**—(Blue Peter); B.I.S., T. Whitten, cox; W. Cooper, stroke; A. Doyle, W. Brophy, W. Adams, J. Connolly, E. Higgins; (gold medals.)

**TOGO**—(C.E.I.), A. G. Williams, cox; M. Jenkins, stroke; F. Miller, J. Crocker, E. Goodland; (silver medals.)

**MERCANTILE**—(Blue Peter); Job's, T. Whitten, cox; J. Keough, stroke; J. Rendell, J. Gunn, J. Slick, J. Bendon, E. Harvey; (gold medals.)

**DOCTOR**—(Knowing's); C. H. Hayward, cox; P. Brown, stroke; W. Holwell, P. Knowling, F. Crossman, M. Jenkins, F. Rowell; (silver medals.)

**BRIGADE**—(Blue Peter); C.L.B., A. G. Williams, cox; S. Piercy, stroke; T. Hallett, F. Miles, W. Seyler, S. Ebsary, W. Butt; (the Administrator's Cup.) His Honor the Administrator then briefly addressed the audience, thanking them for their hearty cheers and wishing them a pleasant afternoon. After a short interval the programme was resumed.

**TRADESMEN.**

Two boats entered in this race, Blue Peter and Red Cross. The start was a good one, both boats getting away together. When near the Committee tent the Blue Peter began to lead and reached the turning post first. Owing to some mismanagement the "Peter" collided with the buoy and several seconds were lost. Owing to this unfortunate occurrence the race did not prove as interesting as anticipated. The fish saw the Red Cross first with a lead of almost half the pond. Time, 10 minutes, 8 seconds.

**UNION.**

The boats that entered in this contest were the Togo and Blue Peter. Much interest was centered in this race and being was about won. When leaving, both boats got away together. Col-

set of excelsior, and the regatta from a "dead." It proved quite the reverse, however, and seldom, in recent years, has more enthusiasm been manifested. Shortly after 9 o'clock hundreds began wading their way to the banks of popular old Quidi Vidi, and at 10 o'clock the starting time of the first event, many thousands were present. Early in the morning it was feared rain would fall, but at 10 o'clock the clouds cleared, and from that time until late in the afternoon "Old Sol" had no mercy on the excited throng. Although spectators felt the rays of the sun, on the lake there was a delightful breeze to cool the heated brows of the contestants as they put forth every effort to reach the

**Winning Post First.**

The committee are to be congratulated, as if they had the fixing of the weather they could not have made more favorable. Another pleasing feature was the large number of ladies on the "course." Whether the absence of spirituous liquors was responsible for it, we are unable to say, but never before have so many of the fair sex remained throughout the day. Their bright gowns made the surroundings attractive, and the display of native colors, "plak, white and green" was commented on and admired by all. Owing to the absence of rain for some time past, the water was rather sluggish but the time compared favorably with that of past years. Many old familiar faces were missed, but many new acquaintances were made and friends who had not met for years renewed their friendship and passed an enjoyable day. The Old Home Weekers, many of whom had not witnessed the Regatta for some time, evinced as much interest as did the others. Following we give a brief account of the races as they took place:—

**AMATEUR**

At 10.15 the familiar bugle-call was heard, informing the crews in the Amateur race to get ready. A few minutes later the boats sped from their places towards the committee tent. Three boats had entered—Togo, Red Cross and Blue Peter. The crew of the Red Cross entered simply to make a third boat. They had very little practice and in consequence were not considered in the running for first place. The others were the favorite boats and a close contest between them was expected. At 10.40 the boats were in position and the judges boat, in which were the judges, time keepers and Press Representatives, taking its position, the gun was fired and the boats got away. The Peter and Togo kept well together and there was very little difference in the time of their turning the buoy. The "home stretch" was a hard strain on both, as they worked their hardest. As they passed the band stand both put on a spurt and seemed to almost fly along the water. The Blue Peter's crew proved to be the stronger and reached the winning goal about a boat's length ahead of their opponents, the Red Cross being well in the rear. The time was 9 minutes 45 seconds, being 17 25 seconds quicker than last year's.

**FISHERMEN**

Four boats started in the Fishermen's race, viz., Togo (Blackhead), Blue Peter (Outer Cove), Doctor (Pelly Harbor) and Red Cross (Logy Bay). It was generally believed that the Blue Peter would carry off the palm and few would bet against her. Fate did not favor her, however, and the victory fell to the Togo, which was only considered in the running for second place. A pretty start was made but the Peter and Togo soon forged ahead. The Togo turned the buoy first and was straightened up two or three strokes ahead of the Peter. She continued to gain slowly on the return and won by about 2 lengths, the Blue Peter being second, Red Cross third, and Doctor last. The winning crew received the congratulations of all for their splendid work. There are not more than half a dozen families at Blackhead, and this being considered, makes the feat all the more creditable. The Togo's time was 9 minutes 55 seconds.

**FOOTBALL**

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