

Simple pleasures; a history of Tumbling Bay bathing place, Oxford

THE GROWING POPULARITY OF WILD swimming in recent years has renewed interest in Oxford's river bathing places. These modest recreation facilities located in the green margins of the city seemed to have lost their purpose as increasing affluence, wider leisure opportunities and health scares steadily reduced the number of users. Early casualties were St Ebbe's bathing place, closed in 1938, and two sites on the river Cherwell, Dames' Delight and St Clement's bathing place, closed in 1970 and 1971 respectively.¹ The City Council's remaining river bathing places were officially closed in 1990, and, in January 1992, the University closed and quickly erased all traces of its well-known Parson's Pleasure men's bathing place on the river Cherwell.² The City Council cleared the largely timber structures around its Tumbling Bay, Long Bridges and Wolvercote bathing places, and nature began to take over sites that had previously been regularly managed. Some swimmers were not deterred, however, and as a new generation seeks to revive these facilities it seems timely to examine how and why the City Council created these bathing places and how they have been used and developed over the years. This study concentrates on the history of one of the oldest City bathing places, Tumbling Bay, which was originally for males only, evolved into a gender segregated facility, and ultimately became a family resort.

Early organized swimming in Oxford

In their study of Victorian swimming communities, Day and Roberts noted that before dedicated facilities were provided, 'swimming took place in virtually any area in which water existed.'³ This was certainly the case around Oxford where the rivers and streams had long been used for informal recreation. A young graduate, Gabriel Poultney, drowned at Patten's Pleasure, an early name for Parson's Pleasure, on 21st August 1607, and Anthony Wood noted other drownings there in 1666 and 1689.⁴ A correspondent to the *Oxford Chronicle* in 1864 named seventeen other locations around the city where swimming had formerly taken place, one of them being the Port Meadow stream where Henry Taunt and other boys from St Ebbe's went to swim on hot summer days in the 1840s.⁵ Many of these places became less remote as the population of Oxford began to grow in the early nineteenth century and housing expanded well beyond the city's medieval limits. Respectable folk out for riverside walks took great exception to the sight of nude male bathers and the number of places where 'people can bathe without offending decency, according to the modern notion' steadily decreased. Secluded official river bathing places were viewed as a solution to this problem and, by providing a degree of supervision, they also promised to reduce the number of bathing fatalities.⁶ Most of those who drowned were Town boys and young men, but there were also Gown victims; in June 1843, two Christ

Church students, William Gaisford and Richard Phillimore, drowned below the lasher at Sandford-on-Thames where they are commemorated by an obelisk.⁷ The Baths and Washhouses Act in 1846 enabled local authorities to establish open air bathing places and, although in Oxford the city treasurer warned councillors that there was insufficient money for the purpose in the borough fund, a Committee for Public Bathing Places was set up and issued an urgent appeal for financial support from members of the university and Oxford residents.⁸ The committee identified a suitable site on the Oxpens estate which Alexander William Hall, owner of the Swan Brewery, leased from Christ Church. Opened in July 1846, the City's first free bathing place was linked to the St Ebbe's district by a footbridge from Blackfriars Road. The swimming area in a side channel between the Castle Mill Stream and the main river Thames was small and quite shallow, suitable for young boys but never very appealing to older males.⁹

The search for other sites was delayed by a shortage of funds. The City Treasurer and Alderman Sadler noted that the cost of forming the St Ebbe's bathing place had only been kept down to around £25 because the Paving Commissioners had sent a few men to help with the work.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the City agreed in 1853 to rent from the lessee of Christ Church's Medley estate a narrow strip of ground beside the Bullstake Stream north-west of Osney Bridge. Bullstake Stream had been part of the main river Thames navigation channel around West Oxford in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1790, the Thames Commissioners created the present main river channel with a pound lock at Osney, and Bullstake Stream became a side-stream.¹¹ A tumbling bay or outfall weir had been built on this stream by 1796, and the name Tumbling Bay became attached to the locality.¹²

Opening of Tumbling Bay bathing place

Tumbling Bay bathing place opened in 1853, two years after the development of nearby Osney Town began, but the City Council envisaged it as a city-wide facility while recognising that similar accommodation was needed for residents in the eastern suburbs.¹³ The site was near an earlier unofficial bathing place on the Sheepwash Channel,¹⁴ but cut off from the rest of Oxford by the recently built Great Western Railway line and separated also from the growing suburb of Jericho by the Oxford Canal. This seems not to have deterred keen bathers; nor were they put off by the fact that the only access was by ferry punt from the Thames towpath north of Four Streams. Tumbling Bay was originally for males only and the swimming area below the lasher was reached by a path from the ferry. Some bathers probably changed in the sheds that were provided in 1853, but many would have undressed on the grass behind a screening hedge. Two or three narrow openings through this hedge led to the pool side, an arrangement which was criticised in 1859 because it made supervision difficult and led to people diving on to swimmers; the complainant also worried that naked males 'were unveiled, not only to Botley Road and the inhabitants of a portion of Osney Town, but also to the refreshment department and other offices of the Great Western Railway.'¹⁵

The City Council had created the St Ebbe's and Tumbling Bay bathing places, but did not have the resources to maintain them. In August 1864, the Paving Commissioners, a joint university and city highways and sanitary authority, appointed a committee to report on the best means of providing such facilities.¹⁶ The Oxford Local Board, another Town and Gown body, took over from the Paving Commissioners in 1865 and eventually, in May 1868, decided that it would spend £10 on maintaining Tumbling Bay and £5 on the St Ebbe's bathing place.¹⁷ The Local Board subsequently managed the City bathing places until Oxford became a county borough in 1889 and the City Council inherited all of the Board's responsibilities. The Local Board's main task was the main drainage of the city carried out between 1873 and 1880, and bathing places were a comparatively low priority. Attempts to open a bathing place in St Clement's were unsuccessful and, in 1885, remarkably ambitious plans for open air baths at Aston's Eyot near Jackdaw Lane foundered when the Local Government Board turned down the Board's request for a £2,000 loan.¹⁸ Oxford University had funded the creation of a river bathing place for members of the university at Long Bridges in 1868, and the Local Board negotiated its use by citizens during the Long Vacation in 1884. This arrangement continued annually until 1887 when the Local Board purchased Long Bridges.¹⁹

Development of Tumbling Bay

By the mid-1870s, Tumbling Bay was equipped with changing sheds, privies, ladders and a 'bottom plunging platform', presumably a diving board. The hedge described in 1859 had evidently been removed and a new one planted on the south bank now shielded naked bathers from passers-by on Botley Road (Fig. 1).²⁰ Use of the bathing place in 1876 was described as 'something wonderful'; in the main summer months, about 1,000 males were using it on weekdays and, on Sundays, there were said to be 4–500 present at any one time between 6.30 a.m. and 10 p.m.²¹ The place was indeed so busy that Maximilian Davies, the attendant at Tumbling Bay, secured an increase in his annual salary from £10 to £15 because he had to employ someone to help him with the punting.²² Since Davies spent virtually all his time punting people to and from the bathing place, supervision in Tumbling Bay was minimal, and, following the inquest on a thirteen-year-old Jericho boy who drowned there in June 1877, the jury recommended that 'a man should be kept in the place who could swim and dive.'²³ There were inevitably instances of bad behaviour and, in July 1874, the so-called leader of the Tumbling Bay roughs was sent to prison for twenty-one days with hard labour for disorderly conduct and using bad language. In 1886, two people wrote to the local paper complaining about the disgraceful conduct of boys at Tumbling Bay. One wanted no swearing signs erected, the other requested that everyone should wear a 'bathing dress' to put a stop to the boys' vulgar comments and filthy conversation.²⁴

Women and girls had never enjoyed the simple freedom to swim in rivers and streams and no provision was made for them in Oxford's early bathing places. By the end of the nineteenth century, many women were taking up

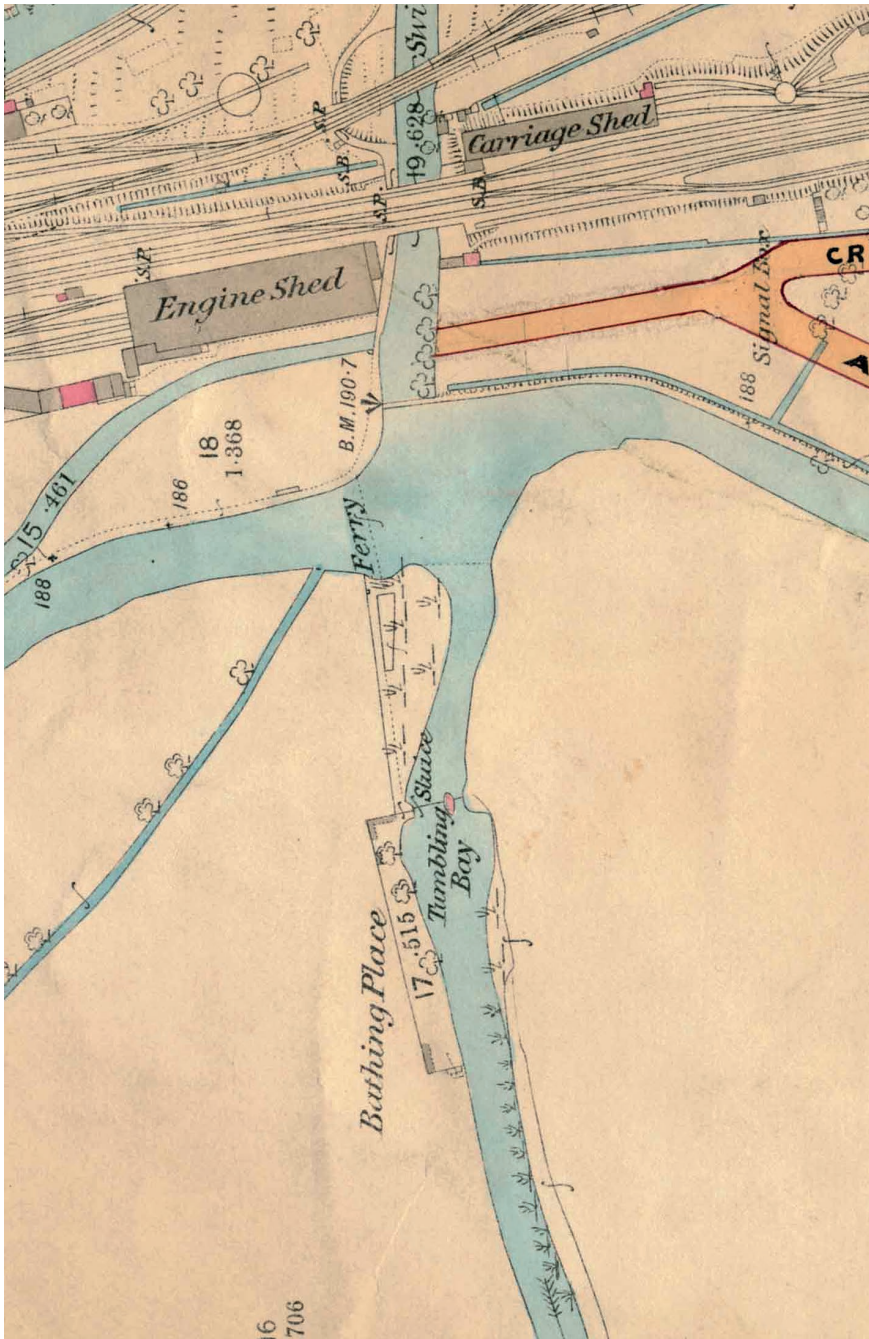


Fig. 1 Ordnance Survey plan of Tumbling Bay surveyed in 1873-4. (Author)

healthy outdoor activities such as swimming and, in 1884, ‘An Oxford Lady Bather’ wrote to the *Oxford Chronicle* seeking better facilities for women in Oxford.²⁵ At this date, ladies could pay to use Parson’s Pleasure ‘for a couple of hours in the middle of the day’ during the summer vacation, and similar arrangements were made for women attending the University Extension summer meeting in 1891.²⁶ In 1898, a limited company opened the Isle of Rhea bathing place, higher up the Cherwell, to provide for North Oxford women and girls who could afford to purchase season or day tickets.²⁷ Once the City Council assumed responsibility for the Local Board’s bathing places in 1889, it became easier for electors, including propertied women who could vote in local elections, to urge their councillors to cater for the less well off. In June 1892, the City Council considered whether to allow females to use Tumbling Bay for two evenings a week before agreeing to open it to them all day on Fridays from 6.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. During the debate, Councillor Grubb expressed doubts as to whether there would be any enthusiasm for early swims and remarked, to general amusement, that, ‘if any women went to bathe there, he would want to see them.’ A special dressing shed was provided and females were expected to wear ‘bathing drawers’ which they could borrow free of charge from the woman attendant employed for these sessions; once suitably dressed, the women bathers could enjoy their own roped-off space in the pool. Anticipating a limited response, the Council initially ordered only twelve pairs of bathing drawers, but nearly 5,000 females flocked to Tumbling Bay during the season, an average of around 370 a day.²⁸ Tumbling Bay continued to be made available to women and girls in subsequent years, but the Council now came under pressure to provide similar facilities in East Oxford. Some especially keen females negotiated with the attendant to secure paid access to Long Bridges bathing place before it opened in the morning, and the City Council created a separate women’s bathing place there in 1900 after receiving two large petitions.²⁹ Additional hours for females at Tumbling Bay were an unsatisfactory compromise and, in July 1913, the Council opened a separate women’s bathing place above the lasher and beside the path leading from the ferry (Fig. 2). This space provided dressing cabins and sheds and an attendant’s hut, and steps in a concrete retaining wall led into the pool where a footbridge separated the deep and shallow ends. The popularity of the new facility was such that the swimming area had to be enlarged in 1924.³⁰

Swimming lessons at Tumbling Bay

Speaking about Tumbling Bay bathing place in 1866, E.T. Spiers noted its considerable importance as a place for learning to swim, but the Council did not appoint an attendant who could also teach swimming until 1895.³¹ Boys from Magdalen College School were swimming at Parson’s Pleasure by the mid-1850s,³² but local elementary schools only began to bring boys to the City’s bathing places in the 1900s as the school curriculum expanded to include physical training and exercise. SS Philip & James’ School held its first swimming sports at Tumbling Bay in July 1905 and boys were taken there weekly the following year. The City Education Committee issued certificates to boys who completed a twenty-five yard swim and demonstrated

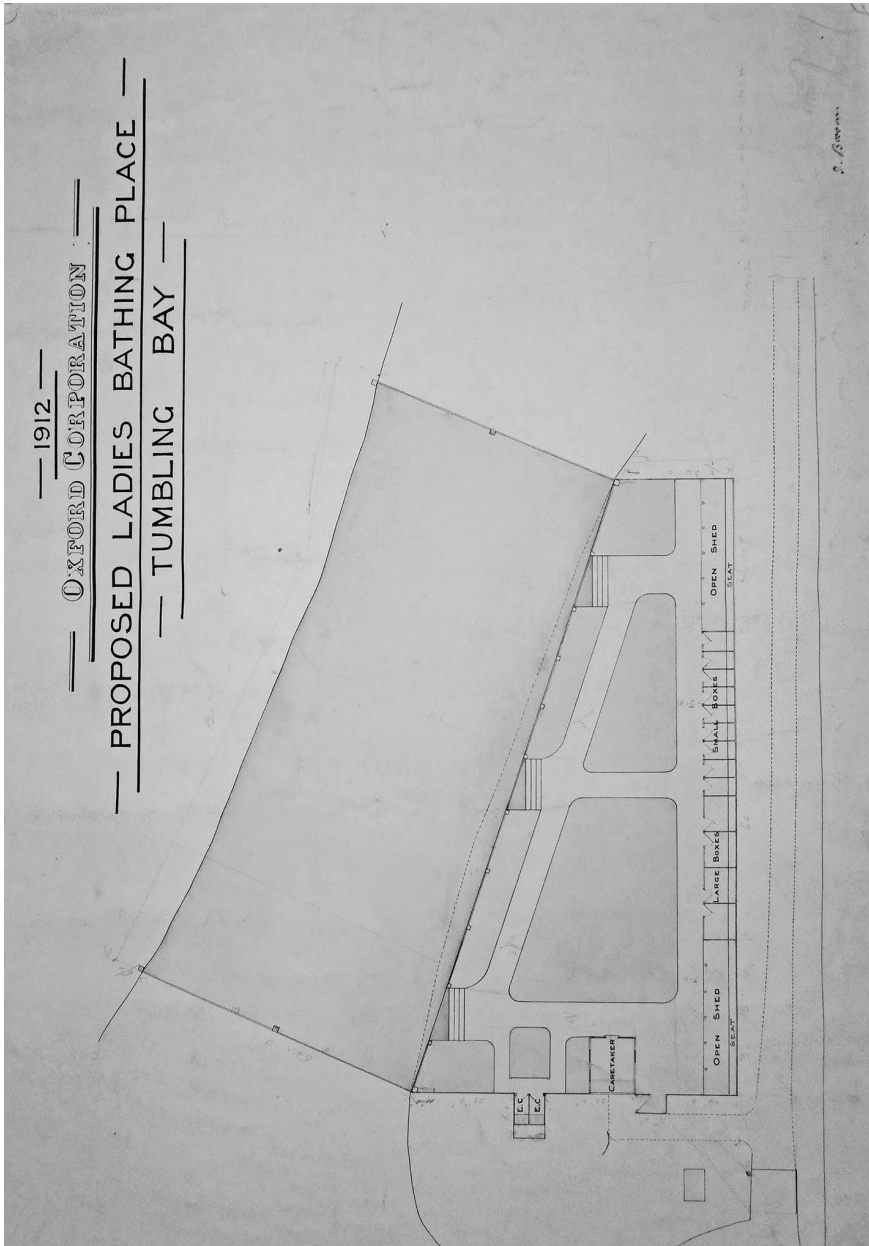


Fig. 2 Plan of the Ladies' bathing place opened in 1913. (© Oxfordshire History Centre OCA3/1/Y12/6/5)

knowledge of first aid; by the 1940s, this test included diving into the murky depths of Tumbling Bay to retrieve a brick.³³ Girls' schools only began to attend classes at Tumbling Bay and Long Bridges in the early 1920s after head teachers secured the appointment of an instructress by revealing that that only 3.5 percent of their girls had 'really learnt to swim' in 1917 and 2.9 percent in 1918.³⁴ Even for local West Oxford schools, class visits involved walks along the river towpath to the ferry north of Four Streams; for children from Jericho, there was the additional excitement of crossing the Oxford Canal by pontoon from the Council depot in Nelson Street and walking to the ferry past busy railway yards (Fig. 3). Bob Allen never forgot the occasion when Mr Parsons, his teacher at St Frideswide's School, fell into the river.³⁵ Renie Haffenden remembered that children learned to swim by practising strokes on boxes on dry land; once in the water, Edith Bartlett pretended to swim while keeping her feet on the bottom.³⁶ Bob Hounslow recalled lessons where he stood in the water in a line of 'scrawny boys' before diving forward with arms outstretched and gliding along until he reached the weir.³⁷ Schools, including nearby Berkshire schools, continued to visit Tumbling Bay until around 1960, and the Baths Committee noted in July 1948 that, whereas overall attendances tended to fall in cold weather, teachers rarely cancelled class visits.³⁸

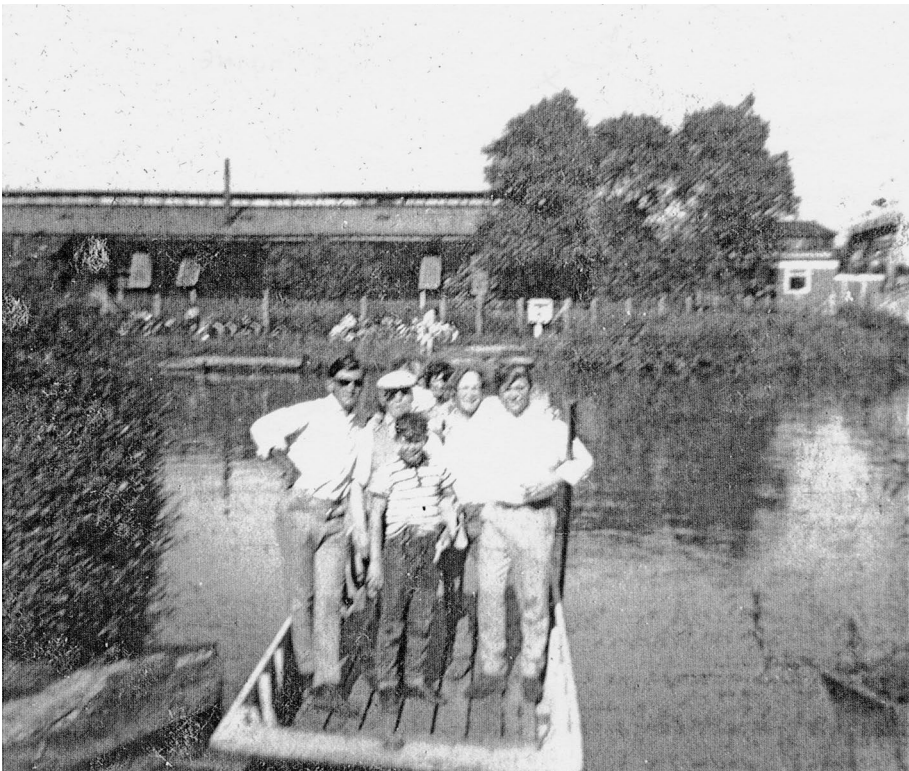


Fig. 3 Swimmers on the Tumbling Bay ferry in the 1950s. (© Oxfordshire History Centre POX0014792)

Tumbling Bay in the twentieth century

The strict segregation of the sexes at Long Bridges and Tumbling Bay was very gradually relaxed. The women's bathing places were initially screened off from outside observation by high galvanised sheeting, and Mrs Long, an attendant in the women's pool at Tumbling Bay in the 1920s, was particularly hostile to male intruders. Joan Bates remembered that 'some children came in carrying a baby and she wanted to know whether it was a boy or a girl and either they didn't know or they didn't tell her so she lifted up the child's clothes to find if it was a boy or a girl, found it was a boy and told them to take it out, they were not going to have it in a girls' bathing place.'³⁹ Nude swimming for males remained general until 1932 when, after an entertaining debate, the City Council decided to make the wearing of costumes compulsory at all its bathing places. Seventeen men defied the new regulations at Tumbling Bay on May 1st and two did so again on the 2nd, but the threat of legal action seems to have swiftly ended their resistance.⁴⁰ The relevant committee discussed and promptly deferred the issue of mixed bathing in 1924, but that option became more practicable after male nudity was prohibited. Mixed bathing on two afternoons a week was permitted in the Tumbling Bay women's bathing place in 1937, and mixed bathing was fully introduced in 1948.⁴¹ Between the Wars, Tumbling Bay closed at 8 p.m., but local clubs such as the Clarendon Press Swimming Club and the Oxford Co-operative Social and Sports Club were permitted to hire it for an extra hour on summer evenings.⁴² The swimming season finished at the end of September but, in 1936, J.E. Lloyd and five other men were given special permission to use Tumbling Bay free of charge during October.⁴³

Tumbling Bay was probably busiest in the post-war years before mass car ownership and foreign holidays widened everyone's horizons (Fig. 4, *see the cover*). More than 86,000 admissions were recorded between May and September 1947, accounting for just over a third of the attendances at all the City's outdoor bathing places,⁴⁴ and the number of people wishing to use the bathing place forced the Baths Committee in 1952 to consider how to improve access to it. School groups had sometimes been allowed to walk through the allotments in Twenty Pound Meadow to reach Tumbling Bay, but the Allotments Committee ruled out more general use. Members of the Parks and Cemeteries Committee initially refused to allow access from the adjacent Botley Road recreation ground because they anticipated a flood of bicycles, but they agreed to a year-long experiment in 1955 and that became the permanent solution.⁴⁵ During these years, the bathing place was scrupulously maintained and the swimming area was regularly dredged. In 1963, the City Engineer consulted the Hydraulics Research Station about managing the build-up of silt in the pools, and a silt barrier costing £1,764 was installed in the following year.⁴⁶ Improved facilities included new seats, hand wringers and first aid boxes in 1952, toilets in 1954–5, new dressing accommodation in 1956–7, and a drinking fountain in 1957. Committee reports also occasionally noted the planting of summer annuals and the pruning of rose trees which brought colour to the bathing place (Fig. 5).⁴⁷



Fig. 5 Tumbling Bay bathing place in the 1950s. (© Oxfordshire History Centre POX0123075)

Jenny Rogers, born in 1952, has recalled the ‘simple pleasures’ of family picnics at Oxford’s river bathing places.⁴⁸ Ann Allan, born in 1948, often went to Tumbling Bay with her father and her sister in the early 1950s, and she recalled the slide and springboard at each end and the diving board in what had been the men’s pool. Once she reached the age of seven, she was allowed to go on her own, joining the many other youngsters who spent much of the summer at Tumbling Bay. Leslie Jones visited frequently as a boy and, later, when he was employed in the nearby railway locomotive depot, he kept a swimming costume in his locker and sneaked across the river for a quick dip whenever he could.⁴⁹ Between 1962 and 1965, Mrs Atherton from Henry Road secured a licence to supply sandwiches, ice cream and sweets at Tumbling Bay, but the venture was not a financial success, and the City Council failed to attract another contractor.⁵⁰

Decline (and rebirth?) of Tumbling Bay

Although Tumbling Bay continued to be a popular destination for local youngsters and family picnics into the 1970s and 1980s, user numbers fell away both here and at Oxford’s other river bathing places. Oxford still had no central swimming pool, but the outdoor pool at New Hinksey, opened in 1935,

and indoor pools at Temple Cowley (1938) and Marston Ferry pool (1976) provided accessible alternative facilities. St Clement's bathing place closed in 1971 because the river Cherwell was judged to be too polluted, and the water quality at Oxford's other bathing places was questioned.⁵¹ As Karen Carr has commented, people now saw 'dangers where there were none or where dangers were far outweighed by the pleasures of swimming.'⁵² The low risk of catching Weil's disease, a rare form of leptospirosis contracted from the urine of infected rats, helped to deter potential river swimmers.⁵³ On safety grounds, the City Council removed the diving platform and the water chutes that had so delighted users of Tum in the 1950s (Figs. 4–5). Even during the dry summer of 1959, water was still pouring over the lasher (seen behind the children in Fig. 4), but water levels tended to fluctuate much more in later years. Local people debated whether this was due to dry summers, the abstraction of water from the Thames for Farmoor reservoir or the management of river levels so that larger cruisers could negotiate Osney Bridge. In June 1981, a feature in the *West Oxford News* announced that Tumbling Bay had been dredged and was safe for swimming with adult supervision from 10 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.; it was even possible to book evening parties.⁵⁴ The sub-text was to 'use it or lose it', but attendances continued to decline and the bathing place was officially closed in 1990. Unofficially, of course, swimming was still possible, and the present writer, a relative newcomer to West Oxford, would often join true locals Bill Shorter, Jim Megitt and Brendan Carter, for a refreshing evening dip in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Bill had been a regular at Tumbling Bay since the 1920s and was able to judge the time accurately from the elevation of the sun above the willows at the west end of the pool.

The gradual transformation of Tumbling Bay into an unofficial nature reserve had a positive side—treading water close to a kingfisher was one!—but the silt built up, the weirs decayed and the last of the timber footbridges became unusable in 2002, making most of the site inaccessible. Friends of Tumbling Bay encouraged the Environment Agency to rebuild the weirs, and another local organization, the West Oxford Wildlife Group, supported by West Oxford Community Association, secured funding to rebuild the footbridge in 2003. Swimming at Tumbling Bay, especially on hot summer days, continues to be popular, but the pools are now silted up and one of the concrete retaining walls needs repair. A Tumbling Bay Preservation Society was formed in 2022 to ensure that wild swimmers can in future enjoy a place which has happy memories for so many local residents.

Appendix: The staffing of Tumbling Bay

The ferrymen and attendants were a crucial element of Tumbling Bay bathing place, many of them earning a lasting place in people's memories. Until 1895, there was just one attendant who spent virtually all of his time ferrying people across the river; subsequently, the posts of ferryman and attendant or caretaker were separated so that one (and later two) male attendants could supervise the swimmers. A female part-time attendant was first appointed in 1892 when women and girls were allowed to use Tumbling Bay; eventually, two female

attendants were employed in the women's bathing place. Records of service are incomplete, but the following individuals are identified by committee reports, newspaper accounts and reminiscences:

Thomas Beesley, attendant, until 1871; described as 'long in charge' when he died in 1871 aged 73. (*Jackson's Oxford Journal* (henceforth JOJ) 5 November 1870; *Oxford Chronicle* (henceforth OC) 26 August 1871).

Maximilian Davies, attendant, 1872 to c. 1878 (JOJ 4 May 1872, 16 June 1878).

William Beesley, attendant, c. 1880 to c.1895 (JOJ 12 May 1883, 15 June 1895).

James Beesley, attendant, 1895 (OC 10 August 1895).

Charles Longford, attendant, c. 1899 to 1914. Royal Humane Society medal for saving several lives in Tumbling Bay, 1899; volunteered for service, 1914. (JOJ 26 August 1899; OCA1/22/A1/1, 13).

Miss E A Beesley, attendant or caretaker, 1912 to 1918. Living at 69 Abbey Road, 1917. (OCA1/100/A1/2, 278, 348; OCA1/22/A1/1, 30, 45, 68, 76).

William Carter, ferryman, 1912 and 1917. Living at 17 Princes Street, 1917. (OCA1/100/A1/2, 284; OCA1/22/A1/1, 68).

Thomas Rose, ferryman (also at Long Bridges), 1912–18 (OCA1/100/A1/2, 283; OCA1/22/A1/1, 20, 72).

Charles Longford junior, attendant or caretaker, 1915–33. Succeeded his father. Living at 22 Friars Street, 1917. (OCA1/22/A1/1, 13, 68; OCA1/7/A1/2, 119; OCA1/54/A1/1, 249).

Frederick W Beesley, ferryman, 1916–18 (OCA1/22/A1/1, 30, 71).

Miss L Wheeler, assistant caretaker, 1920. Living at 4 Beef Lane. (OCA1/7/A1/2, 121).

G E Gardiner, relief attendant, 1920–2. Living at 11 Green Place, New Hinksey, 1920. (OCA1/7/A1/2, 119, 219).

Frank 'Butcher' Long, ferryman, 1922 onwards. Lived at 49 Bridge Street, Osney; died in 1947 aged 62. (OCA1/7/A1/2, 219; OHC OT 259; *Oxford Times* 3 January 1947).

Mrs Long, attendant, 1920s to 1930s; offered post of relief attendant as in previous years, 1937 (OHC OT 250; OCA1/54/A1/2, 102).

Miss E M Savin, assistant attendant, 1924 and 1934. Living in Marlborough Road (OCA1/7/A1/2, 344; OCA1/54/A1/1, 279).

Miss E M M O'Brien, assistant attendant, 1927. Living in George Street, St Clement's. (OCA1/7/A1/3, 214).

Miss E N Joy, assistant attendant, 1933–4. (OCA1/54/A1/1, 255, 278, 314).

F G Webb, attendant, 1934. Living in Church Lane, New Hinksey. (OCA1/54/A1/1, 278).

Miss Bowell, assistant attendant, 1933–4. (OCA1/54/A1/1, 314).

C H Butler and E Jackson, attendants, had been called up, 1940. (OCA1/54/A1/2, 237).

A Parker, attendant, 1946. (OCA1/54/A1/3, 83).

W M Buckle, chief attendant, resigned, 1947. ((OCA1/54/A1/3, after 111).

Alfred Curtis, ferryman, 1955. (OHC POX0393372).

Notes

- 1 Oxfordshire History Centre (henceforth OHC) OCA1/54/A1/2, 140; Sugden, V., *An Oxford Diary* (Oxford, c.2009), 317, 404.
- 2 Sugden, op. cit. 436; Townsend, G.J.N., *A Cultural History of Parson's Pleasure* [Unpublished thesis] (2022), 363.
- 3 Day, D., and Roberts, M., *Swimming Communities in Victorian England* (Cham, Switzerland, 2019), 4.
- 4 Clark, A., ed., 'Register of the University of Oxford, vol. ii, 1571–1622, part iii, Degrees', *Oxford Historical Society* 12 (1888), 220; Clark, A., ed., 'The Life and Times of Anthony Wood...', vol. ii, 1664–1681', *Oxford Historical Society* 21, (1892), 80; Clark, A., ed., 'The Life and Times of Anthony Wood...', vol. iii, 1682–1695', *Oxford Historical Society* 26 (1894), 306.
- 5 *Oxford Chronicle* (henceforth OC) (16 July 1864); OHC Taunt 47 Taunt, H.W., *From Oxford Westward* (Oxford, 1920), 1.
- 6 *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (henceforth JOJ), (20 June 1846).
- 7 JOJ, (24 June 1843).
- 8 *Acts of Parliament of the United Kingdom*, 9 & 10 Victoria, c. 74.
- 9 JOJ, (20 June 1846, 25 July 1846); OC 6.8.1887; Ordnance Survey 1:2500 Berkshire VI.3 (1878), surveyed 1873–5; the side channel was infilled after the closure of St Ebbe's bathing place and is now part of Oxpens Field.
- 10 JOJ, (25 July 1853).
- 11 Crossley, A., ed., *Victoria History of the County of Oxford, v. 4: the City of Oxford* (London, 1979) (henceforth VCH 4), 292.
- 12 Hobson, M.G., ed., *Oxford Council Acts, 1752–1801* (Oxford, 1962), 245.
- 13 JOJ, (9 April 1853).
- 14 Townsend, op. cit. 68, 81.
- 15 OC, (23 July 1859).
- 16 JOJ, (6 August 1864).
- 17 JOJ, (9 May 1868).
- 18 JOJ, (6 October 1883; 21 February 1885); OCA3/1/Y12/1.
- 19 JOJ, (2 May 1868; 16 October 1869; 11 October 1884; 15 October 1887).
- 20 JOJ, (24 April 1875; 8 April 1876); Ordnance Survey 1:500 Oxfordshire XXXIII.14.20 (1878), surveyed 1874.
- 21 OC, (9 December 1876).
- 22 JOJ, (9 December 1876).
- 23 JOJ, (16 June 1877).
- 24 JOJ, (18 July 1874); OC, (10 July 1886, 24 July 1886).
- 25 OC, (20 September 1884).
- 26 *Daily News*, (13 September 1884), reference kindly provided by George Townsend; Townsend, op. cit. 116
- 27 OC, (29 October 1898).
- 28 Before the vote was won: women and politics, 1868–1918 – The History of Parliament (wordpress.com), <https://thehistoryofparliament.wordpress.com>.

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- com/2018/08/29/before-the-vote-was-won-women-and-politics-1868–1918/, accessed 5 Dec. 2022; OC, (17 June 1892).
- 29 JOJ, (5 August 1899; 7 April 1900).
- 30 OC, (1 August 1913; 8 February 1924); OCA1/100/A1/2, 278, 340; OCA1/7/A1/2, 313–4; OCA3/1/Y12/6.
- 31 JOJ, (12 May 1866); OC, (10 August 1895).
- 32 Townsend, *op. cit.* 79.
- 33 JOJ, (9 June 1905; 28 July 1905; 20 July 1906); OHC OT 277.
- 34 OCA1/22/A1/1, 89; OCA1/7/A1/2, 152.
- 35 OCA1/54/A1/4, 26; OHC OT 272.
- 36 OHC OT 274.
- 37 Davies, Caitlin, *Downstream: a History and Celebration of Swimming the River Thames* (London, 2015), 53.
- 38 OCA1/54/A1/3, report after 131; OCA1/54/A1/6, 15.
- 39 OHC OT 250.
- 40 OCA1/54/A1/1, 151–2.
- 41 OCA1/7/A1/3, 9; OCA1/54/A1/2, 106; OCA1/54/A1/3, report after 125.
- 42 OCA1/54/A1/1, 61; OCA1/54/A1/2, 18.
- 43 OCA1/54/A1/2, 30.
- 44 OCA1/54/A1/3, report after 111.
- 45 OCA1/54/A1/4, 162–3, 168; OCA1/54/A1/5, 50; OHC OT 272.
- 46 OCA1/54/A1/6, 301; OCA1/54/A1/7, 53.
- 47 OCA1/54/A1/4, 150–1; OCA1/54/A1/5, 2, 103, 145, 148, 176, 191; OCA1/54/A1/7, 220.
- 48 Davies, 44.
- 49 OHC OT 253; OT 258.
- 50 OCA1/54/A1/6, 249; OCA1/54/A1/7, 143, 150, 211, 215, 222.
- 51 VCH 4, 428; Hibbert, C., ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Oxford* (London, 1986), 447; Sugden, 309.
- 52 Carr, K.E., *Shifting Currents: a World History of Swimming* (London, 2022), 334–5.
- 53 Davies, *op. cit.* 11.
- 54 *West Oxford News*, June 1981.