

Sally Lawrence

Book of Condolence

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Sally was the first person I met from Lea RC (as I'm sure she was for many). From the very beginning, she was one of the friendliest, most helpful and kindest people I knew at the club...in fact I'd say that goes for life in general. Over the years, she taught me so much. We shared loads of laughs, wins (both with her in the coxing or coaching seat and as a fellow rower), wine and river-swimming. Floating down the River Stour the morning after camping at Sudbury Regatta won't be the same without her. Rowing won't be the same without her. The Lea won't be the same without her.

Sarah Rimassa, Lea Rowing Club

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Dear, dear Sally! Thank you so much for welcoming me to rowing at my relatively late age, and for encouraging me to progress and 'not to stand in my own way'. I shall remember you, and your selfless service to Lea RC, with great fondness and gratitude.

Vukasin (Kash) Babic, Rec Squad member, Lea Rowing Club

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Dear Sally you were such a kind and generous person. You created a really welcoming atmosphere at the club for everyone whatever their capability or potential. That will be your legacy. I will miss you so much as a friend and I am very grateful that I have wonderful memories of our holiday together to remember. Be at peace Sally x

Jo Baxter, Lea Rowing Club

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Sally was my "rowing sister" (her words). She has been my good friend since I returned to rowing in 2010 and particularly over the last 5 years. She always there to offer support and help over rowing and non-rowing matters.

We enjoyed each other's company and spent time together outside the rowing club. Gail's in Wanstead will always remind me of you and our regular coffee mornings and chats. She was my roommate at Seneffe camp and at HRR. She loved Henley Royal Regatta, she knew so many people! But again she gave support as I worked my way through qualifiers to knock out with the crews I coached. G&T ready at the end of the day and commiserations when needed! Sally, I miss you, we had a lot of fun and laughed a lot. I still can't believe you have gone. Rest in peace, my friend, my "rowing sister".

Gill Parker, Lea Rowing Club

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Sally cared so much about helping others; sometimes with discreet issues but often over an extended period of time. In this way she touched the lives of so many people, me among them, though in her typically modest fashion she never believed us when we told her how much we appreciated her. As the first person I met from a rowing club, and someone who supported and encouraged me for my entire 'career' thus far, Sally will for me always be intrinsically associated with the sport. I will think of you Sally whenever I am out in a rowing boat or any other vessel, and remember how much you enjoyed being on the water. You'll forever be welcome beside me.

Ian Richardson, Lea Rowing Club



You gave so much, so selflessly to us all at the Lea and beyond - I hope you felt the love returned by all those you helped along the way. Thank you for so many happy memories, your friendship, your laughter and your unique 'madness' - I will miss you xx.

Nick Mather, Lea Rowing Club



Sally was a lovely friend, a brilliant cox and coach to the men's masters squad, and far, far more. As well as having huge integrity and energy, she was great fun – making us all laugh with the double entendres she often didn't realise she was uttering. Bless her! It's so unbearably cruel that she was taken for us so early and so quickly, but I take comfort in being able to let her know in her last days how much love and gratitude we had for all she did for us. I don't think I'll ever be able to visit the club or row without thinking of her. RIP Sally xx

Shaun Griffin, Lea Rowing Club



Sally and I more or less started at the Lea together. She served her apprenticeship as a cox with our Vets squad and had to deal with some real characters in those early days. I think she nearly got as much verbal abuse as myself. She took it all in her stride and managed to take control when it was required.

She was such an asset to the club and will be irreplaceable.

I will miss her Dearly.

Neil, Lea Vets



Dear Sally

I am missing you so much. For the record and, so you don't worry:

- I am the club welfare officer as you asked me to be and trying to keep up to date
- I have removed the stakes that you noted were a health and safety hazard from the plants behind the club
- I am trying to keep my left knee in the boat when sculling to improve my stroke
- I am looking after 'Just William' even though you won't be here to buy him as you wished to, should I ever buy a new boat. Maybe I will just hang onto him

I can't believe that you won't ever be coxing me, coming to The Xmas party and bringing me peaches in brandy or just being part of the Lea life again.

Rest safely

Sylvia Chew, Lea Rowing Club

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In fond memory of an amazing woman who I have enjoyed knowing since she first joined Lea Rowing Club. It was amazing how quickly she became enmeshed in the organisation of the club and in almost every activity. How did she find time??? My first thoughts were that things might fall apart without her, but then I realised that she left it with an ethos and camaraderie that will bring everyone together even more so. I hope that this memorial fund will serve its purpose in helping yet more people enjoy not only the activity of rowing, but also the pleasure of being a member of such a great club.

Roger Mears, Lea Rowing Club

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Sally was such a generous person – whatever she had she wanted to share. She offered me the use of her single when I was first learning to scull, which was not just generous but foolhardy, given my lack of competence. Then when I was getting married she insisted on lending me two beautiful pieces of jewellery. One was so valuable I didn't dare wear it at all, but the other was with me on one of the most special days of my life, and every time I look at the photos I think of her.

Cressida, Lea Rowing Club

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Sally was a good friend to me. It's the small things that I will cherish: the lifts home after-dark, proper mugs of tea on camp, cheerleading us to Mordor and back, the little tellings-off about lifejackets, lending me her bike most weeks, twisting my arm into volunteering for the club, the many, many emails and phone calls... But most of all, I'll miss walking into the boathouse and hearing her say "Matt – I need to talk to you". The Lea, and my life, will be a lot quieter without her. RIP.

Matt Pooley, Lea Rowing Club

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I will always remember Sally's never ending willingness to help. Lea was your life and I can only hope that it has given you all the happiness in the world.

It won't be the same without you and it is still very hard to think that I won't see you down the club again. Rest in peace. XX

Iva Vasickova, Lea Rowing Club

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Blessed to be a friend in and outside of the rowing world for many years, along with my wife who had Christmas breaks away in Germany with her. We are still stunned and upset since first knowing of her illness and not being able to physically see her in her last weeks was so painful. Sally was the glue that held Lea Rowing Club together with her incredible administration and personnel skills. Gone are the late evening phone calls discussing club and other issues, when she should have been relaxing at home. R.I.P.

Sally Xxx

Peter Chapman, Lea Rowing Club

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Sally was an amazing colleague and friend. We spoke a few times every week and she was always so generous with her advice and support. She was also a fellow masters rower.

She once subbed into an 8+ at St Neots. I was in the 2 seat, she was at 3 in front of me. Although she kept worrying about catching a crab and whether she was fit enough she was unbelievably excited to be rowing in the crew. She rowed perfectly and we won. There's a wonderful photo of Sally grinning from ear to ear holding her pot.

When the club needed a female coach for a women's group, naturally she didn't hesitate to volunteer. She loved working with these women and was so proud of their achievements, especially their first race at the Bear's Head last year.

Sally's influence has touched every part of the club. She was one of the most generous people you could meet and worked so hard to make the club a success. It is impossible to put into words how much she will be missed not only as a colleague but as a friend.

Sara Cinamon, Lea Rowing Club

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This incredible woman whom I barely knew really touched me. Sally made contact with me because of my activities with Canal Watch London in response to boaters' call for solidarity and joined-up forces in establishing towpath safety. She told me that she'd got cameras installed and paid for by the MetPolice in the dark passageways near the rowing club. She'd just quietly got on with it. My experience of Sally (one phone call, and couple of emails between us) was that she was a kind-hearted and gracious person. I wish I'd known her better. RIP Sally Lawrence.

Helen Brice, Itinerant Boater

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It is very hard to imagine the Lea without Sally. She will be so missed. I know my life at the Lea – the home I've found at the Lea – wouldn't be quite what it is without all her help, advice and belief in the community. In the relatively short time I've known Sally (just 5 years) I feel the influence she's had on me personally, the club and wider.

One of the things that keeps sticking in my mind at the moment is the promise that Sally and I made last summer – after the silly 'boat-craft' races we had as the finale of our 2019 WMas 'at home' camp – that we'd row together again in a double. Sally stepped in to make up our crew numbers for the races, and I was so chuffed to have drawn her out of the hat as my crew-mate. Sally and I won – I like to believe a combination of me strategising from watching all the other crews who went before us, good communication between us, and Sally's skill as a rower and steer (she was in bow, and that was part of my strategy) – we had such fun! Sally also coxed our WMas 4x+ win at Molesey Vets Head in 2019 – my first ever winning race. So sad we'll never get to row together again.

Nicky Barneby, Lea Rowing Club

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Lovely Sally, I can see you, greeting us with a smile and twinkling eyes, such energy, so good natured and a bit bonkers, really fun to be around. Thank you for helping look after Morgane as a baby so I could continue rowing and competing. Thank you for coxing our boats, putting up with our moods, getting all those entries in month after month, year after year, and the million and one other things you did, so generously making our fun possible. Thank you for being so kind to me. The Lea will not be the same without you. I will miss you, but I know I will keep seeing you there walking out of the boat house towards me in my mind's eye. Your energy is there in the bricks and mortar, in the boats, the activity you have helped to build and sustain over many years. You will not be forgotten.

Bridget Snaith, Lea Rowing Club



Words can't express how much sadness I feel that you're gone. You came into my life when everything changed due to illness. During the time that I had known you, you showed me so much kindness, warmth and friendship, far, far beyond anything that I ever expected. Thank you so much for allowing me into your life. You opened my eyes and heart to the beauty of rowing and it's because of you that I feel in love with the sport, which in turn helped me with my disability. You were seats there for me Sally. Thank you for being such a good friend and mentor. You will always have a space in my heart.

Rosy Soulby, Lea Rowing Club



Sally gave us all many brilliant memories. She helped us all in so many countless ways that she'll always be the benchmark for true generosity. And I'll particularly remember her fantastic sense of fun as I'll miss sharing any more of those giggly afternoons talking about everything and nothing. Sally was a good friend and I'll miss her very much.

Sara Woodford, Lea Rowing Club



Sally gave all of herself to the Lea RC. As a newcomer to rowing she was incredibly generous with me and everyone around me – I could always ask her a question, she would always have time for me, she would always look out for me, my crew, and the amazing community we've built at the clubhouse over the years. She is one of the people whose leadership deepened my engagement with rowing and I will always be grateful to her for that.

Nicolò Wojewoda, Lea Rowing Club



Sally and I used to communicate regularly whether it be about Lea matters or sharing silly photos of our beloved pets. She helped, taught and encouraged me (and everyone else) so much and was so generous with her time. I always hear her voice when I am out in a single saying 'what are you worried about the worst you can do is fall in!' I loved being in the boat when she was coxing and one of my fondest Lea moments was winning a Masters 8+ with her rowing at St Neots. She made rowing so much fun in and out the boat.

I miss you Sally and the laughs we had and am very happy to have met you and been your friend. Rowing and the Lea will never be the same without you. X

Gail Bryson, Lea Rowing Club

Dear Sally, you will be sorely missed by all us rowers. Hope you've found a lovely spot to scull in up above. Lucy xx
Lucy Clarke, Lea Rowing Club

When I try to remember when I first met Sally at the Lea, I find that there are no memories that don't include her! When I joined the Club, she was there, supposedly as a rowing mum but it was obvious that she was already becoming so much more than that. Sally quickly became an amazing cox, always challenging us to learn more and assuming that we knew more than we did so that we would have to learn. She coxed my first win at Sudbury, more years ago than I care to think, and then last season, a win in a coxed quad at Molesey, such a fun race. Always so generous with her time, despite how much she did. Sally collected me for so many early starts, we cycled across the marshes together discussing so much more than rowing, and then somehow I found myself responsible for registration at the Lea Regattas, while Sally seemed to be doing everything else. I don't remember volunteering for that but she had a way of encouraging everybody to get involved that was irresistible. Those hilarious trips to race at World Masters where she always seemed to know everybody.

The speed with which you have been taken from us is cruel and shocking. Everyone at the Club misses you now, and we will miss you even more when we finally get back to rowing again, and I will miss you every time I go on the river whether on the Lea or anywhere that you would have been, and should be, with us. What a legacy you leave at the Lea, dear Sally. You will never be forgotten.
Francesca Franchi, Lea Rowing Club

Thank you Sally for the many tips and encouragement over the years. Your energy, generosity and spirit will be sorely missed but will continue to inspire our rowing endeavours for life.

Ally, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

Thank you for your support and encouragement, Sally. I will always remember your smiling face and your unfailing enthusiasm for getting more people rowing.

Dee, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

Never imagined not to see you again, Sally. So resourceful and super positive. Such a force for the Lea! - So lucky to have met you.

Anna W, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

You were a good friend to me and a great mentor growing up at the club. I am thankful for everything you have ever done for me and I will miss you.

Anthony Duncalf and family, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Sally played a pivotal role in helping the London Otters Rowing Club establish themselves. She was an avid supporter, promoter and ally of the club. Her knowledge and guidance over the years was invaluable. We will miss her dearly.

London Otters Rowing Club, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Sally was such a welcoming, warm and approachable person, her huge personality stood out a mile. She will be missed dearly.

Ash, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Sally was a wonderful person and it is a great idea to help her spirit continue

Amanda from Broxbourne R.C. , on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



We will all miss you so much, the club won't be the same without you keeping us in order!

Amy, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



I only met Sally once, at a Regatta. She lent my crew a boat when a schedule clash would have prevented us from racing otherwise. Her enthusiasm and practical kindness left a lasting impression on me, and I hope your fund brings this to others.

Emmet C, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



You will be forever missed, Sally.

Kevin Mann, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Sally made me feel home and welcome at the Lea - while I was there and whenever I would come back to say hi. Thank you so much for everything.

Anna B, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Rest in peace, dear Sally, and may you inspire many more people to experience the joy of rowing

Anonymous, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



It is so sad to know you won't be there. It won't be the same without you

Anonymous, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Oh Sally I'll think of you every time I set foot in the Lea. Thanks so much for making me and so many others feel welcome, and for your many, many acts of kindness and generosity. I'm so glad to have been there for the launch of the Sally Lawrence!

Don, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



One of the good guys in life, you will be missed by so many of us. Rest in peace dear Sally.

Irene and Gordon, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



With thanks to Sally

Shelly, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Well done Sally, thanks for all the coxing, the races, the countless favours, and so much of your time.

Tom, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



What a great tribute to Sally! Great to see that she had such a positive impact on the sport nationally and touched the lives of so many people at club.

Sam Batten, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Even to an outsider (I don't row, but my husband does), Sally made her mark - always so friendly and helpful. A truly lovely person. I miss her every time I go to the club.

Joanie, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



Thank you Sally, for your generosity... and the tremendous legacy your spirit of inclusion leaves for all to enjoy rowing at the Lea RC...xx

Lucy SM, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund



When I first met Sally I confused her with my English but she never got frustrated with me. She always encouraged and supported me. I will forever remember our rowing memories which make me smile. I'm very sad but comforted with knowing Sally is at peace.

Berk – Gigi, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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I feel so privileged to have known Sally and to have had her as a coach. What a beautiful and lovely person she was. I truly miss her, and know that once I'm back rowing on the water again after lockdown she will be missed so much more!!

Breindy Gold, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally was such an important member of our community at the Lea and was a friend to everyone. She will be greatly missed xx

Jess and Jon, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally left us a great legacy of acceptance, inclusion and looking out for each other. This is a wonderful idea.

Cj Elser, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Thank you Sally for your great life, massive contribution to rowing and for helping out the Otters back in the day when we had nothing! Brian Winsor, Senior Captain Otters x

Brian Winsor, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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I was so shocked to hear this sad news! The Lea will not be the same without Sally, she was such a big part of what made the Lea fantastic for me, and was just so selfless. She won't be forgotten. Xx

Amy Cooper (nee Sillitoe), on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally was the embodiment of what LRC is about - welcoming, cheerful, friendly, helpful and inclusive. She will be sorely missed but hopefully Sally's Fund will be a fitting legacy.

Ben Booth, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally was kind, dedicated and loved a good laugh. She would bend over backwards to make sure everyone else had a good time too. Underneath it all was a fiercely independent and competitive spirit. I will treasure my memories of her forever.

Lou N, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally was a wonderful person and always offering to help and support us. I remember the fun chats we had about her cats and the post-race lifts she gave us which were filled with great conversations and celebrations. Her legacy will be always with us x

Julia, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Hopefully the Fund can fill a little the Sally-sized hole in the rowing community - without, sadly, the benefit of her infectious laugh and great personal attributes.

Anonymous, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally you truly were the beating heart of the Lea. May your spirit live on in the club always.

Ross Stevenson, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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This is such a great idea. I'm so grateful for the energy and love Sally put into the Lea.

Max

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To the person who made the Lea a home for all, I'm not sure you ever realised how many lives you touched! x

Catherine Grayson, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally was an incredibly charitable woman and I'm truly thankful for her support in making my time at Lea enjoyable! My sincere condolences to her family, friends and the rowing community for her loss.

Joshua Hedge, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Sally has been a huge part of our lives for the last seven years - a coach, cox, fellow rower and friend above all. Happy memories of races, trips to Belgium, Slovenia and all over the UK with Sally as the go-to person for any and every eventuality.

Colin and Liz, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Such a tragic loss but so lovely to honour Sally in this way.

Mary Finlay, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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Although I didn't have privilege to get to know her, am grateful of her contribution to our wonderful club. Thank you Sally!

Aki rec member, on Just Giving webpage for Sally's Fund

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I went to graduate school at the University of Tennessee with Sally and have been friends with her since 1982. Quite an odd match we were as friends—an Englishwoman whose accent took a while to understand and me a young southern US man. And we hit it right off!!

I was fortunate to keep in touch with her all these years. I remember her coming over to the US and bringing her young son Henry so he and my family could visit the Houston Livestock and Rodeo in Texas. Those kids never had so much fun! My wife and I were fortunate enough to visit her and her family in London in 1988 also. I managed to see her a few more times on my trips to GB and Europe throughout the years. Unfortunately I had not learned of her illness in time to talk to her before she passed — for this I am eternally saddened. Sally holds a special place in my heart and my tears flow freely for her...God bless and rest in peace.

Rick Davis, from Eastern Region website



So sorry to hear this news. Sally was a hard working supporter for our region, and the sport of rowing. My condolences to Sally's family and friends, and to Lea RC, who have lost a wonderful member.

Simon Clark, from Eastern Region website



I am shocked and saddened to hear of Sally's passing. She epitomised Lea Rowing Club and the wider world of rowing with her commitment, hard work and sense of fun.

On a personal basis I seem to have known Sally for a very long time and although to her I was just another rowing colleague whenever I met her on the Regatta circuit, no matter how busy she was, she would always find time for a few words and a catch up. I do know that she loved to come to our Regatta and delighted in bringing her Lea colleagues to our special event. We shall all miss her.

Keith Paxman, Sudbury Rowing Club, from Eastern Region website



This is terribly sad news. I will always remember Sally for her patience and great help with the many Cantabs junior entries we entered into Lea Autumn regatta. She made it such an enjoyable event for the juniors that we came back year after year. Such a great organiser who will be sadly missed

Phil Gunning, Cantabrigian Rowing Club, from Eastern Region website



Sad to hear this news today. I got to know Sally at the ERRC Coaching workshops and her patience and helpful manner in supporting our juniors during the clubs Regatta at the start of the new season. She will be missed and our thoughts and prayers are with her family at this time.

Gary O'Shea, Cantabrigian Rowing Club, from Eastern Region website



Sally was wonderful, helpful and friendly, a real loss, I will remember her very fondly and with a smile, a real inspiration and hopefully we will get to celebrate her life together soon, my warmest wishes to Sally's family, friends and Lea RC from Amanda and Broxbourne RC
Amanda Hosking, Broxbourne Rowing Club, from Eastern Region website



So sorry to hear this. Sally was an good internet friend around regatta organising time and a fine opponent on the water. All the best to her family.
Rachel Kormberg, from Eastern Region website



At Milton Keynes we were so saddened to hear of Sally's passing. She was always willing to help others and find time in her busy schedule to give advice and support or just for a friendly chat. Our deepest condolences to her family.
Karen Wilson, Milton Keynes Rowing Club, from Eastern Region website



Thanks to Sally, that weak, not so good at giving instructions or it so strong at rowing woman managed to cox men's 8 and be part of a rowing club that I never thought I could be a part of. Thank you Sally. Be free, happy and be as you always are, fun where ever you are now.
Ayfer, from Eastern Region website



Amongst the numerous comments on the @TheLeaRC twitter account

My deepest condolences to all @theLeaRC and to all Sally's friends and family, what a loss RIP.
Annamarie Phelps, former Chair of British Rowing

A special legacy for someone who clearly gave much to the sport and those around them
Kate O'Sullivan, Deputy Chair of British Rowing

Sally was an amazing individual, a whirlwind of activity, wrapped in a wicked sense of humour. The Lea and @Eastern_rrc will be poorer without her.
Helen Middleton