

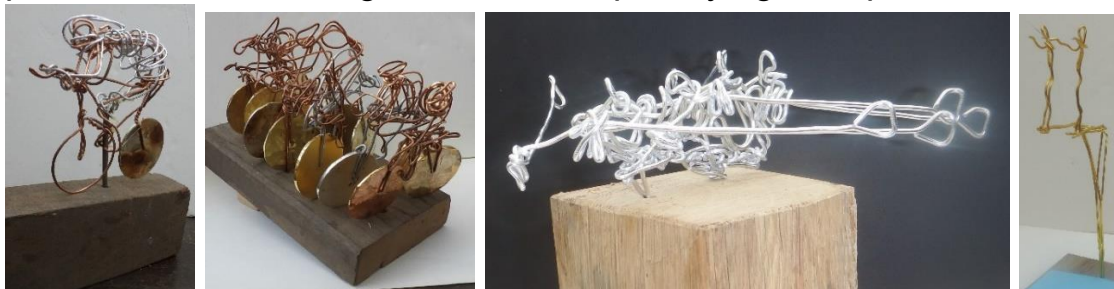
# TALES OF THE RIVERMAN 160 July 2024.



What does Paris mean to you? The Eiffel Tower, Dior perfume, Revolution and guillotine, Art. Love, Tour de France, food and wine. To me it brings memories of staying as an art student in Montparnasse, also of the Glasgow Humane Society winning the World Life Saving Championships on the Sienne in 1900 (as told in the Tales of the Riverman no 4 <https://parsonageriverman.com/docs/riverman/tale4.pdf>)

Today, Paris, means the 2024 Olympics.

I always look forward to the Olympics. I love most sports and sit with my pieces of wire, twisting them into shapes trying to capture the motion.



la baignade dans les rivières doit être strictement surveillée

If you have watched the television news in the past few days, you will have heard that there will be swimming in the Sienne. I wonder how many people are rescued from the Sienne every year. These are the kind of stats that do not appear in brochures. Things like there being over 15000 thousand bicycles taken out of one city's Canals every year.



I did try to find out some details of emergency statistics, but failed. I did however find some lovely bits of information.

“Swimming is not recommended, it is discouraged”. In one city, “a few hundred houseboats are yet to be connected to the city’s sewer system. Hence, people rescued from waterways are always strongly encouraged to get a tetanus shot”. I like some people’s advice as to what to do if you fall into the water. In one waterway that is shallow, the advice is, “don’t panic, stand up”. Drownings are no laughing matter. However, the report about the number of people who fell in while attempting to relieve themselves led someone to, allegedly, create a satirical video: “Safe ways to pee into canals”. Then there is “Yell ‘HELP!’ as loud as you can! This is no time for pride. Yes, you will attract plenty of morons who will capture your predicament on their smartphones, but there will also be good Samaritans who will try and rescue you”. Unbelievably another area has a warning. “If you fall in, you’ll dissolve”

I can never approve of swimming in city waterways, I have had to rescue so many would be swimmers, and sadly recover the remains of so many who thought they could swim.



If they do swim in the Sienne, it will be a well supervised wonderful spectacle which I will no doubt enjoy, and hopefully there will be no copycat behaviour. So, like I will, watch and admire, though I will have some nagging trepidations.

After the Games are over, and you return to your day-to-day pleasures, be careful out there. Think not just of your own safety, think of those who would copy your actions, and think of those who would put their lives in danger when they attempt or carry out a rescue.

Whatever your Country, whatever your Sport, may your competitors do well. Win or lose, it is an honour to compete. No losers, no winners. Representing your Country, makes you already a winner.