

As I reflect on the past year I feel some sadness along with much happiness and hope for the future. As you will all be aware, towards the end of last year the Club lost one of its greatest characters in its Ex-Chairman Vic Noake. But Vic was more than just a Committee member or Club Chairman he was a very helpful, chirpy person with an infectious sense of good humour who loved to wander around chatting and joking with our members. Vic gave me the impression that he was just as happy helping on the pool side or helping at our parties as he was when he was at the Committee meetings and quite rightly he was eventually honoured with a MBE for his services to disabled people. Modest as ever, when we held a celebration of his medal at the Westland Sports club, in his speech, he said that he was accepting the award not only for himself but on behalf of the whole Apollo club and without all of you it would not have been possible. We are all very privileged to have known him and the club as it is today is largely due to the efforts of Vic and others from many years ago. One of those others around in Vic's era was Joan Ricketts who also passed away last year. Apollo was just one of the local charities that Joan was involved with and like Vic she was involved with the club over a great many years. I remember her being more interested in helping members actually in the water rather than on dry land. Joan will also be fondly remembered and sadly missed as will Bob Taylor another of our long standing members who used to play in the Apollo band and later fixed us up with sound systems for our parties. Our thoughts were also very much with our Ex-President John Maunder over Christmas who lost his wife Jean in December. I know that many of us older members knew Jean very well through John and were very sad when she died following quite a short illness. I also remember Peter Barker at this point, husband of Mary and of course Ian's dad who has died in the past year. Although, Pete was not a member he was very much associated with the club since Ian was a child and I think most of us knew him very well. In more recent years Pete was often over at Sherborne on a Tuesday evening when Mary was manning our desk.

We have only lost one swimming session over the past year which was last Saturday due to a filtration problem at Goldenstones and there were a couple of other occasions when the minibus didn't run and one of those was down to mechanical failure.

Over the past year 9 new members have joined the club but unfortunately as happens every year some did not renew their membership meaning that overall we are 3 members down on where we were at last year's AGM. We have 94 members today compared with 97 a year ago.

Last year we continued to perform exceptionally well in all of the galas. We won the Keynsham Gala for the 3rd year running whilst gaining several individual awards including Sheila Drake winning the Endeavour award. This was followed by our adult team gaining 3rd place and juniors 2nd place at the Street Gala and in our own Gala in the autumn we came 2nd by 5 points to the Mendip Mallards. Unfortunately, last year's Plymouth Gala was cancelled but we are hopeful that it will take place as usual again this year.

As well as competing in the galas we have also been involved with lots of other interesting things. Back at the beginning of July we let the Chernobyl Children's Lifeline Charity borrow our minibus for a couple of weeks so that it could be used to transport children from Belarus, who were over here on holiday, around the our region. The children have grown up in country which had suffered a nuclear disaster before they were born and came to our country for a short period because it would improve their health. I have since learned that the visit was a whole new experience for them with some seeing the sea and tasting ice cream for the first time in their lives. Some of us were lucky enough to meet the children and their host families. Particularly nice was the

afternoons sailing that Tracey and Paul arranged for them on Sutton Bingham one weekend towards the end of their stay.

As in previous years, a group of our members attended the Woodlarks camp again last year and of course most of us were involved in social events of one kind or another be it the theatre trips that Tracey was running, the bingo evening or one of the sailing trips to the coast that Paul organised. Being a member of Apollo is certainly not only about swimming but a whole host of other activities and we are lucky that we have people willing to give up their time to organise and run all of these extra activities and I am very pleased that so many of them our well supported and enjoyed by you our members.

I am very pleased to report that since the last AGM we have had one new qualified Lifeguard join us. Her name is Rosie Palmer and she is just what we were looking for young, enthusiastic and very pleasant. She's been with us for quite a few months now and I know that many of you that go swimming on a Tuesday evening have met her. We hope that Rosie will stay with the club in the future.

I have not forgotten to mention the subject of the minibus replacement. For a couple of years now at the AGM we've talked about replacing our minibus and I guess that you could be forgiven for wondering whether it will ever happen. All I can say is that a new minibus is very much still in our plans and whilst it would be very tempting to put a forecast date against when it will actually happen we are talking about a vast amount of money and we as a committee need to ensure that we do not leave the club or indeed it's Trustees exposed in any way by jumping to a decision before we are absolutely sure that we can afford it whilst meeting all of our other commitments. Having said all of that we have been saving for a very long time and had many donations specifically for this purpose so I am adamant that the money should be spent as soon as possible on the reason for which it was allocated.

Unfortunately, we haven't been able to recruit any new Committee members or bus drivers since the last AGM. Whilst Sue Bullivant joined us as President and Jackie Masterson returned to the Committee as Membership Secretary around this time last year and Rosie Palmer started Lifeguarding for us around midyear there has been no one coming forward to take over the vacant Secretary's position or as Transport Manager and we have had no new volunteer drivers. Luckily we have not lost any Committee Members or volunteers since the previous AGM so we are still just about holding on by the skin of our teeth but we do need a Transport Manager and drivers if we are going to get a new minibus.

I am sure that those of you who go to Sutton Bingham regularly will agree that we had another very successful sailing season last year and of course there were several trips to the Poole area again last year to sail in the sea. I'm sure that you would like to join me in thanking Paul and Liz Wilson and everyone else who made those trips possible.

I would again like to thank all of those organisations such as the Yeovil Operatic Society, The Sherborne Conduit Lodge and Waitrose along with all the individuals that have made donations to our club in the past year and would like to thank the following who have helped the club during the past year:

Sherborne Boys School Leisure Centre, Goldenstones and Sutton Bingham Sailing Club and the Yeovil Volunteer Office.

Thank you to Graeme Tate our Treasurer. I understand that other charities have often had difficulties in appointing Honorary Treasurers and we are very lucky to have such a good Treasurer as Graeme. When Graeme does his presentation in a minute just look at all the data that he presents and what it must take to keep on top of it all, to keep on top of what money we've got coming in and paying all the clubs bills, sorting out all of our insurances and fuel claims etc and then remember that he does it all in his own time for us for absolutely nothing.

Thank you to Tracey Wilson. Tracey said that she was trying to organise at least one social event for each month of the year and I think that if you include the gala and party for which she organised the food along with Joan Owen then she has more than achieved that.

Jackie Drake There have been so many galas over recent years and whether they are our own or whether we travel to another club to take part they always seem to happen almost automatically so it's easy to forget the tremendous amount of work that goes in to organising them.

Sheila Drake As well as being the clubs Vice Chairperson, Shelia is very much a 'hands on' type of person which is why whatever the club is up to you will normally find her there with Jackie and heavily involved whether that's on the desk or making announcements at swimming or helping with sailing or fundraising she's involved with just about everything the club does.

Sarah Hull is our publicity rep but is always helping out in a wide variety of other ways as well which could go unnoticed. She books the room for the Committee meetings and often sorts out things like the microphone, tea coffee and biscuits that we have here this evening. She has also been helping with the Secretarial tasks whilst we have not had a secretary and of course was instrumental along with her mum Jean in the making the Ottery St Mary trip happen just before Christmas.

Thanks to Gill Allen for her cashiering duties again over the past year. I think that there has only ever been one occurrence over all the years, that I've been on the Committee, where I was warned that there may not be anyone available to be on the desk on a certain Saturday morning and in the end that got resolved before the day.

Since Sue Bullivant returned to the Committee about a year ago she has engulfed herself in the fundraising side of things and is going to talk to you in a minute to explain what she has been doing so far and the immense amount of effort that she has put in so far regards raising money for the minibus replacement fund. It takes a certain type of personality to get out there and be quite forceful in making prominent people listen to you and pledge to help you raise money and I can't thank Sue enough for what she has already done in this respect. Hopefully, with Sue's help we will really be able to 'close out' our minibus fundraising this year and see something back for all the effort.

As I'm sure many of you will be aware, Jackie Masterson has been very busy in the past year in more ways than one but she has still managed to be an excellent Membership Secretary and obviously we are very grateful to her for fitting us in around her own life.

Finally, there are so many of you who are not on the Committee but help the club so much year on year. Mary Barker, Daphne Wilson, Edith Roberts, Joan and Bev Owen, Liz Wilson, Helen and Malcolm Campbell, Jane Burrell, Andy Marsh and Rosie Palmer our Lifeguards. Mike Searl who

maintains our Website, Our Drivers Ed Breadon, Adam Hawkins and Simon Rowbottom, Lynda Sharp our Club Protection Officer to mention just some of you.

Well I hope that you all enjoy the your Club and think that you have a good Committee but of course if you have any suggestions regarding the way in which the club is run or indeed would like to join us you are more than welcome to put yourself forward and play a bigger part behind the scenes.