

The following report was presented at the The Apollo Swimming Club For The Physically Disabled of Yeovil And Sherborne AGM on Monday 16th February 2009 at The Wessex Room, Westland Sports And Social Club, Yeovil By The Clubs Chairman Colin Vickery

Chairman's Report 2009

No matter how many times I stand in front of you and thank everybody involved with running our club it never gets monotonous or boring because I appreciate just how much effort is put in by so many people so I make no apologies for starting my report this year as in previous years by thanking the Committee and all those who are not Committee members but give so much of their time for Apollo, the lifeguards, minibus drivers including Vernon from CVS who has recently offered to help with driving the club minibus, Gill Allen and the cashiers, the pool helpers, Paul Wilson and those who help organise the sailing which seems to become more popular year on year, the club protection officer Lynda Sharp and everybody else who helps the club in any way whatsoever throughout the year. Just a few who deserve a special mention are Jackie Rowbottom for her efforts in her first year as gala coach and Tracey Gullis who attended Woodlarks camp as our helper last May and has very kindly agreed to do so again this year. We appreciate that when both of you are caring for our members away from home be it at a gala or on holiday you have to give up very long periods of your own time and it's a huge responsibility. The efforts of Simon Rowbottom and Neil Downton as race officials at the Sherborne gala's last year are very much appreciated as are those of Sarah Hull who has made such an excellent job of editing the newsletter for us. The subsidised Christmas trip to Ottery Nurseries has become something of an annual event and just one of the many social events for which we must thank our excellent Social Secretary Jean Noake.

We continue to work hard with the Yeovil and Dorchester volunteer bureau's in fact we have a new pool helper starting at Sherborne tomorrow evening.

Again this year, of course, we are in dept to Old Mill Accounts who provide Graeme Tate free of charge to manage our finances. We must never forget that they are under no obligation to provide us with this free service and it's only because they value who we are and what we do that they continue to do so.

Whilst we are still on the subject of people, I am very grateful to our Vice Chairman and the rest of the Committee. Our Vice Chairman Vic Noake (MBE), for anybody that already doesn't know, a few years ago Vic was made a Member of The British Empire for services to charity and was presented with his medal by the Queen at Buckingham Palace you don't get that sort of recognition unless you basically dedicate your whole life to helping other people, it never fails to amaze me how well the Committee meetings are attended and the enthusiasm with which they are supported. Even when meetings last far longer than anticipated everyone's still there at the end. When we've faced difficult situations in the past we have not been afraid to take professional advice to ensure that we arrive at the correct decision and in the best interest of all the members concerned. We have very recently reviewed the decisions we've made with those who provided the advice and been assured that we were absolutely correct in the actions taken. I am being 100% honest in saying that if you do not follow official guide lines and procedures, to the very letter, in this day and age it could have very serious consequences for the club. The current committee are a fantastic group of people who's intentions are always in the best interests of the club and all it's members. You would have to go a long way to find a better Committee than the one that you have at the moment and they deserve your undivided support. With the exception of Mary Barker (Membership Representative) who has been on the Committee for 32 years they are all prepared to represent you for another year. I personally have known Mary and her family for all of my life and I am extremely pleased that she is to remain with her cashiering responsibilities.

Last year at the AGM we talked about setting up a really nice website and as soon as the meeting had finished sought to find an expert in that field who could do that for us. We applied to the local volunteer bureau who introduced us to Mike Searl from Bristol. Very shortly after that Mike travelled from Bristol to Goldenstones one Saturday morning to see the club in operation and by the following week we were on line. Mike has provided some stats and for the first 6 months that we were online there were an average of about 12 people a day accessing the site which obviously means that over a year there are a considerable amount of people reading about us who may otherwise not even have known that we exist and of course our own members can get enormous pleasure from logging on. Getting the website up and running is one thing but to keep it refreshed is quite something else. One of my pet hates is websites that haven't been updated and contain stale news so please keep any news or

articles coming and I will ensure that they get added. Let me pause there for a moment to ask how many of you have actually seen the Apollo club website on you computers?

Well those of you who haven't you just need to type Apollo Swimming Club into google and it normally comes up at the top of the list. Once on you can read all the latest club news, look at photographs of your friends and look at forthcoming events and lots more.

Our Publicity Rep Diana O'Malley is not with us this evening as she has to go back into hospital but I've spoken to her in the last few days and she sends her love and says that she is looking forward to getting well again and returning, to work hard for you again, in the very near future. Good publicity is important to our club and we have always enjoyed an excellent reputation. We all have a responsibility to make sure that continues in the future.

Unfortunately, a club like ours comes at a cost and whilst we do our best to keep prices down, whilst in a global recession, we are finding it very difficult and again are starting to rely on donations. Graeme, our Treasurer will be presenting last years accounts to you shortly and I think it is fair to say that we are having to pay more for nearly everything we do. As donations are never guaranteed we feel that we need to survive on membership and pool takings and use any donations for the minibus replacement fund and other luxuries. We've considered the situation very carefully at the annual accounts meeting on 9th February and reluctantly have decided to raise club charges. The new charges will take effect from 1st April and will be:

£1 on yearly membership for adults
50p on yearly membership for juniors

And

20p on pool entry for everybody. That means that the new rates will be:

£6 Membership for adults
£3 Membership for Juniors
£1:80 per adult swim
£1 per junior swim

I think that you will agree that this still represents excellent value for money when you consider all the other benefits that the club gives you

such as Christmas parties, galas, subsidised outings etc.

Quite a high percentage of our weekly income is raised through the frequent draws that we hold and it's really noticeable when they drop off so please could I ask that you continue to support them regularly.

There are little things that we can do to show that we are proud of our club such as wearing our Apollo 'T' shirts when we are on spotter duty at Sherborne and elsewhere. We are buying a new banner to better promote our stall when we are at fetes in the summer and of course we are again this year taking part in the Dorset Active Leisure Season between May and September.

In September the Apollo Club is 40 years old and on 12th September we are planning to mark this incredible event with a party and are hoping that many past as well as present members will be in attendance but lets not wait for September, lets make it a whole year of celebration starting this evening in the company of a founder member who of course is our President John Maunder.

An extremely busy year lies ahead but we are up for the challenge. We will enjoy our anniversary year but most importantly will continue to do what we do best and have done for the last 39½ years which is to help physically disabled people.