

Chairmans Report 2012

Colin Vickery

It has been another very successful year for the club with all the usual things, the annual Woodlarks camp, social events and the like as well as all the weekly swimming and sailing sessions taking place and being enjoyed by all involved. Both our interclub gala and the annual Christmas gala (& combined party) both took place on Sundays last year and were very successful and in particular it was nice to see the junior races at the end of the Christmas gala enjoyed by several children which is something that we haven't seen for some years.

The above would not have been possible without the efforts of many and I would like to say several thank you's:

Jackie Drake has done a fantastic job again organising our gala's compiling our pool duty rotas and overseeing our general swimming issues as has Sheila Ludgate who has managed to recruit enough new members to keep the clubs membership at about exactly the same level as that of a year ago which I can assure you is no mean feat. Incidentally, membership at the moment stands at about 120. I'm also very grateful to Gill Allen who hardly ever misses a Committee meeting and contributes such a lot in her own very special quiet way especially with the cash desk etc at Goldenstones on Saturday mornings. I'm greatly in debt to Tracey Gullis who seems to be giving a week of her time and accompanying our delegation to Woodlarks now on an annual basis and has looked after our members transport needs over the past 12 months (more of that in a minute). Thank you also to Paul Wilson and everybody who helped at Sutton Bingham last summer for another very successful sailing season and to Jean Noake our excellent Social Secretary for everything that she and Vic have done for the club throughout the year and indeed over many years and in particular for the Ottery trip which was enjoyed by all at the end of November. Our Publicity Rep Sarah Hull has been very active in the past year. In the autumn she arranged a successful coffee morning at the Volunteer office in Yeovil town centre which is to be followed up on Saturday April 28th this year with a grand event, that is being billed 'Our Spring Fair' at the Methodist Church in the Quedam so please put that date in your diaries now and let's make sure that we make it a roaring success. Thanks also go to Clive Stickland our Vice Chairman who successfully chaired his first Committee meeting for the club towards the end of last year. Not only Graeme our Treasurer deserves our utmost appreciation but of course also Old Mill Accountancy for the excellent free accountancy service that they have provided us with for many years. I firmly believe that without an accountancy service of the quality that Graeme and Old Mill

Accountancy currently provide it would not be possible for the Apollo Club to remain in existence in this day and age.

Right let us talk about Jean Crowdy! At last year's AGM Jean handed in a notice of resignation but said that providing we were actively looking for another Secretary she would stay on for a maximum of a further 6 months. Well here we are a year later and she's still here but has understandably made it clear this time that she has now typed her last minutes and written her last letter for Apollo. To volunteer for the Secretaries job is a huge commitment for anybody to make and until we find a proper replacement Sarah has kindly offered to help in the short term then we may end up sharing the Secretarial duties amongst 2 or 3 of us on the Committee until a permanent replacement is found. I would like to thank Jean for everything she has done for Apollo in over ten years, for putting up with me and trying to interpret my scribbles when reviewing the minutes and to wish her every happiness for the future. Please stay in touch.

As always, we are very grateful to non Committee members again this year who help so much for the club. Joan and Bev Owen spring to mind as does Mary Barker as they are always at Sherborne on a Tuesday evening helping with the desk. Iris is another very loyal long standing member who has been producing the club Newsletter and I also always appreciate the help that Daphne Wilson offers whenever I can't get hold of Tracey regarding transport issues at short notice. As well as the above, I thank all of the clubs Lifeguards, Drivers, Pool Helpers especially Brian Taylor, Rachael and Paul on a Saturday morning and everybody else who helps in any way what so ever during the year as well as the management of Sherborne school leisure centre, Goldenstones pool and the Committee and members of Sutton Bingham sailing club. Thanks also to Leonie Girling and John of the Yeovil volunteer bureau who refer helpers to us and Lynda Sharp who looks after all of our club protection issues. We haven't really recruited any new volunteers in the past year but Leonie keeps in regular contact with me and I'm confident that she will refer more to us in the future. Mike Searle has also been keeping us on our toes regarding the website recently.

On a sad note, we have lost two of our most long standing members during the past year in Julie Bishop and Tony Harris. They were two of the nicest people you could possibly wish to meet and they will never be forgotten.

This year has unfortunately again been difficult regarding the wider economic situation. For the Committee, managing club of this nature and size is akin to running a small business and in recent years it seems to be a continuous struggle in trying to make ends meet. In the past year we have had expense in having to replace the minibus cam belt, water pump and clutch. Before we knew of this unforeseen expense we had also arranged to have several of the seats reupholstered as they had reached a stage where we would not be able to continue using some of them. This seat work has

not been paid for yet and will show on this year accounts at next year's AGM. However, the money recently spent should mean that the bus is given a new lease of life and should not need replacing for quite a bit longer. When we are at the gala's around the region and look around at the other clubs minibuses a lot of them are smaller than ours (perhaps 10 / 12 rather than 16 seaters) which we believe some maybe hired anyway so we are very proud to have our very own large bus that we can use whenever we want to and all we have to do is put diesel in it. Unfortunately however, due to a dip numbers we have had to look at the transport we provide on a Tuesday evening and have decided that it is far more cost effective to use a taxi rather than the extra CVS minibus that we used to hire for the weekly Sherborne run. We have used the CVS for many years and it was another hard decision that had to be taken in these difficult times. Much of this year's loss can be attributed to large amount we've had to pay out on the club minibus but although I cannot be sure I believe that, having had the work carried out, it should be pretty reliable for a few years now which will hopefully mean a period of lower expenditure.

Another consequence of the recession is that we are not seeing as much income through grants and donations as we used to, in fact donations were only about one third of what they were 2 years ago, and to be frank in terms of the whole club we are not that fantastic at fundraising. Whilst there are all ways the same old faces that organise events to raise money each year it really is a very small percentage of the overall membership. It seems that generally most are happy to pay a little extra on subscriptions than to help raise funds.

Graeme will take you through the details of last year's accounts in a minute but I will pre warn you that the club has made slight loss again this year and it will be necessary to raise our membership costs by just £1 per year for adults and 50p for children. There will be no increase on the cost of swimming sessions. The Committee spent a long time contemplating whether an increase is necessary and how much at last Mondays accounts meeting and eventually decided it was the only responsible way forward. The new prices still represent fantastic value for money.

Looking to the future, I would like the club to appoint a really good President within the next year. Some months ago we did approach a local Doctor but although we received a very positive response unfortunately he was unable to make the commitment at this time but I really believe that there is somebody out there of standing in the community who would be prepared to become our President and raise the profile of Apollo to a huge extent it's just finding them.

So as you can see your Committee has achieved a hell of a lot over the past year but there is a whole lot more to be done.

I have tried to make this report frank, honest and complete and can promise you that the monthly Committee meetings are always well attended where we try to make decisions that are fair to all of our members. We put plans of action in place at the end of each meeting to ensure that everything gets done and hopefully you can see exactly where your money is going.

Thank You