

Apollo Swimming Club Chairman's Report 2018 (Colin Vickery)

Thank you for coming out this evening it's nice to know that you all really care about your club. Well where do I start? The past year has been very special in that we have held more fundraising events than normal and much more work has gone on behind the scenes to secure donations in order to finally replace our minibus. Sarah Hull has held a couple of skittles evenings and along with Jean Noake a table top sale and a Christmas shopping trip. I have to say that I think the table top was the best yet, it was well attended and had a generally very busy feel about it. Jean Noake and Eive Warr manned a day at the Co-op garage at the bottom of Babylon Hill in December where there was a charity day on our behalf and Jackie and Sheila Drake organised the selling of the Rotary Club Christmas draw tickets for us for the second year running. Gill Allen organised an application for a Co-Op partnership scheme. However, our biggest event of the year was undoubtedly the Charity dinner with Simon Weston held at the Haynes Motor Museum on Friday 4th November which was the brain child of Sue Bullivant and Jackie Masterson helped sell lots of tickets for that. For those of you who couldn't be there, I thought it would be nice to briefly describe what happened on the day.

Sue Bullivant with some of her family arrived over at Haynes early in the morning and then I turned up to help with displaying the draw and auction prizes where they could be viewed by the guests before the auctions actually took place in the evening and then we set up the dining tables which were all laid out in the Apollo clubs colours of blue and red. As well as floral displays on each table there were trifold leaflets explaining all about the Apollo club. We also put smarty tubes on the tables so that the guests could be invited to eat the smarties but replace them by putting money into the tubes. Around about mid afternoon we went home to recover a bit and dress up for the evening. The guests were asked to arrive for 6:45pm so several of us went back to Sparkford for about 6 o'clock where we found Sue already there with Simon Weston. Simon Weston, as I'm sure you will know was very severely burned when the ship he was on was bombed during the Falkland's war in the early 1980's and has since had nearly 100 operations on his injuries and spent much of his time since giving after dinner speeches about his experiences and supporting a great many charities becoming quite a television celebrity in the process. Sue introduced us to Simon and then we went out into the main entrance hall of the museum to greet the guests. When everybody had found and were settled at their tables we played a game of heads or tails where somebody tosses a coin and the guests tried to guess whether it would be heads or tails. It's hard to believe, until you actually see it, but this game only lasted probably no more than 5 minutes and raised £260 for the club. After this a very talented young singer called Emily Payne sang some songs from the musicals for us during which time people had a chance to walk around the tables and see what draw prizes were on offer and also what they would like to bid for in the silent auction later and also, later in the evening, in the live auction. Sue Bullivant

was our MC and was regularly updating the guests on how much money had been raised at key points during the evening. The live auction was then held which was conducted by a professional auctioneer Richard Bromell of Charter House Auctioneers of Sherborne. It was fascinating to listen to the bidding taking place for some of the fantastic prizes that had been donated including one of which was a holiday in Spain. Then came the main event of the evening where Simon Weston gave his fascinating and at times humorous speech and at the end he received a standing ovation. When Simon had finished I went to the lectern to tell everyone why we needed a new minibus and thank Sue for being the main organiser of the evening and Sarah presented her with some flowers. As well as all of the above the guests could have their photos taken, all dressed up in their long dresses or tuxedos and bow ties by a professional photographer or go and wander around the museums sports cars in the Red Room and then finally at the end of the evening Graeme took the microphone to thank everybody and announce the silent auction winners. Our existing minibus was parked outside of the museum entrance for the whole evening. Some of the guests had supported the club in the very early days and it was very interesting to talk to some of them about that and in particular the people who were involved at the time such as Brian Madden, Geoff Bullivant, Vic Noake, Cookie and others they were all mentioned. It was an evening that I'm sure will live long in the memory of everybody who was there for a long time and it raised many thousands of pounds for our club and the food was excellent.

We are currently taking part in a co-op community scheme whereby the Apollo club can be re-funded with a percentage of the money that it's members spend at certain stores in Yeovil and it runs until the end of this year. There is a list of outlets on our website, or if anyone does not have a computer we can arrange for the list to be supplied to them on paper. All you have to do is tell the member of staff when you check out that you would like the Apollo club to benefit. We also have a coffee morning at the Foresters Arms on 27th April, a charity day at Monks Yard, Horton Cross near Ilminster on 27th June and we will be selling tickets to members to see a comedy at a charity evening at the swan theatre on Monday 16th July. Have a chat to a Committee Member to get more details of these events and please take part in them all. Before I finish with fundraising I would like to say a special thankyou to our Treasurer Graeme Tate because with all of this fundraising he has obviously been much busier than usual this year because every penny that is raised has to be properly documented and banked. He has contacts in some of the local charity organisations and I know that he works several evenings a week as part of his very busy day job so we are very grateful that he is able to help us in the way that he does. What I'm going to do in a minute when I've finished my report and just before our Treasurer presents his accounts is to ask Sue our President if she would just to stand up and give us all an update on where we are with the new minibus fundraising and how far we have left to go.

(When Colin Vickery had finished presenting the Chairman's report at the AGM the clubs President Sue Bullivant stood up to announce that the club had reached its fundraising target for a new minibus).

This year I have had quite a few enquiries from Health Centres and Care Homes, who have obviously seen our website, asking on behalf of their clients but despite me supplying all of the requested information we've heard nothing further from them so I need to look into this and understand what's happening.

The Apollo Club currently has 97 members and this year we have had a few new volunteers join us: Phoebe Redman has been helping on the poolside and is going to take her exam and qualify as a lifeguard with us which is quite useful because towards the end of the year I am expecting that Rosie Palmer will be off travelling, as many young people do these days, before going off to university. Hopefully she will stay in touch with the club and maybe even come back to help with us again during her holidays. Etive Warr has joined the Committee as Secretary and has been a fantastic help in writing up the Committee meeting minutes each month and Jonathan Dixon and John Corner have joined us as new drivers since the last AGM. I would like to welcome and thank them all. Unfortunately, Ed Breadon has not been in the best of health in the past year and so has not driven the minibus very often but he is still on our books. It was with deep regret that Tracey Wilson decided to leave the Committee early in the year. As I'm sure you are aware, Tracey has had many roles within the club over the years. She was a Lifeguard, bus driver, Transport Manager, Social Secretary and got us involved with loads of other things such as at the Octagon Theatre as well as the Crewkerne Lions Club summer fetes. She also always gave up her time to go to the NASCH Woodlarks summer camp with our members for a week each year but I'm glad to say that she is still very much a friend of the club and to a great many of our members.

This year has been another very good year for us competitively and just to mention a few results we came 3rd at the Street gala in May and we won the overall cup back at our own gala in September after having conceded it the year before so well done to all of our members who took part in all of the galas again this year.

Sailing numbers were significantly down again last summer, only partly because the boat was out of action for a couple of weeks at the end of the season due to a collision and was being repaired, but the good news is that the Committee are fully committed to keeping the Thursday night sailing going again this summer providing our Sailing Rep Paul Wilson is in agreement.

I only really have 2 minor concerns at the moment one of which is due to the recent sometimes low numbers of swimmers on Tuesday evenings at Sherborne. The numbers are erratic to say the least. In my own mind, I've always considered 25

swimmers to be the breakeven number but there are sometimes many less than that on Tuesday evenings and it doesn't seem to be just during the cold winter months that the numbers are low. My only other concern is the transport for sailing. It is sometimes difficult to cover because it means a very early start for the driver (some of our volunteer drivers are still in full time employment) in order to get the minibus to Sutton Bingham for 6 o'clockish but we'll hopefully cover the transport every other week, as in previous seasons, somehow.

I would like to thank the whole of the Committee, all of our Drivers and Lifeguards, our Club Protection Officer as well Mike Searl our website co-ordinator and those of you who are not on the Committee but are regular helpers at our sessions or galas and parties for the vast amount of work that you have done for the club in the past year. As usual, it has been an absolute pleasure being a part of the club and working with you all again this year and I hope that we've had a few laughs along the way! As usual we express our thanks to Goldenstones, The Sherborne Boys School Leisure Centre, Sutton Bingham Sailing Club and all of the other individuals and organisations who have helped us either in the day to day running of the club or with donations. There are too many of you to mention individually here but you are all recognised elsewhere in the clubs minutes or accounts.

Thank you very much.