



Portishead Open Air Pool

eNEWSLETTER

Issue 7 , October 2011

What an amazing end to the Season! After an indifferent spell of weather in September, on our official closing day of the 25th, we offered free swims to everyone and had a successful day (see p2). But with the record breaking Indian Summer weather right at the end of the month, we decided to re-open for three days until 2 October, for the first time in the Pool's 50 year history and it was a resounding success. Alas, autumn has now returned, but we are ready to make a start on the winter maintenance programme. See p5 for further details if you would like to get involved. In this Newsletter, as well as the usual features and updates, there is AGM news and Trust information (pp7-8). Monthly issues will start again next spring, but we may issue further bulletins over the winter. Watch this space...! Ed.

ppctnewsletter@gmail.com

July? No, October!



Photography by Bryan Farrell

A spectacular spell of late summer sunshine led to the Pool re-opening for the weekend at the beginning of October for the first time in its 50 year history. We had already closed for the season on Sunday 25 September (see page 2) but decided to re-open for three days from Friday 30 September to Sunday 2 October.

As temperatures broke all records for early October, the Pool had its best weekend of the year, when nearly 3000 visitors came through the turnstiles. The busiest day was Sunday, with 1440 swimmers. The tuck shop had its best weekend ever, clearing out the stocks of local ice cream suppliers!

The idea for re-opening was first discussed on the previous Sunday, when unusually warm and sunny weather was forecast for later in the week. After checking we could get lifeguard cover, the Trust monitored the forecast for a couple of days and then started to get the message out to as many people as possible via local radio and online. Thank you [Goodman and Lilley](#) for displaying our signboard outside your High Street office which helped enormously. Our efforts paid off when a queue started forming an hour before opening on Friday and from then on until Sunday evening; the Pool was at capacity every day. Extra volunteers came in at short notice to support the Duty Manager and lifeguards, some staying for all three sessions, which meant we could implement our busy day

policy (see [our website](#)). This meant that everyone had a chance to spend at least 20 minutes at a time in the pool before a blast on the horn signalled 'all out' and people queuing could jump in. This proved much more popular than the old 'one out, one in' policy and everyone got into the spirit by cheering the klaxon.

Volunteers and staff felt their efforts were rewarded by the wonderful atmosphere and the obvious appreciation of so many visitors. With the unexpected boost to our finances, the Trust will be able to buy a commercial underwater pool cleaner. This is an environmentally friendly option which will also save money in refilling the pool.



Queue on Saturday just before 2pm opening

Season ends on a high note

Saturday 25 September marked the official end of the season. In what has now become a tradition, the Trust was offering free swims to all comers that day, as a thank you to regular visitors and a taster for those who had not visited before. Although it was fresh and breezy, the sun shone and the water was warm as usual. 250 visitors came through the turnstile, to swim or just look around and enjoy an ice cream or cuppa on the terrace. During the afternoon, entertainment was provided by jazz singer Christine Staples, followed by local band [No Time for Sightseeing](#), and the session finished with a barbecue run by volunteers.

We plan to open the 2012 season on 21 April, the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Pool, but will be watching the weather closely to see if this can be brought forward so watch out for further announcements nearer the date on our website or in the newsletter.



And the sun sets on another season

Photography by Bryan Farrell

Pool Temperatures

Water temperature was generally very good with just the odd hiccup if Tiger didn't behave. June and July were about 90% of the long-term average sun hours and August even lower at 70%. Sept figures were not available when we went to press but can be seen on <http://www.williamhunter.co.uk/POOL/2011pooltempsetc.pdf> and water quality is measured in similar charts for pH and free chlorine). (contd in col.2)



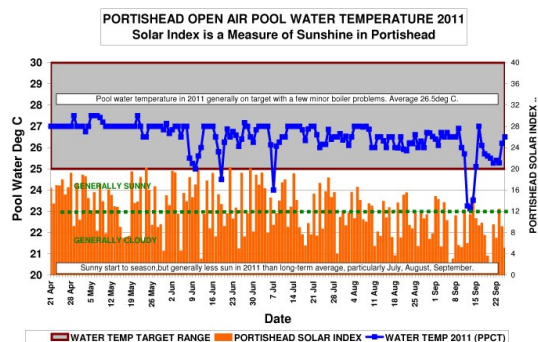
No Time for Sightseeing (from left Joe Withers, Ollie Hook, Will Stubbs and James Playford)

Photography by Bryan Farrell

(pool temperatures contd.)

In general, it was nice warm swimming in a rather poor summer, reflected in visitor numbers being down a bit but surprisingly good nonetheless.

One of the important (behind the scenes) jobs of the lifeguards is to monitor and adjust the water treatment to keep the water quality good for all our visitors. It goes without saying that the independent Bristol City Council monthly spot checks for nasty things that might lurk in the pool have always come out as very satisfactory. (Perhaps we should fly a blue flag!)



Waitrose Community Matters

Good news! Last month [Waitrose](#) customers in Portishead voted for us to receive £580 from the Community Matters Fund towards the cost of kitting out our disabled changing facilities. Thanks to everyone who put their green token in our box at the store—we couldn't have done it without you!

NatWest Community Force

As we reported in the August Newsletter our disabled changing room and pool ladder project is also in line to win an award of £6000 from the NatWest Community Force fund.

Our grateful thanks to all you who have already voted for us. We are doing very well in our area (West Bristol) but are running third at time of going to press, with a closing date of 23 October, so we desperately need some extra help (see also Ella's plea opposite). If you have not done so yet, go to <http://communityforce.natwest.com/project/3838> to find out more and vote - you don't have to be a NatWest customer. You can also see our appeal on YouTube by going to http://youtu.be/TWrwb6_5HSc

50th anniversary of the Pool and mini-Olympics



The Pool was officially opened in 1962, and next year we will celebrate our 50th birthday on 21 April, the probable start of the season. Another suggestion is an exhibition of photographs of the pool from 1962 to the present day. If you have any old photographs of the pool which you are able to lend us, please get in touch with me on 01275 817158 brenda@brendabirkinshaw.co.uk

The Mini Olympic plans are beginning to be refined and most schools who wish to take part have signed up. The Town Council has not identified any other local groups planning to celebrate the Olympics, so it would seem we are going it alone and will need to approach other sports groups (triathlon, runners, cyclists, water polo, synchronised swimming, Tug of War, and a Toddler toddle) ourselves. The next meeting of this committee is on the **19 October, 7.30pm** at The Royal, it's not too late to join us and bring your ideas. Councillor Clarke from the Town Council is attending at the start to tell us what help they can offer us.

There will be lots of volunteer help needed on these days but more about this in future editions— **Brenda Birkinshaw**

Meet the Team (1) Ella Jenkins—Volunteer



I am 31 and grew up partly in Bristol and partly in the small mountain village of Cipieres in Provence. After leaving Cotham Grammar, I studied to be a primary school teacher but didn't leave with a degree – life, hey! This was followed by waitressing work and a stint as an air hostess with Sabena Brussels Airlines, then working for cancer services at the BRI. My increasing ill health then unfortunately put paid to regular work.

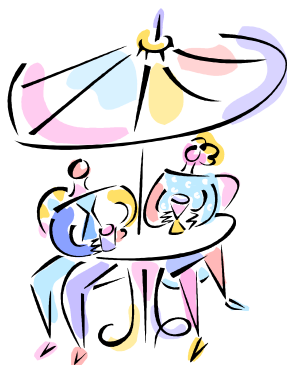
I have Juvenile Chronic Arthritis and had several joint replacements and joint fusions by the time I was 27, which helped my mobility but I was still not well enough to return to regular work. After a spell of recuperation in France, I did disabled modelling work for companies who manufacture wheelchairs and other aids. I met my husband Andy at one of these photo shoots and we later moved to Portishead with our young daughter where we discovered the Pool. By then I was supplementing my modelling with volunteer work and I found that this was the ideal place for me. So, although orange is not my colour, I signed up and absolutely love it. To my eight year old daughter, my work here is as important as an astronaut!

As well as working in reception and the tuck shop, I am also involved in our current bid with NatWest Community Force. As a disabled young woman, I don't have the strength and mobility to use the current ladders to get into the water. Not only would swimming help my condition, but I would love to get into the water and have fun with my children. So, if you haven't already done so **PLEASE** get on to the website (see article on this page) and vote for the Pool's bid for disabled facilities and access to the water. The Pool was saved by the community for the community and there is still a significant number in our community who can't use it!

This has been my first season working at the lido. I have felt so valued and enjoyed it so much that you can expect me back next year.

Café Update

Five Poolside have now finished their short-term tenancy. The Trust is grateful to the Freemans for stepping in at such short notice and running a successful cafe during the summer, and everyone will miss Mary's cakes! Trustees have advertised for Expressions of Interest for the long-term tenancy of the cafe and have been carrying out interviews with potential tenants. Further updates will appear in the next newsletter.



Portishead Activities and Council Open Day

The Trust is taking part in this event, which is organised by Portishead Town Council, at Somerset Hall on **Saturday 26 November from 10am-3pm**.

Membership and season ticket forms for the Pool will be available and volunteers will be on hand to answer queries from the public, especially people who have recently moved to Portishead.

Tuck Shop Success

Kate and Chris Burns have reported increased profits for the Tuck Shop in 2011, which are up on last year due to the record breaking October weekend. At the same time it provides amazingly good value to customers – there are not many places where you can get a decent cuppa for 50p – and a good range of snacks, sweets and ice-creams, all served with a smile by volunteers. All profits as usual go back into pool funds to help pay for essential maintenance and development.



Kate and Chris would like to thank all the volunteers who once again braved the popcorn – all 2080 bags of it! But the success of the Tuck Shop could not have been achieved if it had not been for the support of everyone.

Facebook Page

Don't forget that to check up on the latest news of the Pool, including opening hours, events, photos and links to the Newsletter and Trust website, you can join our [Facebook](#) Group—just click on the link to go straight there. You can also follow us on [Twitter](#).

Meet the Swimmers

In the style of our regular Meet the Team feature, we are introducing a new feature on our regular swimmers, what they think of the Pool and where they go in the winter (!). We would love to hear from you if you would like to contribute in future issues. This month we are featuring -

Richard Nuell

I live in Bristol and have been swimming at the Pool for the last 20 years, but more frequently since I took early retirement from the Post Office Procurement Team. Last year I joined Hazel's classes to boost my front crawl which I am



continuing at Burnham Swim Academy and weekly tuition with PAC-TRI (even though I don't own a bike!) I have also used the Pool to train for Aquathons (swim and run) including those at Clevedon Marine Lake and last week at Cheltenham Lido.

I am a member of the Outdoor Swimming Society and take part in occasional competitive swims in lakes and rivers. Last January our wetsuited splash in the Thames hit the headlines as we crossed a snow covered field for our dip then lay in the snow star-shaped for a photocall before drinking our coffee in a frozen car park as if it was nothing unusual! Wet suits were banned for our 2009 Christmas Dip with Ben Fogle and 200 others at Parliament Hill Lido. I then discovered what hyperventilating meant, as the water was only 6C!

Some time ago, I performed badly in an open water event which turned out to be much harder than I thought. It dented my confidence, but I sought therapy in Portishead Pool on the way home. Never have I done such an enjoyable mile on a dull day and it bucked me up again. Thanks! One of the pleasures of swimming at Portishead Pool is that you do not close at the first drop of rain, as some pools do. However, much as some of us like a quiet swim in the rain without the crowds, it is essential we get the message across that the water is heated and delightful in all weathers.

Following a suggestion from Trustee Sally Chorlton, I have now joined Portishead Loafers and my first swims with them have been fun, especially as I have always been wary of sea swimming.

Withdrawal symptoms are now setting in as I return to Bristol Lido for the winter - it's better than nothing! And I'll keep up the lessons. Thank you Portishead Pool for being there, and to the trustees, volunteers, lifeguards, tuck shop and other users for putting up with my eccentric ways. I'll be back next year (Oh no! I hear you say)

Meet the team

(2) Heather and Mike Pugh – Volunteers



Mike and I were brought up in Bristol; I lived in Mangotsfield, while Mike is from Headley Park. We met at Albright & Wilson in Avonmouth, where I ran the typing pool and Mike was in sales. After taking redundancy, Mike went on to quality control at Toyota in Portbury, while I became depot secretary at Lex Harvey.

It was a second marriage for both of us and we have been living in our present home in Quantock road for 33 years. Mike adopted my two boys Spencer and Laurence and we now have four grandchildren ranging from 5 years to 19 years old. We look after the two younger girls Willow and Kate during school holidays.

Laurence now lives in Thailand where we recently visited for 5 weeks. We had a great time swimming in the South China Sea, sailing on the Mekong River and staying at one of the Kings Palaces, which is now a hotel. We travelled on to Laos where everyone carries their money in carrier bags as it is of no value!

In Mike's younger days he walked from London to Paris with the Association of Boys Clubs, did Outward Bound in the Lake District in December and bivouacked in the snow, and also took part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award. We now enjoy touring in our caravan and take a winter break in Lanzarote.. We are also keen skittlers and members of the Tearaways Skittle Team in Bristol.

We volunteered at the Pool as it was an activity we could share and also extend our social network, which has certainly been the case as we have made lots of new friends and feel that we are making a real contribution to the community. I also love swimming there of course - we took the children when they were younger and now bring our grandchildren, as well as meeting friends there on Sunday for a coffee. I bought a season ticket this year, which has been fantastic value at £55 - I have calculated each visit worked out at only £1.30!

Winter Works Programme



One area which attracts comments is the general state of the changing rooms, particularly the ladies' side, which suffers with a build up of mould and through the season becomes more and more unpleasant. This is due to a lack of air circulation, and over the winter we intend to open up the end wall to allow in

more fresh air and sort out the extract fans which should help. We also intend to embark on a more rigid cleaning cycle next year, so we are sure we can get on top of this problem. The showers in the ladies changing also need some attention - we will be sorting out the tiling and generally improving the whole area.

Staying with internal works, we hope to be successful in our bid for some money from Nat West Community Force, and this is earmarked for the fitting out of disabled changing facilities and pool access equipment for those less able swimmers. £580 already awarded by Waitrose (see p3) will enable us to make a start.

On the exterior, we hope to start a programme of replacing the worn out paving slabs around the pool, starting with the area between the children's pool and the ladies outside toilets which is an area of high traffic and has some of the worse sections of paving around the pool. This will be an ongoing programme and hopefully within a few years all the old slabs will be replaced. We also intend to improve the edges to the toddler pool.

As it is our 50th birthday next April, the whole place could do with a coat of paint so this is another big task for our volunteers.

There is always a lot to do during the closed season and we have working parties at the pool on most Wednesdays. This builds up towards opening when we have enough to keep us occupied most days of the week so if anyone fancies volunteering to do some over- winter maintenance, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Ann Hailwood on 0781 309 5126.

Why not advertise your business here?

Contact us on ppctnewsletter@gmail.com for further details

Andy Thatcher, Premises Committee

Little mermaids practise at Portishead Pool

Freelance photographer [Peter Tecks](#) recently found the Pool the ideal location for a casting session for an upcoming underwater fashion shoot. Prospective models were put through their paces after instruction from Peter in underwater techniques including safety procedures and correct breathing technique.

As well as his freelance work, Peter is also an engineer with [Lobster Pictures](#) who design and manufacture specialised cameras and software for remote site monitoring and time-lapse photography.

Peter will be making a donation to Pool funds for the use of the Pool, and has also offered his scuba skills to help clean the bits of the pool the new vacuum cleaner cannot reach!

You can follow Peter on [Twitter](#)



Clockwise from top left: Peter Tecks briefs the models on underwater technique (photo, [Bryan Farrell](#)) ; Becki Taylor; Laura J Ruffell, Rach Vowden; Cerise Banwell (photos, [Peter Tecks](#))

TRUST MATTERS

(1) PPCT Annual General Meeting

The Trust's Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 30 November at Clarence House, Portishead, starting at 7.30 p.m.

Further information about the AGM will be posted on the pool's website later this month. Members will be alerted via post or email when the information becomes available.

There are currently two spaces for additional trustees to come on to the Board. If you are interested in standing for election as a trustee, or you would like to discuss what this entails, please contact me direct (details below).

Only members of the Trust may speak in the formal proceedings of the AGM, and only members may vote.

Members of the public may attend the AGM, but may not speak or vote in the formal part of the proceedings. There will be an open session at the end of the meeting where public contributions are welcome.

Joining the Trust

Membership of the Trust is open to everyone. If you would like to become a member so that you can vote on issues relating to the Trust, please download and complete the application form on the pool website <http://www.portisheadopenairpool.org.uk/>. In order to be able to take part in the forthcoming AGM, this form needs to be submitted before 20 October 2011.

Please note that if you are a season ticket holder or a regular volunteer, this does not automatically mean you are a member of the Trust! If you want to have a say and a vote at the AGM, you still need to apply for membership, together with your annual subscription of £10.00, or a lifetime subscription of £250.

Current members – subscriptions

Around the end of last year, we agreed that memberships would run 1 May to 30 April, and anyone whose membership would have expired before 30 April 2011 needed to renew their membership.

If you did not renew in time, your membership will have expired. If you are not sure whether or not you renewed in time, please contact me and I will let you know if you are still a member! If your membership has lapsed, you can re-apply using the form on the pool website.

Membership renewals are due from 1 November 2011, and the deadline for receipt of renewals for the 2012- 2013 membership year is 30 April 2012.

We are hoping that members will now move to renew their annual £10.00 memberships via standing order, as this will save significantly on administration time.

Please give your bank the following details:

Bank: CAF Bank

Account Name: PPCT Number 2 A/C

Sort code: 40-52-40

Account: 00019876

Payment should be made with a reference of Your Name - membership. It would be helpful if you would also email or phone me to let me know you have set up a standing order; that way I won't keep hassling you!

Jane Humphreys

Trustee with company secretarial responsibilities

Jane@stone-cottage.org

0774 992 4633

(2) The Trust Sub-Committees

Over the next few issues of the Newsletter, we will be publishing information on the work of the Sub-Committees who look after the day to day running of the Trust. In this issue we look at the work of the Strategy and Premises Subcommittees,

Strategy Group

The remit of the strategy group is to focus on the Trust's vision and identity, and this includes marketing, advertising and publicity; fundraising and grant applications; events management, opening times and pricing; website management; and communications with members, volunteers, and other stakeholders, and increasing membership. The group is beginning to develop in a very positive and exciting way and there have been several important initiatives over the summer which is a promise of major achievements to come. The trustee on this group is Jane Humphreys, and the members are: Barbara Thatcher, Bryan Farrell, Lucinda Brook, Jon Barr, Chris Burns, Ann Looker, and Jill Fletcher.

Barbara Thatcher has produced this fantastic, informative newsletter – it has been justifiably acclaimed. Jon Barr used his expertise to work with members of the group to help publicise the pool to around 80,000 primary school children and their families in North and North West Somerset. Bryan Farrell has taken amazing and beautiful photographs which have accompanied a number of press stories. We have had the continuing support of the Bristol Evening Post and the North Somerset Times, as well as frequent slots on Radio Bristol and other local radio stations. We are lucky to have Lucinda Brook on this team – she brings some much needed professional marketing expertise and contacts, and is currently preparing a marketing plan, to replace our current ad hoc procedures. Lucinda, Barbara and Bryan have been working on the NatWest Community Force bid, together with a number of volunteers – an enormous number of hours have gone into preparing this bid and we hope everyone will encourage their friends to vote for us. Chris Burns has been looking at increasing revenue via the tuck shop, Jill Fletcher is liaising with the group planning the Jubilee celebrations next year, and Ann Looker has been looking at the possibility of running a Ball. We have also been working on sources of charitable income for the pool such as website giving, text giving, and legacies.

Areas where we still need to work are, in no particular order, the website, events management, and further work to improve communication with stakeholders. We also need to improve publicity within Portishead itself in terms of noticeboards and communicating with other groups – maybe there is someone reading this who would like to take this specific job on? We are always grateful for suggestions as to other marketing and publicity work we could be doing but please remember that everyone is volunteering their time and there is a limit to the funds and time we have to spend!

For further information about the work of this group, contact **Jane Humphreys** Jane@stone-cottage.org; 0774 992 4633.

Premises Group

Of all the committees, the Premises Group probably has the easiest job, as a good part of the work is done when the pool is closed over the winter period. The committee is headed by trustee Andy Thatcher, with members Dave Skelthorne, Ann Hailwood and Joyce Cooper. The Health & Safety subcommittee of this group is led by Brenda Birkinshaw, another of the trustees, with Andy Thatcher, William Hunter and the pool manager.

The Premises Group is responsible for looking after the buildings and plant and maintaining them in the best condition. It ensures that all the statutory inspections and certificates – gas, electricity, fire extinguishers and equipment are carried out.

We assess the condition of the buildings and obtain quotations for recommendation to the board. We also purchase materials for the enthusiastic volunteer working group who meet at the pool most Wednesdays in the closed season, although the pace does hot up a lot towards the opening day. We are currently obtaining quotations from contractors for replacing the section of paving slabs between the toddler pool and ladies' outside toilets as part of the programme and we are investigating an underwater vacuum cleaner which will clean the pool without the need to drain it.

We are also responsible for the day to day maintenance and sort out issues like blocked drains, cold showers, broken paving slabs and all manner of minor items, all of which are vital to the safe running of the facility.

Health & Safety documentation is reviewed over the closed period, so that everything is ready for opening day. We have to comply with legal requirements and meet with the council H&S inspector at least once a year. The correct personal protective equipment must be in place, training certificates up to date and consumables like eye wash bottles and first aid kits must be intact and in date. With chemicals and equipment, we are required to carry out risk assessments and obtain COSHH assessments from suppliers to ensure that staff members know how to safely store and handle them.

Whilst we have spent the few days after the final closing of the pool packing away all the loose equipment and closing everything down for winter, we will be starting some cleaning and general maintenance work on 12 October and thereafter weekly on a Wednesday so if anyone feels like doing a bit of honest hard work, either make contact with **Andy Thatcher** on 0789 992 7710 or **Ann Hailwood** on 0781 309 5126 so that we can update you on the latest requirements (see also our Winter Works Programme on p8).