



Portishead Open Air Pool

eNEWSLETTER

Issue 8, December 2011

*A very Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year to all our readers*

ppctnewsletter@gmail.com

Double Windfall for Pool Project



Barbara Thatcher receives Community Matters cheque for £580 from Waitrose partner Sue Ames

Members are this month celebrating the news that the Trust has won two awards to enable us to finance our latest Pool project. In September we were chosen as one of their local community groups to support by the Waitrose Community Matters scheme and shoppers at Waitrose in Portishead voted for us to receive £580.

We are also one of the local winners of the NatWest Community Force Awards. Each year, as part of their Customer Charter, NatWest invite local community projects and charities to apply for an award of £6000, to raise awareness of our work and appeal for volunteers. The three winners in each area were decided by public vote during October, with the Pool coming second in the West Bristol area. Congratulations also to our friends at Bude Sea Pool who also won the £6000 award in the North Cornwall area.

Fundraising is an important part of our activities and we applied to Waitrose and NatWest Community Force so that we could finance our winter project to provide dedicated disabled changing facilities and a special access ladder so that people with restricted mobility can enjoy a swim like everyone else. A big thank you to members, volunteers and supporters for raising public awareness of our bid and getting all their friends and families to cast a vote for our cause. We are thrilled to have won as it means that we can now get on with the building work over the closed season and have the disabled facilities ready for our 50th anniversary opening next April.



Bid organisers celebrate their NatWest Community Force win: (clockwise from top left) Ann Hailwood, Jane Humphreys, Mike and Heather Pugh, Bryan Farrell, Barbara Thatcher, Ella Jenkins, Joyce Cooper

Ann Hailwood receives award from Portishead in Bloom



Ann receives John Daws Cup from Christine Button

Ann Hailwood was presented with the John Daws Cup by Portishead in Bloom in recognition of the work she has put in at the Pool in her role as volunteer co-ordinator.

The annual competition is awarded to individuals that the public feel have made a lasting impression on the town, either through a single good deed or perhaps an ongoing commitment.

The special award was launched in 2006 in memory of the late John Daws who was a former chairman of the town council and one of the founders of Portishead in Bloom.

Presenting the cup at the Portishead in Bloom AGM last month, publicity officer Christine Button said that Ann had been awarded the Cup not only for all the time and dedication she gave to managing teams of volunteers who keep the pool operational, but also for rolling her sleeves up and getting involved in cleaning and maintenance during the winter months.

The John Daws Cup was sponsored again this year by the North Somerset Times, which gave £100 in prize money.

Trustees visit Hilsea Lido

In October, a team from Portishead Open Air Pool visited Portsmouth to see the work being done by a community organisation Hilsea Lido Pool for the People Trust which took over the Lido from the City Council in 2010. The group have been in touch with Portishead trustees to gain information and advice about the process, as well as sharing experiences and news. Last summer they travelled to Portishead to visit the pool and speak to trustees and volunteers.

Many of the challenges and problems facing the two teams are similar and trustees are hoping to continue to work together in the future. This may include setting up a "twinning" arrangement between the lidos which would enable season ticket holders to use their tickets at either pool. Mutual support will hopefully extend to other open air pools that have been saved by community groups such as Bude Sea Pool, and the Tropicana in Weston-super-Mare which will learn next week whether they have a chance to save their historic lido.

Portishead Pool volunteers inspected the 1920s Lido's changing rooms and filtration plant as well as the multi-purpose restaurant area. "Their story is very similar to ours," said trustee Jane Humphreys. "Hilsea Lido had been progressively run down by the council, who were going to close it, and then a group of people got together and saved it. The asset transfer is actually the easy part; the real challenge is running these pools. So, it's very useful to exchange ideas and information with others doing something similar, and we hope to continue supporting each other in the future."

The visitors were amazed at the size of the unheated Portsmouth pool, which is a massive 67 metres long, and 4.6 metres deep! The Hilsea team plan to capitalise on the size of their unheated pool by offering deep water training as well as traditional swimming. They came away very impressed with all the work that has been done so far and plan to make a return visit once the pool is open to the public.

Sabrina Richards at Hilsea gave us an update last week. "Our pool, which we took over in September 2010 is still not open yet. Last week we had the water emptied by the Fire Brigade, who are supporting us as we are trying to address the problem of tomb stoning in the city, and the sludge has been cleared by our volunteers and the community payback team. We now have to clean, prepare and paint the pool and refill prior to working on the plant-room. We have been very fortunate that the electrics passed the periodic inspection in June so we are keeping our fingers crossed for next year. There is a long way to go but we are feeling positive and examples like Portishead and Sanford Parks in Cheltenham continue to inspire us."



Pooling resources: Andy Thatcher (PPCT), Des Callow, Sabrina Richards, Jane Humphreys (PPCT), Andy Goodall, Sally Chorlton (PPCT), Helen Downing-Emms, Barbara Thatcher (PPCT), Robin Kay



Trust Members attend Fireman's Ball



A group of Trust Members and volunteers attended the Annual Fireman's Ball held at Somerset Hall on 11 November to raise money for firefighters' charities. Ann Hailwood reports "Nine of us went and we had a great evening.

The ladies went dressed up to the nines while most of the other guests were in their twenties and wearing jeans and killer heels!

Portishead Victorian Evening

Pool volunteers will once again be taking part in this year's Victorian Evening on **Friday 16 December**. BBC weather presenter Jemma Cooper will be officially opening the evening at 6.30pm from the Tudor Garage as the High Street is transformed into an old fashioned street market with more than 40 stalls, sideshows and entertainers.

Ann Hailwood and her team will be manning a stall at the annual event which raises money for the town's famous Christmas Lights display. **It will include a tombola and any gift or bottle donations would be gratefully received. Please contact Ann on 0781 309 5126.**

School Swimming Galas

By Pat Gardener

Location, Location

In October, the Pool cafe was the location for a photo-shoot by local photographer [Dave Pratt](#) for his clients [Go-Pak](#) UK of Yate, who import and sell a wide range of disposable products for the catering industry. The shots will be used for [Go-Pak's](#) new website and brochure and they felt the cafe would be the ideal space as a soft background for the lifestyle shots. As you can see from the photo



on the right, disposable tableware can look very glamorous these days!



Dave works from his studio in Failand, but lives in Slade Road, Portishead. He mainly shoots advertising/commercial photography ranging from people to products and interiors, but also does family portrait and equine photography.



School Swimming Galas at the open air Pool were a big part of my life. I first went to one to cheer on St Barnabas against St Peters, St Josephs and Portishead Primary when I was about 9. This was before Highdown was built and when Portishead Primary in Slade Road was called 'the Council School'. Our parents came with us as we all so young. Some years later, it became a much more exciting event.

When I was at Gordano School (1969 - 1974) the galas took place during the summer term. In those days, Years 7 and 8 had their own gala. We had our own House System named after the Somerset Hills - Mendip, Polden, Quantock and Brendon. The Middle School houses (now years 9, 10 and 11) Reid, Gale, Sutton, Evans and Classey competed against each other. For either competition the agenda was the same - don't go to school, meet at the Pool! All roads led to the Lake Grounds. Gaggles of girls and boys made their way along the village, down the hill and arrived in from Pill, Portbury and Abbots Leigh (this was before St Katherine's was built) Green and black clad kids were everywhere!

Once there you had to find your form tutor, for registration. The various houses would congregate in corners. I remember most particularly 1972 whilst a proud member of SUTTON HOUSE (Hurray!! - pardon my shouting - very proud of our house!!). We gathered together in the top left hand section of the terraces, with a good view of the deep end for the start of the races and the diving competition. The stars of the gala were unfortunately not members of my House. My next door neighbours, Ruth and Ann Harvey, were the mainstay of a very talented Reid House aquatic team who triumphed at the Pool year after year. Ruth was a competitive swimmer for Portishead Swimming Club and competed at County level as well as winning the Long Swim. Another star at the galas was Gary Davies of Classey House who later went on to win the Long Swim too.

That gala stands out in my mind vividly. Our exchange school pupils from the Lycee Mixte, Aix Les Bains, in South Eastern France were visiting and our Headmistress, Mrs Esther Cryer (known to all as "Ethel") made a speech at the Pool in French. This was the year the song 'The Streak' was popular. Yes, you must be ahead of me! During a quiet moment as she drew breath a lone voice from the terraces yelled out

(Continued on page 4)

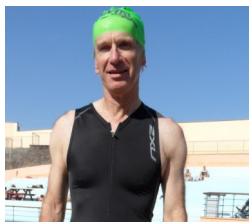
Season Ticket Reminder

As in previous years, we are offering Earlybird Season Tickets at a significant discount to everyone who purchases theirs by **31 December 2011**. This year Earlybirds can get their 2012 season tickets at 2010 prices—what a bargain! Print off your application form by following the link for a [family season ticket](#) and an [individual season ticket](#) on our [website](#) .



Christmas Dip anyone?

By Richard Nuell



Are you among those people who spring to life on Christmas morning dashing down to the beach with a group of like-minded enthusiasts who leap into the sea, splash around a bit and come out again, all in the name of charity? When undertaken on a grand scale, such action usually guarantees TV coverage and photos in the thin Boxing Day papers.

Sadly, we all live in the wrong place. You need to be in Bude, Brighton, Exmouth, Hunstanton, Hayle (and lots of other places in Cornwall), Sutton Coldfield, or Porthcawl on **Christmas morning** to join in the fun. If driving over 100 miles each way for a one minute freezing swim on the 25th isn't very convenient, what about **the 26th**? Charity swims take place at Aldeburgh, Paignton, West Bay, Whitley Bay, Tenby and, er, Liverpool Dock! And that's just the public events! Need something more local? The biggest is still over 40 miles away but Cheltenham lido always holds a mass swim on **Christmas morning** at 11am and is well publicised on its website. Last year it was called off due to snow and the fact that the water in the pool had frozen solid; at least 80 pre-entered people were disappointed! I recently heard of a charity swim in aid of the RNLI which takes place on **Christmas morning** at Weston's Marine Lake around 10.30 - 10.45 followed by hot chocolate at the organiser's Cove Restaurant. Everyone is welcome.

Our friends at the Middle Yeo Surf Lifesaving Club at Clevedon, with whom I have recently been for some brief swims, meet every day of the year on the beach adjacent to the pier within an hour or so of high tide, but occasionally at the Marine Lake. On **Christmas Day** they will be at the Marine Lake around 10am and on **Boxing Day** at the same time before the annual road race which begins at 11am. **New Year's Day** will see their traditional swim at 11am by the pier with a pantomime characters theme, assembling at Campbell's Landing at 10.15am. Most events referred to above will involve signing a disclaimer and are very definitely at your own risk. Guidance on cold water swimming is readily available on various websites. I understand that wetsuits will unfortunately be frowned on at all these events.

And finally, if anyone is interested in taking part in a very low key dip from Sugar Loaf beach, Portishead, on **Christmas morning** at around 8.45, at own risk, could you post a message on the Facebook page please? I am not organising it but a very keen all weather swimmer has asked me to mention it as she would like others to join her. I assume wetsuits are OK for this one.

Warmest congratulations to Duty Manager, **Jo Lench** and partner Becci on the birth of Harry on 18 November, a brother for Jack and Louise.

IT'S A BOY!



(Continued from page 3 - School Swimming Galas)

at the top of his voice the catchphrase from the song - "Don't Look, Ethel!" The place collapsed in laughter!

I have no idea why the galas stopped. When I was publicising the pool to the schools in 2008/9 to win their support to keep it open, one establishment (no names ...) wrote a curt letter to the Trust stating "they could not possibly consider holding swimming lessons or galas there because the parents would complain their children would be cold" ...!!! How refreshing it is that the schools will be using the pool once again now that it has been proved the water can be warm once again. I learnt to swim there with St Barnabas School and improved with lessons whilst at Gordano. The Pool was part of all my life, inside and outside of school and I am thrilled this wonderful facility is developing into THE place to be each summer once again!

Pat was instrumental in setting up the Trust in 2008 and she worked as a Trustee in the hectic early months, taking an active part in the makeover—Ed.

Tribute to Volunteers

By Ann Hailwood

I would like to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and all the hours they have put in. We had a lot of new people signing up this year, many of them via the website. We now have 92 core volunteers who did at least one shift.



Special thanks to:

- Those volunteers who turned up to help for the extra weekend heatwave in October and also gave much needed backup to the lifeguards. What a great time!
- Holly, who covered 203 shifts; by the end of the season she was a completely different person to the shy, introverted young lady who arrived.
- Suzy Cranney from Headway, Mike Lilley, Julianne who has Downs Syndrome, and Helen from Freeway Home, who all really enjoyed helping out.

Without our band of volunteers the Trust would not be able to continue. THANK YOU TO YOU ALL!

(Taken from Ann's report to the recent AGM — see Trust Matters)

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](#).

TRUST MATTERS

(1) PPCT Annual General Meeting

The third AGM of the Trust was held on 30 November 2011. It is likely that future AGMs will now be held around this date because it ties in with the dates for the Trust's submission of report and accounts, it is a good time to reflect on the season gone by and to think ahead to winter works and the next year.

Chairman David Coombes briefly highlighted some of the main achievements and events of the pool over the season, and financial director Andrew Butland drew members' attention to important aspects of the Trust's report and accounts. Although the poor summer had meant that 2011 swims were running slightly below 2010 numbers by the time the pool closed, the extra special weekend opening for the October heatwave eventually pulled numbers above the 2010 level, setting a new target for us to beat in 2012. Next year promises to be an important one for the pool with the Jubilee celebrations and the mini-Olympics celebrations being planned by Brenda Birkinshaw and her team. The planned opening date for next year is 21 April, the exact anniversary of the pool's very first opening date in 1962.

Jane Humphreys, who has responsibility for company secretarial matters, reported that membership now stands at 134 members. It is important that membership is maintained at a high level because it is from the membership that future trustees will be drawn. She and the chairman both asked all members present to encourage other supporters and volunteers, and their friends, to take up membership in order to underpin the Trust's future.

Two members, Joyce Cooper and Ann Hailwood, successfully stood for election as trustees, and thus fill the two vacant slots on the board and bring the total number of trustees to 9. Both Ann and Joyce have taken very active roles in the pool over the last three years, and trustees are delighted to welcome them on board. Ann has been doing sterling work as the volunteer co-ordinator and Joyce has worked in a number of capacities including being on the former management committee, and their hands-on experience will be invaluable to the board going forward.

The Trust's governing document requires that some trustees should retire every year and stand for re-election if they wish: this year, David Coombes, Jane Humphreys and Tony Stubbs stood down and were re-elected by members.

If you would like to become a member, or you know someone who might like to join, please direct them to the website where you can download the application forms. You don't have to stand as a trustee – but you will have a vote in who gets elected!

Jane Humphreys

Secretary

Jane@stone-cottage.org

0774 992 4633

(2) The Trust Sub-Committees

In the October issue of the Newsletter, we published information on the work of the Strategy Group and the Premises Group, two 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 Finance and HR Groups,

Finance Group

The finance committee is headed by Trustee Andrew Butland, with fellow Trustee Tony Stubbs, David Bellotti and representation from the tuckshop team (Chris and Kate Burns).

Our responsibilities include making sure that daily cash takings are banked, that financial controls operate as expected, that planned expenditure is budgeted for, and we provide a financial perspective to the Trust's decision making process.

We meet frequently during the summer season (and less often over the winter) to consider issues as they arise and the committee reports formally at each Trustee meeting.

At the end of each financial year, we prepare the Trust's financial statements for independent review and lodging with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

2011 Finance Report: The season started well, with good weather, but this did not continue. By the time we closed for the season, total swims were slightly down on last year. However, the special weekend opening for the October heat-wave eventually pulled numbers above the 2010 level at a record of 31,400, and setting a new target for us to beat in 2012. Revenue was in line with last year, plus the welcome bonus of the two awards from Waitrose and NatWest means we can go ahead with the disabled wet room facilities over the closed season.

The Trust would like to thank everyone who has helped or supported the Pool in the past year, including all the volunteers and staff, and a special mention (in no particular order) to:

The Town Council

The Freemans and all at Five Poolside

Steve of Able Investigation and Enforcement

The Royal Inn

Humphreys and Co

Portishead Lifeboat Crew

Portishead Fire Brigade

Portishead in Bloom

No Time for Sightseeing

Goodman and Lilley

Waitrose

NatWest

Jonathan Saxon

Burleigh Press

Steve Hughes of Adhesive Design

HR (Personnel) Group

The Human Resources Group is headed by Trustee Sally Chorlton, with Ann Hailwood, Barbara Waterhouse and Liz Hunter, plus a Duty Manager.

This committee oversees the advertising and recruitment of paid staff, the recruitment of volunteers and provides reviews for all over the season.

There is also a role for the overview and structuring of job descriptions, CRB checks and general contact information.

The committee also carries out an annual review and update of the Volunteer Handbook if necessary.

2011 HR Report: During the past season we employed fifteen lifeguards and two duty managers. We also employed a trainer, which worked very well. This year for the first time, we organised a staff team to take part in the Raft Race and hope to continue this next year.

Nine of the lifeguards are planning to return in 2012, and we are hoping to employ fewer lifeguards overall but deploy them more effectively, although anticipating weather conditions will continue to be a challenge. Plans for next year include earlier recruitment, in order to get personnel in place at least two weeks before the Pool opens.

The Co-op

Brackenwood Plant Centre

Costco

Iceland

Glulam Timber Products

Approved Access Scaffolding

Brenntag UK

Tam Engineering

Tracey Fowler

Heather and Mike at the Evening Post

Fay Edwards, The Breeze FM

Jackie Keen (Highdown)

Gill Gunnel and Hayley Perrett (Gordano)

Dart Services, Accountants

Freemans, High Street