



SAFFRON SEALS

SAFFRON WALDEN AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 24th March 2009

Present

Neil Pottrill, Chairman
Annie Eady, Treasurer
Harriet Christodoulides, Secretary
Alison Eddershaw
Marion Grainge
Vanessa Hill
Gail Hoban
Arlene McLean
Iain Rogers
Janet Rogers
Gill Sarginson
Kathy Snelling

Apologies:

Janet Bright, President
Tamara Lamb
Jo Raynham

**Minutes of AGM
held on 14th
March 2008**

Minutes, having been circulated to the meeting, were passed as correct.

Proposed:
Annie Edie
Seconded:
Alison Eddershaw

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

**Chairman's
Report:
Neil Pottril**

This has been a very busy year again for the Club with a whole range of activities new and old being undertaken. Firstly though, I need to thank our "ever expanding" committee which takes on all the roles and activities we need to cover to make the club successful. In these days of high pressure on parents from a whole range of areas I am very thankful to all those who do take the time to support us in so many ways.

The Committee:-

- Secretary – Harriet Christodoulides
- Treasurer – Annie Eady
- Child Welfare Officer - Arlene McLean
- Fixtures Secretary & Officials Organiser (two roles) – Amanda Jenkins (up to December 08) from December onwards TBA
- Kit Manager – Gill Sarginson
- Membership Secretary - Alison Green (until December 08) – Tamara Lamb from November 08
- Waiting List – Marion Grainge
- Publicity Notice Board/Awards Coordinators – Kathy Snelling
- Publicity/Newsletter – Jan Bright
- Publicity/Newspaper reports – Neil Pottrill
- LBL&FC Forum Representative/Swim 21/Poolside help – Alison Eddershaw

Additional essential help but not committee members:-

- Website Administrator & Manager – Gail Hoban
- Schools Coordinator – Jo Raynham

Not forgetting our very active and supportive **President Mrs. Jan Bright** – not sure what the Club would do without Jan – Very big thank you from me, the Committee and the whole Club for everything that Jan does and has done for many, many years.

Recruitment

I am pleased that we have been able to cover most of the roles this year and indeed fill some vacant ones.

We have welcomed Tamara Lamb / Gill Sarginson / Gail Hoban / Janet Rogers

However, we *still* have some important vacancies that the Club needs to fill (not necessarily committee positions) this year. If you feel you would like to join our successful team please give any member of the committee a call.

- Team Manager (One role)
- Children's records - currently carried out by Howard
- Poolside help (Desk rota)
- Training Course Organiser
- Fixtures Secretary – We are thankful that we now have a nomination for this role.
- Officials Organiser - We are thankful that we now have a nomination for this role.

We did lose some people....

A very big thank you to Amanda Jenkins, whom for many years held a number of roles (Fixtures Secretary / Poolside help / rotas etc) within the club and has certainly been there at most, if not all events. Amanda left us (formally) in December 08 but we were pleased to be able to say thank you more formally at our annual Club Championships. However, I am pleased to say the even though Amanda is no longer a committee member she still takes an active role in supporting our events.

Alison Green also formally left us in December 08 - after many years fulfilling the vital role of Membership Secretary encompassing the paperwork & organisation of swimming trials for all potential new members – we are thankful that this role has been taken on by Tamara Lamb. Alison has also played a key supporting role for our Treasurer Annie Eady in respect of annual appraisal of income & expenditure to run the club. Both these ladies will be missed but the club wishes them the very best for the future.

Finally, (last but not at all least) a big thank you goes to the many parents whom turn up to help with Galas / fund raising etc on more of a ad hoc basis.

Swim Staff

We would not be able to carry on the fundamental work of training our swimmers without our Club Coach and his team. Their commitment to the Club is tremendous and we owe them all a debt of gratitude. Week in and week out they turn up on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays to put the swimmers through their paces and of course on a number of Saturdays for galas at home and away:-

- Coach – Howard Godwin, Team Manager – Janet Rogers; Teachers – Vanessa Hill / Jo Raynham / Dawn Fanger; Water Polo Teacher – Lyn Dance

New website – www.saffronseals.org.uk

During the March 09 AGM the Club formally launched its own website. With an enormous “thank you” to Gail Hoban we now have a means of providing parents & friends of the club a place to go to find out information about us and what we do. I must also thank our club secretary for helping provide a lot of the data and support material. Please take time to have a look. As we get used to its existence I am sure we will be putting more and more information there. If you spot anything you would like to see please let the Secretary know in the first instance.

Water Polo

You might recall from my last year’s report, as part of the Swim 21 process the club is encouraged to offer additional activities for club swimmers. We decided as a Committee to offer the water polo experience by firstly inviting Tim Witham (National Water Polo coach) along on Friday 16th May 2008 to explain to our swimmers what was involved and then for the club to carry on to offer two courses of 5 weeks duration on a Wednesday evening (20.30 to 21.30) at the Friends School pool.

Given the great success and feedback from the swimmers we are actively looking for the best solution to offer the activity to more members as we recognise the limitations of the times on a Wednesday. It is an interesting fact that the Club started as a Water Polo club back in 1911 in the old Town Baths.

Lyn Dance & Howard Godwin staffed the sessions where the youngsters got to grips with the basics. Lyn has now completed her UKCC L1, unit 2 coaching in water polo (over a couple of weekends in February) to be able to offer even better coaching in the subject. See the Water Polo report from Lyn further down this document.)

Carnival

During last summer it will not have escaped your notice that it was Saffron Walden Carnival and I am pleased to say that the Club took part in 3 events over the course of the week.

One of the highlights was the procession (some photos on the new web site) where we were very fortunate to be able to loan a very old Massey Ferguson tractor & trailer which, with the help of many members/parents and friends, was decorated to advertise the Club – the theme was Hollywood and everyone (even me) dressed up in costumes. The second most notable event was the family fun swim - again with the Hollywood theme where families were invited to compete against each other in a variety of events – not a ASA Law in sight!

We were very fortunate in that the event was started by the Carnival Queen and her attendant with photos being taken afterwards (again a snapshot on the website). Lastly & not least we deployed our giant black seals (used on the float) to a tent on The Common for some pure advertising along with many other Saffron Walden volunteer organisations.

Fund raising

This year, through the encouragement of the Swim 21 Process, we embarked on a fundraising effort to replace some worn out equipment and at the same time invest in some “latest” technology. Most sponsorship of this kind requires the funds to be spent on capital projects rather than on-going costs.

- UDC support

We were very thankful to receive a cheque for £250 from UDC Community Fund to go towards the purchase of a "lite pro" (PC laptop projector) for training & club meeting use.

- Round Table support

For the first time in the Club's history we applied for a grant from the Round Table Carnival Fund and were lucky enough to receive a cheque for £1410 which we have put towards a new audio/visual Infinity starting machine – used for the first time at the recent Essex Mini league home Gala.

- Leisure Connection support (LBL&FC)

The club met up with the management of the LBL&FC Mr. Nigel Court in November 08 to discuss how they might be able to help and support the club. This has enabled the promise of £500 towards new diving blocks and further support in the way of club signs & advertising. We are in the process of crystallising this offer.

Club Championships

Another thrilling two evenings of competitive swimming – this time just within the Club members. For those of you who did not make it or have not been to these events - make sure you are there for next one (Jan 2010). The level of professionalism is great to see as you will have noted from the newspaper reports. 50 races took place over Friday & Saturday evening, culminating in points being awarded for each race with medals presented on the day. Saturday evening the cups were presented to those who accumulate the most points from the event.

Swim 21

In one sense we have not progressed quite as quickly as we would have wanted with the S21 accreditation process, in that we planned to be in a position to go for accreditation by now, however, we recognised that it was more important to "bag some early wins and then hold those gains" as part of the process rather than miss these opportunities and achieve the goal. However, the process of accumulating the "evidence" that we run the club in accordance with S21 principles still carries on. You will note in the commentary on a number of items here in my report, that the item is part of, or has been driven by, the S21 accreditation process.

Publicity in newspapers (reporter / Weekly News) / Salad Days

This year has seen a positive "proactive" attempt (again as suggested under the S21 process) to put the Club more into the public eye to recruit new members. Publicity works and we have through a combination of paid adverts in the seasonal "Salad Days" publication, reports in the local news and now our new website – not to mention the Carnival activity, pushed this plan forward significantly.

Newsletter – Jan Bright

An essential part of our communication strategy this year (again encouraged by Swim 21) has been to publish a newsletter as often as possible to all members. We have been very fortunate that this document has been "significantly brightened up - no pun intended!" by our Secretary Harriet Christodoulides which has made it much more interesting to look at and easier to read - hopefully you all have benefited from this.

Pool issues

We do recognise some issues in the use of the Friends' School pool during the colder

winter months. As a club we can only swim under certain criteria and we do all we can to ensure that all the pools we hire meet the necessary standards.

Swim time

We could do with more water time as a club which would allow us to offer more activities for the swimmers. We are actively pursuing other opportunities and will let everyone know if and when we are successful through the newsletter/email/website.

Galas

Again this year we have attended many Essex Mini-league Galas, giving the swimmers in the club the real opportunity to compete against other Essex clubs. Sadly, due to our “friendly & fun” approach to swimming, we are not always able to compete to the same level as some of the larger clubs but you have to bear in mind that some of them are able to swim much more often and their size and location can make a significant difference to the results. However, we compete & have fun – so keep it up swimmers! I would urge any swimmer who has not taken up this opportunity to do so, as the galas provide an excellent opportunity for you to demonstrate your skill and the hard work that you have put into perfecting your stroke.

Club Captain's & Vice Captains

This year we have not changed our Club Captains so James Jenkins & Maia Lamb and Vice Captains Eddie Pottrill & Anna & Rachel Carter-Gladwin continue in their roles.

Training – Lyn Dance, Ruth Lambert & Arlene McLean

As a club we don't spend much of our income on training, but I am pleased that this year we have been able to support Ruth Lambert with her UKCC Level 1 Teaching Aquatics qualification and Lyn Dance in Water Polo UKCC Level 1, unit 2 Coaching in Water Polo. We support the training cost of some of our younger swimmers like Ruth in the hope that they will be able to help the club out in the future. Ruth is currently studying at University. Arlene McLean has attended two Child Welfare Office courses to ensure that we as a club are conforming to the latest standard in child protection. Congratulations to them all for passing their courses.

Club finances

You can see full report with the audited numbers from the Treasurer within this report but we have had to raise the fees this year to take account of the increase in the charges placed on us from pool hire / etc. One way to combat any further rises is to maintain a healthy volume of members so if you know anyone who would like to come along or go on the waiting list please let Marion Grange know.

The Finance Sub-committee has put together a rolling 3 year finance strategy to enable the Club to plan ahead - again as suggested by Swim 21 process.

Masters swimming

Masters swimming is swimming for adults. It encompasses the whole range of ability from casual fitness swimming to highly organised competitive swimming. To qualify as a 'Masters' swimmer one needs only to be over 25 years of age, but there are also a number of competitions for younger adults above the age of 18.

If you are interested in “taking the plunge” as an adult the Club is currently considering how it might be able to offer its Masters the opportunity to use some pool time. Please let the Club Secretary know and once we have seen the level of demand we can put some plans together.

More help please!

My plea to you as parents and supporters (as last year) is to help the Club as much as you can – I know it is difficult these days of long hours and demanding additional curricular activities that our children get involved in but It does make a lot of difference to the rest of the committee and helpers. If you wish to take up this opportunity and - believe it or not you do not need to know anything about swimming – we have a great team of experts who can do that! - Please make yourself known to one of the committee members.

Thank you for taking the time to read this years report.

Neil Pottrill – Chairman - chairman@saffronseals.org.uk

Secretary's Report

Following the awards from The Round Table and Uttlesford District Council and the very favourable press coverage, letters of thanks had been sent to both organisations.

Harriet Christodoulidies

Data Protection – annual application made and granted

New image newsletters now being sent out by Email to all members on regular basis – normally monthly.

All members now being contacted only by email except for annual subscription – saving on time and postage.

ASA continue to send large amount of information on courses and events which is disseminated to the whole Committee as and when received.

secretary@saffronseals.org.uk

The Secretary agreed to send emails out to members without disclosing every email address which she agreed to do and the report was passed.

**Treasurer's Report
Annie Eady**

The club continues to be in a reasonably healthy financial position. It would appear from the Income & Expenditure that we actually made a profit last year – this is in fact not the case. We had several fairly large bills that related to 2008 that were very late coming in; details of these are at the foot of the Income & Expenditure account. I have asked for these invoices to be presented earlier if possible this year!

With regards to fees, thank you to those parents who set their standing orders up in time for January – this helps the Club immensely.

One area I do have an issue is with is non swimmers/leavers – if your child decides to leave the club for whatever reason can you please ensure that you let Howard and myself know. You can contact me on my e-mail address below.

The Club Championships made a profit– the first time for a while, through raffles and entry fees. Thank you to all those parents and swimmers who supported this event.

Neil, Alison (Green) and myself have had a couple of meetings setting up the three-year financial plan. This has helped with forecasting possible unseen expenses, pool hire increases, setting fees and training costs. This will be on going year on year.

One of the biggest increases in this financial year was the cost of ASA membership (increase of £513 on last year) payment of which, as you may or may not be aware is compulsory. If we do not pay we do not swim! They are going up substantially again in 2009, which was reflected in changes made in 2009.

Unfortunately there were no closing stock figures available. We had 12-18 months of no

one being responsible. Now the kit ordering/sales have been taken over by Gill Sarginson I am confident this problem will not occur in future.

All other costs are kept to a minimum and as said in previous years, I know that several of us committee members do not charge for copying, stationery and none of them for their time!!

Mrs Annie Eady Treasurer e-mail: anne-beard@btconnect.com

FOR FULL SET OF ACCOUNTS PLEASE EMAIL : secretary@saffronseals.org.uk

"I have examined the books and records of Saffron Walden Amateur Swimming Club and certify they represent a true and fair view of the transactions for the period 1st January 2008 – 31st December 2008.

PJ McMahon FIAB “

(Note a signed copy will be available at the AGM)

The ASA subscriptions being expensive would not be paid for those “members” not having renewed their standing orders.

A desk rota for supervision of registers would be useful at Friends and this would be discussed at next Committee Meeting.

**Child Welfare
Officer Report -
Arlene McLean**

Since taking on this role in at the AGM in 2008 I have completed 2 courses and done a feedback session for committee members.

As usual courses give new information and also create more questions and work that has to be applied at local club level and to be made individual to the needs of our Club. The main point is to make the Club an “aware club” and create a culture of “awareness” in terms of safeguarding, protection and support for children.

As part of Swim 21 we need to integrate our local policies with those of the facilities that we use, so that we are aware of lines of responsibility and how we work together on any issues relating to safety and protection. Neil and I have met to look at some of this work and it is will an ongoing process.

We also need to streamline the process of ASA membership and CRB checks. This is being worked on with the Club treasurer.

I have copies of Wave Power ASA guidelines Time to Listen, and Safeguarding and Protecting Children the NSPCC documents if anyone is interested in looking at these.

The plans for this year are to continue to streamline processes and also to continue the work on Swim 21. If there are parents who have specialist skills in this work it is always great to discuss ideas and broaden our knowledge in safeguarding and protecting children and continue to develop out awareness.

Arlene McLean

Fixture List

A reminder please to keep an eye on the Club notice board for Gala Dates (which is situated down the corridor towards the changing rooms)

**Water Polo
Lyn Dance**

Water polo is a team game with 13 players, 7 in the pool and 6 subs. The objective is to score more goals than the other team! Highly competitive, contact between players above and below the water line, (much of the latter unseen by the judges you hope!). Develops great skill in the water, fitness and stamina. Clubs often run parallel to

swimming clubs and provide a 'branching off' for those swimmers who prefer the 'team' environment, or as additional/alternative water time.

I recently went to Morden in South London to undertake a UKCC coaching water polo course. My fellow candidates were a mixture of National League players, player/coaches who had been involved with polo for 20 years and others who were new to the sport. The young, energetic, super fit national players were a great source of interest demonstrating their awe-inspiring ability with a ball whilst undertaking an incredibly powerful egg-beater kick (was there a moving floor in the pool, were they 'standing' on the water?) in contrast to my personal exhaustion trying to just 'have a go' at the range of skills on offer. Luckily I wasn't alone in this category.

We concluded our weekend, before the dreaded test paper, with a coaching session of the local water polo club. These players ranged in age from 10 years to 18 years. Skills being taught within their ability groups and then a mixed age game. The ability of all these players were incredible and as one of my fellow candidates stated players in the club ranged from 10 – 65 years, as they never leave!

At Saffron Walden Amateur Swimming Club it is hoped we can also offer a parallel water polo club to the swimming club. As part of the Swim 21 accreditation clubs are encouraged to offer a range of alternatives if possible. It is hoped we can provide an additional training session at LBLC in the future and therefore offer the club swimmers a chance to sample and enjoy this wonderfully energetic and competitive game.

Lyn Dance – Water Polo Teacher

Election of Officers

The Chairman proposed by Harriet Christodoulides and Seconded by entirety of those present. The Secretary proposed by Kathy Snelling and seconded by Marion Grainge; Treasurers proposed by Harriet C and seconded by Jan Rogers, other Committee Members were proposed by Neil Pottrill and seconded by Harriet Christodoulides

Web-Site

Gail Hoban gave a presentation to the meeting of the new web-site. She has succeeded in her aim to make it easy to navigate and simple to understand. It was agreed the minutes for the AGM and Committee meeting would be put as pdf's on the site.

A Sponsorship page would be added which would include the names of UDC, Round Table, LBL&FC, Salad Days and the Saffron Directory.

Club Constitution

Neil reported that it is necessary to make a small modification to the Constitution to reflect our payment methods of collecting fees monthly by standing order. The proposal was passed unanimously.

Club Organisation

The Committee were asked to give consideration to the formation of sub-committees to handle discreet areas of the business of running the club. Operations, finance, people, and swim 21 with a view to reporting back to full Committee say twice a year.

There being no further business, Neil thanked everyone for attending, and closed the meeting at 8.46 p.m.