

**Portobello ASC,**

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting**

**Held on 22 June 2022 at Portobello High School**

1. Present
   1. Lesley Scott  
      Linda Forrester  
      Liz Henderson  
      Sharon Turner  
      Joanne Campbell  
      Ed Grundy  
      Gail Hogarth  
      Sally Williamson  
      Neilson Rutherford  
      James Woodward  
      Lucy Zhong  
      Silvia Seabright  
      Stephen Mallison  
      Louise Smith
   2. Apologies for Absence

Keith Anderson

Murray Anderson

Cath Fleming

Andy May

1. Approval of minutes from previous AGM & matters arising.

Approved – Nielson Rutherford proposed and seconded by Joanne Campbell

1. President’s Remarks – Lesley Scott

Welcome to the AGM of Portobello Amateur Swimming Club of 2022

I am Lesley Scott and have been in post as the president for the last year. Tonight, we are going to hear about how the different aspects of the club and how the club is functioning, you will hear from our convenors, who will reflect on the last year, celebrate our successes and look forward to what we hope for in the future at PASC.

I came into post this time last year when we were just starting to get back to swimming and Edinburgh Leisure was giving us more pool time to get back into the water, there were still restrictions in place and I want to thank all our Covid Volunteers that helped the club at that time especially Doug Bathgate our Covid officer who we thankfully don’t need any more.

By about last August we had most of our sessions back to normal and we were settling into a better rhythm of training with the Water polo and Swimming sections of the club. We had expected this year for Portobello Swim Centre to have closed for a life cycle refurbishment but this has been delayed, there are plans in place for when this happens so sessions might change but they will continue. We will let you know about this as soon as we know.

By September we had our Committee meeting back to face to face meetings which was great, there was a lot of work to do and it was much easier to do that in one room, our finances have taken a massive hit as you will hear, thankfully they were in a very good position prior to Covid, so we unlike many other clubs have been able to get through. We have focused on good financial housekeeping and a small increase in fees this has helped some of the way. However, with rising pool costs and loss of members we need to ensure we are considering all our options going forward. Nationally there has been 20% drop in membership we have not suffered quite as badly but we need to be actively recruiting over the summer as we need and want to increase our membership. We will need help to do this.

We have 2 new Young Ambassadors in the club who went off to have training with Scottish Swimming and we are hoping to get them working hard over the next year to help us think of innovative ways to keep our swimmers supported and happy, they are Adda James and Hanka Seabright.

I want to minute a thanks to Kate McBain who has kept our WHATS APP group running over many years.

We always want to celebrate with our members, Alan Anderson this year received a Life Time Membership of Scottish Swimming for his work with Scottish Swimming Water Polo and congratulations to Gael Logan, our Girls Water Polo coach and player, who had a baby over the last year.

Sadly, we didn’t manage to have our Annual Awards Ceremony this year, but we are aiming to have a fun informal event as soon as the schools go back to celebrate the successes the members have had in the pool over the last year. Andy has run our first poolside helper course and has recruited extra help on poolside which is great for the swimmers and the coaches.

The committee have worked very hard despite a reduction in support, John McDougal after many years doing lots of things in the club has temporality relocated to France, we have had other key positions in the committee that we have not had filled over the last few years. Over the last few months we have had a search for volunteers, we worked hard at trying to explain this to members and parents to ask for more help which I am delighted to say has been successful and we have been able to fill some key positions, so welcome to our new volunteers, we continue to need more support and we ask that you speak to us after the meeting or get in touch to see how you can help our club. As we all know without volunteers in a club like this nothing would happen. We now have Catherine Bell heading up social/fundraising committee and Julie Malloy has been joined by Lucy Scott Watson to focus on Social media for the club. I want to say thank you to Nikki Bathgate who has eventually managed to hand over her role of Pool Convenor, Nikki has been very helpful over the past few years.

I am sad to share that we have lost 2 life members over the last year.

-Liz Laidlaw, died 22/12/21 wife to Bill Laidlaw, both life time members of the club, Liz was President of the Portobello Ladies section at the same time as Bill who was president of the club, likely the last lady to be in charge of the lady’s sections. As a couple they have been involved and interested in the club over many years and their son Martin is still involved and interested. Our condolences go to Martin, Ann and all their families.

-Jack Snowdon MBE died 17/4/22 aged 98, Jack was a swimming coach, administrator and water polo goalkeeper. Jack will be remembered throughout Scotland but primarily Edinburgh for the encouragement he gave numerous people of all ages in the swimming community. He was a Second Wold War Veteran with the Royal Navy prior to that he joined Portobello ASC in 1936. He was involved in the historic swim of the English Channel in 1950 when Ned Barnie became the first Scot to swim the Chanel.

He played masters Water Polo into his 60’s and was a coach on our pool side into his 90’s. He was always seen in his whites at swimming galas refereeing and keeping everyone right. Jack is past president of PASC, East District and Scottish Swimming.

Jack’s service to the sport of swimming were recognised in the 2001 New Year’s Honours list when he received a MBE, he was indeed a gentleman in the world of aquatics, our condolences go to Cath, Julie, Barbara and all their families.

Last week I was on holiday and was reading a book by Bonnie Tait called “Why we Swim”, it was a great book and was so inspiring, it talked about the history of swimming and different benefits it brings to individuals and community, she talked about how swimming gives confidence through community, I loved that phrase, the PASC community certainly gives me confidence wanting to make this club a great place for individuals to meet people, gain lifelong skills, exercise, make life time friends and gain confidence in ourselves by just being in the water, as she says doing “meaningful play”. In a world that is all about image and social media being the water strips all that back and to some Lycia a cap and goggles.

Finally I want to say thank you to the coaches of both Swimming and Water Polo sections who work so hard and getting the best out of our Athletes, their commitment, time and passion is why we are still here after 110 years. Also, a massive thanks to our volunteers and committee who make this club a better place. I hope you enjoy hearing more about the club from the folks that are running the club.

1. Financial Reports
   1. Treasurers Report – Joanne Campbell

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Opening Balance 1st April 2021 £20,396.31** | |
| Expenditure | Total |
| Pool Hire (polo and swimming) | £42,468.75 |
| Coaching | £11,721.90 |
| SASA | £9,845.00 |
| Scottish Swimming WP | £980.00 |
| East District fees | £781.00 |
| Total Expenditure | £65,876.65 |
| Income | Total |
| Subscriptions | £46,459.03 |
| SASA Fees | £12,157.75 |
| SASA Refund | £504.00 |
| Swim Shop | £450.00 |
| Donation/Subsidy/gala | £2,100.00 |
| East District fees | £626.00 |
| Total Receipts | £62,296.78 |
| **Closing Balance 31st March 2022 £16,816.44** | |

Pre Covid we had over £30,000 in the bank. It was good we had funds in reserve. This allowed us to resume swimming as soon as restrictions were eased in Sep 2020 and offer sessions to all our members with subscription costs reflecting the reduced capacity due to Covid rules. Throughout that first year of lockdowns and partial re opening our costs soared and by 31/3/21 our bank balance was reduced to £20,396.31. So, in one year we ran at a loss of £10,000.

The last financial year from 1/4/21 to 31/3/22 our expenditure exceeded our income by just under £4,000. Still running at a loss. It should be noted:

• We received a £2000 donation which cushioned the loss.

• We were unable to run our annual gala which reduced our overall income.

• We raised our subscription charges but have tried to keep them as close to

• pre-Covid levels as possible.

• We reduced our SASA admin charge in light of the fact most swimmers/polo

• players had little opportunity to complete or play games throughout the

• season.

• Unfortunately on a monthly basis our costs are exceeding our income and on

• the 31/5/22 our balance was reduced to £13,453.67.

Going forward running at a loss is not sustainable. As a club we need to increase our membership base and the committee is doing everything it can to promote PASC. We are also looking at the possibility of getting grants to help with growing costs. We can’t do this alone. We need the help of all our members to recruit, particularly at the younger end. The alternative is for us to raise fees which no one wants.

On a positive note:

• We still have some money in the bank to give us time to recruit new

• members.

• With all restrictions lifted we are looking forward to a full 2022/23 season of

• galas and polo fixtures.

* 1. Gala Fees – Scott Creelie

I have enclosed the June 2022 summary for the Gala Fees account and the latest bank statements covering the period May – June 2022. The balance of the gala fees account on 11th May 2022 was £8,747.46 and the closing balance on 14th June 2022 was £9,130.46.

The closing balance includes:

• £4,050.00 in respect of La Santa Deposits

• £2,200.00 in respect of La Santa savings from parents

The adjusted PASC gala fees account balance is therefore £2,880.46.

The gala fees account balance currently includes the £1500 from previous La Santa trips and the ‘excess’ (gala float) of club money.

As things stand, £263.00 is outstanding in terms of gala fees - Requests have been issued to parents in respect of the East District Summer Sizzler on 25/6 and the Scottish National Open Championship on 1/7.

Summary of recent payments in and out of the gala fees account below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Jun-22** |  |  |  |
| **Opening Amount - May 22** | **£8,747.46** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Money In** | **£888** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Money Out** |  | **£505.00** |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Closing balance** |  |  | **£9,130.46** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Notes:** | **1/ Closing balance includes £1500 from previous La Santa trip & "float" of PASC club money** | | |
|  | **2/ Outstanding gala fees (June / July 22) = £263** | | |
|  | **3/ La Santa deposits & savings balance = £6250** | | |

1. Water Polo Convenor Report – Ed Grundy

Scottish Leagues/Cups and BWPL

The junior teams all played really well in what was a very compressed SNL season, with normal service being resumed next year - under 17 boys won their league, under 19s came second

In the Scottish Cup, the 2004+ girls were in the final against Dunfermline. It was a mixed team with Forth Valley, and the team played strongly against tough opposition. They lost 22-8 but the game was certainly closer than the scoreline. Either way, lots to build on.

The 2006+ boys also reached the final and were unfortunate in losing to another strong Stirling team. Stirling came out hard at the start and built a commanding lead of about 8 goals. Porty controlled the second half and got it all the way back to the final score of 19-17. It's a testament to the group of players and the coaches that they were able to turn the game around so well.

Some of the women's team played in the final for Warrender against another strong Dunfermline team and our players certainly did well! Several of the women's team were part of the Caledonia women's team again this year. They competed well, but the numbers had slightly dropped off which made it difficult to compete with some of the stronger division 1 teams. They were unable to maintain their place in Division 1 for next year, but there's plenty to build on and some of the younger Porty girls might be in a position to contribute to that group soon!

The men's team also reached the final and beat Dunfermline 14-9, though it wasn't as close as that scoreline would suggest. It was level at half time, but Porty were in control and scored the first 5 goals of the third quarter, eventually taking it out to a 7 goal lead at the start of the fourth. The whole team played well together and particular mention should go to Andrew Melville who had his nose broken in the first quarter and then came back into the game in the third and fourth to anchor a great defensive effort. Alex Dagaetano and Joe Mathieson played in the final and it was great experience for them, and Will Hurd and Sam Molloy also contributed to the Scottish Cup (and league) efforts throughout the year.

In the BWPL the young team also did relatively well throughout the year. The team had issues with attendance at some practices and some of the BWPL weekends through Covid and other reasons, but that made it slightly difficult to get any momentum. The team maintained their position in the second tier of the league, though had to do it the hard way, losing out on a place in Championship 1 on head to head goal difference, and then salvaging a draw in the final game of the season against London Otter to go back up into Division 2 by a single point. The team is looking promising for the next few years and there are a number of juniors looking to make that step up into contention for the BWPL team.

General Updates

We are waiting to hear back from Scottish Water Polo about their plans to host all SNL games at Strathclyde University. Apparently Portobello were the most vocal voice against that plan, but seemingly none of the SWP committee had thought about the issues we pointed out; the main one being that Saturday morning games would clash with football/rugby/swimming etc and it would just be making kids make a choice that we would probably lose!

If the central venue does go ahead then we will need to consider the logistics of getting there and back to play games, but one benefit is that refs and table officials will be arranged for us. Either way, fingers crossed that we revert to the normal timetable and home/away games.

Finally, we've had a lot of issues getting coaching for the Saturday evening session at the RCP. Cameron McRobbie is now coaching it but is away to University in September (hopefully to Edinburgh though), and can't do it every single week. Once we manage to get some consistency with it, we may be more successful in getting good numbers along.

Our u17 and u19 teams were entered into the NAGs tournaments. The u17 team competed well.

Overall the junior section is looking strong and seemingly Portobello have come back from Covid with the lowest drop-off in membership numbers in the Scottish Water Polo community. It has been tough to get junior girls back and we are trying to boost those numbers, and there have also been a number of retirements (or just hiatus's) in the senior women's team, but there is a core group of girls coming through which bodes well, particularly if those away at University come back to Edinburgh after that.

We have tried to run some more sessions aimed at getting the swimming side of the club involved in Water Polo, and think that has had some success, so we will continue to do that. We have also tried to institute a 'bring a friend for free' type session with relatively mixed success. However, we will look to re-run that again, perhaps over the summer when parents might be looking for the kids to get into something new!

That’s everything from the water polo section, and we’re looking forward to an excellent year to come now that everyone is back in the water again!

1. Swimming Convener Report – Andy May

Like everywhere else these past 2 years it has been a challenging time for the swimmers. But, my thanks to the Committee, the coaches and the parents for helping provide the bedrock that has allowed the swimmers to remain engaged in the club and the sport and we look to go from strength to strength.

The first 12 months of restrictions I cannot thank enough those who worked behind the scenes to negotiate tremendous training availability and to all those parents who made themselves available as “Covid Helpers” to allow sessions to progress. Mention especially to Doug Bathgate, as “Covid Lead” who helped break down the reams of guidelines into meaningful, practical explanations!

The second 12 months has seen slightly more “normality”, though we are not fully there yet.

Regardless, I am delighted we have managed to get many swimmers into the competition pool. For too long (understandably), much was focussed on the elite athletes, but gradually club swimmers at all levels have been allowed back competing.

For many of our new members who had never experienced a competition we have had a scaled-down version of our usual Club Championships and the Coverdale. Some were nervous going in to these, understandably, but were certainly buzzing having taken part. This is what it’s all about.

More competitions will come online for swimmers at this early level, but it gives a focus for the training (at any level) and we hope many previous anxieties will have been dispelled and the prospect of the competition pool will be relished.

Competitions for the mid section of the club have been more difficult to enter as senior swimmers from every club were grabbing every event coming along. However, we recently managed to get a fantastic group out to the Trojan meet in Whitburn with the team of 16 returning many medals, stacks of Personal Bests and numerous “speeding tickets” for being too fast. A successful competition! But more importantly – getting this group back in the competition pool. And having a great time into the bargain! (As well as Ice Lollies at lunchtime, but that’s another story!!)

The seniors have had more availability, albeit piecemeal, and this has brought its own challenges. But we had our strongest representation at District level in a long time, not just qualifying, but smashing times, qualifying for finals and almost medalling.

As a result, we had our largest contingent at Nationals for many a year and again – finalists. Not just 1, but 7! Standards haven’t dropped, times haven’t slowed, we’ve just had swimmers who have applied themselves superbly and stepped up.

Such that one senior swimmer has been invited to the British Summer Meet this year!

It’s been a while since the club has hit these heights, but take nothing away from the swimmers. They have stuck through the tough times, the stop / start nature of the past 2 years and they’ve kept close and helped each other.

Again, to all the helpers behind the scenes, to all the parents who helped poolside or otherwise helped keep their swimmers going, to the coaching staff and Committee – this is what has been made possible.

1. Membership Secretary Report – Liz Henderson

I’ve been the PASC Membership Secretary since Lesley stepped down from the role at the last AGM. Prior to that I had been helping Lesley with the water polo side of our membership and had (almost successfully) weaned us off WhatsApp by setting PASC up on Stack TeamApp.

As Lesley reported last year, we came out of Covid in a pretty good position membership-wise. Most of our members returned, most of those that didn’t were the members we would expect to lose as swimmers left school and moved on to the next stage of their lives.

PASC Membership in June 2021

Total members – 170

Swimming members – 124, Non-swimming members – 46

PASC Membership in June 2022

Total members – 176

Swimming members – 125, Non-swimming members - 51

The split between water polo and swimming members is a fairly equal split.

While we had hoped that we would have an influx of new members post-lockdown we haven’t found that to be the case and our membership numbers have remained fairly static over the last year. One reason for that could be that the enforced break in swimming lessons has led to fewer children being ready to move to club level swimming, hopefully we’ll see a change in that very soon as they catch up.

A big focus for me over the next few months is to work on recruiting new members. The recent, successful recruitment of more volunteers to key roles within the club means there will be opportunity to work on building the club back up to pre-Covid levels. I’d particularly like to welcome Claire Wallace who will be sharing some of the membership workload with me.

The main focal area will initially be our U15s water polo and women’s water polo membership as our ability to put out full teams is limited at the moment. But we also need to make sure we are attracting young swimmers wishing to develop their swimming post-lessons into our D1 and D2 swim programmes. Thanks to our excellent coaches, retention of swimmers doesn’t appear to be a problem, we just need to make sure we have plenty joining at the beginners end of the club.

The Edinburgh City Council’s schools swim coordinator for our area is very keen to work with us in promoting the club to keep children swimming after primary school and we will be taking advantage of that. Our new social media team will be instrumental in raising our profile online and I’m hoping we can start to run taster sessions regularly for prospective members so that I can report increased membership next year.

1. Pool Convenor Report

No report

1. Gala Convenor Report

As no galas were hosted due to covid, no report is provided.

1. Wellbeing & Protection Officer Report – Sharon Turner

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1. Proposed changes to Constitution

None

1. Election of Management Committee Members

Vacancy for vice president to be filled in due course.

Linda Forrester stepped down as secretary and was replaced by James Woodward.

Committee for coming year:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| President | Lesley Scott |
| Secretary | James Woodward |
| Membership Secretary | Liz Hnderson |
| Treasurer | Joanne Campbell |
| Gala Fees | Scott Creelie |
| Swim Convener | John McDougall |
| Water Polo Convener | Ed Grundy |
| Swim Coach | Andy May |
| Pool Convener | Nikki Bathgate & Doug Bathgate |
| Gala Convener | Cath Fleming |
| Health & Wellbeing Officers | Roddy Hardy, Keith Anderson & Sharon Turner |

1. Appointment of Auditors / Independent Examiners

Janet Jones appointed to look at accounts

1. Appointment of Honorary President & Honorary Vice President(s)

None.

1. Other relevant business

None

The meeting closed at 20:41