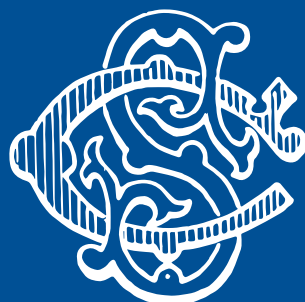


# OTTER SWIMMING CLUB

FOUNDED 1869



ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2016



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FOUNDED 1869




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## PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

*Paul Hindle*

### OTTER'S HEROES

2016 was yet another fantastic year for Otter.

- Our swimmers excelled in almost every competition where we were represented.
- The ladies' water polo teams continued to develop as the premier ladies' club in London and the South East, and the only British team to compete in Europe.
- Otter men's water polo made big steps forward with a new training venue, coach, and an embryonic junior section. It is starting once again to deliver real success, most notably in the London League competitions.
- And in open water swimming, Deirdre Ward completed a stunning two-way channel swim – probably an Otter first?



You can read all the detail about our Otter heroes in this excellent Annual Report.

### OTTER'S UNSUNG HEROES

As President I often worry about the activities that go on within the Otter realm, day to day (up to five different venues/activities each day of the week), weekly, monthly and annually. I worry because of the sheer number of different individual activities, functions and tasks that are happening, which I probably do not know as much as I should about the 'who' and the 'how'; but I take comfort that we have many highly capable and committed people quietly getting on with business.

In this year's President's Foreword I want to focus on these 'unsung heroes' who get on with the back office functions that allow Otter to thrive. Of course, the risk in doing this is that I manage to omit and thereby offend someone; if I do then please accept my sincere apologies, but also please make sure that I know about your contribution.

#### The Otter Committee

I want to thank everyone on the Otter Committee for the tireless and unselfish time and effort they give towards the running of the Club.

Our Hon. Treasurer, Chris Eden, deserves a special mention for the work that he does in keeping us financially in order. Running the finances of a £100k+ turnover club of nearly 400 members, making sure that bills are paid in a timely fashion and everyone is up to date with their subscription payments, all in your spare time, is a big job for any individual to take on.

The section captains: Olivia Reynolds, Tracey Allen, Nicolas Barber, Pip Bennett, Daniel Shunn and Eric Boldon, also deserve special mention for their work. As well as giving time and effort to the Committee, they put even more into managing the day to day activities of their sections, as well as finding time to train and compete at the top level.

#### ASA registrations

Thanks to Emma Cartwright, Leon Estrella and Daryl Nurthen for managing our ASA registrations, ensuring we're all able to

train and compete year on year.

#### Otter events

- The Quarter Mile
- The Half Mile
- The Mile
- The Annual Dinner
- The Club Championships
- The Otter Golf tournament
- The 'mature Otters' monthly get together
- The 'younger Otters' monthly social
- The Otter Christmas social

All of these events are an important part of what makes Otter special, and I want to thank everyone who has made a contribution, no matter how small, to their organisation in 2016. None of these events happen by themselves, someone has to organise every aspect of each one. These include, in no particular order or relevance: setting and advertising the date, arranging the venue, negotiating the price and contract terms, agreeing menus and seating plans, arranging any disco, organising raffles, collecting money, arranging transport, lifeboats and lifeguards, making sure trophies are available and, of course, the on-the-day organisation.

#### Pool hire and relationship management

I want to thank Michelle Senecal, Nick Buller and everyone else who manages the numerous pool hire arrangements. In each instance there is a contract of some description to be agreed and regularly renewed, invoices to be processed, and relationships with the pools to be maintained.

#### Recruitment and management of our coaching teams

Otter is proud to have some of the best swimming and water polo coaches in the country. A big proportion of the competitive success of Otter is down to their dedication and hard work. However, it would be remiss of us all to forget that behind the scenes our coaches are recruited, have contracts of engagement



and are managed to ensure that training plans are appropriate and excellent relationships are maintained. I want to thank everyone who is involved, but especially Lesley Davies, who carries much of the burden in the swimming section.

**Otter participation in external swimming and water polo bodies**

Thanks to all Otters who participate in the external bodies that help to govern and run our sports. Peggy Etiebet is on the management board of London Swimming. Peggy is also Chair of the London Swimming Water Polo Committee, and Nick Buller is its Talent Development Leader. In addition, Otters attend meetings of the various water polo leagues that we compete in and, where necessary, make game arrangements, a task that can be very time consuming.

**Otter participation in external competitions**

In 2016 the men’s water polo teams played over 50 competitive fixtures, over 30 of which were self organised. The ladies played over 40 competitive fixtures, including the qualification round of LEN Euro League in Padova, Italy. In addition, our ladies played numerous games in national age group competitions. Volunteers ensure that: teams attend each game; referees are provided and available; transport is organised; and, where necessary, accommodation arrangements made.

Otter also participates in numerous swimming competitions over the year and, for each, somebody organises team entries, handles queries, and makes transport and accommodation arrangements, where necessary.

I want to thank all the many individuals who contributed to making this happen.

**Otter policies and procedures**

We live in an increasingly regulated and litigious world; Otter is no exception. The Club conducts regular risk assessments of all our training and competitive activities, and has recently implemented a child protection policy that all existing water polo members and all new members, both in swimming and water polo, are required to agree to.

I want to thank Lesley Davies for administering these policies and advising the Committee on the latest requirements.

**Otter Annual Report**

Thank you everyone who has provided a contribution to this report. My special thanks go to Gina Hobson for chasing those contributions, compiling, editing, arranging for and organising printers, and generally producing this superb Annual Report.

**The website: [www.otterswimming.com](http://www.otterswimming.com)**

The Otter website is our window to the outside world; it is also one of the mechanisms we have for managing the club and keeping members informed. It was created by Lex Hignett, with technical support from John Talbott and Dave Warren. Having been created, the content needs to be refreshed and updated regularly; some of our sections are particularly good at doing

that. My thanks to everyone who helped to create the website, along with those who keep the content refreshed and updated.

**Tours and training camps**

In 2016 several tours and overseas training camps were organised. They are an important part of making Otter attractive to new members, as well as fostering team spirit and camaraderie. Thanks to everyone who has been involved in making them happen.

**The Bath Cup and Otter Medley races**

I want to give special thanks to John Nalson for his singlehanded management of the Otter Schools relay event.

**Volunteers needed**

You will have gathered by now that a vast amount goes on behind the scenes to run the Club. As we grow and in a world of ever increasing time pressures on individuals, the need for more members to step forward to make a contribution, no matter how small, to the running of the Club and its events becomes more important. Quite simply, it is not sustainable for the same individuals to continue to run everything.

If you think you may be able to help with any of the above activities or can offer support in other areas then please do not hesitate to contact one of the captains or anyone on the Committee. It would be good to see more involvement from right across the membership, regardless of your swimming or water polo prowess.





## OTTER COMMITTEE 2016-17

The principal decision making body of the Club is the Committee. Its key functions are to set the strategic direction, manage financial affairs, and oversee the ongoing health and welfare of the Club. The Committee meets formally once every two months. The meetings are either face to face or by conference call, depending on the matters to be discussed. Urgent matters are usually dealt with via email.

The 2016-17 committee was elected at the April 2016 Annual General Meeting.

Several changes were necessary during the year. Men's water polo captain, Eric Bolden, started a new job in Chicago, USA. The position is being filled on a temporary basis by Daniel Shunn. In October men's swimming captain, Pip Bennett, stepped down from the Committee. He has been replaced by Nico Barber.



<b>President:</b>	Paul Hindle
<b>Vice Presidents:</b>	Lesley Davies - (Health & Safety, Welfare and Coaching)
<b>Hon. Treasurer:</b>	Chris Eden
<b>Hon. Secretary:</b>	Jessica Trelvellick
<b>Hon. Handicapper:</b>	Dave Warren
<b>Men's Captain of Swimming:</b>	Nico Barber (replacing Pip Bennett)
<b>Ladies' Captain of Swimming:</b>	Olivia Reynolds
<b>Captain of Water Polo (Men):</b>	Daniel Shunn (replacing Eric Boldon)
<b>Captain of Water Polo (Women):</b>	Tracey Allen
<b>Committee members:</b>	Daniel Shunn (Water Polo - Men) Kathy Rogers (Water Polo - Women) Mhairi Nurthen (Water Polo - Women) Three Committee positions were unfilled.



## CLUB ADMINISTRATION

### Chris Eden

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OVERVIEW

Overall, the Club showed an operating deficit of £5.3k, a further operating deficit following on from previous years (£2.8k in 2015, £3.8k in 2014). Taken net of other movements in reserves (donations to the Memorial Fund and the annual increase to the Trophy Insurance fund) the net deficit for the year was £1.6k (2015: surplus £1k, 2014: surplus £0.5k).

Membership numbers, not including water polo age groupers only, grew slightly (80 joiners, 74 leavers) and our member retention held steady with the churn rate (the monetary effect of people joining and leaving, when comparing expected income for an annual subscription to what was actually received) at 25% as it was in 2015. We had to raise subscription rates slightly

in the year and the combined effect was an £8.6k increase in membership income (net of unrecovered subs) on 2015 and a £6k excess over the forecast income for the year. The Club also benefitted from a great effort in fundraising, both from the raffle at the Annual Dinner as well as individual fundraising efforts by the ladies' polo team.

Pool costs increased by £8.7k, mainly due to QMSC bringing its charging in line with Westminster borough-wide rates, men's polo benefitting from additional time at Crystal Palace thanks to an introduction by Nick Buller, more investment in lane time at the Olympic pool, and the usual annual inflationary rises in hourly rates. The unexpected closure of some of our pools during the summer months (Guy's for swimming, St Paul's Girls



School for men’s polo) helped offset other cost rises. Coaching costs went up accordingly.

Activity costs increased by £2k due to a large increase in ASA costs and a club contribution to the ladies’ polo entry to the LEN competition. The LEN entry was supported by another generous donation by Physio in the City. Other items were broadly in line with the prior year.

The balance sheet remains strong and we have the financial base to invest in the right opportunities and as the Committee considers appropriate.

Looking forward to 2017, the Club’s session offering is expected to be over 620 coached swimming hours and over 530 coached polo hours over the year. We continue to take regular time at top-class facilities such as the Olympic pool for swimming and Crystal Palace for both men’s and ladies’ polo. Add to that the program of club handicap competitions, open water swims, and other club events throughout the year, not least the excellent Annual Dinner, and great team-mates whether you’re chasing a black line or besieging a goal: Otter continues to be a fantastic club to be a member of!

**Pool-time help!**

My annual plea: the Committee is keen to investigate opportunities at new pools. Any introductions to contacts within pool management that you can make for us would be extremely welcome. It is getting tougher and tougher to procure time at new facilities (or even older ones!) and a warm introduction would make it considerably easier.

**Prizes & General Fund and Memorial Fund donors**

The generosity of members, either in paying over and above their regular subscriptions or in making separate designated donations, continues to help manage the Club’s annual costs as well as strengthen its capital base. As such, we thank the following:

Michael Amos, Matt Burgham, Ilaria Contoni, Annette Coomer, Charles Doxat, Martha Dean, Anne Eden, Alex Flash, Martin Flash, Tim Fraser, Emma Hamilton-Foster, Cat Hasnain, Gina Hobson, John Illife, Andrew Louw, Fiona Marshall, Elizabeth McMenemy, Andrew Morton, Derek Parr, Doug Payne, Helena Phillips, Dave Roberts, Abigail Rhodes, James Scanlan, Elizabeth Shaw, James Stewart, Cliff Stossel, Chris Sutton, Bob Thomas, Emma Unsworth, Dave Warren and Thibault Williams.



**MEMBERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION**

During the year, Otter welcomed 93 new members (compared with 99 in 2015), 35 of whom were water polo players (2015: 53). All new members are included in the list of current members attached at the end of this report. The average number of members during the year was:

	2016	2015
Active swimmers	106	101
Country swimmers	25	17
Non-active swimmers	69	67
Life member swimmers	34	34
Junior swimmers	5	7
<b>TOTAL SWIMMERS</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>226</b>
Active polo	62	52
Country polo	8	10
Non-active polo	14	14
Life member polo	8	8
Junior polo	44	31
<b>TOTAL POLO</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>341</b>

Thanks to the considerable efforts of the following, for signing up new members, policing memberships and more:

Felicity Hannon, Olivia Reynolds, Nico Barber, Emma Brooks and Deirdre Ward for swimmers; Jill Dean, Jill Rogers, Tracey Allen, Peggy Etiebet for ladies’ polo; Leon Estrella, Dan Shunn, Paolo Sirianni and Paul Hindle for men’s polo.

Thank you also to Emma Brooks for handling the Club’s ASA registrations, taking on the reins from Deirdre Ward who has done a tremendous job these last few years; Tony Ray for running the shop and managing swimming relay competition entries; and Michelle Senecal, Tony Ray, Daryl Nurthen and Paul Hindle for managing the pool bookings.

The Club website continues to be a key factor in attracting new members – thanks to John Talbott, Lex Higlett and Dave Warren. The quality of the website is defined by the content on it (news, reports, photos, etc.) so please get in touch throughout the year if you have any contributions, whether it be for swimming, polo, triathlon, open water, or any member news at all. We hope to be able to reintroduce the online kit shop through the website in 2017 through an enhancement to our club management software, so watch this space!

Finally, another huge thank you to Tom Burkinshaw for taking on the role as Honorary Club Auditor for another year, and for keeping me on my toes!


**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - £**

Year ended 31 Dec 2016	2016	2015
<b>Members income</b>	<b>119,082</b>	<b>109,542</b>
Subscriptions income	110,360	100,824
Special sessions	1,150	1,360
Match fees	5,901	5,516
Prizes and general fund	1,671	1,842
<b>Other income</b>	<b>2,244</b>	<b>1,231</b>
Capital income	1,312	1,231
Miscellaneous income	932	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>121,326</b>	<b>110,773</b>
<b>Pools &amp; equipment</b>	<b>(76,141)</b>	<b>(67,436)</b>
Pool hire costs	(75,537)	(67,117)
Equipment costs	(604)	(319)
<b>Coaching</b>	<b>(24,950)</b>	<b>(22,840)</b>
Coaching costs	(24,950)	(22,840)
<b>Activity costs</b>	<b>(16,800)</b>	<b>(14,740)</b>
Water polo expenses	(8,396)	(7,073)
Swimming expenses	(883)	(1,348)
Affiliation costs	(7,433)	(6,071)
Prizes and trophies	(88)	(248)
<b>Club activities</b>	<b>(95)</b>	<b>(506)</b>
Dinner	(20)	(436)
Open water races	160	(668)
Shop sales	(235)	598
<b>Administration</b>	<b>(8,674)</b>	<b>(8,062)</b>
Insurance	(2,000)	(2,000)
Post and printing	(1,720)	(2,231)
Bad debts	-	(3,377)
IT costs	(199)	(278)
Miscellaneous costs	(423)	(176)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(126,660)</b>	<b>(113,584)</b>
<b>PROFIT/(LOSS)</b>	<b>(5,334)</b>	<b>(2,811)</b>

'I have examined the books and vouchers of Otter Swimming Club and have obtained all necessary explanations for me to confirm that these accounts show a reasonable view of the Club's activities for the year and its financial position as at the 31st December 2016.' Hon Auditor. Tom Burkinshaw


**BALANCE SHEET - £**

Year ended 31 Dec 2016	2016	2015
Trophies	35,000	35,000
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	<i>35,000</i>	<i>35,000</i>
Investments at cost	30,142	30,142
Self insurance investment	26,064	26,053
<i>Investments</i>	<i>56,206</i>	<i>56,195</i>
<b>Fixed assets</b>	<b>91,206</b>	<b>91,195</b>
Stock	4,206	4,831
Debtors	4,287	4,115
Cash at bank and in hand	46,364	23,346
<i>Current assets</i>	<i>54,857</i>	<i>32,292</i>
<i>Creditors falling due within one year</i>	<i>(28,021)</i>	<i>(3,782)</i>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>26,836</b>	<b>28,510</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>118,042</b>	<b>119,705</b>
Computer fund	3,880	3,880
Spoon fund	7,038	7,038
<i>Sinking funds</i>	<i>10,918</i>	<i>10,918</i>
<b>Provisions</b>	<b>10,918</b>	<b>10,918</b>
Life membership fund	21,295	21,295
Memorial fund	36,925	35,254
Trophy insurance fund	24,983	22,983
<i>Capital funds</i>	<i>83,203</i>	<i>79,532</i>
Balance brought forward	29,255	32,866
Capital income and reserves	-	-
Result for year	(5,334)	(2,811)
<i>Reserve funds</i>	<i>23,921</i>	<i>29,255</i>
<b>Reserves</b>	<b>107,124</b>	<b>108,576</b>
<b>RESERVES AND PROVISIONS</b>	<b>118,042</b>	<b>119,705</b>

Investments # and value at 31 December 2016; Brunner Investment Trust 2517 £19,080, Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust 7465 £21,201, JP Morgan Claverhouse Investment Trust 1530 £10,535, Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust 14270 £45,721. Total market value of portfolio £96,536 (2015 £81,706); unrealised gain £66,394 (2015 £51,563).



## MEMBER NEWS

### DENNIS WARNFORD-DAVIS: 70 YEARS AN OTTER

*Charles Doxat*

During our Club's long and illustrious history few Otters can claim over 70 years of membership. Even fewer have made such a significant contribution during that period both to the swimming and water polo sections of our Club.

Dennis joined as a seventeen-year-old just after the war in 1946. In his early years he was a first class breaststroke swimmer representing the Club at national level (1953-61). He was also a committed water polo player (second team colours 1953-75). More than that he has held a variety of administrative roles including: Club secretary, water polo captain, schools secretary, and organiser of successful water polo tours (notably Malta – a county he loves – in 1966). He is a qualified water polo referee and was president of the London Water Polo League in 1976.

His good humoured anecdotes regarding his own medical history are well-known, especially to older members, who honoured him at a recent dinner organised by Charles Doxat (himself a member for a mere 60 years).

Floreat Dennis!

### DAME BARBARA JANET WOODWARD DCMG OBE

*James Stewart*

In our 2014 Annual Report, it was noted that we would be losing Barbara Woodward (joined 1983) for a while, as she would be taking up her appointment as Her Majesty's Ambassador to the People's Republic of China in early 2015. She did not have long in post before the visit to China of Prince William, Duke of Cambridge in Mar 2015; the most senior 'Royal' to visit China since the Queen's tour there in 1986. Keen observers of the newscast of Prince William's arrival at Beijing's airport will have noted the discreet figure of Barbara at his right hand side.

While much of Barbara's work is necessarily conducted behind closed doors, the London media did pick up on an incident in May 2016, when 'Chinese officials walked out of a meeting at Lancaster House with Barbara Woodward, the British Ambassador to China'. In a display of support for her diplomat, our Queen was subsequently quoted as saying 'They were very rude to the Ambassador' and this support has been emphasized with the award to Barbara of a Damehood in the Queen's Birthday Honours of 2016. Those of us who know Barbara, will be certain that this little diplomatic incident will by now be well smoothed over.

When your scribe was at school, the award of a "D" was a cause of schoolmasterly ire and great parental angst. Conversely, the award of a "D" in the British Honours system is a cause of great congratulation and celebration. On 8 Nov 2016, Barbara in the course of a fleeting visit to UK, attended Buckingham Palace for her investiture by the Queen and afterwards was joined by a number of friends for a celebratory lunch at the Royal Inn on the Park, an establishment owned by an Otter member, Bob Thomas. Barbara is now a Dame Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George – the equivalent of being knighted. The many members who know Barbara may wish to join in congratulating her on this recent award and also wish her continuing great success in her vital role in representing our nation with one of the world's great powers.



*Dennis Warnford-Davis around age 8, with younger brother, Peter*



*Dennis in his prime!*



*Dame Barbara Woodward*





## WEDDINGS

2016 was a bumper year for weddings, and Otters could be found crowding the dancefloors and the bars at the following couples' nuptials:

- Mike Reys (joined 2012) and Karen Edwards, Fri 29 April
- Katie Kerr (joined 2010) and Caleb Barnes, Fri 1 July
- Craig Gillespie (joined 2012) and Charlotte Hurry, Sat 23 July
- Ex-men's captain, Ben Thomas (joined 2005), and Hannah Brown (joined 2007), Sat 3 Sept
- Bronwen Bew (joined 2004) and Dave Rowlands, Sat 26 Nov



Mike & Karen Reys



Katie & Caleb Barnes



Craig Gillespie & Charlotte



Ben & Hannah Thomas



Bronwen Bew & Dave Rowlands

In addition, ex-ladies' captain, Gina Hobson (joined 2003) and Dave Warren (joined 2009) tied the knot in unique style over 30 Sept-2 Oct on a SwimQuest holiday in Formentera (just off Ibiza). Gina and Dave welcomed nearly 40 friends and family, including lots of Otters, who took part in several group sea swims in the gorgeous waters of Formentera in celebration of their marriage. Their itinerary included six swim guides, four powerboats, one fishing boat, an underwater photo shoot, copious bottles of fizz, swimming games (of the clothed and unclothed variety), wedding themed swim hats, beach bar welcome drinks and a sunset reception, shot club, amazing mojitos, and a sunrise breakfast swim.



Gina & Dave celebrate in Formentera



## ARRIVALS

We welcomed many new Otter babies into the world in 2016. Congratulations go to the following Otters:

- Otter couple, Jane Leighton (joined 2007) and Dave Roberts (joined 2008) welcomed Lizzie on 22 January and have wasted no time getting her working on her breaststroke!
- Chloe Rose Clements-Partridge born on 31 August to Monica Kruesmann (joined 2009) and Aaron Clements-Partridge, who met through Otter.
- Rachel Joyce (joined 2003; multiple podium finisher at the Kona Ironman World Champs) and Brett Hedges welcomed Archie (on 7 September); he's got the potential for some serious long distance pedigree!
- Helen Prentice (joined 2009) and James Amilcare Maggs welcomed Allegra (on 9 December).



Lizzie Roberts



Chloe Rose Clements-Partridge



Archie Joyce-Hedges



Allegra & Helen Prentice

## RIO OLYMPICS, 2016

2016 was an Olympic year and **Susie Rodgers** (member 2008-2014) competed for GB at the **Paralympics**. Here's her story:

Eight years ago I joined Otter after moving to London and starting work. Steve Bratt was my first coach and we worked together to get me onto the national scene and to break into international competition. I couldn't have predicted that in eight years I would be standing on top of the podium, number one in the world in the 50m fly.

I never started out for anything other than pure enjoyment of pushing myself and seeing how fast my body could go given my disabilities. It has always been a dream to compete for my country and I remember how proud I felt to have Otter and Steve cheering me on to bronze at the London Paralympics in my 400m free. After that I moved flats and it became impossible to train with Otter so I moved to Beckenham which was closer to home. I worked on my strength and power and started to specialise in the sprint events, where we felt I had the best chance. I remember the night before and day of my race so clearly - I just felt calm and ready. I had learnt to control my mind - the part that had been missing in previous performances. We also made more strategic and calculated decisions with every race rather than getting in and hoping for the best. The result was one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life. This time (unlike London), I was ready to enjoy it, I had a specific race plan and I executed it without fear. My reaction was picked up in the media - the Susie 'shock face' - but I honestly felt numb. I couldn't believe that I had finally won Paralympic gold.

I want to thank every single person that has helped me on my journey - Steve for being there right at the start and playing a huge role in believing in me, encouraging and developing me, and all the lovely people at Otter who have shouted from the side lines, congratulated and supported me, encouraged me during hard sessions and kept in touch beyond the pool.

I doubt I will go for another Games - two was hard enough! I'm enjoying my break. But my love for swimming will never stop because it's made me who I am and it's led me to meet some wonderful people.



Susie Rodgers and her Paralympic gold medal (50m fly)

Susie wasn't the only Otter to experience Rio; here's a Q&A with Simon Williams (joined 2014), who shares his experience:

**Q: So what were you doing at the Rio Olympics?**

SW: I was working with the Photo Operations team for the gymnastics event. That included men's, women's and team events, as well as the trampoline and rhythmic gymnastics (ribbon waving!)

The Photo team was responsible for looking after the press; making sure they got to take the pictures they needed, and making sure they didn't get in the way of the actual event. There can be a lot of competition to get the 'special' shot, so a lot of the work was keeping their 'enthusiasm' under control.

**Q: How did you get to be there?**

SW: I did some work for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the set up for London 2012. I was involved in the IT set up for the cycling road race and time trial event. My work background is IT consulting and I was helping set up the servers and equipment for the timekeeping, results and media services. It was good fun, and I had the best possible access to the event and behind the scenes. I kept in touch with the IOC and they asked if I'd like to get involved at Rio.

**Q: Why did you chose gymnastics?**

SW: I didn't! When you fill in all the application forms you're asked what sports you know or have experience of. I put swimming and triathlon, and for Rio, as it was new to the games, rugby. Last time I got cycling, this time gymnastics! I had to learn a bit about how the events worked and the processes and procedures, as it's not a sport I've followed much in the past.

**Q: Did you get to see any other events?**

SW: My wife and son came with me and I had a few days off before and during the event. I was based in the main Olympic park and had access to the media areas in most of the venues. We got to see boxing, fencing, diving, water polo, cycling and swimming.

**Q: What were the high points?**

SW: There were quite a few. From a 'work' point of view, the special day was Max Whitlock winning the two gold medals on my shift. I was doing crowd control trying to keep the photographers back from crushing him after the medal ceremony. There were two Brazilians on the podium with him and the whole place was crazy. The atmosphere was electric.

We flew out on the same plane as the Team GB cycling and open water teams, so my son had his photo taken with a few of the big stars, who were all very nice to us. We were staying just next to the athletes' village and Adam Peaty's family and friends, 'Team Peaty', were staying in the same complex, so I saw a bit of them going in and out of the park.

**Q: And what's with the photo?**

SW: Yes, sorry for the cheesy photo. A Canadian photographer was keen to get some test shots on the podium, he asked me to stand on it for him. When someone asks you to stand on the top step of the Olympic podium and wave what would you say?



Simon Williams at the Rio Olympics



## CLUB PERFORMANCE:

### WATER POLO - MEN

2016 was an exciting year for Otter Men's water polo

**The highlights:**

- Otter 1 wins promotion to the London Water Polo League's Premier Division and qualification for the British Water Polo League's Championship 3 division
- Otter II wins promotion to the London Water Polo League's Division 2
- An additional training venue, Crystal Palace, and more pool time
- A tour to Zagreb, Croatia
- A junior water polo group established

## OTTER FIRST TEAM

### Dan Shunn

Otter 1 enjoyed a very successful 2016 season having achieved our goals of winning promotion back to the London Water Polo League's (LWPL) premier division and qualifying for the British Water Polo League (BWPL) Championship 3. All of this while undergoing a season of transition which involved a change in pool, coach and captain, and the loss of several senior players over the course of the season.

### London Water Polo League, Division 1

We began our LWPL season by making light work of an underprepared Reading side, beating them 17 – 4 in a game in which nine of our eleven players managed to get onto the score sheet. Chelmsford were up next and once again we started in a dominant mood and raced off into a commanding lead. Despite a disappointing last quarter in which we trialed a few new tactics we managed to win 17 – 9. Next up we faced our first away trip to Kingston, inspired by assist master, Richard Chambers, and eight goals by Andrew Couper we ran out winners 18 – 7. We managed to beat Avondale 11 – 7 in a far tougher game at home before our first seven put on a dominant performance against Reading away, scoring 14 goals in a 17 – 9 win.

Watford were up next, one of the two teams we were expecting to be the biggest challenge in our promotion push. We went down 9 – 10 in a hard-fought game at home leaving us to play catch up for the rest of the season. Thankfully we managed to get back on track straight away with a comfortable 17 – 9 home

victory against the other strong team in the league, Croydon. Summer holidays threatened to derail our season plans when we went into an away game against Avondale with only eight players. In arguably one of the most impressive games of our season we managed to win 14 – 5. Our next away trip took us to bottom of the table Chelmsford where we picked up a big 15 – 2 win. We faced a strengthened Croydon side next and in a disappointing game we drew 10 all. We welcomed the fighty old men of Kingston in our final home game of the season needing only a draw to secure promotion. We held on for a 13 – 9 win in an exclusion filled match which meant our final game of the season, away against Watford would determine the winner of the league. It was a very tense game but three goals from Nikolaos Roussos and a great all round team effort on defence saw us hold on to win 9 – 8. We were champions of LWPL Division 1, we were heading back to the Premier Division.

	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Otter Men's 1s	12	10	1	1	169	87	82	33
2	Watford Men's 2s	12	10	0	2	147	88	59	32
3	Avondale Men's 1s	12	6	1	5	155	118	37	25
4	Croydon Amphibians Men's 2s	12	6	1	5	128	144	-16	23
5	Kingston Men's 1s	12	3	1	8	114	148	-34	19
6	Reading Men's 1s	12	3	0	9	84	161	-77	17
7	Chelmsford Men's 1s	12	2	0	10	73	124	-51	13

**Top goal scorers:**

- Andrew Couper – 35
- Dan Shunn – 22
- Orion Ganase – 13
- Richard Chambers – 12
- John Rogers - 11

**Kick out kings:**

- Andrew Couper – 10
- Richard Chambers – 8
- Gergely Bocsi – 5
- Brian Barone – 5
- Eric Bolden – 5



Otter 1. L-R: Istvan Tar, Gergely Bocsi, Adam Dodkins (Coach), Alex Biom, Chris George, Nikos Roussos, Andrew Couper, Pier Luigi Spagna, Brian Barone, Daniel Shunn (Captain), Ivor Sokolic, Nuno Cerqueira



**British Water Polo League, Phase 1, Division 4**

Last season’s relegation to Division 4 was a massive disappointment and it was important to the team that we gave ourselves every opportunity to rectify that this season. Team morale was at an all-time high following our successful Zagreb tour, an Avondale-Otter-Zagreb mix team win at a tournament in Amsterdam, and an Otter-Dobhar-chú win at a Master’s tournament in Belfast.

In mid-Sept, we started the BWPL season with a trip to Sheffield. We beat Grantham Knights 9 – 5 in our first game and then in one of the more impressive comebacks in recent Otter history, we overcame York 11 – 10 having been 1 – 5 down early in the game. We were off to Marlborough College for the second weekend. Our first game of the weekend against Cheltenham Spartans was one filled with ill-discipline, poor refereeing, and a very late equaliser for the opposition. The game finished 8 – 8, despite Otter conceding 17 majors to Cheltenham’s four. Next up on Saturday was Bridgefield, we won 11 – 6 in, thankfully, a far less chaotic game. Early on Sunday morning we went down 8 – 10 to a young, fit and well organised Portobello side. The final weekend of Division 4 had us travelling to Grantham, where once again our discipline let us down and we lost our first game to Invicta Marlins 8 – 14. Results elsewhere epitomised the competitive nature of the division and meant that if we were to win the final game of the season we would finish second, if we lost we would finish seventh. Despite four players being excluded early in the game we managed to hold on to win 13 – 7. The report on the final half of the season, to be completed in 2017, will be available in the 2017 Annual Report.

	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Portobello	7	6	1	0	92	52	40	13
2	Otter	7	4	1	2	68	60	8	9
3	York	7	4	1	2	81	62	19	9
4	Bridgefield	7	3	1	3	77	72	5	7
5	Cheltenham Spartans	7	3	1	3	98	77	21	7
6	Invicta Marlins	7	3	1	3	82	59	23	7
7	Grantham Knights	7	2	0	5	56	77	-21	4
8	Bedford	7	0	0	7	35	130	-95	0

**Top goal scorers:**

Nikolaos Roussos – 16  
 Andrew Couper – 13  
 Daniel Shunn – 12  
 Orion Ganase -10  
 Christopher George & Pier Luigi Spagna - 8

**Kick out kings:**

Andrew Couper – 17  
 Orion Ganase – 17  
 Gergely Bocsi – 12  
 Dan Shunn – 11  
 Ben Cocksworth – 9



Chris George (Otter) under pressure against York

**Croatia Tour**

In June the men’s team went on tour to Zagreb, Croatia, for the second successive year. Once again we were hosted by one of the city’s and country’s premier clubs, Vaterpolo Klub ZPK. A total of 16 players, coaching staff and supporters (from 11 different countries) travelled down for what would turn out to be yet another successful celebration of water polo, Bosnian food and rakija.



Otter with Vaterpolo Klub ZPK

The first night of the tour featured a serious match against ZPK, whose players (including former professionals and current Croatian Division 2 players) showed the Otter team the kind of pedigree that one can expect from a competitive Croatian water polo team. Otter spent Friday sightseeing the town, lounging in the sunshine on a lakeside beach and finally watching the Croatian football team play in the Euros, together with locals on the city’s main square. Well watered, they continued to play a recreational match with ZPK in the evening, motivated by earlier scenes of patriotic fervour and by Coach Dodkins’ inspirational oration.



Veteran players, Shunn and Cocksworth, warm up for the evening matches at Jarun, Zagreb sea



Saturday saw the team travel outside of Zagreb to the once great ancient Roman city of Sisak (Siscia) to play several matches against Vaterpolo Klub Val. Three exhausting matches were played with these friendly giants, which were followed by a barbecue, drinks and live music with the opposition in Zagreb. Overall, the tour was a raucous success and both Croatian clubs have once again extended an open invitation to Otter to visit Croatia.



The Otter team join locals for a football match Division 2



Otter with the friendly giants from Vaterpolo Klub Val

## OTTER SECOND TEAM

### Paolo Sirianni

Otter II is a mix of serious and social water polo. It is our vehicle for providing competitive water polo for beginners and aspiring first team players, as well as those of us who still want to play but are particularly time challenged, because of age or work reasons, or both.

Otter II had an exciting and winning 2016. The success being achieved because of great organisation and discipline during match time, with a lot of support and patience from our top players, and great sacrifice from everyone by making themselves available for some very distant mid-week and late evening away matches.

### London Water Polo League, Division 3

Otter II won the summer 2016 LWPL Men's Division 3 with an unbeaten 100% record, six points ahead of the second placed team. Our success and subsequent promotion to Division 2 was the result of better match management from Paolo Sirianni and Coach Dodkins, superb and controlled

team play, all leading to a very effective attack (averaging over 14 goals per match) and a strong defence (only 75 goals conceded).

	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Otter 2s	10	10	0	0	141	75	66	30
2	Hornchurch s 1s	10	7	1	2	117	76	41	24
3	Eastern Otter 1s	10	5	0	5	120	109	11	20
4	Enfield 2s	10	4	1	5	97	97	0	19
5	Blue Marlins 1s	10	3	0	7	82	132	-50	16
6	Central London Orcas 1s	10	0	0	10	48	116	-68	9



Otter II celebrate promotion to LWPL Division 2

### Middlesex Water Polo League

Otter II finished the season mid table.

	Team	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1	Poly Purples	8	6	1	1	36	13
2	Penguin	8	5	2	1	2	12
3	Enfield	8	4	0	4	9	8
4	Otter	8	3	1	4	-10	7
5	Ealing	8	0	0	9	-37	0

### Thameside Water Polo Association

We also compete in the Thameside Water Polo Association competitions - Division 1 of the League and in the Handicap Knock-Out competition.

In the 2015-16 Handicap Knock-Out we reached the final which took place in mid-March at the Whitgift pool in Croydon. Playing against a very strong Poly Purples side (almost the Poly BWPL first team) the game was a tight affair, played in a fantastic spirit, whilst being robustly competitive throughout. Otter lost 8-6, with Poly Purples scoring their winning goals in the last few minutes.



In the League competition we finished mid-table.

	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1	Croydon Amphibians 2s	8	6	1	1	106	70	36	21
2	Poly Purples	8	4	2	2	88	86	2	18
3	Avondale	8	4	1	3	87	78	9	17
4	Otter 2s	8	2	2	4	87	97	-10	14
5	Citizens 1s	8	1	0	7	54	91	-37	9

## JUNIOR WATER POLO

### Paul Hindle

In January 2016 we began a junior water polo initiative in a collaborative venture with the Chelsea and Westminster Swimming Club. Starting with a single one hour session on Friday evenings in the diving pit at the QMSC Leisure Centre, demand saw it quickly progress to two sessions, a beginners group (generally aged between 9-12) and a developers group (generally aged 13-16). The initiative has been led by Paul Hindle, with several Otters, principally Spencer Thursfield and Gergely Bocsi, assisting.

This junior water polo group played their first friendly/competitive matches in specially arranged round robin competitions at the Whitgift pool in Croydon. In November the under 13 team achieved their first victory in a close game against Haringey.

We have now extended the initiative to include training in a full size pool a couple of times per month, with Tim Kendall in the lead coach position, and for the first time we have entered an under 15 team in the LWPL summer 2017 competition.

This is a long term project and it is hoped we will see many of these juniors, both boys and girls, progress to become stalwart Otter water polo members.

## COACH'S REVIEW

### Adam Dodkins

Back in June when I was asked to look after the Otter first team, we had just been relegated from Division 3 of the BWPL and were starting the new season in lower divisions all around. Having played with many of the players, it was clear that we were a talented bunch and identifying the problem areas in the pool was my first objective.

Now, when your starting 7 can swim a 50m freestyle in under 28 seconds, all of them blessed with some ferocious shooting

power, and our goalkeepers have cat like reflexes there was nothing I could teach that most of the players did not already know. They come from some of the best water polo playing countries in the world: Hungary, Croatia and Italy just to name a few, and the rest grew up with top level coaching, so getting the team to gel together was the main priority.

By going back to basics, following a structured offense and a strong emphasis on defence, our team objectives were to get promoted in all the competitions/divisions we were competing in. Our new structured approach meant that few teams could break down the defence, while the offense gained in confidence to score goals consistently.

The pleasing results so far are that we won the LWPL Division 1 and as of the end of 2016 are competing in phase 2 of the BWPL 2016-17 competition to get promoted back to Division 3. Increased training days and utilising the facility at Crystal Palace have all contributed to the success of the squad.



Coach Adam Dodkins



## CLUB PERFORMANCE: WATER POLO - LADIES

*Tracey Allen*

Ladies water polo had its most successful year to-date during 2016, from the British Championships through to the National Age Group Championships and social leagues in between.

- Otter's junior ladies had a phenomenal season bringing home the silverware and developing emerging talent in our Futura teams. Our U/19s re-wrote the record books, becoming only third team to ever win the National Age Group championships. Our U/15s successfully defended their title and Otter came fourth in the U/17 championships.
- The Otter first team finished the BWPL in second place behind rivals Liverpool. In the British Championships, Otter fought hard to get into the final again and were narrowly defeated in a tough finish. The LEN Euro Cup was Otter's most successful to-date. Otter is in prime position in the 2017 BWPL Super 5s.
- Otter Lutra maintained a 100% winning record in Division 2 of BWPL.
- 12 Otters were selected to represent their country in international competition.

Otter continues to grow its reputation as a leading club in the UK and that is driven by the dedication of our members and supporters. The commitment and drive of our coach, Nick Buller, is integral to our success, and Otter is incredibly grateful for his guidance and leadership.

Otter would also like to extend its gratitude to the team at Physio in the City, our wonderful sponsor.

Thank you to our outgoing Captain, Lex Higlett. Lex is a tremendous leader and formidable player and has generously dedicated many years of service to Otter, for which we are grateful. To our Committee members: Daryl Nurthen, Jill Dean, Peggy Etiebet, Tracey Allen, Mhairi Nurthen and Kathy Rogers, thank you helping our Club to run smoothly and for facilitating its growth!

### OTTER FIRST TEAM

Ladies' first team 2016: Tracey Allen, Holly Campbell, Liz (Turny) Dunn, Claudia Ferrone, Izzy Dean, Mhairi Nurthen, Brooke Tafazolli (c), Emma Hamilton Foster, Peggy Etiebet (vc), Kathy Rogers, Hannah Patchett, Danica Brazier, Fabianna Anastasio, Rebecca Mulcahy. Coach: Nick Buller



*Otter celebrate beating the Liverpool team*

#### Ladies first team results:

- 2nd 2016 BWPL Super 5s
- 2nd 2016 British Championships

Otter were proud runners up at the 2016 British Water Polo Women's Championship after an exciting 8-5 final against City of Liverpool in May. Prior to the tournament, Otter finished the BWPL season in second place so went into the Championships ranked second and were drawn to play third-ranked Coventry in the first semi-final. It was a tightly fought match with only a goal or two between the teams, but Otter held tight to win 10-9 and progress to the final. Claudia Ferrone top scored for Otter in the 2016 Super 5s with 13 goals, she also led the scoring in the first phase of the BWPL, along with Lex Higlett. Otter's success through 2016 stemmed from a very strong defensive record, speed and enviable fitness, and most importantly working together as a team. Everyone stepped up through the season.

Otter took this momentum into the 2016-17 BWPL season. With one round of Super 5s remaining at the time of writing, and a leading for-and-against, Otter is well positioned for a podium finish. Kathy Rogers, Claudia Ferrone and Lily Turner were Otter's leading goal scorers in the 2016-17 campaign. Defence has been fantastic, and has supported our for-and-against, which is at the top of the league.



*Otter celebrate their 2016 campaign outside of the pool!*





### LEN Women's Euro League

Otter took on some of the best European club teams in Group D of the LEN Euro League in Padova, Italy in December 2016. Our team comprised a mix of young talent and senior Otters who brought a wealth of international experience to our games against former Italian, French and Spanish champions. It is a privilege to play in the LEN Euro League, particularly as an amateur team, and each year we close the gap on some of the world's finest professional players. The experience strengthens our domestic BWPL campaign and supports the development of our talent, often providing the first taste of international competition.

The team are incredibly grateful for the support of their sponsor, Physio in the City, coach Nick Buller and all of our fans that travelled to Padova to cheer us on!



Kathy Rogers and Anna Szyszko in action at LEN

## OTTER LUTRA

### Emma Shkurka

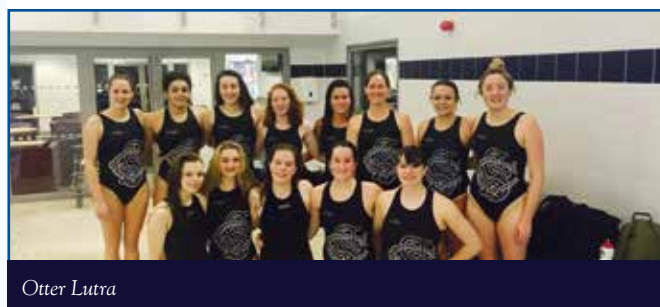
Otter Lutra kicked off its BWPL 2016-17 season at Ponds Forge over 17-18 Sept. The team welcomed a number of new faces, including junior players Drew Goold, Poppy Mayall, Meg Wall-Peters, Katy Cutler, and sisters Bob and Lidia Toth. Together with international signings Nahn Van Wyk, Sarah Connolly and El Lazat.

It was a very successful start, with three wins from three, beating Tyldesley 12-7, Liverpool Liverbirds 10-7 and Manchester Comets 11-8. Otter Lutra Captain, Holly Campbell, scored 7 goals and Isobel Keith netted 8.

Full of confidence from their perfect start Lutra travelled to Plymouth at the beginning of November to face joint Division 2 leaders Welsh Wanderers and London rivals Penguin. Otter Lutra proved too strong for the Welsh winning the match 13-

8, there were hat tricks for Holly, Katy and Nahn. The game against Penguin came down to the wire, with scores level at 7-7 with 4 minutes remaining. A final minute goal by Heather Keith sealed the victory for Lutra and cemented their position at the top of the table.

In the final weekend of Division 2 Lutra showed their dominance with a 28-6 defeat of Devonport. The top goal scorers included Sasha Tinkler-Davies (8), Katy (7) and Lidia (5). The last game of the year was against Mid-Sussex Marlins. Otter Lutra led from the start, eventually winning the match 14-11. This final victory ensured Lutra maintained their 100% record and made them the team to beat in 2017.



Otter Lutra



Otter Lutra in action

## NATIONAL AGE GROUP COMPETITIONS

Otter has had another fantastic year at the National Age Group Competition cementing our position as the best junior girls' development programme in the country. For the first time in our history we won the U/19 competition, we successfully defended our title in the U/15 competition and we came fourth in the U/17. We were also the only club to enter development Otter Futura teams in every competition to give our younger players the experience at playing at a high level which they can draw on in their competitive year group.

### Otter Under 19s

Otter U/19s beat City of Manchester 10-6 in the semi-finals and City of Liverpool 13-8 in the final. With the victory



Otter became just the third club to win the U/19s with north west giants, City of Manchester and City of Liverpool, the only other winners since the inaugural championship in 2004. Otter captain, Mhairi Nurthen, top-scorer in the final with five goals, had been confident Otter would win, having won the U/15 and U/17 titles as a squad in recent seasons. All the players, Mhairi, Kathy Rogers, Izzy Dean, Anna Szyszko, Lily Turner, Ellie Danielson, Lidia Toth, Helena Phillips, Sasha Tinkler-Davies, Poppy Mayall and Ella Wyrwas, also played for Otter or Otter Lutra in BWPL showing that the junior development programme is a brilliant feeder for the Otter senior teams.

The Otter Futura team came fourth in the Plate finals beating Northampton 8-5 but going down to Leeds 5-2 and Caledonia 6-3. These were close games and a massive achievement for a younger and less experienced team.



### Otter Under 17s

It was an extremely tough finals weekend for the Otter U/17s. As defending champions they took on Exeter in a tense semi-final. With the scores locked at 11 goals each at the final whistle the Exeter side managed to overcome Otter on penalties that went into sudden death. The game finished with a final score of 17-16. Otter fought hard in the bronze medal match but went down to Rotherham Metro 5-2.

The Otter Futura girls also had a tough draw at the Plate finals losing to Tyldesley 5-3 and Welsh Wanderers 9-4, before going on to beat Cheltenham in the 5th/6th playoff, 8-5, and finishing on a high.

### Otter Under 15s

As defending champions expectations were high but the U/15 team was more than equal to the task. The team conceded just four goals across their five games, storming through their group with comprehensive victories over Cheltenham (9-0) and Rotherham (16-0), then a 9-2 defeat of 2010 champions Tyldesley. A repeat of last year's final saw Otter see off City of Liverpool in the semis with a 12-2 win. Newton Abbot awaited

in the final but a dominant display saw Otter finish 11-0 winners, with captain, Erin Andrew, finishing tournament top scorer with 14 goals. Well done to Erin, Imogen Smith, Nolly Olusanya, Ciara Nicholson, Eve Poole, Emma Cogni, Bob Toth, Anashe Chisadze, Emily Campbell-Lamerton, and Anna Leeson!

The Otter Futura team had two good wins against Manchester but went down to Liverpool, Rotherham and Newton Abbot.

Our greatest thanks go to our assistant coaches Brian Pool, Julian Moore and Justin Shute, along with team managers Jill Rogers, Rebecca Henderson and Debbie Helliwell, for all their hard work with the teams and without whom our success in the competitions could not have happened.



## LONDON LEAGUE

The Otter Ladies social team was undefeated in Division 1 of the 2016 Summer League tournament. This was a consecutive undefeated season for the team, which comprised of a mix of youth and experience. London League is a great tournament and provides the opportunity to play social water polo, while developing our junior talent. We look forward to the 2017 season!

## INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION AND AWARDS

Otter juniors had a fantastic summer with trips across Europe for a great number of them. Hannah Patchett, Izzy Dean, Mhairi Nurthen, Kathy Rogers, Katy Cutler and Lilly Turner were selected to represent Great Britain in the U/19s, and travelled to Hungary, Serbia and Croatia, in preparation for the European championships. In Croatia they came second in a tournament against Germany, Serbia and Slovakia, and also enjoyed playing against top class, professional clubs like Sentez in Hungary.



## CLUB PERFORMANCE: SWIMMING

### COACHING: STEVE BRATT, OTTER HEAD COACH

*Gina Hobson*

January 2017 marks Steve Bratt's 10th year as Head Coach of Otter (swimming). In his time as Head Coach, the Club has won the overall top club trophy at the Middlesex Masters championships every year, it's also won the top club trophy at the long course GB championships on three occasions, and the men's and women's teams have won the decathlon competition on nine occasions (women five; men four). I sat down with him and asked him how he's gone about cementing Otter's position as the top Masters swimming club in the UK.

#### What achievements are you proudest of as Otter Head Coach?

It's not in my nature to look back: I'm a perfectionist and focus on looking forward rather than reflecting on what the Club's achieved. But when I think about it, I'm proud to be part of a Club where the attachment is so strong, while there'll always be a part of the Club which is quite transient with people joining and then moving on, there's a larger part where once you've been a member of Otter you'll always be.

In terms of performances, it's great to see that since I've joined the Club's performances collectively and individually have built year on year, with records and trophies being won.

#### Who are your coaching role models?

I aim to continue to evolve as a coach and a big part of that is observing and learning from other swimming coaches around the world. I really admire Eddie Reese (Head Coach, University of Texas) and Dave Salo (Head Coach, University of Southern California) and you'll see elements of their programmes in our sessions. Recently, I've drawn inspiration from Shane Tusup and his work with Katinka Hosszu (his wife, and three time Olympic champion).

#### What are your goals for 2017?

Overall, for us to continue to build on our performances, and to prepare a strong team for the World Masters Champs in Budapest. Also, I've identified that as a Club swimmers' leg kick isn't as strong as others, so in 2017 I'll be increasing the amount of leg work we do in our sessions. We'll be aiming to strengthen the kick, making it more propulsive, and swimmers should be aiming for a high heart rate during these sessions - rather than using it as an opportunity to swim down! And, I'll be encouraging swimmers to work on their turns' technique; with tumble turns, for example, using the 'T' to initiate the turn, making for a faster transition.

In addition, Hannah, Izzy, Kathy (Vice Captain), Katy and Lily were then selected to play for GB U/19s in Den Hague, Netherlands at the European Championships where the team came ninth.

We also had six girls (Anna Szyszko, Helena Phillips, Kathy Rogers, Izzy Keith, Heather Keith and Harriet Cross) go to Hungary for their Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence, where they played against the professional club, Eger, whilst learning about being elite athletes.

Holly Campbell represented Scotland in the EU Nations tournament in Prague in June, where Scotland finished seventh, and beat Ireland in a penalty shootout. Campbell also starred in Scotland's successful North Sea Cup campaign, where they overcame England and Wales to take the title.



*Otter juniors represent Great Britain (L-R Katy Cutler, Izzy Dean, Hannah Patchett, Kathy Rogers, and Lily Turner)*



*Holly Campbell in action for Scotland*



**How do you go about devising an annual training programme?**

I'll identify the key dates in the year, so for 2017 the World Masters Champs and the LC and SC nationals and then fit the main training programme around these, defining the emphasis of the session depending on which phase of the cycle we're in.

I'm involved in two Masters training camps overseas in 2017: with the London Masters swimmers in Tenerife and the Otter camp in Lanzarote in Sept. I'd encourage any Otters to think about attending these; they're fantastic ways to improve your fitness in and out of the pool and get to know your Club mates better.

**We have a wide variety of abilities, speed, motivation and goals across the lanes. How do you accommodate everyone?**

I try to write my sessions so that they can be flexed to an individual's goals. While the sets are designed for those who want to compete, everyone will be able to get something out of them. Swimmers should speak to me and the other coaches to make sure that the session is appropriate for the lane. And I'm always in favour of swimmers moving to other lanes where the pace enables them to swim the full set and in the stroke they'd like to train.

**How can Otters make the most of your coaching and experience?**

If you've got specific questions or goals or would welcome feedback on your stroke, come and speak to me - I welcome questions and am always happy to look at strokes and offer advice on how you could improve. Regardless of which lane you swim in, there are always changes that swimmers can make so you swim more efficiently and consequently quicker.

However, I understand that for a lot of members, swimming is a kind of release and they come to Otter sessions to relax and let off steam - so I won't force feedback on you!



Head Coach, Steve Bratt

**COMPETITIVE SWIMMING RESULTS**

*Olivia Reynolds*

In the same way we know every Otter session will start with the same warm up (400m free, 4 x 100m free descend, 4 x 50m free descend), the UK Masters swimming calendar is pretty repetitive. It was therefore a welcome change to see the European Swimming Championships were going to be held at the London Aquatic Centre in May. The lure of such a competitive meet in a fantastic, local facility, with the legacy of 2012 still fresh in our minds was undeniable for the Otters and it became the focus for the team.



As seasoned athletes (or perhaps the repeated reminders from the coaching staff are sinking in) a good warm-up is essential if we are to perform at our best. The Otters wasted no time in setting the tone for the year by sending a large squad to Crawley for the **South East Region Masters championships** (23-24 Jan). It was an encouraging meet for all and Coach Steve was on deck throughout to offer guidance and advice. Craig Gillespie led the way in the breaststroke and there was a great Otter head-to-head between Wade Rimbach and Enrico Hahn in the 400m IM with Wade pipping Enrico on the last length. Dave Warren brought in the New Year by claiming his first British Record in the 45-49 year age group in the 200m butterfly, beating the previous mark by a whopping 7 seconds. Not to be outdone, Jess Thorpe rounded out the meet with a gold in the 800m free. The kit bags returning to London were significantly heavier as the team hauled home 50 medals: 30 gold, 14 silver and 6 bronze. Not bad for a warm-up event!

Over 5-6 March, 17 Otters ventured cross country to Swansea for the **Swim Wales Open Masters champs** (some were bribed with Welsh cakes) to try tweaking those race patterns now the Christmas excess was truly behind us and we had some training under our belt. Camille Vrain set the bar high in her first long course meet for Otter winning each of her events (200m back, 200m breast, and 400m IM) despite almost breaking her foot navigating the grandstand. Kim Liu swept the breaststroke events in the 18-24 age group. Gina Hobson, dominant as always, collected four golds (400m free, 50m free, 200m and 100m back). Lesley Cook took to the Welsh waters



winning the 1500m and 800m free, second in the 200m IM, and third in both the 200m and 100m back. Felicity (Fliss) Hannon made the most of a gruelling schedule winning the 200m IM, second in the 400m IM, 200m fly, 800m free and 1500m free, and third in the 100m fly. Lex Higlett won the 400m free and the 50m free in a championship record time, and placed second in the 100m and 800m free. In total the team won 31 gold, 14 silver and 15 bronze over the weekend.



Catherine & Olivia, Welsh nationals

There was extra pressure on the **British Long Course championships** (1-3 April) this year. As always we wanted to demonstrate to our compatriots that Otter continues its tradition of excellence, but for many swimmers the meet was the first true indicator of whether they were on track to meet their targets for Europeans. This was a monster of a main set. Three days. Eight sessions. And the Otters did not disappoint. Mike Wake set an Otter record for the 800m free (75-79 age group) before Steve Braine, Peter Ray, Pete Kirk and Paul Goudie set new British records in both the 4x200m free and 4x100m free in the 240+ years age group. Lex, Olivia Reynolds, Gina and Catherine Demont caught some of the relay spirit to best the 120+ British record time by six seconds in the 4x100m free. On to the stroke events and Otter's depth started to show. Derek Parr picked up another gold as Abi Hucker, Emma and Gina each came second in the 50m fly before the breaststrokes showed their dominance. Kim, Craig, and Mike each picked up gold in the 200m with Dontony Gill-Nasadi, Wade, Enrico Hahn, and Liz Shaw taking home bronze medals. Back to the freestyle, Dave picked up gold before Ollie Caldwell scooped up his second silver of the meet in the 200m free and Pete Kirk and Lex came home with bronze. Not to be outdone by the continued success of the breaststrokes Alex Fraser and Wade both won the 200m backstroke in their age groups. All Otters who raced in the 400m freestyle came in the top 5 before Derek and Dave reigned supreme in the 200 fly. Pip Bennett medalled in his first ever 200m fly taking home bronze. The success added up and at the close of the weekend Otter was awarded the Cupar Points trophy for the top club at the championships.



Steve, Peter, Pete & Paul celebrate multiple 240+ team records



Otter wins top club at LC nationals

To Coach Steve's dismay our team remains divided on the merits of kick sets. When the kickboards appear on deck some of us rise to the challenge whereas others are blinded by fear of impending cramp. The **Norfolk Counties** (7 May) was the kick set of 2016. On the sunniest day of the year, led by proud alums, the team picked up 30 medals at the meet, 18 gold, 9 silver and 3 bronzes. Not all the times were fast but better to leave any pre-race jitters in Norwich than to bring them to the main stage.

Before we knew it May was upon us. With thousands of meters behind us it was time for the big event and we headed to the London Aquatic Centre for the European Championships (25-29 May). It was not the most organised meet we have ever been to. But it didn't matter. Otter swimmers picked up 13 European Championship medals and four British records. Dave Warren, Roger Lloyd-Mostyn and Derek Parr took home three medals each, from their three individual swims.

Dave finished the Championships with gold in the 200m fly, silvers in the 200m free and 200m IM, and three British records. Roger collected a medal of each colour winning gold in the 100m fly, silver in the 100m free and bronze in the 50m fly breaking club records for each. Derek took home gold in the 100m fly and bronze in both the 200m and 50m fly. The Otter ladies 4x50m free relay teams enjoyed some brilliant results on day two of the Championships. The team of Lex Higlett, Olivia Reynolds, Laure Kearns and Catherine Demont won gold in the 120+ age group, while the team of Gina Hobson, Emma Shkurka, Jane McMenemy and Fiona Marshall Staines won silver in the 160+ age group in a British record time. Pete Kirk and Hayley Davis picked



up bronze medals in the 100m and 800m free respectively, Hayley breaking the club record in the process. In addition, 24 Otter club records fell at the Championships spanning all but 3 of the age groups.



*Fiona, Jane, Gina & Emma celebrate a British record & silver medal*



*Lex, Olivia, Laure & Catherine celebrate their gold medal*

Typically, the offseason kicks in after the biggest meet of the year and it would have been understood if people wanted to take a break after Euros. Perhaps motivated by our success at Euros, however, the team continued to race and excel this time venturing to north London for the Barnet Cophall meets. First off was the **distance meet** (10 July) where Hayley Davis triumphed in the 800m free, before Camille Vrain won the 100m breaststroke and 100m back and was second in the 200m IM. Shortly after the team secured the top club trophy at the **Middlesex County Masters** (24 July) for the tenth consecutive year (despite a disqualification in the men's medley relay as Alex Fraser tried to swim both the back and fly legs in the same heat). At the **Barnet sprint meet** (4 Sept) many Otters worked hard to earn some Decathlon points with strong results posted by Yuri Schwartz, Matt Wan, Kim Liu, Wade Rimbach and Catherine Demont. Lex Higlett deviated from the free events and remembered to touch with two hands in the 100m fly and 100m IM. Finally, at the 1500 Barnet (26-27 Nov) meet experienced distance specialists Nico Barber and Tim Kendall won their age groups. Joana Gauer surprised herself (but not her fellow lane four swimmers) when she beat her entry time by a full minute in her first competition for Otter.

Brushing off train cancellations the Otters forayed once more to Sheffield for the **Short Course National Championships** (28-30 Oct) where Pip Bennett and Hayley Davis wasted no time in becoming the first Otter national champions of the meet winning the 1500m free. Nico, Dan Bullock, Roger Lloyd-Mostyn and Cristina Bertucci all powered through to earn silver medals in a strong start for the Otters.



*Derek Parr at the European Masters Championships*

Hayley was only getting started as she won the 100m back, 200m breast, 200m fly, 200m IM, 400m IM, along with a host of silver and bronze medals, relay glory and the indisputable winner of the annual prize for 'shortest time between alarm clock and starting block'. Other highlights included national champion honours for Nico (400m and 800m free), Mike Wake (100m breast, 200m free), Derek Parr (100m free, 200m fly, 400m free, 400m IM), Wade Rimbach (200m and 400m IM), Craig Gillespie (200m breast), Roger (100m fly) and a bunch of relays. Finally, in what he claims was his final major meet before retirement, Dave Warren broke GB records in the 100m breast, 200m breast and 100m IM.

Many people 'forget' to warm down after their last event at Short Course Nationals but an intrepid crew travelled to the **South Yorkshire Masters** (11 Dec) for one last push before the holiday season. Catherine continued to excel in sprint fly and free winning the 25-29 100m free and fly. Wade and Nico battled to the finish in the 100m breast (well done Wade), before Nico returned to his strengths winning the 200m and 400m free. Fraser Peh hinted that if we can find a backstroker we might have a solid relay team in the making as he took the title for the 100m fly.

Before we knew it the year had drawn to a close. We raised our glasses at the Christmas party and Pip, Craig and Mike Reys posted their total metres for 2016. It was never going to be an average year but the Otters outdid themselves at every point. The trophies, records, and medals, speak for themselves. But perhaps most inspiring was watching the significant number of new members and new competitors become a part of Otter and the shared experiences that make us a great team year in year out. I hope we bring that same passion and enthusiasm to the 2017 calendar.



*Otters refuel at SC nationals*



## CLUB PERFORMANCE: OPEN WATER SWIMMING

In addition to the Club-run open water events, an increasing number of Otters take part in other open water challenges, and 2016 was no different. Some of the highlights follow.

### TWO-WAY CHANNEL CROSSING

#### *Deirdre Ward*

In 2009 Lisa Cummins became the first Irish person to swim to France and back again. I thought she was mad. In 2012 I swam to France in a time of 14 hours 30 mins. I had met Lisa and swam with her in Cork. I still thought she was mad. In 2013, Wendy Trehiou swam to France and back but I didn't think Wendy was mad. In the space of a year I had started to wonder if I had what it took.

By the end of 2013 I had a secret. I had booked a slot with Neil Streeter on Suva for the 9 to 16 August neap tide in 2016.

2014 season was bookended by two big swims – Manhattan Island Marathon Swim (MIMS) at the start and a two-way Windermere at the end. Neither went as planned. 2014 was the year I realised that the technique that got me to France was not good enough to get me back. Winter 2014/15 I did nothing but drills, breaking very old habits and trying to learn new ones.

2015 season started with a channel swim. I spent the first two hours asking myself why I was putting the crew through this again. I knew they wouldn't let me out of the water so I stayed in and carried on. I was slower but stronger, feeling the benefits of a winter of drills.

November 2015 was when training really began. The focus was increasing the speed of my cruising pace and holding it for hours and hours. I did my first 20km pool set in December and 15km pool sets became the new normal. As the water warmed up I moved outdoors and to Dover and the fun really started. 10 hours became the new normal!

I became a weather watcher. My tide came and went and still I waited. I was at a wedding in the Lake District. The wind howled and the rain poured across the country but the forecast suggested perfect conditions were on the way. Neil said the slot was mine if the forecast held. Weather watching intensified and at 10pm on Monday 22 August, we got the green light for a 2:30am start on 23 August.

The next 27 hours 52 minutes were individually uneventful. The conditions were perfect - flat seas, blue skies. The sun playing on the surface of the water was beautiful and I was happy. My crew was amazing. My pilot and his crew believed in me. The tankers came and went. The odd jellyfish got me but I couldn't complain. I landed at La Sirene restaurant by Cap Gris Nez in the afternoon of 23 August after 13 hours, 15 minutes (a PB!) and within 2 minutes, I was back in the water swimming to England – no time to think. As the night came in we carried on. I could see the stars above me. Another boat passed me by, wishing me well. As the sun started to come up, as my left arm started to really hurt, the sunrise pink cliffs of Dover started to loom closer and I realised I was going to make it.

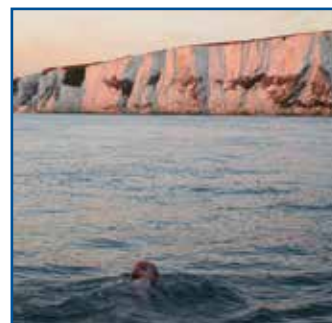
The last bit was tricky, trying to find a spot to land under the cliffs at St Margaret's. My crew were behind me trying to direct me but not allowed ahead of me or to touch me until I cleared the water. I was wobbly as I tried to shuffle across the rocks. I was directed to a white rock clear of the water that I could sit on. I sat on the rock. I was overwhelmed with relief. I tried to cry. My husband hugged me and I nearly toppled over. I could finally stop swimming.

I landed on 24 August 2016 in a time of 27:52:53.

43rd two-way channel swim  
29th person to swim a 2-way  
17th female to swim a 2-way



*Deirdre celebrating completing her two-way channel crossing with husband, Mike*





## ASA OPEN WATER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, SHEFFIELD

### Pip Bennett

A handful of Otters went back to the Rother Valley Country Park in July to compete in the ASA National Championships. A hot day saw Dave Warren (45-49) win both the 1.5km and 3km events and Pip Bennett (35-39 years) win the 3km. Tim Kendall (55-59) took home bronze and Jess Trevellick (25-29) 4th in a deep field. At this event, the competitors go off in mixed age waves, there is usually a good battle for who can be the first master home overall. Rather unfortunately for the Otters, Roberto Pavoni, European medallist and Olympian took that position comfortably. Dave and Roberto shared tales of IM swimming at Olympic trials 20 years apart!



Tim, Dave, Jess and Pip at Rother Valley

## EUROPEAN MASTERS OPEN WATER CHAMPIONSHIPS, CROATIA

### Pip Bennett

This year, the open water event was held at a different time to the pool racing at European Champs, in the warm waters off the coast of Croatia (Sept 2016). Pip Bennett and Michelle Senecal went off to enjoy the weather and race 5km in clear water; there were even fish to help with pacing. Both would have preferred the course to have been rather rougher than it was for most of the way round but had to settle for generally calm water; this meant there was some exciting pack swimming! Creditable 7th (Michelle, 35-39 years) and 8th (Pip, 35-39 years) place finishes rounded off a sunny few days.

## BRITISH OPEN WATER CHAMPIONSHIPS (OPEN AND MASTERS), LONDON

### Pip Bennett

Rounding off the season was a new addition to the open water calendar, the British Championships, held in the Serpentine, Hyde Park. Maddie Parra qualified for the open race and held her own against a fast international field in the 5km event.

The remaining Otters competed in their respective age categories battling with some familiar faces from the circuit over a 3.3km race. Despite an unexpected detour involving going the wrong way round a buoy and having to go back on himself, Pip Bennett came home equal first master overall, winning the 35-39 year category in the process. Nico Barber and John Talbott took silver and bronze in the 30-34 age group and, though she found it all rather chilly, Jess Thorpe won the 30-34 years. A good showing from the team and an event worthy of club attention in future years.



Talbott, Pip, Nico and Jess at the Serpentine

## SWIMRUN

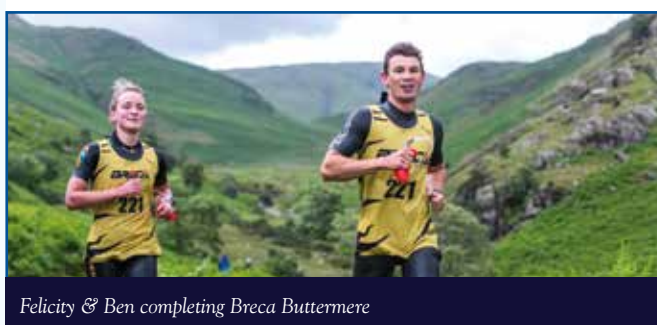
### Felicity Hannon

A Scandinavian aquathlon has taken off in the UK, called the 'swimrun' series. The idea behind swimrun started out as a drunken bet between two Swedes who challenged each other to run and swim 75km over 26 islands in Stockholm's archipelago.

Unlike traditional aquathlons, which combine swimming and running in a two-stage race, swimrun involves transitioning seamlessly between running stages and swimming stages in pairs. What's more, you have to carry all your kit with you throughout the race such that you run in your wetsuit and swim in your trainers.

In 2016 Felicity Hannon took on this endurance challenge with her partner, Benjamin Bussmann. In July 2016, they completed the Breca Buttermere race, trail running 42km across rough terrain, including 1,900m of vertical ascent and swimming 6km through choppy waters.

Felicity and Ben finished first in the mixed category, and tenth overall (out of 79 teams), in 6 hours 47 minutes, setting a new course record by over an hour. In 2017 they've been invited back to compete in the Jersey swimrun.



Felicity & Ben completing Breca Buttermere





## CLUB EVENTS

### SOCIAL OTTERS

As is custom, the **Annual Otter Dinner** is THE social event of the year. In 2016 it was held at the Holiday Inn, Bloomsbury, on Fri 18 March and was organised by Dave Warren, Emma Shkurka and Tracey Allen. Nearly 100 Otters enjoyed an evening of eating, drinking and dancing. In 2017 we return to the Holiday Inn on Fri 31 March for more merriment.

The self styled Mature Otters meet on the first Thursday of the month for a gentle swim and a less gentle social. If you would like more information or to join the group, please contact Charles Doxat (cdoxat@btinternet.com).

### HANDICAP & CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

#### *Dave Warren, Hon. Handicapper*

The Otter tradition of handicap events is almost as old as the club itself, which is evident in the age of the trophies awarded to each event winner, several of which are over 100 years old. Perhaps the most striking trophy is the George Rope Averages Trophy, an "otter on a plinth" donated in 1911 and awarded to the person with the greatest cumulative points gained across all the handicap events that year. A separate trophy, the Frank Sachs Challenge Cup, donated in 1923 is also awarded to the overall cumulative winner of the three open water events.

The handicap events include both open water and pool swims spread throughout the year with the open water events swum in the warmer summer months. These events are for all members. They provide a great chance for those who don't normally compete an opportunity to "beat" the more experienced competitive swimmers because each swimmer is given a pre-determined handicap time by the Honourable Handicapper with the intention of all swimmers finishing together. Those that show the greatest improvement from their handicap time win the event.

The open water events were the first handicap events to be held in 2016, with the competition starting later than usual due to the cancellation of the Mile because of bad weather. The Half mile was swum in July at Wargrave hosted by Henley Sailing Club. The first swimmer back to the clubhouse this year was Katherine Mearman, followed 10 seconds later by Joana Gauer, with Pip Bennett and the Hon. Handicapper battling it out over 30 seconds behind for third (Pip finishing ahead of Dave).

The Quarter Mile was swum in Parliament Hill lido on a warm Saturday in August. Men's water polo player, Daniel Shunn, won the event, with Nico Barber finishing five seconds behind for second and Mike Reys a further five seconds behind for third.

Because there were just two events contributing to the overall Open Water Handicap championship, this was extremely close. To separate the top four an extra point was added to each swimmer who swam both events. This resulted in joint winners, Joana Gauer and Pip Bennett, who share the Frank Sachs Challenge Cup. Tied also for third place overall were Katherine and Daniel:

- 1= Joana Gauer, 9 points
- 1= Pip Bennett, 9
- 3= Katherine Mearman, 8
- 3= Daniel Shunn, 8



*Katherine being presented with the Half Mile trophy by Paul Hindle*

The pool handicap events were held with the traditional staggered start, with the exception of the 'sealed' 100m fc. Also contested is the veterans' 50m handicap (over 45s), which is not included in the overall handicap championship. After several years with just two swimmers in this event we saw witness to many of the 'Otter Oldies' competing, so it had to be run as knockout heats and a final for the first time; previous Otter President, Roger Sharpley, emerged the vet's handicap winner.

Consistency is generally the key to winning the overall championship, and throughout the earlier events both Pip Bennett and Wade Rimbach provided this. In later events this was matched by Etienne Cambier. These three were closely matched for the overall Handicap Championship, with just one point separating all three by the end. It was Pip Bennett and Etienne Cambier who ended up joint winners of the



George H. Rope Averages Trophy, with Wade Rimbach losing out by just that one point to finish third. The fourth place finisher was Tim Kendall. The top six overall for 2016 were:

- 1 = Pip Bennett, 33 points
- 1 = Etienne Cambier, 33
- 3. Wade Rimbach, 32
- 4. Tim Kendall, 23
- 5. Alex Capon, 21
- 6. Alice Dinsdale-Young, 18

In total, 71 swimmers competed in the Handicap events in 2016. Thank you to everyone who continues to participate in these events. Very well done to all event winners and special congratulations to the overall Handicap champions.

In the annual **club championships** a total of ten races are held across the year, which are open to all Club members and have a variety of trophies up for grabs. In 2016 Dave Warren won the men's title for the seventh time, and promptly announced his (temporary) retirement. Wade Rimbach and Josh Sambrook-Smith again took second and third, respectively. In the women's event, Hayley Davis won the title for the first time, with Catherine Demont in second and Lex Higlett third.

## OTTER GOLF AND SUMMER LUNCH

### *Paul Hindle*

The 2016 Otter Golf tournament and lunch took place at the Ealing Golf Club on a gloriously sunny day in late May. Nine Otters (Charles Doxat, Matt Staines, Andy Craig, Ric Jones, Martin Flash, Mike Reys, Ed Buckley, Dave Gawler, and Paul Hindle) took part in the golf tournament. The Ealing golf course, unfamiliar to most, was in great condition, the grassy fairways newly mown and the greens unbelievably fast and true. The course is not long, but it is tight and with the meandering River Brent having an impact on half of the holes, it is a challenge for any golfer, let alone an Otter with a dodgy swing and a liking for water.

Perhaps predictably, nobody really got to grips with the course; the scores were not outstanding. By way of illustration the prize for the longest drive on the 7th hole was awarded to Charles for a miserable 150 yard effort, nobody else managed to hit the fairway; and the prize for the nearest the pin (on the green) in one, on the short 18th, was awarded to Dave Gawler, but only after the golfing committee were forced to reconsider the rules of the day, as nobody managed to land their tee shot on the green.

The 2016 Otter Golf champion and winner of the George Rope trophy was Matt Staines. The summer lunch was a well-attended affair. Starting with drinks on the sun drenched grass terrace before moving inside for a carvery lunch prepared by the Ealing Golf Club's excellent catering staff. A superb day, enjoyed by everyone.

The 2017 event will once again be held at the Ealing Golf Club on Friday 19 May. Please contact Paul Hindle for more details.



*Otters enjoying post-gold lunch at Ealing Golf Club*

## THE BATH CUP AND OTTER MEDLEY RELAYS

### *Paul Hindle*

Otter has run the Bath Cup and Otter Medley relay competition since 1948, with John Nalson running it singlehandedly for the last 37 years.

The event is now a vast undertaking, with an incredible number of components, each of which is painstakingly managed by John. These activities include liaising with schools, ensuring a pool booking (at least a year in advance), plus all associated staff and volunteers, preparation and distribution of event programmes, provision of personalised finals certificates and medals for the winning teams, managing all financial matters and, finally, on-the-day co-ordination. John is far too modest to let anyone know how much time he commits to the event. We estimate that it is well in excess of 750 hours each year.

Otter nominated John Nalson for an ASA Aquatics Award in the 'Services to Aquatics' category. The nomination was for his voluntary, single-handed and selfless dedication to the development, organisation and on-the-day coordination of the annual Otter Invitation Team Relays (aka the Bath Cup and Otter Medley races). When John took over running of the event it was a relatively small and exclusively boys affair, attended only by the well know independent schools.

Through his vision and guidance it has more than quadrupled in size and most importantly has included girls since 1995. The event is now held at the London Aquatic Centre. John's nomination for an award was kindly acknowledged by the ASA.



**John’s report on the 2016 event follows:**

Back in 1910 just six boys schools contested the first competition and since then a total of 137 schools have taken part in the Bath Cup and the other relay races that now form the extended competition for boys and girls. The 2016 events took place on March 2016 at the London Aquatics Centre when there was a record attendance of 85 schools.

The 2016 results were as follows:

**The Bath Cup**

1st Reeds School, 2nd The Royal Belfast Academical Institution, 3rd Stewarts Melville College

**The Otter Medley**

1st The Royal Belfast Academical Institution, 2nd Reeds School, 3rd Whitgift School

**The Otter Girls Freestyle Relay**

1st Latymer Upper School, 2nd Guildford High School, 3rd The Mary Erskine School, Edinburgh

**The Otter Girls Medley Relay**

1st Latymer Upper School, 2nd City of London Freeman’s School, 3rd Guildford High School

The evening before the Bath Cup the Club ran its only match for the year against school teams where we contested the Otter Challenge Match against some of the best schools teams in the UK where we were narrowly beaten by The Royal Belfast Academical Institution who went on to be successful in the Otter Medley and the Bath Cup.

Over the years that the Club has been involved there has been a steady reduction in the number of Club members attending as officials to the extent that less than a handful of members were there in 2016. This does not augur well for the future of the event under the management of the Club and unless more support is forthcoming we may have to cease our involvement in these events which are the highlights of the year for the schools that take part and a potential source of new members.



As mentioned above, Otter took part in the Otter Challenge Match. **Ben Thomas’** account of the event follows:

The Otter Challenge Match (aka the Pre-Bath Cup) has been cemented as a regular in the Otter calendar. It’s a warm-up meet where a number of public school teams compete at St Paul’s School in Barnes. Continuing this long held Otter tradition in 2016 were Wade Rimbach, Josh Sambrook-Smith, Dave Warren, Nico Barber and Ben Thomas. The last couple of years Otter has fielded a really strong men’s team and this year was no exception. What the Otter team may have lacked in youth, they certainly made up for in effort! It was all about pride trying not to be beaten by 16-18 year olds! It was a very close fought competition with the Otter men’s team coming a creditable second place; an especially good result when you consider one of our team members was over 25 years older than the competition (and he still managed to beat them all!). After the competition finished the Otter men’s team went off to the pub for a celebratory beer, whereas the school kids had to go straight home!

**TRAINING CAMP**

In April 2016, a large number of Otters joined the London Swimming-organised training camp held at T3, Tenerife. The main aim was to prepare for the upcoming European Championships in London later in the year. The camp was led by our Head Coach, Steve Bratt, and was enjoyed by all. In September 2017, a large group of Otters will be heading to La Santa in Lanzarote, led by Nico Barber. If you’re interested in attending, please speak to Nico. It’s a fabulous week in the sun with a mix of swimming and non-swimming activities, including tennis, cycling, windsurfing, beach volleyball, various exercise classes, or simply lying by the pool! A mix of swimmers, water polo players, and partners will be attending in 2017.



*Otters enjoying the sun at Club La Santa*



## 2016 OTTER TROPHY WINNERS

### Championship Races (Men)

Event	Trophy	Year	Winner
50m Freestyle	(No trophy)		J. Sambrook-Smith
100m Freestyle	5th Humphrey's C.C.	1911	D. Warren
400m Freestyle	Major Collis Browne	1899	D. Warren
100m Backstroke	Brown C.C.	1889	D. Warren
100m Breaststroke	2nd Annison C.C. (shared)	1914	W. Rimbach
50m Butterfly	(No trophy)		D. Warren
100m Butterfly	Peters Tankard	1966	D. Warren
100m Medley	Ronald Edgar Salver (shared)	1952	D. Warren
200m Medley	Arthur Batt Trophy (shared)	1996	D. Warren
Mile Open Water	Dudley C.C.	1898	(not contested)
Points Total	Buller C.C.	1905	D. Warren

### Championship Races (Women)

Event	Trophy	Year	Winner
50m Freestyle	(No trophy)		L. Higlett
100m Freestyle	J.R.G. Millner C.C.	1977	C. Demont
400m Freestyle	Club Trophy	2001	L. Higlett
100m Backstroke	Club Trophy	2001	H. Davis
100m Breaststroke	2nd Annison C.C. (shared)	1914	C. Vrain
50m Butterfly	(No trophy)		H. Davis
100m Butterfly	Club Trophy	2001	H. Davis
100m Medley	Ronald Edgar Salver (shared)	1952	H. Davis
200m Medley	Arthur Batt Trophy (shared)	1996	H. Davis
Mile Open Water	C.G. Forsberg Memorial	2001	(not contested)
Points Total	Jackson Trophy	1993	H. Davis

### Handicap Races

Event	Trophy	Year	Winner
10 Widths Handicap	Hodge C.C.	1970	(not contested)
50m Handicap	Macdonald C.C.	1893	E. Cambier
100m Handicap	Pyers Mostyn C.C.	1955	G. Bonavota
100m Sealed Handicap	David Craig Salver	2004	W. Rimbach
125m Handicap	Ladies' C.C.	1874	A. Capon
150m Handicap	Baldon C.C.	1934	A. Capon
200m Handicap	Alfred Jonas C.C.	1935	M. Wan
400m IM Handicap	Alex Ferguson Trophy	2008	C. Vrain
Veterans' 50m Handicap	Synge-Hutchinson C.C.	1931	R. Sharpley
Open Water Quarter Mile	2nd Tom Batt C.C.	1948	D. Shunn
Open Water Half Mile	J.W. Rope Memorial	1921	K. Mearman
Open Water Mile	Cunningham Plate	1951	(not contested)
Open Water Points total	Frank Sachs C.C.	1923	J. Gauer
Handicap Points Total	George Rope Averages	1911	P. Bennett E. Cambier

### Water Polo

Event	Trophy	Year	Winner
Men's Player of the Year	J.H.R. Haswell Trophy	1998	D. Csizsinszky
Men's Most Improved Player	Doug Woo Award		S. Brown
Women's Player of the Year	Water Polo Cup	2003	K. Rogers
Women's Captain's Trophy		2014	E. Shkurka & T. Allen

### Golf

Event	Trophy	Year	Winner
Otter Golf	G.H. Rope C.C.	1923	M. Staines



## LIST OF MEMBERS 2016

### Honorary Active Life Members

1966 Iliffe, Mr J.K. (2003)

### Life Members

1946 Warnford-Davis, Mr D.M.  
 1949 Millner, Mr J.R. (1972)  
 1950 Cooper, Mr G.G. (1972)  
 1951 Milton, Mr H.P. (2004)  
 1952 Raw, Mr E. (1972)  
 1953 Gill, Mr A.G. (1982)  
 1953 Penny, Dr P.T. (1977)  
 1953 Thorogood, Mr P. (2009)  
 1953 Vandersteen, Mr M.H. (1999)  
 1954 Burn, Mr R.G. (2001)  
 1954 Dussek OBE, Mr I.J. (1973)  
 1956 Doxat, Mr C. (1999)  
 1959 Grundy, Mr M.D. (1997)  
 1960 Downs, Mr M.C. (2003)  
 1960 Goldberg, Mr M.D. (1980)  
 1960 McLachlan, Mr M.L. (1980)  
 1965 Thornton, Mr B. (1993)  
 1966 Gawler, Mr D. (2008)  
 1966 Thomas, Mr R. (1988)  
 1967 Pointon, Mr G.H. (1978)  
 1967 Wigginton, Mr A.B. (1991)  
 1967 Woodman, Dr M.J. (1980)  
 1971 Craig, Mr A.R. (2010)  
 1971 Goodbody, Mr J.B. (2005)  
 1971 Jones, Mr R.H. (2007)  
 1976 Mackenzie, Mr J. (2001)  
 1976 Miller, Mr D.R. (1999)  
 1979 Marshall, Mr F. (1998)  
 1980 Redpath, Mrs E.M. (2004)  
 1981 Courtney, Mr M. (1995)  
 1981 Plumley, Mr J. (2000)  
 1983 Woodward CMG.OBE, Ms B.  
 1984 Goudie, Mr P.A. (2001)  
 1985 Grace, Mr P.M. (1997)  
 1990 Williamson, Mr P.K. (2010)  
 1992 Hopkins, Mr R. (2006)  
 1993 Levitz, Mr M.D. (2010)  
 1997 Phillips, Mr R. (2012)  
 1997 Wake, Mr M. (2009)  
 1998 Gallagher, Mr N.R. (2010)  
 1998 Vider, Mr P.A. (2007)

### Active, Non-active, Country Members

1946 Payne, Mr D.B.  
 1954 Morton, Mr A.J.  
 1955 Chaney, Mr A.J.  
 1955 Stossel, Mr C.A.  
 1956 Harford, Mr R.S.  
 1959 Kennedy, Dr W.J.  
 1959 Towers, Mr J.F.  
 1959 Williamson, Mr R.J.  
 1960 Lloyd-Mostyn, Dr R.H.  
 1960 Parr, Mr D.R.  
 1960 Skidmore OBE, Dr F.D.

1962 Flash, Mr M.H.  
 1962 Stewart, Mr C.J.  
 1964 Fox, Dr J.S.  
 1966 Nalson, Mr J.K.  
 1968 Palmer, Dr R.J.  
 1972 Foxon, Dr M.  
 1973 Musgrove, Mr N.  
 1974 Sharpley, Mr R.F.  
 1975 Bedford, Mr J.  
 1975 Turner, Mr H.  
 1976 Hindle, Mr P.E.  
 1979 Flash, Mr G.M.  
 1979 Kirk, Mr P.G.  
 1983 Musgrove, Mr I.  
 1984 Flash, Mr A.M.  
 1984 Fraser, Mr T.M.  
 1985 Stewart, Mrs M.J.  
 1986 Musgrove, Mr G.  
 1987 Davies, Miss L.  
 1987 Evans, Mr P.  
 1988 Wain, Mrs A.L.  
 1988 Willetts, Mr G.  
 1990 Musgrove, Miss H.  
 1991 Kendall, Mr T.H.  
 1993 McMenemy, Ms E.J.  
 1994 Amos, Dr M.J.  
 1994 Rae, Mr P.J.  
 1994 Ray, Mr A.A.  
 1995 Deacon, Miss G.L.  
 1995 Deacon, Miss L.L.  
 1995 Fraser, Mr A.  
 1995 Fraser, Mr T.  
 1995 Gallagher, Mr M.  
 1997 Bree, Dr S.  
 1997 Evans, Mr B.E.  
 1997 Fry, Mr W.G.  
 1997 Hardy, Mr V.  
 1997 Powdrill, Mr G.  
 1997 Ray, Mr A.J.  
 1999 Buckley, Mr E.J.  
 2000 Hindle, Mr J.E.  
 2001 Marshall, Ms F.C.  
 2001 Shaw, Miss E.A.  
 2001 Parrish, Mr J.  
 2002 Dean, Ms M.E.  
 2002 Monk, Mr G.P.  
 2002 Slater, Ms S.  
 2003 Joyce, Miss R.  
 2003 Hobson, Dr G.  
 2003 Eden, Mr C.G.  
 2003 Ward, Ms D.  
 2003 Paynter, Miss D.  
 2004 Boldon, Mr E.M.  
 2004 Bew, Miss B.  
 2004 Turner, Mrs E.A.  
 2004 Mikulskis, Mr D.P.  
 2004 Williams, Mrs L.J.  
 2004 Hudson, Mr A.M.  
 2005 Russell, Mr A.  
 2005 Miller, Miss A.T.

2005 Miller, Miss K.A.  
 2005 Miller, Mr R.G.  
 2005 Etiebet, Miss P.E.  
 2005 Buller, Mr N.  
 2005 Lievesley, Miss A.  
 2005 Thomas, Mr B.  
 2005 Comiskey, Mr G.M.  
 2006 Senecal, Miss M.L.  
 2006 Estrella, Mr L.  
 2006 Adams, Mr C.J.  
 2006 Walton, Mrs S.  
 2006 Aldana, Mr J.F.  
 2007 Bullock, Mr D.  
 2007 Bratt, Mr S.  
 2007 Capon, Mr A.  
 2007 Ochocinska, Ms A.  
 2007 Hahn, Mr E.  
 2007 Brown, Miss H.  
 2007 Hasnain, Dr C.A.  
 2007 Cook, Ms L.  
 2007 Mulligan, Miss M.A.  
 2007 Chopra, Dr M.  
 2008 Mulcahy, Miss R.  
 2008 Roberts, Mr D.  
 2008 Wall, Mr W.A.  
 2008 Williams, Mr T.  
 2008 Sokolic, Mr I.  
 2008 Sutton, Mr C.  
 2008 Worsley, Mr D.  
 2008 Shkurka, Miss E.  
 2008 Tufarelli, Mr T.  
 2008 Wright, Mrs F.J.  
 2008 Greenberg, Mr S.M.  
 2009 Talbott, Mr J.R.  
 2009 Burgham, Mr M.R.  
 2009 Williams, Mr J.C.  
 2009 Eden, Ms A.M.  
 2009 Caldwell, Mr O.J.  
 2009 Ganase, Mr O.A.  
 2009 Sirianni, Mr P.  
 2009 Benett, Miss S.E.  
 2009 Prentice, Dr H.  
 2009 Kruesmann, Dr M.  
 2009 Warren, Mr D.  
 2010 Burkinshaw, Mr T.  
 2010 Moulson, Mr D.  
 2010 Kerr, Miss K.  
 2010 Bari, Mr F.  
 2010 Tafazolli, Miss B.M.  
 2010 Pariag, Mrs E.J.  
 2010 Kearns, Miss L.  
 2010 Hannon, Miss F.A.  
 2010 Basse, Mr A.  
 2011 Bond, Mr I.  
 2011 Louw, Dr A.R.  
 2011 Trevellick, Miss J.  
 2011 Wright, Miss S.E.  
 2011 Schuring, Mr B.  
 2011 Glennie, Miss G.  
 2011 Cockill, Mr M.

2011 Higlett, Miss A.  
 2011 Shannon, Miss H.  
 2011 Deschatres, Mr F.  
 2011 Orosz, Mr G.  
 2011 Scanlan, Mr J.  
 2011 Grainge, Mr M.R.  
 2011 Harris, Miss L.J.  
 2011 Parra, Ms M.  
 2011 Coomer, Miss A.  
 2011 Csizsinszky, Mr D.  
 2011 Cook, Mr C.T.  
 2011 Davis, Mr M.  
 2011 Thorpe, Miss V.  
 2012 Wilson, Mr O.M.R.  
 2012 Cerqueira, Mr N.  
 2012 Grey, Mr C.  
 2012 Barber, Mr N.  
 2012 Imbs, Mr X.N.  
 2012 Reys, Mr M.  
 2012 Gillespie, Mr C.  
 2012 Eckert, Mr J.  
 2012 Gauer, Miss J.S.  
 2012 Finlay, Mr T.  
 2012 Campbell, Miss H.  
 2012 Leighton, Miss F.  
 2012 Nurthen, Ms M.L.  
 2012 Patchett, Miss H.N.  
 2012 Amardeilh, Mr C.  
 2012 Roussos, Mr N.  
 2012 Von Herberstein, Mr E.  
 2012 Nyaka, Mr M.J.  
 2012 Barone, Mr B.  
 2013 Goad, Miss E.  
 2013 Reynolds, Miss O.  
 2013 Voeltzel, Miss D.  
 2013 Bennett, Mr P.S.  
 2013 Mattick, Mr J.  
 2013 Woolley, Mr R.  
 2013 Allen, Miss T.  
 2013 Dean, Miss I.A.  
 2013 Freeman, Miss C.  
 2014 Bautista-Garcia, Miss I.  
 2014 Brayne, Miss S.  
 2014 Brooks, Miss D.  
 2014 Brown, Miss A.  
 2014 Cappellari, Miss O.  
 2014 Cartwright, Miss E.  
 2014 Hedley, Miss K.  
 2014 Macdonald, Miss K.  
 2014 Wharton, Miss A.  
 2014 Birmingham, Mr M.J.  
 2014 Bonavota, Mr G.  
 2014 Fakley, Mr P.  
 2014 Hall, Mr B.  
 2014 Jourdain, Mr M.  
 2014 Nasadi-Gill, Mr D.  
 2014 Sambrook-Smith, Mr J.  
 2014 Third, Mr J.  
 2014 Williams, Mr S.B.  
 2014 Friefeld, Miss K.



## LIST OF MEMBERS 2016

2014 Hamilton-Foster, Miss E.  
 2014 Szyszko, Miss A.  
 2014 Bion, Mr A.  
 2014 Edelman, Mr N.  
 2014 Shunn, Mr D.  
 2014 Tatar, Mr D.  
 2015 Benoy, Ms A-M.  
 2015 Decla, Mrs S.  
 2015 Demont, Miss C.  
 2015 Matich, Miss S.  
 2015 McCarthy, Ms E.  
 2015 McGirl, Miss E.  
 2015 Newton-Smith, Ms R.  
 2015 Nonaka, Ms S.  
 2015 Rhodes, Miss A.  
 2015 Scott, Ms C.  
 2015 Taurite, Miss D.  
 2015 Vrain, Miss C.  
 2015 Ward, Miss B.  
 2015 Bail, Mr S.  
 2015 Braine, Mr S.  
 2015 Brownsey, Mr E.  
 2015 Cambier, Mr E.  
 2015 Collis, Mr A.  
 2015 Davis, Mr G.  
 2015 Ibanez, Mr D.  
 2015 Jatteau, Mr R.  
 2015 Kuchinskiy, Mr V.  
 2015 Laborie, Mr Y.  
 2015 Lawes, Mr M.  
 2015 Marini, Mr P.  
 2015 Masters, Mr N.  
 2015 Matich, Mr D.  
 2015 McLean, Mr B.  
 2015 Northover, Mr J.  
 2015 Pardoe, Mr B.  
 2015 Paulson, Mr J.  
 2015 Pisati, Mr M.  
 2015 Schwartz, Mr Y.  
 2015 Wilson, Mr P.  
 2015 Danielson, Miss E.J.  
 2015 Ferrone, Miss C.  
 2015 Rogers, Miss K.  
 2015 Bocsi, Mr G.  
 2015 Cocksworth, Mr B.  
 2015 Dodkins, Mr A.  
 2015 McLean, Mr C.  
 2015 Martinelli, Mr I.  
 2015 Monahan, Mr N.  
 2015 Nordgren, Mr H.K.  
 2015 Oleinik, Mr B.  
 2015 Roy, Mr M.  
 2015 Zelei, Mr B.  
 2016 Abdullin, Mr A.  
 2016 Adamson, Mr D.  
 2016 Allgar, Ms E.  
 2016 Anastasio, Ms F.  
 2016 Arradi, Mr M.  
 2016 Banhidy, Mr F.  
 2016 Banhidy, Mr N.

2016 Beitia, Ms O.  
 2016 Bertucci, Ms C.  
 2016 Blackmore, Ms V.  
 2016 Bugakov, Mr A.  
 2016 Burkhart, Mr J.  
 2016 Cabero Alonso, Mr S.  
 2016 Cavalcanti, Mr O.  
 2016 Chambers, Mr R.  
 2016 Chisari, Mr L.  
 2016 Colantoni, Ms I.  
 2016 Connell, Mr A.  
 2016 Connolly, Ms S.  
 2016 Corjon, Mr N.  
 2016 Couper, Mr A.  
 2016 Couquet, Mr A.  
 2016 Davis, Ms H.  
 2016 Dickx, Ms L.  
 2016 Dinsdale-Young, Ms A.  
 2016 Feuilleaibois, Mr L.  
 2016 Field, Mr R.  
 2016 Filbey, Mr J.  
 2016 Fincher, Mr H.  
 2016 Gauer, Ms L.  
 2016 Geleoc, Mr O.  
 2016 George, Mr C.  
 2016 Goff, Mr S.  
 2016 Gorohovik, Mr F.  
 2016 Gregson, Ms A.  
 2016 Ho, Mr C.  
 2016 Hopkins, Mr D.  
 2016 Houghton, Mr M.  
 2016 Hucker, Ms A.  
 2016 Hussey, Ms S.  
 2016 Jancourtz, Ms K.  
 2016 Kwok, Mr D.  
 2016 Law, Ms S-J.  
 2016 Lazat, Ms E.  
 2016 Le, Mr M.  
 2016 Levi, Mr N.  
 2016 Lonoce, Mr F.  
 2016 Marnat, Ms E.  
 2016 Manning, Mr J.  
 2016 McBirney, Mr G.  
 2016 McNeill, Mr A.  
 2016 Mills, Mr P.  
 2016 Mohamed, Ms F.  
 2016 Morten, Mr S.  
 2016 Mullan, Mr S.  
 2016 Parsons, Mr M.  
 2016 Partridge, Ms L.  
 2016 Pealing, Ms J.  
 2016 Peh, Mr F.  
 2016 Pryke, Mr A.  
 2016 Rigby, Ms H.  
 2016 Robbins, Mr C.  
 2016 Ross, Mr J.  
 2016 Sartorius, Mr M.  
 2016 Tar, Mr I.  
 2016 Thibault, Mr A.  
 2016 Thomson, Ms A.

2016 Thorpe, Ms J.  
 2016 Treseder, Mr H.  
 2016 Unsworth, Ms E.  
 2016 van Wyk, Ms N.  
 2016 Wan, Mr M.  
 2016 Webster, Mr G.  
 2016 Wright, Mr B.

### Junior Members

2005 Miller, Mr L.A.  
 2005 Miller, Mr B.Q.  
 2011 Wain, Miss Z.F.  
 2012 Wain, Mr E.V.  
 2014 Tinkler-Davies, Miss S.  
 2014 Wain, Miss S.  
 2015 Andrew, Miss E.  
 2015 Bent, Miss M.  
 2015 Brazier, Miss D.  
 2015 Chisadze, Miss A.  
 2015 Cogni, Miss E.  
 2015 Cross, Miss H.  
 2015 Cutler, Miss K.  
 2015 Dizdarevic, Miss D.  
 2015 Dizdarevic, Miss J.  
 2015 Gillie, Miss E.  
 2015 Goold, Miss D.  
 2015 Hanrahan, Miss R.  
 2015 Keith, Miss H.  
 2015 Keith, Miss I.  
 2015 Leeson, Miss A.  
 2015 Mayall, Miss P.  
 2015 Nicholson, Miss C.  
 2015 Olusanya, Miss N.  
 2015 Pennington, Miss A.  
 2015 Poole, Miss E.  
 2015 Redfern, Miss M.  
 2015 Rogers, Miss S.  
 2015 Smith, Miss I.  
 2015 Stoner, Miss H.  
 2015 Toth, Miss B.  
 2015 Toth, Miss L.  
 2015 Turner, Miss C.  
 2015 Wall-Peters, Miss M.  
 2015 Wyrwas, Miss E.  
 2016 Apps, Miss L.  
 2016 Campbell-Lamerton, Miss E.  
 2016 Coulthard, Miss P.  
 2016 Ellis Keeler, Miss S.  
 2016 Helliwell, Miss J.  
 2016 Helliwell, Miss L M  
 2016 Henderson, Miss L.  
 2016 King-Dabbs, Miss M.  
 2016 Moore, Miss M.  
 2016 Poole, Miss F.  
 2016 Rourke, Miss M.  
 2016 Shute, Miss S.  
 2016 Turner, Miss G.  
 2016 Watt, Miss R.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Honorary Annual Report Editor:

Gina Hobson



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Thank you to all contributors of material and photos for this year's report. Please send your contributions for the 2017 Annual Report to Gina Hobson ([ginaju@hotmail.com](mailto:ginaju@hotmail.com)) and don't forget that the Club's 150th anniversary is in 2019; please send contributions for the anniversary publication to James Stewart ([james.meg@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:james.meg@hotmail.co.uk)).

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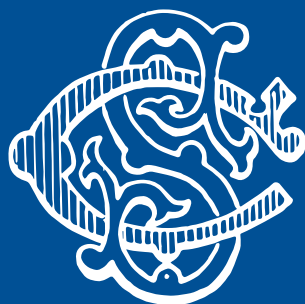
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