

Presidents Message 2011.

Another year is nearly over, in a few days time we will be welcoming the year 2012, the year we have been waiting for, the Olympics, in our own country, unfortunately it has already been a slight disappointment for many members, firstly only a few members managed to obtain tickets for any of the events, let alone the events they really wanted to see, then last week all of the members nominated by the committee to be torch bearers, had rejection letters, unlike the London Marathon, you do not even get a second chance, It could be another sixty four years before it comes back to the UK.

The last year has been another successful year for the club in many ways, membership has now risen to over one hundred, this in the main is due to the beginner's courses, the web site, face-book and Julia Woodward, who makes sure all perspective member's needs and queries are fully looked after. The other surprising fact regarding membership is over the years there has always been a steady increase in female's joining, last year I stated that the ladies represented one third of the membership, now they represent approximately fifty percent. This gives us a much more balanced club and I was pleased to see two more ladies elected to join the committee.

With the increase in membership we have out grown the entrance foyer of King Edwards Leisure Centre as a meeting area for the Wednesday evening run's, therefore we have moved further up the hill and now meet in the Saxon Hill School Foyer, even this was stretched to its limits when forty four members plus helpers turned up for the December Time Trial.

We continue to benefit from being members of the South Staffs Athletics Network, during the year five members have attended Leadership in running courses, others have attended talks on training, and the committee has also been made aware of many health and safety issues, which we are currently looking at putting into practise which will benefit all members. With many more courses or lectures planned for next year, Paul Keighley our representative will keep us fully informed.

I would like to take this opportunity to record my thanks to all of the committee that served during the last twelve month's, Alan our secretary, has carried out a sterling job on our behalf, we have all received numerous e-mails informing us of club activities, local and national events, general items of interest etc., with all the other information regarding the competitive results being posted on the web-site it was agreed that this year we would not send out a lengthy Christmas Newsletter. Laurence, the statistician regarding the handicap system, has retired from the committee, thank you Laurence, for your time over the last few years. Julia has agreed to take on this task once Laurence has shown her the complicated formula to be applied, if you wish to make a donation to secure a decent handicap, Julia would prefer cash in preference to cheques, and she is sorry she is unable to process credit cards. The existing committee members re-elected from last year will be joined by Pam Wilde, Rebecca Head and Paul Faulkner,

I am positive that the new committee, working together, will lead the club to even greater heights during the next twelve months.

All of the usual activities the club has introduced over the years still appear to be well supported generally, some much better than others, reports and results of all the individual races can be seen on the club website, along with the overall results and the prize winners for 2011.

Names for the Presidents Shield and the Mike Green Trophy were put forward at the AGM and voting extended for a fourteen day period for those unable to attend the meeting, I now have the results and they will be announced and presented along with the winners of all the club Trophies at the prize presentation on Tuesday December the 27th 2011 at the Kings Head, Bore Street, at 12.15pm onwards, following the Hang Over Run which will start from King Edwards Leisure Centre, see the monthly program for details. *Congratulations to all of the winners.*

.During the year members have competed in open events around the country and in some cases much further a field, unfortunately I am not aware of all of your achievements, however I would like to congratulate John Dawson for becoming the oldest person to run ten marathons in ten consecutive day's, John's name should be entered in the Guinness Book of Records ?, one small problem, they did want full photographic proof of all of the runs, fortunately they have now accepted that John is the oldest person in the UK and are awaiting clarification from America on the world record, just to be sure, John has entered for next years event, he says he was disappointed with his times on at least two of the days, we all wish you well John with your health problems and look forward to you completing your third 10 in 10. Steve Eaton is also hoping to have his name in the Guinness book of Records for being the first person to run a marathon on the high seas, or at least around the deck of an ocean liner on the high seas, I am not sure how many laps he had to run, or which ocean the ship was in at the time, I bet he had more waves than he has had in most of his marathons on dry land. Finally congratulations to Phil Piper for winning his age group for the second time in the Dublin marathon, as they say in Dublin after the third or fourth Guinness "just to be sure, to be sure".

It would not be my Christmas message if I did not mention the 10K. and Fun Run, once again we had well over one thousand runners in total (162 in the Fun Run – a record). The weather was good and although we did not have the course record's broken there were some very good times recorded. Many of the competitors took the trouble to comment on the support they received from the marshals and officials, also the quality of the tee shirts for the 10K finishers. We have been assured that with a little tweaking and possibly the closure of a couple more road junctions, we will retain our gold certificate for next year.

This year unfortunately we did not have the sponsorship that we have enjoyed over previous years, however due to the negotiating skills of Paul and Rachel Faulkner; we managed to make donations to all our usual helpers and charities. I am pleased to say that Cass Jackson has agreed to join the committee for next year.

Congratulations and thank you, to all who made the day such a success.

I hope one day in the very near future that I will be able to enjoy your company on a Sunday morning once again, you know how much you all enjoy saying “ shall we stop and wait for Dave to catch up “.I will not disappoint you, I now take a calendar out with me instead of a watch.

At least the weather is better than it was at this time last year, which will give you all a flying start to being much fitter for next season, even after fighting off the excesses piled on over the festive season.

Finally Wendy and I would like to wish all members, their partners and families a very

Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.