

SASA Past President's Association

Annual Dinner 2015 Stirling Court Hotel

Minutes of the Annual Dinner held at Stirling Court Hotel (formerly known as the Stirling Management Centre) on Saturday 28 February 2015 at 7.30pm

Present:

Margaret Neil, widow of Jock Neil (1973)
Mary Black (1976 and 1977) and Bill Black (1995)
Isobel Smith, widow of Peter Smith (1978)
Don Hawthorn (1983) and Carole
Jill Cochran (1992) and Gordon
Norman Grierson (1996) and Myra
Jean Hoare, widow of Derrick Hoare (1997)
Ron Taylor (2000) and Sheena
Stewart Davidson (2002) and Joan
Blair Prentice (2003) and Ann
Helen Murray (2004) and Stuart
Allan Fletcher (2007 & 2008) and Monica
Bob Reekie (2009) and Evelyn
Doris Mair (2010) and Michael
Neil Valentine (2011) and Issy
John Deans (2012) and Tricia
Gina Logan (2013)
David Downie (2014) and Susie

Guest of Honour

SASA President Eddie Wilmott (2015) and his wife Irene.

The assembled party took their seats at the time honoured square table set up. There was a welcome gift for everyone, exquisitely wrapped parcels of tablet for the ladies and perfectly bottled whisky for the men. Each gift was adorned with the SASA Logo.

Thanks to Issy for the wrapping, Doris for the tablet and Neil for the liquid refreshment.

Neil Valentine, President in 2011, Chair for the evening and organiser of the dinner opened the proceedings.

He welcomed everyone to the dinner and continued with a special welcome to our guests for the evening, the new SASA President, Eddie Wilmott, and his wife Irene.

He wished them well over the next year and hoped that they would enjoy their time in office.

There were tabled apologies from

Les Turberville (1974) and Pat
Sir Peter Heatly (1975 & 1988)
George Philip (1991) and Agnes
Winnie Ferguson (1993)
Robin Dale (1998 and 1999) and Jennifer
Sandy Brunton (2001) and Lorna

These apologies were tabled for all those present to read at their leisure.

Neil added that there was an additional apology from Jack Snowdon (1984) who would not be able to attend due to illness, however, he hoped to see everyone at next years dinner.

Neil then asked the Rev Don Hawthorn, President 1983, to say grace.

Rev Don Hawthorn, 1983 President, thanked Neil for his very short warning of this duty and added that he had been on a diet for two months but since he was going to say grace he would enjoy the food tonight. He then proceeded to say Grace.

There followed an excellent meal accompanied with plenty of wine which was enjoyed by all along with many conversations going on around the table.

The meal was followed by a discussion on whether to read the minutes of last year's dinner or have a comfort break. Doris Mair, President 2010 opted for a comfort break whilst the rest of the company opted to hear the minutes first.

The minutes of the 2014 Dinner, held at the Stirling Management Centre were read by the new Scribe Blair Prentice, President 2003. He quickly washed his hands on the contents and passed the blame to the previous scribe Stewart Davidson, President 2002 before reading the minutes. He hinted that there was a bit of poetic licence in the minutes regarding his "volunteering" to be the new scribe. Doris returned halfway through the minutes and was in time to propose that these were a true-ish record of the 2014 Dinner. Neil Valentine President 2011 seconded the proposal.

The Scribe added that next years Dinner was due to be organised by the North District and David Downie, President 2014 was the newest Past President in that District and so he won the honour of organising the 2016 dinner.

There followed a 10 minute comfort break of which a great many of those present took advantage.

The Toast to the SASA was given by Neil Valentine, President 2011.

Neil referred to the fact that he had been involved with Scottish Swimming since 1993 and went on to elaborate on the amazing success Scottish Swimming had in the last year giving a special mention to the Thursday night of the Commonwealth Games in Tollcross pool. He added that he was sure that Hannah's gold medal was the first Commonwealth gold medal achieved by a Scot on home soil of the – no one though different. He added that he was also sure that the Diving medal achieved at the RCP in Edinburgh was the first diving medal achieved by a Scot on home soil. Again no one thought different. Neil went on to cover the success at the European Championships. He then proposed a toast to the SASA.

Neil continued with an introduction of Eddie Wilmott, President 2015. Eddie had been involved in the sport for a wee bit more than 30 years. Starting with his home club, Arbroath St Thomas, and working his way up through Midland District Posts, including twice being District president and SASA Council. Eddie also achieved being on the FINA Referees list from 2003 to 2006 and officiated at European and World championships.

Eddie Wilmott then gave the reply to the toast. He started by saying that he was going to be short and sweet and instead of detailing his own life in the sport he was going to mention a few anecdotes on well known people he had met in the sport and asked the members present to decide if they were "characters" or "colleagues".

He mentioned, Stewart Davidson, Winnie Ferguson, Bob Greenlees, Ed Adam, John Bruce, Allan Fletcher, Robin Dale, Peter Syer, Lex Taylor, George Battison, Norman Grierson, Sandy McGill, Roy Wilson and Jill Cochran.

What happens in the Court Hotel stays in the Court Hotel so I can't reveal the anecdotes nor who was a "character" or who was a "colleague" – all I can say was those present enjoyed the tales he told.

Eddie concluded by proposing a toast to the SASA.

The business of the evening moved on to Business – Competent or Otherwise.

Don Hawthorn, President 1983, set the tone for the evening by saying if that was Eddie being Short and Sweet he would like to hear him talking at length.

David Downie, President 2014, then reminded Mary Black, President 1976 and 1977, that she was going to tell us what happened in Iceland last year but we ran out of time. He wanted to hear the story now.

Thank goodness we were after the 9.00pm watershed as Mary told a true tale about what happened in Iceland – stripping off and skinny dipping in the middle of a water polo match resulting in one team being distracted and the other team scoring – a goal that is.

She continued with another the true tale of Jock Neil nearly throttling David Wilkie and ordering him not to win another gold medal as he had had to pay a \$10 forfeit.

Next came another true tale about a trip to Rome and a Team member's audience with the Pope, in Mary's place, where the Pontiff took him aside and asked him to tell Mary "he was asking for her".

After the company stopped laughing and returned to some semblance of order Don Hawthorn, President 1983, stood up and proposed a toast to the comedienne – Mary. All agreed and toasted Mary.

The Chair, Neil Valentine, President 2011, then brought matters down to earth and raised the matter of payment. He thanked Scottish Swimming for their generous donation of £500 this year towards the dinner. Matters were successfully settled up.

The gathering gave a vote of thanks to Neil Valentine for organising a successful Dinner on their behalf.

The Dinner finished at approximately 10.30pm. The gathering split up into smaller groups in the Bar, Foyer, Conservatory, etc where more alcohol was consumed and more tales told. As I said before what happens in the Stirling Court Hotel stays in the Stirling Court Hotel.

Thank you
Scribe, Blair Prentice.
March 2015.