

THE OLD EDWARDIAN SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2011

I welcome you all to this the Eighty Seventh Annual General Meeting of our Society, and thank you for being here in the interests of our Club.

In last year's report I appealed for a unity in our Society and stated that too many of the Sub-Clubs are utilising the clubs facilities without doing anything to enhance the Society itself.

I made it an ambition of mine to attend all the Annual General Meetings of the Sub-Clubs, but due to circumstances I have not been able to achieve this.

However, I am at the club more often than many of my ilk and enjoy the atmosphere in our club (which is mostly created by the people with whom I work and play).

I have over the past three years as President been involved in the Bowls, Water Polo, Cricket, Tennis, Squash and Happy Hour Sub-Clubs.

I hence I have good idea on how much effort many of the Sub-Club Chairmen and/or Women and members of committees put in to ensure the enjoyment of each of the members of the Sub-Clubs.

I want to thank everyone involved for their work, and in many cases the results achieved by the players are a happy reward for the efforts of the committee members.

I also want to express my appreciation to the Sub-Clubs for their friendly hospitality towards me at all times.

We are blessed, that the Executive Committee has established an excellent arrangement and maintains a good working relationship with Virgin Active.

Virgin Active through their efforts and the efforts of Turftek maintain the playing fields in a manner that is conducive to excellence by the players.

We are also fortunate that Virgin Active have big buying power and can source many items through their size and overall business strength for sports and maintenance facilities.

When you realise that we have no borehole water and the irrigation of our facilities is paid for by Virgin Active, you will start to realise what an outstanding platform your Executive Committee has created for us the members.

I salute our Chairman, Neil Darroch and his Committee for their unstinting devotion to the needs of our Society.

I further commend the elected officers of all the Sub-Clubs and urge them to continue the good work to make this club a pleasure for all the players.

Finally I wish to thank Anne Pratt our in house secretary and friend to all members, but remind you that she is actually in the employ of Virgin Active, but her service to the Society is humungous and she fully deserved the Chairman's award, which she received at our annual Sportsman of the Year function.

Why is our club so run down, I hear you ask, well the maintenance we should have done twenty to thirty years ago could not, at that time, be afforded. We had a huge debt caused by the rising costs which we had expended to maintain our playing surfaces.

The Ladies Committee at that stage managed the gardens around the club, but the building suffered.

Solutions at that stage even included the sale of this whole property to the Johannesburg Council to help liquidate our debt but fortunately the spirit of "Strenue" prevailed and a 40 year lease deal was struck with the Health and Racquet Club Group.

It is a result of that deal that we can look forward to enjoying the privileges of that deal, for the next 20 odd years, under the management of Virgin Active.

Knowing that the whole property will revert to the unencumbered ownership by the Society in 2030.

I agree with Virgin Active, and I am sure all property knowledgeable members realise that since our buildings are condemned to expend a lot of money in patching the surfaces will be wasted as the structures especially the roofs, need to be reconstructed, but when we do that, the poor quality of the structure will be exposed. Our outdated and poor electrical and plumbing services will demand a major financial input to make our building habitable again.

It is for this reason that I am satisfied that a rebuild will be far more economical than a "refit".

The Society instructed the Executive Committee to investigate and report back to the membership on the progress of the development committee, and those of you who were here on the 15th November, at the Special General Meeting and heard the report by Kevin Webber must have appreciated the professionalism of the presentation, and the huge effort and time expended by the Executive Committee on our behalf as a Society.

I was saddened by the comments made by some members at that meeting, and being an 'old codger', am reminded of the attitude of members fifty years ago when the privilege of serving the Society was an ambition of many of the members, but you had to be good to be invited!

Special General Meetings were designed to let members **assist** the Executive Committee and not to knock them down!

I have now come to the end of my three year tenure as President of your Society and I have enjoyed this comfy seat. I have got to know many of the members a lot better, and must express my gratitude for the support I received at the time of my wife's death last March. I will always treasure the love and care I received from so many of you which made the loss less of a burden.

I can assure that the management of the Society is in good hands and to all the incoming members to the Executive and the new President my best wishes for a happy and successful future.

You know that I will always do my bit to assist you and my club.

GEOFF BRYANT

PRESIDENT 2009- 2011

