

## **Chairman's Report 2017**

I wish to begin by thanking all Club members, especially those on the Executive Committee, for your continual support during 2017 without which I would not be standing here tonight.

We have had a number of exceptional people associated with our Club and it would be remiss of me not to mention Murray Lambden whose loss to the sport is still being felt. Much has been said about Murray by people who knew him much better than myself so I do not wish to add more than record my deep sadness on his passing.

Another great character within athletics was Peter McElroy and recently I was looking through some of his old 'Chit Chats' columns. He was musing on the collective noun for a group of veteran athletes – "should it be a variety of veterans, or a veneration of veterans or as one youngster put it 'a load of old rubbish!!' "

We as members of IOMVAC are certainly not rubbish – old perhaps but definitely not rubbish! as I report on another successful year.

A year in which the Club has maintained its reputation of organising and delivering high quality, enjoyable events ranging in distance from the Veterans' mile through to the Marathon and beyond to the End to End. These events continue to evolve as in 2017 a relay was added to the marathon and a separate race to Peel in the End to End. Of course these events don't just happen and it is down to the hard working, dedicated members of the various sub committees that ensure their continuing success and need to be applauded. For the future I believe the End to End committee will consider introducing a relay into the event, a one lap option is being investigated for the Syd Quirk and the introduction of a 20k race in conjunction with the 20 mile race will be considered again for 2019.

As ever the Club faces new challenges as the 'face' of athletics on the Island continues to change. The new structure of the IOMAA has been established and whilst having a few teething problems has begun to deliver on its stated aim for athletics being:-

'to maintain and increase its popularity by delivering an inclusive framework for athletes from age 7 upwards.'

The question was asked regarding our affiliation to IOMAA and, whereas we may not need to be due to our affiliations with English Athletics, UKA and the BMAF, I think we do need to be a part of the structure. Without a presence within the IOMAA Executive Committee and a vote at the AGM we cannot influence the future pathway of athletics on the Island.

By the IOMAA gaining charitable status it has been able to pursue funding from the Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation to employ an Athletics Development Officer. This funding is in the process of being finalised and a Job Description for an ADO, directly employed by IOMAA, has been drawn up for a 3 year period. Within this job description is a duty to work with all local athletic clubs to help them develop. The support of this role by IOMVAC is desirable for our own development and that of athletics Island wide. More of this later when we discuss the two motions regarding the Club's funding of this role.

Other changes have been seen by the mass participation in the Prom Runs and the introduction of the weekly ParkRuns. These events need to be embraced and their organisers praised. Without these innovations at grass root level (literally on the ParkRuns!!) our sport would struggle to continue or grow. Numbers competing in road and fell races are encouragingly high, which I believe is a direct result of these events. It was heartening to have separate conversations with 3 competitors before the start of last year's Syd Quirk Half Marathon who were 'nervous', 'unsure what to do', 'worried about drinks on route', as it was their first half marathon.

It is only by engaging these 'newbies' that our events will continue to be successful. I will propose to the committee that we support these new events by volunteering as a Club to show a presence and help in marshalling, providing drinks and competing in a Prom Run and a ParkRun with a view to increasing our profile and perhaps membership.

The Executive Committee continually works to improve the club and events. It has been suggested that we should adopt a 'greener' image by using recyclable paper cups for drink stations instead of adding to the 'plastic mountain' and this will be adopted for the races around the NSC and will be actively considered for our 3 long distance events.

I am also indebted to Mandine for putting together a 'Vision of Service' for the Club in which she proposes, amongst other things,

shorter distance races with in our existing events to encourage more participation; not only of new people but a chance for our older members to continue competing;

a 'forum' in which more experienced athletes can pass on their knowledge not only of competing but the history behind running on the Island;

and a more social feel to the Club.

It is this kind of innovative thinking that is needed within the Club and the Executive Committee will be looking into how these ideas can become reality.

With this in mind I believe that it may not be in the best interest of the Club for me to remain as chairman. Whereas I am willing to be re-elected for 2018, I think a new chairperson with new ideas should be considered for 2019 and beyond. To this end if anyone has an interest in becoming Chairperson then serving on the committee during 2018, with a view of taking over in 2019, would be a very valuable experience.

I will finish as I began by thanking once more all Club members for their support which has assisted me in my role as Chairman.

Terry Bates

Chairman IOMVAC

6 February 2018