



LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL – DISTRICT 105SW

DG's Newsletter

MAY 2009

DISTRICT GOVERNOR LION GRAHAM LANG
"PLANNING A POSITIVE FUTURE"



First, 'the Good News'.

I am pleased to be able to tell those who have not yet heard that our District Young Musician, Stephen Sykes was the overall winner of the MD Competition held in Birmingham at the beginning of April (*see photo on page 2*).

Although the judges' decision was unanimous in his favour, there were nine Districts which entered a finalist and we all held our breath at the end as the runners up from Districts BS and I, and others, certainly gave a good account of themselves. You will remember that Stephen wowed Delegates at Convention and it his unique style and "feel" for the instrument that makes him such a great trombonist. All who hear him agree he has a great future. That future now includes entry into the European Final in Finland in September and although he will not have been able to appear "live" at the MD Convention we hope that a recording of his performance will be shown to the audience there.

Thanks to DO Lion Jane Brown for all her hard work in looking after our end of the contest this year and the necessary liaison with MD to ensure Stephen got the best chance in the final. Also congratulations to Glastonbury and Street Lions who sponsored all three District Finalists but to win the MD round is even more impressive - Now, bring on the Classical Guitarists!

Now, 'the Not such Good News'.

At the time of writing (early April) bookings for the District Fun Day at Crealy are still disappointingly low and PDG Lion John Sims needs a big push to achieve the numbers that will make the day viable. By the time this appears the decision whether to proceed with the day will have been made and we must hope that it is a success. If you are going off on the 9th have fun but if not then maybe we can revert to a more familiar format and location next year.

And finally – 'Is it Bad News'?

I have been concerned on my travels to Clubs about issues that appear to be growing, District wide, in regard to difficulties in Retention, numbers, new members and ageing Clubs. I, perhaps alone at the moment, am concerned that there is a trend developing with our Clubs as a result of the origins of our District with the majority of Clubs chartered in the 1970s and early '80s.

A rough count suggests that in 2010 there will be at least 14 more Clubs over 40 years "old" and a further 18 between 35 & 40 - that is 50% of the Clubs in the District. At the same time, before Newquay (Towan Blystra), the last new Club Chartered was Kingsbridge and before that Ivybridge and Worle - only four Clubs which are less than ten years old.

This is not to say there is anything wrong with a long standing, well established Club and we will proudly celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our "first" Club - Exeter in 2011. But I am concerned about the way we are retaining and renewing Lions' membership and wonder if we are going to face another crunch point in a couple of years. I believe LCI have also sensed there is a weakness in our Organisation, hence the Global Membership Team drive for the next three years. We invite suitable people to become Lions based on our individual perceptions of what this

involves and for as many existing Lions as there are, there will be as many models of a suitable member to invite. I have always thought this strength is also a weakness, as to identify across the generations and to attract new Lions to identify with the established style or ethos of a Club will inevitably result in a repeat of the way things have been; i.e. *accepting* how things are will determine how they should continue.

I can, I hope, hear howls of disagreement from many Membership Committees and can certainly give examples of Clubs that have introduced "new blood" and re-invented themselves but it has to be accepted that this is not the norm as our current membership figures still show net losses while we just mark time Club by Club.

What we now seem to be seeing is the next phase of a reducing membership - the difficulties Clubs have in working with well below the "recommended" minimum number (10) of members and the associated difficulties of finding those willing to take office. This may be a sign of the current socio-economic crunch and will hopefully pass but I also think it represents Lions who have done their best and are, literally, tired from their valuable and long efforts of Service.

We do not need simply to replace losses, we need to re-vitalise and energise Clubs with ideas and activities that appeal and attract young (OK, OK it's ageist) people who represent present Society and the communities in which Lions are established and should continue to thrive.

Because Clubs are autonomous, it is very often at the last moment that the Association (via the District) learns of a Club throwing in the towel, although for perfectly understandable and real reasons in their view.

Advice and support are always available from the DOs if applied at the right time but in a few recent cases this has been given and not found useful or been given too late to have any positive results.

The District (and MD) MERL team has access to "tools" that, albeit theoretical, could suggest actions or activities that have not been tried for a while - The Club Toolkit is still relevant; Project Refresh and the Int. President's Retention Campaign are all out there, if nothing else, to check that we have no more ideas to use.

I hope the MERL team will soon be able to put together all the options and resources that we can muster for not just any single Club issue but which can be used for what I anticipate may be a number of situations that are currently "bubbling under" and will I am sure need attention, if not before July 1st., certainly in the next couple of years.

DGs and DGEs are repeatedly encouraged to recognise continuity and I hope that by drawing attention to this as epitomised by recent events we can avoid what is literally a "time" bomb for the future of Lionism.

To paraphrase Oscar Wilde – "to lose one Club may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose more may seem like carelessness"

Graham

N.B. A COPY OF THIS NEWSLETTER, AND COPIES OF THE CURRENT MONTHLY MAIL-DROP DOCUMENTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ON THE District 105SW Website @ www.lions105sw.org.uk JUST GO TO THE "NEWSLETTERS" and/or "CABINET" LINKS FROM THE HOME PAGE OF THE WEBSITE

MD DIRECTORY CHANGES

"The 2008-2009 Yellow Book!"

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS (Pg.135)

ZONE'F' CHAIRMAN (Pg.137) and ...

BRIDGWATER SECRETARY (Pg.139)

Steve Fletcher:

E-Mail: steveanglen@talktalk.net

DG GRAHAM'S DIARY

MAY

5	Brixham	Official Visit
6	Glastonbury	Official Visit
9	Crealy	District Fun Day
9	South Molton	Charter Anniv.
10	Plymouth	Charter Anniv.
11	Nailsea	Official Visit
12	Seaton	Official Visit
15	Minehead	Charter Anniv.
16	DISTRICT CABINET	Okehampton
18	Hilary Lister Challenge	Plymouth
21-23	Devon County Show	Clyst. St Mary
22	Okehampton	Charter Anniv.

JUN

1	Padstow	Official Visit
4-6	Royal Cornwall Show	Wadebridge
8	Worle	Official Visit
12	Bridgwater	Charter
20	Barnstaple	Charter
26	Looe	Club Handover
27	Liskeard	Carnival
28	Okehampton	Donkey Derby

MD Young Musician of the Year

"Stephen Sykes"



[CLICK HERE](#) to enlarge image

Please refer to DG Graham's editorial on the front page.

DISTRICT BANNER BOOKINGS

MAY	21-25	Royal Devon & Exeter Show
"	27-30	Bath & West Show
JUNE	4-6	Royal Cornwall Show
"	26	Fowey River
"	28	Okehampton
JULY	18	Burnham-on-Sea
"	23-26	Weston-Super-Mare
AUG	13	Okehampton
SEPT	4	Okehampton
OCT	4	District Forum

If your Club would like to make use of this large 10ft. X 6ft. banner, then please contact IPDG Brenda Wood:

Tel: (01963) 31460

E-Mail: ipdg@lions105sw.org.uk

105SW CONVENTION

VENUE CONFIRMED FOR 2010

Together with the District Governor Elect, I have been reconsidering the Convention venue for 2010.

It had become very apparent that since it will be our 40th Anniversary more Members will wish to attend and additional interest has also already been shown from Lions of other Districts.

We were not convinced that the Bideford venue would be able to accommodate our anticipated numbers and have, therefore, decided to remain at The Holiday Inn, Plymouth over the weekend of 12th - 14th March, 2010.

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE AND VENUE IN YOUR DIARY.

GLYN JOHN

Convention Chairman

MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY

(Re: Membership Reports from March'09)

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members into "105SW", and our family of Lions:

Michael Bristow	BODMIN
John Lee	BRIDGWATER
Ian Salisbury	CLEVEDON
Alison Holmes	IVYBRIDGE
Gill Francis	KINGSBRIDGE
Sue White	LISKEARD
Albert Perring	ROCHE
Hilary Pymm	TORPOINT & RAME
Karen Rowsell	YEOVIL BRANCH

TRANSFERRED MEMBERS

Philip Linley	ILMINSTER	(From Lyn)
Gemma Adams	TORPOINT & RAME	(From Plymouth Tamar)

Total District Membership: 1363

With Deep Sadness

It is with much regret that the DG has learnt of the passing to higher service of

Lion Norman Rapson
(Weston-super-Mare Lions Club)

Mr. John Parsonage
(ex. Torpoint & Rame Lions Club)

We know they will be sadly missed and our heartfelt sympathies are extended to their families, community and friends in Lionism.

French Convention (103W)

A warm welcome greeted us as we arrived in Cholet for our twin 103W District's Convention. After lunch we were invited to attend a tree planting ceremony, an annual event of the Convention, and also a cultural visit to an old hospital which had been redeveloped as a Music and Dance College.



[CLICK HERE](#) to enlarge image

The Convention was to be held in an ice rink which, for the District Governor's 'Soirée' on the Friday evening, brought a whole new meaning to 'Dining on Ice' with the added attraction of a Jazz Band from the College.

Saturday dawned and the Convention commenced after the official opening and flag ceremony performed on ice by young skaters.

The morning session was divided into four workshops and PDG Dave Atkins, Cathy Atkins, John and myself attended the session on the 'Vitality of Lions Clubs' and it was most apparent that Clubs have the same problems all the world over.

During the afternoon session PDG Dave and I made our presentation and in turn District Governor Michel presented me with a cheque for €2,500 towards our Joint Humanitarian Award Project - the Lions Club of Tanzania Heart Babies Project.

Farewells were made until next year when the Convention will be held in Brest. 103W's IR Officer, Jean-Maurice Coudre, is to become 2nd Vice District Governor but has said that he will still attend our own Convention in March next year.

IPDG BRENDA WOOD

District International Relations Officer

ERRATUM:

Just in case anyone noticed! - Last month's issue of the Newsletter contained a report on this year's Convention, which stated that the newly elected 2nd VDG was "Clifton Clayton".

This should have read; "Clif Cane".

Apologies to Lion Clif - but I blame the author of the original report !!! (Ed.)

Please submit editorial contributions by the 14th of the month preceding issue (preferably by E-Mail, if you have the facility) to:

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