

Chairman's Report Sept 2004 – Sept 2005

This has been a phenomenal year for the Parent's Association, with Keith – our Treasurer – announcing at the last PA Meeting that we had raised in excess of £38,000 pounds for the school, which means that not only did we meet our target of £25,000 for the CAD/CAM Equipment but we also managed to continue providing the school with grants to cover the costs of the school mini-buses, magazine subscriptions etc. and we were able to buy a dishwasher!

And yes, it was hard work.

We started in October, with our Inaugural Ball, which, I'm delighted to say, was a roaring success. We sold 148 tickets to parents and friends, marquee lined the walkway, dressed the entrance with a pavilion and adorned the Hall with Balloons, themed into the blue and gold colours of Sir Thomas Rich's School. There were some stunning floral arrangements created by our very own Anne Rawlins and the Table Seating Plans were expertly created by Alison Halliday. Thank you both. I could talk about the detail for the next hour, but suffice to say, that feedback was fantastic (in fact it was very much the topic of conversation the following Monday, at the Informal Year 7 Parents' Evening). A big thank you to the PA, Staff, and 6th Formers, for all their hard work and a special mention must go to Lindsay Evans, who organised the free glass hire, collected them from various supermarkets, washed them before the event (and during and, I believe, after!!) before returning them. And, there wasn't even a dishwasher in the school at that point! She was helped in this Herculean task by Kathy Tribe. During the course of the evening, one of the cisterns in the Gents Lavatory overflowed. There is a certain image which will stay with me forever and that is of Kathy, with her beautiful Ball-gown hitched up, astride the toilet, with her hands in the cistern, fixing the ball-cock. Well done, Kathy – that was way beyond the call of duty and I was told, subsequently, that she fixed the problem so well, that the caretaker couldn't remove the ball-cock afterwards!

To all of you who returned on Sunday, for the big 'clear-up', a huge 'thank you'. Many hands did make light work and I greatly appreciated you giving up part of your Sunday.

The Ball was a brilliant start to the fundraising year. We made a gross profit of £3416.54. (Despite the realisation, after the event, that money or wine to a value in excess of £600 was missing, which would have brought our profits to over £4000. The Police were involved, but the loss wasn't recovered – however, valuable lessons were learnt, which will be brought into practice at the next ball). A large majority of the profit was raised from the Raffle and the Auction, so many thanks to all who donated items.

Our first meeting this year was in November, volunteers came forward to drop Leaflets through letterboxes in the area local to the school, promoting the Christmas Fayre and the 'ever popular' Silent Auction, and to help organise and run stalls 'on the day'. My thanks to everyone who helped with this annual event, with special thanks going to John Whitley, who organised and donated a fabulous reusable banner, to hang on the school railings and to Liz Young (and also to her husband Tim and son Richard), for the brilliant Silent Auction. Organising the Silent Auction is a mammoth task – I think it's fair to say that it's 'all consuming', and Liz has done it for **3 years**. This year the Silent Auction alone raised an amazing £1,901. Liz decided that it was time to stand down and for some new members to take on the role and inject a few new ideas, and Sheila Johnson, Kathy Tribe and I volunteered to take the role on, with the support and guidance of Liz.

Three Car Boot Sales were held during the year; in March, May and July. All were profitable, financially, the final one raising the most - £294. However, I must give special thanks to all of you who helped, particularly those of you, who, like me, continued to smile at people and be pleasant and helpful, at the May sale, in the most heavy of downpours, with the backing of

thunder and lightening! All Car Booters who had a Boot in May, were offered a £2 discount off the pitch price of the July sale. Thank you to both the PA Members and the 6th Formers for Distributing the Flyers for this event.

We've raised additional money this year from Sutton Seed Catalogues and Bulb Catalogues and from Name Tapes.

We had planned a Derby Night in June, but cancelled it due to lack of parental interest.

Sports day was well supported – Thank you to all helpers (and I'm delighted to say that there was a good lot of helpers this year) who stood in the cold and wet, to serve drinks, and BBQ food, to pupils and parents. They made a profit of around £250.... Well done.

Penny Lancaster, and her Team, once again, worked hard selling Blazers and other Uniform, which raised a substantial amount of money for the PA. Special thanks to Penny, who has been doing this demanding task for more years than I've been at the school! Penny has now passed the role to Sally Creese and Anita Grogan, although she will continue to provide guidance.

The 100 Club has seen an increase in members this year. Thanks must go to Julie Power for running it and to Liz Young for creating a new promotional flyer, which was given to all Year 7 parents at the Open Morning.

Special thanks also to Bob Burns for administering the Gifting Scheme Forms (this scheme is very successful and an excellent PA fundraiser) and to Keith Tranter, our Treasurer, for making sense of all of the figures and keeping us on the straight and narrow.

We sent out a Flyer with the last Newsletter of the year, promoting the 2005 Autumn Ball and offering parents the chance to purchase their tickets prior to the new school year, at a discounted price of £30.

All in all, I must report another active and highly successful year for Sir Thomas Rich's School PA. If I haven't managed to mention you personally, I apologise. Each and every one of you is very much appreciated, whether or not I have mentioned you in person.

Before I close, I would like to say a final, big Thank you to Esther Parker, for her excellent Minutes, Agendas and organisation of the Chair (!) and to Mr. Kellie and Mr. Carter for the huge amount of support, appreciation and encouragement, which they regularly provide. Not only do they both attend the PA Meetings, but either one or both of them have once again, been seen at all of the PA Events this year.

Thank you.