

## Monkton Bluefriars

Some notes by Julian Bewick for March 2015 meeting of Trustees Local Sub-committee  
5:30 PM Wednesday, 25 March 2015 at JMB's House

### 1 Background (to introduce Julius to various aspects of Bluefriars)

#### 1.1 Monkton Bluefriars Boat Club

- 1.1.1 MBBC Was founded about 60 years ago. Its purpose then was to give recent old boys of Monkton an opportunity to row together and meet socially occasionally. There was no intention to interfere with any new club membership they had – for instance it was expected that many of them would be rowing at their universities.
- 1.1.2 There was a very small life subscription.
- 1.1.3 JMB Became master in charge of rowing 1970. Following discussions with Charles Grimwade, the founder of Bluefriars, subscriptions by current members of the school were abandoned, but school leavers were encouraged to pay a modest donation to the club each year, in order to keep in touch. It was suggested to them that they might consider increasing their donations "when they became rich and famous". A fairly small number started making donations, and some of them have since increased them.
- 1.1.4 After 1970 it became the custom that any crew rowing in school holidays competed under Bluefriars colours, with Bluefriars paying the entry fees. First VIIIs regularly rowed out of term at the head of the River race, for training during the Easter holidays, during summer term half term and in the summer holidays.
- 1.1.5 The income of the club gradually rose plateauing at about £1000 a year by the mid-1990s.

#### 1.2 The Monkton Bluefriars Charitable Trust

- 1.2.1 The trust was set up in 1996. it seemed likely that income would go up, and Bluefriars could become correspondingly more useful if it became a charity.
- 1.2.2 It has two aims: to encourage rowing at Monkton, and to encourage rowing amongst young people and students elsewhere.
- 1.2.3 After 1996, income did indeed go up quite quickly to about £8000 a year and more recently to over £10,000 a year. There was also a small number of "capital" donations.
- 1.2.4 In practice we give approximately £10,000 a year on average to Monkton and about £1000 a year externally. We also support OM rowers seeking international selection.
- 1.2.5 Nearly all Monkton oarsmen and oarswomen "join" Bluefriars when they leave school. The total number on our list is about 600 – 700, but only just over 100 make annual donations. We wrote to all members last Christmas but only a handful replied.
- 1.2.6 It has been policy not to ask parents to contribute to our funds, though some have done so over the years.
- 1.2.7 We accept donations from local clubs and sometimes direct grants back to those clubs. We have consulted HMRC about this and emphasise that trustees could not be tied to particular expenditure by donors, but that the trustees could bear the donors' wishes in mind.
- 1.2.8 We organise occasional social gatherings – a dinner at Henley or Monkton every two years or so is typical. Some years ago we used to organise family Sunday lunch at a local restaurant.
- 1.2.9 Our trust deed includes a statement that we will "encourage" rowing at Monkton. We are conscious that this has to be done tactfully and we have been reluctant to become involved in school rowing "politics".
- 1.2.10 The list of trustees has been fairly stable over the years.
- 1.2.11 We organise an annual small boats head race at Salford each October. In a good year the profit can be about £2000
- 1.2.12 There is a printed annual newsletter, which goes out to Bluefriars, current members of the boat club and their parents. Also useful general PR.
- 1.2.13 We supported the recent school boat club appeal.

### **1.3 Things we do well**

- 1.3.1 Over the past few years, the newsletter has had good feedback; people enjoy the head race; trustees have coached boats; supported the director of rowing in various ways; organise the Monkton tent at NSR; got plenty of new members.

### **1.4 Things we do badly**

- 1.4.1 With a few notable exceptions, we have not succeeded in getting many new donors or to get long-standing donations increased.
- 1.4.2 There is usually mixed enthusiasm amongst parents . We have not been good at introducing them to rowing or to "organising" them.
- 1.4.3 Social occasions are a bit haphazard; the informal Sunday lunches have disappeared.

### **1.5 Points for discussion**

- 1.5.1 Local Trustees
  - a. Relationship between local Trustees committee and all other trustees. We need to come up with a suggestion for the way forward.
  - b. Notices of meetings; frequency of meetings
  - c. notes of meetings for distribution to other trustees
  - d. Splitting workload
  - e. Decisions by email
- 1.5.2 School and Parents
  - a. Relationships with parents, school, director of rowing
  - b. Introducing Bluefriars and trustees to parents
  - c. Could we persuade parents to help with the organisation of the head race? At present Avon County members do a great deal of work which we recognised by letting them have free entries for the race – this costs us in the region of £600 – £700
- 1.5.3 Action
  - a. Arrangements for NSR
  - b. Social occasion in 2016 to mark 20 years of Bluefriars trust.
  - c. Further grant for Mike Lawrence?
  - d. Requests and reports from Matt Wells