

Cygnus Amateur Swimming Club

since 1909

CENTENARY PUBLICATION



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In April 2009 Cygnus Amateur Swimming Club will celebrate **100 years in existence.**

To commemorate this auspicious occasion the club is **appealing to past and present members to give support to the club in any way possible to ensure its continuation.**

We invite past and present members to join us for this momentous event in the history of aquatics in South Africa.

With your support we plan to ensure the swan will sail for many years to come with a bright future to benefit all.

C E L E B R A T I O N S

The Centenary Committee are planning two events to celebrate the club's milestone and will ensure all age groups can be included in these celebrations.

A formal dinner will be held on Saturday 11th April where past/present members will be invited to celebrate the milestone and pay tribute to Barbara Dowell and past members.

On Sunday, 12th April the club will hold a family fun day at the Oonagh Whitsitt Pool, Sutton Park, where there will be a casual braai, fun races, synchronised swimming display, and much more.

Final details and costs of these events will be sent in due course once numbers are established. Please indicate on the reply form if you are able to attend.



Cygnus Team at NAG 2006

HISTORY OF THE CLUB

In the very early days of Durban, keen swimmers such as Rachael Finlayson & Mr CS Brown used to swim between the wooden jetties at the Yacht Club in the bay. When the Town Pool and Turkish Baths were opened they had two separate days for men and women to swim. So the first Clubs were either - Otters/Queenspark for men and Cygnus for women.

Cygnus Ladies Swimming Club was founded in 1909. Through the years the club has introduced many Durban families to the aquatics arena and is today one of the oldest clubs in South Africa. The old trophies bear testament to the many members the club has seen over the years.

Cygnus moved to Oonagh Whitsitt pool at Sutton Park in 1960 where both men and women were now coached together. Only married men were allowed to coach at that time and wooden kick boards were used and there were no rubber bathing caps, no fitted bathing suits, or fancy costumes and no nose clips were seen.

Oonagh Whitsitt was a diving champion and attended the British Empire Games in 1939 (now called the Commonwealth Games) in Hamilton, Canada and received a gold medal for the 3mtr springboard event.

The prime mover of Cygnus though was Mrs. Rachael Finlayson, after whom the beach baths were renamed. She was affectionately known as Ma Fin and

coached the legendary Kathleen Russell and many others. Ma Fin and Kathleen attended the Olympic Games in Amsterdam in 1928 where Kathleen received a bronze medal for 4 x 100 freestyle relay. During the 2nd World War, Ma Fin served as a driver in Women's Auxiliary and continued to coach daily.

So many members have been associated with the club over the past 100 years and their contribution has been invaluable. A presentation at the dinner on the club history will pay tribute to these many members. To mention but a few, Mr. CS Brown who donated the Minor Trophy, the Levy family, Marrindales, Hilda Sunderman, Little Johnson.

BARBARA DOWELL



Barbara Dowell has been a member of the club since the early 1930s, first as a swimmer and then as a swimming and synchro coach. Barbara has served on the KZNA and SSA boards in various positions over the years and has represented South Africa at international events. Barbara's awards include Life Membership and Meritorious Service Awards from the Cygnus Amateur Swimming Club, South African Schools

Swimming Association. She also received the State Presidents Award. Her name is a byword in the world of swimming in South Africa. Barbara has selflessly coached members of the club free of charge and has taught generations of Durban families. In the early 1950's Barbara introduced synchronised swimming to its members and has gone on to produce SA's top synchronised swimmers who have represented the country at international competitions.

Cygnus has won the National Age Group Trophy for 23 years consecutively. Synchronised Swimming would not be a viable sport in South Africa without her tireless dedication to the sport and the girls of the club. Barbara's commitment has encouraged the development of women in sport and she has welcomed swimmers from disadvantaged clubs to utilize the club's facilities and her coaching fee of charge. Barbara has fulfilled many roles within the club for more than 60 years.

SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING

Cygnus is the top club in the country offering Synchronised Swimming under the able guidance of Barbara Dowell. Over the years the Cygnus synchronised swimmers have represented KZN at the SA Nationals event winning most of the top medals/trophies. Cygnus members have, over the years, represented SSA at various international events, including Olympic & Commonwealth Games. Earlier in 2008 Cygnus employed a Canadian Coach for 3 months to ensure the skill levels continue and the experience the girls gained during this time was invaluable. In June 2008 a Cygnus team of 7 members traveled to Singapore to compete in the Singapore 3rd National SS competition and brought home 4 gold medals and 1 silver medal. Many of the Cygnus members are representatives of the SA Nationals Junior and Senior teams. Cygnus have just returned from the 2008 National Age Group Championships and brought home the club trophy for the 23rd consecutive year running.



Cygnus team competing at the recent 3rd National Synchronised Swimming Competition in Singapore 2008.



D E V E L O P M E N T

“The strong foundation of a club will ensure support for all”.

The current Cygnus Amateur Swimming Club Committee is dedicated to ensure that the club, which is steeped in history, remains a viable strong club to be able to fulfill its commitment to development across the board, as well being able to support its members at all levels to enable them to reach their full potential.

Cygnus gladly supports development and over the years has welcomed members of the Otto's Club and, more recently, Lamontville Club, to train with Cygnus using its facilities and coaches free of charge. Cygnus acknowledges the importance of developing swimmers of our nation and encourages women in sport and members from previously disadvantaged communities.

C Y G N U S W I S H L I S T / D O N A T I O N S

It is a well know fact that sport in South Africa is grossly under funded. This is particularly evident in minority sports and particularly in sports for women. In spite of the odds, synchronized swimming has produced numerous Cygnus members who have South African National representation. Barbara Dowell started off each and every one of the synchronized swimmers on their illustrious careers without remuneration, only asking them to become Cygnus members.

All donations or sponsorship of any items would be gladly accepted. Monetary donations would be gratefully accepted to ensure the Club's continued viability, and the committee undertakes to ensure that every rand is put to good use. If you would prefer to donated specific items on our wish list, we would be pleased to acknowledge these.

- Trophy restoration R20,000.00
100 year old trophies require restoration to continue to be passed on to new and current members.
- Honours Board/s—R3,000.00
To recognize Cygnus members who represented South Africa at international competitions and members who have made substantial contributions to the club.
- Equipment: - R15,000.00
Time clock
Kickboards
Gazebos
Chairs
Trolley for sound system
Cabinets for Trophies
Flags/Banners for the club
Shelving for the storeroom
Notice board for the Club

- Coaches:
Cygnus members would benefit greatly from the assistance of an international coach to enable them to achieve well at international competitions. Monetary assistance for airfares and salaries would enable the club to employ this much needed expertise. Donations of air miles would also greatly assist towards this.
- Centenary Celebrations:
The committee would like to ensure that the Centenary Celebrations are appropriate for the occasion and would appreciate any donation/sponsorship of the following for these events.
Drinks
Hampers
Raffle Prizes
Auction Items.



CENTENARY COMMITTEE



Barbara Dowell—Honorary Life Member
Peter Larcombe—Centenary Celebrations
Ann Crowder—Honorary Life Member
Wendy Sloley—Chairman
Anne Domiro—Secretary—082-8958160
Treve Taylor—Honorary Life Member
Email: Cygnus.Centenary@gmail.com
Fax: 0865034463—031 5647689



Cygnus Amateur Swimming Club
Banking Details

Bank: FNB
Branch: Musgrave Road
Branch No: 221126
Account Number: 62150945677

Please pass this onto any past members of the club that you know. We would love to hear from them and add them to our list. Please supply us with any photos newspaper cuttings you have to add to our memorabilia file and to be used at the functions.

REPLY FORM

FAX TO 031-5647689 OR 0865034463

Name: _____

Contact Details: email: _____ Phone: _____

Membership year/s of the club: _____

Achievements within the club: _____

Formal Dinner 11th April 2008, No: of people attending: _____

Dietary request: Hallal/Kosher/Vegetarian, etc: _____

Family Braai 12th April 2008, No: of people attending: _____

Promise or Donation/Gift of: _____

Sponsorship of (specific item): _____

Money Donation : Amount _____ for _____