

President's Remarks at the LEI.O.C. AGM held on 28th October 2019

A pleasure to be asked as your President to talk reasonably briefly about our Club this evening and to concentrate on two matters, the latter of which can be correctly described as “Hail and Farewell to the Captain of our ‘Good Ship the O-S-V LEIOC’”.

For many Club members the highlight of the year will have been the exceptionally active day at the 2019 British Sprint Championships at Loughborough University though, speaking very personally, I think that Irene M in her ‘Retired Man Chronicles’ was a little bit harsh when commenting on my contribution as “talking people to death”, when in fact it was more helping them into a gentle state of stupor and rigidity, that is catatonia, to alleviate their anxiety for needing to enquire and clarify a worrying problem; more to the point Irene omitted to mention my regular visits to Download regarding ‘Enquiries’ – across the Event Centre, through the Fire Door, down two flights of stairs, often against the flow of happy, satisfied, or even dejected competitors, through an illegally held open Fire Door, checking with Kevin and Jeff as best as was possible to get an accurate clarification, and then the same route back up again, often to discover that the ‘enquirer’ had somehow disappeared – in all my good lady was surprised that her recent present of a ‘Fitness Tracker’ showed that for an M77 who assured her he would be sitting down all day had somehow managed to achieve a total of 13,970 footsteps between 08:30 and 17:00 hours!

So, now to come back to the present and the retirement of Chris from his post as Chair of LEI.

I’m certain that many of you with long memories will be able to think back to the very early years of the present century when LEI, foremost amongst the EMOA Clubs, was invited to support NWOA at the 2004 JK and organise the Classic Long Distance Day 3 at the 5000 acre Graythwaite Estate west of Windermere – for over two years Chris and myself travelled to the Lakes, took part in extensive meetings and site visits, for 12 to 14 hour days, and for the Day later to be voted by the UK’s Elite Competitors as ‘The Best Day of Competition’ in 2004! That is when the star of LEI as a very well organised and respected Club fully rose and stays shining to this very day, lead as it has been by Chris for well over a decade. The letters STD – no, not ‘Standard Trunk Dialling’ - standing for ‘Successful – Trusted – Dependable’ are qualities that we as a Club are known for and Chris has ensured that this has been the case and will continue to be so.

Also, Chris has made and is continuing to make a major contribution to our sport not only as a member of the Event & Competitions Committee but also currently as the Chair of this august body – it is very much a proactive role in keeping both competitive and recreational aspects of our sport available and of the necessary quality. Many are not aware that all too often there is an aspect to this role whereby, like the legendary iceberg little seen above the surface but pretty humongous underneath, what may seem to those making a simple query or complaint - that should be made elsewhere in the first instance - is made all too often directly to Chris most days of the year – another burden of the role that he willingly undertakes on behalf of all members of British Orienteering.

Our Club is second to none with a reputation amongst other Clubs throughout the UK and long may it continue to be so - Chris, thank you very, very much.

It is now time for me to ask you to welcome the, hopefully unopposed, election of our current Vice Chair Stephen Chafer to the post of Chair of LEI – Stephen – on behalf of all LEI members ‘Good Luck and Thank You’.

Ernie Williams