

PRESS RELEASE

"Kings Meadow Campaign hosted a unique - never been done before Water Feast at the Central Swimming Pool Saturday 26th January. Everyone enjoyed the Gala very much - the bringing together of Reading Royals Synchronised Swimming Club, Reading Water Polo Players, Albatross Diving Club, Members of Reading and Caversham Underwater Hockey, and our visiting team from Henley, their very talented synchronised swimmers.

There were few spaces on the balcony when Mr Rob Wilson MP opened the Gala. Many people preferring to stand. Later in the programme Mr Alok Sharma MP came to offer his support and spoke with participants.

Both MPs congratulated the team members and voiced their support for the KMC cause. Mr Peter Beard former Mayor of Reading, came along too. Very special guests were Mr Charlie Burt and his wife Jen - Mr Swimming of Berkshire - who had taught a lot of school children to swim both at Kings Meadow Baths and Central Pool during the 50s/60s. Charlie reached his 96th birthday 2 days previously, and Rob lead the audience into singing "Happy Birthday" to Charlie!

The skills of the teams were enjoyed by everyone, they were not to have been missed. The beauty of it was, extra to the programme, there was cross pollination of the clubs all having a go at each others sport.

The audience saw the synchro girls and divers passing the ball with the water polo players and shooting goal, and then donning masks and snorkels batting the puck across the bottom of the pool with the underwater hockey players. The puck was passed around the audience to feel its weight.

Similarly the divers, including the boys had a go at Synchronised swimming, with the team of burly water polo players... on stand by!

The general consensus was that it should happen again. The atmosphere was great.

Each team coach received a plaque denoting this special occasion presented by the Chair of the Kings Meadow Campaign Mr Robert O'Neill, and team members took home Kings Meadow Baths memorabilia.

The main objective of the Gala was the unique bringing together of the clubs at the same time raising the profile of the Kings Meadow Baths Campaign.

Proceeds will go towards the hiring of the pool. Our thanks to Signarama, Berkshire Trophy Centre, Georgie's Flower Boutique and Dave Warren Images for helping sponsor our Gala. "

Anne Jessel