



IN COD WE TRUST

The GTST Newsletter

Issue 5

September 2006

TIME FOR CHANGE

If we were to go about this newsletter in the same way as we've written previous ones, we'd give you a long list of all the positive developments since the last "In Cod We Trust" went out in December. We'd tell you that we've now raised in the region of £21,000 since the KTMA campaign began last January, that the Trust now owns 20,000 shares in GTFC on behalf of its members. We'd also tell you that we now have 69 life members, that we've already taken over £2000 in membership fees this year, that over a third of our one year members are now paying by standing order and that whilst the total membership numbers are down on this time last year, this was to be expected once an agreement was reached with the Inland Revenue and the initial enthusiasm and urgency to save the club from a fate worse than debt had subsided.

Of course, all that is true, but it doesn't give you the full story. For instance, it doesn't tell you that since we started signing up members three and a half years ago, we've acquired over 100 lapsed ones. It also doesn't tell you that, whilst we still have many extremely loyal and long-term members who continue to generously support what we're trying to do with their hard-earned cash, we are really struggling to recruit new members. The nine new life members we've signed up this year were all upgrades from one-year memberships and apart from our two new corporate members, whose adverts you can see inside this newsletter, the only new member we've actually had since the turn of the year is the lodger of two of our Board members.

With this in mind, the Trust secretary prepared a lengthy report during the close season, laying out in detail what was working and what wasn't, what the Trust was doing right and where it was going wrong and then putting forward suggestions as to how we could improve our performance for the benefit of both our members and the Football Club and its supporters as a whole.

This report was presented to the Trust Board, who then met to discuss it. One of the main areas where improvement was seen to be required was communication. We had to hold our hands up and say that we hadn't been communicating well for some time, not with our members and not with the media. These newsletters had been few and far between, the website

hadn't been updated regularly enough and email communications with our subscribers had dried up completely. In addition, whilst we've built up good connections with Look North and Radio Humberside, resulting in numerous contributions on TV and radio by our Board members, our use of the Grimsby Evening Telegraph has been poor recently.

As a result, we took swift action to remedy some of these shortcomings. The Trust's e-newsletter has now been resurrected and is currently delivered to over 250 subscribers every week. Our website is now regularly updated with news and information and in addition we have a column in the GTFC matchday programme every game so that our members who don't have internet access can keep up to date.

We also hope to produce this newsletter on a bi-monthly basis, although where possible we would like to be able to deliver it to our members in PDF format in the future. It currently costs us around £80 to print and post out each issue of In Cod We Trust to around 250 homes, but probably 75% of our membership have access to email. So if the majority of members agreed to receive their newsletter in PDF format, we could post out printed copies to the remaining members at a fraction of the cost. In addition, the PDF format would allow for colour, pictures, increased length etc.

Another main area of discussion for the Board was to review what we are raising money for. Following the launch of the KTMA campaign last January, we raised a lot of money very fast, around £10,000 in the first three months. Then once agreement was reached with the Inland Revenue, the income slowed down and we were averaging around £800 a month. This year we're down to around £500 a month and whilst that's not bad, it's not enough to make a real difference.

The problem (and it's a nice one to have) is that, whilst the Club still has plenty of debt and would be up the creek without John Fenty's cash, there is no longer an imminent danger of going out of business, so the impetus has totally gone out of the Keep the Mariners Afloat campaign, which has impacted greatly on our ability to recruit new members and hang onto existing ones.

Following a query from one of our members, we recently asked the Club for an update on the tax situation and received confirmation from chairman John Fenty that the debt to the Inland Revenue is now about half paid and,

barring unforeseen circumstances, should be paid off on schedule. As a result, there is no longer the pressing need for us to raise money for this purpose as the Club can manage these payments itself.

There is also the question of whether the Trust should continue to invest all of the money it raises in shares. Is this the best use of the money, given that John Fenty now has a majority shareholding in the Club and our influence at that level is currently pretty limited? Then there are the tax implications, in that we become liable if we invest more than £10,000 a year in shares, whereas sponsorship doesn't incur the same penalties. In addition there is our obligation to meet one of the Trust's original objectives by investing in the Grimsby Town youth system.

However this isn't a decision for the Trust Board to make on its own. This is something on which we need to canvas our members' opinions, particularly as over half the money raised since last January has come from membership fees. Should we continue to buy shares? Should we increase our sponsorship of players/matches? Should we invest in the Club's long-term future by raising money for the youth system? Or should we go for a combination of the three?

Your opinion is vital, so please take the time to complete the questionnaire enclosed with this newsletter. All responses received by 31st October 2006 will be entered into a prize draw for a signed caricature of Mariners legend John McDermott.

A LIFE SENTENCE THE EASY WAY

Did you know that you can now become a life member of the Trust in instalments?

If a one-off payment of £100 is a little too steep for your bank balance, you can choose to pay the membership fee by standing order, either in ten monthly payments of £10 or four quarterly payments of £25.

For further details and to download the necessary forms, visit our website www.gtst.net.

Alternatively you can write to us and request the forms or give us a call on 0870 4711827.



JUNIOR MEMBERS TO BE GIVEN THEIR CARDS

In an effort to make our junior membership scheme more attractive and better value for money, we will shortly be introducing the added incentive of a hand made Grimsby Town birthday card (exclusive to GTST and worth £1.50) as part of the package.

Every fully paid up GTST junior member will be sent a card in time for their birthday, which we hope to get signed by their favourite Grimsby Town player.

As advertised above, these Grimsby Town and other football-related birthday cards will soon be available to buy from the GTST Online Shop, priced at £1.50 each.

You will also be able to purchase made-to-order cards for a little extra at £2.50 each.



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CORPORATE MEMBER OF GTST



BUY.AT UPDATE

We know we keep banging on about Buy.at, but it really is money for nothing as far as the Trust is concerned. All you have to do is go to www.buy.at/gtst and then click on the link to the retailer you desire and the Trust will get a percentage of your transaction at no extra cost to you (the commission we earn comes out of the retailers' profit margin— it is their marketing spend). It's a matter of a couple of extra mouse clicks on your part, but it could earn the Trust a fortune. To date we've earned nearly £480 through being affiliated to Buy.at and it hasn't cost us a penny.

If you haven't visited our Buy.at website before, then here are a few examples of how the Trust can benefit from your online shopping:

1. Every time you buy a CD or DVD from Amazon, Play.com, dvd.co.uk, or CD Wow, we receive an average of 3% of the transaction value.
2. We will receive up to £30 if you sign up for a contract phone via Carphone Warehouse.
3. The Trust will benefit by between £10 and £55 if you sign up for motor or home insurance online.
4. Need a new credit card? You could earn us up to £20.
5. Fit yourself out with a new wardrobe from Additions Direct, Abound, Lasenza, LX Direct or M&S and we'll get between 3 and 10% of the order value.
6. Sign up online for Sky Digital and the Trust will receive £50.
7. Book your holidays/hotels with the likes of DFDS Seaways, Eurocamp, Butlins, Haven, Great Getaways, Hoseasons, Ramada Jarvis,

Thomson , Superbreak, Sibl, Portland, and Laterooms and the Trust will benefit to the tune of 3-5% of the value of your holiday/ stay.

There really is very little you can't purchase through the retailers affiliated to Buy.at and with those few extra clicks, you could have a major impact on the Trust's coffers.

So add the address to your favourites today and then please remember to use it!

www.buy.at/gtst

SPONSOR A SOD

If you've seen this season's matchday programme, you'll know that the Trust is once again running its Sponsor A Sod campaign.

To date, we've sold 24 out of the 32 sods, so if you would like to buy one of the remaining eight, please either email us at pitch@gtst.net or call us on 0870 4711827.

Remember that for £50, you will receive your name in the programme, a certificate of ownership and the chance to win a 2007/08 season ticket.

STADIUM PETITION

Not signed the petition in support of the new stadium yet?

Download one from our website, fill it in and then send it in to either the Trust or GTFC .

Your support could make the all the difference.

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TRUST AGM

The Trust's Annual General Meeting is due to take place in October (exact date and venue to be confirmed).

If you have some time to spare and are interested in getting involved with the Trust at board level, please either email us at enquiries@gtst.net or call us on 0870 4711827 and a member of the current board will get back to you to discuss the matter further.

If you would like to know more about what being a Trust board member entails, you can now view and download the Trust rules, Board Membership Policy and many other documents from the "newsletters and docs" section on the Trust's website.

SWWF GOLD

Following improvements to our website, the Sing When We're Fishing Gold section has been resurrected, so you can now once again enjoy some of the classic articles from almost twenty years of SWWF, including a contribution from well-known football author Phil Ball (before he was famous). Unfortunately there is unlikely to be a new issue of SWWF in the near future, as due to Trust/work commitments, none of the main contributors has the time to produce it at the moment. However we hope that it will make a return eventually.

TALES FROM THE PARK

Sales of Jim Connor's superb book "Tales from the Park" have so far netted the Trust in the region of £700, but if you haven't yet picked up a copy, it's still on sale at a number of outlets, including WH Smiths and Ottakars in Freshney Place, as well as from our online shop.

Another of Jim's masterpieces was also on the market recently when a signed caricature of Macca earned the Trust £21 on eBay.

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

For an annual membership fee of £100, you will receive an advert in each ICWT newsletter and on our website, as well as a free sod in our Sponsor a Sod campaign (subject to availability) and multiple copies of this newsletter. If you're interested, please either email or call us, or download the membership form from our website.

FAMILY FUN DAY

The Trust raised just under £300 at the recent Family Fun Day at Cleethorpes Boating Lake. Whilst this was down on last year, we incurred extra costs this time, like having to pay for our pitch, which was free last year, and having to buy in new prizes for the tombola as we'd used up a lot of our suitable existing stock the previous year.

However we did manage to get plenty of people to sign the petition in support of the new stadium, as well as selling merchandise and doubling our money on cold drinks. We also made money on some of our long-term existing stock, which we would otherwise have struggled to shift.

All in all, it was a successful day's fundraising and hopefully the Trust's profile was raised too in the process.

HARRY ROUND THE WORLD

The Trust is planning to produce a calendar next year, featuring pictures of Town's very own Harry the Haddock in exotic places and/or interesting or amusing situations. So we'd like you to take your haddocks with you around the world and start snapping and the best pictures will be used in the calendar.

We'd prefer the pictures in jpeg format, but if you'd rather send in prints, we can use them as well.

Visit our website for more information about the Harry Around the World calendar.



You can write to us at:

Grimsby Town Supporters Trust, P.O. Box 421, Grimsby, DN32 9WL

Or email us at: enquiries@gtst.net

Visit our website at www.gtst.net

Printed by Pelham Print - Tel: 01472 341726