

Sportsman's Association News

July 2016

By Mike Wells Secretary General

Phoenix meeting 2016

For those who do not know Shaun Hopwood. He was the Landlord and proprietor of Bisley Pavilion. Shaun organized four major shooting exhibitions every year since 1996

In 1996 at the last Anno Domini pistol competition now known as the Phoenix meeting. Shaun was a founder member of the Sportsman's Association along with Alan Westlake and Squadron Leader Albie Fox. The Association was formed in Shaun's office at the Pavilion as the NRA bang opposite did not want to get involved and oppose the Tory Governments proposal to abolish centre fire pistol shooting on the UK mainland. Sportsman's was formed, the rest is history.

For the last 23 years Shaun Hopwood and his team put on all the exhibitions and Arms Fairs on Bisley Camp. This year the Phoenix event was organised by the NRA, as Shaun had decided to take early retirement and surrender his lease due to expire in 2017 back to the NRA.

Friday started off a bit slow, there were some exhibitors that were not arriving until the Saturday. Day two was well attended and the tills were ringing, the sun shined and there were outside caterers as the Pavilion Bar and Cafeteria were closed. The Sportsman's Association held their Annual General Meeting at the Army Target Rifle Club on Saturday evening.

Under new management the Phoenix was a success, we look forward to next year

Sadly missed

Shaun, Julie and children Polly & Sean will be missed they were part of Bisley and have put on over the years some fantastic events. The Harley Davidson Rally with five live music Bands. The Hay Ride, Classic American Car Rally with live music and BBQ's Weddings and Rock concerts in the Pavilion Ballroom.

The four annual shooting exhibitions were a must for every shooter with shooters coming from as far a field as Cornwall & Scotland. I have spent many nights in the shooters Bar at these events with my fellow shooters. Dave, Shaun's Barman enjoyed the banter, and the Chinese takeaways.

We have bedded down under canvas as well as in the Pavilion Hotel and cottage, sampled the Pavilion's full English and bacon rolls, washed down with lashings of Tea.

The camaraderie of the exhibitors was great, as they slept in sleeping bags on their stands, you could walk into the Ballroom at 22:00 for a chat and a drink.

Bisley Pavilion was the driving force; I believe that without Shaun's impetus Uk shooting would have dwindled. Shaun kept our sport alive.

The Sportsman's Association continue to fight for the rights of shooters every day, punching above our weight with a council taking on the establishment, for the benefit of all shooters.