

Get Together 2014: Holbury, Southampton

By Terema Skrzypek

This years Get Together marked the 35th Kiribati Independence Celebration and also 20 years of KTA. It was a fantastic event that was hosted by Paul and Michelle Barnes, who secured a wonderful venue for us at The Waterside Sports and Social Club in Holbury. The club boasts it's own theatre, where we had our celebration. It also has a sports field that we used to camp on.

Campers started arriving from Thursday lunchtime. It was a beautiful day and the hot weather continued over the whole weekend. The celebration was held on the Saturday. We recorded that 159 guests attended the event. The doors were opened from 10am for people to browse the stalls and admire artifacts on display. This was followed by the AGM, which started at 11am. During the meeting, we said farewell to four members of the Executive Committee: Mr. Karea Bairati, Mrs. Nancy Ambrose, Mrs. Rotee Walsh and Mr. Patrick Lawrence. Patrick stood down indefinitely and was presented with an engraved pocket watch to thank him for his long-standing service to the KTA. We welcomed new Committee Members to fill the vacant positions and the posts are now as follows:

Chairman: Mrs. Terema Skrzypek

Secretary: Mr. Philip Walsh

Treasurer: Mrs. Philomena Lawrence

Trustee: Mr. Paul Hartness

Dance Organiser: Mrs. Rake Hardy

Dance Coordinator: Mrs. Tokaniman Finikaso

No Publicity Officer was elected at the meeting, but the Committee have since Co-opted Miss Krista Dixon to fill the role until the next AGM.

After the meeting, the Consulate of Kiribati, Michael Walsh, made a speech and Peggy Turpin cut the cake. We all had a tremendous feast, which was kindly prepared by Michelle and her friends, whilst we enjoyed watching the dance group perform on stage. The dancing was a real treat again this year. Many of the Group had freshly returned from performing at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow and their hard practicing had surely paid off. Our younger dancers had also been working hard towards the day and put on a lovely display with their dances too.

At the end of the day, a professional DJ came and put on a disco for us. Everybody enjoyed letting their hair down after such a wonderful event. On the Sunday everybody made preparations to go home. We were all smiling as we reflected on what a brilliant weekend it had had been. Thank you Paul and Michelle, you were truly brilliant hosts.