

The PYA Christmas Ball 2009. Carlton Intercontinental, Cannes

When it was decided to go 'back to the Carlton' reverting to the tradition of a formal Christmas Ball, there was a small voice of doubt as to whether we would get the support needed to hold a successful event in a year when many had struggled. Well, there was no need for doubt because as soon as the word was out and we started to look for sponsors, the offers came in. Burgess Yachts were the first to sign up to sponsor the fantastic entertainment package promoting their new division Burgess Crew Services (Guernsey). A new division aims to provide a legitimate, robust and cost-effective structure through which yacht crew may be employed, working with the Captain and under the guidance of the owner we provide a full complement of crew management Services.

They were swiftly followed by pledges from regular supporters of the PYA, International Technic Marine, Marseille, So.Se.Ma. Shore Crew, Insull Yacht Marketing and Bond Technical Management and new supporters from Spain, Grand Villanova Marina from Spain and Hub Engineering from Germany.

Admittedly, some of the familiar tables were missing but these were replaced by newcomers such as Shore Solutions and Sud Marine Shipyard who both donated wonderful prizes for the ever popular raffle which was as abundant as ever with wonderful prizes. It's rare that an event passes without some hitch and on this occasion, the wonderful hampers donated by Shore Solutions were victims of the weather and were stuck at Heathrow Airport. I am happy to say that they did arrive after the event and were duly delivered to the lucky winners as promised by Shore Solutions MD, Andrew Roth.

The event took place on Friday 19th December and two month after the event; people are still talking about it. The festivities began with cocktails in the Bar de la Cote before the guests were serenaded by gently violin music from 'Viva' as they took their places in the Grand Salon for dinner. The current President, Andrew Schofield, in his welcoming speech outlined some of the work done by the PYA over the recent year and also announced that membership was up by 25% saying that this was very encouraging for the future of the association and then proposed a toast wishing all a pleasant evening and a very Merry Christmas. The food was exceptionally good this year and we have received many compliments. The raffle was drawn towards the end of dinner and the results of the Caption competition were announced with the winning prize going to Carol Boone and Wayne Toohill.

With the more formal part of the evening over, the DJ turned up the music a notch and the revellers took to the dance floor with great enthusiasm and enjoyed the varied music and entertainment provided by Peter Mackley and 'Sounds Alive' until late with at least 40 % opting to take advantage of the special hotel rates and stayed over so didn't have far to go.

Over the years, the PYA annual dinner dance has become an increasingly more popular and prestigious event whilst at the same time maintaining excellent value for money and this primarily is due to all our sponsors to who we would like to say a big thank you.

Photos from the evening can be viewed on the photo gallery. Don't miss out – the provisional date for this 2010 is 17th December and advance bookings can be made from September onwards. As usual, Members will qualify for discounted prices if they book early.

Bridget Featherby
Feb 2010