**Social Secretary’s report and Club Secretary’s report – Michael O’Callaghan.**

- March 2020

This year I have been both the Club Secretary and the Social Secretary.

**1 Social**

A quick review of social events over the past year goes like this

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| Amritsar dinner and talkFebruary | Dr Zareer Masani was our distinguished after dinner speaker. This was officially just before the current GMC year started, but I’ve included it here anyway. Dr Masani’s documentary on the this subject was broadcast on Radio 4 in April and was so good it was featured on Pick of The Week. We were fortunate to have this expert visit us.  |
| Architecture talkMay | Two members who are also successful architects were our after dinner speakers – Mike Russam and Paul Monaghan. This event was popular and much appreciated, so the Clubhouse was full. Great organising by Sarah, inspired by Gerald.  |
| Bar quizJuly | The winning team put in an impressive performance and got its entry refunded by the quiz master (me). |
| Film NightAugust | We watched Belle Epoque, projected on to a squash court wall. Thank you to Lucy Whatling for the film recommendation and to Paul Barnes and Nigel Hutchings for organising. |
| Wine tastingSeptember | A fantastic evening with top quality wine and cheese hosted by a charming and highly qualified wine expert. Modestly priced for members – this would probably have cost at least three times us much elsewhere.  |
| OktoberfestEnd September | Created and masterminded by Nigel Hutchings, with special beers and live music. Thank you to Paul Barnes for turning out with his keyboard. Thank you to those (e.g. Natalia Lazika) who donned special costumes to add to the atmosphere. Eva in the kitchen is to be thanked for efficiently handling Nigel’s German sausage. The accordion was played, members may be interested to know, by a former Principle Horn of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He did it free of charge as a favour to the Club. The electric bass guitar player has not been seen with that instrument since. There may be a special prize for any member who can remember who it was. |
| A night at the operaOctober | In October former Coolhurst Chair Penny Chalmers told us the you-couldn’t-make-it-up story of being called to take the leading role in a Wagner Opera under, arguably, the world’s greatest conductor, Sir Bernard Haitink, with less than half an hour’s notice. Penny told me this story at the wonderful Anna Tilbrook charity music quiz at the end of 2018, and from there we turned it into an event. At the talk we heard a genuine recording of the event. Hair raising! |
| My Life – Peter KraucharDecember | In December Coolhurst stalwart Peter Krauchar told us the amazing story of his life. With 60+ attendees the Clubhouse was packed once again.  |

Thanks to the kitchen led by Eva which did a remarkably effective job, coping admirably often with a large number of diners who had to be served in a tight space, quickly. Eva was very good at contributing organisational ideas without which some of these events might not have worked.

We had in addition social events not run by the Soc Sec. Sarah put on a very well organised and attended open day in (I think) July, a great Christmas Party in December, a Christmas dinner and turkey run.

I think the social programme over the past year is maybe the most complete I’ve seen since I’ve been a member, and is a credit to the various Club staff, and Club members, volunteers, speakers, organisers and so forth, who made things happen.

This is the last year of the Soc Sec role. It disappears on March 16th as we shrink the GMC. That doesn’t stop us having more fun events though.

**2 Club Secretary**

A main focus this year was dealing with CASC.

Community Amateur Sports Club is a status a bit like a charity but not quite one. Coolhurst has already been a CASC, but then ceased to be one. This has been a subject at previous AGMs.

The beginning of the year found me in deep discussions with HMRC to get us qualified. There was work to do in understanding our own data and in preparing membership categories. At one point it looked as if we might even need another Special General Meeting because there were a number of stipulations about the structure of the GMC that were being flagged up by HMRC following my submission of our case which happened in February last year. That submission in itself was a milestone that had taken us years to get to.

To deal with some of the quibbles we were getting from HMRC our legal expert Walter Merricks wrote to HMRC directly and succeeded by logic alone, in getting my contact to change his view on the application of CASC rules to us, which looked like it would simplify thing for the Club considerably. A virtuoso display of powers of persuasion.

However, the whole subject then moved in a different direction. At the GMC it emerged that the main CASC benefit – reduced business rates – was in fact something we are already getting from the Borough of Haringey.

The GMC discussed this and decided to change course. We would not go for becoming a CASC after all.

In September I wrote to HMRC to say we were dropping our CASC application.

-Michael O’Callaghan.

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