

HAMPSTEAD HOCKEY CLUB

Rosemary House,  
16 Church Street,  
Hampton,  
Middx. TW12 2EG

30th April 1987

Dear Old Member,

(Please go to the end of this letter for notice of the A.G.M. - even if you put the rest of it on one side for more leisurely perusal.)

There are three types of old members:

- a) Those who received my previous newsletter, in November, and responded by saying they wanted to go onto the 'Old Members' mailing list'.
- b) Those who were sent the previous newsletter but from whom I didn't hear - maybe because they never received it (addresses do change over the years), or maybe they just overlooked it (I know that correspondence does get put on one side and forgotten).
- c) Those who weren't sent the previous newsletter because, at that time, we hadn't got a comprehensive mailing list - particularly for old members from the post-1970 vintage.

Category (c) are receiving - with this letter - a repeat of that previous mailing, which will serve to explain what this is all about, and bring up to date their historical perspective on the Club's activities.

Category (b) are also receiving another copy of that November mailing, in case it went astray - or they lost it - and to give them a second chance to enrol on the 'Old Members' list'.

Category (a) are only getting this letter - because, by definition, they read and responded to the previous one!

Are you with me? Good! Then, read on -

The 'Old Members' Day' (on 1st December) was quite successful - for the first of its kind. Eight old members came along (Andrew Alexander, Berry Bermingham, Don Morphew, Morley Pecker, Geoff Porter, David Smyth, Brian Westhead - plus 'Honorary Old Member' Dick Cheston), and several others sent apologies. They had the pleasure (?) of watching a game - of sorts. After all my bragging about the improved drainage, it proved to be a really murky day, and we managed to slosh about in the mud for an-hour-and-a-quarter. (I say 'we' advisedly - I fetched up playing my annual game, with my 1950's shorts flopping about my knees, and unable to move the ball more than 20 yards on such an alien surface! Brian (Westhead) played too - demonstrating, yet again, the age-old wisdom of always putting your kit into the boot of the car!) The result was an honourable 1 - 1 draw (I think), with skipper John Haynes (I think) scoring his first goal for something like 25 years to haul his 'international XI' - just two Dutchmen this year - back from the brink of defeat. (Who writes this cliché-ridden rubbish?)

The subsequent company, in the refurbished clubhouse, was very congenial. (Sorry, Geoff and David - I let you slope off before the Stilton and Port made its traditional - and welcome - appearance. Don't allow me to let you go early next year.) Old members in their droves - well, Berry anyway - were signing-up for Andrew's new-fangled mixed hockey, which turns out to be the famous 'Dr. Joad' game, played on Hampstead Heath on Sunday mornings. (Did Berry ever get there?)

The Club's results continue to be patchy. The 1st XI finished fifth from the bottom of the London League, with just three wins to their credit. It gets harder and harder for clubs who aren't already towards the upper reaches of the League to recruit (and retain) top-notch players - a process of self-perpetuation which many find disturbing. (As witness historical clubs like Wimbledon, Hawks, and (particularly) Mid-Surrey who, together with Cheam, languished below us in the League.)

But the other XI's continued to produce very good results, with a healthy credit balance over the whole season. In particular, the Veterans XI only lost three games all season, and must (one presumes) be front runners for the award of the Barnard Cup at the A.G.M.

Quite apart from the playing side, the Club prospers. Social functions abound: regular 'hops' in the clubhouse; the Annual Dinner in February (a mixed function nowadays, with dancing etc. - not like 'the old days'); a 'World Cup Veterans' Dinner at Kettners (Bill Fletcher and Peggy came along, and Hugh (Wickham), and Berry and Yolande - sorry I was only able to manage last-minute notice); the annual end-of-season Veterans Supper, also at Kettners; a ladies' XI tour to Paris this June etc. etc. (I don't know where today's members find either the time or the energy to indulge themselves in this way - I think it's disgraceful(!))

Even on the playing side there is so much more available nowadays - not only indoor hockey and regular training on winter evenings, but even an exercise gym in the clubhouse, and a regular visiting physiotherapist. I wonder the members bother to go home at all! (By the way, the refurbished clubhouse is available for hire if you are thinking of running a function or party in North London - contact the manager, Mark Allen.)

Now, regrettably, I have to come to a sad note. As a result of reviving the Old Members' list, we learnt that Bob Cummins (O.B.E.) died three years ago. Bob, as you probably know, was a tower of strength when the Club was re-formed after the War, in the early to mid-Fifties. First, as General Secretary for a year, but then, more influentially, as Fixture Secretary for a much longer period, doing wonders in working up the fixture list from nothing to as good as any club in London. But, also, as an iron-fisted Captain of the 3rd XI who brooked no back-sliding - there were no cry-offs in Bob's team! Sadly, because we didn't know of it, the Club wasn't represented at Bob's funeral, but we remember him with great affection (despite his carefully cultivated gruff manner), and with deep gratitude for all he did for the Club.

I also saw recently, in The Times, the obituary of J.W.S. Hardie - right full-back from 1933 to the War, in Ruari Milsted's team. Throughout that time he also captained Wales (25 caps - in the days when you only got 3 or 4 internationals a year), and was reputed to be 'a superb stylist'. He went on to become a prominent educationist (Headmaster of Canford School, and Principal of Loughborough College), and was one of our Vice-Presidents in the days when we had them (before the Hornsey amalgamation).

And now, I will finish with a notice and some 'admin.'.

The notice: the Hockey Club A.G.M. (as distinct from the more formal Hornsey Club A.G.M.) will be held at the clubhouse on Tuesday, 5th May, at 8 p.m. Old members are welcome to attend - I intend to be there myself - though, of course, as non-voting participants. I am sorry this notice is so short, but I have only just received my own confirmation of the date and place.

The admin: those old members who donated a sum to receive the regular club bulletin didn't get copies - the Secretary apologises for that. They had printing difficulties throughout the season: most of the time, the bulletin was little more than a team sheet, so he didn't bother to send it to you. The printing difficulties have now, hopefully, been resolved (courtesy, again, of our generous President), so you will go back onto the mailing list for next season. Don't send an additional donation for next season's bulletins - this year's will be carried over. (He also explains that this is why he didn't pay in your cheques - he didn't want to take the money under 'false pretences' - they have now been paid in.)

The other thing I will explain on the admin. side is this: I am asking you to return your tear-off slip for next season now, rather than in the Autumn. The reason for doing that is because, if I know that you are (still) interested, then you can have a copy of the fixture card, and early season bulletins etc., as soon as the season begins, and not have to wait for your first Old Members' newsletter. (You see, the secretarial touch is still there - if you can understand what the hell I am getting at!)

So - I look forward to seeing you at the A.G.M., to getting your 'renewal' slip (if you are already on the list), and to adding you to the list (if you are not).

Yours,

C. GREENHALGH

P.S. I should, on the Club's behalf, thank those people who 'joined the list' earlier this season, in response to my first newsletter, for their generous donations. Some of you donated 'beyond the call of duty', with the result that the Club benefitted to the tune of about £150. But, thank you more than that for your interest in the Club's welfare.

To: C. Greenhalgh,  
16 Church St.,  
Hampton,  
Middx. TW12 2EG

HAMPSTEAD HOCKEY CLUB

- \* I would like to (continue) to receive copies of the Old Members' Occasional Newsletters.
- \* I would like a copy of the 1987-88 fixture card when it is printed. (Minimum donation £2, please)
- \* I would also like to receive regular copies of the fortnightly team sheets and club bulletin next season. (Minimum donation, an extra £3, please - unless you are already down as having requested it this season- in which case, don't pay again!)
- \* I enclose a (total) donation to the Club of £.....
- \* PLEASE DELETE AS APPROPRIATE.

Name: .....

Ø Address: .....

..... Tel. No: .....

Ø NO NEED FOR YOUR ADDRESS IF YOU HAVE ALREADY 'JOINED THE LIST' AND IT HASN'T CHANGED. OTHERWISE, PLEASE COMPLETE IT, SO THAT I KNOW I AM UP-TO-DATE WITH POST-CODES ETC.