

August Secretary's Report

When I started to write this report I was sitting on my deck, sweltering in yet another heat wave. Today, putting the finishing touches to it, I am indoors, looking at a grey sky, and wondering whether it will rain today. Who says weather is boring!

Two items of information for you in this month's report.

First, the VOCS Summer Picnic is on Monday August 30th (weather permitting). Although a number of you have already signed up (and many thanks for this) there is still availability for late comers. Can those who wish to attend please email me at vanoxbridge@gmail.com, whereupon I will send you joining details and add your name to the list of attendees.

As with last year, this event is weather dependent, and (also as with last year) we are obliged to observe the following COVID related requirements:

- Attendees to please bring their own seats / blankets.
- As we are still not allowed to share, attendees are to bring their own food and drink.
- Although it is not required for attendees to be masked, can all attendees please observe social distancing rules.

Secondly, the Boat Race Dinner. We didn't have one last year, not least because there wasn't a Boat Race in the UK. This year, of course, there was (albeit at Ely, not London) and we are wanting to hold a delayed Dinner this autumn. The fly in the ointment, of course, is the Delta Variant. Although current COVID regulations permit us to hold an indoor dinner, we can well understand that many VOCSians may be reluctant or uncomfortable with attending an indoor event at this time.

The current BC health information for indoor events may be accessed here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restrictions#pho-order>, and the actual health order (all 13 pages of it) may be read here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-gatherings-events.pdf>.

From our point of view, the relevant pages are 5-7. I would urge you all to read, or at least skim, these pages. My take away from them is that although it is indeed permissible to hold a formal dinner this autumn, there are various rules which must be observed. The requirement that guests keep to their seats and do not mingle or table hop is one we need to think about.

Although it seems clear that we could hold our Boat Race Dinner this autumn, if we wished to, and provided we scrupulously follow the health recommendations, the question is, do we want to hold our dinner under these circumstances?

Your Board welcomes your views on this point. Please email me at vanoxbridge@gmail.com and let me have your views.

All I can say at the moment, is watch this space. We really do not want to cancel a second dinner, but unfortunately may be compelled to do so.

Finally, one of our members has an ancient Cambridge MA hood which was used both by her father and husband at various times. She doesn't believe she has any further use for it, so if any member would like it, please let me know and I will inform her accordingly. As always, the email address vanoxbridge@gmail.com.

I look forward to hearing from you