



**From the President, SMTC**

Sir Brian Williamson, CBE

23 Paultons Square

London SW3 5AP

T: 020 7 351 9654

E: [brianwilliamson@23paultonssquare.com](mailto:brianwilliamson@23paultonssquare.com)

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A handwritten signature in brown ink, which appears to read 'B Williamson'.

The webcams of St Moritz reveal mountains covered in snow and soon Natalino and his men will be building our new Cresta Run. New cabling has been laid from Top to Finish. Only those keen enough to visit the Run during the summer will have seen the massive amount of reconstruction. Riders will notice a new split time taken in the Bledisloe Straight flashed to the screen and Top riders will see a board in Top Hut displaying the riding order. For Tower, there is the prospect of improved reliability of the timing equipment, another safety camera and improved communications. It has been a major and expensive construction and we are very grateful to the Kurverein for contributing generously to this investment in our infrastructure and future.

There are always Members on the look out for extra thrills and entertainment. Their season got off to a poor start when the posturing mayor of New York City conjured up a bit of a storm, some rain and a huge tide, all designed to wreck the SCARs dinner. In London, however, Harry Sheppard's inspired "Cresta Riders to the Box" party, deep in the heart of Soho, exceeded all expectations. A thin veil should be drawn over the proceedings of this enticing curtain raiser.

More sedately, a quiet lunch will be held on the 19th November in Chelsea when Stephen Bartley OIHA\* will spend an hour or so with friends explaining how he discovered the St Moritz Tobogganing Club was formed, as we all know, 125 years ago. The second half of his lecture contains the explosive revelation that the correct date is the 19th (hence the lunch) not the 17th which, of course, we all had come to believe.

In St Moritz we will celebrate the efforts of four men, Duke Grazioli, Major Lambert Dwyer, Capt. William Henry Bulpett and Clarence Barker who established the Committee of the SMTC, appointing Bulpett as its first President. In his honour this year's Season Badge shows him lying on his toboggan with his arms, contrary to modern safety rules, akimbo. His great-grandson turns out to be a friend of mine and it was encouraging to discover that our first President combined success in number of activities with pursuits not at all alien to many of his successors. All will be revealed.

Another celebration occurs on the 12th January. The Clubhouse will be 50 years old. Gunter Sachs, prominent among others, generously backed the vision of Ben Bathurst (later Lord Bledisloe) to make it possible. By happy coincidence the day falls on the first day of the Curzon Cup, the Blue Riband of Junction riding - a race which the young Bathurst won in 1936.

His son, Christopher, President from 1991 to 2004, played a similar role in building our current Junction Hut. Before Christmas, on its roof, the life-size bronze statue of a *Cresta Rider at Finish* by George Bingham will be unveiled in the presence of representatives of Celerina, to whom the statue will be presented. In due course it will be placed at Finish on a plinth designed by Rolf Sachs. Also present will be a number of bottles representing the House of Krug. The cost of the statue has been covered by the generous Members who have purchased maquettes in silver and bronze. Their names will be recorded around the base of the plinth.

There was no cause for celebration at your Committee meeting last week, when David Payne announced that after 20 years serving the Club in many capacities, he would retire as Secretary at the end of the Season after next, in 2014. So it will be some time before we will laud him appropriately. As each season goes by he adds to his encyclopaedic knowledge of every aspect of the Club's affairs. We will ensure that we do not lose his experience and wisdom but we need to start right away with the process of finding a successor. Several candidates have indicated interest and anyone else wishing so to do should contact Harriet by the end of November with a view to preliminary interviews in London in the first week of December.

Gary Lowe has taken over the Shop. He is, as you know, a new high quality item. At least, I think that is what he implies with the information he wishes me to include in this letter: *"There are many new high quality items ranging from hand-crafted silver plated drinking beakers to cashmere sweaters to tea towels. In addition, there are many products and gifts for ladies. Some items are made to order so it is worth ordering now. Most of the merchandise can be seen on the new shop website [www.crestashop.com](http://www.crestashop.com). All items will be available in the Shop but many are available now, ahead of Christmas, from the new Shopkeeper."* It is not possible to transact through the web site but his contact details are therein.

The Shop Girls this year, hand-picked by Gary, will be Lottie Bingham and Lara Robinson. He would welcome applicants for future seasons. And the Tower Boys will be Tom Gimlette, Charlie Child and all the way from Down Under, Alexander Champion de Crespigny.

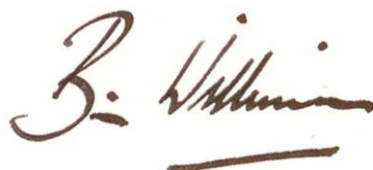
Stephen Bartley OIHA writes that *"The SMTC now has a permanent home in West London where Members can view the Club's embryonic collection of early Cresta photographs, magazine extracts, old Ball programmes, early Cresta kit and other ephemera. If any Member has an original "America", a Bulpett/Mathis "Skeleton" or an original Bott sliding seat "Traditional" toboggan decorating their bedroom in the UK or elsewhere, I would be glad to hear from them. As the Club starts to celebrate its 126th year, we are very interested to find out more about the four men who formed the first Committee.*

*"The archive is currently featuring the images taken by Capt. Frederick Bligh, the Anglo-Irish photographer, who was a winter resident in St. Moritz 1892-1900. The Club was very fortunate to acquire this rich source of material from the Bligh family last year and a number of his Cresta images, selected by Clifton Wrottesley and Luca Marenzi, will be on display by the Sunny Bar this coming season. If you wish to visit our Archive in Fulham or need your questions concerning the history of the SMTC and the Cresta Run answered, please contact me."*

Last year 35 nationalities rode the Run. GBs outnumbered CHs, Ds, Is and As combined. There were 35 USAs and an encouraging 11 AUSs. Some 15 unfortunate nations however were only represented by singletons. They were: AL, BR, DK, ESP, FIN, HKJ, MEX, N, PE, RA, SK, SLO, SRB, UY, and YV. In these difficult times it is good to see that we play our part in bringing joy and happiness to these countries.

As the rest of the world contemplates another year of apprehensive austerity, and wonders what economic medicine to take, we all know exactly what is required to relieve the gloom. The Committee and the Secretariat look forward to seeing you in the Engadin Klinik, otherwise known as the Cresta Run, where the troubles of the world are laid to rest and we can go about our business of competitive sport with amateur ideals.

**нһн! нһн!** as they say in Belgrade.

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'B. Williams', with a horizontal line underneath.

\*Our Indefatigable Honorary Archivist