

BARNET WOOD

NEWSLETTER OF HAYES TENNIS CLUB

ISSUE ONE MARCH 2023



Hayes Characters

1. Nigel Gallagher



Julie and Nigel Gallagher

“Get off your backside and do it-”

Nigel Gallagher's Dad's maxim was the best advice Nigel ever had. The Chairman of Warman Sports Club heard those words from his father and still lives by the same rule today. Every club member can vouch for that. We've seen Nigel in action day after day. He never seems to switch off. The other week Nigel was in pursuit of a “scrubber” in Basingstoke- in reality a huge machine that clears moss off the tennis courts. He brought it back and did the scrubbing on the courts. Nigel talked to 'Barnet Wood' over a coffee in downtown Locksbottom. He started out as an electrician, joining an apprenticeship in 1980 for the London Electricity Board. Next he was a gas engineer, and later a company director for a firm called Kestrel for 21 years. They carry out mechanical services for schools including water, sometimes heating systems. On the strength of that he'd always had practical knowledge. He can solve problems and a good part of that is to get on with things.

Nigel's great passion is sport and the good it can do for young people. “I believe that sports clubs are hugely important to today's society. They need to start from earlier : get children into sports clubs instead of hanging around on street corners.”

A few days ago the Chairman repaired the floodlights which overhang the courts. They're working much better, but as Nigel put it, “they're living on borrowed time. There will come a time when we can repair them no longer. They should be LED lights.”

In between jobs Nigel regularly takes his friend, the club treasurer Peter Bennett (76), to hospital appointments for treatment. The other day he was drumming up support for the cricket quiz night asking tennis players to put their names forward. Nigel is a huge supporter of more interaction between the three club sections, rugby, cricket and tennis.

(59) and his wife Nigel Julie took their children, Kayleigh (now 27) and Scott (now 24), to tennis clubs when they were juniors. Nigel has been a cricket member for 16 years. His son is 24 now and he was 8 when he first came to the club. Scott plays in the first team. Kayleigh who can sometimes be seen running the bar, is a school teacher and a Kent cricket coach.



Kayleigh

The chairman sees the club as a positive place .

“I take pleasure seeing people enjoying the facilities, and I have to see these facilities are up to scratch. We would love to see the tennis club grow socially. “Warman functions because of the bar. More functions from tennis and cricket are needed. The beer festival on August Bank Holiday at the end of August - we've done 4. The 5th will be this year. That generates good revenue. It goes straight back into Warman. We've refurbished toilets and the kitchen with that money, and the bar is the next.

“ Warman is a three legged stool.If one section falls, the whole stool will fall.” Nigel sees his chairmanship as a tribute to his friend Jerry Freds, the immediate past holder of the role.



First Team Player Scott

“I guess I fell off the back of what Jerry was doing, “ he said. “We were both at a celebration in London, of the career of former England rugby player Jeremy Guscott. We were in the bar. He nudged me and said you are the prime candidate to take over from me, my successor, in a year or so's time. You get a lot of respect from everybody.”

Nigel has been in post since April 9. Jerry dropped the hint about the switch in November 2018.

Welcome to the first issue of “Barnet Wood”. It's abbreviated. For later issues feel free to offer comments and criticism, and indeed ideas for publication. Send all messages to anthony@doranpressagency.co.uk