



Chair's Report to the BBCA AGM - 26th May 2016

Introduction

The BBCA continues to go strong in its role as an umbrella group for the British/English-speaking community and remains in good shape financially. Since the last AGM, there have been changes in our committee. Sadly, we have lost John Houston, who passed away last autumn and to whom both the BBCA and the DORB owes a great deal. We have recruited some excellent new people to reinforce our team and this is a continuous process. The committee is in the brainstorming process to draw up its future financial and donation strategies.

Chair	Caroline Laske
Vice chair	Rex Parker
Secretary	Glenn Vaughan
Treasurer	Christopher Thubron
Membership	Stuart Dowsett
Newsletter	Tim Reynolds
Website	Jeremy Dixson
Social Secretary	Nikki Hayes Janssens
	Tracie Ryan
	Tony Enevoldsen
	Ed Cutting
	Alexandra Rogers
	Miguel Toledano
	Sara Leventhall
	Glynis Whiting

Highlights since May 2015

- The DORB 2015 (200th anniversary) was an exceptional success. The event raised some €52,000 of which the main beneficiaries were the BBCA charities (June 2015). Since the DORB was resurrected, it has raised over €170,000 in five years.
- Summer Pimms Party kindly hosted by Tracie Ryan was a sunny and wonderful event (June 2015).
- Guided tour of the exhibition about Edith Cavell, organised by constituent member, the Belgian Edith Cavell Commemoration Group (October 2015).
- The Christmas reception at the British Residence with the British Chamber of Commerce had to be cancelled due to the security threat following the Paris terrorist

attacks. But we were able to catch in January with a festive occasion, at which Ambassador Rose presented the charity donations for the year (January 2016).

- The now well-established Presidents Group reception was much appreciated by all who attended and it is an event that appears to be gaining momentum (March 2016).

Future challenges and events:

- membership: growing and retaining. Payment reminders have been sent out.

26-May-16		Paid	Paid	Paid
Members Numbers	Active	2016	2015	2014
constituent_group	44	31	33	29
family	41	19	24	26
single_person	70	40	42	33
student	1	0	0	0
Totals:		90	99	89
		58%	61%	57%

- Organising more events for the entire BBCA membership by involving member groups (see e.g. BECCG/BBCA event last October).
- Continued improvement of communication strategies with our members and between our members:
 - reinforce 'buddy' system and links
 - cross-referencing each other's webpages and facebook (liking!)
 - proposing events for BBCA members.
- Leveraging our support networks to help maximise projects, event participation and fundraising activities.
- Continue to redraw the BBCA's future financial and donation strategies .
- How future DORBs work with the BBCA and will be run.
- Pimms Midsummer Party: Sunday 5th June.
- Charity event on October 18th at the British Residence to raise money for the charities we support
- Christmas reception with the British Chamber.

Thanks:

- To our supporters and their leaders, whose commitment is key to our annual donations for charity:
 - patron supporters : Fry Group, ING;
 - corporate supporters: British Chamber, White & Case, BDO, Eurocity, BSB.
- To our President, Ambassador Rose, for her support and the help from her staff, as well as that of Vice Consul Sara Leventhall.
- To the British Chamber, notably Glenn Vaughan.
- To our committee - this wonderful team of dedicated volunteers.

Outlook:

It is positive, but much work still needs to be done. We hope to increase participation in our core group of activists to further realize the full potential of the BBCA.

We also hope that the BBCA continues to be regarded as a priority partner for the Embassy, and a resource in reaching out to one of the Embassy's key constituencies, the British community in Belgium.

Thanks to the British Chamber of Commerce for generously allowing us to use their premises. And thank you all for participating in this AGM.

We look forward to your continuing support.

Caroline Laske
Chair, BBCA
26th May 2016