

After speeches at the court gate by Martin and Pat Edginton the ribbon was duly cut, balloons released and the courts were opened. Martin and his wife were then presented with a bouquet and presents from the club who in turn then presented the club with a painting of Wimbledon, featuring the new Millennium Building and signed by the Chairman of Wimbledon Tennis Club, (his was totally unexpected and is something that the club will always treasure).

During the proceedings Martin regaled us with a story about how at a recent event he had spent two hours with Princess Anne. Some wag, it could have been me, asked him whether there was a connection with his recent O.B.E. Martin took this in good part but perhaps indicated that any further discussion might involve a visit to the Tower.

The official proceedings successfully completed, people drifted back to the Hall to enjoy the refreshments or try out the new courts which seemed to receive their seal of approval and certainly have had many favourable comments since.

Our thanks again to Martin for accepting our invitation to open the courts and also for the painting which currently resides in the Committee Room of the Hall.

Ian Carrington, (Club Sec.).

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## **Sobell Support Groups**

Sir Michael Sobell House Hospice was first opened in 1976 to provide care to patients with life limiting illnesses and also to offer support to their families. Although about 60% of the running costs come from the NHS, around £800,000 per year needs to be raised from charitable donations. Sobell House Hospice Charity exists to raise these funds, which is done by a variety of means and with tremendous support from the local community.

One important form of fund-raising for us is events organised by our supporters. Many coffee mornings, bring and buy sales and Christmas fayres have been organised on our behalf and some supporters have been very inventive - we have had sponsored head-shaves, concerts, and even a papier-mache boat sailing down the Thames.

We would like to expand this type of fund raising by encouraging 'Community Support Groups' to provide on-going support for the work of Sobell House. These groups could be formed by colleagues, groups of friends or members of an existing recreational group and the Charity would like to encourage members to organise fund raising events on our behalf. The Charity would be able to offer support and advice where needed. Some Support Groups could then develop their relationship with the Charity and act as a link between the Charity and the community at a local level.

If you would be interested in organising an event for the benefit of Sobell House, please contact the Charity on: 01865 883339 and we would be delighted to discuss this further.