

# SKY BLUE

**Issue 204**  
**Michaelmas 2023**







---

# EDITOR'S WELCOME

---

Hello and welcome, once again, to a new Sky Blue edited by yours truly. With two previous editions under my belt already, I could now recycle a lot of the formatting and stuff, which made my life easier (special thanks to Photoshop for remembering precisely what font I wanted for the cover!). Now, piece of advice for future editors: don't leave it until the last minute to write an article, a report, edit hundreds of Punt Joust pictures, make a cover and put all the magazine together – it's not worth it. But alas, having successfully ignored the rather reasonable deadline I set for every other CUSAGCer, my contributions were slightly rushed. As a result of that, if you find any tpyos, *no you did not!*

Anyway, I hope you enjoy this edition as much as I did putting it together – we have another fun TOE story from our ex-AAC, some Rally impressions, a camp blanket instruction kit, a ranking of lines from a musical, and an interview with a punt joust-er! Thank you for everyone who contributed, and please keep doing it and let's make the next edition *thicc* and interesting. I was browsing through some old Sky Blues in store today – those CUSAGCers were creative! I suggest we do a *Sky Blue reading session* before the next issue, just so you all are also made aware of what I'm expecting from now on.

In my usual manner, I've waffled for quite a lot, so now I'll leave you to reading this magazine. But don't worry, I'll be back soon enough!

*Mara-Ioana Postolache*

---

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

---

## Chair:

Well, I did tell you that I'd be back soon! Anyway, having taken over the role of chair at a crucial time, when most of the new committee is completely new to CUSAGC, I am happy to report that we are vibing and thriving! Activities are getting organised, hikes are as well, old CUSAGCers are being confused by how early in advance we sort stuff out. Whimsy is also having a blast, enjoying his time on the big shelf of plushies in my room, as well as coming to just about every activity I attend (and sometimes also riding in the same backpack as a pack of duck legs). He has started sending CUSAGC postcards from his adventures, which I have heard is a success. I have also recently started getting the club back on Instagram, with Freshers' events being promoted there, as well as on Facebook. In short, all well and great, and I'm looking forward to two more terms of chairing this lovely committee!

*Mara-Ioana Postolache*

## Treasurer:

Breaking with the traditional *female mathmo*  $\mapsto$  *secretary*  $\mapsto$  *chair* trajectory, I took up the (arguably more logical) position of junior treasurer. Little has happened thus far, aside from a last minute rush when we realised the SU now wants a copy of our annual accounts before the financial year finishes (the logic of which is beyond me). Other than that, CUSAGCers will be pleased to know we have money (and indeed could probably do with making a loss on some Service events), and that the Santander cheque books are with someone who *\*might\** actually be able to write a cheque with them - further updates as events warrant.

*Caitlin Kinch*

## Adventurous Activities Coordinator (AAC):

Rachel (previous AAC) organised a trip to the Brecon's over Easter. We went up Kinder Scout and saw some amazing views. During Easter term there was a hike to Grantchester then north past the rifle range before returning back to Cambridge via an ice cream shop.

*Simon Richards*

## QuarterMaster (QM):

TLDR: Stores is tidy! Thanks to many hours of hard work by a whole host of CUSAGCers, we now have beautifully tidy stores. Emma Crickmore and I had a riveting afternoon doing a clear out/reorganisation/inventory, which produced the shiny, new, actually useable CUSAGC stores inventory spreadsheet. We then had a well-attended (and well-provisioned) stores party to clear out 1st aid kits, dig through the map collection, and sort the service event kit, for which everyone's help was greatly appreciated. We also succeeded in clearing out the (rather old) CUSAGC wine stash! Although I have sadly had to tender my resignation as QM due to leaving Cambridge, I reckon we've done at least a year's worth of tidying this summer!

*Rachel Angus*

## Secretary:

There's been very little to do so far, just writing minutes for meetings. The most difficult part is recording the account balances but Caitlin is very patient when I have to ask her to repeat them!

*Louise Holman*



# TRIP OVER EASTER 2023

Way back in April, which now feels an age ago, nine CUSAGCers headed out on our Trip Over Easter (affectionately known as TOE) in Brecon. We had a double Berlingo roadtrip due to the wonderful British rail network once again being on strike, and those of us in the later car got there to find the earlier arrivals drinking chocolate fudge milk and playing poker. Having refuelled with some tea we headed out for a walk into town and visited the cathedral before following the river upstream through some lovely woodlands. Along the way, we found a pretty bridge (see photo at the end of the report), lots of sheep, and what we thought might be an old well.



A chair is not good enough for the Chair...



Jolly Hockey Sticks with CUSAGC

When we got back to the hut we cooked fajitas, with the traditional arguments over levels of spice – despite which they were well received by all (and no one got chilli in their eyes this time). After dinner we discovered the Scout equipment cupboard, which included hockey sticks and spinning plates. Some members of the group decided to stay at the hut for the evening and embrace their inner Scout, whilst some of us decided to head to the pub and embrace our inner student. The pub crew ended up in the Gremlin Hotel and had a drink and chat at the table in the corner whilst the local youth occupied the pool table and jukebox.

We consumed a *very* restrained number of pints before heading back to the hut for a relatively early night.

On Friday morning, we got up and cooked breakfast remarkably efficiently – only an hour after the alarm call of “Here Comes the Sun” was brekkie on the table. We drove to the bottom of Pen y Fan, the tallest point south of Snowdonia in the UK, and our hiking target for the day. Unfortunately, the whole of the rest of Wales had the same idea, and we ended up in a HUGE traffic jam, with a full car park at the top of the hill, 8 cars trying to drive up the single-track road, and 2 trying to come down. Eventually someone became a traffic marshal and after some interesting parking on a slidey, muddy bank we were ready to set off.



Here Comes the Sun (do do do do)



The steep climb...

The weather was a lot warmer than anticipated for April, so after an hour or so of climbing a party was dispatched to return to the cars with our warm layers and one member of the crew who wasn't feeling well. We walked quickly back up to meet the others again on a ridge with a lovely view, where we stopped for our first lunch. Having carried on up the ridge and scrambled up a steep section of rock, we reached the top. There were amazing views from the top of Pen y Fan, but we decided to ignore the queue to get a photo at the trig point! We saw several paragliders enjoying the weather too.

From the top of Pen y Fan we split into 2 groups – 3 went round to the next saddle, and 5 of us climbed up Cribyn. There was a great view of Pen y Fan from the peak of Cribyn, but we decided not to go down the very steep path which looked rather like walking off a cliff... Having rejoined the others at the next saddle we ambled down the spur, where Will got his drone out to take some photos whilst others found tadpoles in the streams.



... and the beautiful view!

We returned to the car park through some old woods and pretty fields with lots of friendly sheep. Having driven back to the hut (fortunately with far less traffic than on the way) we sat down exhausted from our hike, which was only 8 miles but had 800m of ascent! We found that we had all got rather sunburnt – because who would have thought we'd get sun, in April, in Wales of all places? (*disclaimer: it was on the risk assessment...*)





"I am not a teapot, I'm a Scout..."

Once we'd summoned the energy to move again, we cooked sausage and mash with broccoli for dinner, with a more sensible quantity of gravy than last year. The burst of activity didn't stretch to making hot chocolate though, so we had the rest of the chocolate fudge milk instead. We then headed across the road to the Scout hut's campfire pit, where we made a zero-match campfire with knife and flint, sang lots of songs, and ate lots of smores. Having extinguished the campfire like responsible adults (see left), we headed to bed.

On Saturday morning, we had a lovely lie in till 9am. Having packed our things, we had eggy bread, mash fritters, beans, and other leftovers for brunch at about 11. Everyone was feeling pretty exhausted from the previous day's excursions, so funnily enough we didn't do the 6 mile walk to see an aqueduct which I'd planned (however keen the engineer might have been about it the day before). Instead, we headed off to the gift shops to buy fluffy dragons, and then to the river we walked along on the first day to have a paddle. The water was absolutely freezing cold, like you'd expect a stream come straight off the mountains in April to be... but we enjoyed it all the same. After a picnic lunch, we headed off on the roadtrip home.



Getting frostbite instead of sunburn today!

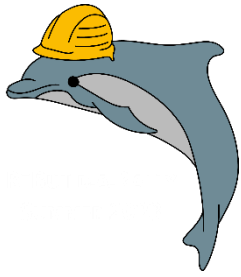
Despite the sunburn and unexpected warmth, I for one enjoyed the trip, and I'm sure CTW in January will be just as much fun (and slightly cooler) with Simon, our new AAC, at the helm!



Nine happy CUSAGCers, as seen by Will's drone

*Rachel Angus*





---

# REBAR:

## THE SOUTHAMPTON RALLY

---

It's Thursday, the start of May Week, and your friends are excited for the week of dressing up and fancy balls lying ahead. You, however, are shoving the most sweat-resistant t-shirts and your sturdiest walking shoes into your backpack. The necker has already been prepared, so all you have left to do is pack your stuff and go to the train station tomorrow. Four hours of travel later, you'll be at the camping site. Between moving abroad and pandemics, it's been so many years since you went on your last scouting event. But tomorrow you'll be in that happy place once again. And you wouldn't give ten May Balls for it!

Yup, that's what I was up to in late June this year. On Friday, I put Whimsy in my bag and left for ReBuild-a-Rally, near Southampton. Now, before you accuse me of animal abuse, please note that we met Lancaster SSAGO on the train, and Whimsy would've definitely been stolen if just out in the open! Plus, he spend all of Rally at my necker, so I don't think he minded the cosy transport, but I digress.



Having arrived at Braggers Wood just in time for dinner, we had plenty of time to put up our tent and unpack before the food was ready – apparently SSAGO also runs on CUSAGC time! After a chilli lacking in chilli (as seen on Marathon 2022), we ignored the quiz night with an ill-timed “Titanic” round, and instead escaped to the campfire.



We claimed the best seats, made friends with our rivals at Oxford, and started singing a few songs as more and more people arrived. I was once again amused at the difference between campfire songs sung by SSAGO and CUSAGC and what my scouts in Romania used to sing. At home, the fire will be surrounded by forest-themed love songs or verses praising the beautiful mountains; meanwhile, here I was, singing about someone jumping without a parachute, and being scraped off into a matchbox like jam off toast. Now, don't get me wrong, I have grown to love these newly discovered songs just as much as the ones I grew up listening, and often find myself with one of them stuck in my head. One thing, however, was the same in both countries: the unknown desire to sing songs that are dirty for no reason. As soon midnight struck and the guidelines said offensive songs might be sung, SSAGO did not hold back.

The next morning, breakfast was followed by a split in CUSAGC – we all went on to different day activities. While the others went on the coaches taking them to Southampton, I departed with a group of five other people on a long, chill hike. After all, what is a camp without a hike? Having embarked on our journey to the sea, we had to make our way through numerous obstacles: a theoretical path that went straight through a maize field, some other paths with nettle attacking from both sides, as well as a road which was, at least according to road signs, icy (although the sun was strong enough to burn me that day).



After a walk of around 11km, we arrived at our destination: the beach in Mudeford. With a mystical fog on a sunny day, it was an incredibly gorgeous sight! We had our packed fajitas under the cool shade of some pretty trees, and then ventured out to look for some fish and chips. Putting my foreigner hat on again: *what's up with British people and needing this particular food every time the salty smell of waves hits their nostrils?* The mystery shall remain unsolved for at least a little while longer, as all we found was overpriced scampi and a chippy shop that was closed.

With the time for our relaxing break passing, we made our way back, altering the route as needed to avoid the stinging nettle and acquire ourselves some snacks from a nearby grocery store. This time, we faced the maize field head-on, and bravely made our way through the tall, sturdy crop. After an equally long, but this time hotter and more exhausting walk back, we made it back to camp a little early, excited to take over the empty showers. However, as we later learned, our rush to get back earlier than everyone else was rather pointless, since the coach company went MIA that afternoon, leaving the majority of SSAGO stranded in Southampton. Nevertheless, a team effort was pulled by just about everyone with a car, and everyone was brought back (eventually).



After dinner, we made the CUSAGC ceilidh contingent proud, by winning an impromptu Varsity challenge of Witches' Reel against Oxford. We then once again settled around the campfire, this time with some s'mores, and had a lovely, although rather cold, evening. Having moved the tent to the quiet camping area, two of the three CUSAGCers retreated to sleep there, while I decided to enjoy the lack of rain by sleeping in my hammock. Truly more comfortable than my rolling mat on some dry ground, my hammock also awarded me with a gorgeous view of the campsite in the soft, orange morning light of Sunday.



Now, for the final day of the Rally, Emma and I decided to visit Brownsea Island, though for two entirely different reasons: while Emma had spent a lot of the summers helping out at the guiding shop there and knew the island like the back of her palm, for me it was a magical place that gets mentioned in stories about scouting and that makes its way onto various quizzes, but not something a Romanian scout would ever think of being able to visit. Nonetheless, here I was, with Emma serving as a great guide. We saw peacocks, statues of Baden Powell, went into the sea a little, and patiently looked for red squirrels – of which I actually managed to see one, hidden away under some bushes! Whimsy acted like a massive tourist and took countless pictures with all the important attractions: a statue of BP, the founding stone, a flag post at the first scouting camp, and another statue.



Finally, we made our way back to the campsite and reunited with our “*dangerous-activity lover*” friend. We attended the closing ceremony, from which I am happy to report we left without doing any challenges (*I told you Whimsy was kept safe!*), but the coach company did get a prize for how utterly useless they were. Then we got on with the rest of our last night of Rally, with the usual campfire now delayed by us taking part in a silent disco and singing Mamma Mia to the nearby cows. Eventually we did make our way to the campfire, sang some more songs, and finally I retreated to my hammock for another night under the shield of the trees and the night sky.

Monday morning was off to a slow start, but we enjoyed our breakfast, packed up and finally headed to the train station early, just in time to help watch a broken down minibus. After 5 different connections on rails, Emma and I made it safely back to Cambridge, and Katelyn to York. Now, I can’t speak for them, but I definitely had a blast, and I am so looking forward to the next Rally that happens to fall outside the Cambridge term, as I desperately want to go back!

And, as a final question: *Was everybody happy?* Well, *you bet your life we were!*



*Mara-Ioana Postolache*

---

# A HISTORY OF THE CLUB CAMP BLANKET

---

As CUSAGC celebrates our 70th anniversary it is only natural that I share some of my knowledge on the recent history of the club. Many of us like to remember our Scouting/Guiding journey by reminiscing over the badges we proudly display on our camp blankets; CUSAGC is no different. Back in 2016 the club purchased a large blanket and somehow I ended up being in charge of it.

How to arrange your badges is a matter of personal preference, some people sew them on in chronological order, others prefer to sort them by theme. My own blanket is arranged thematically so I decided to do the same with the CUSAGC one. Armed with some old badges, I took it home over Christmas to make a start on it and over the years the collections of badges has grown. It makes an excellent table cloth for Freshers' Fair and I hope future CUSAGCers will remember to collect a spare badge to add to it.

*Emma Crickmore*



**Badges from events people went on independently of CUSAGC**

One of the local Scout groups visited Cambridge in Canada and 2 of our Guiding members went on GOLD trips. Richard is a former member of the club hence he decided to represent himself by a duck on his wedding

**Miscellaneous**

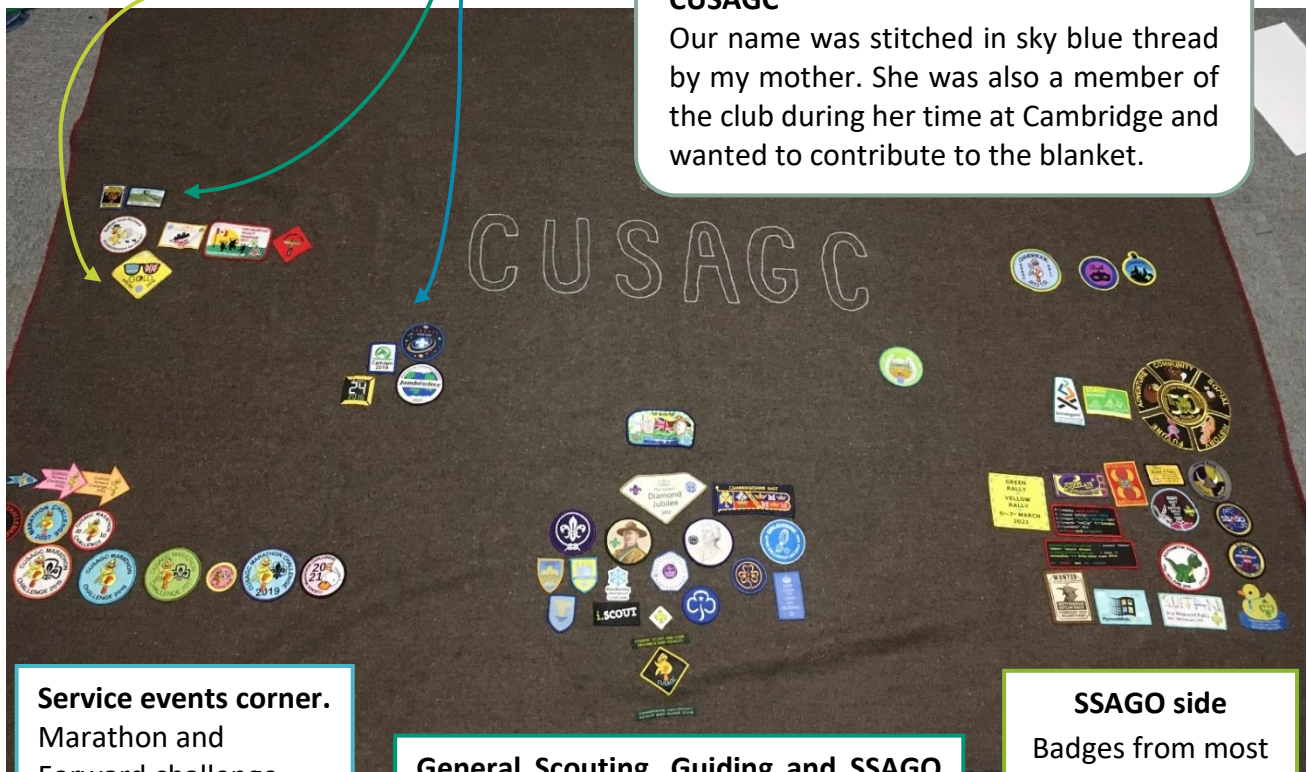
Once we were contacted by a special needs Scout group who were learning about SSAGO. They asked for our club badges and sent us their area badges in return.

**Activities that CUSAGC did as a group**

The Jambowlree is a Scouting bowling competition, who doesn't want a badge just for visiting your local alley? Other badges are from local camps or activity days.

**CUSAGC**

Our name was stitched in sky blue thread by my mother. She was also a member of the club during her time at Cambridge and wanted to contribute to the blanket.



**Service events corner.**

Marathon and Forward challenge badges. From 2020 the Forward badges were designed to tessellate. Alas, those who arrange badges chronologically cannot exploit this

**General Scouting, Guiding and SSAGO**

The sides were decided by which way round the logos were on the joint badges so Scouting on the left, Guiding on the right. Joint and SSAGO badges are in the middle, it really irks me that the Guiding trefoil is on the left on the platinum jubilee badge.

**SSAGO side**

Badges from most Rallies and Balls attended by a CUSAGCer. Also includes a row for SSAGO anniversary events.

---

# SCOUTS! THE MUSICAL

---

You might think no one has ever looked at the Scouting movement and thought “this needs to be turned into a musical” but you would be mistaken. Not to be confused with ‘SCOUTS ’ (another new musical featuring a giant moth - I don’t understand either) ‘Scouts! The Musical’ written by Sam Cochrane and David Fallon in cooperation with The Scout Association had a short run on Westend. Think ‘Dear Evan Hansen’ but with added neckers. As far as I’m aware no CUSAGCers actually went (probably put off by the content warning of “audience participation”) so I have trawled through all videos and reviews I can find so you don’t have to actually go.

The show is set at the Annual Scout Games, a competition designed to “test every scouting skill you know”. The twist? An ex-scout has come back to avenge her previous failure in the competition by, as far as I can tell, hypnotising the competitors. In the song ‘Trance Dance’, the horrified scouts sing “rather than tie knots, she’ll undo them”. I promise I’m not making this up.

Without further ado, here is a rundown of my favourite quotes from the opening song ‘Into the Wild’, the friends-are-the-most-important-thing song ‘Home’ and the finale ‘Skills for Life’.

10

*When you need help wait and ask a friend to climb to  
the top and pull you up too*

As someone who enjoys walking but (as the trip up Pen y Fan confirmed) cannot do mountains, this is solid advice. However, I don’t know how much good it will do for the friend who’s now got to do twice the work.

9

*Remember a scout is prepared for adventure  
No matter the scout and no matter the venture*

Honestly the only reason I put this in is for the attempt to rhyme “adventure” with “venture”.

8

*Home is following a map for hours and realising you’re  
lost cause the map was upside down*

Not one I’ve specifically experienced but I have ended up in the middle of a golf course before. I’m sure it’s one CUSAGC-ers will relate to, at least in principle, particularly those dealing with children on Marathon/ Forward.

7

*Home is climbing up a giant mountain and getting a  
nose bleed cause you’re up too flipping high”*

See previous comment re mountains; no nose-bleeds have yet been experienced.



6

*Step out the front door  
You're not a cub anymore*

Ah, the classic I'm older now so I must be braver, although in my experience at that age it's the other way around.

5

*Home is... a field of angry goats*

I met some angry cows on DofE once and it didn't feel particularly homely, maybe angry goats are different.

4

*Home is going on an expedition and packing light so  
you have to wear the same pants twice*

Is this a thing? I have never had so little space I can't pack enough pants. Please tell me no CUSAGC'er does this on CTW or TOE.

3

*You'll know my name, she'll go down in history  
I hear them cheering as I rock up to the jamboree*

Do people get famous from jamborees? I've never been on one, maybe they do. I'm not sure their names go down in history though.

2

*They say Joe you've got 60 badges isn't it time to stop?  
I tell them I'll stop at the top when I've got a badge for  
all the other badges I have got*

Here we have it, the Scouting and Guiding condition. Based on CUSAGC campfires, I know a lot of us suffer from badge-collecting-itis. And with Guiding's new badge system, this dream has become a reality.

1

*Remember a scout will always act with honour  
A smile and a whistle even if they are a goner*

Need I even comment?

Caitlin Kinch





---

# PUNT JOUST:

## INTERVIEW WITH A NOVICE

---

***So what is punt joust?***

Exactly what it sounds like.

***What do you need for it?***

Just the punts and poles plus padded poled for lances. Oh, and helmets.

***When was it created?***

Roughly 50 years ago.

***That's a long time ago; are there any strange traditions?***

There was the ceremonial Reading of the Rules before we started.

***Do you need any training?***

There were a couple of punting practices to prepare the newbies (\*cough\*sacrifices\*cough\*)

***Where do you do it?***

A section of the Cam with conveniently placed ladders.

***Most difficult part?***

Standing up.

***Did you win?***

Yes. Although I don't think anyone was surprised – my opponent nearly pitched off the front before we even reached each other!

***So you made it back ashore dry and triumphant?***

Sadly not. Apparently we practice 'chivalrous' jousting here. This means the winner must plunge themselves into the icy water as an act of compassion. Clearly invented by a perpetual loser.

***Any drama?***

Only one jousting trying to escape the chivalrous self-sacrifice. Good for them I say.

***And afterwards?***

A barbecue on the riverbank. Then we packed up and headed back.

Louise Holman

---

# GOLDEN QUOTES

---

*“The last supper would have looked better with a dismembered Jesus”*

An ex-chair keen on drastic measures

*“Twister is just Jenga with human parts!”*

A different chair, but with similar drastic measures

*“There’s only one time I wanted to be a tree and that was age 10 in a production of Wizard of Oz”*

A CUSAGCer well past the age of 10

*“I seem to have had an unfortunate incident with this tree”*

A different CUSAGCer, relating to some different tree (*I hope?*)

*“I have no idea how I’ve passed three hours doing mushrooms”*

A chair that should know better, on colouring in toadstools

*“For the honour of the G in CUSAGC!” \*splash\**

A proud Guide protesting a cowardly escape from the Cam at Punt Joust

*“Murder is arguably less bad than cannibalism”*

A new CUSAGCer with lots of explaining to do

*“I don’t understand how onions work”*

A CUSAGCer who doesn’t understand how *many* things work

*“Some of those big ones might be hard to do at full length”*

*“It will be difficult to make the big balls go all the way”*

*“It went around the rim before going in”*

A series of quotes by an innocent-looking CUSAGCer on TOE, about throwing balls into plastic containers from long distances

*“The Germans love head... the English don't mind it either”*

A very quotable ex CUSAGCer, post Annual Dinner

*“I'm sex positive but age negative”*

The same quotable ex CUSAGCer, strike #2



***“Can I stop being the QM minion now?”***

An unhappy ex-QM

***“So, back to 50 Shades of Grey”***

A CUSAGCer who likes judging movies

***“50 Shades of Green... I’m now thinking of a garden related something”***

A completely different CUSAGCer on a completely different occasion related to colouring pages

***“It wasn’t deep, it was just long”***

A secretary’s remark at the end of a committee meeting

***“I spent many nights wandering up and down, feeling this fence”***

A CUSAGCer with plenty of nights spent in Cambridge

***“I feel like suncream doesn't go on your mind, it goes on your face”***

A CUSAGCer who knows their skincare well, while debating whether children’s sunscreen is appropriate for CUSAGC or not

***“It is just very stiff, so I assumed your end was in”***

A CUSACGer putting up a tent on Rally

***“I mean, creepy old men have their uses sometimes”***

A CUSAGCer I didn’t expect to be this quotable

***“Hammer sports, um croquet!”***

A CUSAGCer who has their way with words

***A: “Can we shoot the freshers?”***

***B: “I don’t think we’re allowed to shoot human-shaped targets.”***

***A: “We could beat them until they no longer look human and then shoot them?”***

A chair who has no common sense and an elder who does, while discussing rifle shooting at a committee meeting

***“Can we minute the fact that Katelyn lost two weeks? “, followed only a little while later by “Katelyn, may I join you in the ‘I’ve missed a week?’”***

A CUSAGC chair, at a committee meeting

***“We didn't have enough violence this term”***

Our Social Sec, regarding lack of weapon-related activities

*“We’re just a club of aspiring pyromaniacs, aren’t we?”*

*- A committee member’s description of the club*











