

OAKLEY BOWLERS



CHRONICLE



September 2020

ISSUE 2

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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME – MARTIN SMITH



Hi to you all,

Hope you are all well.

There is not a lot for me to say this time with lockdown and no Friendly Games played this year so I have had a quiet year.

Being no games, I have got some pads and pens left, if you would like one you can buy a pad and pen for £1.00 and the money will go into Club funds. Contact me and I will see that you get it. Please call 01256 327658 or (M) 07778478714.

I would like to thank all those members for the work they did painting the outside of the Clubhouse.

I had to cancel my Tour to Paignton this year, but it is all booked for next year for John to take his Tour to The Queen's Hotel, Paignton. John will be in touch with all the members from my Tour in due course.

I think that is all and hope to see you at the AGM.

Spencer's Snippets

from Spencer Kerley, General Secretary



Normally at this time of year, articles in the Chronicle would be reflecting on the season that is just closing. How different it is this year. Some members have played bowls at Howard Park but for many it has been a year away from the green, although not from the work that goes on to keep the Club operating.

For the Committee this has meant having to adjust to unfamiliar ways of doing business. In the last Chronicle, I speculated as to whether we would venture into video conferencing. We did. To date three meetings have been held using Zoom.

At its most recent meeting the Committee discussed a range of matters which I detail below.

The AGM

Advice is awaited from Bowls England as to how Clubs might manage AGMs, but meantime it was agreed that, as the normal list inviting nominations would not be seen by members, I should email members seeking nominations. This has been done but, so far, I have received just one nomination. Please give this matter some thought. We do not want to get to the AGM and find ourselves scratching around to fill posts.

Club Captain

The resignation, because of ill health of Barry Lee as Club Captain was received with much regret. Barry has worked enormously hard over many years, recognised by his appointment as a Life Vice President. As Club Captain he will be much missed.

Indoor Friendlies

All the friendlies scheduled to take place before Christmas have been cancelled by the host Clubs. We wait to see what will happen in the New Year.

Short Mat

Compliance Guidance issued by the ESMBA was considered and it was felt that, if/when short mat restarts it might be best if only one mat were in operation in the clubhouse and possibly one also in the pavilion. However, no one had come forward to run the sessions and it was felt that before any resumption it would be necessary to obtain the Estate's views on what would be acceptable. It was agreed that any approach to the Estate be delayed until such time as a volunteer came forward and I was asked to email the membership to seek a volunteer(s). A volunteer has come forward to run Thursday afternoon, but we still need volunteers for Monday afternoon and Thursday evening. Please let me know if you wish to help on these occasions.

Green Maintenance

It was noted that the request for a member to attend a spraying course had attracted no volunteers but, at the meeting, Bob Goodyear and Ric Newson volunteered and as a result I was invited to check on the availability of courses. I established that suitable courses are available at Sparsholt College in December

and subsequently the Committee has agreed to the expenditure of £968 for both Bob and Ric to attend. The cost will reduce by £200 if I can obtain for them a bursary from Bowls England.

More generally, it was noted that we still need someone to carry out machine setting and that the greens team needs extra help. There are a variety of tasks to be undertaken and, where necessary, training is available, so if you can help please get in touch with Ian.

It was noted with thanks to Colin Statham that he had successfully obtained a grant of £333 from Waitrose and this money would be spent on a petrol hedge trimmer.

Finances

A report from Sean was considered and it was agreed that for the next Committee meeting he would prepare a forecast of likely income and expenditure up to September 2021 working on the assumption that normal activity would resume. Recognising that no play was available to members in 2020, this forecast would then be used as a basis for a recommendation to the AGM as to the level at which subscriptions should be set for 2021.

Artificial Green

Our original bid for Local Infrastructure Funding for an artificial green was rejected because planning permission for Manydown had not been given so demand was felt by the Council not to have been demonstrated. The Committee noted that the planning permission was given in July and I and Colin Statham have been asked to contact the Council to establish the timings and what we need to do in order to make a further bid for funds.

Risk Assessment

Ric Newson and Anji Smith are updating the Club's Risk Assessments.

Catering

It was agreed that the catering arrangements for 2021 should be reviewed after the AGM. Meantime work is in hand to obtain a replacement fridge/freezer for the one, in the pavilion, which has given up the ghost.

Christmas Lunch 2020

Again, uncertainty exists but a provisional booking has been made for a Christmas Lunch to be held at Test Valley Golf Club on December 13th. Numbers may be limited but Janie will be in touch with further details once the position becomes clearer.

Bowls Hampshire and Bowls England Matters

Both organisations are planning on the assumption that bowling will be back to normal in 2021 and already, as County Secretary, I have sent to Clubs the Championship and Competition programme for the year. The County Finals are being brought forward from September and will be played prior to the Nationals at Leamington. The venue for all Finals in 2021 will be Banister Park BC as the Atherley Club has informed the County that it will be maintaining only one green in 2021.

Changes are also being introduced to the way in which affiliation fees are assessed and collected and to the entry dates for Championships. No longer will Clubs have to pay affiliation fees based on their membership as at 30th September. They will now be calculated on the membership numbers at the start of the current

season. The date for Championship entries to be submitted to Bowls England has been put back to the end of February which should mean that Bowls Hampshire will only require entries by end of January. This should then mean it will no longer be necessary for our Competition Secretary to ask members to return their County entries at the AGM and that all entries can be processed at the Pre-Season Meeting in January.

As far as is known most Bowls Hampshire officers are willing to continue in post. The Chairman Graham King is retiring as am I. Hazel Marke is my likely replacement. A replacement also needs to be found for Men's Match Secretary Keith Taylor who suddenly and unexpectedly passed away last month.

It is the end of an era for Bowls England with Tony Allcock having retired as Chief Executive and his replacement Jon taking up post just as Lockdown hit. Bowls England is now conducting a Strategic Review and consulting widely and it will be interesting to watch developments.

David Bryant

Many current members may never have heard of David Bryant (the bowler with the pipe) who has just died but I could not finish this article without briefly recounting the great man's achievements. Three outdoor World titles, four Commonwealth Games Singles Gold Medals and 6 outdoor National Singles titles, three of which were in successive years. Numerous other titles (e.g. eight National Indoor Singles titles), too many to list explain why one obituary referred to him as the "Bradman of Bowls" whilst another suggested Ali may have thought himself "The Greatest" but David really was "The Greatest" his success transcending the sport. Importantly he was a sportsman and a gentleman and those of us who saw him play (or in my case once played on an adjoining rink) have no doubt his achievements in bowls will never be bettered.

Almoner's Observations

From Lesley Allard



Greetings everyone!

This has been, an unusual few months to say the least, with many of us having to stay indoors or social distancing with family and friends.

I hope that you are all now able to get out and about, albeit with face masks, and have been reunited with close family, although I understand that family in most care homes are still only accessible with conversation through windows.

Several members have been decorating the Clubhouse and maintaining the green in preparation for 2021. We look

forward to playing on it again.

About 25% of members, including some who have also been maintaining the green, have been able, owing to the good offices of Howard Park Bowling Club, to enjoy some friendly and competitive bowling in the fresh air.

We called ourselves the Oakley Wanderers and hope that the friendly spirit will be retained when the Wanderers return to Malsanger next season under the Presidency of John Yarrall.

Many thanks to Angie Smith, who has done a great job organising us and liaising with Alan Tait of Howard Park.

Our best wishes and heartfelt thanks for his hard work over many years go to Barry Lee, who has had to relinquish his position as Club Captain, owing to ill health. He will be a hard act to follow!

Best wishes and thanks to Colin Statham, who despite having a painful operation on his leg and having to be on crutches until the end of October, has continued to be busy fund raising for the Club.

Stay safe everyone and let's hope that we can have the AGM in a real meeting and not on Zoom.

Best wishes to you all

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations and best wishes to Past Presidents Alan and Linda Poynter who recently celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary. Greetings were sent on behalf of the Club.

Members stories of what they have been doing during the pandemic

Anji Smith

Lockdown 2020

Middle of March and suddenly the country has gone into Lockdown. Everything we had booked until June was cancelled, and slowly events after that were called off as well. No bowls, no trips out, no long weekends at steam rallies and, even worse, no seeing the family. Overnight the world became a different place. But life goes on!

Sorting out the craft room became a 'must do' but the more I sorted the more I wanted to create so lockdown indoors became a creativity station. How much was made? - 1 painting, 1 bedspread, 10ft of embroidered silk bunting, 1 knitted cardigan, 1 knitted sweater, 1 new top, 2 crochet dogs as well as greeting cards for birthdays, Easter and retirement/leaving cards for Hampshire Fire Service.

But being claustrophobic I had to get out so religiously, for the permitted 1 hour exercise every day, I donned my walking shoes and went for a yomp (remember the Falklands war?). No driving anywhere meant I had to walk around the village which got a bit boring so I began wandering 'off piste' and discovered footpaths and byways I didn't know existed. On one particular day I bumped into a herd of water buffalo and made a new best friend:



We had a long conversation discussing the way of the world, the weather, speeding drivers, lockdown and various other topics. The amazing thing was he listened without ignoring me or interrupting. By this time I knew that lockdown had got to me!

While listening to the radio one day I heard about the Country Walking magazine Walk 1000 Miles challenge. If you know me you will know I rise to a challenge and, as I was regularly yomping about 4 miles around the village and adding in the casual wanderings clocking up a total of 7 - 8 miles a day, I decided to have a go so signed up at the end of April. July saw me reach the 'Proclaimer' level of 500 miles and to date I am at the heady height of 750 miles. Only 250 to go to get my 'Completer' medal and certificate.

If you're a bit of a mathematician you may have noticed that the daily mileage appears to have gone down. There is a reason – bowls! Howard Park opened their doors to all and I was persuaded to go along. Playing

anything up to 6 times a week doesn't leave a lot of time for an hourly walk every day but playing bowls, socialising and generally having fun makes up for it. They have all the protocols set up for Covid-19, ready to change when Bowls England give the go ahead and social distancing has become a habit. It may not be a normal bowls year for competitions and games but I've played more and never entered so many competitions before.

2020 may be a very peculiar year but as changes come about it's time to embrace them so life can move on safely...roll up 2021!

Keith & Mary Turnbull

Covid 19 Activities

Hello everybody – we hope you are all keeping safe and well. What a weird few months we've all just lived through. In addition to the restrictions applying to the population as a whole, Mary and I have been shielding pretty well totally, because of Mary's kidney transplant, which means she is permanently taking several immune suppressant drugs. This means if she were to catch the virus, she wouldn't have much chance of surviving, so I also have to be very strict about my own behaviour.

Fortunately, Mary is a keen gardener and also a very accomplished slave driver, so we have both been kept pretty busy keeping the garden tidy and painting what appears to be acres of fence and shed panels. We've also taken the opportunity to catch up on all the household de-cluttering and DIY projects we never usually have time for in the summer months. It's a shame that the club had to remain closed this season, but we believe strongly that it was the right decision for the majority of members, most of whom would be at risk. The benefits of opening, with all the restrictions that would have to apply, really would not be worth taking that risk.

Since the beginning of this crisis, we have ventured out together only a handful of times – in every case in order to attend essential medical appointments. I managed to escape a couple of times on my own – to do essential spraying at the green and to adjust the height of the green's mower. We have been kept supplied with shopping by our lovely daughters – especially Claire, who has brought us supplies every week. We've also become great fans of on-line shopping for more bulky items.

For exercise, we started – and strictly keep up – a daily regime involving a 30 minute brisk walk up and down the drive at 5am every morning and two different 30 minute HasFit online fitness sessions involving weights – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. We're fitter and stronger than we've been for years – so much so that we've cancelled our gym membership. The lovely weather this year also means we've been able to sit in the garden reading for a couple of hours each day.

The one thing we've definitely missed is our regular visits with the girls and the grandchildren. We've been doing Skype calls with them, but it's not the same as being able to share hugs. They have visited us a few times in our large back garden – but they have to stay on the lawn and we sit on the patio, which again is not ideal. We have missed our regular restaurant outings with the family, although a couple of weeks ago they brought us a Nando's takeaway which we enjoyed enormously – once we'd disinfected all the packaging and containers (which didn't affect the taste TOO much!!).

We were supposed to have had a couple of short holidays this year – in Weymouth and Germany – but have had to cancel them. Actually the Germany one (a rail tour) allowed us to transfer the deposit money to next year rather than lose it, so we've decided to swop the holiday to a rail and coach touring holiday in the Isle of Wight next August – staying in the Trouville Hotel in Sandown, which is where Coral's OBC tour stayed in 2013.

The way things are, our situation is not going to change until we have guaranteed access to a vaccine and/or effective treatment, so I guess we're going to be left behind by the rest of the country as the restrictions are gradually lifted. It's a good thing we get on so well with each other and even after 49 years of marriage we are very comfortable in each other's company, so the self-imposed exile is not a problem for us.

Good luck to everybody – hope to see you on the green sometime soon.

Peter and Shirley Ball

Lockdown 2020

I would just like to say how very grateful Shirley and I am for the generosity of Howard Park Bowling Club in providing the clubs facilities to over 30 Oakley club members. We have all enjoyed their friendship and hospitality including arranging several competitions including a very enjoyable Oakley members pairs competition in which Jim Dixon and I came out as winners, Shirley also won a singles competition so despite Oakley bowling Club remaining closed Shirley and I have had a great time safely bowling outdoors courtesy of Howard Park Bowling Club.

Editor:

Sounds like a great time was had by all and I understand a number of our members, other than those mentioned by Peter also won competitions, well done to everyone, it must have been lovely to receive your awards at the end of the competitions and not have to wait for a formal presentation as is usual.

Special Thanks

Special thanks go to Ric for keeping us supplied with quizzes during lockdown to keep our little grey cells working.

Thanks also to Spencer Kerley, Linda Poynter and Fred Norris who also supplied quizzes.

I do hope we all enjoyed them, I know I did and learned a lot, hope I will recall the answers should the occasion arise in the future.

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Many thanks to Barbara for providing me with these. Editor.

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Editor's Corner (Sandra Lee):

What have I been up to during lockdown:

I decided this was the perfect opportunity to tackle all those jobs that, you never have time, keep putting off as would rather not, or just plain and simple, better things to do!

I decided to declutter, and worked my way through cupboards and room by room, never knew I had so much clutter that needed getting rid of, the great majority of which I was able to recycle.

Then we decided on redecorating, or should I say Chris, I am no good with a paint brush especially if steps or ladders are needed.

As Chris was busy inside, I decided to start on our large garden. I employed a gardener, a very capable man in our village who was more than happy to put my ideas into place, he is very creative and enjoys a challenge! I also had a builder come and take out very steep steps which I found quite dangerous, must be my age, and he put in a gentle slope to make it easier for me to reach the top level and fix other steps from the first level down to the patio.

I now have two areas with a Japanese theme, two rose bushes planted in a low fenced area with a fig tree in between, which has produced 3 figs in the last few weeks, much to my surprise. The gardener discovered what we thought was a lovely bush turned out to be deadly nightshade, goodness knows how that came to be in the garden so that had to come out.

I then gave the gardener 300 bulbs to plant throughout the garden front and back and we have even had some of them flower this year. Thank goodness for online garden centres. I then decided that the bank down our drive needed replanting as I didn't like what was there, so once the bank was clear I had to decide what was best to plant. As by this time lockdown had eased and we were able to visit garden centres and I was able to see and pick all I wanted and my gardener duly planted the bank up. I have to keep an eye on weeds this year until all the plants have spread to fill the spaces, some of my succulents have already started doing this. Hopefully next year it will be a lovely bank of colour.

I also had mad urges to bake cakes and scones and my neighbours and friends enjoyed these very much.

Before lockdown like many of us in the village I attended a Moveitorloseit class in our village hall run by Nicky which I thoroughly enjoyed and miss very much, roll on next year. Nicky kindly sent everyone in her classes the exercise sheets so we could continue doing them at home. I have to admit that I tried very hard to do these each week however after a few months slipped into only doing them now and again no doubt this will show when classes resume next year.

We have certainly made the most of this lockdown to catch up with those jobs we never seemed to have time to tackle, perhaps that has been the one good thing to come out of this dreadful year, is we have discovered time, to look at how we have been living our lives and we have come to appreciate what is really important in life.

Keep safe and let's all be kind and help one another when we can.