**LOWDHAM BOWLING CLUB**

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**Newsletter**

**May 2017**

Dear Member

Happy Days! We are now well into our outdoor season to the delight of all concerned. I say all, but ask you to spare a moment to consider the ongoing plight of those unsung heroes – the team captains. Among the problems they now face are the weather (which never stabilises until a match gets under way), the availability lists (which are already demanding phone calls and arms up backs), and team selection problems (which will no doubt surface soon). Please keep making yourselves available and don’t take it to heart if you are not selected. Team captains are working to a selection policy which was agreed early in 2015 (see newsletter April 2015). Of course if you want to make sure of selection, volunteer to become a team captain!

For medical reasons Geoff Gittins has had to stand down as captain of the 3x3 league and his replacement is John Broadbent whom we wish well.

Having enlisted outside help with our green preparation, everyone was keen to try it out and the first opportunity came on Sunday 23 April when 46 members turned up (40 to play) for a roll up. Over several short matches with teams drawn out of the hat, individual scores were totted up to decide a winner. Jenny Franklin, Elizabeth Butler and Bob Malt tied on the top score, leading to a one wood play-off. Elizabeth duly placed her wood near the jack only to see Bob remove it leaving Jenny space to calmly deliver her wood into the resultant space. It was a good day for Essex as Tony won the fruit hamper in the raffle.

**Social events**

**Games evening – Village Hall - Saturday 18 March**

This popular annual event attracted 46 members and friends. As usual the men drew a ladies name out of a bag to create the competing partnerships. One such partnership, completely devoid of a winning mentality paired Michael Stone and Margot. Runners up were a youthful team of Janet Wakefield’s grandchildren – John and Lauren. Not to be left out of the prizes, Janet herself got the booby paired with Pat Barker. An attractive raffle made £80.50 and after settling hall and supper costs Eileen was able to give our treasurer £152.00.

**Potters week-end - 31 March to 3 April**

Those of us who travelled to Potters Leisure Centre Nr Yarmouth, found the journey well worthwhile. Comfort, food, activities and entertainment were all of the highest standard. Resident song and dance ensembles were of West End quality and the management had gone overboard to compensate for the absence through illness of the Sunday night attraction – Chas and Dave. In addition to a free bar between 6pm and 11pm which tempted many of us to hit the G and T’s from the outset, they had also shipped in a range of look-alikes to entertain and provide photo opportunities throughout dinner and on into the theatre. We were treated to Basil Fawlty goose stepping down the aisles with a diminutive Manuel in tow. Acceptable facsimiles of Gordon Ramsey, Tom Jones, David Brent and Del Boy were also in attendance and of course Tom Jones sang a few of his show-stoppers later on in the theatre.

Potters is still owned and run by the Potter family and this was evident to us all in the care and friendliness of the staff. In contrast to many other ‘off-shore’ owned holiday firms, we really felt that the comfort and well-being of the paying guests were of major importance to the management. This stood out in their concern for, and treatment of Richard Melbourn who fell ill with gastric problems on the Saturday evening. Richard and Freda received a call from the reception staff after their return home to check on their progress and recovery.

I wonder if a return visit would prove popular. Thanks to Steve Marsh for taking over the leadership from Joan and Gordon who had made the original booking.

**Skittles afternoon – Royal Oak , East Bridgford – Saturday 22 April**

28 members and friends came to play and 35 sat down to the ‘early doors’ meal afterwards. Seven teams of four, named from the Zodiac played each other in a round robin format with Libra winning the prizes. Libra tipped the scales with Steve M, Anne M, Cath B and Phil a visiting friend. Joan Welbourne had sent a beautiful hamper of fruit for raffle and Margaret Derry sold tickets at this event and at the first roll-up mentioned above. When drawn this yielded the princely sum of £121 for club funds. A small profit of £33 was also realised on the skittles event.

Thanks to Eileen and Gordon for running the social events.

**Gordon Welbourne**

Having started this newsletter with the word ‘happy’, we were saddened by the news of Gordon Welbourne’s death on 9 April. This is a great loss to us as a club and individually. Having written in January’s newsletter an appreciation of his captaincy and club leadership, I was unfortunately unable to attend his funeral, so I thank Steve Marsh for the following report……………

 The church was literally packed to the rafters as Gordon’s family and his many friends attended his funeral at Carlton Pentecostal Church on Thursday 20 April. At Gordon’s request we were all asked to wear something yellow as Joan was wearing a yellow dress on the day they first met.

 Sad though the day was, it was very much a celebration of his life. It was clearly a life of much happiness but also much hardship, and determination to overcome those hardships, not least when he lost his leg in a road accident when in his thirties soon after his fourth daughter was born. We heard much of his sporting prowess and what a competitive streak he has always had; not least in his darts days when losing was not something to be taken lightly! How important sport in general, and bowls in particular, was to him was evidenced by his decision to be buried in his England bowls outfit.

During the service we listened as some of his grandchildren from each of the four families spoke of their memories of him. What was evident was the love and admiration they all had for him and the faith they have that has seen them through the many difficult periods in their life. We also heard from two of our own, Jenny Franklin and Mike Stone, with Mike being unable to resist the temptation to offer a friendly welcome to anyone who would like to experience what Lowdham bowls club has to offer!

After a family burial at Woodborough Cemetery, we all finished our celebration of his life at the Nags Head, Woodborough, where we were able to meet and chat to members of his family and his other friends and share yet more of our memories.

After their sad loss of Victoria, Gordon leaves behind three daughters, twelve grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild with another due any day.

Our love and best wishes of course continue to go out to Joan and we look forward to being there to support her as she moves forward in her new life without Gordon.

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**Membership**

Treasurer Michael Barrett tells me that this years’ paid-up membership has now almost reached 70, which you will agree is a healthy state of affairs. On behalf of the committee and all members may I issue a warm welcome to the following new members, wishing them full enjoyment of the game of bowls and inviting them to take part in our rich social programme – **Jenny Higgins, Sue Grainger, Stella Clayton, Jim Clarke, Gordon Tyers, Paul Roberts and Stuart Welsh.**  We also welcome back **Anne Poxon** who spent many seasons with us until a couple of years ago.

A cheque for £660 has been handed to Mike Barrett from the Wednesday games group, collected during our winter season. This will more than settle our clubs heating bill. Meetings will continue through the summer months, celebrating our happy outlook and perhaps attracting more members. All are welcome!

**President v Captain ‘Friendly’ – Saturday 13 May**

The date of this annual favourite had been changed due to the non-availability of the President, but moving it to a Saturday had no effect on the turn-out which totalled 30, facilitating a match format of 5 triples rinks. Over the last few years the straightforward draw had led to one-sided results, so Captain Ivan and President Cliff got their heads together and introduced a simple form of seeding. This did add a few minutes of initial delay but the system proved worthwhile when the final result showed a mere one shot difference between the 2 teams. The event was preceded by the formal handing over of a new set of scoreboards – a Presidential gift to the club. These are less cumbersome and occupy less storage space than their predecessors which nevertheless had served us well for 29 years. May the new ones last as long!

**Harry Fray Shield – Drawn Trips – 2 woods – Sunday 21 May**

Numerically it was not a tremendous turnout for this 1st club competition of the year, with 15 men and 8 ladies in attendance. Marlene opted to stand down and run the refreshments and Peter had to adopt his frequent watching brief so that 7 teams of 3 could contest a round robin match.

In an event of this nature the actual match format depends on the number of players who turn up. After 5 six end games, the winners with 4 wins and 1 draw were Jenny Higgins, Ivan B, and Steve P. Four teams then were tied for 2nd place but on a count back on shots gained the runners up emerged as Margot G, John W and Keith P. Congratulations to the Shield winners and thanks to Peter and Elizabeth for their organisation.

During the afternoon players were unfamiliar with the new scoreboards and it was decided to adjust them to reflect the more usual format with the Ends indicator separating the Home and Away scores.

**Coming of age?**

Seven members of our club travelled to London on 29 April to attend Margot Griffiths surprise 80th birthday celebration, and she has saved me the job of reporting on that very enjoyable experience by sending the following thank-you letter which precis the whole event. We repeat our congratulations –

 ‘I would like to thank all those friends along with my family, who made it to my ‘surprise’ 80th birthday party on a 4 hour boat trip up the River Thames, with dinner and Frank Sinatra serenading us and glorious weather conditions making for a perfect evening.

 Thank you also to my 60 guests who attended a lunch party at Tom Brown’s in Gunthorpe the following weekend. What a lovely way to celebrate with family, neighbours and bowling friends. I do hope you all enjoyed yourselves.

 What more could a ‘recycled teenager’ require to soften the blow of reaching the dizzy heights of 80 years old! I must admit that, as yet, I don’t feel it!

 I have sent £400 to the RNLI to which you so generously contributed. I am very grateful. How lucky was I?

Thank you again

Love Margot

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**Dates for your diary**

**Sunday 4 June** Godfrey Cup 3 wood drawn pairs 2.00pm

**Sunday 11 June** Annual big match friendly versus

 Nottm Honorary Vice Presidents 2.30pm

Please do not delay putting your name on the availability sheet. They will bring a strong side of seasoned players and I need an equally strong side to challenge them. We also need early notice of how many to cater for.

**Tuesday 13 June** Coffee Evening - visitors welcome 7.00pm

**Sunday 25 June** Mablethorpe – this eagerly awaited annual match introduced to us by Gordon and Joan should attract a good attendance. Secretary Michael has put up a list in the clubhouse and I would urge any of our newcomers to get their names down. Further details of this great event can be obtained from any of the committee members.

**Sunday 9 July** 2 wood drawn pairs – ladies and gents events

**Sunday 6 August** Gala Day 2.00pm

Plenty of time to prepare for this fun event. Twin themes for dress this year – Flower Power – all things bright and beautiful. I think organiser/MC Jenny Franklin wants to have a colourful turn out. Plans are already underway.

**Entertainment**

 A religious Yorkshire widow passed away having left clear instructions to her children that her gravestone should carry the epitaph “She was thine”. Shortly after the funeral her son visited the grave and was astounded to read “She was thin”. Immediately seeking out the stonemason, he complained “You’ve left off the E”. The mason apologised and told him not to worry as it was easy to correct and would be done straight away. A few days later the son again visited the grave to read “EE she was thin”!

***Limerick time***

There was a young fellow named Brett

Loved a girl in his shiny corvette.

We know it’s absurd

But the last that we heard

Was they hadn’t untangled them yet.

*An apple a day*

*Lets your greengrocer say*

*“If you’ll up it to four*

*I shall profit much more*

*And you’re on the loo all day”*

***Anagrams***

1 Caviare a deadly sin!

2 Deceive the eye with this leg break

3 Harlot Festival but surely not in this accommodation (2 words, 1 hyphenated)

**Last answers**

1 Aphrodite - Atrophied

2 Girl then in - Inner light

3 Strange tin - Astringent

I believe Noah should be installed as the Patron Saint of accountants. As well as inventing double entry, he also kept his company afloat, while all others were facing liquidation!

Yours sincerely

Cliff Rycroft