

## **ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CROQUET CLUB**

### **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18<sup>th</sup> 2012 AT 11.00 a.m. in FRANT**

**Present:** Jon DIAMOND (Chairman), Richard MANN (Treasurer), Mick BELCHAM (Secretary), Angela CHAPMAN, Jeff CHAPMAN, Pamela CLARK, Richard CLARK, Duncan COX, Jolyon CREASEY, Derek CROCOMBE, Geoffrey CROXFORD, Michael GREAGSBY, SANDRA GREAGSBY, Carolyn GUNSTONE, Frank GUNSTONE, Derek HEATH, John HOBBS, Ray MEECH, John MOORE, Hazel MOSS-DAVIS, Kate SANDER, Michael SANDER, John SKATES, Barbara TASKER and Gerald WHITE

#### **PRELIMINARY**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from those unable to attend were read and noted.

There were no Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 2010 AGM so they were duly signed by the Chairman.

#### **1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman reviewed the past year:

- The lawns are in good condition thanks to the efforts of our new Groundsman, Ray Kemp
- Our membership level is below last year's. It peaked a few years back at 60 and is now around 50. We need our members to "twist some arms"
- Congratulations to Richard Smith and Jo Wadman for their marriage this year.
- We were sorry to hear of the death of Miriam Reader since our last AGM. A long standing and committed member who is very much missed. She left a bequest to the Club which has been used to fund her "replacement" (a dishwasher!), a new flag and a new banner. Also her name has been incorporated into the name of the trophy for our annual Association Doubles competition – her favourite competition.
- Our Social programme continues with pub lunches and Kate and Michael Sanders' Summer BBQ and Winter Warmer. Much appreciated.
- Our interclub league results were poor. The Club's only accolade of note being John Hobbs winning the national over-75 competition
- Our Finals Day was well organised and viewed as successful – to be repeated in 2012.
- We have continued with our winter One Ball series – in January there were 16 competitors! Our next two will be in March and April
- Our hosting of outside (typically evening) events again generated some healthy income for the club. We already have 5 booked for this year. We are hoping to limit it to 8 due to their demand on members' time
- Jeff and Carolyn will be organising Clubhouse maintenance and cleaning prior to the start of the season – please volunteer if you can.
- A new group – the Friends of Calverley Grounds has been set up by the Borough Council to provide input to its planning process. It sounds as if it will provide a valuable two-way communication mechanism between park users and the Council.

#### **2. TREASURER'S REPORT.**

The Treasurer reviewed the Accounts for year ending December 31<sup>st</sup> 2011 and highlighted a number of points:

- Our level of annual subscriptions is down due to lower membership levels.
- Our cash at bank is very healthy (at £18,000) but we must be aware of the inevitable costly replacement of our lawn maintenance equipment at some time in the future.
- Our Events income is likely to be lower in the future if we are to limit the number of evening events as has been suggested

In the discussion that followed it was agreed that the Committee should consider specifying projects requiring Grant support eg from the Council and/or from the Gatwick Community Trust

The acceptance of the Accounts was passed unanimously.

### 3. LAWN AND CLUBHOUSE MAINTENANCE.

Re Lawns, Jeff Chapman reviewed the situation at the end of the 2011 season:

- The lawns are in great condition, for which thanks go to Ray Kemp
- Autumn maintenance included changing the mix of top dressing by increasing the sand content to provide lighter soil.
- Winter maintenance will include attempts to rectify some of the “hollows” that are appearing. Ray will attempt to “lift and underfill”.
- We’ll continue to use the same height setting on the lawnmower as we used last year to encourage even growth with the hope of reducing it slightly the following year
- We have replaced the wire protection mats over the hoop holes with a more substantial alternative that does not need to be pegged down. These will also be used for the peg holes

In the discussion that followed it was suggested that there should be more variation in the direction of lawnmowing to reduce the potential of bias on the balls. It was also noted that our boundary marking lines are the straightest ever!!

Re the Clubhouse:

- Jolyon has modified the plumbing to provide easier winterisation
- We have a new outside/picnic table
- The clubhouse doors have been reinforced to provide greater security and will have a new lock fitted as requested by our insurers
- We have provisionally replaced the ball store doors. They require further adjustment and locks to be fitted.
- We hope to paint the main clubhouse ceiling before the start of the season as well as re-doing the external woodwork
- Our new dishwasher has been delivered. It has yet to be installed. It is not intended as a washing up dumping ground (!) and is only intended to be used when it can be filled, run and emptied in the same day eg for Club Afternoons and Tournaments when there is significant crockery and glassware usage
- We need to review our external alarm system to ensure it is fit for purpose
- The awnings are in need of adjustment prior to the start of the season

Jeff was thanked by the meeting for all his efforts on the Club’s behalf

### 4. TOURNAMENTS, COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS

The Secretary

- re-iterated the Chairman’s comments about our poor performance in the interclub leagues
- confirmed that our plans for 2012 include running our normal 4 open tournaments – 2 Association and 2 Golf
- listed winners of 2011 internal competitions as follows:
  - Golf
    - Hunter Plate: Jon Diamond
    - Kitchin Rose Bowl: Jon Diamond
    - High Bisquers: Michael Sander
    - Handicap Doubles: Duncan Cox and Michael Sander
    - Fraser Tankard (Teams): American Dream
  - Association
    - Spa Salver: Mick Greagsby
    - Lustau Cup: Richard Mann
    - Calverley Cup: Mick Belcham
    - Lewis Trophy: Barney Lewis
    - Miriam Reader Doubles: Barney Lewis and Jeff Chapman
    - Howell Cup: not awarded

Duncan Cox confirmed that he would again organise the Tuesday evening Golf Team event  
The Committee will discuss how to publicise evening and other Events to members not having Email access.

## 5. HANDICAPPING AND COACHING

- Daphne Gaitley will again be asked to provide coaching assistance – for both Golf and Association players
- John Hobbs, Richard Clark and Jolyon Creasey will discuss other coaching possibilities including a taster course for Golf Croquet players wishing to try Association – with some emphasis upon showing that Association is not as “anti-social” a game as some Golf Croquet players presume.

## 6. NEXT YEAR’S SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Secretary reminded the Meeting of the Club’s policy to have a two-tier Annual Subscription mechanism to allow those that feel they are able to make contributions over and above the minimum to do so in the form of Voluntary Contributions.

He pointed out that the quality of the club’s lawns and indeed of the club facilities as a whole are dependent upon the level of voluntary contributions as the basic Annual Subscription would only cover minimal lawn maintenance and other costs.

Derek Crocombe asked that the Committee should reconsider how best to convert those non-members who try (and like) the game on a Club afternoon to being full members of the Club. He said he thought that it might be appropriate to offer a £10-per-month membership to encourage them to “sign up” after a trial afternoon rather than our simply suggesting that they come back again when they feel like it. The Committee agreed to debate the suggestion – and potential alternatives.

The Committee has proposed the following Annual Subscription rates for 2012:

- Full Membership:
  - First Year: £ 75
  - Thereafter: £100
- Student/2<sup>nd</sup> Club Membership: £ 35

In order to cater for exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, these rates may be varied by the Club’s Officers when deemed appropriate.

The existing schedule of Green Fees for visitors (i.e. £5 for a full day, £3 for a half day) would continue to be applicable for 2011

These proposed Subscription and Green Fee rates for 2011 were agreed unanimously.

## 7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, COMMITTEE AND TRUSTEES

The Chairman noted that Mick Belcham was retiring both from the Committee and as Secretary. The other two Officers (Chairman and Treasurer) as well as all other members of the Committee were standing for re-election.

There were no further nominations for any of these roles, including that of Secretary.

The re-election of existing Committee members (including the 2 remaining Officers/Trustees) was proposed and unanimously approved.

Mick Belcham agreed to continue in his role as Trustee for a limited period.

The Committee then for 2012 is as follows:

Chairman	Jon Diamond
Treasurer	Richard Mann
Secretary	Unfilled
Committee	Jeff Chapman, Mick Greagsby, Carolyn Gunstone, John Moore and Kate Sander

## 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- There was considerable support for the suggestion that we do something to recognise the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, particularly as the Queen is the Patron of the Croquet Association. Perhaps organise a special event at the Club? Perhaps plant a commemorative tree?

- We are organising a day to introduce members of the Tunbridge Wells Bridge Club to Croquet (April 15<sup>th</sup>). It may well appeal to Bridge players as both games are cerebral, particularly Association.
- We will continue to attend meetings of the Friends of Calverley Grounds and maybe organise an event specifically for them.
- The Chairman made presentations to John Hobbs, Duncan Cox and Derek Heath in appreciation for their efforts throughout 2011.
- He also presented the Secretary with gifts of appreciation from the Club for all his work over the years