



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

Secretary:
Roger Stroud
Corks Cottage
180 Common Road
Kensworth
Dunstable
LU6 2PJ
Tel: 01582 873793
Email: rogerstroud302@hotmail.com

Founded 2000

NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2018 Volume 19 Issue 1

Membership Secretary:
Judith Cundell
18 Saxons Close
Leighton Buzzard
LU7 3LT
Tel: 01525 374620
Email: judith.cundell@btinternet.com

The newsletter Editor is John Cundell. Items for the newsletter can be sent to 18 Saxons Close, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 3LT; or emailed to john.cundell@btinternet.com. Tel: 01525 374620

“Happy New Year”

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2018. Happy New Year to all members and friends. Our first report takes us back to the AGM.

Annual General Meeting

The 18th Annual General Meeting was held at Northall Village Hall on Friday 10th November 2017, and the meeting started promptly at 7.30pm as our Chairman Malcolm Kirby welcomed some 28 members and guests, and in particular Leighton-Linslade Councillor Alan Brandham who would later be presenting the trophies.

Malcolm read out a summary of points from his report which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. He mentioned the installation of the steps between lawns 2 and 3 by the Council which should encourage more members to use lawn 3. Secondly he commented upon the purchase and erection of the three shelters - and the four excellent benches donated by the Council. In addition, Malcolm said the bald patches on lawns 1 and 2 have now been scarified plus top soil and grass seed added.

Secretary Roger Stroud gave apologies for absence from Diana Phelps and Sheila Guest.

There were no queries from last year’s minutes which were duly signed and accepted by the meeting.

The reports of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer (including Annual Accounts) had been previously circulated to members with the AGM Information Pack therefore the reports were not repeated. Chairman Malcolm had nothing further to add.

Roger said that in addition to his written report he would like to add three points:

- 1) 2017 has seen several members improve their play significantly.
- 2) Whilst it is difficult to highlight the contribution to our club from any one individual, Tom Miller has continued in his role for many years as our representative on the Leighton Linslade Sports Council, doing an excellent job. Only a small number of members are aware of Tom performing this role and the membership showed appreciation for his efforts by a loud round of applause.
- c) Ross Bagni has played extremely well this year,



Councillor Alan Brandham presented the trophies. Above: left to right; Mix ‘n Match Doubles Handicap winners were Ronnie Richardson and John Thorp; runners up were Sheila Beal and Roy Kemp. Below: Ladies Doubles Mix ‘n Match winners were Sheila Guest (not present) and Val Jeffers; runners up were Sheila Beal and Helen Wilkinson.



winning two of the B-Level National Tournaments, resulting in his handicap dropping to 2. Well done to Ross.

Our Treasurer, Mary Kemp, had earlier given members a printout of the profit and loss account and balance sheet for the year ended 31st October 2017. She asked members if there were any queries. David Ball asked what was included in the Misc. Costs of £215. Mary explained that this consisted of numerous small expenditure items which, if each one was shown on the list, would clutter it with too much detail. Mary keeps a detailed record with back up claim forms for every item, however small.

Len Buckingham commented from the floor that various grants might be available to our club with us now having a 15 year lease - the difficulty being that until we get our new licence from the Council we cannot show this to prove the length of our lease. Len suggested that we write to the Council explaining this so we can get our formal licence, which has already been agreed in a Council Meeting, as soon as possible. (See later note. Ed).

In a discussion about communicating committee members decisions during the year, Len suggested that members should look at the minutes of each meeting on our website. Malcolm added that we will also put a printed copy of the minutes in the club house. Roger said that if anyone has any queries regarding access to our web site then to ask him. *The website can be found at www.leightonlinladecroquet.org.uk. If you wish to access the members only area then drop an email to Roger at rogerstroud302@hotmail.com and he will forward the password.*

Tom Miller proposed acceptance of the reports, seconded by John Thorp.

Mary Kemp said she saw no reason to change the annual membership fee. Len Buckingham proposed that we keep

the same fee for 2018, seconded by Malcolm Kirby and agreed by the meeting. Len referred back to his comment when retiring as Treasurer last year that we should in future consider increasing our membership fee by the same annual percentage increase applied by the Town Council for our lawn rent.

Mary Kemp said that our accounts auditor for 2017, Graham Quick, has agreed to audit our accounts for 2018. Roger agreed to write to our auditor thanking him for the professional work he is doing for our club.

The Chairman then stepped down and handed over to Secretary Roger Stroud who explained that we had received two nominations for the three posts, one from Sally Clay and one from Diana Phelps. Both nominations were for:

Chairman - Malcolm Kirby

Secretary - Roger Stroud

Treasurer - Mary Kemp

Jean Ball proposed the three officers nominated which was seconded by Ross Bagni and approved by the meeting.

Malcolm Kirby retook the Chair and read out the list of current committee members, all of whom are prepared to continue on the committee except for Len Buckingham who wished to step down.

The remaining committee members are John Cundell, John Thorp, Val Jeffers, Ross Bagni, Sally Clay and Sheila Beal.

Malcolm then asked all members present if there was anyone who wished to join the committee. There was no response. (See note later. Ed). He added that whilst Len did not want to be on the committee, he would like Len to act as a 'conduit' between the committee and members ensuring that members are fully informed about decisions



Above: left to right; Handicap Singles winner was Una Pengelly; runner up was John Thorp. Below: Doubles winners were John Cundell and Judith Pengelly; runners up were John Thorp and Helen Wilkinson.





Above, left to right; Singles winner was Roger Stroud; runner up was Judith Pengelly. Below; Ross Bagni enjoyed a very successful season in the National B-Level series - winning both Nottingham and Hurlingham tournaments - and finishing a very creditable fourth in the National Finals at Southport after a close match.



made by the club. Malcolm then invited a proposal for all committee members to be elected 'en bloc'. The proposal was made by Helen Wilkinson and seconded by Tom Miller.

Any other Business

Sheila Beal said she wished to thank all members who helped as 'scorers' during the year and made a plea for members to assist as scorers during 2018 even if a member can only come once.

John Thorp explained some of the details about a new competition which will be running throughout the 2018 season. This will basically be a knockout competition for all members. John added that initially all members would be automatically included, a draw made and if a member wishes not to take part, then they could opt out, giving his/her opponent a bye. All games will be played over 19 hoops - further details will be worked out by the committee in 2018 prior to the start of the season. Ross Bagni offered to help organise this competition.

Sally Clay made a proposal that in Friendly matches, instead of playing with the same partner during the whole

match, partners should be mixed during the four games - a player will partner each of our other players in turn.

Malcolm said that we could not adopt that system in 'away' friendlies but it could be considered for home friendlies. After some discussion it was decided to take a vote from members present. Ross Bagni spoke up for keeping the current system and explained that when he was learning croquet, partnering a more experienced player was of enormous benefit to improving his game. Malcolm explained exactly what Sally's proposal was and asked members to vote. There were 14 votes to keep the current system (the same partner throughout) and 7 votes to endorse Sally's proposal. It was therefore decided to keep the current system.

John Cundell explained to members the recent new membership proposals made by the Croquet Association, also saying that if any members wished to ask for any further information then to see him after the AGM. During a general discussion about these proposals, Helen Wilkinson asked if there were any benefits to the club by members joining the Croquet Association (CA). The general feeling was that the CA is likely to give us preferential treatment the more members we have registered with them as 'standard members'. (See later.)

Presentation of Awards

John Cundell called forward Councillor Alan Brandham to present each of the prizes and then spoke to the meeting prior to calling out the names of the winners / runners up, saying that for each trophy he would call out the name(s) of the runners-up first, then the winners.

Mix 'n Match Handicap Doubles

Runners Up Sheila Beal and Roy Kemp
Winners Ronnie Richardson and John Thorp

Mix 'n Match Ladies Doubles

Runners Up Sheila Beal and Helen Wilkinson
Winners Sheila Guest and Val Jeffers

Handicap Singles

Runner Up John Thorp
Winner Una Pengelly

Doubles

Runners Up John Thorp and Helen Wilkinson
Winners John Cundell and Judith Pengelly

Singles

Runner Up Judith Pengelly
Winner Roger Stroud

B-Level Nottingham

Ross Bagni

B-Level Hurlingham

Ross Bagni

John Cundell also added that Ross had taken part in the B-Level National Final at Southport and had managed a creditable fourth place.

Councillor Alan Brandham spoke and said that sport was also important to him - his sports being table tennis and badminton. Malcolm thanked Alan Brandham for presenting our awards and for his support of our club over the years.

Closing Remarks

Malcolm then thanked everyone who brought food for our party, all those who helped set up the hall for the meeting; to Mary for booking and organising the hall and to Tony Stammers for his assistance with the raffle.

He added that the annual lunch will be in March which is yet to be organised (see later) and reminded people about the social club which meets during the winter at Page's Park Pavilion each Wednesday morning from 9.30 to 11.30.

He then wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Leighton-Linslade CC Social Club

The Wednesday morning social club is meeting regularly during the close season at Page's Park pavilion from 9.30am to 11.30am, and on average up to a dozen or so members have been present. The fee is still only £2.50 per session, and for that you get refreshments and the opportunity to play many board games, dominoes and cribbage. Please support this venture if you possibly can. Friends of members are welcome for same attendance fee.

Annual Lunch

Malcolm Kirby has reserved the match room at the Leighton Buzzard Golf Club for Friday 23rd March.

You should have found the Booking Form with the email that this newsletter was sent with - or in your envelope for those who are not on email. Please complete the form and send to Malcolm Kirby together with the required deposit as soon as possible. Last year a number of attendees suggested that a choice of two or three courses would be nice - hence this year you can choose your preference. The price is a very reasonable £24.00 for a three course meal and £21.00 for two courses, both including coffee or tea with after-dinner mint. (If you wish you can pay the total amount initially by cheque or BACS - however if you choose the latter you still need to send the completed form to Malcolm Kirby).

2018 Dates for your Diary

March

- 7 Committee Meeting
- 23 Annual Lunch - Leighton Buzzard Golf Club
- 24 LAWNS OPEN - weather permitting

April

- 7 Official Opening. TO BE CONFIRMED

May

- 19/20 Club 'Mix 'n' Match' Handicap Doubles

- 26/27 Club Ladies Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match'

June

- 2 EACF Wheeler Shield Counties Tournament at Hunstanton
- 9/10 Club Handicap Singles
- 13 Committee Meeting
- 16 CA B-Level Tournament (3 to 8) - Leighton-Linslade

July

- 13 C-Level Tournament (8 to 12) - Leighton-Linslade
- 14 EACF Champion of Champions Tournament - Colchester

August

- 8 Committee Meeting

September

- 1 Club Garden Party and Fun Day at Page's Park (10.00am - 4.00pm)
- 5 Committee Meeting
- 22/23 Club Doubles
- 29/30 Club Singles

November

- 9 AGM & Party

The dates for other events such as League Matches, Inter-Club Shield, 4-Club Charity Tournament, other local Friendlies, etc., will be published in the next newsletter in mid March.

Leighton-Linslade GC B-Level Tournament - 16th June

This competition was initiated in 2014 by Chris Roberts, the Editor of The Croquet Gazette, to try and bring a climax to the series of B-Level Tournaments held throughout the country. Chris's idea was to enlarge the competition by getting more clubs to take part and rationalising the events to allow play from the same handicap. This was finalised at the handicap level 3 to 8.

Winners of each round automatically qualified for a two-day final at the end of the year. The series is now in its fourth year and is very well supported. This year there are 24 tournaments throughout the country. Our round will be on Saturday 16th June and will cater for 12 entries.

To play in any of these events, previously you needed to be a Tournament Member of The Croquet Association which cost upwards of £45.00. The situation has changed substantially as from this year, and the new membership requirements are detailed in the following paragraphs.

The Croquet Association - New Membership Arrangements

We received an announcement from The Croquet Association back in October 2017 which was sent out to all members.

Our club is a member of The Croquet Association. We pay an annual CA levy (£10.50) for every member which comes out of your annual club subscription and also covers us for insurance purposes. This situation continues this year. However, as from this year, all members of CA clubs have been offered Standard Membership of the Croquet Association at **no extra cost to the club or yourself**. This will enable all croquet players to become part of the wider family of croquet through the national governing

body, which will ensure that all croquet voices are heard. The following is part of the introductory information from the CA that was circulated to you all.

*The benefits to members of taking up this offer include:
Free Croquet Gazette mailed to each member for the first year of membership, so they can keep up to date with everything in the 'Croquet world'. There will be new pages tailor-made for new CA members.*

Access to the online Tournament Entry System enabling swift, accurate entry to participating tournaments.

Opportunities to gain awards based on both croquet skills and other contributions to the game.

Maintenance by Members of their own records, including handicaps.

Voting rights which deal with current issues and future policy, so they'll be able to influence CA policy and have a hand in developing the future of our fascinating sport.

Access to the Members' Area of the CA Website (which includes the CA Directory, CA Minutes & Papers, Selection Event Availability, Surveys and Voting and Membership administration).

What's more, by joining in, more members will help to support and determine what the CA does in promoting and developing the sport we all enjoy. Some of the most important services provided by the CA include:

Running the CA shop, which caters for the majority of both club and member croquet needs (equipment, clothing, literature, stationery, etc.).

Providing free promotional materials (including glossy posters and leaflets introducing the public the AC and GC).

Providing Public Liability and Professional Indemnity and Employers Liability Insurance for clubs and federations at no extra cost.

Providing grants and loans to clubs to support their development.

Coordinating the CA Fixtures List for the benefit of all clubs relying on tournament income and all tournament players.

To facilitate this, the CA is implementing a new, online Membership Database system. The new system will provide facilities for both clubs and individual members to create and amend their own data.

In order to accept club members as members of the CA, the CA needs to hold personal details. This includes name and address details, as well as email addresses where known. These will be held by the CA in encrypted form on the new system, which will be secured against unauthorised access and not passed to any organisation that isn't a member of the CA.

It is up to individual members to decide whether or not they wish to take up CA membership - hence the form that I sent to all members.

As of now we have 46 club members. Two have recently moved away and for one of our members, LLCC is not her primary club - leaving 43. I am very pleased to say that I have received information from 40 members - only three members did not respond. Even if you have no future thoughts of taking part in competitions outside our club events, it is important that as many members as possible become 'standard members' of the Croquet Association, as apart from the benefits mentioned above, we as a club intend to apply for grants from the CA and the more members who belong to the CA, the better.

Leighton-Linslade High Handicap (C-Level) Tournament - 13th July

The C-Level tournament is aimed specifically at those players whose handicap falls between 8-12, designed to give the less experienced player a chance to play in open competition, and hopefully to tempt them into entering more senior Croquet Association events.

This will be our fourth C-Level event - last year's was won by Tracy Martin from Letchworth. The event is organised similarly to the B-Level Tournament. There is a small entry fee.

The event was much enjoyed by all competitors and resulted in some exciting croquet from all concerned throughout an enjoyable, friendly and sociable day's play. The date for this year's tournament is 13th July.

EACF Leagues

The League has been running for many years and has not really changed all that much, apart from the introduction of the Level League some years ago in addition to the Handicap League. Over the last couple of seasons, there have been some problems regarding last minute date changes; and the Level League has developed to the stage where a number of clubs with a good compliment of low level handicap players (2 and under) has meant that other clubs are really just making the numbers up!

The League organisers are very aware of this situation and have drawn up some proposals which are designed to remove the above problems - and furthermore to encourage the mid-range (3-8 players) by starting a third League. This has generally been agreed and your committee has decided to enter a team for the new mid-range League, and the usual Handicap League. We will not be entering the Level League. More details in due course.

Croquet Association Inter-Club Murphy Shield Draw

This is the tournament that we won in 2016 - there are 23 clubs entered from across England. We are in the Southern block. We are not involved in the preliminary round that reduces the number of teams to 16. Our first match will be against either Roehampton or High Wycombe - probably some time in late May/early June.

New Knockout Trophy Event for 2018

We will be running a Knockout Singles competition during the 2018 season. This will start in April and run through until September. All members will be invited to take part and full details will be published shortly before the season commences. Ross Bagni has offered to host the series, so look out for further details in due course.

New Licence with Leighton-Linslade Town Council

Further to comments made at the AGM regarding our new Licence with the Town Council, all members will have received the information from our Chairman Malcolm Kirby back in November stating that we have now received a signed copy of our new Licence which is dated from 1st April 2017. The Licence contains all the clauses which we negotiated. Members who would like to view a copy of the Licence are requested to contact Chairman Malcolm.

Lawn Maintenance

In our sixth year of looking after the lawns during the close season, we became more proficient and knowledgeable as to what needs to be done to maintain, and over the longer term to improve our lawns - aside from the unfortunate error by your 'experts' who managed to apply a bag of weed killer to some sections of lawns 1 and 2 at the start of last season!!

Under our new Licence we are no longer responsible for sole maintenance of the lawns during the winter months - the work will co-operatively be carried out between the Council and the Club. We are very grateful as the extent of the work was tending to be somewhat beyond us over the last couple of years.

Under our new arrangement we have scarified the damaged areas mentioned above and re-seeded and top dressed these. We are pleased to say that they are responding well - the bare areas have almost recovered and should be fine for the start of the season.

Also, the Council Groundstaff have mowed the lawns a number of times to date, and aerated them back in November. We have a moss problem on a couple of the lawns - however treatment will be carried out in due course.

Membership Form and Newsletter

It's Membership Renewal time!!

Please include your email address when you complete this year's membership form. The newsletter will normally be distributed by email. As per 2017 please mark on your membership form if you are happy to print out your own copies of any other forms which may be required. Postage costs are now very expensive and we would rather spend it on the club than the Post Office.

Our Treasurer advises she is happy to accept Payment by BACS as well as by cheque. Please note the requirements on the Membership Form concerning this. YOU STILL NEED TO SEND THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY.

Also please add your mobile telephone number. This is very handy for chasing up those who forget they have entered a competition! - and also for members to arrange visits to the lawns outside of the regular playing sessions.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - 2018 SEASON

I/we wish to join / rejoin the club.

Name(s):

Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Tel No: Mobile No:

Date: Email:

I am happy to receive all communication by email, including 'return forms': YES NO

A subscription for the full season is £75 per person. Potential new members may also pay a £5 fee for two trial sessions. This fee will be deducted if full membership is subsequently taken out.

I / we enclose a cheque for £..... payable to 'Leighton Linslade Croquet Club'.

If you wish to pay by BACS you still need to send the form to the Membership Secretary.

The details are: Leighton Linslade Croquet Club
09-01-54
54393482

Please return this form and cheque to: Judith Cundell (Membership Secretary), 18 Saxons Close, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. LU7 3LT. Tel: 01525 374620. Email: judith.cundell@btinternet.com