



LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

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NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2010 Volume 11 Issue 3

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"A Busy Season So Far"



The Opening Day was dry if somewhat chilly as a hardy but enthusiastic contingent of club members witnessed Mayor Councillor Karen Cursons cutting the ribbon to open the third lawn and then very effectively striking the first ball straight through the hoop!

Welcome to the third newsletter of 2010. Our 11th season at Page's Park got off to an early start on 20th March, followed by the official opening of the season and the third lawn on 28th March by Town Mayor Karen Cursons. Although generally dry the weather for the first few weeks was decidedly chilly, and April and some of May followed suit - and with everyone geared up for the cold winds, the end of May produced a heat wave! Despite the cold, all events up to Littlehampton were dry and continued without interruption. Littlehampton was another story - see George Lawson's report later.

Playing Sessions

As a number of members are still asking what are the playing sessions for 2010, despite a notice posted in the clubroom, here is the information again.

The Committee agreed that 'official' playing sessions for 2010 will be as follows:

- 10-12 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
- 2-4 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
- 10-1.00 Wednesday
- 10-1.00 Thursday
- 10-12 Saturday
- 2-5 Saturday
- 10-12 Sunday (Singles Handicap)
- 2-5 Sunday

Playing sessions can be flexible to work around the weather - either good or bad - e.g., if morning is wet we can regroup pm or even on another day; if good then stay on as required. Also, members are able to go along for practice or self-organised group sessions at will.

The only provisos are that a) if the Groundstaff are working on the lawns, then they will have priority and members will have to wait until they are

finished; and b) certain Mondays and Fridays when League and Friendly matches are scheduled when no club play will be possible.

2010 Dates for your Diary

June

- 18 EACF League - LL 'A' v Letchworth (Away)
- 21 Inter-Club Shield - Nottingham (Home)
- 25 EACF League - LL 'B' v Wrest Park (Home)

July

- 2 EACF League - LL 'A' v LL 'B' (obviously on our lawns!)
- 5 EACF League - LL 'B' v Letchworth (Away)
- 8 EACF League - LL 'A' v Wrest Park (Away)
- 10/11 Club Handicap Singles (see later note)
- 15 Anglia in Bloom - see below
- 16 EACF League - LL 'B' v Northampton (Away)
- 17/18 Hunstanton Friendly (Away)
- 23 EACF League - LL 'B' v Watford (Home)
- 25 Club Fun Day
- 28 Committee Meeting

August

- 2 Letchworth Friendly (Home)
- 7 Club Garden Party
- 14/15 Club Mens Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match' 'The John Fogg Trophy'
- 16 EACF League - LL 'A' v Northampton (Home)
- 20 Watford Friendly Home.

September

- 25/26 Club Doubles
- 29 Committee Meeting

October

- 2/3 Club Singles

November

- 12 AGM & Party

Club Coaching Day. Why is Tom clasping a cloth to Diana's leg? She had just fallen against the fence and bruised her leg badly.



Thursday July 15th is the day that the 'Anglia in Bloom' judges will be inspecting the town. They are expected to travel on the railway sometime during the afternoon between 1.45pm and 4.30pm. The town's AIB organisers have suggested that it might be nice if there was some croquet going on at that time. So if you are interested please come along and play that afternoon and please wear whites.

Third Lawn

Our groundstaff worked wonders by even getting the third lawn ready for play. The extended snow followed by too much wet stuff really delayed preparatory work, and then along came the dandelion plague! It also didn't help with footballers playing on the lawns just before our season started, plus some vandalism on the new grass that was just establishing itself. We needed to dig out the offending area, and replace it with turf. Thanks are due to David Ball, John Thorp and John Cundell for this work. Use of the lawn will and has improved matters, so please take note of the request in the clubroom and use the third lawn regularly. (This also rests lawns one and two. Continual play on lawn one in particular, which most members go to without thinking, will cause this surface to deteriorate even quicker).

It's a shame that lawn three's surface is not up to standard as yet, but continual use by us together with current regular mowing, and hopefully in due course, rolling, spiking, etc., by the groundstaff when they are no longer heavily engaged in the 'Anglia in Bloom' preparatory work, will improve the surface. Long standing members will recall that usually a couple of years is required before the surface reaches a consistent playing quality.

SEASON SO FAR

Soham Indoor - 13/14th March

We had two teams entered on the Saturday – David and Jean Ball and Peter and Irene Davis. They reported an enjoyable and busy day and remarked that the competition standard was high. Organiser Chris Howell reported on the event in the news section on the EACF website as follows and we thank her for permission to reproduce part of her report.

"The indoor weekend at the Ross Peers Sports Centre in Soham provided a pre-season warm up for participating teams from the region. Ball positioning, blocking the

opponents, jump shots, team tactics were skills which had to be brought into play in order to feature high up in the final placings.

On Saturday teams enjoyed the handicapped competition with players from Hunstanton, always strong opponents, Letchworth and Leighton Linlade and Bury St Edmunds in contention. With free shots strategically used to gain dominance, any of the teams could have taken the lead. As the day progressed the Bury and Letchworth teams edged ahead of the others, finishing on equal points but on net hoop count back, Andy Allen and Ian Mantle of Letchworth just beat the Bury players, Michael Percival and David Crawford, by one hoop to take the trophy.

The Hunstanton team of Pat Bailey and Timothy Race finished a creditable third. Timothy, still only 14, played with concentration and accuracy particularly when playing jump shots, even from a distance most were successful. We wish Timothy every success when he represents England against Ireland next month."

Club Dinner - 17th March

The annual dinner was at 'The Chef in Waiting', Milton Keynes. It was held later this year to try and offset the bad weather conditions we had experienced previously - obviously a good decision. Around 30 members attended and a variety of opinions have been expressed as to the evening's fare, but a very enjoyable evening was had. Thanks are due to David and Jean Ball for organising the event.

EACF Annual General Meeting

On Saturday 20th March, John Cundell and Tony Wells, forewent the chance to play on the opening day of the season, and instead travelled to Bury St Edmunds for the Annual General Meeting of the East Anglian Croquet Federation. There were upwards of 20 members present from EACF clubs with representatives from Watford and Letchworth as well as ourselves. The normal business of any AGM was conducted efficiently and speedily. LLCC members may be interested to know that there are currently 27 clubs in the EACF and the latest to join is Fromus CC near Saxmundham. Terrey Sparks, who was of course the organiser of the excellent Friendly with Hunstanton in 2009, was intending to stand down as Secretary of the EACF but he has agreed to stay on, a decision welcomed by all present. The National Trust event held at Ickworth for many years, which a number of



You can tell that the Come and Try Day was cold by the clothing - except for David Ball! David and Jean Ball on lawn 1 and George and Margaret Lawson on lawn 2 show visitors the basics of golf croquet.

our members have attended, will most likely be hosted by a different club each year from now on. More news on this when we receive it. Chris Howell, who organises the golf croquet indoor events at Soham would like some feedback from clubs as to the preferred format. Perhaps if any member has a thought on this he/she could let Tony W or John C know. The dates for this forthcoming winter at Soham are 13/14th November and 12/13th March 2011.

A question in AOB raised the subject of Handicap 'Bandits' from some clubs who did not run or organise their handicaps satisfactorily. A busy discussion followed during which John and Tony explained our system of using 'Club' and 'Competition' Handicaps which was received with some interest.

It was pleasant to meet members of the committee and delegates from other clubs. If any member wishes to join Tony and John next year the date to put in your diary is 19th March 2011.

Club Coaching Day - April 9th

Wow - we were so fortunate! After a dreadfully cold Easter some of us had anticipated a similarly cold and wet day for the club's first major coaching day to be organised by solely club members - namely Richard Keighley, Eve Buckingham, David Ball and John Cundell - all now recognised CA club coaches. Someone was smiling on us as we were greeted by a wonderful blue sky, light winds and temperatures in the mid sixties. Attending the course were 16 members - all considered to be in the Improvers category. After an introduction from Richard, and some information on warming up, grip, stance, etc., there followed a short demonstration by John Cundell on split shots, after which players were grouped into fours, each with one coach. Amongst subjects covered during the two hour morning period were the drive shot, accuracy, stalking, lining up, concentration, positioning skill, running straight and angled hoops - plus advice and practise on stop shots, roll shots and jump shots.

After a break for lunch, the afternoon session covered courtesy and etiquette during play, out-of-play balls, non-striking and striking faults, the halfway law, playing the wrong ball, push and pull shots, double taps and crush shots. Finally a game was played by each group with analysis of every move and shot by the participants - a very interesting and informative exercise.

The enthusiastic thank you at the end of the day and

later gifts of wine for the coaches from the members showed that the day had been worthwhile and we are sure that many of the tips learned will improve individual performance and more enjoyable games.

Since this session, David Ball, Eve Buckingham and John Cundell have assisted Richard Keighley in coaching days at Watford and Dunstable.

From Chairman Tom Miller:

"We really are so lucky to have more than four club coaches as members of LLCC. Even though I had been on a CA club coach course, I still learnt something new from our in-house experts. It was a very enjoyable day and I would urge all members to take advantage of this free 'service' next time it takes place."

Come and Try Day

The first 'Come and Try Day' we have held for three years was on May Bank Holiday Monday from 10.00 - 4.00pm. The day was bitterly cold, yet we still had a number of hardy souls who came along to try out Golf Croquet - some from Leighton Buzzard, and others from Wing, Edlesborough and Heath and Reach. We are hopeful that two or three who expressed a firm interest will join.

Thanks are due to those members who posted information around the town and arranged for details to be included in the surrounding village newsletters; and also to the relatively large turnout of club members, especially considering the weather, who introduced the visitors to our club and the sport.

Stony Stratford Friendly Away - reported by David Ball

Friday 7th May and eight members turned up at Stony Stratford for a pre-arranged friendly match. As we were on time and their members were late I suggested that we gave them a hand to erect their gazebos.

SS members had visited Broadwas Club for a day's croquet the previous week and they played by taking a partner from the opposing team and changing around all day long. They explained this to me and I put it to our members present and they all seemed happy with the idea. Although the sun did appear occasionally it was a rather cold day but that didn't deter the enjoyment we experienced on the day.

We stopped for lunch between games and then carried on in the afternoon until we had finished all our games.



The Mix 'n' Match Handicap Doubles brought together Sheila Beal and Sally who won their block, plus Peter Stevens and John Thorp who won the other block. The final resulted in a win for John and Peter, watched by a relaxed crowd. Above, Tom Miller and Diana Phelps discuss tactics; whilst Sheila Guest and Bryan Ferris seem to be having a jolly time!

Parkinson and Roger Nicholls, reasonable weather and an excellent opportunity to match one's skills against other clubs – plus meet some very nice people. If you are interested in taking part in any of these B-Level matches then ask Richard, Eve or John for further information.

Mix 'n Match Doubles Handicap - 15th May

This event was inaugurated in 2009 as a way to encourage members of all ability levels to get involved in a light-hearted yet competitive event – and to introduce the concept of Handicap Doubles. Last year's entry comprised 18 – this year we had an increase to 24.

We were lucky to enjoy one of the first relatively warm days of May – and at 9.00am 22 members assembled for the draw of partners (apart from two who thought the start was 10.00am, however a telephone call roused them from their slumber and they duly arrived in less than 30 minutes!) Just before the draw John Cundell outlined the procedure for the day and informed the players of the necessary amendments to handicaps due to the fact that a considerable proportion of entrants had not managed to play the necessary ten handicap games since the start of the season which had been decreed by last year's committee as a requirement for entry into club handicap competitions. The draw took place and there were some interesting combinations - the pairs were placed into two blocks of six.

Play started just after 9.30 and all three lawns were in use. Block play continued until 4.15pm. Sheila Beal and Sally Clay headed Block 1 with Sheila Guest and Bryan Ferris second; in Block 2 winners were Peter Stevens and John Thorp with Tom Miller and Diana Phelps runners-up. In the timed Semis, the Beal/Clay team beat Miller/Phelps by 3-2, and Stevens/Thorp beat Guest/Ferris by 7-5.

The Final started at 5.15pm and resulted in a fine win for Peter Stevens and John Thorp by 7-4. Many of the entrants stayed to watch and warmly applauded the winners.

The event was a success and was obviously enjoyed by those present. Tom Miller thanked those who had set up

The winners of the day were Neville Crook from SS and our Sally Clay who had won all their games. A shoot out to the centre post would determine the overall winner. Neville went first and only reached two thirds of the way, Sally followed and passed his ball reaching nearer to the hoop and making her the winner of the day. Well done Sally.

At this stage we stopped for refreshments including lovely home-made cakes.

Neville thanked us for coming and the pleasure they had enjoyed during the day. On behalf of LLCC I thanked them for their hospitality including the flow of tea, coffee, biscuits, etc., and that we were looking forward to seeing them at Page's Park in due course.

B-Level at Watford - 10th May

This event at Watford was their second golf croquet One-Day B-Class Tournament. This is singles level play for those with handicaps of 3 to 7. There were 12 players divided into two blocks – from Leighton Linlade, Watford, Reigate, Colchester, Ealing and Broadwas. We had five players entered; David Ball, Eve Buckingham, John Cundell, Richard Keighley and Roger Stroud. Handicaps of the players present consisted of three 3's; two 4's; two 5's; and five 7's. The standard of play was very good – and for those who had not played in one of these competitions before, David and Roger, found the experience particularly rewarding – and we all learnt a lot. Richard and Roger won three of their five matches; Eve, David and John won two of theirs. Richard reached the semi final and finished overall third – a repeat of his last year's result.

An excellent day, well organised by Watford's Ian



Watford Friendly Away on 17th May was a lovely summer's day for the Leighton Linslade team of Tony Stammers, John Thorp, John Cundell, Diana Phelps, Eve Buckingham, Jean Ball, Yvonne Banks and Val Jeffers. David Ball was helping out Watford's organiser Ron Drew (not pictured). Right, Jean runs a hoop with Eve and John watching.



the lawns and equipment at 7.45am!; the ladies (Val, Eve, Jean and Margaret) who had provided a fine spread of cakes, and Judith Cundell for organising play and scoring.

There are a few changes that we will have to look out for next year – certainly a time limit for each match. Most of the games were considerably longer than normal social play which is to be expected as handicap games are obviously designed to even out skill levels and the standard of play within the club has recently increased markedly.

Watford Friendly Away - 17th May

A warm May morning found our team of John Cundell and Eve Buckingham, Tony Stammers and Jean Ball, John Thorp and Val Jeffers, and Diana Phelps and Yvonne Banks on our way to Watford's Cassiobury Park. Although we were a trifle early, (10.00am) as Watford were not expecting us until 10.30, we still received the usual warm welcome at Watford from Roger Nicholls and Ron Drew. They were ably assisted by our David Ball, and it wasn't long before the first round of doubles got under way. This was halved, as was the second round, so we sat down for lunch. That was our undoing as the third round was a clean sweep for Watford. Watford struck again in Round 4 with three wins, so the overall result was a win for Watford by 11 – 5. Our thanks for the fine hospitality and the day was rounded off with a tea and a fine selection of cakes.

EACF League 'A' - Stony Stratford Home - reported by George Lawson

Our first League match of 2010 was for our 'A' team at home to last year's runners-up Stony Stratford. When the

helpers arrived just before 9.00am to set up the gazebo, etc., it had all been completed by Tony Wells (who possibly suffers from insomnia) as he had arrived at 7.30am and set it all up on his own.

The weather was very good for the whole day, in fact too warm at times. Our team was Richard Keighley, Eve Buckingham, Val Jeffers and Don Barrett. Stony Stratford's team was Alfred Sawbridge, John Burrridge, Roy Healey and Rex Hale – who arrived at around 10.00am.

After introductions and morning coffee, play got under way at 10.30am. The first round was not very good for us as Eve Buckingham was the only winner. The second round was slightly better as Richard and Eve were winners. It was then lunch break at which stage we were 3-5 down.

After lunch there was a slight improvement as Eve and Val were winners, and then onto the last round of the singles, where Richard, Val and Don won making the score eight games each.

Into the doubles where we needed to win both games for the match, but unfortunately it was only a win for Richard and Don, so the result was now nine games each.

A play off was then necessary which has been changed from the centre pin shoot out. Now both captains decide whether they play a singles or doubles as the decider, which is played from corner No.1 across the court and through hoop 3 – in other words a long distance 13th hoop. It was agreed on a doubles. Stony Stratford won the toss and went first with a very good shot from their first player. Unfortunately we could not equal it and after a very few more shots SS went through the hoop and won the match 10-9.

Thank you George. We knew this was going to be a tough match as last year's EACF runners-up were SS – and they



At the League 'B' match with Stony Stratford, John Guest attempts a power shot - watched by Tony Stammers and SS's Roy Healey. Sheila Guest and Diana Phelps discuss their next shot, watched by SS's Neville Crook.





lost the Final by a similar play off. A shame we didn't win but an encouraging result that shows our 'A' team is up with the best at this very early stage of the competition.

EACF League 'B' - Stony Stratford Away

Exactly one week after the 'A' team match against Stony Stratford, the 'B' team of John and Sheila Guest, Diana Phelps and Tony Stammers made the short journey to Stony Stratford for their match. Stony fielded a revised team with Marion Holland and Neville Crook joining Rex Hale and Roy Healey.

The first round proved to set the scene for the day with a clean sweep to SS; however a determined fight back in round two saw Diana, Tony and John winning their matches. Unfortunately after lunch SS came out fighting and took all the matches in the remaining two rounds, and finished off the day with two wins in the doubles as well. The overall result was a win for Stony Stratford by 15-3.

LL's team plus the sole supporter, John Cundell, joined in the local club's celebrations by enjoying the fine tea and cakes.

EACF League 'A' - Watford Home

An absolutely glorious sunny day greeted John Cundell, David Ball, Richard Keighley and Roger Stroud on 4th June as they assembled early in the morning at Page's Park to set out the equipment etc., for the match against Watford. It was a pity that this work had to be carried out by the players and it would have been nice if some of the other able bodied League team members had turned up to help and support.

Scorer George Lawson, plus the regular sideline scorers, arrived shortly, together with Watford's team of John Walker, Ron Drew, John Bee and Helen Walker. After they had refreshed themselves from their journey and enjoyed a few minutes practise, play commenced shortly after 10.00am.

The first singles round resulted in wins for John, Roger and David – round two with wins for David and Richard – round three for John and Roger. As you can see a closely fought struggle to this point, so at lunch the score was in favour of LL by 7-5.

The final singles round after lunch resulted in wins for David and Richard so as we went to the doubles, we needed one win to take the overall result and Watford

The League 'A' match against Watford was our first League win for a long time. Above right, Richard Keighley produces an exciting shot - Richard partnered by Roger Stroud. At right, two of the scorers enjoying the super weather - Yvonne Banks and Sally Clay.



needed two to take the match to the dreaded play off.

David and John went off to a flying start and after just ten minutes were 5-1 up. There was a struggle over the next few hoops but they stayed ahead and won 7-2. So the match was secure. Richard and Roger were at this time 3-5 down and their game continued for some considerable time and some wonderful croquet was played by both teams as they clawed their way back to the 13th hoop. Another fight over this final hoop resulted in a fine win for Richard and Roger – so the overall result was a win for LL 'A' over a strong Watford team by 11-7.

This was the the club's first League win for some time and it was a shame that there were not more supporters present from the remaining club members to witness a fine day's play and a good result.

Watford then joined us for tea and cakes which rounded off a fine day.

Our thanks are due to Val Jeffers and Jean Ball who brought along the cakes – and a big thank you to George Lawson who kept proceedings on the straight and narrow, and an even bigger thank you to sideline scorers Irene and Peter Stevens, Sally Clay, Yvonne Banks and Diana Phelps – and to the sole supporter – Judith Cundell.

Littlehampton Friendly - 1st June - reported by George Lawson

The team travelled down on Bank Holiday Monday, and comprised Yvonne Banks, Diana Phelps, Sally Clay, Val Jeffers, Sheila and John Guest, and Margaret and George Lawson. Margaret and George had a pre-arranged meeting with Michael Holdsworth, the Littlehampton Captain, on Monday afternoon to make plans for Tuesday's order of play.

The club has a pleasant club house which is slightly



larger than ours, and five courts. It was decided that four handicap doubles would be played with no time limits, and this would be repeated until all pairs had played their opposite numbers, with a break for tea and biscuits after the first doubles, and another break for a fish and chip lunch after the second - depending on the time factor. Also, if there was time remaining then it might be possible to play some singles.

Tuesday morning arrived and all players were present at 10.00am, and it started to rain, so it was waterproofs on and play started with the condition that if the rain became too heavy, play would stop. When we stopped for tea and biscuits - so did the rain! - so we quickly started again - and again, so did the rain! At the second break at 1.00pm the expected fish and chips should have arrived. After some hasty telephone calls to the chippy, it was apparent they would be delayed. Hence the next doubles round was started, and we broke off play at 1.30pm on the arrival of the food. At least it had stopped raining so some of us sat outside. Play restarted at about 2.30pm and the doubles matches were soon completed.

It was then agreed to play eight singles, by which time the rain had stopped but it was still cloudy and breezy. The matches finished at about 4.00pm and the results were as follows:

Doubles - Littlehampton 13, LL 3 - (Sally and Val 2, Margaret and George 1)

Singles - Littlehampton 7, LL 1 - (Sally)

The results may look disappointing, however there were many close games - in the doubles six games went to 7-6 and three to 7-5, and the overall hoop score was 101 to 78, a difference of 23 in 16 games. In the singles two games went to 7-6 and one to 7-5, and the overall hoop score was 52 to 37, a difference of 15 in 8 games.

We were then served with tea, cakes and scones. We left at 4.45pm after a very pleasant day, which was enjoyed by us all, despite the weather, as they are a very friendly club, and it would be nice to go back again another year.

B-Level at Newport - 5th June - reported by Richard Keighley

I finished fourth out of a field of 16 in a Golf Croquet 'B' class tournament at Newport on this sweltering June Saturday.

There were plenty of familiar faces, notably Martin and Linda Ambrose from Hunstanton but formerly of Downham, Judith Hand from Chelmsford, Ann Dennis and Maureen Croft from Watford with their respective



Littlehampton and LL players. Above: George Lawson waits for his first shot of the match.

husbands, Edme Robinette (the original League organiser) from Bury, Charlie Blyth from Downham and representatives from Purley, Colchester and Newport itself.

Two blocks of 8 meant 7 games for everybody. In my group, Martin Ambrose and Stephen Dennis each won 6 games out of 7 but Martin qualified for the Final on a "who has beaten whom" basis. I won 5 of my 7 games, losing to both Martin and Stephen. In the other group Clive Cassidy won 6 of his 7 games with the rest nowhere. Martin beat Clive 7-5 in the Final, apparently a repeat of last year's Final which Martin also won.

Games were double-banked on three lawns with a certain amount of sitting out, timed at 35 minutes each with no stops as we were encouraged to dodge hoops if necessary and work out a new route. It was a long day with a 9.15am start with the Final finishing shortly before 6pm. Did I mention that a slap up lunch was also provided?

COMING UP Annual Garden Party

Once again we will be holding a Garden Party for members plus guest(s) at Diana Phelps house 7th August. Our thanks to Diana for her generous hospitality - full details and the booking form are with this newsletter. Don't delay - complete it today!

Inter-Club Championship/Shield

We entered the Inter-Club Championship in 2009 and gained an insight into the skill levels of 'top' clubs. This event was designed to give emerging competitive players their first taste of the higher levels of our sport, and for a number of clubs, including ours, the difference in skill was a bit of a shock and an eye-opener.

Accordingly the Croquet Association has created a new event this year which will appeal more to clubs such as ours at the current stage of our development. It is to be run along very similar lines to the Championship but with the restriction that players must not have a handicap below 2, and also that only one player can have a 2 handicap. Also, the total handicap of the team of four must be at least 12. The competition is to be called the Golf Croquet Inter-Club Shield and we have entered for 2010. The initial draw as to which club we are to play was made back in April by the Croquet Association organisers. We

have been put into the North and Midlands region and our first match is against Nottingham. This is on 21st June at Page's Park so why not come along and support your team. When we win our next round, the quarter finals will be against Belsay Hall, Northumberland!

ODDS AND ENDS

Club Handicap Events

In both the January and March Newsletters, it was reported to you that it was agreed at the September 2009 meeting of your General Committee that all members who wish to take part in club handicap competitions must play at least 10 handicap games, preferably against a variety of players, in the available sessions in that season prior to the competitions.

At the Handicap Mix' n' Match Doubles approximately half the entries had not fulfilled the requirement therefore after much deliberation by your committee it was decided to penalise the defaulters with a two-point handicap penalty.

Please note that the rule will be applied for the forthcoming Handicap Singles on 10/11th July with no exception. You must have played at least 10 handicap games, preferably against a variety of players prior to the competition. Handicap games played by League players and marked on their green cards will be taken into account.

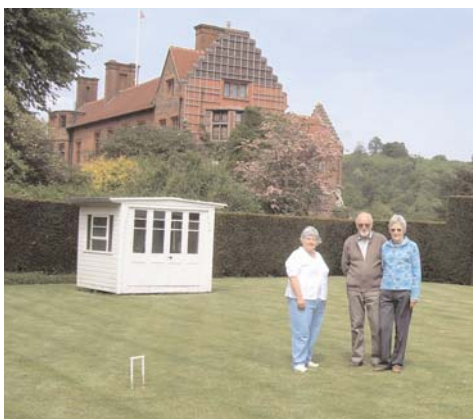
If you cannot get along to Handicap sessions you can play a handicap singles game at any time, as long as you can find an adversary of course, and if there is a lawn free, which is usually the case now we have three lawns. Please do not play singles in these non-handicap sessions once you have completed your ten games.

Ball Protection!

We would like to remind all members that the policy of returning balls to the vicinity of the clubhouse from lawn two - and now lawn three - is essential if there is no-one waiting to play. Lawn three is a tidy way from the clubhouse so it is even more important that the balls are not left vulnerable. They are expensive items - around £200 a set!

Hoop Placing/Removal

On a number of occasions recently incorrect hoop positioning has occurred. The 'Townsend's' (the name is on the top bar of the hoop) must go on Lawn 1 - nearest the clubroom; the 'Davidson's' on Lawn 2; and the Jaques on Lawn 3. Also, if you look closely at the hoops you will note a small number between 1 and 6 in black felt-pen marked at the top of the hoop. They should be placed in the normal



On a recent U3A trip to Chartwell, John and Judith Cundell and Erica Fogg were informed they could play croquet. Unfortunately the groundsman had disappeared and the clubroom was locked! Photo by Amy Worden.

order of play for the first six hoops. The reason for this is that the hoop sets have different shapes and spacing on their pegs, and using them incorrectly leaves large holes and incorrect spacing, which leads to loose hoops and extra maintainance.

Also, when removing hoops, please don't waggle them sideways to loosen them as again this makes the holes large. Use the hoop lifters provided for this purpose. It takes a few seconds and saves literally hours for the stalwart club members who have to repair the damage. It also makes it easier on your back!

Locking Up

On at least two occasions recently members have departed without checking the 'locking-up' list that is displayed in the Clubroom.

On one instance a plastic chair was left out overnight - not the end of the world - but it does demonstrate that there is a lack of care.

The second occurrence was much more important. The roller shutter door to the toilets had been pulled down but not locked. It is appreciated that this may well have been left open by a third party, but this was found early one morning before any other regular user of the pavilion was present, following one of our previous day's afternoon session. Just check if you are the last to leave that everything has been put away and all secured.

Club Badges

There are still some Club Badges available. If you want one then get in quick as the supplies are running low. They are 3ins in diameter, cloth embroidered and can be ironed or sewn on to items of clothing. The cost per badge is £3.50. Contact me on 01525 400512 or email john.cundell@btinternet.com.

Telephone List

You will find a list of members' telephone numbers on the back of the top of the 'Garden Party' form for your use in arranging sessions with other members if you so wish.

Visitor/Guest Reminder

The committee would like to remind all members that you may bring along friends, relations and visitors free - on up to three occasions during the season. Also, if you bring a guest, please try and come at a quiet time. Although we try to be welcoming to all, it is not fair to paying members to be sitting out while beginners/guests are being taken over the court. Also, please mark all visitors on the register as 'friend of

And please don't forget to mark the registers - don't just assume that someone else has done it. There are a number of members who never mark the register. It only takes a few seconds when you arrive. It is important that the Council is aware of how well used the courts are.

Thanks from Len Buckingham

Len would like to express his grateful thanks to all those who have sent cards and enquired after his health over the last few months - all very much appreciated.

