



Wrest Park Silsoe Bedfordshire

October 2009

newsletter

Club competition winners

Steel Cup (Advanced)	Rod Ashwell Runner-up: Bryan Harral
Archer Cup (Handicap)	David Marsh Runners-up: Rod Ashwell and John Bevington
Ashwell Cup (All England h'cap)	Tim Brewer Runner-up: Terry Mahoney
Thomas Philip Earl de Grey Cup (B level)	Terry Mahoney Runners-up: Geoff Strutt and Steve Jones
14 point advanced	Bryan Harral Runner-up: Rod Ashwell
De Grey Plate (14 pt h'cap)	Richard Keighley Runners-up: David Marsh and Cliff Hayes
Golf croquet	Rod Ashwell Runner-up: Eric Audsley

In four competitions one player won both semi-finals so there were two runners-up. The Archer Cup was won by David Marsh at his first attempt, his semi-final opponents only scoring one point between them. In the Ashwell Cup Tim won both semi-finals, which left Terry to play Elaine Newman for the other place in the area final. The closest finish was in the Steel Cup. With all four clips on the peg, Bryan was joined up with a cut rush to the peg. Rod turned down the shot at partner and just nicked the edge of a double to snatch the win.

Don't forget to bring all the club trophies to the Annual Dinner for the presentation, where they will be joined by the winner's trophies for the Beds and Herts League and the Inter Counties 2nd division.

Golf croquet Inter Club final

26 September



L-R: Samir Patel (S), Howard Cheyne (S), Tim King (A), William Gee (A), Rachel Rowe (A), Don Beck (S), Ray Mounfield (A), Stephen Mulliner (S)

The finalists, Ashby and Surbiton, were the same as last year, and we were again asked if we could host the event. The hoops were moved to the positions last used for the May tournament and were very firm in the ground, and the recent lack of rain made the lawns relatively fast.

The format was one doubles and six singles, each being best of three. It turned out to be a close-run thing, with the outcome depending on the deciding game between Ashby's Tim King and Surbiton's Stephen Mulliner. After Tim failed hoop 1 Stephen established a lead which he maintained to the end, and Surbiton won the match 4-3 to retain the trophy.

EACF Leagues playoff

26 September

Wrest Park's team of Bryan Harral, Tim Brewer, Geoff Strutt and Elaine Newman travelled to Hunstanton for the playoff against the other League winners Hunstanton and Colchester South. Each team played six games: two doubles and four singles.

The team sadly left their league form at home, losing all their games. The playoff was won by Hunstanton with five wins, one more than Colchester South. Full results and a report can be seen on the EACF website.

Here's to you, Mr Robinson

Earl de Grey (1781-1859), who built the present house, came from Yorkshire. His full title was Thomas Philip Robinson, 2nd Earl de Grey, 3rd Baron Grantham, 6th Baron Lucas.



The memorial of Earl de Grey in the mausoleum in Flitton Church.

He was the son of Thomas Robinson, 2nd Baron Grantham and Foreign Secretary in 1782-83, and Mary Jemima Grey Yorke, younger daughter of Jemima, Marchioness Grey of Wrest Park, granddaughter of the Duke of Kent. The family lived at Newby Park (now Baldersby Park) between Ripon and Thirsk.

Thomas inherited his father's title and estates in 1786. In 1803 he inherited Newby Hall (near Ripon) from a cousin, William Weddell, and changed his name to Weddell. Two years later he married Lady Henrietta Frances Cole, daughter of the 1st Earl of Enniskillen. When he inherited Wrest Park in 1833 on the death of his mother's elder sister Amabel, Countess de Grey, (who had inherited Wrest Park from her mother in 1797) he changed it again to De Grey. He also inherited the Ripon estates of Elizabeth Lawrence of Studley Royal.

Apart from being First Lord of the Admiralty (1834-1835) and Viceroy of Ireland (1841-1844) he was also the first president of the Institute of British Architects. His brother Frederick Robinson was Prime Minister (1827-1828) and became the 1st Earl of Ripon.

Wrest Park was inherited by Thomas's elder daughter Anne, Newby Hall by his younger daughter Mary, and the Earldom and the Studley estates passed to his nephew George Robinson, who married Henrietta Vyner, Mary's daughter. Their son, Frederick Oliver Robinson, the 2nd Marquess of Ripon, was one of the finest game shots of all time (he did little else). When he died in 1923 his titles of Earl de Grey, Earl of Ripon, Marquess of Ripon, Viscount Goderich and Baron Grantham all became extinct.

The house of Studley Royal burned down in 1946 and the grounds, including the park and the ruins of Fountains Abbey, are now owned by the National Trust. Newby Hall is privately owned and open to the public. Baldersby Park became a girl's school in 1925.

For anyone interested in the social history of the landed gentry in the mid-Victorian period and beyond, the book to read is *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* by David Cannadine, which possesses the rare quality of being both informative and entertaining.

Annual Dinner

This will be at the Monna Lisa (*sic*) restaurant in Luton on Friday 27 November at 7.30 for 8 pm. The Monna Lisa is at 36 Guildford Street, on the north side where it crosses Bute Street. The phone number of the restaurant is 01582 516116 and its website is www.monnalisarestaurant.com. There is a large car park (free after 6pm) called the Bute Street Shoppers Car Park between Bute Street and the station. Entrance to the car park is off Church Street/Hitchin Road at the east end of Guildford Street. A map and menu is attached.

For another perspective, go to the Multimap website, enter Bute Street, select Bute Street, Luton and when it appears select Bird's Eye View.

If you are planning to come please contact Rod Ashwell on 01582 504536 or at rod.ashwell@btinternet.com. Partners are very welcome. Numbers are restricted to 30, and the cost will be £23. Please give your preferences for starter and main course from the menu.

Last year's winners should bring their trophies or, if they're not coming, give them to someone who is. Don't forget the Inter Counties and League trophies!

Pictures of Lily

If you want to see the house wrapped up in red ribbon, and more besides, take a look at cricket lover and budding national treasure Lily Allen's *My Fear* video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-wGMLSuX_c&feature=channel

Club's new membership scheme revealed

Become a life member today and enjoy a lifetime of great days out

My opponent's about to peg out

What bad luck - he only joined this year

ENGLISH HERITAGE
Days out worth talking about.

This English Heritage flyer is dominated by a familiar scene which seems to suggest that the "great days out" are spent playing croquet at Wrest Park.

The image must have been deliberately chosen as likely to appeal to the target audience, and it is encouraging to see that the club is regarded as a useful marketing tool.

Indoor croquet at Soham



There will be a full programme of indoor croquet tournaments at Soham over the winter:

Saturday Nov 14	Golf (Christine Howell)
Sunday Nov 15	Golf
Saturday Dec 12	Association (Neil Chalmers)
Sunday Dec 13	Golf
Saturday Jan 16	Association
Sunday Jan 17	Association
Saturday Feb 13	Association
Sunday Feb 14	Association
Saturday Mar 13	Golf
Sunday Mar 14	Golf

There is a tournament on each day, starting at 9am (the Sunday Association tournaments start at 8.30). Each tournament involves seven teams of two, each team playing the others. Play finishes at around 6pm (the golf tournaments finish earlier). The entry fee is £30 per team per day, and the sports centre has a bar and serves basic food. The court is half-size and is made of strips of carpet-like material, with the hoops fixed to metal plates. It is extremely fast.

The format for Association is 14 point handicap doubles, each team having a playing time of 25 minutes, the time being controlled by clocks operated by teams not in play. There is a modified bisque allocation, and teams with a total handicap of 3½ or fewer have to perform mandatory peels. A copy of the rules is attached. The golf tournaments are 13 point handicap with games lasting 40 minutes.

Indoor croquet is a unique experience which all players should try at least once. There is a certain amount of sitting out, and you will have to do a stint as timekeepers. It is fast and furious, and you may find yourself having to run after the ball to save time.

If you would like to have a go, find a willing partner and let me know as soon as possible which date/s you are interested in. I will then forward your entry to Neil or Christine. If you want to find out more from Neil or Christine their contact details are on the EACF website.

New storage unit installed

Dave Smith has very kindly made and recently installed a splendid wooden unit which, we have to admit, was very sorely needed. It has provided us with valuable extra space for some essential items which we can now store more efficiently.

Best of all, it will allow us to easily identify the contents and allow us to dispose of its packaging on delivery, resulting in a tidier pavilion. Our grateful thanks.

John Bevington

16 October 2009