



Vic Rees and Anto Davies, members of the team that won the Longman Cup for the first time in 1964, join this year's winning team: l-r Vic Rees, Cliff Hayes, David Marsh, Tim Brewer, Geoff Strutt, David Morris, Ray Pearcy and Anto Davies.

Annual Dinner 26 November

New year, new venue. 29 members made their way down a narrow lane to the South Beds Golf Club on a cold Friday evening and, having negotiated the metal barrier at the entrance, found their way to the clubhouse. A far cry from our own, with individual parking spaces for officials, photos of all the committee members, trophy cabinets, honours boards and notices regarding dress codes and just about everything else.

There had been a last-minute panic as the chef had walked out not long after the booking, but his replacement did us proud and it turned out to be a most enjoyable evening. After the meal, chairman Tim Brewer awarded the trophies for the club competitions, and the Longman Cup team were joined by Vic Rees and Anto Davies from the 1964 team, Anto having travelled up from Stratford on Avon for the occasion. Many thanks to Eric and Wendy Audsley for organising the event.



John Bevington – Steel Cup



Geoff Strutt – Archer Cup



David Marsh – Ashwell Cup



Geoff Strutt – Earl de Grey Cup



Rod Ashwell – 14 point trophy



Richard Keighley – De Grey Plate



Joining opposite ends of one table suggests that Rosemary Morris and Maureen Watts might use the same hairdresser...



... and joining the two halves of the other table brings husbands and wives closer together. Original photos by John Wheeler.



Rod Ashwell collects the Bottomley Plate and the golf croquet cup.

Club competitions update

Thomas Philip Earl **Geoff Strutt**
de Grey Cup (B level) Runner-up: Tim Brewer

De Grey Plate **Richard Keighley**
(14 pt h'cap) Runner-up: David Morris

Geoff and Tim finally concluded their five game series on November 6th, Geoff winning overall -12, +6, +15, -9, +16. The De Grey Plate final was played on November 16th, Richard winning +11.

The Steel Cup

This cup has a history. It is inscribed Bedford Croquet Club, Steel Challenge Cup, Class C, and the first winner was Muriel Hume in 1929. The cup was presumably

donated by or associated with Dorothy Dyne Steel (see the November 2005 newsletter). Today Class C means players of handicap 6-11 (A being 2 or less and B 2-5), but this may not have been the case 80 years ago. We also don't know if the competition was for handicap or advanced play. Of the 22 winners between 1929 and 1956 sixteen were women, and women won on the last 11 occasions. I leave it to others to describe how and when we acquired the cup, but it reappeared as a club trophy in 1985 when the winner was John Wheeler.

Three of the earlier winners are of particular interest. Edward Duffield, winner in 1935, joined the Colchester club in 1930 and was for many years responsible for the high standard of their lawns. He became a Vice President of the CA in 1967 and served as President from 1975-1982. In 1953 the winner was Mrs P.E. Heley, who lived in or near Cambridge and had a private lawn to which students were invited. A postgraduate club was started in 1964 and named the Heley club in her honour. Her name is also remembered in the CA's Apps-Heley club development award (Mrs Apps was CA secretary from 1948-1959).

Last but not least, the winner in 1955 was Miss E.J. Warwick. Joan Warwick was a first-class hockey player before taking up croquet. Described in Prichard's History of Croquet as "a dogged player of the orthodox 4-back and peg type, cautious and careful" she won the Women's Championship on five occasions between 1960 and 1968, the Ladies Field Cup five times, and the Mixed Doubles three times. She played in the President's Cup on four occasions and was also in the victorious MacRobertson Shield team which travelled to New Zealand in 1963.

Autumn lawn maintenance

The lawns were scarified diagonally on Thursday 27 October, a job made considerably easier by the provision of a trailer which allowed us to immediately dispose of all the material. A second N-S scarification was done over the weekend of 6-7 November, but as no trailer was available the material will have to be disposed of at a later date. Many thanks to all those who came along to help. George Collin applied the autumn fertiliser a fortnight later, so the lawns can now rest in peace until the spring.

EACF committee

The East Anglian Croquet Federation have asked all member clubs to enquire if there are any members interested in being nominated for their committee, as they are losing their long-serving Treasurer (our own George Collin) and current CA representative this year.

As EACF Chairman Terrey Sparks wrote: *"For those of you who might not be aware of the EACF function, it is a body that is run under the auspices of the Croquet Association and its aims are to promote the game of croquet and to coordinate the activities of croquet clubs in the six counties that make up the Eastern Region. In this connection, as well as assisting new and developing clubs with coaching and equipment, it also organises leagues and tournaments for both Association and golf croquet. The EACF is represented on the CA Council by the Development Officer and one other representative, which enables us to put the region's views directly to the governing body."*

The EACF's activities are also reported on their excellent website, maintained by Simon Hathrell. Terrey has sent a copy of the minutes of the last committee meeting which I can forward to anyone who wants a better idea of the function of the committee, and I'm sure George would be happy to enlarge on its activities. If you want to ask any questions of Terrey, his email is tds3elm@aol.com.

For services rendered

At the Annual Dinner Bryan Harral proposed a vote of thanks to the committee, which was as welcome as it was unexpected. We would like to take this opportunity to thank others who have assisted the club during the season, including the staff at English Heritage, John and Pandora Wheeler and Bryan for their many hours on the mowers, and all the members who helped us with tournament catering and lawn maintenance.

A Merry Christmas to one and all.

John Bevington

7 December 2010