

The History of the St. Ives Bowling Club

On October 9th 1934, it was decided at a General Meeting that the St. Ives Bowling Club should be reformed. The members were mainly business men of St. Ives and their wives. The Constitution and Objects of the Club together with an Annual Subscription of £1-11-6 were decided.

The venue was the same as today and the green (4 rinks) was laid on land leased from the St. Ives Tennis and Croquet Club. The first 4 rinks were laid on the hard core of the tennis courts.

An anonymous donor lent £200.00 @ 5% for the laying of the green, erection of a pavilion and Gents. Toilets.

The late Sir Arthur Hawke was elected President and the first Chairman was the late G. G. Warren, a previous Mayor of the then Borough Council; the first captain was the late Mr. Welch.

The Club did not allow play on Sundays, probably because 4 or 5 of its members were Clergymen in the town. This Bye-law was only altered in 1988 when Sunday play was permitted with the proviso that all players agree to play on Sunday.

The first pavilion was built by Messrs. Bath Catalogue for the sum of just £26-2-6 and the veranda was built for £4-10-0, a total cost of £30-12-6 (30.63p today). After the war, the veranda was rebuilt and a donation given to the Club by the late Mrs Hollow in memory of her brother, the late W. B. Richards who was an active member of the Club, having served as an Officer for many years.

The Ladies section was very small but active and the cream teas they provided were renowned throughout Cornwall and were given free of charge by these ladies and some of the men. During the war years, tea permits had to be obtained from the Food Office in order to serve refreshments.

Membership after the war dwindled and at times was a struggle to raise enough members to play in the Constantine and Nichol Cup competition.

In 1937, the Club bought the ground from St. Ives Tennis and Croquet Club for the sum of £500.00. All of the maintenance of the green was carried out by members, this task being very time consuming as Club Competitions were still being played in December.

In addition to the four rinks, there was also a croquet lawn. It was decided in 1960 that the croquet lawn be made into two extra rinks thus making six rinks, therefore enabling the Club to turn rinks around and bowl either way. This work was carried out by members of the Club.

In 1976, after much consideration, it was decided to hand the green and pavilion over to Penwith District Council as there were not enough members to meet the cost of keeping the green and pavilion up to the standard required.

Penwith District Council erected a new pavilion. The Club repaired the men's changing room; this was followed by a changing hut for the ladies, paid for by the Club from money raised from Fetedays. These are the present buildings around the green.

Today, the membership is approaching 100. Among our past members we are proud to boast of having three Presidents of the Cornwall County Bowling Association and two Presidents of the Cornwall County Woman's Bowling Association. In 1980, the late Miss Eva Date was elected President of the English Woman's Bowling Association.

The late Col. J. Daniel and W. B. Richards toured South Africa and Australia for the E.B.A.. The Club and individual members have gained many honours at both Divisional and County levels. The green is considered to be one of the best in Cornwall with many County Finals being played on it.

In 2002, a new pavilion was erected, paid for mostly by loans from members. The old pavilion was converted into Men's and Ladies changing rooms with a viewing area overlooking the green. An extension to the new pavilion was completed in October 2004, allowing the Club to install new toilets, toilets for the disabled and a small changing room for short mat bowls.