



## Chairman's Report

By the time you read this, I will have taken up the role of Chair of your Committee. Somewhat apprehensively, following such an outstanding personality and leader as Gill Stone, who has guided us for the last 6 years, she being only the second Chair since the Club was formed. We trust she can now enjoy her Croquet in a more carefree manner! We all thank Gill for her stalwart service on our behalf and wish her well.

This is the year of change on the Committee, as another long serving member steps down. Richard Wallis our Treasurer, who has diligently kept us financially sound, and hands on a respectable bank balance to his successor, Jean Healey. Thank you Richard for all you have done. Jean needs no introduction as she is well known to you all as one of the mainstays of the Club, an excellent player and Coach and the previous Secretary of the Club.

I am a comparative new boy to the Committee and to introduce myself to newer members of the Club, let me say that Mary, my wife is also a Club member. We have 2 daughters and 1 son and 5 grandchildren.

We face another challenging year for playing our game due to the Pandemic, but our experience last year means we are geared up to play in a similar manner at least until June, when fingers crossed, we may be able to play with less restrictions. Gill, our retiring Chair, has kindly agreed to run the booking system once again. Computerised booking systems are available online which we will be looking into. In the meantime hopefully we will be able to continue Croquet to keep us sane, as we did last summer.

Our Captain Chris, with Pete Howe, is overseeing improvements to the lawns which he outlines elsewhere in this Newsletter. Unfortunately this costs money which will be challenging for all of us.

We have a vacancy on the Committee which will have to be addressed, to ensure the workload is spread evenly and the future of the Club continues to progress.

Although we as a Club have remained Covid free, unfortunately we have several members and former members, who have passed on. I am sure we remember them with affection, and our thoughts are with their nearest and dearest. In view of our age profile there have been some members that have impairments that have prevented them playing, and we hope that the NHS can start to tackle what they term as 'non urgent' health matters soon. Following on from this I wonder if we can use the Newsletter as a medium to update members, on the health and welfare of other players, who are prepared to give permission to share the information with us? At the moment it is sometimes only by chance that we become aware of reasons for absence from the lawns and the opportunity to make sure all is well may be missed.

As many members commented last year, for mental and physical wellbeing 'playing croquet has been a life saver!'

With that as our motto let us look forward to another successful year in Maldon Croquet Club.

Apologies for the length of this article, I promise to rein in my verbosity in the future!

Neil Clark



## RITA GORRIE

We were sorry to hear recently of the passing of Rita Gorrie. Rita was the wife of our late treasurer John Gorrie. They were both founder members of MCC when we started playing at Drapers Farm in 2011.



## Newsletter Editor

For the last two years I have thoroughly enjoyed putting the Newsletter together. However it's now time to let someone else have a go.

It requires checking and collating the news from the Committee or sometimes members in Word format and then circulating via email on a monthly basis. It has been agreed this does not need to be a Committee role so we would welcome anyone to express an interest in taking on this task to enable the newsletter to continue.

It only requires 2/3 hours a month at the most. If you wish to discuss this further or volunteer please ring me on 01621 843020. Mary.

## Ramsgate 2022

Unfortunately as you will be aware the weekend at Ramsgate has been postponed to next year due to Covid restrictions.

So this will now take place from Friday 13 May through to Sunday 15 May. Hotel stay on the nights of 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. Play to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. Bookings will be taken in September.





**CLUB CAPTAIN'S NOTES – APRIL 21**

With the partial relaxation of restrictions, preparations are well underway for the start of the season. Now we just need the weather to cooperate so that the lawn can dry out from its winter saturation.

All four courts are being turned through 90 degrees to minimise the effect of the sloping ground. This reconfiguration means that the starting point on each court has moved in the direction of where the blue flags used to be – confused? – you'll soon get used to it and hopefully reap the benefits.



Pete & Geoff preparing to move the sign to enable the reconfiguration of the lawns.

By the end of last season the courts had deteriorated to an unacceptable degree. Your committee, with the advice of Jane Woodhead and specialist contractors, Total Sports Ground Solutions, has prepared an essential lawn improvement programme. The first phase, the preseason work, involving aeration and fertilisation has just been completed.



Our contractor, Total Sports Ground Solutions, setting off to aerate the 5000 square metres of our lawn.



This clever piece of machinery injects air under pressure laterally into the ground at a depth of 6 and 12 inches, reducing compaction, encouraging drainage and promoting root growth.





The next step is to set out the four reconfigured courts which Pete Howe and his working party have in hand.

Hoops have been repainted (thank you Pete), balls cleaned, club mallets oiled (thank you Gill) for those who need to use them.

When the start date is announced, bookings will be required as last year ie via Gill Stone. This will continue at least until restrictions dictate otherwise. Please note that the booking office is not (**not**) open yet but when it is you will find that normally all four courts will be available seven days a week with certain sessions blocked out for coaching, matches, visiting organisations, lawn maintenance etc.

Speaking of coaching, Jean Healey and Al Brown will be running structured and bespoke sessions starting as early in the season as possible – more details to come.

Roll Up sessions will start as soon as restrictions allow – so that's not yet!! However the internal club competitions will start early on and members will be receiving detailed information separately. All members are encouraged to join in.

Meanwhile, until we can start play, be patient and stay safe.

CJ



Your new Committee having their first meeting via Zoom!

