

# Preface and

*Let me refer anyone who doesn't quite understand the title of this little book to a piece that was written by David Everett [1770-1813], viz . . .*

*Large streams from little fountains flow,  
Tall oaks from little acorns grow.*

*. . . and I'm sure that if you give it a moment's thought you too will think it rather apt, when you consider that our County Association developed from a single meeting attended by representatives of just 20 clubs.*

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*A few years ago it seems it was decided that some effort should be made to record the history of the Kent County Bowling Association in time for its centenary celebrations in 2011. I was asked to undertake the task and, therefore, what ever is written in this little book cannot be blamed on anybody but me. If I have erred in any way it is entirely my own fault. Fortunately, I had available to me every word of every Minute of every meeting since the Association was formed, and this has been the basis upon which this history was written. George Firmin allowed me to make full use of the research he had performed from his collection of County Year Books, and to him I am exceedingly grateful.*

*'History' should be about people, not just a string of dates and events; for it is people who have made this Association what it is, and it is their story which should be recorded. I have also always believed that written history needs to be a blend of the 'factual' to give it authenticity; 'whimsy and humour' to make it a reasonably enjoyable read; 'anecdotal sketches' of personalities and their accomplishments to bring them to life and a somewhat sardonic 'warts and all' narration to show that our founding fathers were really not supermen but were just as prone to make errors and indulge in crabbiness as we ourselves are. I hope I have been successful in some small measure, and that you find something of interest in this account of the Association's one hundred years of life.*

*My apologies, too, if some of the photographs in this little booklet look a trifle bleary and smeary to you, but they are mainly copied from old prints and looked just as bleary and smeary before they were printed.*

*We should also be grateful to the Kent County Patrons' Bowling Association for creating their 'Centenary Fund' which has been used to offset the printing of this little book. Without their generosity it would probably have cost more than you were willing to pay just to put it on your bookshelf.*

*Best wishes,*



**Congratulations, etc.**

# Message from the President elect



# A brief look at how it was then

Time, like distance, lends enchantment, and whilst we may look back with nostalgia on the 'good old days' we tend to forget that the sun wasn't always shining though our memories might like to pretend that it was. The things we take for granted were still in the future, and the simple effort of moving about the county was a problem in itself. Few people had their own means of transport, and a journey from East Kent to West Kent to attend a meeting was not something to be taken lightly.

There was a world of difference between the life styles of 'those who had' and 'those who had not'; and, in this period before the first world war, junior shop staff still lived on the premises in which they worked and the farm labourer still lived in the farmer's bothy. On leaving school young girls still 'went into service' unless they were fortunate enough to find employment in a shop of some kind, and the young men in the rural areas almost certainly worked on the same farm as their fathers while those in the industrial areas would be swallowed up as labourers in a factory.

Regular employment was a thing to be envied and striven for, and if any man enjoyed such good fortune he would accept almost any degree of discomfort to keep it. After all, it meant that his family would be fed, clothed and cared for. Most people would have found their employment locally, and would, in the main, have been unskilled or semi-skilled

labourers of some kind. With none of today's labour saving devices their daily work was hard and physically demanding, and at the end of the day they were probably more tired than we would ever understand, or accept, without protest.

Those who lived in mining or industrial areas were subject to the vagaries of the market place; so it is probably true to say that not all employers were gentlemen, and, therefore not all of their employees were well treated and happy with their lot. But a pint in the local pub with a friend cured many ills in those days, and there was usually a good and loving woman at home - as long as you weren't too late for dinner.

Shopping was a daily task, in the local corner shop or street market, and those new-fangled refrigerators were luxury items for the wealthy few. Freezers were not yet thought of, and the fishmonger and butcher made do with blocks of ice instead. What spare time mums had was filled with knitting, darning and make-do-and-mending, with, perhaps, the odd evening's cleaning to earn a little extra cash. They were too tired and didn't have time to paint their faces, but they were very much loved and probably equally loving.

The folk who lived in those days would probably look with pity on the young folk of today, even though we have

so many more material advantages than they ever had. There was a solidarity within the classes that made up for a great deal of the misery it caused. In the small communities in which we lived everybody was known, and probably related to, everybody else, and troubles were shared as were the joys. People felt secure within their own locality and with their own neighbours, and there was very little of the 'blow you jack, I'm all right' attitude that causes so much despair nowadays.

Men and women lived together after, not before, they were married. Children knew both their own parents, and mum was the one who cared for the family whilst dad was the one who tried to protect and provide for it. Burglary happened to those rich folks one read about not to that little old lady round the corner, and children were safe whether they played in the streets, the country places or their own homes.

The young were cared for and shielded from the harsh realities of life. They simply didn't know about sex or drugs, and the idea of leaving home to live on the streets because you didn't get on with dad or mum would never have occurred to them. Everyone lived in a world of rock-solid authority, in which parents, teachers, policemen and even librarians and park keepers were figures to be respected and obeyed. In school, bottoms were kept on seats and noses to grindstones. Gentlemen stood up so that ladies could sit down, and what people thought of you was important.

Not everybody was happy with the way things were, especially the ladies who still didn't have the vote, and most governments were more than a little bothered by the activities of groups of anarchists whose members wanted to change the world with pistols and bombs. Indeed, just a few months before the Association was formally set up three such revolutionaries had been besieged in

Sydney Street by more than a thousand troops and police before being killed. King Edward VII had recently died of pneumonia; and the country was just getting excited about the forthcoming Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary, before being seriously troubled by the assassination at Sarajevo..

A Yorkshireman was soon to become only the second man to swim the English Channel which had first been crossed by Matthew Webb some 36 years earlier, and in August Canterbury was to have the doubtful honour of recording the hottest temperature ever to be registered in Britain. Horse buses were now being seriously challenged as a form of public transport as trams and petrol buses became more reliable, and this might well have made it easier for you and me to see the new fangled films at the 'electric theatres' that were springing up all over the county.

The Association was formally created in March, 1911 during a period in our history when the rigid class system was still a fact of life accepted by almost everyone, and few people would ever expect or aspire to move out of the class into which he had been born. Furthermore, the rigid social structure of this period, and its concern for what it saw as 'good manners' imposed standards of behaviour and a level of courtesy on its members that we would probably find difficult to emulate today.

These expectations naturally affected the early development of the Association, and must be born in mind whilst we see it grow and change as contemporary attitudes themselves changed. We occasionally hear said, usually tongue in cheek, that bowls is a game for gentlemen which should be played in a gentlemanly manner; but in 1911 that would have been a statement of fact not an ideal, or an implied criticism of some of the behaviour we might see nowadays.

In those days bowls was a gentleman's leisure activity, for only gentlemen would have had leisure time or the money to spend on it. Those who were members of a bowling club were probably the leading establishment figures within the local community, and the bowling club was probably merely an off-shoot of the local Conservative Club and Chamber of Commerce. I imply no criticism in this or the way such organisations were set up and managed, for it is merely in keeping with the values of that period in our history.

During the early days of my own Club, for instance, the membership read very much like the Canterbury edition of "Who's Who", and surely many of the original members would be spinning like tops in their graves if they knew the likes of those wearing the Club badge nowadays. Councillors were ten a penny on the membership list, and Aldermen were equally thick on the ground. If the Mayor wasn't a member before he became the Mayor he certainly was before his term of office expired.

The club was even able to request the services of the City Sheriff to conduct the visiting KCBA Executive on a tour around Cathedral, before they were lunched in the County Hotel during their first visit to the city on 16th August, 1916. I would imagine that most clubs in their early days were like this; and at times many clubs' pavilions resembled that famous Lloyd's Coffee House of London, as most of the local up-market trading establishments and centres of commerce were enjoying their leisure.

### *The Beginnings of an Organisation*

The Scottish Bowling Association, the first National Association was set up in 1892, Its guiding light, a Mr. W.

Mitchell, formulated the first laws of the game, '*The Manual of Bowls Playing*', and by 1902 the association had a membership of 400 affiliated clubs. We were not so quick off the mark in England, and the first Associations were regional rather than national. The first of these was the Northumberland and Durham Association set up in 1892, which was followed by the Midland Counties and the London and Southern Counties Associations in 1895.

It was not until 1899 that any attempt was made to form an English National Association, and this really came about as the result of a conversation between some Australian bowlers, who were visiting England to watch the 1899 Test matches, and a Mr. S. E. Yelland of Hove. As a result of this conversation the Imperial Bowling Association was formed, though its intentions were more to encourage and arrange matches between the Commonwealth Countries and Canada than to unite and organise English Bowling Clubs.

There was, however, a true hard-core of keen and competitive bowlers beginning to develop throughout the country at this period, and it seems that they were not too impressed with the attitude or activities of the I.B.A. which appeared to have little cohesion at the grass roots of bowling in England. They consequently decided to set up their own rival organisation, led by none other than Dr. W. G. Grace, and thus, in 1903, the English Bowling Association came into being. This was soon followed by the formulation of the Irish and Welsh Associations, and eventually the International Bowling Board which began to regulate a series of home international matches.

The Imperial Bowling Association really couldn't compete, and in 1905 they decided that it would be better if they amalgamated with the E.B.A. bringing

the number of associated clubs up to 90.

The organisation of the E.B.A. was channelled through these clubs and the country was divided into 16 districts which elected the E.B.A. Council. However, by 1921 there were 21 County Associations, and not all of them were affiliated to the E.B.A. So a brisk change in the Constitution saw these districts abolished and their electoral rights passed over to the County Associations. In future the E.B.A. would work through the counties, and the counties through the E.B.A. The change seems to have worked well, for whilst there were only 222 clubs registered with the E.B.A. in 1919 there were 599 in 1922.

There were some 43 bowling clubs in existence in our county prior to the setting

up of the KCBA, but the number of fixtures available to them was dictated more by the difficulties of travel than the lack of any opposition. Nevertheless, it is fairly clear that they were beginning to communicate with each other, and were keen to create closer ties within the county.

Their efforts were not always appreciated, and when the idea of a County Association was first discussed in the Canterbury Bowling Club many of its members were not too enthusiastic. They considered that such an organisation "*would have an adverse effect upon the social nature of the game*", and had no wish to become associated with it. You must, of course, make your own judgements on whether this dire prediction



# A seed is sown . . .

## *From 1910 till 1923*

The very first mention I have found of the proposed setting up of the Kent County Bowling Association is in the Minutes of the Canterbury Bowling Club of the 30th December, 1910. During the course of the meeting the Secretary read a letter from a Mr. H.

J. Green [senior] of Bromley Bowling Club which apparently suggested the formation of a Kent Association of Bowling Clubs. Having only recently recovered from the speedy rise and fall of the original East Kent Association of Bowling Clubs one might expect a certain

caution on the part of Canterbury. However, after certain members voiced their concerns that such an Association “*would have an adverse effect upon the social nature of the game*”, it is recorded that “*the suggestion met with the approval of the Committee and the Secretary was instructed to write for further particulars of the proposed scheme*”.

Nothing further was mentioned on the subject until May, 1911, when the Secretary reported on further correspondence received from Mr. Green, this time referring to the Kent County Bowling Association, and its thoughts on bowling and competition within the County. It seems that the contents of the

**Proposed Rules of the  
Kent County Bowling Association,  
as suggested by the Committee**

- 1-The Association shall be called “The Kent County Bowling Association.”
- 2-The Association shall consist of all properly constituted Bowling Clubs in the County of Kent, and whose greens are properly ditched and banked, and conform to the rules and regulations of the English Bowling Association.
- 3-Application by Clubs for admission to the Association. shall be made to the Honorary Secretary accompanied by the name of the Club, copy of its Rules, Office Bearers, together with an entrance fee of 5/- per Club, and 5 /- Annual Subscription. Clubs admitted to Membership shall receive certificates to that effect signed by the Honorary Secretary. The Annual Subscription shall be paid within one month after the General Meeting, and any Club failing to pay the Subscription within the time stated shall forfeit all rights and privileges so long as the Subscription remains unpaid.
- 4-The Annual General Meeting- of the Association shall be held in January. Fourteen days' notice shall be given of all General Meetings, and seven members shall form a quorum.
- 5-A Special General Meeting shall be convened at any time by the Committee or on a resolution signed by not less than five Clubs specifying, the Resolution or Resolutions to be submitted, at least fourteen days' notice to be given.
- 6-At the Annual General Meeting, the Association shall elect from the Members a President, a Vice-President, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, and a Committee of eleven (one from each of eleven Clubs) to manage the affairs of the Association, five of whom shall form a quorum. The President, Vice-President, Honorary Secretary, and Honorary Treasurer for the year, shall be members of the Committee (ex-officio). The Committee shall have the power to fill up any vacancy in their number which may occur through the year, due regard being paid to the constituency represented by the late Member.
- 7-The Secretary shall keep a record of all the business transacted at General and Committee Meetings. At each Annual Meeting he shall submit a Report of the proceedings since the previous meeting, and the Treasurer shall submit a full account of his receipts and disbursements for the previous year, duly audited by two Members appointed for the purpose.
- 8-Each Club shall be entitled to send two representatives to all General Meetings of the Association, and representatives must sign the Attendance Book.
- 9-All disputes from whatever cause arising shall be settled by the Committee, whose decision shall be final,
- 10-The Rules and Regulations shall be Printed and published, and copies sent to the Secretary of each affiliated Club.
- 11-No alteration or addition to the above Rules shall be made except at the Annual General Meeting. Notice shall be given in writing to the Honorary Secretary setting forth in full such proposed alteration or addition, which shall be stated in a Notice of Business for the meeting at least one month before.

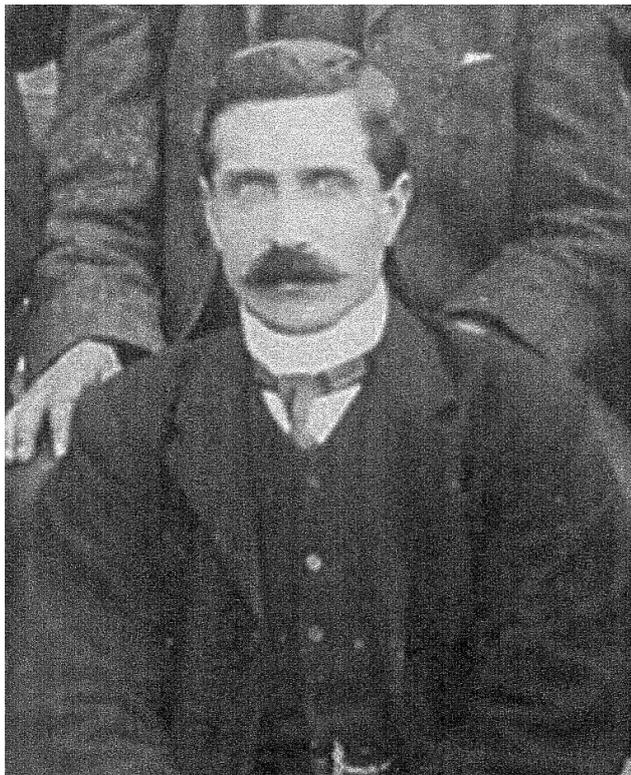
This is a facsimile of the card on which was printed the proposed rules of the Association. A copy was sent to all clubs that had shown interest in taking up membership of the K.C.B.A.

letter were discussed, and, having met with the approval of the Committee, it was immediately resolved that "*we become affiliated to the K.C.B. Association*".

It would appear that some of the Canterbury bowlers took to the K.C.B.A. like ducks to water, and without doubt the most enthusiastic of them all was Mr. W. A. King. He became the Club's representative on that body, and served his year as President in 1922. In its early days I imagine that the main aim of the Association was to unify the development of bowling within the County, and to link it with the progress that was being made nationwide by the E.B.A.

The first Minutes of the Association are dated the 1st March, 1911. The inaugural meeting actually followed one held by the delegates of the 'English Bowling Association Kent District Bowling Clubs', which had been called to "*elect three members to represent the District on the General Committee of the English Bowling Association*". So it is fairly safe to assume that there was already an embryonic association of county clubs in existence, and perhaps the time was ripe to bring together the Kentish bowling clubs who, perhaps, had not been too interested in the doings of the EBA.

The meeting was held at the Angel Hotel, Tonbridge on 1st March 1911. It was attended by 41 representatives of 20 clubs that were scattered throughout the county. They were Beckenham, Bromley, Bromley Common, Bromley Town, Chatham, Cray Valley, Camden, Darnley, Forest Hill, Greenwich, Hythe, Maidstone, Margate, Shortlands, Thanet, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells, Tunbridge Wells Grove, Westerham and Woolwich and Plumstead. The meeting was chaired by Mr W. A. Sims who at the time was President of the E.B.A.



**Mr. J. Savidge of Tonbridge B.C. who made the proposition that Mr. H. J. Green be elected the Association's first Secretary. He was actively connected with the affairs of the K.C.B.A. until November, 1964, when he decided to give up active bowling after some 70 years through indisposition, and he died in 1968.**

Of these, only thirteen are still affiliated to the K.C.B.A. in their original guise; the Camden, and Darnley, clubs seem to have disappeared altogether; Greenwich and Shortlands have both assumed different names, and Cray Valley, Margate and Thanet appear to have re-invented themselves at a later date. The three delegates elected to represent the 'Kent District' were Mr T. Woof representing Bromley, Mr J. Gillespie representing Forest Hill and Mr G. E. Smith representing Tonbridge.

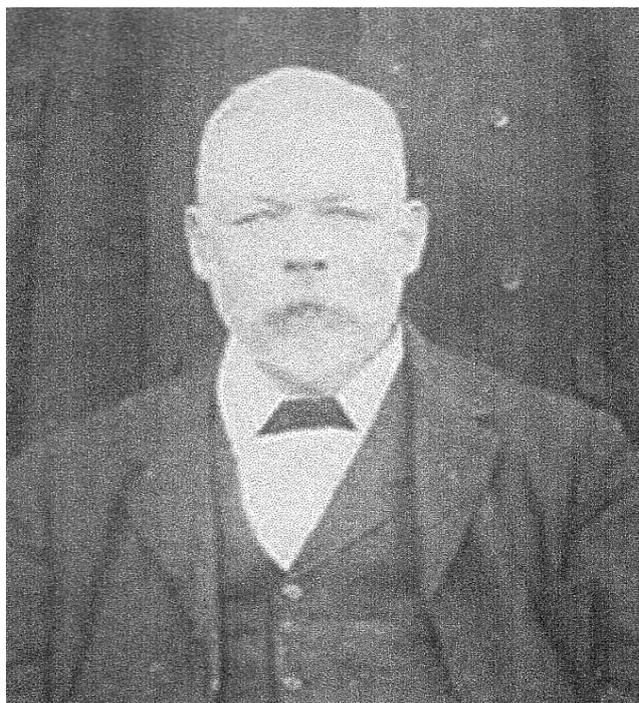
The second part of the meeting was to consider the "*desirability of forming a Kent County Bowling Association*". Mr T. Woof (Bromley) then proposed and Mr H. J. Hancock seconded a proposition "*that a bowling association be formed in Kent to be called the Kent County Bowling Association.*" This was carried unanimously and Mr H. J. Green was

thereupon elected first Honorary Secretary of the new Association. Under his new title, the Hon. Secretary brought the meeting to order and charged them with two duties:

- a. *To elect a Committee of eleven clubs.*
- b. *To elect a President who was to be Chairman.*

The eleven clubs elected to have a representative on the committee were Bromley, Chatham, Cray Valley, Darnley, Forest Hill, Greenwich, Hythe, Thanet, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells The Grove and Woolwich and Plumstead. Mr G. Judge (Margate) proposed and Mr G. E. Smith (Tonbridge) seconded "*that Mr W. A. Sims be President for the ensuing year [and] also that he be Chairman of Committee.*" Thus, Mr W. A. Sims of Forest Hill became the first President of the K.C.B.A. in 1911, the same year that he was President of the E.B.A., and he also subsequently became the third Honorary Secretary of the K.C.B.A.

The proposed rules of the Association were initially considered and



Mr. G. E. Smith of Tonbridge B.C. who proposed that Mr. W. A. Sims should be the Association's first President.

approved by the committee at their meeting held on 22nd March, 1911. There were only eleven of them and they were much less complicated than they are nowadays, though that might just be an indication of how much simpler life was in 1911.

However, at the General Meeting held at The Angel Hotel in Tonbridge on 26th April, 1911 it was deemed that a change to rule 2 would be advisable. Mr. T. Woof proposed and Mr. H. Gilliam seconded "*that all clubs in the County of Kent that have not proper banks be admitted to membership, but that Finals and Semi-Finals cannot be played on these Greens.*"

I would imagine that not too many clubs had greens that were "*properly ditched and banked* [and which conformed] *to the rules and regulations of the English Bowling Association*", so this part of the proposed rule 2 was very quickly and quietly removed. An extra rule was also inserted, this being "*That the Association be affiliated to the English Bowling Association, and conform to its Rules and Regulations*". I suppose they thought that this was as good a way as any to ensure that all its member clubs fell into line and conformed.

One amusing little item was recorded in the Minutes was the proposition made by Mr. H. J. Hancock of Forest Hill, seconded by Mr. W. Driver of Darnley, "*that no Committee Meeting be held the London side of Sevenoaks*". One cannot help but speculate on the reasoning behind this resolution. Had it been passed because of the difficulties that clubs in East Kent might experience in travelling long distances to meetings, or were those clubs from the colonies further east harbouring certain misgivings about the possible likely dominance of the more Metropolitan clubs nearer London?

In any case, at a committee meeting held on the 7th February, 1912, Mr. Woof of Bromley Bowling Club proposed that *“for the future, meetings should be held in London”*. There are no records as to the discussion that followed this proposal being put to the committee, but it is recorded that the decision was to be *“left over for the General Meeting”*. Sure enough, at the General Meeting, held immediately after this committee meeting, it was proposed and seconded that *“the resolution passed on 11th March, 1911, ‘that no Committee Meeting be held the London side of Sevenoaks’ be rescinded, and that for the future committee meetings and General Meetings be held in the near vicinity of London”*. Once again there is no record of the discussion that followed nor of the votes that were cast, but the resolution was carried.

It is unfortunate that no record of debates, discussions or disagreements appear to have been kept of the Association’s meetings, nor are the numbers voting for or against particular resolutions recorded. So there is little opportunity to gauge the individual member’s response, nor what passions were aroused during discussion. You and I know that things do not always run smoothly and occasionally feathers are ruffled during the course of a meeting, and it is in the recording of these events that an assembly is brought to life. Never mind, we will do the best to gain an insight with the information we have available to us.

Indeed, the only occasions when the earlier Minutes deviate from this absence of information is when the members present are being particularly nice to each other. For example, at the AGM held on 7th February 1912 Mr. Hancock, was supporting a vote of thanks to the retiring President. His words were reported as follows *“Mr. Hancock said he was certain a more loyal friend or*

*businessman did not exist than Mr. Sims”*, and Mr. Sims was equally fulsome in his reply, *“I am grateful for the kind expressions and thanks. In reference to the K.C.B.A., after business it shall have my whole consideration”*.

At the same meeting they were trying to persuade Mr. Hancock to accept the position of County Treasurer, to replace Mr. W. Drummond. However, he refused the nomination as he had only recently resigned the same office at Forest Hill B.C., and thought it would be unfair to accept. So, *“Mr. Sims and Mr. Woof assured Mr. Hancock that he need not fear the consequences as they would both go and face the music at Forest Hill if necessary, and both thought that the members of Forest Hill would think it an honour to have one of their members elected as Hon. Treasurer of the K.C.B.A.”* You don’t often hear folk being so formally flattering to each other nowadays.

It would seem that the removal of the *“properly ditched and banked”* rule allowed more clubs to affiliate, as the membership had increased to 35 clubs by April 1914 and to 46 clubs by March 1915. The entry fee remained at 5/- [real money] and 5/- annual subscription, but in spite of this relatively low income the annual accounts always seemed to show a healthy balance in hand at the end of the year.

## The beginning of County Competitions

The first meeting to plan and organise County Competitions was held on 1st April, 1911 at the Bromley Bowling Club, and in the beginning the entire responsibility for this was in the hands of a sub-committee of five members. These were Messrs. Sims, Woof, Hancock, Rees and Green, and as most of these gentlemen were already

involved in the management of the County's affairs they must have been very fortunate leisured gentlemen indeed. Their actual deliberations are sufficiently interesting to record them in full from the Minutes of that meeting.

*“Mr. Woof proposed and Mr. Rees seconded that a Rink Competition be played [the] entrance fee of which shall be 5/-, and a Single Championship entrance fee 2/6. To be played on Neutral Greens to be mutually arranged between the Clubs drawn together, failing which the first named Club to appoint a Green equal distance between the two Clubs. The Prizes for the Rink Competition to be four Gold Medals for the Final Rink. A Gold Medal for the Single Championship will be presented by the President W. A. Sims Esq. That the County be divided into four districts. That the Finals be played on the Bromley Bowling Green. It is suggested that a shield be purchased to be held by the Club to which the Rink Champions belong.”*

I wonder if the “Gold Medals” are still gathering dust in somebody's house, and if the people living there know what historical value those objects hold for the County.

The first County Competitions were inter-club affairs rather than individual contests, and the Single Handed competition had an entry of 12 clubs while 14 clubs had entered the Rink competition. It seems that the county had been divided into four districts for the purpose of competitions, but there is no reason given for this in the Minutes though I imagine that travel difficulties might have had something to do with it. In the Singles the sub-committee had placed Bromley, Bromley Town, Forest Hill, Catford and Crystal Palace in Section 1; Woolwich and Plumstead, Gravesend Darnley and Chatham in Section 2; Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells The Grove in Section 3 and Tunbridge

Wells and Hythe in Section 4. Mr. H. J. Green of Bromley beat Mr. J. Grindley of Woolwich and Plumstead by 21 shots to 6 in the Final held on Bromley's Green, and he did it after playing only three games in total. Would that it were that easy nowadays.

In the Rink competition we find Beckenham, Shortlands, Bromley Common, Forest Hill, Catford, Bromley Town and Bromley in Section 1; Gravesend Darnley, Chatham and Woolwich and Plumstead in Section 2; Tunbridge Wells The Grove and Tonbridge in Section 3 while Hythe stayed in Section 4 with Thanet. The Grove, [Messrs. C. B. Brown, H. Albrow, R. A. Greig and H. Sales] beat Shortlands, [Messrs. Thompson, McKoue, F. Lumley and W. Harvey] by 22 shots to 12 in the Final, and they too only played three games. However, one little mystery remains to be solved. Hythe reached the semi-final stage of both competitions but scratched from both of them. No explanation is recorded in the Minutes to clarify their reason.

The Annual General Meeting of 7th February, 1912, decided to add the Pairs to the Rink and Singles Competitions, and once again it was an inter-club affair. The entries were slightly up on the previous year, 18 Singles, 20 Pairs and 21 Rinks, and the following year, 1913, saw 29 Singles, 31 Pairs and 29 Rinks. The idea of organised Competition was obviously proving very popular for there was a further increase in 1914, 37 Singles, 38 Pairs and 37 Rinks, however, the ‘Great War’ intervened and while they carried on the competitions the numbers fell and did not really recover until it ended.

In 1913 the Secretary had persuaded the K.C.B.A.'s Patron, Mr. Everard Hesketh, to present a cup to the County, and thus the Hesketh Cup was awarded to the winning Rink. In March

1915 it was proposed that cups should also be awarded to the winners of the Singles and Pairs competitions, and this was agreed so long as the cost was not more than £15. There had obviously been some talk about this beforehand, because the Treasurer was *"delighted to inform the meeting that he already had the sum of £11 7s. 6d. in hand as donations towards the Singles Challenge Cup"*.

It was at the Annual General Meeting held in February, 1916, that the Singles Competition finally ceased to be an inter-club contest and, on a proposition by Mr. Green which was seconded by Mr. Rees, became a challenge between individual members of the Association. That year saw 42 Singles entries, with three members entering from the Bromley, Gillingham, Chatham and Eltham Bowling Clubs, four from Sevenoaks and six from The Grove. The other clubs still only had only the single entry. The Pairs Competition was de-restricted likewise in October, 1916, but the Rinks had to wait until October, 1918. The organisation was still handled by the

small sub-committee of five, and the county was still separated somewhat haphazardly into four districts. In 1918 the Tunbridge Wells clubs complained about *"being drawn in the same division as Margate, etc.,"* and the reply was *"it is due to the shortage of entries in these prospective districts and [it] would be rectified in future"*. It was also in 1916 that the Committee made its first attempt to monitor its affiliated club's Greens, and to ensure that they met the requirements required for County Competition.

It was at a meeting in July, 1916, that a Mr. Black of Hesketh Park B.C. asked that a particular Singles match be replayed as *"the Cray Valley Green was unplayable"*. The Committee would not accede to his request as *"Mr. Brockwell [of Hesketh Park B.C.] had not formally lodged a protest before the match end"*. However, the President and Secretary were *"empowered to inspect Cray Valley Green, and if it be found unfit for play no further rounds in the County Competitions be allowed to be played"*



This old photograph is just marked K.C.B.A. 1914, but from the five Canterbury faces that I can recognise I would imagine that it is a photograph of those who took part in the Final's of that year's County Competitions which were held on the Green of the Forest Hill Bowling Club. Mr. W. A. Sims is the gentleman seated seventh from the left in the second row, and I would imagine that many of the County's other Officers are also present. However, nobody I have shown this photograph to claims to recognise anybody else, but you may be able to pick out those whose photographs adorn your own clubhouse's wall.

upon it". In the event the 'inspection' discovered that "cattle had strayed on the Green which was in a filthy condition and full of holes", so it was speedily removed from the list of acceptable Greens. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the member who had been so successful on his home turf [previously winning 21 – 7; 21 – 12; 21 – 4] lost his home advantage and his next match on a neutral Green 21 – 17.

No official rules of competition were formulated until August, 1917, and these were adopted by the member clubs at the following Annual General Meeting. They were very simple compared with the pages that are printed in the year book today, and are worth reproducing in their entirety.

#### *RINK*

*Each club affiliated to this Association may nominate six players [the competition was still restricted at this time] for this event and names of these players shall be forwarded to the Hon. Secretary with the entry, any four of the nominated six may compete in any round including semi-finals and finals and in any position.*

#### *PAIRS*

*This competition shall be open to bona-fide members of any club affiliated to the Association, names of players and of club to be submitted with entry. Substitution of any player may be made only on medical grounds and supported by medical certificate.*

#### *SINGLE HANDED*

*This competition shall be open to all bona-fide members of any club affiliated to the Association, entrants' names and name of club to be submitted with entry.*

*No player shall enter for more than one of these competitions.*

*That score cards, showing the results of*

*each match, and the names of the players, must be sent by the winners to the Hon. Secretary of the Association immediately the game has been played. Winners failing to notify the Hon. Secretary within 48 hours of the completion of the game, render themselves liable to be scratched in the next round.*

*That in the event of a game not being completed by rain or any other cause, such game shall be carried on from the point at which it was stopped.*

*That Foot Referees be appointed for the finals.*

At the same meeting it was agreed that . . .

*For the purpose of obtaining players in inter-county friendly and competitive matches, the Committee invite all affiliated clubs through their respective Secretaries to nominate not more than four men for the same. The selection of teams for above-mentioned matches be vested in the Committee, or in any sub-committee of not less than five members, exclusive of the President and Hon. Secretary, appointed by them for the purpose. Such committee, or sub-committee, shall have power to select players, whether nominated or not, always provided they be bona-fide members of an affiliated club.*

*That each player taking part in County Matches be requested to wear the recognised County Colours, which embrace white hat with blue band, blue coat with badge and white flannel trousers. Brown shoes must be worn.*

In April, 1919, the Committee set the first dates for the completion of the various rounds of the competitions, and in November, 1922 it was decided that "in County Competitions the challenger should give his opponent three dates, one of which must be accepted by him". At the

same meeting it was decided that Greens were to *“be inspected and approved by the ‘Executive’ for any competition in connection with the County”*, though it was still necessary for them to be banked and ditched to pass muster. I would imagine that details such as these had, until now, been mutually agreed between the contestants, but the Minutes are beginning to make it very clear that the Committee was not too fond of haphazard or ad hoc arrangements and was determined to gain control of the way in which County Competitions were organised and played.

The members of the affiliated clubs were also beginning to see them as an important part of their annual bowling activities, and the numbers taking part in them were increasing until their administration was obviously becoming quite a burden on the Secretary. Indeed, by 1924 there were 177 entries in the Singles, 150 in the Pairs and 65 in the Rinks competitions, and the number of affiliated clubs had risen into the 90's.

It is not surprising, therefore, to read that *“the Hon. Secretary [by now Mr. W. A. Sims] asked for the appointment of an Assistant Secretary, as the work was during the season more than he could manage”*. A Mr. C. Morley, Borough of Greenwich B.C., volunteered his services, which were eagerly accepted, and immediately stirred up the pond by suggesting *“that a scheme should be started to place the Association in a better financial position”*. He is later referred to as the ‘Financial Secretary’ rather than the ‘Assistant Secretary’, so perhaps his main duties involved collecting and caring for the cash.

It was sometime in January, 1922 that the E.B.A. changed its method of electing its council from ‘Districts’ to ‘County Organisations’, and that same month sees the County Committee arbitrarily dividing Kent into three sections and electing representatives

accordingly. Percy Snow was elected to represent East Kent, J. T. C. Chater to represent West Kent whilst W. A. Sims was to represent London. At the same meeting it was agreed that the Association needed *“District Secretaries for Competitions”* and consequently elected P. Snow, East Kent; J. Chater, West Kent; W. Gillett, South Kent and W. Thorn, London. Moreover, they also elected an *“Emergency Committee”* of the Secretary, the Financial Secretary, and Messrs. Moore and Townsend, which could be gathered together quickly to handle matters of urgency.

It was at this meeting that we find the first mention of the ‘Gill Cup’ competition. It seems that a Mr. Gill, Chairman of the Men of Kent Association, *“had offered a Cup to be played for by the Clubs belonging to the County”*. John Gill was a coal merchant in the Bromley area who knew little about Bowls or its organisation, but an employee and friend, Captain R. Colquhoun, knew it all; and as a result of discussions between the two of them this inter-club competition was brought into being. The Committee unanimously agreed to accept the offer and *“it was resolved to make a new Competition for the ‘Gill Cup’ consisting of a two rink Competition, one rink to play away and one rink playing home, on the knock-out principle”*. What's more, it was decided that *“no charge to be made”*.

So, as one can see, by the end of 1922, just eleven years after its formation, the County's internal competition structure was very much as we know it today in spite of the four years of war that had intervened.

## Inter-County Competition

The first cup for inter-county competition was donated by Horatio Bottomley. The Competition was organised by the E.B.A., and the cup was first played for in 1911 between the

counties of Kent, Devon, Sussex, Berkshire, Bedfordshire, Middlesex and Surrey, when it was known as the 'John Bull Cup Competition'. Kent won it in 1912, and our success is featured on the badge we used on our stationery from 1919 till 1928. I can find no mention of any other John Bull Cup successes for the County, and it ceased to be played for as an inter-county competition in 1922. It was then returned to the donor, and at the 12th Annual General Meeting held in November of that year there is a Minuted entry that "*the County enter for the E.B.A. County Championship 'Middleton Cup'*"

In the County Year Book of 1948, a Mr. J. B. Foad writes about the 'Middleton Cup' as follows, and it is sufficiently worthy of note to reproduce it in full.

*"The welcome success of the chosen bowlers of Kent in reaching the semi-final stage of last season's Middleton Cup Competition after a long succession of failures, made the subject one of considerable interest and a topic of conversation among bowlers in all parts of the County; and having again been invited to make a small contribution to the pages of the Year Book, it occurred to me that a few notes on this important part of our County Association's activities might prove of interest, particularly to the many newcomers to the ranks of Kent bowls since the County last achieved distinction by winning this Blue Riband of the bowling world, which was in 1929, the previous success being as far back as 1912, although the wearers of the White Horse badge were runners-up in the seasons 1923 and 1925.*

*As a preliminary general observation it may be assumed that the Middleton Cup is to the game of bowls, what the F.A. Cup is to football, the County Championship to cricket and the Ryder Cup to golf; in fact, it is the County*

*Championship of the flat green game, and is so described in the Year Book of the English Bowling Association. This being the case naturally gives rise to the question as to why the Competition goes under the name of the Middleton Cup, and it is on that particular point that the following notes may prove of interest to readers of the Year Book.*

*For much of the information the writer is indebted to that grand old veteran of Kent bowls, Mr. W. A. Sims, first President and a former Hon. Secretary of the K.C.B.A.. The first inter-county competition promoted by the E.B.A. among the counties affiliated to the parent Association went by the title of the 'John Bull' Cup, the trophy having been presented by the late Horatio Bottomley, whose activities in the journalistic, sporting and financial worlds are too well remembered to need any comment in these brief notes; suffice it to say that the cup was in due course returned to the donor.*

*It was at this stage that Mr. Sims, when paying a visit to the Norwood B.C., was approached by Mr. Middleton, one of the members of that club, who stated that having lost a son in the war (the 1914-18 conflict) he would like to commemorate his sacrifice by offering a cup to take the place of the 'John Bull' trophy.*

*Mr. Sims, a Past President of the E.B.A., duly submitted Mr. Middleton's generous offer to the Association, which that body was pleased to accept, and as a result the former 'John Bull' Competition was re-named the Middleton Cup Competition, by which title it is still known, and although a suggestion has been made that the title should be changed to that of the County Championship, in view of the circumstances in which the presentation of the Cup was made by the late Mr. Middleton, it would hardly be in the true spirit of the game of bowls for his name to*

*be disassociated with the Competition; rather should it serve to remain as a tribute to the memory of one who displayed so great an interest in our great game."*

Several County bowlers were successful in the E.B.A. National Championships during this period with Mr. J. Work of The Grove being runner-up in the Singles in 1911, whilst Messrs. E. Moore of Bellingham and A. Goodsell of Forest Hill won the Championship in 1919 and 1920 respectively. In 1913, Messrs. C. Booth and A. Goodsell won the Pairs Championship, but we could only manage to become runners-up in the Rink championships of 1913 [Bellingham] and 1914 [Gillingham].

Furthermore, the County was regularly represented by members of Kentish Clubs in the English teams that played in recognised International games. W. Sims played in 1910, 1912, 1913, 1914 and 1921; H. Gilliam in 1911; J. Work in 1912; E. Hodgson and H. Sales in 1913; E. Moore in 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924 and 1925; A. Fitt in 1920; F. Wills in 1921; A. Godsall in 1922 and 1923 and W. Huggett in 1922 and 1924. I can't believe that many of them being K.C.B.A. Officers at one time or another had anything to do with their selection, though we were, perhaps, fortunate in having so many bowlers of this calibre to vote into Office in these early days.

## The County 'Social' Calendar

In 1911 the Committee attempted to persuade its associated clubs to gather together to improve the 'social' aspects of their relationships, and tried to arrange a get-together supper to take place in London. Well, I suppose such an idea seemed perfectly feasible to members of those clubs who lived in the London end of the county, but I'm not so sure that those who dwelt further afield in the more remote colonies of east Kent would see it in

quite the same way. As it was, *the "Hon. Sec. read replies [to his invitations] which meant that only about twenty could be guaranteed to attend"*. So, the Committee quickly put this idea back into its bag of tricks and decided instead to attempt to bring about a similar scheme with other County organisations. Therefore, *"Mr. Woolf proposed and Mr. Hancock seconded that the Hon. Secretary approach the Hon. Sec's. of other counties to see if it could be possible to amalgamate and have a dinner in January or February"*. This aim appeared to receive as little support as their County 'supper' idea, for after reading the replies received from the Sussex, Middlesex, Berkshire, Surrey, Oxford and Gloucester Associations it was decided that the Secretary should reply *"thanking them for their appreciation, and as a result it has been suggested that we do not have an Annual Dinner this year"*.

The County played a regular annual programme of 'friendly' matches with other County Associations, and they also played against visiting teams from overseas whenever they had the opportunity. The first of these was against the Canadians at Tunbridge Wells The Grove B.C. on 18th June, 1913. The Minutes seem to take the visit very seriously indeed, and it is recorded that *"Mr. Booth proposed and Mr. Gilliam seconded that the County of Kent do entertain the Canadian Bowlers"*. Perhaps it is in the selecting of the club at which the game should take place that the value of such an occasion to the host club's prestige becomes apparent, and it also gives a little indication of the degree of wealth that some bowlers of that time enjoyed. The Minutes record that *"Mr. Webster kindly offered the Forest Hill Green for the Match, also Mr. Moore offered Bellingham"*. But they couldn't compete with Mr. Gilliam when he offered the use of the Tunbridge Wells Grove Green, and added *"that he was prepared to offer the following – to give our Canadian friends a drive round the County on arrival at Tunbridge Wells; provide them with lunch afterwards, also a Tea and liquid*

*refreshment, and also a dinner in the evening*". Mr. Webster and Mr. Moore immediately, and probably very wisely, decided to withdraw their offers in favour of The Grove. The Minutes go on to record that *"with regard to the extra expenses attached to the Match the Hon. Secretary had instructions to write to all Kent clubs to get contributions [of] 10s. 6d. or upwards. With regard to the Kent Colours, it was decided to have Navy Blue Coat and White Trousers, and Badge on left breast"*. Kent won by 115 shots to 110, and no doubt a good time was had by all.

On 20th May, 1921 Kent were hosts to a visiting team from New Zealand, and once again The Grove was to be the host Club for the visiting tourists. However, on this occasion *"arrangements to be made by the Hon. Sec. for the entertainment of the Visitors and their Ladies"*. Perhaps The Grove didn't make such an attractive offer as the one they had made when we played the Canadians, for *"after discussion it was decided on the motion of Major Graham seconded by Mr. Chater that as the expense in connection would be considerable all affiliated clubs should be asked to send a donation"*. [Furthermore] *"it was agreed on the suggestion of the Hon. Sec. that the Visitors should be motored from London so as to be shown some of the natural beauty of the County"*. During the following Committee meeting there was great relief when the Secretary reported that *"he thought the amount collected would about settle the expenditure"*. However at the next meeting, *"the Hon. Financial Sec. presented a statement of accounts re the New Zealand match which showed a deficit, but owing to the generous action of the Visitors who returned the cheque due to them for travelling expenses actually showed a profit to the County"*. All had not been well with the catering arrangements or the conduct of the host club, and *"in criticising the item of expenditure £16 7s. 10d. for Teas, etc., a considerable discussion took place, and it was generally agreed that some of the items in the*

*account were excessive, more especially so as the Committee had been given to understand by the representatives of the Grove Club that the Club was prepared to help in the entertaining"*.

Perhaps because of this vexation the arrangements for the visit of the Australians to Kent in 1922 were made on a far more businesslike footing, as is recorded in the Minutes of a meeting held on 11th May. They state *"The Hon. Sec. reported as to arrangements for the Australian Visit to Kent. The players were to pay £1 11s. 6d. inclusive"*, and a contract had been agreed with a Mr. Jobbins of Blackheath to cater for the match at *"10/- per head for 80 for a cold collation"*. It was also reported that *"the President of Bellingham Club would entertain the Australian Ladies to tea"*. I have no doubt that they all enjoyed the game and their 'cold collation', and they had learned to approach such international affairs with a little more circumspection than earlier in the Association's history. There is a very interesting little entry in the Minutes of the Emergency Committee held on the 28th June. A Mr. Chase was to be barred from participating in the Match versus Australia *"on account of his non-complying to the rules in the Surrey Match"*. There is no indication given as to Mr. Chase's transgression, but the Secretary was instructed *"to write to Mr. Chase as to his future conduct"*. Maybe he was guilty of talking with his mouth full, putting his elbows on the table or slurping his tea out of a saucer, but whatever it was it shows that the County was setting standards and expected even the great and the good to comply with them.

It was at a committee meeting held on 17th May, 1916, that the traditional visits by the President and the Committee to associated clubs was founded. A Captain Pleavis, the delegate from the Gillingham B.C., *"invited the Committee to hold their next meeting at Gillingham. Suggesting that a Match should be played in the afternoon with members of the Gillingham*

*and Chatham Clubs, tea to be provided, and the meeting held afterwards.*" This proposal was *"unanimously and thankfully accepted"*. It must have been quite a swell affair because not only was *"a sumptuous tea partaken of"* but also *"the Mayor of Gillingham expressed his pleasure at the visit of the Committee and indulged in an optimistic speech regarding the war"*. After the meeting they adjourned to the Gillingham Liberal Club, where the new Green was inspected and some of the Committee had a *"run up"*.

They obviously thought this touring the County was a great caper, and the *"President offered to write to the Canterbury Secretary with a view to playing a match as at Gillingham"*. The home of Canterbury B.C. was at that time in the Old Dover Road, and its clubhouse was a converted railway goods wagon. Nevertheless, the Committee was made very welcome and *"about 20 sat down to lunch at the Rose Hotel"* before the meeting took place. Afterwards they proceeded to the Green where in a four rink match the Club beat them by 86 shots to 84. Then it was off to the skating rink for *"High Tea"* where the usual speeches were made during which Canterbury's President *"expressed the Club's appreciation of the visit of the County Committee, and hoped others would follow"*. In responding the County President Mr. H. J. Green *"thanked members of the Club for their kind hospitality, and also Mr. Richardson personally for his courteous attention in meeting the Committee at the station and arranging for a hurried visit to the Cathedral. Thus ended a very pleasant outing"*.

The Presidential tours became quite commonplace after this, with notable visits to Faversham, Margate and to Canterbury again for a second time. Admittedly, the members had to sit through a meeting before the junketing could begin, but they were regarded as visiting royalty by the host clubs and treated as such. It's not

done quite on that scale nowadays, I fear, but I am sure that the President and Council enjoy themselves just as much as their predecessors did, particularly as we no longer have to sit through a meeting afterwards.

## County Organisation and its Officers

The County Association was managed by a President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and 11 elected representatives from affiliated clubs, though in 1918 the number of elected representatives was increased to 16. At the A.G.M. held in 1911 the Office of Vice-President was added to the list of officers, and Mr. Gilliam of Tunbridge Wells The Grove B.C. was duly elected to the post. In March, 1913, the County established the title of Honorary Life members, and elected Messrs. Sims and Gilliam as first holders. In the following years the retiring President automatically became Life members, and later in its history the County would elevate some members to this position in recognition of their service.

It was not until 1914 that the Notice of Annual Meeting sent to all affiliated clubs was accompanied by the Agenda and Accounts. One must remember that this was a time before office copying machines, and if they wanted more than one copy of anything it had to be produced by a jobbing printer. It is interesting to note that Stationery and Printing cost the County £10 2s. 3d. in 1918, and the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer together spent some £3. 0s. 0d. between them on printing and postage.

Bowling was obviously becoming an established national pastime by 1914, as that year saw the publication of *"the new paper The Bowling World"*. It was decided that it should become *"the official organ of the K.C.B.A."*, and it was decreed *"that all secretaries [should] see that it is brought to the notice of members of their clubs"*.

Present day Secretaries may find that it is somewhat comforting to note that even the Secretary of the K.C.B.A. was as liable to errors as they are, for it was in March, 1913, during the course of a meeting to elect the County's representatives to the E.B.A. it was found the Secretary "*had omitted to notify four clubs of the meeting*". The meeting was immediately adjourned to be re-convened at a later date.

In February, 1916, Mr. H. J. Green who had been the County's Honorary Secretary from the very beginning was elected President, and a Mr. W. W. Gower of Bromley B.C. was elected to replace him. He didn't last very long, and in March, 1918, at a Committee meeting, that he didn't attend through pressure of business, he resigned the post. "*The President in voicing the feelings of all present expressed deep regret at the resignation of Mr. Gower, who, in the short time he had undertaken his duties, had put much energy into his work*". Mr. W. Sims was then elected to replace him.

I have already noted that within twelve months Mr. Sims was asking for an assistant to help him with his duties, so it is fairly obvious that the Honorary Secretary's duties were becoming too arduous for one man to manage in his spare time. It is apparent from the content and structure of the Minutes that Mr. Sims was a particularly efficient Secretary, who worked without any of the aids that so many of us have available for our use nowadays. There were no photo-copiers or computers for him to make use of, and the only method he had of producing multiple copies for distribution was by resorting to the local jobbing printer. Indeed, I have found no mention of typewriter or spirit duplicator until Bert Cox held the position of Secretary, and that didn't happen until the 1940's.

In September, 1921 Mr. Sims wife became seriously ill, and she died in November. In June, 1922, Mr. Sims

reminded the Committee that as "*at the end of the coming season he would have completed 21 years of active service for the game of Bowls, he would ask them to relieve him of that position*". He went on to say that *he had been looking round for a likely successor [and] had great pleasure in nominating Capt. R. G. Colquhoun of Bromley Town as one who would fill the position with every satisfaction to the Association*". The Committee agreed that the name would go forward for nomination, but after the Chairman formally closed the meeting there is written another entry in which "*Major Graham proposed Mr. W. Thorn for the position of Hon. Sec.*" and the proposition was seconded by Mr. W. A. King. The Minutes of the A.G.M. record that there were two nominations to fill the position of Hon. Secretary, a "*Captain R. G. Colquhoun and Mr. Thorn. On a ballot being taken Mr. Thorn was declared the Secretary*".

In November, 1922, the Secretary received a letter from the Gillingham B.C. asking permission to nominate one of their members as prospective Vice-President for the following year, and had agreed that they might so do. This nomination had, until now, been fixed by the Committee at the meeting prior to the Annual General Meeting, and to allow a Club to nominate someone was a movement away from the general practice. However, the next letter from the Club "*contained two names, and after some long discussion the Committee agreed that the Club had placed them in an awkward position, [as] they felt that the Club was divided as to who should have the position*". So they decided to make their own nomination as usual, and proposed that Mr. A. Smith of Maidstone B.C. should be nominated as well.

The 13th Annual General Meeting was the one at which "*for the first time in the history of the Association the delegates were called upon to vote for the election of Vice-President*". One of them was the Gillingham nomination and the other was the Committee's. In the event The

Committee's candidate was elected with an almost audible sigh of relief from the Minutes.

The first Treasurer of the Association had been a Mr. Drummond Hayward, but he resigned his post at the end of his first year and it was taken by a Mr. Hancock. In a prospectus setting up the new Forest Hill Bowling Club Mr. Hancock was described as a 'Gentleman', whilst the others were listed according to the employment which gave them their livelihood. It would seem that Mr. Hancock must have been someone very special indeed. He resigned from the post in 1916 "owing to removal from the neighbourhood due to domestic trouble", and was replaced by a Mr. H. Lewis.

In 1921, Mr. Lewis was voted off the Committee as a result of a squabble with Mr. Sims, who was the Secretary at the time. In the Minutes of a Committee meeting that took place on the 16th November, 1921, it was reported that "a

*letter was read from Mr. Lewis explaining his absence through illness, and [it] referred to certain items not accounted for by the Hon. Sec. The Hon. Sec. reported that he had previously received several postcards and letters from Mr. Lewis, which were very uncalled for, and absolutely refused to continue in office if Mr. Lewis remained in the position of Treasurer".*

I know one shouldn't really regard this kind of thing with amusement, but it is really quite entertainingly edifying to find that those fairly exalted figures could, at times, behave just like some of those ordinary, and somewhat awkward, folk we know on our own Club Committees.

Anyway, after "*much discussion*", which was not reported in detail, the Committee made a bold, and perhaps diplomatic, decision and it was decided that "*the position of Hon. Sec. and*



Three gentlemen members of Bellingham B.C. circa 1918, two of whom are of great interest to us. The one on the right is W. A. Sims, who chaired the meeting at which the K.C.B.A. was inaugurated and who was our first County President. The one on the left is H. Lewis. He became County Treasurer in 1916, taking over from H. J. Hancock, but was himself voted out of Office by the Executive after a squabble about procedure with Mr. Sims, the then Hon. Secretary, in 1921.

*Treasurer be combined, and Mr. Driver proposed and Mr. Chater seconded that the name of Mr. Moore should go forward [to the A.G.M.] as the Treasurer. Agreed*". So, out goes Mr. H. Lewis, yet for some reason he was then made a Life Member at the next Annual Meeting.

The first mention of a "*Handbook*" appears in the Minutes of a meeting held on 17th May, 1916, but that is the only reference to it that I have found during the period covered by this chapter. It was only mentioned then because five clubs had not paid their membership fees, and the Secretary was instructed to remove their names from the Handbook.

It was in September, 1919, that it was suggested that the County should ask Sir Robert Gower, O.B.E., J.P., Albert Simmonds, Esq., and Howard Williams, Esq., to join Everard Hesketh as Patrons of the K.C.B.A. There is no mention of whether these gentlemen accepted the position or not, but an entry in the 1924 Handbook indicates that Sir Robert Gower was a Patron at that time together with Everard Hesketh; however there is no mention of the other two gentlemen who had been approached.

Looking back it seems that I may have, perhaps, covered these twelve years or so in too much detail, but the period is one in which a relatively few people impressed their authority and character upon a fledgeling organisation and

fashioned it into something that is not too much different from today's. It may well be that these gentlemen were driven by nothing more than personal ambition, for seven of those who were present at the inaugural meeting in 1911 became County Presidents by 1923; but even if this were so the result was still to the benefit of bowlers throughout the county. In those twelve years they had set standards and values that would govern the development of bowling throughout the county, from the well set-up clubs of the metropolis to the less sophisticated associations developing in the more rural areas.

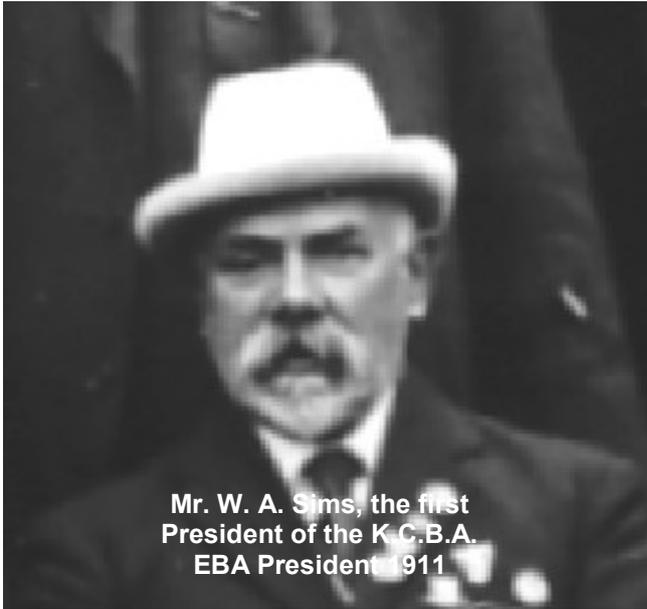
The County and Inter-County competition calendar that these few individuals set in train have grown to require an organisation that functions almost independently of the management of the County's domestic affairs, and it has had its effect upon the aims and aspirations of even the less able bowlers who are happy to act as canon fodder in the hope that they may achieve some level of success.

Naturally, it has changed to move with the times, and parts of its organisation has been tweaked here and there when necessary. But whether you are a believer or whether you consider that the County "*has had an adverse effect upon the nature of the game*", you must give these chaps their due.

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These gentlemen have all been Presidents  
of both the K.C.B.A. and the E.B.A.

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Mr. W. A. Sims, the first  
President of the K.C.B.A.  
EBA President 1911



Mr. A. D. Sward  
EBA President 1973



Mr. P. Snow  
EBA President 1934



Mr. A. G. Hockley  
EBA President 2003

# Puts forth roots . . .

*From 1924 until 1939*

## *In General*

The 1924 AGM Minutes show that the Association was managed by a President, a Vice-President, the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Secretary, the Hon. Financial secretary, the Hon. Auditor and sixteen representatives from sixteen affiliated clubs. The nomination for Vice-President had, until now, been an uncertain affair, and usually depended on an affiliated club or the Executive selecting and nominating someone for the job.

However, at the Annual General Meeting of 1928 it was agreed that *“the method of selecting the Vice-President shall be by rotation from the four Divisions. Nominations to be received by the Div. Sec., and the Vice-President elected at the respective Divisional meeting. The gentleman nominated need not necessarily be a member of the Executive Committee for that particular Division”*. This process lasted until 1932, when at the A.G.M. it was decided that the Vice-President should be nominated by the Executive Committee by rota of Divisions. The membership of sixteen affiliated clubs in 1911 had now grown to 86, numbering some 5,000 bowlers; but their representation on what was now being referred to as *“the Executive”* still remained at just sixteen, and consisted of four clubs from each of the four Divisions. Its structure seemed to consist of one representative for each five affiliated clubs in each Division.

This did increase to twenty in November, 1926, with six each from Divisions one and two, but the rustics in Divisions three and four were still restricted to four representatives each. By 1939 the number of clubs affiliated was approaching 200, and they had 38 representatives on the Executive. Mind you, there were also thirteen ex-officio members with full voting powers, which formed a committee of 51 in total. The meetings of the Executive Committee were still held at a series of hotels in London, as were the meetings of the Emergency Committee, but the Selection Committee appeared to have no particular fixed abode and the meeting often took place at one of the member's Bowling Clubs.

In a letter to the Secretary, written in November, 1938, Mr. J. Foad, the Association's Publicity Officer, expressed his concern at the increasing number of representatives on the Executive Committee, and forecasts that *“assuming the same rate of progress the grand total will be 61 by 1943”*. He was concerned at the considerable increase in the Secretary's workload, and the unfair distribution of representatives in the various sections of the four Divisions. With a certain wry humour he claimed to bring the matter forward *“with some diffidence as [he] is well aware that it will not be favourably received by the executive members as it would obviously result in some of them losing their places”*. Eventually he made his suggestion in the form of a Motion, limiting the size of the Executive to one

representative from each seven clubs instead of five clubs, and it was eventually discussed by the General Purposes Committee. They decided to “ascertain the procedure of Surrey and Middlesex on the matter” and passed it on to the Executive for a decision. It was promptly passed back like a hot potato when the Executive “agreed that the whole question of Election of Divisional representatives be referred to the G.P.C.”. They didn’t want to raise their heads above the parapet either, and “after discussion it was agreed to recommend that no alteration to present Rule 7 dealing with the matter was necessary”. The meeting then closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman, and, I would imagine, a suppressed sigh of relief.

The habit of taking the Executive about the county to play against affiliated clubs was very well established by now, though the visits were often for the most part social occasions rather than a convenient venue to hold a business meeting. The most exciting reason for visiting a club was when the Executive was invited to open a new Green, and in 1924 they officially opened three. These were Callender’s at Belvedere, the one on the west cliff at Ramsgate and one at Deal. The Secretary reported that “the friends connected with these Clubs did all in their power to make the visit of the Executive

most enjoyable, and their kindness and hospitality were greatly appreciated”. Indeed, Sir Tom Callender’s hospitality after the Kent versus Bedfordshire match, played on Callender’s Green in June, 1925, was so overwhelming that he was rewarded in 1926 by being invited to become a Patron of the Association along with John Gill. In 1935 the Association became even more ambitious, and invited H.R.H. The Duke of Kent to become a Patron. Such grandeur was not to be achieved, however, for at the Executive meeting of July, 1935, a letter was read from “H.R.H. Duke of Kent expressing regret re Patronage”. My word, if he had accepted they would probably have completely re-designed all the Association’s stationery and added a ‘By Royal Warrant’ to their badge.

On the 8th May, 1926 the Secretary reported that they had opened a new, full size grass green at Brooklands Park, Blackheath, and that “this marks the passing of a Public Parks club, under the title of the Boro’ of Greenwich, to a private Club with the title of the Blackheath and Greenwich Club – one of our oldest affiliated clubs”. But what really made him wax quite lyrical in his reports was when the executive were asked to open a Cumberland Turf Green. “At Folkestone, on Thursday, June 10th we opened a



The Kent County Bowling Association opening Canterbury Bowling Club’s new Cumberland Turf Green on 1st May, 1930

*properly banked and ditched Cumberland-Turf Green at the Recreation Ground, Cheriton Road, being an addition to the Folkestone Club who now possess two Greens. At Herne Bay, on Saturday June 5th, a ditched and banked full size Cumberland Turf Green in the Memorial Park in connection with a newly affiliated club bearing the title of Herne Bay*". However the General Strike of 1926 seems to have made travelling a problem, and several clubs, including the one at Sheerness, had their visits postponed.

It would seem that the Association was now even more determined to achieve a certain standard from its associated clubs, and in particular to the quality of the playing surfaces. It became routine at this time for the Divisional Secretaries to visit any club seeking affiliation to inspect and report on the condition of the Green. Their recommendation as to whether or not that club should be admitted was usually accepted by the Executive Committee. Whoever visited the Sandwich and Blenheim Clubs was obviously not particularly impressed at the time, and in the Minutes of the Emergency Committee of 8th June, 1927 it is reported that "*Sandwich and Blenheim Clubs did not see their way clear to make the necessary banks to their Greens, and the Emergency Committee did not accept them as members*". However, in 1926 Wellcome and Institute Dartford had been allowed to affiliate "*having put banks to their Green*", so it seems that we were allowed a second chance if we proved willing. By 1931 it would appear that they were becoming even more finicky about such matters, for in July of that year, after Eltham B.C. had protested about the Chislehurst Green in their Gill Cup tie, it was "*agreed that a letter be sent to the Chislehurst Conservative Club requesting them to adjust the Banks to the proper standard before the commencement of the 1932 season*".

Moreover, it would appear that a more formal standard of dress, particularly

for inter-county games, was becoming mandatory, for at the AGM in November, 1929 it was proposed and agreed "*that a registered County Hat Band and Tie be adopted for County players to purchase*", as was the proposal that "*a special badge be presented to Middleton Cup players in the 1929 teams*".

William Thorn had been elected as Hon. Secretary at the Annual General Meeting in 1924, and obviously took a very firm hold on the County's administration from the start of his period in office. He was assisted in some way by Mr. E. A. Gilkes, the Financial Secretary, whose duties are never made clear anywhere, and the four Divisional Secretaries. If anything, the new Secretary's Minutes were even more terse than his predecessors. In general, they merely mention the items being discussed and state the decisions that were made as a result of any discussion that took place, though the hand-written copies of his annual reports that are folded into the Minute books show that he is obviously prepared to speak his mind when it is necessary.

For example he was very much annoyed by the number of players withdrawing from County Matches after they had been selected to represent their County. In his report for 1926 he writes, "*It is, in my opinion, a matter of regret that anyone should allow his name to be submitted [for selection] without a reasonable certainty of being able to play if selected*". I'm sure that our present Secretary and Competition Secretary know just how Mr. Thorn felt when he wrote those words. He goes on to write, "*With the idea of helping the Selection Committee next year, a space will be provided on the Nomination Form for the 'Record' of the players nominated*". It seems that his tetchy remarks did little to improve the situation, for in his report of 1927 he is even more forthright in his condemnations. "*It is, in my opinion, a matter of regret that the Selection Committee should*

*experience so many withdrawals from the -teams chosen [to play for the County] and I trust you will forgive me being so plain spoken. But I consider that a player after allowing himself to be nominated for any particular match, and being chosen to play, he should regard that match as having absolutely first claim over any other he may subsequently wish to play in. Nothing but sickness, or inability to fit absence from business, should keep a player from his engagement after having accepted; in short, County first always, with the sole exception of International honours".* He makes no further condemnations in his later Reports, so we must assume that either the situation had improved or he had given up the struggle.

It became quite apparent in 1927 that the prime function of the County President was to wave the County's flag as enthusiastically as was possible, and on as many occasions as was possible – but it was the Secretary who handed him the right one. The retiring President did, however, receive a regular and flattering mention in Mr. Thorn's annual reports, all very much as the following example; *"Our President, Mr. J. Edwards, [or whosoever] has carried out his duties in a very genial and satisfactory manner, and has done his utmost to further the interests of the County Association".* Of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary he would write that we have *"gentlemen in whose hands the financial matters of the Association are conducted in a thoroughly competent and business-like manner".* The delegates to the Executive were congratulated for having once again *"remarkable attendances at the various meetings which have been such a marked feature during my four years secretary ship"*, while of the four Divisional Secretaries he wrote, *"you have four gentlemen who have given very efficient help in many ways, and who carried out the County Competitions to the entire satisfaction of the Executive Committee and to the competitors generally"*. Of himself he wrote *"the many expressions of kindness from the President*

*and Officers, and various officials of clubs, have made the growing and somewhat heavy nature of the work of your Hon. Secretary a pleasure"*. Reminds me of so many of those school reports that I used to write at the end of every year.

The annual County's 'Secretaries' Day' dates back to the 16th July, 1924, with an entry fee of 6/6d. But in those days it was a serious matter, regarded as an opportunity for Secretaries to meet in conference. Admittedly this was followed by a competition of some sort in which the winners received a cash prize, but I'm not so sure that it is taken quite so seriously nowadays.

The Divisional Secretaries were, by now, controlling all aspects of the County competitions up till Finals Day, and had also become ex-officio members of the Executive Committee. It was at the AGM in 1927 that they were empowered *"to appoint an Assistant or Assistants if desired. Such Assistants to be chosen from representatives on the Executive Committee"*. There is little doubt that the Hon. Secretary's power base had grown quite considerably in a very short period of time, and he now administered to the affairs of an Association that numbered 116 affiliated clubs. In return for his time and effort he was rewarded with an honorarium which by 1927 had increased to seventy-five guineas.

In 1929 there began the tradition of presenting a County Brooch to those ladies who lent a hand at the various functions attended by the Executive, though it seems that these have been replaced by a small personal gift from the reigning County President. Also in 1929 the *"Hon Secretary was requested to attend the E.B.A. Championships, if he could manage it, either for the week or part of week"*. It does not say whether this was to be regarded as part of his holiday and therefore at his own expense, or whether he would be attending as an official representative with all expenses paid.

In 1931 we find the very first mention of an 'Open Tournament' when "*Sanction was given to the granting of a Licence by the E.B.A. to Dane Park Club for an Open Pairs Tournament in September, 1932*". Nowadays it seems that hardly a week of the season goes by when some club or other is not running an open tournament, but it would appear that to Dane Park goes the distinction of actually holding the first. This was soon followed by a similar application from Tunbridge Wells B.C. for a six day open tournament, and a similar one from Herne Bay B.C. which was also approved so long as "*date does not clash with Tun. Wells.*"

The Minutes of the Executive meeting held at Sevenoaks B.C. in July, 1932, show just how determined the bowling world was to maintain its amateur status as a sport. "*The Secretary reported that correspondence had taken place with the West Beckenham Club in respect to the position of Mr. A. P. Butcher, an assistant at Alexander Park, West Beckenham. Mr. Butcher had entered the County Competitions, but from information received he was requested to withdraw from same*". It seems that a 'friend' had informed the Executive that Mr. Butcher was a waged employee of the club. Anyway, the Secretary of West Beckenham Club intervened on Mr. Butcher's behalf, and was required to answer certain questions put to him regarding Mr. Butcher's employment. To wit : "*Q. His official designation? A. Caretaker. Q. Hours of employment? A. 47 per week. Q. Does he receive any part of his wages for work done on the Bowling Green? A. No. Q. Does he receive any part of the gratuity usually left by visiting clubs or competitors? A. No.*" After much deliberation, and chewing of lower lips, it was "*unanimously agreed that these answers did not warrant Mr. Butcher being considered a Professional and the Secretary was instructed to inform the West Beckenham Club that, as long as Mr. Butcher conformed to the answers given, he was to be considered an amateur,*

*especially the one regarding gratuities*". Perhaps if a wrong answer had been given they would both have been requested to appear before the Committee to have the buttons torn from their white shirts, and the stickers removed from their bowls. Nevertheless, in spite of the authorities' obsession with the need to keep professionalism out of the game, it is obvious by 1939 that it is being played by folk who are just as talented but less affluent than those who held sway over the way in which it was played and managed. So by then, the E.B.A. were more than willing to assist with the travelling and hotel expenses of those taking part in international events, and our Association itself had given the odd £5 or so to assist those Kentish bowlers who were selected for International honours.

From 1932 it was decided that the Secretary's Report would no longer be his alone, and that it should be presented as a Committee Report. From then on the Secretary was required to provide a 'proof copy' of the report to the Committee, whose members no doubt edited it to their satisfaction.

John Gill, the donor of the Gill Cup in January, 1922, died in 1936. He had been a staunch supporter of the Association since it had become linked with the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men. He had maintained his support for the competition, had attended every one of the Finals and always paid for the medals that were presented to the winners. There is no doubt that his death was a great loss to the Association, and the following '*In Memoriam*' was printed in the 1936 Year Book.

*"It is with the deepest regret we have to record that on the 28th. December, Mr John E. Gill, the donor of the 'Gill Cup' trophy, in his eighty-fifth year passed peacefully away at his home in Rochester. Mr. Gill invariably attended the Finals Day of the competition with which his name will always be associated, and his*

*happy personality, courteousness and kindness had endeared him to all those who knew him. Apart from his interest in our Association, Mr. Gill was one of the oldest members of the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men, and was Chairman in 1921. We have lost a very dear friend"*

A very interesting little item appears in the Minutes of the 1936 A.G.M., when, during the time set aside for discussing and voting on the motions that had been submitted, the Secretary read an addition by the E.B.A. to their rules. *"In all Competitions under the auspices of County Associations, and in County Matches, the players to consist of men only"*. It is followed by another little note that says *"It was agreed to insert same in our Year Book"*. One can only wonder whether or not a certain female militant somewhere in the country had tried to insert the thin end of a wedge, and the E.B.A. was determined to scupper the initiative before other females could pick it up and run with it.

It is about this time in our history that the Minutes of the various meetings sadly began to report the deaths of so many who had held Office in the Association in the past. But I suppose this must be inevitable, as the Association had by now been in existence for some 25 years and they too would have been 25 years older than when they participated in its earlier existence.

A great deal appeared to be happening at once in 1936. It is from the 1936 A.G.M. that we find that the Minutes of the Executive and A.G.M. Meetings, the Notices of Motions and the Executive Committee's Annual Report are being printed, and distributed. Before this time the Report was painstakingly hand-written in the Minute Book, and was, therefore, a surprise to everyone, including the Executive Committee, when it was read by the Secretary at the various meetings. However, the printed copies of the Minutes, conspicuously headed **"PRIVATE AND**

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION"**, are only a synopsis of those that are still hand-written into the book. Furthermore, a new committee was formed at the same meeting on a suggestion by C. Walton of Faversham and this new committee was to be called the *"General Purposes Committee"*.

The Executive added yet another committee to its establishment in 1938 with the formation of a *"Finance Committee"*, and yet another *"a Dinner Sub-Committee"* in 1939. However, as the gentlemen elected were either County Officers or already serving on the G.P.C. and Emergency Committees, one wonders why the business they were intended to conduct at the meetings of the new committees could not be conducted at one of the other meetings. Does one detect, do you think a certain 'the bigger the empire the grander its officials' syndrome beginning to emerge?

Division 4 sought, and was given sanction, to *"hold a Competition of Club Champions of all Bowling Clubs in their Division, for a challenge cup presented by Messrs. Cobb & Co., of Margate"*. Does this particular Divisional Competition still take place, I wonder?

There was also a move afoot to create an Indoor Bowling Section of the K.C.B.A., but after the Secretary had received the replies from the established Kent indoor clubs to his communication it was decided to leave the matter until sometime in 1938. In the event, when the matter was discussed at a later date *"the G.P.C. suggestion that this matter be held over for a year or so"* was agreed to.

Mr. E. Moore, who had taken on the Office of County Treasurer in 1922, did not seek re-election at the A.G.M. of 1939. He was replaced as Treasurer by Percy Snow of Margate B.C., a chap who seemed to have done everything and been everywhere in his years with the County Association. At the same meeting Mr. E. Gilkes did not seek re-election as Hon. Financial

Secretary [I have still been unable to find out what his exact duties were], and he was replaced by Mr. J. Woolf of Herne Bay B.C. The members present showed their appreciation for the work that these worthies had done over the years, and this tribute to Mr. Moore was printed in the 1939 Year Book. In 1950 there was a move by some affiliated clubs to simplify the management of the Association by removing the Post of Financial Secretary from the list of County Officers, but the Executive wouldn't agree to it. Well, as one notorious young lady once remarked they "*wouldn't, would they*".

*Mr. E. E. Moore.*

*"Mr. Ernie Moore, who on the 10th November last relinquished the office of Honorary Treasurer after serving the County in that capacity from the 16th November, 1922, first signed the County Committee's register of attendance on the 9th April, 1913. Mr. Moore has had an enviable and distinguished record in both the administrative and playing fields of our game. In the former, he graced the Presidential Chair of the English Bowling Association in 1926 and in 1920 that of our own; and in the latter won the English Singles Championship in 1919; played in the Internationals of 1919, '20, '21, '22, '23 and '24, and has captained the English side"*

Indeed, the Executive Committee went even further "*and suggested that the sum of fifty pounds be voted [as a gift to] Mr. Moore*" and that "*the Clubs be circularised with a view of a further testimonial, as an expression of the very high esteem and appreciation of Mr. Moore's services as Hon. Treasurer for many years*".

## County Competitions

The grouping of clubs in their various Divisions was causing concern to some of the affiliated clubs, and the Minutes of the

AGM of November, 1923, report that "*careful consideration was promised when arranging the clubs for the four Divisions*". They obviously tweaked things here and there as by 1925 they had done away with the 'one man one competition' rule and were presenting dated pennants to the various winners, but it was not until 1927 that they really got to grips with the problem and then it was as a result of the pressure coming from affiliated clubs. Towards the end of the 1920's it became evident that the clubs wanted a little more say in how the Association was managed. For example, the various motions now being put to the annual meetings showed their concerns over how the teams for the Middleton Cup Competition were being selected, how the divisions were set up for competition and how the competitions themselves were organised and administered. The result of this pressure was a meeting of the Divisional Secretaries, together with the Hon. Secretary on 7th December, 1927 to fully consider "*the matter of the County Competitions, as per resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting of Nov. 2nd*". Their recommendations were that the County "*be divided into four Divisions, each with two sections [and] such Divisions and sections to be published in the Hand-book*". Thus Division 1's 31 clubs were divided into two sections of 15 and 16; Division 2's 29 clubs into 15 and 14; Division 3's 31 clubs into 16 and 15 while Division 4's 25 clubs were divided into 13 and 12.

Preliminary rounds should be played to eliminate byes in subsequent rounds, and "*Divisional Finals to be discontinued. The eight winners of the sections to play off on a given day to determine runners-up and winners, this to apply to the Singles, Pairs and Rinks*".

Among their recommendations regarding the Gill Cup Competition was the one that there should now be an "*entrance fee of 4/- per club, this being 6d. each for the eight players*". Until now there

had been no entry fee for the Gill Cup, and they hedged their bets on this one by adding "*subject to the consent of Mr. Gill*".

The results of their deliberations were submitted in a report to the 19th AGM held on 7th November, 1928, and were accepted after it had been agreed to divide each division into four sections instead of the planned two. The Report itself was very formally presented, having been signed by each of the Divisional Secretaries and also the County Hon. Secretary, and for the first time the competitions were played on a very positive footing with everybody knowing just how things were supposed to be done.

In 1929 there were 467 entries in the Singles competition, 421 in the Pairs, 184 in the Rinks and 84 in the Gill Cup, and it seems that keeping track of everybody who had entered was proving very difficult. It was at the AGM that a motion was passed which offered to make life easier for those playing by "*insisting addresses of competitors [appear] in Year Books, and for competitors to appear under a number in the Draw*". It is interesting to note that Division 1, with 42 clubs, had a combined entry of 356; Division 2, with 32 clubs, assembled 178; Division 3, with 38 clubs, had 253 and Division 4, with only 28 clubs, mustered 285 competitors. One wonders how it is that the smallest Division had the second largest combined competition entry – perhaps all that country air and garden-fresh victuals had something to do with it. It was not until February, 1931 that the practice of collecting one shilling from each player taking part in the semi-finals and finals of the Gill Cup and County competitions was discontinued, and all expenses were to be paid by the County Association.

A Motion to separate the County into eight Divisions, with sub-sections, instead of the current four because of the "*great increase in the number of Entries in the County Competitions*" was made by Divisions 1 and 2 at the 1931 A.G.M. The motion was not carried, but the concern

was "*referred to the Div. Secs. to arrange and sub-divide as thought best suited to the various Divisions*". At the same meeting a move to inaugurate a County Triples Competition was made by Divisions 3 and 4, but the response of the Meeting was very luke warm. However they were told that "*no objection would be taken as to Divisions 3 And 4 running an unofficial triples competition if they so desired*". The subject was raised again in the form of a Motion from Division 4 at the following A.G.M., but was withdrawn "*on the suggestion that, the Benevolent Fund Trustees carry out a Triples Competition for the whole of the County on behalf of the Benevolent Fund being accepted by the Benevolent Trustees*".

## County Social Calendar

The County had hosted a visiting Canadian touring team at the Maidstone Green in June, 1924, and the Secretary's Annual Report provides quite an entertaining account of the day's events, thus . . . "*On Monday, June 23rd we had the red-letter day of the season, this being the visit of our Canadian brothers to Maidstone. Our President, Mr. Albert W. Smith, and his Maidstone friends, put forth every effort to ensure the success of what proved to be a most delightful day. A rather unique feature of the visit was the fact that it was the Anniversary of the Canadian Captain's wedding to a Maid of Kent. This gave our friend W. A. Sims, who was present, a brain wave, and by the generous and spontaneous help of visiting Kentish Bowlers and also the Kent players, our President had the pleasure of presenting a very handsome piece of plate to Mr. and Mrs. Grice*".

A present day President should, perhaps, learn a lesson from this, and only take the Executive to visit other clubs on his birthday, his wife's birthday, his wedding anniversary or any other personal festive days that he can fit in to his schedule. My only familiarity with "*red-*

*letter days*” comes with the postman when I forget to pay the gas or electricity bills on time; so perhaps that is what he means, for on that occasion the County had to make good a loss on the day with a grant of £10 from the Association’s funds.

It is fairly obvious that the Executive had learned very little from the events of the past, or perhaps they considered that some form of divine intervention could always be relied upon to step in and help them out of financial troubles. I’m convinced that their past experiences should have warned them that the costs involved in entertaining and playing a game against a foreign touring team would be quite considerable. Sure enough, when they played the genial host to the South Africans at Margate on the 23rd June, 1924, the expenditure of £87 3s. 0d. was £40 13s. 0d. greater than the income derived from charging their 24 players 30/- each and their home visitors 15/- each. The Secretary’s Annual Report of 1926 explains how the deficit was made up by donations “*from Mr. Denny of the Margate Club of £10 5s. 0d., from Mrs. Percy Snow and Mrs. Snow Senior of £8 4s. 6d. for discharge of cost of char-a-bancs and Mr. Percy Snow a donation of £22 3s. 6d.*”

In January, 1928 there is the very first mention of indoor bowling, when the Executive was invited to play a winter match against Crystal Palace Indoor Bowling Club. This took place on the 8th December, and the Executive won by 66 shots to 62. However, when the Association hosted the return game, again using the Crystal Palace Indoor arena, on the 29th February, 1929, they were severely mauled losing by 33 shots to 100.

When the Canadians visited England in 1933 the Executive decided to make it a very swanky affair. The costs to those taking part were to be “*players 15/-, Ladies and Gentlemen friends 10/-*”. I’m not to certain of what interpretation would be put on the “*gentlemen friends*” bit, but I’m sure Mr. Thorn never envisaged just how that

entry could be interpreted in the year 2000+. To continue – “*the President and Secretary of the E.B.A. were to be invited, Programme cards were to be printed, badges to be exchanged by players included, chocolates for the ladies present and photographs of combined group possible, for sale only*”. If one remembers the financial dilemmas that had followed earlier, quite modest, international visits, one can only assume that the excitement of a previous year’s balance of £398 13s. 9d. had gone to their heads and addled their brains more than somewhat.

I would imagine that a letter read to the Executive at the October meeting caused almost as much consternation as the affair over Mr. Butcher. It was from the English Women’s B.A. requesting some kind of match which was summarily refused, and there was no hint of any discussion taking place before “*it was agreed not to play a County Match, Ladies v. Men, should invitation be renewed*”.

In December, 1938, there were signs that the Executive were beginning to take notice of a lobby which was in favour of the Association’s social events taking place within the bounds of its County, and it was agreed that the next Annual General Meeting and Dinner would be held at the Royal Star Hotel in Maidstone. This did seem a more sensible arrangement than the current one, whereby all meetings and dinners had been held in a hotel in London and consequently were really beyond the bounds of the less prosperous folk who lived in the eastern colonies of Kent. As it happened the war intervened, and the meeting and dinner was postponed “*the decision taken and the notice issued under the signatures of A. H. Hardy, Percy Snow and William Thorn*”.

### The County Benevolent Fund

The first indication that anyone might be interested in helping those bowlers who were in need came in the Minutes of the AGM held on the 7th

November, 1929. In them it is reported that *“Mr. G. H. Last of Bromley Town B.C. proposed that one hundred pounds of the funds in hand be voted to form a Benevolent Fund”*. Unfortunately the Proposition was not carried, though the idea obviously struck home in a few kindly hearts, and we did not have to wait too long for it to begin to take root. It is reported in the Executive Minutes of a meeting held on 16th July, 1930 that *“the President read a letter from Mr. Percy Snow re the formation of a Benevolent Fund, and the receipt of a cheque for £10 from the members of his Touring party towards that object. Also a letter and cheque for 21/- from the winners of the Margate Cup, J. Thompson’s Rink, towards the same object”*. The Executive was obviously impressed, and immediately, and in true British tradition, set up a sub-committee to *“bring up a report at the next Executive Meeting for presentation to the General Meeting”*. That the sub-committee met, and eventually successfully presented the idea to both the Executive and the AGM held in November, 1930, is, perhaps best expressed in the following details reproduced in full from the 1931 Handbook.

### OUR BENEVOLENT FUND.

*“During the past few years many have become converted to the belief that there was, and still is, crying need of funds from which alleviation could be afforded to distressed bowlers, or their families.*

*This belief eventually - and outside the province of our Association’s immediate responsibility - culminated in the Francis Drake Fellowship and two somewhat similar mutual help schemes in neighbouring counties. The functioning of these has already proved of inestimable value and an action of the first named, within our own boundaries, has earned our deepest gratitude and calls for emulation.*

*At the Kent County Bowling Association Annual General Meeting of 1929, Mr. G. H. Last, of the Bromley Town B.C., commented on the Association’s large balance (£359.10s3d) and moved that £100 of it should be set aside to form the nucleus of a Benevolent Fund. This met with general approbation, but did not mature because it was understood at the time that county monies could not be*

*used for any purpose not in direct application to the game.*

*Fortunately, Mr. Last’s appeal was not forgotten, and in early June last year, (1930) consequent to practical and generous kindness by the Kent Tourists - exclusively in the interests of the same, or a sister idea - the matter, at the instance of Mr. Percy Snow, was reopened at the Executive’s Summer meeting, debated upon, and a small sub-committee appointed to go into the question. This committee met later in the year, examined the advantages (in so far as they affected our associate members) of two correlative proposals and ultimately decided: (1) in favour of a Benevolent Fund; (2) recommended that the trustees for same be Mr. G. H. Last (Bromley Town), Mr. Percy Snow (Margate), and Mr. T. P. Wootton (Eltham), and (3) that Mr. Percy Snow be deputed to submit a draft scheme at the next Executive meeting. This he did; all suggestions were ratified; were unanimously adopted at the Annual General Meeting, held at the Abercorn Rooms, Liverpool Street, London, on Wednesday, November 5th last, and, the embargo affecting the disposal of County accumulations being found non-existent, a grant of £105 was voted to start it.*

*This ends the chronological sequence of happenings from which the **KENT COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION BENEVOLENT FUND** became an accomplished fact.*

*With all powers of administration in the hands of the President [ex-officio]. Vice-President [ex-officio], and Trustees: Messrs. G. H. Last, Percy Snow and T. P. Wootton [Hon. Sec.]*

Affiliated Clubs were urged to *“send an initial donation, or better still an annual donation, however small”*, to make use of the collection boxes which would be supplied to clubs on application and the running of competitions or other functions. The scheme was accepted with great enthusiasm by a large number of the affiliated clubs, and by the end of its first year a sum in excess of £200 had been donated by 70 clubs, which, with the grant of £105 from the Association, gave the Fund a working start of more than £300. During the course of the same year the Fund had already made three grants to disadvantaged members, and was already beginning to fulfil the function for which it had been set up.

Perhaps one of the most noteworthy ideas was the foundation of the Competition for the Trophy presented for

Hon. Secretary:  
**CHAS. E. BURGESS.**  
"Taranto"  
St. George's Place,  
Canterbury,



Green:-Nunnery Road.

## COUNTY TRIPLES AT CANTERBURY.

### Woolf Trophy Goes to Cathedral City.

The Kent County Triples competition, which is an experimental contest initiated this year in order to assist the funds of the County Benevolent Fund, has had a most successful debut. The divisional semi-finals for Section 4 were recently played at Herne Bay, and it was provisionally arranged that the semi-finals and final of the competition should also be staged on, the Herne Bay green, but in order to meet the convenience of two of the four remaining teams the venue was moved to Canterbury, although the Cathedral trio were still in the running.

These were played off on the Canterbury green on Wednesday, the four semi-finalists: being: Ashford Southern Railway (Messrs. G. E. Winder, J. B. Fuller and E. A. Cozens); Canterbury (Messrs. J. E. Reid, R. W. Martin and W. A. B. Rattey; Margate (Messrs. C. Jewhurst, Mr. Basden and P. D. Tomlinson); and River (Messrs. W. H. Rhodes, A. Fullager and W. Braddock).

#### The Semi-Finals.

In the Canterbury and River match the last named got away to the tune of 9-4 at the 7th end, and then Canterbury gathered a four and a six, but, with a three and a two River drew level at the 11th end. Three singles by Canterbury and a three by River brought the scores level at the 15th end -17 all, and as the competition is one of 15 ends only an extra end became necessary and Canterbury scored the necessary shot to take them, into the final.

The game between Ashford and Margate was not so close, for although Ashford took the lead 5-2 at the 5th end, Margate scored eight shots, in the next five ends to lead 10-5 at the 10th end. On the 11th end Ashford gathered two to make them seven, but did not score again, Margate adding five to make the final scores 15-7.

#### The Final.

The final between Canterbury and Margate was a rare tussle. At the 14th end Canterbury secured a three, but Margate on the fifth end nullified this with a six to lead -4. A three to Margate on the sixth end gave them a commanding lead of 11-4, and at the 9th end they were 12 to Canterbury's six. On the 11th end, however, it was Canterbury's turn to hold a "basketful," and with a six they led by 14-12. The twelfth end brought a couple to Margate for 14 all, and on the 13th end they secured a four to gain a lead of four shots with two ends to go. Canterbury secured two on the 14th end and a further couple on the 15th and last end to tie at 18 all, and thus as in their semi-final, the City men had to play an extra end. On this end the Canterbury skip, Mr. Rattey, converted two against him into two for his side, and thus Canterbury became the first holders of the handsome "Woolf" trophy.

#### Presentation of Prizes.

Mrs. A. W. J. Woolf, wife of the donor of the trophy (Mr. A. W. J. Woolf) presented the cup to Mr. Rattey at the conclusion of the contest and the prizes (salad bowls to the winners and fish knives and forks to the runners-up) to the finalists.

Mr. P. Snow, the hon. secretary for Division 4 of the County, stated that was the first occasion the trophy had been played for, and he thought they would agree the games had been fought out that afternoon in a sporting spirit, and they had seen some very excellent bowling.

Through the generosity and kindness of Mr. Woolf, the Captain of the Herne Bay Club, they had a beautiful trophy to present to the winners, and he would like in their name to thank Mr. Woolf, very heartily for the wonderful interest he had shown, not only in his own club, but in the Kent County (applause).

They were fortunate in having Mrs. Woolf with them and she had kindly consented to present the cup and prizes. They were delighted to see her, and he would also like to refer to their indebtedness to the Canterbury Club,

and particularly to the ladies for so ably catering for them. This matter had been in the capable hands of Mrs. Rattey, and he thanked her and her helpers (applause).

Mrs. Woolf having presented the trophy and prizes, was heartily thanked by Mr. Snow, who also complimented the Canterbury groundsman (C. Scott) on the excellent rinks he had prepared for the matches.

#### The Donor's Objective.

At the request of Mr. Snow the donor of the trophy, Mr. A. W. J. Woolf, referred to his strong feelings on behalf of the Kent County Bowling Association's Benevolent Fund, which had led him to present the cup, so that it could be the means of augmenting a very valuable and necessary fund, besides providing some good matches for the bowlers taking part. His object was to bring additional funds to the benevolent side of the County's activities and to do something to add to the interest in bowls.

He admitted they already had many competitions running in their clubs and in the County, but he felt there was room for just one more if it was going to do a definite amount of good to a very deserving cause (applause). A helping hand was a great thing, and it had already been the case that bowlers had fallen on hard times and required the assistance of just such a fund as their Benevolent Fund was able to give. This year 46 trios had entered the competition and he hoped that next year they would take that number up to sixty at least (hear, hear). Bowlers belonged to a glorious brotherhood and he appealed to them to make their Benevolent Fund self-supporting, and that little competition was just one way of trying to bring this about (applause).

In conclusion, Mr. Woolf thanked the company for the kind way in which they had received Mrs. Woolf. She was a keen bowler herself and her heart was in the game and its best interests (applause).

During the matches a collection was made for the Benevolent Fund, and we hear that as a result of this and of the competition a sum of £10 4s. 0d. has been raised for the Fund.

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This is the cutting from the "Herne Bay Press which so impressed Mr. Burgess that he kept it pasted on one of Canterbury's sheets of headed notepaper as a souvenir.

this purpose by Mr. A. W. J. Woolf, the Captain of Herne Bay B.C. who became County President in 1934.

By 1939 the Benevolent Fund was a recognised part of the bowling activities within the County, and was well supported by the Association's affiliated clubs. At the end of that year it had a balance of some £976 5s. 4d., and had paid fourteen grants, during the year, to needy bowlers in excess of £160 - which was a large sum indeed in 1939. I think that we can safely say that at the end of this period the Benevolent Fund was a well established institution, doing the job for which it was intended.

At the 1937 A.G.M. the Secretary "read a circular from the E.B.A. with reference to a Triples Competition being added to the National Championships". It went on to outline the proposed format of the competition, and requested that the County Associations reply with their observations. I would imagine that from this time the Benevolent Cup Competition's days were numbered.

The Fund was effectively "re-constituted" in June, 1950, when it was decided to link it more closely with the County organisation, and the County Secretary and Hon. Treasurer became the Secretary and Treasurer of the Fund respectively. However, the Fund's Income and Expenditure account for 1951 was still signed by Mr. A. H. Hardy as Secretary; so it would seem that the County Secretary was only the Benevolent Fund Secretary in name, whilst the actual work was still being done by someone else.

## The Year Book

The first mention of any year book that I have found is in the Financial Statement for 1924, and in it there is an entry for £9 7s. 6d. for printing. However, there is no indication of its structure or its contents until the 4th February, 1925, when it was agreed "to adopt same style of Handbook as last year with 4 pages extra".

A Mr. Hayman kindly offered to take up one of them as a full page advertisement at a cost of £2 0s. 0d., and the "new rules and alterations to be inserted in Handbook". In January, 1926 it was decided to insert phone numbers in the Handbook but just whose numbers was not indicated, though at the following meeting the Committee agreed to install a "telephone at the residence of the Hon. Secretary". Perhaps until then he had needed to pop out with his tuppence to a red phone box. It was also agreed "to insert the full list of K.C.B.A. Competition winners in the future Year Books" and by the end of that year the cost of printing had increased to £11 11s. 0d.

In April, 1927 it was agreed to increase the quantity of books printed from 1,250 to 1,500, with "an extra 4 pages to be inserted one of which would be an advertisement by the Bowls News"; though how they were disposed of is never revealed in the Minutes, and neither is any income stated other than that from the sale of the advertisement pages.

By the end of that year the cost is given as £13 2s. 0d. with an advertisement income of £10 10s. 0d. In January, 1928, the indefatigable Percy Snow pops up again and "raised the question of Handbook and advocated a Year Book similar to other Counties", and, in true British tradition, "it was agreed to appoint a sub-committee to consider the matter". The sub-committee met and deliberated, and reported back to the Executive which, in its turn deferred the matter for discussion at the following A.G.M. There, "the Year Book scheme", apparently following the style of the Surrey Year Book, "was explained by Mr. A. Randall and adopted, the details being left in Mr. Randall's hands as Editor". He was also elected Publicity Officer, and had obviously forgotten that cardinal rule 'never show enthusiasm for anything in the presence of an army drill sergeant, a Church Minister or any committee of any description'. He obviously took to his voluntary

employment with great gusto, as the Year Book grew from 164 pages in 1929 to 200 in 1930. Mind you, the cost of production had escalated from around £96 14s. 5d. the previous year to £109 11s. 5d. However, the income generated from sales and advertisements of £145 18s. 0d. more than covered the cost of printing.

Moreover, it appears to devote many of its pages to County affairs which might be of interest to affiliated members, and also the President's Message and Secretary's Report. It also includes much more information in regard to past records, and some 25 pages devoted to Bowls Tournaments and hotels local to where they were to take place. The Year Book still performs the same tasks nowadays, though the 50 pages or so which were at one time used to list competition draws and competitors' details now appear in a Divisional Competition's Supplement.

It was also used on at least one

occasion to generate interest in overseas tours being organised by the E.B.A., and a notice was inserted in the 1937 Year Book *"re Tour to Australia and New Zealand [though] no further action to be taken re Los Angeles matches"*. Perhaps the Boston Tea Party still rankled in the minds of some of our more well-endowed members.

### An Involuntary Intermission

At the Executive meeting held on 10th February, 1940 *"it was agreed that the present Officers and Committees carry on until such time as a General Meeting can be held"*. It was also decided that no Year Book would be printed for 1940, and no County Competitions would take place. They still required the affiliated clubs to pay their annual subscriptions, though the E.B.A. had suspended their affiliation fee. Thus, to all intents and purposes, the Association went into hibernation for the duration of the war.

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There have been at least five designs of County badges used either on the Association's stationery, or as blazer badges.



This one was in used on stationery in March, 1918.



This one was used on stationery In May, 1918.



This one, perhaps a belated attempt to celebrate our Middleton Cup success of 1912, was in use in 1919



Our completely redesigned badge which is the current one in use.

The Hardy Brothers of Northfleet  
who were both Presidents of the E.B.A. and the K.C.B.A.



Mr. A. H. Hardy, J.P. was  
caretaker President of the K.C.B.A.  
during the war years  
from 1939 till 1944.  
EBA President 1951



Mr. H. Hardy,  
younger brother of A. H.  
and K.C.B.A. President in 1952.  
EBA President 1962

# In remission . . .

## *From 1940 till 1945*

The second world war brought the growth of the County Association to an abrupt halt. County Competitions were stopped. Very few Executive matches by invitation of host clubs were accepted or arranged, and the Association's various Officers stayed in their posts until such time as it was considered that the Annual General Meetings could safely be resumed. Nevertheless, the Emergency Committee did what it could to keep things going, meeting on fifteen occasions between February, 1940 and November, 1944, while the Executive met on four occasions and a Special General Meeting was called on three.

The Annual Report, written by Percy Snow and presented to a Special General Meeting held in March, 1942, mentions the difficulties that many of the associated clubs were facing at the time. *"The clubs in Division 4 were, in the main, unable to function, and this appertains to some of the clubs in other Divisions too"*. Moreover, many clubs had ceased to function altogether: *"in 1940, 183 clubs had paid their subscription, [a nominal five shillings], but only 161 clubs had paid in 1941"*. The greatest loss of clubs appeared to be in Division 4 which, at this time could only muster 25, but as a great deal of this part of the County was a restricted area it is not surprising that so many clubs were no longer able to function.

The Association was also going through a period when it was losing many of its established office holders. Mr. Woolf, the Honorary Financial Secretary, had just died, and the post was being temporarily

filled by A. H. Hardy the current County President. Two of the Divisional Secretaries, T. P. Wootton and Captain Mellon, had also passed away, while a third, Mr. E. R. Holtham had resigned. This left Mr. C. Walton as the only Divisional Secretary still in office, but fortunately the Assistant Divisional Secretaries had *"been approached and [were still] willing to carry on as Acting Divisional Secretaries until it is possible to fill these vacancies"*. Mr. T. Wootton was also Trustee and Secretary of the Benevolent Fund, and the Report goes on to say *"he was a great worker and devoted much time to this object, and one can only speak in the highest terms of his labours in this connection"*.

Mr. A. Randall resigned from the Executive and his Office as Editor of the Year Book in February, 1943, and the Secretary was instructed to send him *"a suitable reply thanking him for his past services especially regarding the Year Book which will always be regarded as his masterpiece"*. Mr. Thorn, the County Secretary, had often of late been absent from the Association's meetings because of illness, and the day-to-day administration of the County's affairs had been looked after by Percy Snow. But at the Emergency Committee Meeting of 11th September, 1943, the Secretary finally announced that he could no longer continue in Office. By the time he was officially replaced by his successor in March, 1944, he had clocked up 20 years in Office.

It would appear that Percy had very much taken over the running of the

Emergency Committee, whilst also now acting as Secretary of the Benevolent Fund, during the 'emergency'. Perhaps he had so much time on his hands that all the extra duties were needed to fill it; but it would also appear that he had great influence, and the Committee was very happy to leave everything to him as this entry from the Minutes of a meeting held in October, 1942 would seem to suggest. *"A request was made that a notice in the nature of a questionnaire be sent to all clubs, with the object of getting information as up-to-date as possible. This was left in the hands of the Hon. Treasurer to draw up and include with the Report and Financial Statement"*.

Much of the Association's effort during these four years went into encouraging the affiliated clubs to seek ways of supporting the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund, and when the Committee received a request from Middlesex *"for an Inter-County Match for Red Cross"* it was decided that it *"be not entertained, but that all our efforts be directed to matches in our own County"*. This little entry was immediately followed by *"Mr. Percy Snow kindly consented to take charge of the Red Cross Matches"*, and one can only conclude that our Percy was either an incurable workaholic or a glutton for punishment.

It seems that Percy was not the only 'Snow' determined to play a full part in the Association's war effort, for at the same meeting it was *"resolved that arrangements be made for the purchase of 1,000 badges for sale to members in support of the Red Cross effort. These badges would be of an appropriate design, and it was reported that the cost of the first thousand would be defrayed by Mrs. Percy Snow"*. She was to be suitably rewarded with *"the best thanks of the Association for her splendid generosity"*.

At a meeting held 11th September, 1943, it was reported that the season's special day set aside for the associated

clubs to organise events on behalf of the Red Cross Fund had resulted in the sum of £1,707 11s. 8d. being raised, and when the Fund was eventually closed in June, 1945, the County had raised a total of £9,627 12s. 1d. This was no mean feat when one considers that it was mostly made up of contributions collected by clubs on special days, and Special Executive games arranged by Percy Snow. The Minutes record the Association's thanks by expressing *"its full appreciation of the untiring and extremely successful work carried out by Mr. Snow; and records its grateful thanks to him, and also to Mrs. Snow, Mr. Hardy and Mr. Button for the manner in which they have supported and assisted him"*.

The administrative situation was made more difficult by the fact that the Secretary's home had been *"damaged by enemy action"*, and his temporary address was in West Cliff Gardens, Bournemouth, while Percy Snow, the Hon. Treasurer, seemed to be living in a series of hotels. The first of these to appear on his stationery was the Palm Court Hotel, and the headquarters of the Kent County Bowling Association was now far away in distant Torquay.

It is a remarkable coincidence but I too had experience of the Palm Court Hotel during this period. I had been fortunate to obtain a scholarship to St. Olave's school, which had removed itself to Torquay to escape the war, and at the time was attending as a boarder. The two spinster sisters of my old Walworth vicar, the Rev. Churchill, had also taken up residence at the Palm Court for the duration, and I was invited to "take tea" with them. I can assure you, to a Walworth urchin that particular establishment was more opulent than I ever imagined Buckingham Palace to be, and if Percy could afford to move, however temporarily, from Margate to live there he must have been, as they say, 'well breeched' indeed. In 1943 Percy had moved himself back to London and was living at the Strand Palace Hotel, which also

# KENT COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION

*Patrons.*  
Sir ROBERT GOWER, O.B.E., J.P.  
EVERARD HESKETH, Esq.

*President.*  
Mr. A. H. HARDY, J.P.,  
Northfleet B.C.,  
Rochampton, Singlewell Rd., Gravesend  
Telephone Gravesend 1920.

*Vice-President.*  
Mr. T. BUTTON,  
Red Lodge,  
London Road, Maidstone.

*Hon. Treasurer.*  
Mr. PERCY SNOW,  
44, Madeira Road, Margate.

*Hon. Financial Secretary.*  
Mr. A. W. J. WOOLF.

*Hon. Secretary.*  
Mr. WILLIAM THORN,  
53, Vernham Road, Plumstead Common,  
S.E. 16.



PALM COURT HOTEL,  
TORQUAY.

January, 1942

To the Secretaries of all Clubs and Executive Committee.

DEAR SIR,

The Emergency Committee has pleasure in sending you the Financial Statement for 1941. It is with deep regret that announcement has to be made of the passing of Mr. T. O. Callender, a Patron of our Association, Mr. W. T. Charlton, J.P. and Mr. Alfred Garry, Past Presidents; Mr. T. P. Wootton, Trustee and Honorary Secretary of our Benevolent Fund also Honorary Divisional Secretary; Mr. Morris Ingram, and Mr. W. A. B. Rattey both Members of our Executive. Mr. Wootton has rendered yeoman service to the County more particularly in connection with the Benevolent Fund. To all we are indebted for their service to the Association.

The Amount received during the year towards the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross Fund was £16/9/0 making a total of £185/18/5. Other sums sent in direct bring the full Amount up to well over £200.

The following decisions have been reached relative to Season 1942:—

Activities will be set in motion as soon as circumstances permit.  
Club Subscriptions to continue at 5/- and to be sent direct to Mr. Percy Snow, Palm Court Hotel, Torquay. It is considered desirable that this should be continued to preserve continuity of Membership. Kindly remit without the necessity of sending a reminder. Please note that all correspondence relating to the Benevolent Fund should be addressed to the Honorary Treasurer.

With every good wish for the future.

Yours faithfully,

On behalf of the Emergency Committee,

A. H. HARDY.

PERCY SNOW.

WILLIAM THORN.

KENT COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION.

**Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross Fund.**

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Eltham Conservative	...	...	1 7 0	Rochester	...	...	2 0 6
Callenders Athletic	...	...	2 2 0	J. Buggs, Esq. (Kemsley B.C.)	...	...	1 1 0
Northfleet	...	...	1 1 0				
Kemsley	...	...	1 1 0				
Loose	...	...	7 16 6				£16 9 0

The following amount has been sent in direct:—West Beckenham £12/18/0

Percy Snow, the Hon. Treasurer, seemed to be living in a series of hotels. The first of these to appear on his stationery was the Palm Court Hotel, and the headquarters of the Kent County Bowling Association would now seem to be far away in distant Torquay.

features on the K.C.B.A. stationery as its official address.

In September, 1943, it was considered safe to begin the Association's programmes of General Meetings once again, and at an Emergency Committee Meeting held on 15th January, 1944, it was decided "*to recommend to the Executive Committee that arrangements be made for the resumption of normal constitutional procedure and playing activities at the close of the 1944 season*".

The Special General Meeting was held on Saturday, 25th March, 1944, in London as was the practice, and there were 75 members in attendance as well as the various holders of one Office or another. The star guest was undoubtedly Mr. W. A. Sims, the Association's very first President, and he had been actively engaged in bowling administration for some 33 years. There was very little business to conduct at the meeting, apart from 'rubber-stamping' the various reports and recommendations, and they settled down to the major business of electing an Hon. Secretary to replace the retiring Mr. Thorn. They had three contenders to choose from; W. H. Chase [Eltham Conservatives], R. G. Colquhoun, pronounced Cahoun [Bromley] and H. J. Downes [Bellingham]. In the event R. G. Colquhoun was elected.

I have it on good authority that Capt. R. G. Colquhoun was an excellent bowler, winning the Empire Singles Championship in 1930, and playing for England during the 1929, '30, '31, '32 and '33 seasons. He had actually contested the election for Association Secretary some 20 years previously, when he had been defeated by Mr. Thorn, and had been hovering about the edges of the Association ever since without ever being successful in his endeavours. His first few Minutes were typed on the back of old headed notepaper and pasted into the book, but this was soon discontinued and they were once again laboriously handwritten – this time in

green ink. Perhaps that green ink was why the Association's new Secretary had to wait so long to be elected to an Office.

Sadly, his period of Office was very short, just eighteen months or so, as he resigned as Hon. County Secretary at a meeting held on 13th September, 1945, on "*medical advice*".

There were 35 clubs recorded as affiliated members in the 1939 Year Book whose subscriptions remained unpaid since that date. They were removed from the Register without further ado; and one can only wonder at the stories behind the demise of such clubs as Crystal Palace and Penge [Division 1], Gravesend and Milton [Division 2], Tonbridge Sports Association [Division 3] and Tivoli Park [Division 4].

So, at the A.G.M. held on 25th November, 1944, all was ready for a resumption of County Activities from the beginning of the 1945 season. The Year Book had a new editor, a Mr. Clifford Porter of Bromley B.C., and "*it was resolved that a Year Book for 1944/45 be printed for sale to members*". This was to be printed by the Tunbridge Wells Courier Co., who would charge 1/6d. per copy for 2,000 books, but no selling price appears to have been agreed. As an innovative measure, it was later decided "*that the photographs of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Hon. Secretary and composite photographs of the 4 Divisional Secretaries be inserted*". At the same meeting a "*special tribute [was] paid to Messrs. A. H. Hardy, T. Button and Percy Snow for their very excellent work on behalf of the Association over a long and difficult period*".

There were still one or two minor meetings held before 1944 finally closed, and at the Finance Committee meeting held on 30th December, 1944, "*it was resolved that all cheques and monies due to the Association to be forwarded to the Hon. Treasurer, who will provide the official receipt of the Association*". Prior to

this it seems that certain of these duties, usually connected with competition entry fees, had been undertaken by the Financial Secretary, but now the Treasurer was taking full charge of the Association's funds. Percy was Treasurer at this time, of course.

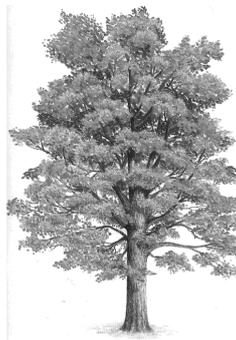
It was the G.P.C. meeting of the 30th December, 1944, which formally agreed *"to include a Triples County Competition in 1945"*. It was decided, without so much as a 'by-your-leave' to the Benevolent Fund, that *"the trophy for this competition be the 'Wolf Challenge Trophy"*, and so the Fund lost one of its sources of income. However, it was also resolved that *"2/6 from each Triple Entry be allocated to the County Benevolent Fund"*.

There is an entry in the Minutes of March, 1946 which states *"that one third of the gross receipts from the Triples entries be handed to the K.C.B.A.*

*Benevolent Fund"* but what happened in 1945 remains a mystery. We shall have to see if this resolution was later rescinded or an annual donation was made, but if it was not I wonder if the Benevolent Fund has a case to demand repayment of a large number of outstanding half crowns.

As a matter of interest, five deserving cases were given grants totalling £36 in 1934, and this level of aid had risen to £13,980 distributed between 93 cases in the year 2000. During that period some 4,306 cases had received the sum of £299,783 7s. 6d. between them, and we can safely say that the Benevolent Fund had been one of the County's better ideas.

In view of the likely cessation of hostilities in the near future the Association decided to put all thoughts of the past conflict behind it, and face the future with boundless enthusiasm. However, in the interim times had been changing.



Past Honorary Secretaries of the Association

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**R. G. Colquhoun 1944 - 1945**

Still trying to find a pix of Gomer



**H. J. Green [Senior] 1911 - 1916**



**W. A. Sims 1916-1924**

It's peace,  
and the sap is rising . . .

### *From 1945 till 1961*

The 1939-1945 war had a significant effect upon the social structure of the nation. The aspirations of ordinary folk like you and I had been changed for ever, and, though we might suffer from the scarcity of many things that had been taken for granted before the war, we would never fear the consequences of sickness or unemployment in the same way as we had previous to 1939. In any case, the commodities that were in short supply had probably been beyond our reach when they were plentiful, and we were only really annoyed because now that we wanted, and could afford, them they were not there to be had.

We ordinary folk now had the confidence that comes with a regular job, and its related income, that did not necessarily depend on us deferring to someone with the power that comes through wealth and status. We had leisure time, and the money to enjoy it. As we grew older and family ties and responsibilities lessened we had the time, and still had the health and energy, to seek pleasure in some active pastime. So, the game of Bowls would no longer be a privilege enjoyed by those fortunate enough to have time, position and money, but was now, in reality, accessible to painters and plumbers and such-like – as long as they passed the interview. Indeed, in 1946 it was reported in the Year Book that *“entries to the competitions was a new all time record for the Association with, 801 Singles; 758 Pairs; 373 Triples; 310 Rinks and 115 in the Gill Cup Competition”*.

## The County Year Book

No Year Book had been published since 1939, and in 1945 the new Editor, Mr. C. E. J. Porter, wrote a very lengthy Editorial in which he attempted to report on anything and everything that had happened in the intervening years. It is a trifle lengthy, but this part is well worth reading in full . . .

**The Editor writes:**

**“IN PASSING”**

**"OUR NEW OFFICERS,  
AND AN APPRECIATION OF  
WARTIME ACHIEVEMENTS."**

*"When the County Bowling Association, at the Annual Meeting in December, on the recommendation of Mr. Harry Green, a shrewd and discerning fellow-townsmen (who should one day be president), that I should be elected to take the Hon. Editorship of the Association, in succession to our genial friend, Mr. A. W. Randall, of Crayford, who, to our regret, is no longer able to undertake the duties, I was, I confess, somewhat elated. But at a later date, when informed that I must write a readable Foreword, or something of the sort, to mark the revival of the Year Book and the County Competitions, after their suspension for five years owing to the War, my puffed-up feelings rocketed sky-high! Editors, and particularly Hon. Editors, are cheerful fellows whose friendship and usefulness can be depended on - sometimes. They are expected to know everything and everybody worth knowing; and it is of course their duty to comment cogently on men and matters, or anything else, that comes within range of their guns. But for one that knows so little about the Kent County Bowling Association it is no easy task to give a faithful pen portrait of its activities, or its officers who, in recent years, have helped, or may be still helping, to maintain and enhance its reputation in the bowling*

world. Nevertheless, a few things occur to me which should be recorded in the Official vade-mecum for 1945. In spite of the suspension of the County Competitions, and in spite of the thunder of the great air armies heard by day and by night throughout Kent, and the grievous consequences of the most momentous war in modern history, the officers of the Association and the affiliated clubs have, in the meantime, been active and vigilant in many ways. While helping on the Home Front in fire watching, or serving in the Home Guard, or in other directions, they have kept the Association alive. In addition they have given meritorious assistance to the Red Cross (Prisoners of War) Fund, and this achievement alone, referred to in greater detail below, quickens one's appreciation and recognition of the worth and work of the Executive and their supporters.

At this point it will not be inappropriate to refer to the fact that many of our surviving bowling friends have suffered poignant bereavement by the violent or untimely death of someone near and dear to them since the outbreak of War. To those friends we extend our sincere condolence. To them in particular the long drag and darkness of the combat years bear heavily on body and mind. Time alone will restore their confidence and courage, and soften their loss. Meanwhile the infinite lies stretched in silent repose. With regard to the coming season and the immediate future, it can be said at once that the strong and representative attendance at the Annual Meeting afforded undeniable evidence of the continued virility of the Association. It is still rich in its list of officers. The new President, Mr. Tom Button of Maidstone, possesses the essential qualifications. His motto is 'Increase and multiply.' He is earnest and purposeful, genial, tactful, conciliatory, and a good mixer. He radiates goodwill, and is always ready to help a good cause. His year of office is, therefore, likely to be a progressive and successful one. To his predecessor congratulations are also due. Mr. A. H. Hardy JP, of Gravesend, has filled the Presidential chair with sound judgement since he was chosen to occupy it in 1938. In the meantime many unexpected problems have arisen, but all have been overcome, smoothly and satisfactorily, thanks in a large measure to his urbanity and informative leadership. Another officer to whom the Association and its Associated Clubs owe a deep and abiding debt of gratitude is Mr. William Thorn, of the Plumstead Common, who, after occupying the onerous post of Hon. Secretary for the testing period of 20 years, has found it desirable to retire owing to impaired health. In his retirement he carries with him our best wishes and highest of all encomiums: 'Well done, good and faithful servant' - and to his tribute is coupled the widespread hope that he will retain a large measure of his former vigour and bonhomie for many days to come. His successor is Capt. R. G. Colquhoun, of Bromley, who, I know from personal observation, is a glutton for work. His

appetite for a game on the green is equally avid - so avid in fact that he lost very little time in capturing, as most of you know, all the international, national, county, club, and tournament honours worth thinking about. May he now be quite content and appeased, in regard to bowling honours, for the rest of his life! 'Bob' brings a clear eye, a clear brain, and a clear vision to his new responsibility which auger well for the successful discharge of his multitudinous duties on behalf of the Association. To my predecessor, Mr. A. W. Randall, M.B.E., of Crayford, a short appreciation is also due. Without it, this review of changing events since the last issue of the Yearbook would be incomplete. Since he accepted the Hon. Editorship of the Association he has displayed zeal and organising ability of a high standard---as is clearly shown by the fact that during the issue of the yearbook from 1929 until 1939 there has never been a loss on its production. Truly a fine achievement which will be remembered for a long time. Mr. Percy Snow, of Margate, continues to serve the Association as Hon. Treasurer with all the rectitude of a bank manager. Amiable, diplomatic and transparently trustworthy, we know that he is a first-rate Treasurer. Moreover, he has served the Association in other notable directions. Credit is due to him for inaugurating the County Yearbook, in spite of the opposition encountered at the outset; and since the outbreak of War in 1939 he has taken a conspicuously successful part in obtaining support for the Red Cross from the numerous Clubs affiliated to the Association. The exact sum subscribed to 'The Lord Mayor of London's Red Cross Organisation Appeal to Sportsmen' in 1941 by Kent bowlers is not known.

At a later date, however, Mr. Snow approached the then President, Mr. A. H. Hardy J.P., both of whom soon got busy on the subject, and although there was only half the season to run, a further sum of about £650 was subscribed to the Red Cross of mercy. In the winter of 1942-43 it was decided to make a concentrated drive on behalf of what had become 'H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John's Fund,' A comprehensive programme was arranged, and Mr. Snow was deputed to take charge. As a consequence the County did remarkably well; the total sum realised was £3,919/10/5. Continuing the effort in 1944 with increased enthusiasm an even greater achievement has to be recorded, as the amount collected for this cause then reached the fine total of £4,458/6/0. A salient feature of this activity is that the whole of the money subscribed has been paid into the Fund. No charge has been made for printing or postages. The Association has paid for the badges, except for the first 1,000 in both 1943 and 1944, the cost which was kindly defrayed by the gracious wife of the Hon. Treasurer. To all the Associated Clubs congratulatory thanks must also be recorded, for without their keen co-operation this record could not have been achieved. The movement will be continued

during the current year, and there is good reason to expect that the outcome will be again worthy of the County and its traditional sportsmanship and goodwill. Long may Mr. Percy Snow continue to fill the Hon. Treasurer-ship con amore: a better man could not be desired. It remains to announce that about 180 Clubs, representing a membership of over 9000 bowlers in Kent, are still affiliated to the Association This is welcome news. To these bowlers in all parts of the vibrant County of Kent, skilled and otherwise, but always hopeful and good 'pals', fraternal greetings are extended. We wish them good health, many happy relationships on and off the green, and some pulse quickening successes in the Club and County Competitions during 1945. Anything more from my pen on this subject would be a work of supererogation, and an abuse of your patience and confidence. I must, however, add that only a writer much more familiar than I am with the Association and its members could be expected to illustrate their activities and aspirations more cogently and convincingly”.

. . . and if you stayed with it to the very end, you must at least admire his style.

In his research into the County's history, through the pages of the Year Books, George Firmin reports that a Mr. W. Wraight became the Hon. Editor in place of Mr. C. Porter though “no reason is given for the exodus of Mr. Porter”. He continues . . . “Why no comment or appreciation for Clifford E. J. Porter? Could it have caused displeasure to some or many members for him to have presented the rather over lengthy Editorial for 1946? Did the Executive Committee consider too much ground had been covered in his Editorial? Or was it perhaps the Committee did not like the opinions expressed by Mr. Porter? He certainly had not died, because he was recorded as having played for the County this year, 1947. He must either have resigned or was not re-elected. If it were the former reason, why no appreciation? If the for the latter reason, it suggests a very strong measure of disagreement that may have occurred at the Annual General Meeting or between him and other strong willed persons that may have unseated him. There must be an explanation”.

Well, George, the explanation appears in the Minutes of the Executive

held on 19th October, 1946, when the Secretary read a letter from the Hon. Editor Mr. Clifford E. J. Porter “relative to the Div. 1 Final Pairs game with Messrs. Shirlow and Stacey of Sidcup club in which the latter were awarded the game”. It seems that there had been some irregularity about the playing-off of this Final, and in adjudication the Division 1 Secretary had awarded the game to Mr. Porter's opponents. Mr. Porter also “intimated in his letter that in view of the decision given against him, he was not prepared to stand for re-election as Hon. Editor. After some discussion on the matter it was agreed that the Secretary write to Mr. Porter of the Executive's decision to uphold the Divisional Secretary's action”, and it was agreed that the meeting would accept Mr. Porter's resignation from the post of Hon. Editor. They did record a vote of thanks in the Minutes for the work he had done in the past, and got on with the next business. Well, County Officers had come and gone in the past, but this was the first time one had gone in a huff.

If anyone still has a copy of the 1949 Year Book they will find therein “the names of the Founder Clubs together with the first Minutes of the Association, as reproduced in the 1936 Year Book”, though the relevance of 1949 escapes me. I can understand 1936, that might have been part of the 25th Anniversary Celebrations, but I cannot see that 1949 would have any relevance at all.

Mr. Wraight certainly appeared to approach his task as Hon. Editor with great professionalism, even if his literary style was not comparable to Mr. Porter's. The income from the advertisements grew by leaps and bounds as did the sales, but in 1949 the Minutes record that “regarding the sales the report was not so good, the sales to date being 2541, approx. 300 down on last year's total. It was agreed that a degree of high-pressure salesmanship was needed and eventually “each Div. Sec. was to take 24 copies from the first lot

*dispatched on a Sale or Return basis*" while the redoubtable Percy Snow was asked to put the pressure on all those clubs whose orders were small with a view to them increasing their orders. According to the County's letterhead Percy was still living in an hotel in 1949, though this one was the Highcliffe Hall Hotel in Cliftonville, but as yet I am not too sure whether he owned the place or just resided there.

Mr. Wraight died quite unexpectedly on the 8th June, 1958, having been Hon. Editor of the Association's Year Book since 1947. The Executive were at a loss as to how to elect a suitable replacement, and decided to advertise the Post amongst all those clubs who were affiliated to the Association in the hope that a suitably qualified volunteer would step forward. In the event a Mr. R. L. Waldron of Loose B.C. offered his services. He stated almost immediately that of late he had been suffering ill-health but, I suppose, in the present circumstances any port in a storm was preferable to none at all, and with a great deal of official relief he was nominated and elected to fill 'Billie' Wraight's shoes. It seems that he filled them successfully, but sadly for a very short time. His death was reported in the Minutes of a meeting held in June, 1960, and the Association once again had to seek for a replacement in double-quick time.

The Association had all sorts of plans for interesting items to be included in a very special 1961 Jubilee Year commemorative edition of the Year Book, and the death of Mr. Waldron part way through its preparation had the G.P.C. all of a dither. It was decided that once again they would ask for a suitably qualified volunteer to step forward into the limelight, and seemed quite surprised to find themselves faced with no less than six who wanted to take up the challenge. Two of them withdrew before the G.P.C. could get around to making a choice between them, and the matter was eventually settled at a special G.P.C. meeting held in

July, 1960. The members present took part in a *"very full and frank discussion which took a very considerable time. It was agreed that the election should be by Paper Ballot, and that the Papers should be destroyed immediately by the President"*. I imagine all this secrecy was to save a Mr. A. E. Walker, who was one of the volunteers and a member of the G.P.C., from any embarrassment should he not be elevated to the position. In the event a Mr. D. G. Wilson of Holmesdale B.C. was duly elected, and thus became the new Association Hon. Editor.

## In General

Mr. A. G. [Bert] Cox was elected to the post of County Hon. Secretary at the A.G.M. held in November, 1945, and his Minutes are much more detailed and, thank goodness, much easier to read than most of his predecessors. Our Mr. Porter had not missed his opportunity in the 1945 Year Book to wax eloquent about the past secretary Capt. Calquhoun, and this too is worth reading in its entirety.

*"In the 1945 handbook it was predicted that Capt. R. G. Colquhoun, of the Bromley BC., would prove a worthy successor to Mr. William Thorn as County Hon. Secretary, and this confidence was quickly justified. In his manifold and exacting duties, more than usually heavy owing to the long lapse and disorganisation due to the war, Bob displayed marked care and ability in helping to revive the work of the Association. But before the close of the playing season Bob began to show signs of impaired health, to the intense regret of all who were familiar with his worth, and in September he was compelled to relinquish the secretaryship to avoid a complete collapse. Protracted indoor clerical work is seldom congenial or conducive to mental contentment when one has spent one's life in the open air. Bob donned the King's uniform as soon as he left school, and he was still in his 'teens when he was sent overseas for active service in the prolonged Boer War; and this record was followed by further meritorious military service during the Great War of 1914-1918. In his well earned but regretted retirement he is accompanied by the best wishes of his numberless friends, and a sincere hope that he will soon regain a large measure of his former health and vitality. May we see him back on the green again for many years to come, again displaying much of that form in the game to which he has added lustre as an International and Empire Champion."*

The Editor took up a full fifteen pages of the 1946 Year Book, including more than half a page write-up of each of the six Rinks that played for Kent in the Middleton Cup match against Surrey. He certainly took to his post as Hon. Editor with great gusto, and we might have enjoyed a great deal more of the same had it not been for his unfortunate outburst during 1946. Perhaps the Executive weren't very happy about the lengthy Editorial in the 1945 edition, for it was decided at a meeting held in January, 1946, that "*A. H. Hardy, J.P., Hon. Editor and Hon. Secretary [were] to meet and discuss what should be included in Year Book*".

Prior to the Executive meeting held on the 15th December, 1945, the President had always been elected as Chairman with the Vice-President acting as Vice-Chairman, but at this meeting it was proposed by the President, Mr. P. Billing of Deal B.C., that Mr. A. H. Hardy, J.P. be elected Chairman with the President taking the post of Vice-Chairman. This was certainly a major break with tradition, though there is no indication in the Minutes as to why the decision was made. Perhaps the task of handling the County's business was becoming one that needed a semi-professional Chairman with a degree of permanence in the post, rather than the annual game of musical chairs. I do believe that it is an association's 'permanent staff' which ensures stability and progression, and probably this was one of the wisest decisions yet made by the Executive. At the same meeting it was decided to merge the General Purposes and Finance Committees into a single committee; a very sensible initiative considering the fact that in the main the same people originally sat on both committees, and the meetings usually followed each other on the same day.

At the following A.G.M. there was an attempt to return to the days when the President was automatically elected Chairman when "*it was proposed and*

*seconded that the President, Mr. H. J. Green [junior] be elected Chairman*". For some reason it seems that the Executive wanted to retain things as they were and an amendment was put to the meeting proposing that "*we continue the policy adopted last year and that Mr. A. H. Hardy be re-elected Chairman. Some discussion took place [though there is no record of what was said] and on the amendment being put to the meeting Mr. A. H. Hardy was elected Chairman and the President Mr. H. J. Green Vice Chairman*".

Perhaps too the Executive had a sneaking feeling of guilt at having purloined the Benevolent Fund Cup for use as the County Triples Trophy, for it was also agreed that each Division should arrange a one day match in aid of the Fund. The Divisional Secretaries were told that the Division 1 game should take place on a Wednesday, Divisions 2 and 3 on a Saturday and Division 4 on a Thursday, though no reason was given for so arbitrarily selecting these dates and one can only wonder if these were the traditional half-day closures for those Divisions. These matches were discontinued in 1951, but a perusal of the Balance Sheets of the Benevolent Fund in the interim showed no indication of any income accruing from the matches that had been played.

At an Executive meeting held at Maidstone B.C. in April, 2003 someone, I think it was Doug Head, raised the question of the 'President's Badge'. It seems that these were no longer being presented to the incumbent of that Office, and he wanted to know why this was so. After much scratching of heads, it transpired that nobody present seemed to know anything about this badge at all. Well, it was reported in the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th January, 1946 that the Secretary "*had received the President's Badge for 1945, which was handed to Past President Tom Button*." I must admit that this is the first time that I had spotted any mention of such a thing in the Minutes,

and as Tom Button had been the President for the previous year it would appear that one didn't receive this prized item until after one had retired. There is no indication as to whether this badge is a special design, or merely an adaptation of the normal County badge. There is another entry on the same subject in the Minutes of the Executive of March, 1950, but this seems to make the issue even more confusing. It is reported that *"Mr. A. H. Hardy wished to commemorate his anticipated year of Office as E.B.A. President by presenting the County Association with a President's Badge of Office, and would like to ascertain if the Association were prepared to accept his kind offer"*. They did, as one would expect, with *"warm approval"*, and approved the design which was submitted. This object was presented by Mr. Hardy to the newly elected President, Mr. H. Chapman, at the A.G.M. held in November, 1950. There is no description of the *"Badge of Office"* but in the Minutes it is referred to as *"a President's Jewel of Office similar to that held by the E.B.A."*, so it is, perhaps, the chain of Office still worn by the Presidents of the K.C.B.A. If this is so, I wonder what has happened to the old one.

The various Notices of Meeting and Committee Reports were still being printed professionally so, as yet, the Hon. Secretary was still relying on pen and ink for all correspondence, though at the same meeting there is an entry in which the Hon. Secretary thanks Captain Colquhoun *"for the loan of his typewriter until such times as one could be found for him"*. Sure enough, pasted on to the next set of Minutes is a carbon copy of a County document, demonstrating that the borrowed machine is already being put to use. Sadly, in December, 1946, Capt. Calquhoun urgently wanted his typewriter back, and the Secretary reported that *"it was necessary to purchase one for the Association"*. He was given permission to do so as soon as one could be found. Strangely enough Capt. Calquhoun then discovered that he had little use for the

machine he so urgently wanted returned to him, and offered it for sale to the Association for the sum of £20. In October, 1947, it was agreed to purchase *"a hand machine for the tedious job of addressing envelopes to club secretaries, the Executive, etc"*. It seems that the Secretary addressed some 2,500 such envelopes during the course of a year, and there can be few more Dickensian mind-numbing jobs than writing the same addresses time without number.

The Hon. Secretary had to wait until March, 1954 before he could add a hand duplicating machine to his armoury of office equipment, and even then he had to prove conclusively that there would be a considerable saving in printing costs before the Executive authorised him to spend £35 on *"a Roneo 150 Portable Machine"*. There was great relief when one member offered to try to obtain the machine at trade discount. Later in the year the Hon. Secretary was even authorised to obtain a filing cabinet in which he could keep the County's papers. Perhaps until now he had stored them in untidy heaps under his bed, and suffered the slings and arrows of an outraged wife as a consequence. My word, don't we take things like computers and photo copiers for granted nowadays. Even the Hon. Editor had to wait until March, 1959, until he was given permission to purchase a portable typewriter *"to enable him to carry out the work of the Year Book"*, and I wonder if our present day editor would even consider writing all that 'copy' in pen and ink.

The Executive meeting of 15th March, 1947, positively bubbled with excitement when it was informed of the record number of entries into that year's County Competitions. There were 914 entries in the Singles, 855 in the Pairs, 418 in the Triples, 335 in the Rinks and 132 in the Gill Cup. They were even more excited when the Secretary reported that it was *"certainly a wonderful entry, easily the largest entry in England"*. What's more, they had donated one third of the Triples

entry fees to the Benevolent Fund for the second time, but only after deducting the one third that would be given in prize money, so the Fund was still, in some small measure, benefiting from the snaffled Woolf Trophy. Sad to relate at the G.P.C. meeting in February 1949 one 'Scroogie' type proposed the idea that this donation should cease to be made; and, though kinder hearts present at that meeting prevailed, it was eventually Mr. A. H. Hardy, himself the Secretary of the Benevolent Fund, who in March, 1949 "*suggested that the time had come when the Trustees thought that the Ben. Fund should stand on its own, and that the allocation from the Prize Fund should cease*".

It is interesting to note that occasionally the Executive demonstrated that they were not merely there to 'rubber stamp' the decisions made by the G.P.C., and in A.O.B. at an Executive meeting held on 15th March, 1947, it is reported that "*Two representatives [not named] expressed their opinion that the G.P.C. were exceeding their powers, but it was pointed out that all matters were brought before the Executive, to confirm or otherwise the decisions made by the G.P.C., and it saved greatly the time of the Executive*". Moreover, the odd player here and there occasionally complained that they had been passed over for selection to the County matches, and one poor chap from Faversham B.C. received a very 'dusty' answer to his complaint when he was informed in writing that "*he had not proved himself worthy in the Association Match*".

In October, 1947, one motion proposed to be put to the A.G.M. by the Ladywell Club states that "*members of the Ladywell B.C. are of the opinion that the present system of selection for County Honours is unsatisfactory, and they suggest that the old method of inviting Clubs to nominate their best players should be resumed as soon as possible*". While another proposed by the Division 1

meeting "*that Division 1 be given more places for County Players owing to the greater number of players compared to other Divisions*". Neither of these found favour in the eyes of the G.P.C., and they agreed "*to recommend the Executive not to support either of these motions*".

At the following Executive meeting the recommendation from the G.P.C. was agreed by the members present, and it was decided that a "*Mr. E. Mercer should lead the attack against the motion from Ladywell B.C., while the motion from Division 1 would not be supported*".

Perhaps the Executive had the feeling that its members and the County Officers' activities were being unduly examined and criticised by Associated clubs, for the same meeting held on 18th October, 1947, was the first for many years during which the members present spent so much time in congratulating each other for their efforts. Mr. Snow received effusive praise for the way in which he had carried out his duties as Treasurer, for his financial report "*and for all of the work put in on same*", while Mr. A. H. Hardy, J.P. on presenting his report was told by Mr. H. W. Smith that "*this was one of the best statements presented, and moved congratulations to the Trustees and to their Hon. Secretary, for his excellent work*". Mr. Smith went on to tender hearty congratulations to A. G. Cox, the Hon. Secretary, "*on the alterations in his Report as suggested at the G.P.C. a fortnight previous, when he mentioned the Report had been so criticised*". A Mr. V. Kay set the cat among the pigeons when he expressed the "*thought it might be advisable to reduce the size of the G.P.C., for he considered that in its present size the G.P.C. could, if it so desired, outvote the rest of the Executive on any motion it brought forward*". Poor chap, he wasn't aware that this had been tried once before, but the result was the same – "*it was decided to consider this at a later meeting*". It was almost like old times. At the following meeting of the Executive Mr.

Kay actually made the proposition that -“the size of the G.P.C. should be confined to 10 members”, and this was seconded by someone whose name was not recorded in the Minutes. However, it was defeated by an amendment “that the Committee consist of 20 members as last year”, so the balance of power remained the same and the ten most likely to be suddenly unemployed breathed a collective sigh of relief.

The Annual General Meeting in 1947 was held outside London for the first time since 1911, at the Royal Star Hotel in Maidstone. It was normally held at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London, the usual venue of the Association’s Annual Dinner, but that particular establishment had annoyed the G.P.C. over the botched arrangements for the planned 1947 Dinner. Some months earlier Percy Snow had reported that the Dinner could not be held at the Connaught Rooms as “our application for a licence for more than the 100 allowed under the Emergency Restrictions would not be allowed by the Food Office. He had ascertained that the only alternative was a Smoking Concert with a running buffet @ 10/6 each, plus drinks”. The G.P.C. was not amused – after all that particular venue had received the Association’s custom for many years, and they thought they deserved better from it. So the Dinner was cancelled, the offer of a Smoking Concert was laughed off the Green, the artists booked [*Dorothy Parfit, Soprano; Jesse Huggins, Bass; Bradley Harris, Entertainer; Joseph Hannah, Piano*] were cancelled, and it was agreed, if possible, to hold the Annual Meeting at the Royal Star Hotel Maidstone.

The Minutes record that this was one of those A.G.M.’s at which just about everybody there was congratulated in some way for what he had done and the way he had done it, and, predictably, the Ladywell motion was defeated whilst the motion from Division 1 was ruled out of order as “it was pointed out by members from Division 1 that this motion [as presented

to the A.G.M.] was not in accordance with that proposed at the Divisional meeting”. Devious indeed are the ways of men and committees. The motion proposed by the Division 3 meeting, “that the venue of the A.G.M. and Dinners in future years be at Maidstone” was changed by amendment to limit the proposed change to the following year.

It was never made clear why the prospect of travelling all the way to London for Committee and Executive meetings was so attractive; after all, travelling to the Berners Hotel in Oxford Street from many parts of the county couldn’t have been very easy even in 1948. But most of the members resisted every effort to hold meetings anywhere else, even defeating propositions to change the venue by proposing counter amendments. However, from this time forward most of the Executive and sub-committee meetings, with the combined A.G.M. and Dinner evening, took place at the Royal Star Hotel, Maidstone. so perhaps the balance of power was shifting away from London to the more colonial regions of the County. Furthermore, the Divisional Secretaries were urged to make arrangements to arrange for char-a-bancs to transport their respective members to and from Maidstone for the A.G.M., which was held at 2.30 p.m., and the Annual Dinner that followed at 6.00 p.m.

It was quite a different story when it came to the Executive’s visits to affiliated clubs, and their reaction to the proposed visit to New Romney in 1948 was typical of many. “In view of the anticipated difficulty in travelling this year [it didn’t seem to stop them going so often to Oxford Street] and the awkwardness of reaching this club, it was decided that the Hon. Secretary should approach the New Romney club to see if they could make arrangements for a coach to meet the Executive team at Ashford station and return them there after the match”. Ah well, I suppose the shopping in Oxford Street was somewhat superior to the kiss-me-quick kiosks of a small seaside town.

February, 1953, at the grand age of 90, and the bowling world lost one of its most redoubtable and staunch enthusiasts. At the same meeting the death of our past Hon. Secretary Mr. William Thorn, who had been elected to the post on the resignation of Mr. Sims, was also reported. Together, these two had led the fledgling Association through many of its formative years, and we should be exceedingly grateful to them even though there are few folk nowadays who are even familiar with their names.

A letter of appeal from the E.B.A. was discussed at length at the Executive Meeting of December, 1952, regarding the *“proposition for headquarters for the E.B.A. This was explained in detail by Mr. A. H. Hardy, after which considerable discussion took place”*. However, *“it was proposed and unanimously passed that our E.B.A. delegates be instructed to vote against same when the matter arises at the E.B.A. Council, as the meeting considered the proposition of E.B.A. Headquarters is not practicable”*. At the end of October, 1953 *“Mr. A. H. Hardy gave the latest information regarding same, and stated he was certain that the proposed headquarters scheme had been dropped”*.

For all its involvement with the E.B.A., the County Association seemed very reluctant to support it in any matter relating to money; for at the same meeting when the subject of the E.B.A.’s Jubilee Appeal was broached *“it was decided to recommend that neither our Association or Clubs should support same, particularly for the reason no hint was given as to what purpose this money would be used for”*.

Mind you, the Association was quite stingy when it came down to spending money on its own requirements, for in 1954, when a new County flag was purchased, it saved a considerable sum by having the Invicta Horse on the old flag unpicked and re-sewn onto the new one. The cost of the new one was thus reduced to only £8.

It was in 1953 that the Benevolent Fund’s Trustees and Officers were finally successful in wresting the income it received from its investments from the greedy, grasping little hands of the Income Tax Inspectors. This battle had been going on for several years, and late in 1953 the Inspectors finally made public their reason for refusing to allow the Benevolent Fund to claim exemption from paying tax on their investment income. Apparently their refusal was *“on the grounds that that the present wording of the objects of the Fund, namely ‘this Fund is intended to assist Kentish Bowlers and their dependents’ was not wide enough in a charitable sense to make the income from such Investments exempt from tax”*. Anyway, those involved put their heads together and changed the wording of the Objects of the Fund to read thus – *“This Charitable Fund is for the specific and sole purpose of granting aid or relief to Kentish Bowlers [who are or have been affiliated members of the Kent County Bowling Association] and their dependents who from age, illness, infirmity or any other cause are impoverished or in distressed financial circumstances”*. With a certain ‘pick-the-bones-out-of-this-then’ they re-applied for exemption, and the Chief Inspector of Taxes *“agreed that if the suggested wording was adopted it would free the investment income from any liability from tax”*. My word, such nit-picking beggar’s belief doesn’t it.

The Emergency Committee met in August, 1954, to try to resolve the Association’s worsening financial position. Apparently, it had *“cut expenditure to the bone, and would be in serious trouble if Competition entries were to drop. The Chairman stated that we had definitely got to have more money, to save scraping along as we were doing”*. In the end they decided to recommend that subscriptions from Clubs with up to 50 members should be increased from £1 to 30/-, up to 100 members to 2 guineas and over 100 members to 3 guineas. The price of the Year Book should be raised to 1/6, and the prices of the badges, ties and hat-bands be

also increased. These seem almost utopian sums to us folk nowadays, but no doubt they were quite a sacrifice in the 1950's. Mr. A. Hardy, the Chairman, then dropped a veritable bombshell when he informed the meeting that Percy Snow was in hospital, and was likely to be there for some time. It was agreed that *"Mr. Albert Hardy should endeavour to see Mr. Percy Snow, and let him take over from him until he was well enough to carry on again"*. I can't help feeling that the Association was very circumspect when it came to dealing with Percy, and were always very careful not to upset him in any way.

It seems, however, that the result of this increase *"was not as good as had been expected"*, and much had still to be done to put the Association's finances on *"a sound basis"*. Various suggestions were put forward for raising money *"for instance the President, Ald. P. Johnson, was very strongly in favour of raising money by holding a big sweepstake, while another suggestion was the formation of a Supporters Association. Finally it was decided that it will be necessary to raise the Competition Entry Fees by 6d. per player"*. It is interesting to note that the Association had foretold the formation of the Patrons' Association by some 19 years.

Percy resigned from the position of Hon. Treasurer at a meeting held on 23rd October, 1954, on the advice of his doctor, and thus brought to an end some 37 years of active involvement in the workings of the Association. He first joined Division 4 in 1918. I found the first Minuted mention of him in 1922, when he was appointed the East Kent representative on the E.B.A. Council, and the Minutes rarely fail to mention his generosity and active participation in one event or another from then on. He became County Treasurer in 1939 when he replaced Mr. E. Moore, and, as Mr. C. Porter noted in that overlong editorial you will have already read, he served *"the Association as Hon. Treasurer with all the rectitude of a bank manager"*. But, perhaps, the achievement that might

have been most satisfying to him was his leadership and guidance in the setting up of the Benevolent Fund in November, 1930, and the work he did as a Trustee from then on. His replacement as Hon. Treasurer was a Mr. R. Lukehurst of A.P.M. Bowling Club.

Percy Snow's death was recorded in the G.P.C.'s Minutes of a meeting held on 19th February, 1955, and the Association had lost one of its most active, open-handed and influential members. Having got to know Percy through the Association's Minutes I felt almost as if I too had lost a friend.

It was at this time that it was suggested that an association of Past Presidents should be formed, on the hypothesis that this Association could be of considerable financial help to the County Association. It is mentioned in the Minutes of an Executive meeting held on 25th June, 1955, that such an Association had been formed, but nothing further was reported at that time. Indeed, one had to wait until February, 1961 before there was a further mention of this Association, and any indication that it intended to offer any *"considerable financial help to the County Association"*. At that meeting it was reported that the Past Presidents had offered to pay the £20 it would cost to have special Menu Cards printed for the Jubilee Annual Dinner, so perhaps they had just been biding their time until they felt they could be of some use.

There was great consternation at the Executive meeting held in December, 1956, when the Hon. Secretary reported *"that a letter received from the Cranbrook Club was signed by a lady as Joint Hon. Secretary. He had taken the matter up with the Club and requested them to conform to the Rules of the E.B.A. The Hon. Secretary of the Club replied he would bring the matter to the notice of his Club Committee in a few days and report back"*. Well, I mean to say chaps, whatever next. Little did they know that this was

Nonetheless, it seems that the G.P.C. was becoming more aware of the inconvenience that many members might be facing, for in 1948 it was agreed to propose to the Executive that the Summer Executive Meeting and the Secretaries Day should *“be changed from mid-week to a Saturday, owing to the increasing difficulty of a good many in getting away from business”*. You will, of course, have noticed the word *“business”*, so perhaps they were not quite so emancipated as to include those who just went to work. The Executive weren't too keen on this idea and at their next meeting proposed an amendment to the G.P.C.'s proposition. The amendment was lost, and it seems that the G.P.C. was, as it had already been suggested, able to outvote the Executive when needed.

In 1949 Mr. S. H. J. Weller, the then President, had presented a Cup to the County which the Executive decided should be *“presented to the Runner-Up in the Championship”*. Upon being put to the vote *“this was agreed with thanks to the President”*. However, at the next Executive meeting *“the President stated he would like to rescind the Proposal made at the last meeting to present his cup to Championship Runner-Up, and present it as originally promised to the winning Rink on Secretaries' Day, for the skip of that Rink to hold for the year”*. I cannot trace any mention of such a *“promise”* mentioned in any of the Minutes; but Mr. Weller had his way and the Proposal was indeed rescinded, so we should always be aware that the Executive's decisions are not necessarily carved on stone tablets and may be changed if we so desire.

Even the Benevolent Fund seemed to have the odd spot of bother during this period. At the County A.G.M. of November, 1949 Mr. Weller, a Past President and ex-officio Chairman of the Fund, *“stated that he was not satisfied with the way that this Fund had been carried on, particularly during his two years as a Trustee Ex-Officio – his chief charges being that no*

*meeting of Trustees had been held and no Minutes kept”*. We have to wait until the comparative privacy of the next Executive meeting to discover the reason for his discontent, for the Fund Secretary, Mr. A. H. Hardy absolutely refused to discuss the matter in open A.G.M. However, all is revealed at the following Executive when it is reported that *“Mr. P. Snow informed the meeting that an application for a loan of £150 was received from Mr. Weller, and that was the reason he had not been invited to attend the meeting. The application had been turned down as it did not come within the powers of the Fund to grant such a loan. He stated that in fairness to Mr. Hardy [the Fund Secretary] he should make these facts known to the Executive”*. Without further ado, *“the matter was then declared closed”*.

The Annual General Meeting of November, 1952, created the Office of Junior Vice-President, this was, apparently, to bring the County in line with the organisation of the E.B.A. It was quite a relief for them really as there had been three nominations for the post of President, but at the previous Executive meeting the three candidates had shuffled themselves about to fill all three offices without the need for what might have been an embarrassing election. This situation had come about because the previous year's Vice-President, a Dr. C. B. Hutchison, who would have been the natural successor to the retiring President had to decline the elevation owing to ill health. He was, however, rewarded with Honorary Life Membership for his past services.

At the same meeting it was reported that Mr. W. A. Sims *“tendered his best wishes”* and his apologies for non-attendance, so he was obviously still going strong some forty years after he was elected the Association's first President. He also became our third Hon. Secretary in March, 1918, and held that post until November, 1922. Sadly his death was reported in the Minutes of the G.P.C. of

only the thin end of the wedge, and we all know what has happened since. However, Cranbrook B.C. obviously knew which side of their bread was buttered, and Mr. Cox was able to report *“that the Cranbrook Club had informed him that they had put their Club in order as regards their Hon. Secretary”* to the next G.P.C. meeting. What a pity they didn't do those 'fly-on-the-wall' programmes in those days.

A similar problem concerning lady bowlers occurred early in 1958, when it was reported that certain affiliated clubs were including ladies in their inter-club matches. The Hon. Secretary was instructed to deal with the matter, and he did so through his newsletter sent out to all clubs.

He wrote thus – *“The attention of the Executive has been drawn to the fact that last season some of our Affiliated Clubs included Lady Bowlers in their teams when playing other Clubs, and I have been requested by the Executive to remind All Clubs that this is not in accordance with the Rules of the English Bowling Association, and that this practice must cease. The teams which Clubs select to play Inter-Club and other matches must consist of Male Players only”*.

This communication was discussed at the following meeting when a Mr. Coleman *“spoke against the decision”*, but a Mr. E. Mercer reminded members present that *“the E.B.A. Rule 2a covers entirely our control over Clubs in Inter Club matches”*, and a Resolution was proposed and carried endorsing the Secretary's action. It was carried with only one member voting against the Motion, and we can all guess who that was, can't we. However, Mr. Coleman wasn't prepared to let the matter rest there, and, persistent in his outspoken opposition, he then *“raised the question what we were prepared to do if Clubs did not abide by our decision”*. In reply *“Mr. A. H. Hardy stated that the E.B.A. had considered this, and were prepared to expel a Club if necessary”*.

The long serving Publicity Officer, Mr. J. B. Foad, did not seek re-election at the 1957 A.G.M., and was elected an Honorary Life Member of the Association for his past services. The post was left vacant until a suitable replacement could be found, and the Hon. Editor combined both jobs as a temporary measure. It was a *“temporary measure”* indeed, for Mr. Wraight made it clear at the following Executive meeting that the two jobs were more than he could handle. A Mr. Jack Walker was speedily elected to fill the Publicity Officer's appointment, and he promised that *“the information and views transmitted to the 'Bowls News' and the Press would be those of the Association and not his own personal views”*.

At this meeting the second member of the Hardy family from Northfleet, Harry, made his big appearance on the Association's stage. He had earlier been nominated to the E.B.A. as Junior Vice-President, but his nomination had not been successful. Nevertheless at the Executive Meeting held in December, 1957, he succeeded in being elected as an Association delegate to the E.B.A. Strangely enough, I had not noted any mention of his activities until this entry, but it certainly looked as though he was being groomed for stardom. His nomination as Junior Vice-President of the E.B.A. was successful in 1959, and he was well on the way to being able to emulate his big brother.

Sadly, the bowling world lost another of its real celebrities at the beginning of 1958, with the death of Colin Walton of Faversham B.C. He had been an active member of the Association's management for some 30 years, but was probably better known for his bowling ability than as an administrator. He made his first appearance as an English International bowler in 1933, and played through to 1949 when he captained the English team. He won the County Singles in 1937 and was runner-up in 1923, 1924 and 1927; the County Pairs in 1927 and 1951, and was

runner-up in 1932; and though only the Clubs are listed as being successful in the County Triples and Rinks he was probably a member of Faversham's successful Triples team in 1934, 1938, 1948, 1953, and the Faversham Rinks teams in 1932, 1933, 1936, 1937, 1939, 1945, 1946 and 1949. My word, that is a record of which he can be justly proud, and he was probably the David Bryant of his day.

It needs to be understood that this Faversham Club, that had been so active in the Association's affairs and successful in County Competitions for some 36 years, is not the one that is a member of the Association today. Colin Walton's club was actually 'The Ship' B.C. of Faversham, which was wound up in November, 1959 "owing to fallen Membership and heavy expenses". The one we know today is Faversham Recreation B.C.

It seems that a Mr. J. J. Scott was still proving quite a nuisance to the 'establishment' at this time. Earlier in the year he had spoken quite strongly about the G.P.C.'s high-handed attitude in fully discussing all matters relating to the Association, and presenting only the results of their deliberations to the Executive for their approval. He considered that this was the wrong way round, and that the G.P.C. should only discuss and resolve matters if they were referred back to the G.P.C. by the Executive. A Proposition to this effect was carried, and it would seem, from reading the Minutes, that nobody quite knew who was supposed to discuss and resolve what for some time afterwards. It was settled, however, at the Executive meeting held in March, 1959. After discussion, it was agreed that the state of affairs was not workable. Therefore, the "*Minute curtailing the activities of the G.P.C. as passed on 8/3/58*" was rescinded, and Mr. Scott retired, huffing and puffing, from the skirmish.

At the Executive meeting in December, 1958, the same gentleman

succeeded in changing a state of affairs that had happily existed since December, 1945, when he Proposed that the President should be Chairman of the Executive. He stated "*he was very appreciative of the good services that Mr. A. H. Hardy had rendered as Chairman for several years, but he felt that this was part of the President's duties.*" A Mr. A. H. Hughes seconded the Proposition, and Mr. Hardy assured members present that "*it had never been his wish to take the Chair against the wish of the President*". Consequently, he refused the nomination that he be elected Chairman as usual, and "*was quite happy to sit back and carry on the work so much to his heart, the Benevolent Fund*". "*The President, Mr. A. E. Walker, M.B.E. was duly elected and took the Chair*". Well, I never did – that's gratitude for you – still, Mr. A. H. Hardy did continue as Chairman of the various sub-committees until 1960 when he, himself, proposed that the President take over all of them.

1961 was, of course, the Association's "*Jubilee Year*", and it began its preparations in January, 1960 by, in typically English fashion, setting up a "*Jubilee Celebrations Arrangements Committee*". It was decided that "*a special metal badge be struck [which would be] the usual metal badge with the addition of a Flash on top with the year on same, and a Scroll underneath with 'Jubilee Year' on same*". Eventually the Association decided to purchase six gross of these badges "*@ 1/9 each and to sell them at 2/6*". They eventually succeeded in selling some 1,500 of them, and I wonder if any of them are still gathering dust in a drawer somewhere?

The Committee also agreed that "*President and Executive matches should be played with surviving Founder Clubs*", but then came problems such as "*whether Margate was the same club as it was originally, [and] whether Queens Mead were the old Shortlands*". Both the Shortlands and Queens Mead clubs

eventually owned up that they had not affiliated to the Association until April, 1912, so they were removed from the list forthwith, and the Margate B.C. made it clear that *"the present Margate Club was not founded until 1922"* and thus was not the original founding club. Matches were eventually arranged between the President and Beckenham, Bromley, Bromley Common, Bromley Town, Darnley, Forest Hill, Hythe, Maidstone, Tonbridge, The Grove Tunbridge Wells, Westerham and Woolwich and Plumstead Bowling Clubs. It seems that the Association had quite forgotten that the Blackheath and Greenwich B.C. had, in May, 1926, changed its name from its original one of Borough of Greenwich, and that it too was a founding club. Quite a flurry of letters passed between the Club Secretary and the Association's Hon. Secretary, before this little storm in a tea cup was resolved and the club was added to the list.

It was also agreed that *"an illuminated Testimonial be presented to Founder Clubs to commemorate their 50 years membership of the Association"*. These were eventually produced, and presented, at a cost of 30/- each. When the Committee eventually took delivery of the *"illuminated testimonials"* it is reported that *"Great pleasure was expressed at the beauty of design and the craftsmanship displayed in the production"*. I would have thought that those clubs which were presented with one would have taken great care of them, but, sadly, few of them seem to have any knowledge of these testimonials at all. With the assistance of Roy Thompson of The Grove B.C. I finally managed to trace the one that had been presented to that particular club. Fortunately one of the club's members remembered seeing it tucked away in a cupboard somewhere, and you should find it on the back page of the cover of this little book. I traced another to the Hythe B.C. and they are certainly beautiful 'family treasures'. I wonder if any more of them are still in existence tucked away in a mouldering box in an ex-Secretary's attic?

The Association had also arranged for a special Commemorative Service to take place at the Tunbridge Wells Parish Church on the afternoon of Sunday, 7th May. It was intended that the Service should be conducted by the Bishop of Rochester with Lord Cornwallis reading the first Lesson, and the parking of visitors cars was placed in the care of the Police and the Automobile Association. Some 750 tickets were taken up by the various associated clubs, but as the event was never mentioned in any Minutes after the 7th May we can have no idea of how successful it was. It was reported, however, that the success of the Jubilee Annual Dinner exceeded all expectations, and a good time was had by all.

With regard to the financing of all the extra activities planned for the Jubilee Year *"it was finally left to wait and see what they were likely to be"*, however no further reference was made regarding how the year was to be financed.

Mr. E. [Jack] Walker, who was the Publicity Officer and optimistic contender for the position of Hon. Editor, had made a collection of metal and cloth blazer badges from every affiliated club in the county. These were presented to the Association as part of the Jubilee Celebrations, and displayed in four cases - one for each of the Divisions. The Association, having no home to call its own, placed them in the care of a Mr. Roy Ancombe of Woolwich Polytechnic B.C. *"until such time as the Association had its own Headquarters"*.

In 1966 the Poly requested that these badges should be removed from their Club, and the Association had to scratch around to find a new home for them. Eventually, Metrogas agreed to give them a home, and they were, apparently, very pleased for the opportunity to display them in their Pavilion.

I finally traced these display cases to the little office of the Maidstone B.C. You might like to take a look at them the next time you visit the Club.

## The Social Calendar

Perhaps control of the County in 1948 was still in the hands of the most affluent, for many of the members of the G.P.C. were quite excited at the prospect of joining the planned E.B.A. two month tour to Canada, even if it was going to set them back the sum of 300 guineas. If you think about it, you could have bought a very nice house for that sum in 1948. The County was also preparing to entertain the visiting American and South African tourist teams during 1948. The Americans were to play at Margate and the South Africans at Folkestone, but before these two clubs could make the necessary arrangements they had to “*approach their local Food Officers, with regard to the numbers allowed, etc*”. I imagine that this was



George V. Firmin was our very first Assistant Honorary Secretary, and is pictured here looking at two of the four cases of badges that Mr. Jack Walker had presented to the Association during its Golden Jubilee Year. Next time you visit Maidstone Bowling Club you might like to see them for yourself.

because of the Rationing restrictions, but perhaps both visiting teams had arranged a supply of food parcels from home to follow them around the country as they toured.

These tours, as were those which took place in the late 50's, were noticeably lavish affairs, and should not be confused with the fleeting visits that constitute the 'package tours' we think of as normal nowadays. For example, the 'official' American tour lasted from 11th June until 8th August, and visited Scotland, Wales and Ireland as well as England. It included a tour of the Palace of Westminster with lunch in the Dining Room of the House of Commons; an official reception at the Guinness Club in Ireland as guests of the Guinness Directors, and similar extravagant receptions in both Wales and Scotland. If the Programme [see page 60] of their day in Kent is anything to go by they were also sumptuously entertained by the various County Associations against whom they played. The Australian Tour of 1959 lasted for an even longer period, 29th June till 19th September, and the 'official' tour was spent entirely in England.

I would imagine that these Australians were away from home for the best part of a year, if one considers the 12 weeks or so it would have taken them to travel to and from England, so we can be sure that these folk were not quite 'ordinary' folk like you and I.

It is interesting to note that the G.P.C. decided quite arbitrarily that the composition of the teams to meet the visitors should be “*two thirds drawn from Officers and Executive and one third from best players in the County*”, which didn't give Tom, Dick or Harry much of a chance to experience their moment of fame. This idea didn't go down too well with our friend Mr. V. Kay

### Kent Team

Watt, W. T. ....	Bowaters.
Jackson, R. J. ....	Callenders.
Rankin, R. ....	Darnley.
Wilson, J. ....	Cyphers.
—	
Rhodes, W. ....	Kearsney.
Fosten, T. J. W. ....	Bromley Common, Asst. Hon. Div. Sec. No. I Div. Canterbury.
Joad, H. ....	Bromley.
Colquhoun, R. G. ....	—
—	
Foad, J. B. ....	Gillingham Mas., Hon. Publicity Officer.
Frost, A. E. ....	Swanscombe, President.
Weston, T. G. ....	Margate.
Tomlinson, P. D. ....	Margate.
—	
Billing, P. ....	Deal, Past President, 1946.
Hutchison, C. B. ....	Deal.
Clements, F. ....	V.C.D.
Gilmour, G. G. ....	Tunbridge Wells.
—	
Wraight, W. ....	The Grove, Hon. Editor.
Buckle, W. W. ....	Callenders.
Waldron, A. L. ....	Loose.
Keith, E. ....	A.P.M.
—	
Button, T. ....	Maidstone, Past President, 1945.
Hardy, H. ....	Northfleet, Asst. Hon. Div. Sec., No. II Div.
Smith, H. W. ....	Loose, Hon. Div. Sec., No. III Division.
Hardy, A. H. ....	Northfleet, Past President, 1939-44 and Chairman Executive Council.

### Programme

11.45 American Team and their Ladies will arrive at St. George's Hotel, Cliftonville, Margate.

◇

12.15 Reception by the Mayor and Mayoress of Margate. (W. J. Perkins, J.P., and Mrs. Perkins).

◇

12.45 Luncheon.  
Afterwards proceed to the Margate B.C., Northdown Avenue, Price's Avenue, Cliftonville, for the match.

◇

2.15 Photograph of the Teams will be taken.

◇

2.45 Match to commence.

◇

6.00 Tea at the St. George's Hotel.

◇

ALBERT E. FROST, President.  
S. H. J. WELLER, Vice-President.  
ALBERT G. COX, Hon. Sec., K.C.B.A.

### Menu

—

Lobster Mayonnaise.

—

Roast Surrey Chicken and Sausages.

—

Garden Peas  
Creamed Cauliflower  
Roast Potatoes.

—

Apple Flan and Cream and Vanilla Ice or  
Cheese : Biscuits : Celery.

—

Coffee.

—

### Toast List

—

AT LUNCHEON.

" His Majesty the King "

" Our American Guests "

" Kent County Bowling Association "

—

AFTER THE TEA.

" The Margate Bowling Club "

### American Lawn Bowling Association Team

Overseas Tour, 1948

Bolling, R. P.	Manahan, Chas. F.
Brown, H. S.	McCrery, P.
Cary, R. J.	Middleton, C. P.
Charles, Sydney.	Nelson, Dean.
Daniels, W. G.	Pratt, Robert.
Gilchrist, A. A.	Pike, Dr. L. E.
Gordon, James	Read, Dr. E. C.
Haley, Ken.	Robinson, Walter.
Hay, W. G. (President, A.L.B.A. & Captain of Team).	Simpson, Wm.
Krupp, Dr. Weston.	Stead, Thos.
Leitch, Hugh.	Way, Dr. A. P.
	Webb, Frank.

Ladies Accompanying the Team :

Mrs. R. P. Bolling.	Mrs. Dean Nelson.
Mrs. R. J. Cary.	Mrs. L. E. Pike.
Mrs. A. A. Gilchrist.	Mrs. Thos. Stead.
Mrs. James Gordon.	Mrs. W. R. Talbot.
Mrs. K. Haley.	Mrs. Frank Webb.
Mrs. W. G. Hay.	Mrs. Wainwright.
Mrs. P. McCrery.	Miss Cary.

The Programme that was printed for the visit of the American Lawn Bowling Association to Kent in July, 1948. This event took place at the Margate Bowling Club, but the New Zealand visit to Sidcup B.C. in September, 1951 and the South Africans at A.P.M. in 1955 were just as lavish affairs. The Association certainly did things in style in those days, didn't they.

who, upon receipt of the Report and Minutes of the G.P.C., wrote to the Hon. Secretary voicing his dissatisfaction. The Minutes of the next Executive meeting make it clear that they weren't too happy about it either. When the time came to discuss that particular item, it is reported that they decided that *"this should only be the approximate basis of selection, and it was left entirely to the discretion of the Selection Committee to select the teams, [though] it was agreed that only Badged Players should be selected"*. Perhaps not surprisingly, Mr. Kay's Club lost its place on the Executive at their next Annual Divisional Meeting.

The Executive obviously decided to make a great occasion out of both visits from the overseas tourists, for it was agreed that *"ladies could be accommodated at both matches if they chose to accompany their men folk"* while *"the number that could attend the Social Functions of both matches could not be more than 150 at each"*. Even so these, plus the visiting tourists and their camp followers, plus the respective Mayors, M.P's and their retinues would be quite a crowd, and all for 25/- per head from the players and one guinea each from the visitors.

The County had already agreed to cover any losses from their own funds, so perhaps it might not have been necessary for Mr. and Mrs. Snow to stump up the difference as they had done on the last occasion we had been hosts to foreign tourists. Sadly, Mrs. Snow's death was reported in the Minutes of the Executive held on Saturday, 13th October, 1951. In reporting the matter Mr. A. H. Hardy *"paid tribute to the support given by her to the Association and to the Hon. Treasurer Mr. P. Snow"*. Well, having read so much about her and Percy in the Minutes I can well understand the tribute paid to her.

You might be interested to peruse the instructions given to both Margate and Folkestone for the arrangements they were expected to make for these events :-

*12.15 Reception by the Mayor and Mayoress with the President, during which cocktails would be handed round.*

*Players to change before Lunch.*

*12.45 Lunch, followed by Toasts.*

*Own arrangements to be made to and from the Green.*

*2.15 Photograph of Team to be taken on the Green.*

*6.00 Tea.*

*Speeches including thanks to both Clubs.*

*Both Clubs to arrange for one main table, with other tables for 12 each [1Rink and Ladies] to be staggered around the room.*

*Both Clubs to arrange for 4 Stewards for seating.*

*To provide 4 Bottles of Sherry, 2 Bottles of Gin, 1 Bottle Martini*

*for cocktails for Reception, and to order Beer and Minerals for Lunch.*

*Invitations to be sent to respective Mayors and their ladies*

*and to the Margate M.P. and his wife.*

[Perhaps the Folkestone fellow wore the wrong colour Rosette]

*Cards to be printed for lunch with a perforated portion for tea.*

*Stress that the ticket must be produced.*

*For the South African Match  
Lunch and Tea at the Majestic Hotel,  
Sandgate Road, Folkestone.*

*For the American Match  
Lunch and Tea at the St. George's Hotel*

Didn't they do themselves well, *"though it was thought it is most likely that the Americans might only bring perhaps four or five Rinks, and that perhaps Kent Players might supplement the Americans so that we can play the six Rinks as selected"*.

They did it in even greater style at Folkestone in 1950, when they added Lord Harris and Lord Cornwallis to the guest list for the Australian visit.

However, this was really the last of the really sumptuous occasions at which the Association entertained foreign touring teams; and perhaps the novelty of foreign bowling tours visiting England was wearing off altogether, for the proposed visit of a Canadian touring team in 1962 was cancelled due to lack of support.

It would, I am sure, surprise you to know that in the 50's the Association's Annual Dinner arrangements were just as lavish. For example in 1954 the entertainment was provided by *"the New Zealand Singers; Mr. Arthur Dounes [Baritone]; Miss Valerie Gray [Mezzo Soprano], a violinist and Mr. Cyril Addison at the piano"*, all at a fee of 20 guineas. In the following year, 1955, a bowler who would be present at the dinner claimed to be a magician, and offered his services at no charge to the Association. *"After full consideration of this kind offer it was decided to decline same with sincere thanks"*, so it seems that services were only valued if they cost money.

The Guest list included *"the Presidents of the E.B.A., Middlesex, Surrey, Essex, Berks., Bucks., Beds., and Sussex. The Hon. Secretaries of Surrey, Essex, Bucks., and Beds. A representative of 'Bowls News'; Lord Cornwallis; the Mayor of Maidstone Alderman A. Clark, and Mr. Leslie Ames of Kent County Cricket Club"*. It was also agreed that *"the guests should be entertained properly, and the only way was to have a Private Bar [later referred to as a President's Room] which the Hon. Secretary was instructed to arrange. It was also agreed that the cost should not fall on individual Officers or members, and, on the proposition of Mr. C. Walton seconded by Mr. W. Phillip, it was agreed that the sum of £20 go from the Association's funds towards the cost of entertaining, the balance of the cost to be shared amongst the Officers and G.P.C. members. This bar to be open to the Officers and members of the G.P.C. and their guests"*.

It may well be that they were not too happy at the way that Bert Cox had carried out the duty of Toastmaster on

previous occasions as it was decided that on this occasion the Association would employ a paid Toastmaster.

By 1957 the arrangements had become even more splendid, as the Hon. Secretary was instructed to *"endeavour to get four musicians to play popular old well-known tunes during the dinner"*, and to ensure that *"the first verse of the Kentish bowlers' anthem [was printed] in bolder print than in last year, and for this to be sung with Piano Accompaniment immediately after the Proposing of the K.C.B.A. Toast"*. I wonder how many of us know the words and could sing it nowadays? Mr. E. H. Barker, who had been elected President at this A.G.M., was absent from the next few G.P.C. and Executive meetings as he *"was recovering from injuries received in a fall after attending the Dinner"*. Now, I wonder what could have caused him fall over?

It is quite amusing to note that all these costly arrangements were made at the same meeting at which the Committee claimed to have *"cut expenditure down to the bone"*, and were busy deciding on ways and means of increasing the Association's income to meet its expenses. The Accounts for this particular year show that apart from the Investment in War Stock valued at £346 6s.6d, there was only a Balance of £385 7s. 11d. in hand; a situation that was a cause of great concern to the Association, particularly as it had already agreed to pay emoluments totalling some £350 to its Hon. Secretary, the four Divisional Secretaries and the Editor.

The end of 1961, the Association's 50th Anniversary Year, would seem a good place to take stock and bring this part of its chronicle to a conclusion.

# Bending with the Breeze

## *From 1962 till 1987*

The beginning of the second fifty years of the County's History revealed an Association chugging along very smoothly, though perhaps a touch complacent and self-satisfied with what it was doing. It was quite prepared to excommunicate any individual who could be shown to make a financial profit from playing bowls, or a club which allowed the female to participate in its management or take part in its games.

It would seem that it had every reason to feel pleased with itself, especially as the seedling had grown from just 22 clubs in 1911 to 215 in 1961. Moreover, competition entries had soared from 26 to 2,919 during the same period. It must be acknowledged that the Pairs, competition did not begin until 1912, the Gill Cup until 1922 and the Triples until 1933, and that for the first few years the competition entries were club applications and not individual; but, even so, without the Association's encouragement and organization it is doubtful that this degree of competitive bowling would have spread to become such a significant part of the individual bowler's calendar. However, the Association could have had little comprehension of the changes that would ultimately be forced upon it over the next half century, and probably little realised how the bowling world of 1962 would have been just as perplexing to those who started the Association in 1911.

For example the Minutes of the first meeting held in 1962 contains a reference to an incident concerning the Calverly B.C.

It seems that the Secretary had received a letter from Messrs. Cripps, Harris & Hall, Solicitors, which was read to the meeting and the Secretary "*reported on his conversation with the Hon. Secretary of the K.C.W.B.A. Upon which Mr. A. D. Saward stated that this was a ladies' matter and domestic incident of the Club*". The Meeting agreed that it should notify the solicitors accordingly, and that there was no need to concern the E.B.A. with the incident. There is no other indication as to the root of the trouble, but Calverly B.C. was severely criticised for not including the "*playing according to the rules of the E.B.A.*" regulation when their Club Rules were amended in 1955 and for failing to submit these revised rules to the Association for its approval at that time.

The difficulties were arising from the fact that so many clubs, which were once the exclusive province of us blokes, now contained females; and these females were not content to be the quiet, inconspicuous little makers of tea and cakes that they used to be. They wanted to be involved in the management of their clubs, and the old guard, which still controlled the game at national and county levels, didn't know quite what to make of it all.

It was considered to be such an important matter that "*Ladies' Section in Clubs and Revision of Club Rules were matters which Mr. A. D. Saward believed could be discussed by the Rules Sub-Committee when it next met*". News of this little contretemps must have swiftly hastened around the county, for at a

meeting of the Emergency Committee a somewhat harassed Secretary reported receiving "from various Clubs copies of new revisions of their Club Rules, and enquired who was to pass same". It was obviously left to him, though he was advised that "so long as they conformed to the Rules of the E.B.A. it was in order to pass same". When the matter was reported at the following Executive meeting it was decided that it was really the responsibility of the Rules Revision Committee, and I would imagine that a very relieved Secretary lost little time in playing 'pass the parcel'.

However, the 'ladies' problem would not go away, and there was much consternation in June, 1962, when the Secretary was handed the Fixture List of the South Hill Wood B.C. which showed that there were two ladies serving on their Committee. He was immediately instructed "to take this matter up with the Club". At the following meeting a letter was read from the South Hill Wood club in which their committee "apologised for its mistake and notified that these two ladies had now resigned from their committee". So, all seemed well that ended well, but perhaps it had revealed the shape of things to come. In December, 1963, there was even more huffing and puffing when it was discovered that Hamstreet B.C. had a female as President, and the Hon. Secretary was instructed to sort it out forthwith. The following meeting reported that Hamstreet B.C. had apologised for its mistake and "had rectified same by making the lady mentioned as President their Patron".

The Council was not entirely satisfied by this, particularly as they had been informed that Calverly B.C. now had two lady Vice-Presidents, and asked the E.B.A. to make a ruling on this subterfuge. The E.B.A. replied to the effect that they didn't much care how many female Vice-Presidents a club had, so long as "there are Men's and Ladies' Sections in Bowls Club, but that under no circumstances may Ladies serve in any way on a committee

*which is dealing exclusively with the management of a Men's Section".*

Nowadays, of course, nobody much cares whether you are masculine, feminine, or somewhere in between, as long as you are prepared to serve your club in one way or another.

At the A.G.M. in November, 1962, Mr. R. Lukehurst resigned from the County Treasurer's post due to ill health, and a Mr. A. W. Gosling was elected to replace him. Reg Lukehurst had been elected to this position after the death of Percy Snow, and his resignation coincided with yet another of those periods when the Association's financial position was causing some concern.

The various debates which followed this meeting, aimed at ways of improving the Association's finances, were quite acrimonious at times. There was general agreement that affiliated clubs' annual subscriptions should be increased by a substantial amount, and an increase in both County Competition entry fees and charges for playing in County matches was swiftly agreed to. It was even decided that there would be a surcharge of 10/- per head to all non-Officers who were invited to sit at the top table at the Annual Dinner, in the hope that this would generate an extra pound or two.

But the Hon. Secretary made matters worse by petitioning for an increase in the grant towards his expenditure which soon jeopardized any financial improvement these alterations were likely to bring. For example, the Hon. Secretary reminded the meeting that he was using his home as an office, and should get an allowance to cover the use of the rooms. "He wanted to be quite frank and point out the extra expenses he had to meet, such as accommodation for all the Association's materials, heating and lighting, which he thought should be borne by the Association, [whilst for travelling] he was only drawing 4d. per mile whereas the cost

was 9¼d". The Treasurer "also stated that his expenses would be more than that of his predecessor's, who was able to do most of his work at his business", but then declined to accept the grant that was offered, as usual, at the A.G.M. In the end the Secretary was "asked to go through other Counties' Year Books and their financial statements and get out the various details such as grants to their Officers, etc". Perhaps we were really beginning to miss the likes of our old friend Percy, who was well able to make ends meet from his own resources.

The Hon. Treasurer quite upset Bert Cox when he enquired "whether the money taken from sales was banked in a separate account as it would otherwise be difficult to get at on the death of the Secretary". He then "passed a further remark [not entered in the Minutes] which was resented by the Hon. Secretary, who stated that he would look into the matter of opening another account". It is quite entertaining to discover that business was not always 'sugar-and-spice', but that they used to squabble just like we do at times.

It was from this meeting onwards that the Executive was referred to as the 'Council', though there is nothing in the Minutes to explain this change of nomenclature. Nonetheless, it was decided to use up the existing stocks of the 'Executive Medal Badge' before ordering a supply of 'Council' badges. At the same time the title of General Purposes Committee was changed to Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The subject of his expenses was raised by the Secretary again in August, 1967, on the grounds that "his expenses had been frozen since 1963". He was reminded that "his expenses in regard to postage, telephone and incidentals had not been frozen, and that he had always been paid the amounts which he had actually expended". He was also reminded that he received £50 annually "as already agreed for accommodation in lieu of office

including lighting and heating". It seemed, however, that his main concern was the standard amount of £150 he was being paid for his travelling expenses. The Secretary "thought that he should be paid 8d. per mile on all journeys by car", and calculated that on that figure "his travelling expenses for the year 1966 should have been £261". The Treasurer made a quick calculation and worked out "that such an amount would represent a mileage of about 8,400, which on the Association's programme appeared somewhat excessive". The F. & G. Committee met with him to discuss his travelling expenses, and they eventually agreed the following formula which was typed and pasted into the Minute book.

Travelling expenses. Amount spent by whichever means of transport is used i.e. Train, Bus, using own car. For the following :-

President's Matches within the County. County Matches, Quarter, Semi and Final Stages of County Competitions.

County Dinners. Personal travelling expenses as above and reasonable personal hotel expenses.

Club Dinners within County. Travelling expenses as above only when acting as deputy to the County President.

Meetings. Personal travelling, expenses as above to Council and Committee Meetings of K.C.B.A.

E.B.A. Council Meetings. Travelling expenses as allowed and paid for by E.B.A.

Quarter, Semi and Final Stages of County Competitions. Personal meal expenses when supplied by Club staging fixture.

These decisions were communicated to the Council at its next meeting, and they obviously did not meet with the Council's full approval. "The Hon. Sec. then asked if he could make a statement". He "did stress that he did desire to be properly defined the expenses to which he was, or was not, entitled. He concluded by stating that he was fed up with the whole business and that he was no longer interested in any increase of his expenses,

*and that any costs over and above those allowances from the Association he would continue to bear himself*". He retired, somewhat hurt, while the Council attempted to solve the dilemma in which they had been placed, and on his return was told that the matter was to be referred back to the Finance Sub-Committee.

In the Minutes of the FGP Committee of February, 1968, it is reported *"that in order to assist the Hon. Secretary in his extremely onerous duties which are ever increasing, and to assure the continued efficient administration for the future, an assistant secretary should be appointed"*. Bert Cox certainly didn't instantly fall about in delight at the thought of some odd-bod being appointed to do what had, during the discussion, been loosely defined as *"assisting him in his duties"*. If it had to be he obviously wanted to control the situation, and when he was eventually invited to speak *"he stated that if it was the wish of the Association to have an Assistant Secretary, then from his position the Assistant would be helped by teaching him the whole work of the Association, so that as and when the time came for the Assistant to take over that he would be fully aware of the whole work of the Association"*. He went further and said that *"the duties of the Assistant must be left to the Secretary, to enable the Assistant to get a thorough knowledge of the whole work of the Association"*. At the meeting of the full Council in October, 1968, they eventually agreed on a form of words to be put as a Motion to the forthcoming A.G.M., but Bert insisted that the *"Assistant should be referred to as the Honorary Assistant Secretary"* and that *"he should be elected, and not appointed"*.

All in all there seemed to be quite a lot going on at this particular meeting, not the least of which was a real 'apple-cart-upsetter' from a Mr. S. Price. He had often spoken during various meetings about what he considered to be the shortcomings of the present system of organisation, but now he went a stage further and gave

*"notice of motion re setting up of a Working Party to consider methods of procedures and organisation which would give more efficient administration both in business matters and playing strength of the County"*. His argument is set out in several closely typed sheets of paper, but in essence he is proposing that a team of five should tour the County, meeting and discussing with affiliated clubs their various suggestions and ideas *"which in their opinion would be beneficial to the County"*. He didn't do himself any good by further suggesting that the members of the planned *"Working Party"* should include neither any of the present Officers of the Association nor Divisional Officers, and, indeed, that they needn't even be present members of the Council. Needless to say, the *"proposed Motion was defeated by a large majority"*, which meant that it would not be placed before the membership at the A.G.M.

It was during 1966 that George V. Firmin joined the Council as the representative of Bromley B.C., and his is the first name of a current serving member that I have found in the Minutes. He had on previous occasions appeared as a deputy for an absent member, but now he was official. At the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday, 9th November, 1968, George was elected the first Honorary Secretary of the Association, and he seems to have been with us in one form or another ever since. At the same meeting Bert Cox was elected Junior Vice-President, so it would appear that his assistant hadn't been elected a moment too soon.

At this time there were eight clubs in the County which were affiliated to the E.B.A. Indoor Section, namely Crystal Palace, Cyphers, Dartford, Folkestone, Margate, Sittingbourne and Milton, Woolwich Afternoon and Woolwich and District, but there was no County Organisation to administer their system of government. The subject of indoor bowling had been discussed by the Council at

several previous meetings, and in February, 1966, a sub-committee was set up to discuss *"the possibilities of endeavouring to form a Kent County Indoor Bowls Association"*. The sub-committee duly met and proposed that such an Association should be set up, and should be based broadly on that of the Sussex County Indoor Bowling Association. However, it decided that *"it should be made clear to the indoor clubs that the K.C.B.A. is only acting as Sponsor, and that it had no desire to "run" the new Association. The new Officers must be provided by the Indoor Clubs, and once it is formed they must be responsible for its organisation"*; though it also decided that *"the K.C.B.A. has the right to nominate a given number of Members to the governing body of the new Association"*. The sub-committee also agreed that it would propose an alteration to its rules to allow *"a specified number of delegates of the Indoor Section to serve on its Council"*.

A meeting of these Indoor Clubs with the K.C.B.A. sub-committee was eventually arranged, and the necessary proposition to form an Indoor Association was made by Mr. A. F. Lewis and seconded by Mr. U. N. Hunt. Indeed, the only Club that was not happy with the formation of such an Association was the Cyphers I.B.C., which sent a letter *"which stated they were against same"*. The Indoor Bowling Association next asked the K.C.B.A. for the use of its Metal Badge Die so that it could have a similar badge made, but it was *"decided that their request not be granted, and that the Indoor Association be recommended to strike an entirely new badge"*. So, it would seem that brotherly love extended only so far and no further. The Indoor Association has now grown to number 22 Clubs. These administer to most of the outdoor bowlers needs during the winter months, with regard to Club and County competitive bowling.

In the Minutes of March, 1967, I found the very first mention of any effort

to set up a coaching scheme of sorts, but there appeared to be little enthusiasm for the idea and it seemed to die a natural death. However, in February, 1968, there is mention of a *"Leaflet and Syllabus of classes"* which the Secretary had obtained from C.C.P.R. [Central Council for the Provision of Recreation]. *"It was proposed by J. Scott and seconded by H. B. Annand that it is considered that the scheme for coaching of the C.C.P.R. has some merit, and that volunteers be called for who would be willing to assist"*. There is no indication as to what this C.C.P.R. organisation was, and, indeed, it had never been mentioned before in the Minutes. Nevertheless, the *"Bowls for Beginners Classes"* had caught some people's imagination, and at the next meeting Mr. H. Annand *"reported that his club [Herne Bay] was prepared to co-operate and that he was prepared to volunteer to assist in training"*. A Mr. F. Wise of the Wellcome B.C. had also offered his services, and, after some discussion, it was proposed that *"each Division be asked to organise scheme within its Division"*. Oddly enough, when the Proposition was put to the meeting five of those in attendance voted against it. No reason for their opposition was mentioned, but perhaps it was because they feared a sudden influx of undesirables into the game. However, Mr. J. Scott was very enthusiastic, and proposed that *"advertisements be placed in local Press of classes when arranged to be held, and cost borne by the Association"*.

The proposed Bowls for Beginners scheme was raised in 'matters arising' in following meetings, but it seemed that the Divisional chains of command did not consider the matter to be of sufficient importance to warrant specially urgent consultation or organisation. Eventually, at the meeting held on 14th December, 1968, the Divisional Secretaries of Divisions 1 and 3 reported that *"they were in favour of same"*, Division 4 reported that *"they were in favour of the general principle"*, but Division 2 *"had not yet met to discuss this question"*. In an attempt, I

would think, to foster greater enthusiasm amongst the laggards the Hon. Secretary reported that he had made enquiries of three other Counties and he had been informed that *"after such classes had been held new members had joined Bowls Clubs, and that these Counties did think the classes were well worth being held"*.

It was apparent that some reservations still existed regarding the founding of an official bowls teaching scheme, for when it was raised again at the F. & G. meeting held in February, 1969, the Chairman suggested that discussion should be confined *"to general policy only"*. Bert Cox was obviously beginning to lose patience with certain members of the Council at this time, and made it clear to them in his report that he had now spent considerable time in contact with five other County bodies all of which spoke highly of the benefits to bowling that had accrued from their own teaching schemes. Eventually, *"Mr. S. Price proposed and Mr. J. Scott seconded that a recommendation be forwarded to the Council in favour of classes, and that Divisions go ahead and organise such classes"*.

At that Council meeting *"Mr. H. B. Annand reported that classes would be started in their Division"*, so it seemed that the colonial clubs were more than ready to jump the gun and lead the way in encouraging the natives to take up bowls as a leisure pursuit. In March, 1973, Mr. H. B. Annand *"enquired about steps being taken by the E.B.A. on Coaching, and re the Booklet on Laws of the Game. He was informed that the E.B.A. was definitely taking steps about coaching, and also on coaching Umpires, etc."* It is interesting to note that at that time you could purchase the Booklet on Laws of the Game for the sum of 5p, but one can't help but wonder why it had taken the National Association some 70 years to *"take steps about coaching"*.

Nothing further was reported on the subject until October, 1975, when Mr. H.

B. Annand *"spoke of the work on Coaching"*. It is interesting, and revealing to read exactly what he is reported to have said. *"Div 1. Div. Coach, 9 Area and 25 Club Coaches. A good job by Bob Fish. Div. 2. Badly let down by Div. Coach. There were 4 Area Coaches. S. Price calling a meeting to sort out problems. Div. 3. Div. Coach, 6 Area Coaches and 19 Club Coaches. Fine job by Roy King. Div. 4. Div. Coach, 6 Area Coaches and 23 Club Coaches."* Perhaps it was just modesty on his part that he did not comment on the *"fine job"* being done by the *"Div. 4 Coach"*, for it was himself. It was agreed that *"the election of County Coach to come before the December Council Meeting"*, and at that meeting *"Mr. A. W. Cooper from the Chair Moved the election of Mr. H. B. Annand [as County Coach] and this was carried unanimously"*. He sprang into action immediately, by arranging that suitable certificates and flashes were awarded to those who had earned them.

It was during this period that the apparent growth of ten-pin bowling began to worry certain members of the Council, and they were pressing very hard to have the Association's name changed from 'Bowling Association' to 'Bowls Association'. It was even discussed at the 1968 A.G.M., but eventually the Council decided that it saw no reason to be disturbed and, with two members voting against the motion, decided *"that no change be made in the title of the Association, and that it remain as at present"*.

At the February, 1971 F. & G. Committee meeting Mr. A. D. Saward was especially invited to attend, to *"report at some considerable length on the E.B.A. proposals concerning the staging of the 1972 World Championships"*. These proposals were, according to Mr. Saward, *"partly confidential at the moment, hence we refrain from repeating same in these Minutes"*. Well, we shall see just what they were eventually, but they were considered sufficiently important for the Committee to

change the date of the next Council meeting “so that the members of our Council could be fully informed of the suggestions, and could fully instruct its six EBA Representatives of its views on same and their instructions”.

The members were so alarmed by these proposals that after Mr. Saward had left the meeting “the discussion then continued for some long time, during which it was most strongly expressed that the proposals, so far known, were so important that it was felt the Delegates should be fully informed by the members of the Council”. Well, I can tell you that I was now all agog and could hardly wait to read the next Council meeting’s Minutes, for I had never sensed so much anxiety expressed in any of the Association’s Minutes before.

Once again Mr. Saward was called into the meeting to give his report, but this time before the full Council. It seems that the E.B.A. was finding it difficult to obtain sponsors for the Bowls World Championships that were to be staged in England in 1972, and to try to cover the costs that were estimated to “range from £25,000 to £55,000. To cover the estimated cost, in case it was impossible to get a sponsor, the E.B.A. were proposing to the E.B.A. Council, at their meeting next Saturday, that a Capitation Fee be levied on the Members of All Affiliated Clubs of approx 4/- to 5/- per member for the years 1971 and 1972”. It was also made clear that should a sponsor be found to cover all or part of the costs this “Capitation Fee” would be retained by the E.B.A. and used by them “for the benefit of Clubs and Bowls”. “Mr. Saward then Proposed that the delegates of Kent be asked to support the E.B.A. in their proposals at next Saturday’s meeting. This was seconded by Mr. A. H. Smith”.

The discussion which followed this revelation filled the following four pages of the Minutes, and it is fairly obvious that the members present were not too happy to

say the least. The meeting eventually formulated a long list of questions which were put to Mr. Saward, and its reservations were obviously not laid to rest by his replies. For example when asked “What happens if a Club refuses to pay this proposed levy?” Mr. Saward replied “Pay up or resign”. He was also asked whether “a voluntary appeal had been considered” [and] had the E.B.A. thought of running a Sweepstake”, to which he replied that the first “was not satisfactory [and the second] had too many organisational problems”. It is evident that members of the Council were more than a little peeved by this seemingly insensitive treatment of their concerns, and eventually Mr. A. Denny proposed the following amendment “that the Council is totally opposed to the Proposals for financing the World Championships in 1972 for the following reasons . . . a) The imposition of a compulsory levy on all bowlers for such an occasion is unwarranted. b) That the total amount which would be raised by the proposed levy is exorbitant, and far in excess of any amount likely to be needed **under reasonable** conditions”. The Chairman “ruled that he could not accept this amendment as, in his opinion, it was a direct negative to the Motion”.

It seems, however, that Mr. Saward had ‘got the message’ as “he wound up the debate by saying that he, and he hoped the other E.B.A. Delegates, had quite clearly in mind the general feeling of the Council” and withdrew the Proposition that he had made earlier in the meeting. “The President summed up by saying that we were in favour of the Championships being held, but in general we were against raising money by compulsion.

We have no knowledge of what actually happened at the following E.B.A. meeting, but the proposed “Capitation Fee” was obviously quietly abandoned in favour of a target that it was hoped each County Association would endeavour to fulfil. Kent’s was £2,200, and “£550 of this is due

by 31/10/70 and £1,650 by 31/10/71". A letter was sent to all affiliated clubs asking for voluntary contributions in order that the County might meet its target, and it is reported later that £404 6s. 1d. had been sent to the E.B.A. which had been donated by 42 of the Association's 200+ affiliated clubs. It would seem, therefore, that by and large the common bowler was probably quite indifferent to the forthcoming World Championships, especially if they were likely to cost him money. At the December meeting it was reported that the sum of £7,054 had been raised from Affiliated County Organisations, and that Kent's was the second highest total.

In March, 1971, the County was still struggling to achieve its target of £2,200, and the Treasurer was only able to report an accrued sum of £750.50 [decimal coinage was now the official currency] with 117 clubs failing to make a donation of any kind. It does seem a rather odd coincidence that at this time, according to an entry in the Minutes, the E.B.A. moved its offices to Bournemouth, but it was also reported that 75% of the cost was covered by a government grant. The Association decided to run a sweepstake in an effort to raise additional money, and this was obviously successful as at the A.G.M. of November, 1972, it was reported that the County had succeeded in reaching its target of £2,200 in spite of some clubs refusing to make any donation. Furthermore, it would seem that the World Championship had been a financial success because in March, 1973, the Association had a refund of £440 from the World Cup Fund. However, the Council decided that it would be impracticable to return this to clubs, and it was suggested that the Association invest it in Premium Bonds.

The Hardy brothers were reported to be quite poorly in 1970, and both refused nomination as County Representatives on the E.B.A. Council; a position they had filled for many, many years. On his retirement from Office Harry Hardy arranged for the President's medallion,

which had originally been presented by his brother Albert, to be "*brought up to date*"; and this was presented to the Association on 4th July, 1970. The death of Albert H. Hardy, was reported in February, 1971, and his brother Harry's was reported in March, 1974. Both of these gentlemen had been wholly involved in the working of the County Association for many years, and both had served as County and E.B.A. Presidents. Albert had been Secretary of the Benevolent Fund since 1943 when he had been elected after the death of Percy Snow, a term of some thirty years, and his place on this committee was taken by A. W. Gosling as an interim arrangement. He had also filled the position of County President throughout the war years from 1939 till 1944, and, with Percy Snow, had been instrumental in maintaining an active County organisation all through that period. However, we all have our five minutes of fame, and others habitually turn up to fill the empty spaces. It just seems so sad that when these names from our past are mentioned nowadays they prompt little or no reaction – perhaps this little booklet will help some of us to recognise the debt we owe to our Association's ancestors.

Mr. Gosling was not too healthy himself at this time, and had resigned the Office of County Treasurer after some ten years tenure in November, 1970. His place had been taken by Mr. E. Croucher of The Grove B.C., but Mr. Gosling was prevailed upon to act as Secretary of the Benevolent Fund until a proper successor could be appointed.

It was at a meeting held in September, 1970 that we first came across a mention of the Home Counties Bowling Association. It was reported that a meeting had taken place recently "*at which members were present from Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, Sussex, Bucks and Berks*". Arising out of this meeting "*it was suggested that a Home Counties Bowling Association should be formed of the Counties at that meeting*". At the following

Council meeting the idea was endorsed, and so Kent became a member of yet another Bowling Association.

There had been no mention in the Minutes of feminine complications since the problems of 1962, but it was obvious that they had been quietly building their organisation throughout this period. Indeed, during a discussion regarding the county Programme at a meeting of the Council held in December, 1970, the Secretary reported that *"a short time ago he had been approached as to why the Kent County Women's B. A. never play the Men's Association"*. The subject was discussed and, despite great opposition from H. B. Annand and one or two other unidentified gentlemen, the idea met with general approval. The game was played at Sevenoaks B.C. on Tuesday, 3rd August, 1971, and seems to have been a regular Fixture ever since. In 1974 there was much consternation amongst certain members of the Council when the F. & G. Committee placed before it the Proposal that *"Ladies be admitted to the 1975 Dinner"*. The Proposal, however, was not prompted by any consideration other than financial, for at an emergency F. & G. Committee Meeting held a month or so previously the Association, wearied of losing money on this event, reasoned that if members were allowed to bring their ladies more of them might attend. As a result *"it was reckoned that there were 80 to 100 Ladies present"*, and the Dinner Committee immediately suggested that in future the event should be a *"Buffet and Dance"*.

The early 70's seemed to be a period when there was a general feeling that certain aspects of the Association's organisation and administration needed tidying up and dusting off. Perhaps this was a natural result of new faces taking over positions which had been occupied by the same people for many years, and which had now been vacated through the death or illness of their long term occupants. I suspect that long term occupancies tend to create a certain 'stick-in-the-mud' way of

doing things, and new tenants want to do things their own way. At the A.G.M. of November, 1971, it was decided that *"the Office of Hon. Financial Secretary was not necessary"*, so out he went. The Benevolent Fund Chairman and acting Secretary *"submitted proposed new Constitution and Regulations"* which tidied up the manner in which it functioned, and brought it much more under the Association's sphere of influence.

Mr. D. Wilson, the Association's Hon. Editor, gave notice that he would not be seeking re-election in 1972, and a Mr. A. H. Haynes was persuaded to accept nomination. He agreed, and began his work in the summer of 1972 so that he could have the following year's Handbook ready in time. In September he reported that *"he was amazed at the amount of work done by Don Wilson in connection with the Book over the years"*, which, I suppose, in its own way was a back-handed criticism and implied that he considered much of it a waste. He went on to say that the 70 pages of advertisements *"took an enormous amount of time to get at a very small profit"*, and recommended that these be reduced. He also claimed *"deletion of the Competition Draw and the insertion of a duplicated copy of the draw applicable to the Division of circulation"* would also help to reduce the number of pages, and therefore the cost of printing. By doing this he reasoned that a projected loss of some £400 could be reduced to less than £100. So, it would seem that Mr. Haynes was determined to be a very vigorous new broom. He resigned the position in 1975 due to ill health, and was replaced by a Mr. B. Burt of Sevenoaks B.C.

In May, 1972, the recently elected Assistant Hon. Secretary, George Firmin, resigned mid-stream, as it were, and while his letter of resignation was the cause of a sudden meeting of the Emergency Committee there is no indication given as to the reason for his decision. Nevertheless, it was discussed again at the following F. & G. Committee meeting and

*“suggested details of jobs which could be done by the Asst. Hon. Secretary were made verbally by the Secretary, who mentioned that it all depended on the capabilities of this Officer as to what other duties could be handed to him”*. I somehow get the impression that Bert Cox was not too keen on having any assistance, but a Mr. G. Godsmark was elected to the Office at the following A.G.M. However, his period of duty proved to be just as fleeting, for in 1974 he did not seek re-election and was replaced by Mr. A. J. Nichol of Thames Poly B.C. who was proposed by Bert Cox *“with a view to his learning the work of Hon. Secretary”*. In March, 1973, the Hon. Treasurer had announced that he was about to move to Sussex, and *“thought it was wise to say now that he would not be available for re-election as Hon. Treasurer next November”*. He was replaced by a Mr. R. Carew.

In the midst of all this coming and going, and largely as a result of a letter sent to the Council by the Hon. Secretary, yet another sub-committee was set up to look into ways of solving the Association's administrative and economic problems. This sub-committee met, and produced a number of recommendations based on the manner in which Sussex, Essex, Middlesex and Surrey County Bowling Associations conducted their affairs. Among the proposals dealing with *“emoluments and expenses payable to the County Officers and the restructuring of fees payable by Affiliated Clubs”* were two others which were of great interest.

The first, *“that on the retirement of the present Honorary Secretary an Honorary Match Secretary shall be appointed in addition to the Honorary Secretary, and the Office of Assistant Honorary Secretary be allowed to lapse”*, was heartily endorsed at the following Council meeting, though it is intriguing to note that this was only going to happen after Bert Cox retired. The second, *“that early consideration be given to the formation of an Honorary Patrons' or*

*Honorary Vice-Presidents' Association which would be open to any member of a Kent Affiliated Club on the payment of an Annual Subscription of £1 by the 30th June each year. The object of the Association would be to raise funds for the County Administration and thus avoid frequent increases in affiliation and competition fees, which are the only main source of revenue. A list of Honorary Patrons or Honorary Vice-Presidents to be printed in the Handbook”*.

The Council agreed *“that a Patrons' Association as suggested be formed, and that a small sub-committee be formed to found same”*. It crossed my mind that many years before a Past Presidents' Association had been created in the hope that it would do just this, but I must admit there had been no mention of its activities in the Minutes for many, many years.

The Patrons' Association was eventually created in 1974, and it was agreed by the Council that *“Mr. A. F. Ames should be appointed Chairman and Mr. W. H. Turner Secretary until March, 1975, or until a General Meeting of Members can be arranged”*. It was also agreed that *“any monies should be banked by the Association Hon. Treasurer in the name of the K.C.B.A., and that he should keep a separate Account of same”*. At this time the Patrons' Association boasted a membership of 36, and had raised the sum of £44.50 for the Association. By March the membership had risen to 44, and at the time of writing is now in excess of 700.

At the Council Meeting of July, 1975, the Patrons made it clear that while they considered themselves an Association created to work with the County, they regarded themselves as autonomous and independent from it. They informed the Council that they did not want their money banked by the Association's Treasurer, but in their own bank account. The Council was also informed that *“at the A.G.M. of the Patrons' Association held recently, the Council's recommendation regarding the*

*K.C.B.A Representatives had been considered, but it was decided that no alteration to their Rules be made and that the K.C.B.A. Hon. Treasurer and Secretary were on the Committee of the Patrons' Association".* This was in reply to the Council's earlier decision that it was not up to the Patrons to decide who would be on their Committee, but that the Council would elect their own Representatives as they did on any other body.

The Patrons' Association made a regular annual donation to the funds of the County Association until, in 1995, it was deemed that the County's finances were sufficiently stable, and over that period its donations had amounted to £8,925. At that time it was considered that perhaps the County Benevolent Fund might be a more needy and worthwhile recipient, and since 1996 the Patrons have donated *in excess of £7,000* to the Fund. They have also gathered together *some £3,000* to be used by the County Association in "*assisting them to celebrate the occasion in the manner it deserves*", and it is this "*Centenary Fund*" which has financed the printing of this little booklet.

At the Council Meeting of December, 1973, it was agreed that the County should add the Unbadged Singles Championship to its sporting calendar. Moreover, it was also agreed that "*the Winner, Runner-up, and Two Losing Semi-Finalists would be awarded County Matches to qualify for their County Badge*". The offer from Mr. A. D. Saward to "*provide a Trophy for this Competition to commemorate his year as President of the E.B.A.*" [was] "*accepted with grateful thanks*".

There were great celebrations in 1974 when the Hon. Secretary "*reported having received various letters of congratulations on the Association Players winning the Middleton Cup*". Perhaps what made it all so exciting was the fact that this was the first time that the County had won the cup since 45 years previously, but the celebrations were not

quite so fervent in the years '87, '89, '91, and '93 when our players were just as successful.

Undoubtedly the principal subject under discussion, and the one that caused the greatest concern, during 1976 was the subject of the "*Proposed New County Boundaries as suggested by the E.B.A.*". It is fairly obvious from the wording, and the tenor, of the first Minuted entry on this subject that the Association was not too happy about the proposals. Indeed, the discussion, as reported, fills two complete pages in the Minute Book, and it was eventually decided "*that a working party of two members from each Division, plus the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer be formed to Investigate in depth the County Boundary Change proposals and to report back to a specially convened F&GP Committee upon the implications should we eventually approve the recommendations, in order that we may decide whether to agree now or to disagree, or alternatively to require from the E.B.A. an extension of time in which to report back to the E.B.A. on the grounds that much consultation is required as we do not propose to make an unduly hasty decision*". The punctuation, or lack of it, is Bert Cox's not mine, and it does, I believe, illustrate not a little agitation and a degree of controlled indignation.

At the following meeting the Hon. Secretary reported that the Home Counties League Secretary had called a meeting of Representatives to discuss the matter, and that "*he had spoken to other Counties and there appeared to be mammoth opposition to the proposal. Middlesex had turned them down, and Surrey were on the point of doing so, and Essex were also against them*".

The Working Party's Report was typed, and a copy circulated to every member of the K.C.B.A. Council. The Working Party was quite frank in the language it used in its report, and a copy of it was pasted in the Minute Book. I have included it is full, just as it was typed . . .

KENT COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION.

MINUTES of a MEETING of the WORKING PARTY set up by the COUNCIL to look into the proposals set out in the Report of the E.B.A., Planning Sub-Committee on New County Boundaries, held at Maidstone, on Saturday, the 3rd. April, 1976, at 11.00 a.m.

PRESENT. C.W. Cooper (Chairman); A.G. Cox; R. Carew; J.E. Duffield; R.A. McKeough; S. Price; C.H. Wright.

S. Price reported that the E.B.A.'s proposals for New County Boundaries were discussed at the A.G.M. of the Home Counties League on the 29th March, 1976, and he outlined the reaction of the Delegates to the changes proposed.

E.B.A. CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT.

The Working Party having carefully considered the foregoing and the Consultative Document on New County Boundaries drawn up by the E.B.A. Planning Sub-Committee, came to the following conclusions:

a] The proposals if adopted would appear to be in the financial interest of the E.B.A., who may qualify for additional grants from the Sports Council.

b] Neither the Counties nor the Affiliated Clubs would derive any direct financial benefit if the proposals were adopted.

c] The reasons given for the proposed change in the Kent County Boundaries are illogical.

d] The advantages if any to the Counties by the adoption of the proposed changes, would be limited and would not justify the upset involved.

RECOMMENDATION.

In the circumstances and in the light of the information available the Working Party unanimously agreed to recommend that the proposals set out in the Report of the E.B.A. Planning Sub-Committee on New County Boundaries be 'Rejected'. It was also recommended that in order to save time and the expense of calling a Special Meeting of the Council, that a copy of this report be sent to each Council Delegate for his observations.

A copy of the this report was sent to each member of the Council, with the instruction that *"notification of disagreement to be received by 8th May, no reply being assumed that they accept recommendations of the Working Party"*.

At the following Council Meeting the President reported that *"only three replies of disagreement had been received"*. On receiving this information the members present expressed *"surprise that the Hon. Sec. had not sent in Kent's reply to the proposal and [he] was requested to do so as quickly as possible"*. The three dissenters were not named in the Minutes, but *"Mr. A. D. Saward did stress very strongly that nothing silly should be included in the reply, and he was assured on this point"*.

At the Council Meeting of 2nd July, 1976, a Mr. J. West appeared to be just a trifle peeved that *"the views of Messrs. A. D. Saward and J. Weller expressed at the previous F. & G.P. Committee meeting did not appear in the Minutes"* and that *"all Clubs had not been approached on the matter"*. The Hon. Secretary oiled the waters by stating *"that the E.B.A. had in their original document referred specially to consideration by the Councils of the Associations, and all members of the Council had been supplied with a copy"*. I imagine that this little entry gives just a hint, perhaps, of whom the three dissenters might have been. Mr. Saward *"referred to the reply as sent in on behalf of the Association by the Hon. Secretary, and congratulated him on the reply as sent"*. From his remarks it would seem that Kent's had been quite a dignified and diplomatic letter, unlike some of the more forthright ones sent by other Counties. Nothing further was reported on this subject until the A.G.M. in November, when, during his *"very full report on E.B.A. activities, etc."* Mr. J. Weller quietly slipped in the information that with regard to the *"County Proposed New Boundaries the E.B.A. have decided to drop consideration of same for three years"*. I have not found another subject in the Minutes which created such an electrifying response from the Council – it was, in places, rather like reading an account of the Watt Tyler Rebellion.

The County's financial insecurity caused great anxiety to the Association

during the latter part of the 1970's, and the situation became so grave in 1980 that the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. R. Carew, was extremely forthright in his annual report to the September meeting of the F. & G. Committee. He estimated that he "*would finish the year with balance of £253.64, but pointed out that no more money comes in till next January and in the meantime he had to pay Grants to Officers of £720. He felt that we must increase our Subscriptions apart from any other economies*", and considered that "*our aim should be to finish with £1,000 in the bank to meet the Grants to members*". Oddly, the meeting seemed quite unmoved by his appeal, and moved on to the next business without any further discussion.

It comes as little surprise to find that a meeting of the Emergency Committee was called on 21st October, 1980, "*to make temporary arrangements to deal with Association Finances owing to the death of Mr. Roland Carew*". The situation was made even more difficult when the Committee discovered that their money was locked securely in the bank's coffers because "*at the moment the Bank had only one signature now to sign cheques instead of two*". It was pointed out that "*according to the Rules the Bank should have four signatures, but the Hon. Secretary stated that this had never been acted upon*". You can imagine the consternation that this little item of information caused, and, as well as thinking it desirable that Bert Cox deal with the Finances temporarily, he was told to submit the signatures of T. H. Brown and S. J. King to the Bank so that there were at least three people able to sign cheques in future.

Those attending the 1980 A.G.M. were not happy to be told that there was an excess of Expenditure over Income of £660, and it was generally felt that "*Income should go up in accordance with running costs*". The situation was reported to be even worse at the Council Meeting of 13th December, when the Secretary mentioned that "*he had had to loan the*

*Association £900*" to help pay the Dinner and October Accounts and "*he had been unable to draw Petty Cash since 1st September as it was not available, and that with Postage and other Expenses there was another £350 due to him*". Roland Carew had identified the real problems as being the Year Book and the Annual Dinner, both of which had made considerable annual losses over a long period of time, and after some deliberations the Council finally decided that something must be done to put the matter to rights. The new acting Hon. Treasurer appointed at the same meeting, charged with the duty of solving the Association's problems was John Canham, though he had to wait to be officially elected at the next A.G.M.

The Association eventually solved the problem of the Year Book by making it obligatory to purchase a copy as a condition of entering County Competitions; and by separating the Dinner from the A.G.M. by holding the two events on different dates, and making the Annual Dinner a Dinner/Dance to which the ladies were invited. In his 1981 Report the Hon. Secretary was able to report that the new Dinner/Dance "*proved to be very popular and was supported by just over 400 Members and Guests*". The changes made in the County's financial affairs proved to be successful, for the Income/Expenditure Account of 1982 shows an Excess of Income over Expenditure of some £2,147 – and no doubt every one breathed a sigh of relief.

Another problem during this period was the appearance on to the scene of the 'Professional' bowler. This was first mentioned in the Minutes of a F. & G. Committee meeting held in February, 1980. The matter was discussed and, while some members present disagreed passionately with the idea of Professionals in the sport, it was decided that it was really a matter for the E.B.A. which decided that bowls should "*go open*". One gentleman was most annoyed at this decision, stating that "*Clubs formed the*

*County Associations and County Associations formed the National Association*” and considered that the E.B.A. should take more heed of the County Associations when dictating policy. The 1980 A.G.M. was not too happy with the E.B.A.’s decision either, but decided that *“it would only affect a few bowlers who are good enough to take something out of it”*. It is, perhaps, just as well that those attending that meeting were not blessed with second sight, for I am sure that they would have been apoplectic if they could have foreseen the pyjama clad professionals who are so entertaining to watch nowadays.

1980 saw a variation on the game of Musical Chairs when certain of the County’s Officers indicated that they would prefer other positions to the ones they already had. It seemed to be sparked off by the removal of the Assistant Hon. Secretary, Alan Nichol, to the Folkestone area and his decision not to seek re-election at the following A.G.M. In consequence a new editor, Mr. Lou Huggins, was elected for the Year Book, Mr. B. Burt moved from Editor to Publicity Officer and the old Publicity Officer, Mr. Gordon Bennett, replaced Alan Nichol as Assistant Hon. Secretary. He himself did not seek re-election in 1984, and was replaced by a Mr. E. Hay.

At the F. & G. Committee meeting of February, 1981 a *“Mr. R. T. Dunk stated it was felt by some members that a Chairman be elected for Council Meetings, in view of the confusion, etc., which sometimes arises at Council Meetings in particular”*. So it would appear that the incoming Presidents were not always sufficiently adept in their man management skills, and a move was afoot to have an elected Chairman once more.

In the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21st September, 1981, the Hon. Sec. stated that *“at the next meeting they would be electing a Chairman, and spoke in favour of an independent Chairman, and not the President, and gave*

*various reasons for same and asked for consideration be given to same before the next meeting”*. There is no indication given of the *“various reasons for same”*. However, at the Council Meeting of 12th December, 1981, when Mr. A. H. Hardy was about to ask for nominations for the post of Chairman, *“the President rose to say that before that was taken he wished to address the Council”*. His address, pasted into the Minute Book, was as follows...

As your President. I claim your Indulgence in addressing the Council.

The view has been expressed that an independent Chairman and not the President be elected as Chairman of the Council on the grounds of the imperfections of some Past Presidents and on the grounds of continuity, but these comments do not apply to me.

It has been the practice for some time for the President to be elected Chairman of the Council and I therefore consider it my duty to offer myself for election as your Chairman.

What are the duties of a Chairman? The primary duties, among others, are to preserve order and to take care that the proceedings are conducted in a proper manner. He must have knowledge of the conduct and proceedings of Meetings and in particular of the rules governing the Body over which he presides. An ideal Chairman will, as far as possible, emulate the Speaker of the House of Commons.

On the grounds of efficiency I propose to have a meeting with the Secretary prior to every Council Meeting in order to discuss matters which will appear on the Agenda. On the grounds of continuity I accept the view of our Secretary and am prepared, if it is the wish of the Council, to offer myself for re-election.

I feel that the election of a Chairman should, if possible, be absolutely unanimous since his position will be greatly strengthened if he possesses the respect and support of the members.

As your President I am quietly

confident that I shall have your wholehearted support.

FROM LITTLE ACORNS

... and, perhaps after a moment or two of embarrassed shuffling, *“Mr. A. G. Brighton President was duly elected to the Chair on the Proposition of Mr. J. Weller Seconded by Mr. A. C. Harris”*.

The issue did not entirely go away for at the Council Meeting of 11th December, 1982, a certain *“Mr. Wright mentioned the question of Chairmanship of the Association, raised at the A.G.M. and to be considered by the Administration Committee, and that he thought someone wanted to speak”*. I wonder if the Mr. Madden who rose to speak was firing the bullets given to him by another member, or whether he was too shy to stand by himself but he *“stated he was in favour of considering this question for Committees as well as Council Meetings. He stated that he thought the President should foster the Good of Bowls and enjoy his term of Office, and leave the administration worries to the Chairman”*. You may have noticed that the punctuation is almost perfect.

The matter was finally resolved at the A.G.M. of 1983, when the County's Regulations were amended thus – *“That a member of the Council, other than the President, the Senior Vice-President or the Junior Vice-President, be elected annually to serve as Chairman of the Council and also as the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the Emergency Committee, the Selection Committee and the Administrative Committee, and that another member of the Council other than the President, the Senior Vice-President or the Junior Vice-President, shall be elected annually to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Council and of the Finance Sub-Committee, the Dinner Committee and the Sponsorship Committee shall be elected annually by the members of these Committees respectively”*.

The problem with writing about certain subjects in the County's past is that often the Minutes do not record anything other than an obtuse reference to them. The Hon. Secretary does, at times, seem averse to stating quite clearly for example that 'the rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain' and prefers an oblique reference to the fact that if a Spaniard desires to experience a spring shower it would be as well for him to move to one of the flatter areas of the country

So it was quite interesting to find that at the December 1981 Council meeting there is another mention of the Past Presidents' Association and a special blazer badge. *“The Hon. Sec. reported he had been handed Presidents Special Blazer Badges by the Hon. Secretary Kent PP&AMBA. H. Kebble Taylor, Esq., covering the years 1984 to 1990 inclusive and he considered it was not his job to hold and sell these, which had been ordered by the Kent PP&AMBA Assoc. He stated it was a matter for that Association to deal with, the Meeting agreed that if the Hon. Sec. did not wish to deal with these Blazer Badges, they should be handed back to the Kent PP&AMBA to deal with.*

The entry is taken from the Minutes of the Council dated Saturday, 12th December, 1981, and the punctuation is Bert's, not mine. I have learned, whilst reading these Minutes, that if the English structure goes a bit haywire it is a sign of Bert being a trifle miffed.

I found it quite intriguing that there was no indication of the design of this *“Special Blazer Badge”* and the fact that the Council appeared quite happy to disown it, so, as there is little information recorded on the subject, I must rely on the information I have been able to scrape together from the recollections of those who were there at the time. It seems that the Association was, with the aid of Lord Cornwallis, given permission to use the Lord Lieutenant's coat of arms as a

special County badge, with the proviso that it would only be worn by the County Presidents. It appears that the Past Presidents' Association actually arranged for the supply of these badges, although there is evidence that the County Association actually paid for them. However, Bert Cox, the County Hon. Secretary, remained adamant that the circular white horse badge should remain the official County insignia, and appeared to regard the coat of arms badge as a Presidential conceit. Thereafter, at the A.G.M. when the incoming President had received his white horse badge and so on from the outgoing President he was presented with his coat of arms badge by a member of the Past President's Association.

I thought that it would be wise to obtain a little support for this tale so I had a long chat with Gordon Hancock. Gordon is, at the time of writing, our longest surviving County President having been elected to that position in 1978. He tells me that this special coat of arms badge was presented to him free of charge by the Past Presidents' Association, though he had to wear the County's round one whenever he was present, or officiating, at an official County or E.B.A. function. This being the case it might explain why Bert Cox wanted nothing to do with them; though it doesn't explain why they were free of charge in 1978, yet needed to be purchased in 1981 and were later presented to incoming Presidents as part of their normal regalia.

The acrimonious issue was finally resolved at the Council meeting of 29th November, 2003, when Alan Chase raised the matter and Proposed that this coat of arms badge become the official blazer badge of the County President; though it seems that the President's shirt and sweater will still display the round badge and white horse emblem. There was little discussion, to follow Alan's presentation; indeed the members present appeared not to understand what all the fuss was about, and the Proposition was carried.

The Council often got itself into a tizzy when the subject of County Badges was under discussion, and was clearly split between those who firmly believed that only members who had won a badge in mortal combat were entitled to wear one while others, perhaps appeared to be more liberal in their outlook. Indeed, this latter preference was followed at a meeting held on 16th March, 1985, when the Council submitted the Proposal that *"a County Badge be issued to Non Badged Officers with 4 years service in Office. It was Proposed by N. Evenden and Seconded by Mr. S. King that a New Type of Officer's Badge be issued."* The Motion was carried and adopted as an F. & G. Committee Proposal for the A.G.M. by 24 votes for and 11 against. It was then *"Proposed by A. J. Nichol, and Seconded by A. C. Harris, that any Life Member of the K.C.B.A. who is not Badged, qualifies for a K.C.B.A. Blazer Badge for Services Rendered"*. This too was passed by the Council Meeting, but with no being one recorded as voting against the Motion.

In October, 1983, *"the Hon. Secretary asked if the Meeting would consider a change of meeting place. He stated that the Maidstone B.C. were offering the use of their Pavilion"*. Apparently, the cost of hire would be only £50 to cover all meetings for the year, and would be something like £100 less than the charge levied by the Royal Star Hotel. The Finance and General Purposes Committee used the Maidstone facilities for the first time on Tuesday, 29th May, 1984, and *"Mr. P.B.T. Burbidge Proposed and Mr. J. Madgewick Seconded that it is with regret that whilst it was alright for F. & G.P. Meetings it was not big enough for Council Meetings, and the Meeting cannot recommend it to the Council"*. The Royal Star Hotel closed in December, 1984, and the Association moved all of its events to The Great Danes Hotel.

There was great consternation at the F. & G. Committee Meeting of Tuesday, 29th May, 1984, when Bert Cox *"reported*

*details leading up to the loss of the Association Flag, and the efforts which had been made to find same without any success". I would not have thought it a simple matter to mislay something quite as bulky as the Association's flag, but someone managed to leave it somewhere and forgot when it was last used. However, "one of our Members had offered to buy the Association a new Flag, and had given instructions for the purchase to be proceeded with". The donor chose to remain anonymous, but was thanked anyway for his generous gift. The missing item was discovered in the Reception Department of the Star Hotel just a month or so later. The Hotel "offered £50 for the responsibility of the loss". The Association grumbled a bit, and the Hotel increased their offer of compensation to £100. This was sufficient for the Association to purchase a special bag to contain it, and give a little back to the anonymous donor who had spent £200 on the new Flag.*

In December, 1985, Mr. H. Kebble Taylor was quite concerned with the cost of presenting each incoming President with his own gold medal, which would be his to keep in recognition of his elevation to Office. He Proposed *"that for the future when the supply of Presidents' Medals in hand or already on order was exhausted, consideration should be given to presenting the current President with a Gold Medal and this should be handed down from President to President. The retiring President should then be Presented with a replica medal made of Brass Metal"*. This Minute was queried by Mr. Kebble Taylor at the following Council Meeting, and he requested that it be altered to conform with what he had Proposed. Therefore the words *"Brass Metal"* were altered to read *"Baser Metal"*, and everybody was satisfied.

At this time it seemed that the Association was somewhat concerned at the offhand attitude of the Great Danes Hotel regarding its meeting arrangements, and discussed the offer of a permanent

home given by both Rochester and Maidstone Clubs. It agreed to hold its future meetings alternately at both Clubs, though the Maidstone venue was not to be available until after May, 1987, when its new pavilion would be completed.

Considerable changes seem to have been made in the Association's administration during 1986, and the explanation is found in an interesting little item reported in the Minutes of the Council held on Saturday, 11th October. You may remember reading earlier in this little booklet that *"an Honorary Match Secretary shall be appointed in addition to the Honorary Secretary, and the Office of Assistant Honorary Secretary be allowed to lapse"*. The Minute reads thus . . .

*"RE-SECRETARIAT. The President quoted that five officers of the K.C.B.A met at Worthing to discuss the future of the Association. It was agreed by all officers attending that a Secretariat be adopted into the Association, this being:*

- 1. County Secretary*
- 2. Match and Competition Secretary*
- 3. Minute Secretary*

*A paper showing the structure of the K.C.B.A Secretariat was issued to all members attending the Council Meeting. The President said that the 3 senior officers had a meeting with the Hon. Sec. regarding the matter which he quoted that he agreed in principle and would accept the change.*

*This was discussed by the Council Members attending and it was proposed by Mr. L. Godley and seconded by Mr. B. Burt that the Secretariat structure be adopted. This was put to a vote and was C/U".*

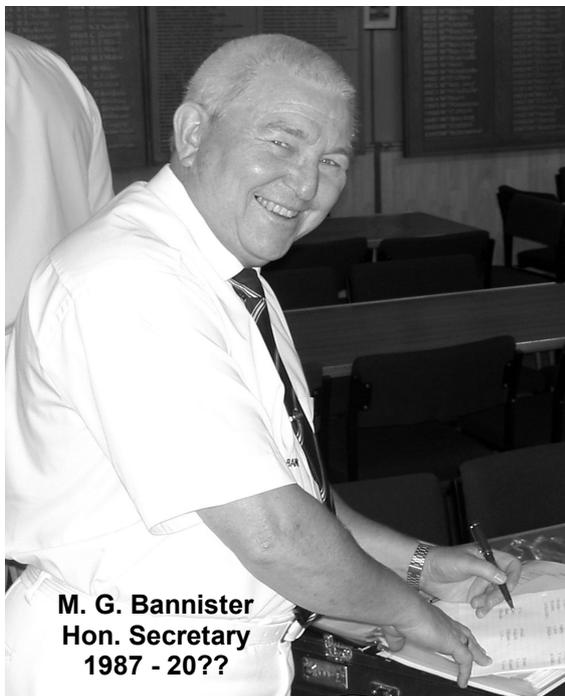
. . . although it had been agreed in 1973 that this was supposed to happen only *"on the retirement of the present Honorary Secretary"*.

There is no indication given for this meeting being held, and the information I have been able to obtain has been gleaned from the recollections of one member who

was present on the occasion. Apparently Bert Cox, the County Hon. Secretary, was in very poor health at that time, and in the circumstances it was deemed necessary that some effort should be made to arrange a successor as a matter of urgency. Those present at the meeting held in 1986 were the President Les Brand, the Senior Vice President Phil Burbidge, the Junior Vice President Sid King, the Immediate Past President Jim Madgewick and the County Chairman George Firmin, and between them they decided that Mick Bannister was the ideal person to take over the role of acting County Hon. Secretary.

At the A.G.M. on Thursday, 13th November E. Hay was elected Match and Competition Secretary, and A. Nichol the Hon. Minute Secretary.

The Minutes of this F. & G. Meeting record that the Chairman, George Firmin, had received *"a letter from A. G. Cox offering his resignation after 42 years in Office. The Chairman spoke of having sent a suitable reply, and that it was the end of an era in the bowls world of Kent"*. He also reported *"of the meeting of the Emergency Committee and the appointing by that Committee of M. Bannister as Acting County Secretary"*, though the Minutes of



**M. G. Bannister**  
**Hon. Secretary**  
**1987 - 20??**



**A. G. [Bert] Cox**  
**Hon. Secretary 1945 - 1987**

the Emergency Committee *"were before this meeting for information only"*.

I have been given to understand by some people that Bert Cox was never collectively loved as a person by all of those with whom he had dealings, but he must surely have been universally respected for the work he did as Honorary County Secretary for some 42 years. As the Chairman had reported, it was truly the end of an era extending from 1945 till 1987, and a time which saw great changes in the way bowling was administered and played throughout the world.

I must admit to having been especially careful in working specifically from the County's recorded Minutes whilst writing this part of the County History, as many of the people written about are still with us at the time of writing; indeed several of them are even now serving Officers of the Association. However, I can assure them that what is written here is, with two exceptions, what is really reported as having happened, even though their memories may be somewhat different.

# Changing Times

*From 1987 till 2011*

**I**t would appear that the Acting Hon. County Secretary took up his duties with considerable aplomb, and the Minutes immediately following the resignation of Bert Cox demonstrated an almost seamless transition from one to the other. Which only goes to show that nobody, no matter how efficient and long-lasting they may be, is really indispensable when the crunch comes.

However, it is fairly obvious that the F. & G. considered that the faithful service of Bert Cox should be marked in some way for the Committee Minutes of 1st June, 1987, report that the grant to him should be paid in full; though John Canham *“felt that it would be a bad policy to start paying pensions”*. Nevertheless, some members of the Finance Committee obviously believed that Bert’s name should be perpetuated for future Kentish bowlers, and to this end *“E. May Proposed that in 1988 the Gill Cup [should] be known as the ‘Bert Cox Cup or Trophy’. This was Seconded by M. Bannister, and carried to be put before the next Council Meeting”*.

The Council debated the matter at its next meeting and it was Mr. H. Keble Taylor who declared that he believed *“this was wrong in deference to Mr. Gill who had donated the Gill Cup”*. Nevertheless, *“it was then proposed by W. Turner and seconded by L. Huggins that from 1988 the Trophy be known as the ‘Bert Cox Cup’. This was carried with 2 against”*. Until I read these Minutes I never did understand why the Gill Cup should change its name to the Bert Cox Cup, but now I, and

perhaps all of you who read this little book, will know the reason why. At the time of writing, Norman Wright, our Honorary Competition and Match Secretary, refers to it as the ‘Bert Cox Memorial [Gill] Cup Trophy’. However, it does seem a trifle unfair to Mr. Gill who, in collaboration with Captain R. G. Colquhoun, had first offered this Trophy in 1922 for a County Inter-Club Competition, for the Association to walk off with it and use it as a tribute to someone else.

It is nice to know that at least two members of the Council thought the same. It is not recorded in the Minutes, but I have been told that permission to reassign the Gill Cup to the Bert Cox Cup was given by the surviving members of the Gill family; though I am also told permission was rather tardily sought after the event, and was granted on the understanding that Mr. Gill’s name should appear somewhere on the cup.

At the Council Meeting held on 12th December, 1987, it was agreed that *“the Competition and match Secretary make enquiries about filling the engraving on the Gill Cup and having it re-engraved”*. At the Council Meeting held on 26th March, 1988, it was reported that this work would cost an estimated £251, and *“it was proposed by P. Burbidge and seconded by L. Godley that the estimate be accepted and the work carried out on the cup”*. The Treasurer reported that the cost of this re-engraving would be covered by the increased entry fees, and so, of course, the Proposition was carried unanimously.

I have never had the good fortune to see the trophy but I understand that the engraving reads thus :

Bert Cox Cup  
Kent County Bowling Association  
Honorary County Secretary  
1945 – 1987  
42 Years Loyal Service.

However, somewhere else it carries a reference to the name of its original donor and a mention of the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men, he being Secretary of that Association when he originally donated the trophy.

Sadly Bert Cox's death was reported in the F. & G. Minutes of the 13th February, 1989, and his epoch was well and truly closed. At the same meeting it was agreed, on a Proposition by E. Hay, that the 'Bert Cox Cup' should in future be called the 'Bert Cox Memorial Cup', and the matter was agreed by the members present. It just shows how transient our little lives are, for the County has carried on since with barely a mention of him.

However, the Matter had not yet been completely laid to rest, because at the Council meeting held on 18th March, 1989, *"Mr. Keble Taylor spoke of being the only one to vote against the change of name for the Gill Cup. He still felt that it was a disservice to the late Mr. Gill. E. Hay spoke of the name Gill still being on the Cup. After a discussion it was agreed that the Cup be referred to as 'The Bert Cox Memorial Cup [Gill Cup]'*, though it seems that this name has now been neatened to that by which we know it today. I must say, though, that it does seem a trifle mean of the County not to have set up a special Cox Memorial Competition of sorts, rather than recycle one that was already going along quite nicely anyway. It was fairly obvious that M. Keble Taylor intended to keep a close eye on things pertaining to this trophy, for some four years later he complained that it *"seemed to be referred to as the Bert Cox Cup when it should be*

*called the Bert Cox Memorial Gill Cup in all competitions and programmes"*. He certainly knew how to chew over old bones, didn't he.

The Council's *"Recommendations of Officers for 1987/88"*, which was scheduled to be presented to the members at the 1987 A.G.M., caused more than a little excitement when it appeared that Alan Nichol was nominated as a challenger to Mick Bannister for the vacant post of County Secretary. Mick is reported to have *"addressed the Meeting and spoke of doing the job over the past months and felt that he had done a good job"*, while *"A. Nichol then addressed the Meeting regarding his qualifications to do the job of Secretary"*.

I suppose it is comforting to know that not all of the Council's recommendations were agreed 'on the nod' as it were, and that some of them did result in a difference of opinion; but the response of *"L. Brand, the Immediate past President [who] addressed the meeting [and] stated that he was devastated that anyone should have the saucy or gall to stand against M. Bannister who had done a good job after taking on the job after A. G. Cox had resigned"* was probably the most powerful and straight-talking statement I had read in the Minutes up to this point. Needless to say, Mick was elected, and, at the time of writing, seems to have settled into the job very well.

The thrills were not quite over yet, however, as there were two candidates nominated for the position of Minute Secretary; A. Nichol, proposed by H. Keble Taylor and seconded by G. Chapman and P. Mill, proposed by L. Brand. Mr. Brand was obviously in a disapproving and judgmental mood, for in his Proposition he stated that *"A. Nichol had shown disloyalty to the County and was not fit to hold office"*. Quite what Alan had done to upset Mr. Brand was never made clear, but *"before the nomination could be seconded P. Mill declined the nomination"*.

Whatever had happened to bring about this hullabaloo is lost in the mists of time and man's indeterminate memory, but it roused Mr. N. Evenden to speak "*of politics creeping into Bowls and County affairs and he felt that the attack on A. Nichol by the Immediate Past President was wrong. The fact that Alan Nichol was still willing to stand as Minute Secretary showed the measure of the man*". Alan remained as Minute Secretary until November, 1996, when he decided not to seek re-election and was replaced by Barry Cook.

However, all the bother seems to have blown-over by the December Council Meeting, when it was reported that "*L. Brand spoke of withdrawing his remarks made about Alan Nichol and apologised unreservedly. This was accepted by Alan Nichol who stated that his loyalty was 100% behind the Secretary, M. Bannister*". So perhaps it was an attack of liver in the first instance, but quite what Norman Evenden meant by "*politics creeping into Bowls and County affairs*" was never clarified; however, a little more of the same would certainly bring a touch more sparkle into our present Council Meetings.

George Firmin stood down as County Chairman at the A.G.M. of November, 1988, having held that Office for five years, and P. Burbidge was elected as Chairman. George had been actively involved with the County's affairs since 1966, and was elected the Association's first Assistant Secretary in 1968. He resigned that position in 1972, but later became Chairman in 1983 and County President in 1984. He was our Representative to the E.B.A. for many years, and was still a very active member of their administration until his death in May, 2004. George was always a gentleman, and I thought him to be typical of those chaps who sat down together and created the K.C.B.A. way back in 1911. He will be sorely missed.

A very interesting little item caught my eye in the Minutes of 13th February,

1989. "*E. Hay then spoke of the matches that the Council play against the Indoor Clubs and the difficulty in getting out six rinks and a general lack of support. He proposed that the Council take a maximum of six matches and the Patrons take six and this would be bi-annually. After a discussion it was Proposed by the President and Seconded by B. Burt that the matches be shared with the Patrons to a maximum of 8*". It seems that this arrangement did not eradicate the County's problems with winter bowling, for in October, 1990, E. Hay finally managed to persuade the Council to withdraw from its winter programme and it was left to the Patrons to carry on alone.

It was also in 1990 that the Association finally established Maidstone B.C. officially as its Headquarters, and at the F. & G. Meeting of February, 1990, G. Chapman stated that he "*felt that this should be made official for all to see by something like a plaque*". It was reported in the Minutes of the May meeting that the "*Plaque for Maidstone Bowling Club as K.C.B.A., H.Q. is now in place over the bar*."

If you have stayed steadfast to me so far you will no doubt remember that at a meeting held on 16th March, 1985, the Council submitted the Proposal that "*a County Badge be issued to Non Badged Officers with 4 years service in Office. It was Proposed by N. Evenden and Seconded by Mr. S. King that a New Type of Officer's Badge be issued*". The Motion was carried and adopted with 24 votes for and 11 against. It was then "*Proposed by A. J. Nichol, and Seconded by A. C. Harris, that any Life Member of the K.C.B.A. who is not Badged, qualifies for a K.C.B.A. Blazer Badge for Services Rendered*". This too was passed by the Council Meeting, with no votes being recorded against the Motion.

Well, you can imagine my surprise when in the Council meeting of the 17th March, 1990, I found the following – "*D. Head asked if a County Badge was*

*awarded with Life Membership and it was pointed out that it was not*, even though the award had been agreed some five years previously. Then *“A. Nichol spoke of making a Life member with the award of a scroll but no badge and thus a person made a Life Member could not play for the County that had so honoured him. It was agreed to discuss the matter further”*. And, indeed it was in ‘Matters Arising’ at the next F. & G. meeting when after discussion *“the view was taken that all persons should win badges [and] it was Proposed by S. King and Seconded by J. Madgewick that badges must be won. Unanimous vote in favour”*.

You might have thought that the matter was settled in 1985, but it seems you would have been mistaken; you might even be excused for thinking that the issue had now been finally laid to rest at this particular F. & G. meeting, but you would be wrong once more; for at the next Council meeting, as the result of a letter being received from Division 2, the subject was raised yet again. The result of a quite prolonged, and somewhat passionate, discussion was that the Council supported the Proposal from Division 2 that *“when a person is made a Life Member he should be awarded his County Badge”*. Of course I haven’t yet reached the end of the Century’s Minutes, so we might still be wrong in our assumption.

At the same meeting we once again find reference to *“lady bowlers in Club management. The Chairman, P.B.T. Burbidge, stated that this was a matter for Clubs. Ladies cannot be on the Council or delegates to the Council”*. So, it would seem that there had been a softening in the K.C.B.A.’s attitude to females and Club Management, but nothing of this had been reported in the Association’s meetings in the interim. However, in the Minutes of the A.G.M. held on 14th November, 1991, we discover that, for some unexplained reason, there is nationally a general softening of the Bowling world’s attitude to female participation when *“The Chairman [P. Burbidge] spoke of the Sports Council*

*wanting the E.B.A. and the E.I.B.A. and the Ladies to join together.”* It should be noted that there was no indication of any objections being voiced by the members present, so perhaps that thin end of the wedge, which had been inserted so many years earlier, had begun to have an effect. In the event the K.C.B.A. and the K.C.I.B.A. held the inaugural meeting of their Joint Sub-Committee on Saturday, 6th June, 1991, and in his Report the Hon. Secretary tells us that it *“was most constructive and hopefully signals the start of even closer liaison between the two Associations”*. It seems that this faith was short-lived, for in October, 1994, after several years of inaction, it was agreed that the Joint Sub-Committee was disbanded and replaced by *“a liaison between the Secretaries”*. There was, however, no mention of any closer involvement with the Ladies.

At the April F. & G. meeting the Secretary *“spoke of a letter from the E.B.A. on the subject of Mixed Bowls.”* It seemed that a liaison group had been formed to meet twice a year to discuss Mixed Bowls and its impact. They were asking for opinions from Counties, and to what level it exists in the County. He was instructed to send a copy of this letter to Club Secretaries to seek relevant information. At the following meeting he reported a somewhat disappointing *“25% response from Clubs on the subject of Mixed Bowls”*. The members present were told to go back to their Clubs in an effort to provide the Secretary with a much improved reaction to pass on to the E.B.A.

It would appear that the Council was at this time going through one of its regular ‘who does what and is it that important anyway’ periods, as the Minutes include mention of all sorts of niggling little conflicts. A typical one was raised by Mr. R. Gill who *“spoke of the unseemly jockeying for position at the Top Table at meetings – who should sit there? After a discussion it was agreed that the Secretary should deal with this matter*

*diplomatically*". One might wonder how he was going to "deal with [the] matter diplomatically" when the very people doing the "jockeying" were actually present at the time.

The hoary old question of whether the Association should have an elected Chairman was raised once again in March, 1993, when J. Canham Proposed that "all reference to the Offices of Chairman and Vice-Chairman is deleted from the Rules of the County, and that the President of the year be called upon to Chair all future meetings of the K.C.B.A. at which he is present". The Proposition was Seconded by E. Hay [who was still smarting from a skirmish with another Council member, N. Evenden], and the recommendation that this be placed before the A.G.M. was carried by 36 for to 14 against.

However, at the following Council Meeting G. Firmin spoke quite passionately against what he referred to as "a retrograde step". The report of the debate which followed was undoubtedly one of the best I had so far read in the Association's Minutes, and I make no apology for reporting it in its entirety . . . "G. Firmin felt that not continuing with the office of Chairman was a retrograde step. He spoke of 1984 when he held both offices and found it difficult and also that it took away a lot of the pleasure of being President. He spoke of the need of continuity with the Secretary over a 5 year period. A. Hardy spoke of enjoying doing both jobs when he had held office. The Chairman, P. Burbidge, spoke of agreeing with G. Firmin but felt that the matter should be one for the A.G.M. to decide. He spoke of the Secretary agreeing with him and G. Firmin for the sake of continuity. J. Canham stated that he put forward the move to do away with the office of Chairman and still believed that it was an office that was not needed when the County had a good President. If a particular President did not wish to Chair meetings then a Chairman could be elected. P. Burbidge spoke of the office of

*President being the highest office the County can bestow or a person. The office of Chairman provides continuity which is the watchword and over the last 10 years himself and G. Firmin had held the office. G. Firmin had been a first class Chairman and I will have to be judged by my peers. In retiring he stated that he had given great thought to a successor and had found one in G. Chapman and he recommended that the office of Chairman be continued. B. Burt stated that he would consider it a personal slight not to chair meetings when he was President. N. Evenden spoke of 'knowing Presidents who could not Chair a meeting and also spoke of the need for continuity with a separate Chairman who knew the constitution and regulations. The matter was then referred to the A.G.M. with a free vote*".

The various protagonists repeated their arguments to the members present at the A.G.M., and eventually the delegates decided to retain the Office of Chairman with 38 votes for the retention and 26 for its abolition. It was at this meeting that Geoff Chapman was elected into the Office of County Chairman.

At the same meeting the members present discussed the Resolution that the "Secretary of the Benevolent Fund be an Officer of Association". There was some disagreement from Mr. G. Ives who considered that "the Benevolent Fund was separate from the County as a Registered Charity, [and] its function was separate from the K.C.B.A.". Obviously those present could not quite see the point of his argument, for they voted 40 to 25 in support of the Resolution.

It seemed that the wind of change was blowing quite strongly at this time, for the Treasurer, John Canham, "stated that he thought the time had come for the Association to have professional auditors to audit the accounts." The Association appeared to have been getting along just fine with the services of a couple of well-meaning amateurs for some 82 years, but

*"It was agreed that this be discussed at the next Council meeting".*

There was no evidence that the subject was discussed at any of the meetings held during the year, and when it was raised again by N. Chase at the following A.G.M. *"the Treasurer spoke of there being no change this year, but the matter would remain on the Agenda so to speak for future years. He spoke of the fee being in the region of £500".* This would seem to indicate that the Association's financial position was stronger in 1994 than it had been in the past, and certainly more sound than in the days when the likes of Percy Snow had to bail it out.

In the meanwhile the Association gratefully accepted the service of its unpaid volunteers, Keble Taylor and J. Weller, although the Minutes of the 1996 A.G.M. report that *the Hon. Treasurer, J. Canham, stated that he felt happier now that the Association has a professional auditor Mr. G. C. Curtis, F.C.A."*

Ernie Hay, the Association's Hon. Match and Competition Secretary, was reported to be quite poorly in 1996, and had decided not to seek re-election at the next A.G.M.; a Post he had held for some 14 years. During the F. & G. meeting of 21st July, 1996, the work involved in that job was discussed and it seemed that members present *"felt that this would be a good time to look at the possibility of splitting the Post as it is too much to expect from one person"*.

The responsibility for administering the President and Council's matches had already been siphoned off, and was now the responsibility of the Hon. Secretary. Norman Wright was elected to the vacancy at the A.G.M. held in November, 1996.

The Minutes of the 1966 A.G.M. also show that there was no nomination for the Junior Vice-Presidency, and it seems that the Council decided to go ahead without one as *"it was decided not to demean this position by canvassing for a candidate"*.

However, in October, 1997, it was reported in the Council minutes that there were no less than seven candidates prepared to join in the mêlée to fill the two vacant Vice-President offices.

At the same meeting it seems that the natives were restless, and the general discontent of the membership regarding the E.B.A.'s new affiliation terms was made obvious by the members present. There seemed to be a deep feeling that the E.B.A. intended to use certain information being demanded from clubs for their own devious purposes.

*"A Kemp of Ashford Rail, referred to the EBA's request for the registration of all bowlers. The Hon Secretary, M Bannister, outlined correspondence he had received from the EBA describing the benefits of the new EBA Card Scheme, and how it could benefit both clubs and individual bowlers. V Steeple, also Ashford Rail, stated that this was not what they were referring to. He went on to refer to the agenda for the 1996 EBA AGM regarding affiliation terms, which now require names and addresses together with the date of birth of all affiliated bowlers. They need to know what would happen to those clubs who do not provide this information. Will they be refused affiliation rights? and if so, does this mean they will not be eligible for affiliation to the KCBA?"*

*"A Mersh referred to his club which has a membership of approximately 1200 who are not bowlers". "After some discussion it was agreed on a show of hands, that there was a general feeling of not wanting to go down this route"*.

The Secretary's Report, presented in 1997, mentions the fact that Doug Head, Benevolent Fund Secretary, had decided to stand down from the position. Mick Bannister's tribute to him is worth reading in full - *"I cannot end this piece on the Benevolent Fund without paying tribute to Doug Head. He reckons that anno domini has caught up with him and he is standing*

down after 12 years in office. During this time, Doug has carried out his duties meticulously and conscientiously and we sincerely thank him. We wish him good health and, hopefully, good bowling in his retirement". Doug carried on as an active Council Member and bowler until his unexpected death in 2003.

The Secretary also wrote in the same Report that Percy Vousden, long serving Chairman of the Patrons' Association, was also not seeking re-election. *"I heard a whisper that Percy Vousden was stepping down as Chairman. What can one say about Percy? Percy is the Patrons, and has been influential in its development for more years than he would care to remember. We thank him for his long years of service to the Patrons and to this Association and wish him, also, good health and good bowling in his retirement"*. Sadly Percy's health deteriorated very quickly, and he died soon afterwards.

The first mention of the likely appearance of coloured shirts on the bowling greens of Kent was when Folkestone Park requested permission to be allowed to play in bright blue shirts, instead of the traditional white ones with collar and tie. At the F. & G. meeting of the 20th July, 1997, *"after much discussion it was proposed by M. Prentice and Seconded by P. Mill that clubs stay with White shirts. This was carried unanimously"*.

However, the Association itself decided that it would like to have an official K.C.B.A. shirt, and sought *"approval from the E.B.A. for the following colours and design of shirts. Shirt: White. Collar: Dark Blue. Cuffs: Dark Blue. Sleeves: White"*; even though the Kent Under 25's Double Rinks were allowed to wear the white shirts *"provided by Thomas Taylor, through Andy Thompson, and sporting the County Badge on the breast pocket, together with the words Under 25's 1997' as per the sample produced by Barry Cook"*.

It might appear that the decision to use official coloured shirts for the County and the Under 25's may well have been more of a nuisance than a blessing, when one considers the number of references in the Minutes to the problems with laundering and shrinking; and there have been more than a few feathers ruffled along the way.

Nevertheless, it seemed that the problems might well have been resolved, for at the F. & G. meeting of the 11th August, 2002, it was reported that now *"the laundry of shirts was in the capable hands of Mrs. Bannister, Mrs. Evenden and Mrs. Clifford"*. I am sure that when their respective husbands were elected into Office, these ladies would have had no idea that one day they, themselves, would be running some kind of Chinese Laundry.

The County's clubs had to wait until August 2001 before the Council debated the 'coloured shirt registration procedure'. At that meeting J. Austin Proposed and V. Steeple Seconded that the Council support the F. & G.'s report on the matter, and *"the meeting agreed unanimously"*. One was still expected to arrive in greys and whites, and was also expected to change back into the same attire at the end of the match prior to the match tea. It all seems a lot of unnecessary bother really, especially with all of the inter-club liaising that is supposed to take place; but, there you are, if that is what your heart desires so be it.

Nowadays it is all changed, of course, and the Council has continually to debate, re-assess and, at times, join battle to enforce the recommended dress code which has altered in keeping up with modern day ideas and values. If you look at some of the old photographs hanging on the walls of your clubhouses you will see that our forefathers bowled in all sorts of attire, and I suppose they thought the idea of playing in whites with regulation shoes just as outlandish as some of the coloured pyjama-type outfits we see worn nowadays. I must admit to still being

somewhat astonished when I see someone bowling with what, at first sight, appears to be a set of lavatory cistern stop-cock floats, but the K.C.B.A. followed the World Bowls' decision to allow the use of coloured bowls in October, 1999. I wouldn't want to be a Lead on an off-day if I were using them.

The transformation that had taken place in Bowling since the second world war had largely been the result of the great social changes that had affected the country: but the changes that were taking place during the latter part of the Century were the result, in part, of the proliferation of indoor bowling facilities which attracted the younger, and perhaps more competitive, bowler; the emergence of the professional bowlers who took part in televised international competitions; the introduction of advertising and reasonably attractive cash prizes; the appearance of bowling celebrities, and the sport's own attempt to project a more 'with-it' image. The activity could no longer be regarded merely as 'old-men's marbles' pursued by somewhat aged folk as a hobby, but as an internationally recognised competitive sport. The changes were obviously not to everybody's liking, and more particularly so to those who preferred still to regard bowling as a social activity. Nevertheless, times change, and if institutions don't change with them they pass away.

Perhaps some bowlers found these changes objectionable, and had lost all interest in the game; for, in spite of all the fiddling with the game's image, and the great efforts being made to encourage younger bowlers, G. Firmin stated in his 2001 Annual Report to the County that the E.B.A. was in financial difficulty caused not only by the loss of sponsorship but because some 137 clubs and 10,350 bowlers had ceased to be affiliated. It was, apparently, not only the reduction in affiliation fees that was creating the problem, but also the loss of income due to a lowering of entries in competitions. The situation hadn't improved in Kent by 2003,

for the number of clubs affiliated had declined from a previously satisfying 200+ to a very worrying 184.

Very little happened between 1993 and 1999 to spoil the peaceful drift of the County's affairs, so it was quite electrifying when, at the F. & G. meeting of July, 1999, "*J. Canham felt it was appropriate now to speak on a matter which arose from the 1995 A.G.M. when G. Firmin gave his annual report of the E.B.A. Reference was made in the report to a Bowls Magazine publication. Subsequently G. Firmin received a summons for alleged slander which had to be defended, incurring considerable legal costs. Ultimately the plaintiff could not prove the case but refused to withdraw the action which imposed a wait of three years for the case to be struck from the rolls. As the summons was in the name of G. Firmin the accrued legal costs of some £5,000.00 was set against him. Recently he [J. Canham] had met the E.B.A. Treasurer, R. Jack, to discuss the matter with a view to establishing a principle of procedure. Both he and R. Jack accepted the fact that G. Firmin was acting in the interest of the E.B.A. and K.C.B.A. when the alleged slander was made and as such took the view that the principle of shared responsibility for legal costs was established. R. Jack will have to take the case and his recommendation to the E. B.A. Executive before any further progress can be made. After debate, the meeting agreed to accept the principle of shared responsibility and await the response from the E. B.A. before making a positive proposal.*"

I have hunted through all of the relevant Minutes and Reports, seeking some clue as to what George Firmin might have said, or written, to create this accusation of "*alleged slander*", and all that I can find is a remark made by him and reported in the 1994 Minutes when he "*spoke of "World of Bowls" going into liquidation with a Police investigation being carried out*".

Nevertheless, the matter was reported to be resolved at the December 1999, Council Meeting when the *"Hon. Treasurer, J. Canham, requested G. Firmin to retire whilst the matter was discussed. J. Canham stated that the facts had been previously Minuted and he had to report that the E. B.A. had agreed to match the amount paid by this County. He reminded members that the total legal fees were £5,000.00, and he was proposing that Kent County Bowling Association pay £2,500.00 towards those legal fees incurred by G. Firmin. Seconded J. Austin, the meeting agreed. Chairman, G. Chapman, asked G. Firmin to return to the meeting and advised him of Council's decision. G. Firmin expressed his grateful thanks to the meeting for their very generous action"*.

I can't believe for one moment that George would have made any mention of a *"police investigation"* if one was not already in progress or preparation, but it just goes to show how careful one must be when making a feather-ruffling comment that may relate to the actions of another person or body. I am still quite dumbfounded as to how the offended party became so aware of the events which took place at our 1995 A.G.M.

Two items very much under discussion and, at club level at least, creating not a few problems, were the need for the Association and affiliated clubs to follow the regulations concerning the new Child Protection Act and the fact that Disabled Facilities were to be in place by 2004. I'm not sure what our forefathers would have thought of the need for the county's bowlers to be reminded that they had a responsibility for the safety and welfare of children, or, indeed, that the government of the day thought that such statutory legislation was required.

The need for the provision of disabled access might have been more understandable to them, but our ancestors may well have been surprised that anyone

in a wheelchair would even want to play the game anyway. What is so sad, however, is that nowadays it is considered vitally necessary for such legislation to be introduced to protect the young from abuse, and the disabled from discrimination. It is only when we glance back over a hundred years or so that we become aware that society has changed so much, and not always, in all things, for the better.

You may remember reading that way back in 1944 the County Association snaffled the Woolf Benevolent Fund Cup to use as the trophy for the County triples competition. It seems that this deed had become lost in the mists of time, and it was not until I was researching the Minutes to prepare this little booklet that anyone discovered where the cup had gone or why. The County Patrons' Association, being committed to raising funds for the Benevolent Fund, searched around for an alternative trophy; and in 2004, some 60 years later, a Mr. Richard Cook of the Horton Kirby Bowling Club presented the Patrons with a replacement cup. This has been called the Richard Cook Benevolent Fund Cup, and is played for annually as a day tournament between 28 clubs. The first of these tournaments took place on the Canterbury Bowling Club's Green on Sunday, 28th August, 2005, and raised the sum of £571 which was donated to the Benevolent Fund. A Rink from Horton Kirby, Skipped by Richard Cook himself, won the trophy on this occasion, and the Canterbury Club has offered the Association its Green as a permanent home for the tournament. It is now an annual event, organised by the Patrons.

The intrusion of the ladies into the bowling world had been gathering momentum since they were first mentioned in the Minutes of a Council meeting held in 1962. At several of the meetings which followed that one, there was much huffing and puffing amongst the membership as they began to see just how deeply the ladies had encroached into what

had always been considered a gentleman's activity. They didn't mind too much if the ladies had a bowling section in a men's club, but woe betide any club that allowed a female to take part in its administration or took part in a mixed match. But just as water smoothes the hardest rocks, so did the ladies grind the rough edges off the men's antagonism.

So much so that they were soon taking a full part in the management of many clubs, and by the year 2000 there was even talk of the *'Unification of the Four National Bodies'*. These were, of course, the E.B.A., the E.W.B.A., the E.I.B.A. and the E.W.I.B.A.; so not only were the ladies and gentlemen considering unification, but also the indoor and outdoor associations too. In 2005 the County Association held a 'Road Show' to present the proposed Constitution to affiliated clubs, and this was attended by 67 KCBA, 5 KCWBA, 19 KCIBA, and 2 KCLIBA bowlers.

It seems that the game of bowls was but a small cog in the great modernisation machine that had been set in motion by a body called "Sport England", and this itself had arisen from a government diktat known as "Game Plan". The bumf, produced for the members present to delight in, set out the reasons behind the proposals, and the first part of it is reproduced here. There is rather a lot of it, but it very clearly sets out the reasons why the initiative was being proposed; and, it would appear that much of the reasoning was financial.

### **Modernization of Governing Bodies of Sport**

*The modernisation of national governing bodies of sport (NGBs) was one of the key recommendations of 'Game Plan', the government's strategy for sport. NGBs are the key delivery platform for high performance and grassroots sport, however, they vary in the level of their resources and sophistication of their governance and management practices. The differing capacities of NGBs has been recognised, with funding put in place in 2001 to assist NGBs become more efficient and effective in their operations. The EBA, EIBA, EWBA and EWIBA have received funding from the government's modernisation programme, administered*

*by UK Sport, to rationalise and modernise the four associations.*

*'Game Plan' also highlights that there are too many NGBs: at least 302 for the 100 sports recognised by the Sports Councils. Potentially this leads to a duplication of effort and extra bureaucracy. Although in some instances it is recognised that this represents legitimate specialisation, it does mean that for every sport there can be competing and rival organisations bidding for the same resources.*

*As a result of the key objectives identified within 'Game Plan', the Sports Councils are aiming to fund only one NGB per sport. It is hoped that this practice will alongside the modernisation programme, encourage rationalisation of NGBs leading to mergers and an increase in their size and capacity to deliver. This rationalisation should however, not marginalise specialist or minority groups currently represented.*

### **The Implication for Bowls in England**

*The Sports Councils recognise a number of NGBs for bowls. It is acknowledged that in some cases the NGBs are specialist and are therefore in effect "variations" of the sport (e.g., English Short Mat Bowling Association) and that in one instance the NGB operates at a British level (British Crown Green Bowling Association). Therefore, to rationalise all the National Governing Bodies for bowls, to create one Governing Body for the sport, may, in this instance not be appropriate.*

*However, where there is the opportunity and it is appropriate to modernise and rationalise governing bodies for bowls in England, Sport England are committed to working with these governing bodies to facilitate the process. In the short term, it is Sport England's recommendation that the four most similar organisations (EBA, EIBA, EWBA and EWIBA), who in many instances represent and provide services to the same members, work towards the outcome of creating one unified governing body for the lawn bowls game in England. Sport England does not view a federal approach for the modernization of the lawn bowls game as acceptable, as it will not serve to create an effective and efficient governing body.*

*It is recognized that the four lawn bowls associations are an element of the game. It is therefore encouraging that the associations, during the unification process and when unified, have expressed the desire and commitment to work in partnership with the bodies who govern other codes of the sport in England and in Britain where appropriate.*

*The unification of the four lawn bowls associations has not been and is not likely to be a straight forward task, however, we strongly believe that it is the right choice for the associations and if you work collectively it will improve your ability to deliver to your members and assist you in increasing the number of participants in your sport.*

*Roger Draper*

*Chief Executive, Sport England*

It seemed that not all those present were entirely committed to the idea of "modernising and rationalising" their

governing bodies, even though they had been assured that the grass-roots bowler would never know that anything had happened - except for the fact that they would henceforth pay only one affiliation fee.

The County Secretary, Mick Bannister, made a very full report to affiliated clubs in his 'Newsletter' in April, 2005, and it would seem to indicate that there was a great deal of support for the idea of 'Unification'.

***“Unification at National level.***

*Despite all the huffing and puffing this time last year, unification finally took a significant step forward in the shape of EBA Roadshows where an explanation of the proposals was part of the agenda. Following the Roadshow in Kent on 20th February, all affiliated clubs were given the opportunity to register then vote, for or against the proposals and 62% of affiliated clubs cast their vote. The overwhelming majority voted in favour of the proposals (108 - 4) and the Council of the Association ratified the decision on 2nd April and our EBA delegates were mandated to vote in favour of the proposals at the Special General meeting of the EBA on 9th April. At that meeting the proposals were adopted.*

*The EWBA voted on a similar proposition on Thursday 14th April and also adopted the proposals. The EWIBA are expected to reach their decision in early May and the EIBA are expected to reach their decision in October.*

*If the EWIBA vote in favour in May, then the mountain of work still to be done will continue immediately and the EIBA will continue to participate, pending their decision in October. If the EWBA vote against the proposals in May, then it is back to the drawing board as it has already been agreed that a minimum of three Associations must agree to move towards unification.*

*The four National Governing Bodies remain targeted on 1st October, 2006, for the new organization to come into being.”*

It would appear that all had not run quite as smoothly as had been hoped, though the following Press Release, issued by *sportscal.com* [*sports news agency*] is careful not to apportion blame onto any particular national governing body . . .

## **Ongoing Division Costs English Bowls Dear**

Bowls - 7 March 2006

English bowls is to miss out on a grant of £40,000 (\$70,000) because of the failure of the four national governing bodies to agree to unification. Sport England, the national sports funding and administration body, has withdrawn the offer which was conditional on the merger of the English Bowling Association, the English Women's Bowling Association, the English Indoor Bowls Association and the English Women's Indoor Bowling Association. Tony Allcock, the chief executive of the EBA, the men's outdoor association, blamed the self-interest[ed] people within the sport for the lack of progress adding: 'It's more than disappointing, it's appalling. The money would have enabled us to launch a development scheme and to recruit new members and would have been targeted at our grass roots members.'

It is also reported that “*a similar article was printed in 'The Times' on the same date*”. Whether the unification scheme was completely dead in the water at this point or merely bumping along the bottom wasn't made clear, but this Press Release doesn't exactly give much hope for a mutually acceptable amalgamation process to make much more progress. In the event, both the EBA and the EWBA agreed to the process of unification in October 2006, and 'Bowls England Limited', complete with new logo, 'Structure Plan' and 'Shadow Board', became an actuality rather than an idea.



The main difficulty, of course, was in making up a single brand new organisation from two separately existing ones; bearing in mind the fact that both the EBA and EWBA had gradually evolved

over the past 100 years or so, whilst the new organisation, in the interest of harmony if nothing else, needed to be fully formed from the very beginning. A 'Shadow Organisation' was set up by both the EBA and EWBA and given the job, and eventually, after many months of hard work by this shadowy temporary governing body, the official inaugural meeting of the new association, 'Bowls England Limited' was arranged to take place in July, 2007.

One of our own, Peter Arnold, *the very last President of the EBA*, Past President of the KCBA and member of Canterbury B.C., was a member of the Shadow Board, charged with the chairmanship of the new 'Development Committee'. At its very first AGM he was also elected a Director of Bowls England Ltd.

At the A.G.M. held on 20th November, 2004, the County Association introduced a new 'Certificate of Merit'. This was aimed at rewarding affiliated individual club members who had given exceptional service to their own club. Ten such Certificates of Merit were presented at this meeting, one of them to Alfie Kemp who had been secretary of his club, Ashford [Kent] Rail, since 1965.

At the same meeting concern was expressed by both the County Association and the E.B.A. over the dwindling number of bowlers both county and nationwide. John Canham, the county Treasurer, mentioned the fact that there were now 48 affiliated clubs in Kent which had less than 30 members. On the brighter side, the increased active participation of the under 25's was most encouraging, and boded well for the future.

One little item that appeared to be causing the Council a degree of unhappiness was the failure of Division 2 to elect a Divisional Secretary. There was no precedent for such an occurrence, and it would seem that a certain amount of arm-twisting was going to be done in the very near future. It does seem strange that the

Division was able to elect an assistant secretary, but just how he was going to assist a County Officer who didn't exist was still a mystery. In the event Roy Lewing agreed to carry on in Office temporarily.

A sad little feature of our present day and age was the realisation that the County Association had no established 'Appeals Procedure' in its Rules, and that it was really necessary to create one without delay. It all came about as the result of a dispute between an individual and his club. What the disagreement was about was never made clear, but the individual concerned had brought the matter to the Association for them to act as a kind of referee. It was even taken up to the E.B.A. for them to make some sort of judgement; though how an outside body, no matter how official, could really be expected to interfere in what was an internal club squabble, governed by the rules of the club concerned, is a bit beyond me. Indeed, why any individual bowler



One of our own, Peter Arnold, the very last President of the EBA, Past President of the KCBA and one of the first Directors of Bowls England Ltd.

would want to make such a fuss is beyond me too. Anyway, we now have a proper 'Appeals Procedure' contained within the County Rules, though I am sure that everyone hopes that it will never have to be used.

At this same A.G.M. we actually had two members who wished to become the official County Coach. A primitive coaching scheme had been set up in 1967, and in the passing years it had become an important element in the training of new bowlers. Most clubs had their own club coaches who were responsible for training their own new members, the various Divisions had their own Divisional Coaches for supervising the club coaches and the County Coach was the supremo responsible for organising coaching within the County. It was quite novel to have more than one applicant for a County Office, and eventually, after the two applicants had made their personal presentations, the meeting elected a Lawrie Baker from Division 1 to the post.

At the same meeting Mike Tidd, the Financial Secretary to the County Benevolent Fund, did not seek re-election, though as he was elected as Division 4's Assistant Divisional Secretary he certainly won't have any more time to spend with his family. There was only one nomination to fill his shoes, and Dick Snell was elected to the Office of Financial Secretary to the County Benevolent Fund.

At an F. & G. meeting in February, 2005, a degree of alarm was voiced regarding the reduction in the number of affiliated clubs, and even more so at the reduction of some 311 in the number of affiliated members. It seems that a certain group of reprehensible bowlers were failing to rejoin their clubs, yet enjoying just as many hours on the Green playing in open tournaments around the county. This, of course, meant that they were enjoying their games of bowls, but contributing nothing to the coffers of either their own local clubs, the County Association or the

E.B.A. It was reported by the Secretary that the E.B.A. did not appear to be unduly concerned, and it seems that the various County Associations were to be left to police their own affairs.

The members present thought this an infuriating state of affairs, and considered, perhaps, that the County should in future themselves issue the Licences that were necessary for a club to arrange an open tournament. However, the actual policing of these tournaments would have to be left to the individual clubs, and it seems that no pledge of enforcement could be guaranteed. No real solution other than threatening the individual clubs with I know not what if they accepted non-affiliated players into their open competitions was reached at the meeting. Like so many hot potatoes the matter was left on the table in the hope that a solution might eventually be found.

At the same meeting John Canham, who was about to complete 25 years as County Treasurer, announced the fact that he would not be seeking re-election at the following A.G.M., though the members present were much happier to hear the news that Peter Arnold had been elected Junior Vice President of the EBA. Peter will be the eighth ex-County President to have held the post of EBA President. As he had indicated, John did not stand for re-election as County Treasurer at the 2006 A.G.M., and Alan Chase was elected in his place. The fact that he didn't take Office faced with the kind of problems that John had needed to overcome, when he himself had been elected County Treasurer in 1986, is an indication of the way the County's finances had been looked after in the intervening 25 years.

The F. & G. meeting of the 7th August, 2005, was very much concerned with County finances, and more particularly with the cost of the County Year Book. It seemed that the Treasurer was somewhat troubled by the projected loss anticipated with the 2006 edition, and

suggested increasing the sale price to cover it. An argument was put forward that those who purchased the book were subsidising those who didn't, and it would be fairer to increase the Affiliation fees by 50p. so that all affiliated members contributed to the costs involved. The fact that the purchase of the Year Book was a requirement for entry into County Competitions was never taken into consideration, neither was the point that even the competitors purchased it with a certain reluctance. In these circumstances one could argue that those who didn't want it were being compelled to subsidise those who were required to have it. In the event it was agreed that future County expenditure, especially in view of the coming centenary celebrations, justified an increase in the Affiliation fees, and that it would be better to have a big one now rather than a series of little ones in the future.

Another item that worried some of the members present was a certain ambivalence in an E.B.A. circular. It seemed to suggest that it was not a requirement of any club that it was necessary to be affiliated to play matches against other affiliated clubs, and some who were present were of the opinion that this would lead to a mass exodus of those clubs who had a small entry into County competitions and who were mainly interested in friendly club Fixtures.

In August, 2005, an event took place at the Ramsgate Bowling Club which was quite unique in the annals of the County Association. The Association was invited to send representatives to take part in a tournament arranged to celebrate the sixty years unbroken membership of one of the club's members, a Mr. Fred Sharp. Fred, who was an active 96 years young, had joined the Ramsgate Bowling Club in 1945, and to celebrate this landmark in both the Club's and County's histories it had been decided to inaugurate an annual tournament which was to be called the Fred Sharp Anniversary Tournament. This

was the first time that I had ever found any similar entry in the Association's Minutes, and It is well worth recording it in this history.

At a Council Meeting held on Saturday, 6th October, 2007, a suggestion was put to the Council by Peter Arnold, one of the Directors of the new "Bowls England", that the County propose to the Home Counties League that substitutes should be allowed in their competitive games. One member present was a trifle surprised, as he thought substitutes were already allowed in such matches. It was explained to him that the idea was that a poorly performing player could be taken off the Green and another, whom it was thought would perform much better, would join the team in his place; a system that is universally followed in professional football nowadays.

It seems that this idea was too far removed from the concept which governed the game of bowls at the beginning of the 20th Century, when bowls was a leisure activity played by gentlemen of leisure in a gentlemanly manner, for some of those present to accept. However, one gentleman present appeared to think it quite preposterous that anyone should even question a suggestion put forward by a Director of "Bowls England", and this didn't really help matters at all; and so the proposition was eventually put to the vote. In the event the Proposition was carried by 18 votes to 12, but I think it serves to show that not all bowlers are entirely happy with the changes that have taken place in the past 100 years of bowling.

Reading back over this little history I must admit, at times, to perhaps waxing over-sentimental and nostalgic about a vanished and fairly mythical past, and might be regarded by some as somewhat quaint. However, the principles, ethics and morality which were commonplace to those folk who first started this County Association are timeless, and do not just belong to the past. They represent

undeniable standards of value which are enduring, and which cannot altogether be allowed to pass away.

The fellow who writes an account of the next hundred years of the Association's history will live in a world as much changed from our own as ours is from those who created the County Association in 1911. He will, no doubt, record the accomplishments of people like Mick Bannister, Geoff Chapman, Phil Burbidge, John Canham, George Firmin and many, many others too numerous to mention who have given so much of themselves to further the Association's aims. Perhaps he will come to favour them in the same way that I have individuals like Percy Snow, W. A. Sims, H. J. Green, the Hardy brothers, and suchlike; but they are, at present, our contemporaries, not bygone memories, and they will just have to wait. Sadly, Phil Burbidge died in October, 2005, and the County lost another member who had worked so long on its behalf.

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During the latter part of my time at school I can remember spending some considerable time during Geography lessons studying what was referred to as the 'ages of a river'. Well, either I was a very slow-witted pupil or the teacher was a very dull teacher, because it was considerably later when I discovered that the subject had nothing to do with the passage of time but rather with the flow of the water in the river. When you give it some thought it does make some kind of sense, and it is remarkable just how so many Organisations and Associations mirror a river's performance in this fashion.

A stream pops up out of the ground with very little warning, and, bubbling and burbling, dashes off downhill full of froth, energy and enthusiasm. It bumbles round the obstacles in its path, collecting new

little streams as it goes, and dashes off with great vigour in the general direction of some sea or other. This is 'its age of youth', and it is just how the Association conducted its affairs for the first 25 years or so as it set out to fulfil its goals.

After this bubbly little river has flowed for some distance it tends to settle down. It has cut its course and, whilst still flowing strongly, tends to confine itself within well regulated margins as it makes its way steadily to the sea. This is 'its middle age', and the Minutes of the next 75 years or so show that it is just how the Association was functioning at the end of this period.

But in its old age the river tends to amble slowly along; often turning back upon itself in great sluggish ox-bow bends, before it vanishes into a reed-blocked delta and seeps slowly into the sea.

I wonder if the chap who writes the next hundred years of the County's history will then be obliged to liken the County's second century to this period of a river's flow.

*There are some folk for whom no  
'history' is complete without the  
inclusion of Kings, Queens and battles  
fought.*

*So, just for their delectation . . .*

[The following pages will probably need up-dating by 2011]

## PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE COUNTY

1911	W.A SIMMS*§	1964	L.A. DENNY*
1912	H.C. CILLIAM*	1965	A.D. SAWARD*§
1913	T. WOOF*	1966	E. CROUCHER*
1914	J.T.C. CHATER*	1967	A.N. DEARING*
1915	Maj. G.H. CRAHAM*	1968	E. ROBINSON*
1916	H.J. GREEN*	1969	J. WELLER*
1917	W. DRIVER*	1970	S. PRICE*
1918	W. ROCKLEY*	1971	A.G. COX, B.E.M.*
1919	A.E. BLACK*	1972	A.F. AMES*
1920	E.E. MOORE*§	1973	C.H. WRIGHT*
1921	W.T. HUGGETT*	1974	T.H. BROWN*
1922	W.A. KING*	1975	L.J. RABSON*
1923	A. TOWNSEND*	1976	C.W. COOPER*
1924	AM. SMITH*	1977	H. KEBLE TAYLOR*
1925	C.E. MOTLEY*	1978	G.A. HANCOCK, B.A.
1926	PERCY SNOW*§	1979	D.H. WELLS*
1927	L EDWARDS*	1980	F. HOLLANDS*
1928	W.J. CILLETT*	1981	A.H. HARDY*
1929	AM. RANDALL, M.B.E*	1982	A.G. BRIGHTON*
1930	DONALD CAMPELL, M.B.E.*	1983	G.A. MITSON*
1931	H.C. SLEEMAN*	1984	G.V. FIRMIN *
1932	F.M.W. CARTER*	1985	P.F. MADGWICK*
1933	E.B. JAGO*	1986	L.C. BRAND *
1934	A.W.J. WOOLF*	1987	P.B.T. BURBIDGE *
1935	A. GARRY*	1988	S.J. KING *
1936	D. SMALLWOOD*	1989	W.H. TURNER*
1937	E.A. COZENS*	1990	N.M. CHASE, M.B.E*.
1938	W.T. CHARLTON*	1991	J.M. CANHAM
1939-)	A.H. HARDY*§	1992	D.S. HEAD *
1944)		1993	L.H. HUGGINS
1945	T. BUTTON*	1994	B.J. BURT*
1946	P. BILLING*	1995	A.G. IVES
1947	H.J. GREEN*	1996	A.C. HOCKLEY §
1948	A.E. FROST*	1997	R, HOWARD *
1949	S.H.J. WELLER*	1998	D.ALFORD *
1950	H. HENLEY*	1999	V.STEEPLE
1951	H. CHAPMAN*	2001	P. ARNOLD§
1952	H. HARDY*§	2000	W. PRESTON
1953	R. LUKEHURST*	2002	A.M. CHASE
1954	H. SNELLING*	2003	R. LEWING
1955	P. JOHNSON, O.B.E. J.P.*	2004	N. WRIGHT
1956	W.S. PHILLIPS*	2005	P. JOHNSON
1957	A.H. SMITH*	2006	B. WIGMORE
1958	E.H. BARKER*	2007	L. KING
1959	A.E. WALKER, M.B.E.*	2008	D. CONDÉ
1960	J. HOARE*	2009	B. CHAPMAN
1961	H.W. SMITH*	2010	A. EASTERBROOK
1962	F.A. ALLAN*	2011	M. BANNISTER
1963	A.G. NASH*		

### Past Hon. Secretaries

H.J. GREEN\*, W.W. GOMER\*, W.A. SIMMS\*, W. THORN\*, R.G. COLQUHOUN\* and A.G. COX\*.

### \*Deceased

§ In addition to the late Dr. W. G. Grace and the late John Gillespie, these members of Kent Clubs have been Presidents of The English Bowling Association.

### HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

All Past Presidents of the Association and Messrs. M G Bannister, G E Chapman, N D Evenden, E Hay, A Nichol, M J Tidd, R Pollington .

## ENGLISH INTERNATIONALS

Men from Kent Clubs who have played for England in recognised International Games:

Barnicott, P.	2003, 04, 06		
Bristow, H.O.	1935-36	Martin, S.E.	1961, 1964 (Reserve)
Bucknell, W.W.	1934-36	Moore, F.E.	1919-20-21-22-23-24-25
Burton, C.	1926	Orchard, Melbourne -	1926-27-28
Butcher, P.	1996 (Reserve)	Sales, H.E. -	1913
Campbell, D.	1926-27-28-29-30	Sekjer, M.	1985-86-90-91-92-94-95-96
Charlton, G.	1996-97	Sims, W.A. -	1910-12-13-14-21
Clements, F.C.	1954-55-56-57	Slater, R.	1931-34-35-36-37-38-39
Colquhoun, Capt. R.G.	1929-30-31-32-33-	Smith, G.A.	1982-83-84-87-88-89-
Crocker, D.	1972-73-74-78-79		91-95-96-97-2000-'01
Fitt, A.H.	1920		92-94 [Reserve]
Gilliam, H.C.	1911	Sweeney, A.T.	1950
Godsall, A.E.	1922-23	Thomson, A.E.	1982-83-84-85-86-87
Grace, Dr. W.G.	1903-4-5-6-7-8		88-89-90-91-92-93-94-
Graville, F.	1924		95-96-97-98-99-2000-01-02-03-04-05-06
Harris, R.G.	1975	Thomson, E.A.	1921
Haskins, G.H.	1959-60-61-62		
Hills, T.C.	1931-32-33-34-35-36	Tomlinson, P.D.	1929-1931-32-34-35-36-37, 1946
Hilton, R.B.	1926	Walton, C.	1933-34-35-36, 1946,
Hodgson, E.H.	1913		1947-48, 1949 (Capt.)
Huggett, W.T.	1922-24	Wills, F. +.	1921
MacIver, W.R.	1953	Work, J.	1912

## EMPIRE CHAMPIONS

Colquhoun, Capt. R.G. -	1930 (Singles)	Hills, T.C. -	1930-34 (Pairs)
Slater, R.	1934 (Rink)	Tomlinson, P.D.	1934 (Rink)

### PLAYERS FROM KENT CLUBS WHO HAVE REPRESENTED ENGLAND IN THE :

#### World Bowls 1992 held at Worthing, England

A.E. Thomson - Triples & Fours

#### World Bowls 1996 held at Adelaide, Australia

A.E. Thomson - Pairs & Fours

#### Commonwealth Games 1986 held in Scotland

M. Sekjer - Fours

A.E. Thomson - Singles

#### Commonwealth Games 1990 held in New Zealand

G. Smith & A.E. Thomson - Pairs

#### Commonwealth Games 1994 held in Canada

G. Smith & A.E. Thomson - Pairs - Bronze Medal Winners

#### Commonwealth Games 1998 held in Malaysia

A.E. Thomson - Fours

#### Commonwealth Games 2002 held in Manchester

D. Turner - Disabled Triples

# KENT'S SUCCESSES IN ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

## SINGLES

1911 - J. Work (Grove) - Runner up  
**1919 - E.E. Moore (Bellingham) - Winner**  
**1920 - A.E. Godsall (Forest Hill) - Winner**  
1925 - C. Burton (Gillingham) - Semi-Finalist  
1926 - A.P. Poingdestre (Bromley) - Runner up  
1927 - M. Orchard (Forest Hill) - Semi-Finalist  
1928 - W. Barlow (Bellingham) - Runner-up  
**1929 - R.G. Colquhoun (Bromley) - Winner**  
1931 - D. Campbell (Kearsney) - Semi-Finalist  
1950 - F. Clements (V.C.D.) - Semi-Finalist  
1957 - R. Middleton (Bromley) - Semi-Finalist  
**1981 - A.E. Thomson (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Winner**  
1981 - G.A. Smith (Old Colfeian) - Semi-Finalist  
1993 - G. Charlton (Folkestone Park) - Runner-up  
1995 - P. Butcher (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Semi-Finalist  
1997 - A.E. Thomson (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Semi-Finalist  
**2001 - G. Charlton [Sandwich] -Winner**

## PAIRS

**1913 - C.A. Booth and A.E. Godsall (Forest Hill) - Winner**  
1925 - I. Berry and D. Campbell (Kearsney) - Semi-Finalists  
1927 - W. Jeffrey and C. Walton (Faversham) - Runners-up  
1927 - A.P. Poingdestre and W. Gomer (Bromley) - Semi-Finalists  
1932 - W. Jeffrey and C. Walton (Faversham) - Runners-up  
**1933 - R. Slater and W.W. Buckell (Callenders) - Winners**  
**1934 - R. Slater and W.W. Buckell (Callenders) - Winners**  
1935 - H.V. Kay and H.O. Bristow (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Runners-up  
**1945 - G. Douglas and J.T. Snelgar (Bellingham) - Winners**  
1945 - E.S. Quinnell and G.G. Gilmour (Tunbridge Wells, Culverden) - Semi-Finalists  
1966 - L.S. Rowan and J. McMeakin (Sandwich) - Runners-up  
**1971 - D. Cross and D. Crocker (Livesey Memorial) - Winners**  
1972 - D. Cross and D. Crocker (Livesey Memorial) - Semi-Finalists **and Winners of B.I. Championships.**  
1976 - M.F. Phillips and F.G. Sekjer (Thames Polytechnic) - Runners-up  
1980 - R. Price and L.G. Platts (Betteshanger Col. Wel.) - Semi-Finalists  
**1984 - O. Jones and L. Haynes (Lenham) - Winners**  
1987 - B. James and S. Savage (North Heath Social) - Semi-Finalists  
**1992 - G. Smith and A.E. Thomson (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Winners**  
1993 - G. Smith and A.E. Thomson (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Runners-up  
1999 - M. Arnold and G. Charlton (Sandwich) - Runners-up  
2006 - P. Field and A. E. Thomson [Blackheath and Greenwich] Quarter Finalists

## TRIPLES

**1948 - B. Bassant, S.W. Filmer and Colin Walton (Faversham) - Winners**  
1950 - G. Pearce, W. Combe, E. Keith (Aylesford Paper Mills) - Semi-Finalists  
1954 - E. Chamings, H.C. Simmons, E.H. Barker (Bellingham) - Semi-Finalists  
**1964 - W. Stevenson, J. Drummond, C.V. Sweeting (Forest Hill) - Winners**  
1969 - J. Armstrong, L. Rowan, J. McMeakin (Sandwich) - Finalists  
**1982 - R. Stewart, O. Jones, L. Haynes (Lenham) - Winners**  
1986 - M. Wilde, G. Chapman, M. Sekjer (Maidstone) - Finalists  
1989 - J. Chandler, T. Heppell, M. Sekjer (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Semi-Finalists  
1997 - P. Hayler, G. Smith, A.E. Thomson (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Semi-Finalists  
1998 - C. Miles, M. Arnold, G. Charlton (Sandwich) - Finalists  
2001 - M. Lonie, D. Clark, C. Taylor [Folkestone Park] - Finalists  
2002 - M. Johnson, C. Hall, P. Barnicott [UK Paper, Sittingbourne] - Semi-Finalists  
2003 - P. Field, T. Heppell and A. Thomson [Blackheath and Greenwich] Semi-Finalists  
2004 - D. Langley, K. Fox and R. Pearce [Buckland Mill] Semi-Finalists

## FOURS

1907 - Forest Hill - Finalists	1950 - Eltham - Finalists
1913 - Bellingham - Finalists	1958 - Livesey Memorial - Finalists
1914 - Gillingham - Finalists	1961 - Bexleyheath Conservative - Semi-Finalists
1926 - Margate - Semi-Finalists	1965 - Chatham - Semi-Finalists
<b>1927 - Margate - Winners</b>	<b>1967 - Sandwich - Winners</b>
1929 - Ashford S. Railway - Semi-Finalists	1981 - Old Colfeian - Semi-Finalists
1932 - Faversham - Semi-Finalists	1987 - Livesey Memorial - Semi-Finalists
1933 - Deal - Semi-Finalists	<b>1993 - Blackheath &amp; Greenwich - Winners</b>
1945 - Faversham - Finalists	1989 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Semi-Finalists
<b>1946 - Faversham - Winners</b>	1999 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Finalists
1949 - Tunbridge Wells - Semi-Finalists	2000 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Semi-Finalists

## NATIONAL CLUB TWO FOURS CHAMPIONSHIP

1973 - Sandwich - Finalists	<b>1993 - Blackheath &amp; Greenwich - Winners</b>
1975 - Livesey Memorial - Semi-Finalists	1995 - Folkestone Park - Quarter Finalists
1980 - Bexleyheath Conservatives - Finalists	1996 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Semi-Finalists
1985 - Old Colfeian - Quarter Finalists	1999 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Finalists
1986 - Old Colfeian - Quarter Finalists	2000 - Sandwich - Quarter-Finalists
1987 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Semi-Finalists	2002 - A.E.I. Henley - Semi-Finalists
1988 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Quarter Finalists	2004 - <b>Sandwich - Winners</b>
1990 - Blackheath & Greenwich - Finalists	2005 - V.C.D. - Quarter-Finalists
1991 - Palm Cottage - Quarter Finalists	
1992 - Horton Kirby - Quarter Finalists	

## INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP (MIDDLETON CUP)

<b>1912 - Winners</b>	<b>1974 - Winners</b>	1998 - Quarter Finalists
1923 - Runners-up	<b>1987 - Winners</b>	1999 - Runners-up
1925 - Runners-up	<b>1989 - Winners</b>	2000 - Quarter-Finalists
<b>1929 - Winners</b>	<b>1991 - Winners</b>	2001 - Finalists
1947 - Semi-Finalists	<b>1993 - Winners</b>	
1992 - Quarter Finalists	1995 - Semi-Finalists	

## E.B.A. NATIONAL COUNTY TOP FOUR COMPETITION

1982 - R. Price, M.A. Luker, G.A. Smith, D. Crocker - Finalists
1999 - P. Barnicott, G. Smith, G. Charlton, A. Thomson - Finalists
2000 - P. Barnicott, G. Charlton, G. Smith, A. Thomson - Semi-Finalists
2001 - P. Barnicott, G. Charlton, G. Smith, A. Thomson - Finalists
<b>2002 - P. Barnicott, D. Hanmore, G. Charlton, A. Thomson - Winners</b>
2004 - <b>R. Kendrick, D. Hanmore, P. Barnicott, G. Charlton - Winners</b>

## E.B.A. NATIONAL CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS SINGLES COMPETITION

1988 - G. A. Smith (Blackheath & Greenwich) - Finalist	2000 - C. Payne [Winget] - Semi-Finalist
1984 - B. Ward (Livesey Memorial) - Finalist	2000 - C. Smith [Old Colfeian] - Quarter-Finalist
1989 - G. Spencley (Faversham) - Quarter Finalist	2001 - J. Dunn [Betteshanger] - Semi-Finalist
1991 - T. Duncan (Forest Hill) - Quarter Finalist	2005 - M. Goord [Eltham] - Finalist
<b>1994 - M. Arnold (Margate) - Winner</b>	
1996 - D. Hilley (Cyphers) - Quarter Finalist	
1998 - J. Dunn (Sandwich) - Quarter Finalist	

## E.B.A. NATIONAL JUNIOR SINGLES CHAMPION

1994 - J. Dunn (Sandwich) - Quarter Finalist
1996 - C. James (Canterbury) - Quarter Finalist
1997 - C. James (Canterbury) - Runner-up

## E.B.A. NATIONAL COUNTY U25 TWO FOURS COMPETITION

1997 - Semi-Finalists
2000 - Semi-Finalists

## KENT COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION BENEVOLENT FUND

A short history of the formation of Kent Benevolent Fund made up from past County Hand Books and past Benevolent Fund Minute Books.

In 1928 the Frances Drake Fellowship was founded to assist Bowlers or their dependants in need throughout the country, and although they were doing a good job it was felt extra help could be given to those living in this county. So, at the 1929 County Annual General Meeting, G. H. Last (Bromley Town B.C.) proposed the following:- *'As the County had a large financial balance, perhaps a fund could be formed to assist bowlers or their families in financial distress, and that £100 be set aside to form the nucleus of a Benevolent Fund'*. It was discussed and supported, but it was questioned whether County funds could be used to finance such a venture and the idea was shelved.

The following year at an Executive Meeting of the County held in June 1930 the matter was raised again, this time by Percy Snow (Margate B.C.). After discussion it was agreed to form a small sub committee to look into the matter. They met and reported back to the Executive Committee with the following recommendations:-

- [1] Three Trustees be elected, and they plus the current President and Vice President of the K.C.B.A., both (ex-officio), would administer the fund.
- [2] G. H. Last (Bromley Town B.C.), P. Snow (Margate B.C.) and P. Wootton (Eltham B.C.) be elected Trustees, the latter to act as Hon. Secretary.

These recommendations were presented at the Annual General Meeting of the County held on Wednesday, 5th November, 1930 at the Albercorn Rooms, Liverpool Street, London, where they were unanimously accepted. As the embargo affecting disposal of funds was found non-existent a grant of £105 was given to start the fund, and in future a form would be printed in the County Year Book enabling clubs, or members of clubs, to send donations to the Benevolent Secretary.

So the Kent County Benevolent Fund was born.

1st Committee meeting was held on Thursday, 20th November, 1930, at the Strand Palace Hotel, London.  
Present :- G. H. Last (Bromley Town B.C.) - Chairman, T. P. Wootton (Eltham B.C.) - Hon. Secretary,  
F. M. Carter, Vice-President K.C.B.A. (Gravesend. B.C.)

They agreed the following:-

- (1) To open an account at Lloyds Bank, Holborn, London
- (2) To have collecting boxes made to distribute to all clubs
- (3) To ask the County Executive for leave to circulate collection boxes at next years County Dinner.

2nd Committee meeting was held on Wednesday 22nd July, 1931 at the Alford B.C., Catford.

Present: P. Snow (Margate B.C) - Chairman [He held this position until the meeting on the 26th June 1954, and he died in March 1955]; G. H. Last [Bromley Town B.C.] Trustee [He remained Trustee until he resigned in August 1949, and he died later in year]; P. Wootton [Eltham B.C.] Hon. Secretary until he died late 1941 or early 1942; H. G. Sleeman, President K.C.B.A. [Beckenham B.C.] and F. M. Carter, Vice-President K.C.B.A. [Gravesend B.C.]

H. G. Sleeman proposed, F. M. Carter seconded, that boxes should not be circulated at the County Dinner. This was carried unanimously.

Case No. 1 was given to an application on behalf of a member from Bellingham B.C. A grant of £5 was approved.

3rd Committee meeting held on 17th September, 1931 at Hotel York, Berners Street, London.

Present : P. Snow, G. W. Last, P. Wootton - Trustees; H. C. Sleeman, President K.C.B.A. and F. M. W. Carter, Vice-President K.C.B.A.

Case No. 2 - A grant was given to a widow from Margate B.C. for £24 19s. 7d., comprising £20 to widow's estate administered by the Club's Treasurer and £4 19s. 7d. for the daughter's outstanding school fee, plus this school fee would be guaranteed for the following 2 years.

4th Committee meeting held on 23rd October, 1931 at Hotel York, Berners Street, London.

Present :- Percy Snow, G. H. Last, T. P. Wootton, Trustees; H. C. Sleeman - President K.C.B.A.

Case No. 3 - A grant was made to a member from Erith Tramways B.C. for £10

H. G. Sleeman proposed, G. H. Last seconded, that neither the names of applicant or the club applying for the grant should appear in the annual statement of accounts of the Fund, but would appear as Case No's. only and that the accounts would close for audit on the 31st December annually and a copy be sent to all affiliated clubs. Agreed unanimously.

5th Committee meeting held on 8th April, 1932 at Hotel York, Berners Street, London.

Present :- Percy Snow, G. H. Last, T. P. Wootton, Trustees; F. M. W. Carter [Gravesend], President K.C.B.A. and E. B. Jago [Sevenoaks], Vice-President K.C.B.A.

Case No. 4 - A widow of a bowler from Canterbury B.C.; If the club had founded a fund for her a donation of £10 be made to the fund, if not a sum of £10 10s. 0d. be sent directly to the widow.

It was agreed the annual accounts closed on the 30th September in future, in time for the County A.G.M.

6th Committee meeting held on 18th June, 1932 at Redhill B.C., Surrey.

Present :- Percy Snow, T. P. Wootton, Trustees; F. M. Carter, President K.C.B.A.

Application from Tivoli Park B.C. Margate for a grant for a member was turned down. Case No. 1 from Bellingham B.C. reviewed again and a further £5 was granted.

7th Committee meeting held on 21st October, 1932 at Strand Palace Hotel, London.

Present :- Percy Snow, G. H. Last, T. P. Wootton, Trustees; F. M. Carter, President K.C.B.A. and E. B. Jago, Vice-President K.C.B.A.

Application from Loose B.C. for a grant for a member was discussed. Further enquires were required, and these would be made by E. B. Jago who would report his findings at the next meeting on Tuesday, 25th October. It was also agreed that receipts be sent for all donations received by the Fund.

8th Committee meeting held on 25th October, 1932 at Hotel York, Berners Street, London.

Present :- Percy Snow, G. H. Last, T. P. Wootton, Trustees; F. M. Carter, President K.C.B.A. and E. B. Jago, Vice-President K.C.B.A.

E. B. Jago reported his findings regarding the Loose B.C. application and a grant of £40 was made to the fund opened by the club on behalf of their member. It was also agreed officially to take over the running of the County Triples competition. A trophy had already been presented by A. W. Woolf [Herne Bay B.C.]. It would be called THE WOOLF TROPHY.

9th Committee meeting held on 3rd June, 1933 at Alford B.C., Catford.

Present :- Percy Snow, G. H. Last, T. P. Wootton, Trustees; E. B. Jago, President K.C.B.A. and A. W. J. Woolf [Herne Bay], Vice-President K.C.B.A.

A grant of £10 was given to a widow from Hesketh Park B.C.

A grant of £2 2s. 0d. was given to a member from Suburbagas B.C. The grant to go into a fund the club had started for him.

10th Committee meeting held on 19th July, 1933 at Herne Bay B.C.

Present :- Percy Snow, T. P. Wootton, Trustees; E. B. Jago, President K.C.B.A. and A. W. J. Woolf, Vice-President K.C.B.A.

A further grant of £5 was given to a member of Margate B.C.

County Triples Competition - it was agreed to ask Mrs. Woolf to present cup and prizes to the winners and runners-up, and that £8 be spent on prizes, to the value of £1 13s. 4d. each on the winners and £1 each for runners-up.

11th Committee meeting held on 29th November, 1933 at Welcome Inn, Eltham.

Present :- Percy Snow, T. P. Wootton, Trustees, and A. W. J. Woolf, President K.C.B.A.

A grant to a member of Cray Cottage B.C. was made - 10 shillings a week for 1 year then the case would be reconsidered. The case from Hesketh Park B.C. was reviewed again and it was agreed to pay the rent of the rooms as suggested for 13 weeks with a limit of £25. The case would then be reviewed once again.

12th Committee meeting held on 3rd July, 1934 at Hotel York, Berners Street, London.

Present :- Percy Snow, G. H. Last, T. P. Wootton, Trustees and A. Garry Forest Hill], Vice-President K.C.B.A.

The member from Cray Cottage B.C., previously given grant, had now obtained work and the club had returned the £2 10s.0d. A grant of £6 was given to a member of Deal B.C. The case from Hesketh Park B.C. was once again reviewed and a further £1 a week for 13 weeks was granted with a further review later. Another member from Margate B.C. was granted 10 shillings a week for 13 weeks. Prizes for County Triples Competition were increased to the value of £2 each for Winners but Runners-up would remain the same at £1 each.

**For obvious reasons I have not disclosed the name of recipients receiving grants.**

***The following extracts will be of some interest.***

Meetings up to July 1938 were held at Hotel York, Berners Street, London. Then World War Two came and there were no recorded minutes of the Committee until 1942, although the Trustees met and gave grants during the war period which they recorded in the minute book. There were no more regular meetings until 1949, and the dates below were when the Trustees met to approve grants given by them as and when they saw fit.

4th February, 1942, at Strand Palace Hotel	24th October, 1942, at Strand Palace Hotel
21st October, 1944, at Hotel York	8th September, 1945, at Bowaters B.C.
10th July, 1947, at Bowaters B.C.	6th August, 1949, at Folkestone B.C.
26th November, 1949, at The Royal Star Hotel, Maidstone	

The structure of the Fund changed from this point. The Committee was increased in size; the four divisions elected a representative to serve on the Committee annually, and regular meetings were held. The bulk of the grants were given at six monthly intervals. Sometime later it was passed that Trustees serve for Three years only, one coming up annually in rotation for re-election at the County A.G.M. This format remains to this day. The majority of meetings were held at the Star Hotel until 1981, with the Queens Hotel and Maidstone Town Hall being used on odd occasions. Then they alternated with Gravesend B.C. until 1985 when the Star Hotel probably closed. Gravesend B.C. was then the main venue until 1988, with Gravesend Alms Houses, The Danes Hotel and Rochester B.C. being used on occasions. At a meeting held on 15th October, 1988, at Maidstone B.C. this venue became the adopted Headquarters of the Kent County Bowling Association. All meetings have been held here up to the present day, except one which was held on 2nd December, 1990 at Minster in Thanet as the Hon. Secretary was unable to travel. In 1983, an application was made to the Charities Commission for the fund to be registered as a Charity, and it was found that the Fund had already registered way back in 1959 by Mr. H. Hardy. [Charity No. 208964]

**The History of the Benevolent Fund's "THE WOLF TROPHY" Triples Competition.**

The trophy was presented by A. W. WOOLF [Herne Bay B.C.] to the County in 1932. With A. W. Woolf's approval, the Executive asked the Benevolent Fund to run the competition, permitting all profits going into the fund. The Fund accepted, and ran it until 1940.

	<b>Winners</b>	<b>Runner-Up</b>
1932	Canterbury	Margate
1933	Margate	Sevenoaks
1934	Gillingham Liberals	Faversham
1935	Deal	Sevenoaks
1936	Bromley Town	Erith & District
1937	River	Sidcup
1938	Faversham	Gillingham Masonic
1939	Herne Bay	V.C.D.
1940	Loose	V.C.D.

From then until 1945 no mention was made of the trophy or the competition, but the County hand book of that year made reference to the English Bowling Association starting a Triples Competition and that the Benevolent Fund would have to rely on clubs' contributions in the future. I made a brief telephone conversation with the E.B.A. on the 13/1/98 they said they knew nothing of a trophy of that name. So what happened to it ? ***[I can answer that one Doug. It was snaffled by the County in 1945, and is now used as the County Triples Trophy].***

**HON. SECRETARIES of the BENEVOLENT FUND since its foundation**

1930-41	T. P. Wootton [Eltham B.C.]	1972-77	Ernie Robinson [Harmsworth B.C.]
1941-42 [stop-gap]	Percy Snow [Margate B.C.]	1978-85	Bill Turner [V.C.D. B.C.]
1943-71	Albert. H. Hardy [Northfleet B.C.]	1986-97	Doug Head [J & E Halls then St. Lawrence B.C.]
1971-72 [stop-gap]	A. W. Gosling [Loose B.C.]	1998- 04	Mike Tidd [Lyminge B.C. then New Romney B.C.]
1972-77	Ernie Robinson [Harmsworth B.C.]	2004-	Dick Snell [Canterbury B.C.]

*Doug Head*

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