

## Swanage Croquet Club AGM 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024

### Chairman's Report

#### A date for your diary - AGM and Awards Presentation

We have set the AGM date as 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 to be held at The Conservative Club starting at 11.00. The notice of AGM and all papers and reports will appear on the club website soon so please look out for those.

As if our AGM won't be fun enough on its own, we have decided to use this event to present the awards for all the competitions held throughout 2023. As well as awards to competition winners there will be a special posthumous award given to Pauline Windle for her lifetime contribution to croquet.

Please put the date in your diary now so you don't forget.

#### 2023 Committee

Greg Vaughn	Chair
Jill Benwell	Secretary
Bruno Charron	Treasurer * (see below)
Simon Parvin	Membership Secretary
Keith Southern	CA Rep, High Handicap Team Manager, Handicap Committee
Sally Fazekas	Winter Socials organiser
Gary Coleman	Legal Advisor

We sadly lost Pauline Windle this year. Gone but never forgotten and irreplaceable.

#### 2024 Committee

All seven current Committee members have offered to stand again, but now is your chance to either vote them in again or choose your new 2024 Committee. If you feel you have something to offer and are willing to nominate yourself please email Jill Benwell, SCC Secretary at [jill.benwell123@btinternet.com](mailto:jill.benwell123@btinternet.com) and get a seconder to also email to second your nomination. **All nominations should be received by the Secretary 14 days before the meeting (27<sup>th</sup> December).** In the event of more than one nominee for the Officer roles of Chair, Treasurer or Secretary we will conduct a vote to find your preferred choice.

#### Extra roles and \*

\*Bruno has let us know this will be his last year as Treasurer so we are looking for someone to shadow him next year with a view to taking over as Treasurer in 2025. A responsible but not overly technical role so don't be afraid to consider taking this on. The opportunity to shadow Bruno will ensure the transition will be as easy as possible.

#### Communications Officer

Your Committee are keen to have people in three new roles. We think the Club would benefit from a **Communications Officer** responsible for sharing news about SCC, its successes and benefits of membership as well as dispelling the common perception that Croquet is elitist.

### **Fund Raising Officer**

Another key role is **Fund Raising**. We are keen to keep membership fees low but have an ever growing list of things we would like to spend money on so fundraising might be a way to do both.

### **Social Events Officer**

Lastly but very importantly it would be great to have someone willing to organise and manage **social activities**.

These new roles could be filled by members willing to join the Management Committee or could equally be filled by members who hold the role but sit outside the Committee.

If you think you have the skills and time, please do let us know by email to Jill Benwell at [jill.benwell123@btinternet.com](mailto:jill.benwell123@btinternet.com).

### **2023 overview**

We started the year with plenty of hope but no actual lawns to play on.

Since then, we have come to an arrangement with Swanage Primary school where we have exclusive (almost) use of part of their field. Simon Parvin, Bruno Charron and Ron Barker have worked hard to prepare and maintain two lawns of ever improving quality. Thanks to them and all others who made this happen.

The High Handicap team won their league, getting all the way to the South Western finals only just losing the final despite giving away 53 free shots against 4 for Swanage. Well done.

Tony Green was awarded his Referee qualification, so we now have two (with Keith Southern) qualified referees in the Club.

### **New players**

We welcomed several new members and some of those, alongside some existing newish members, are showing real promise so I feel confident our league teams will be even stronger next year.

Thanks to Tony Green and Keith Southern for managing these teams.

### **Play over winter**

We are keeping the lawns open over winter so please feel free to take advantage of any good weather. WhatsApp is proving a popular way of getting players together but please ensure you always also sign on the booking system as that is the key record for data gathering and insurance needs.

### **What does 2024 offer us?**

We recognise most members enjoy croquet for the fun of play and have no interest in playing competitively. That said, an increasing number of players welcome the opportunity

to play other clubs in league games as they feel that the competitive element helps them develop their playing skills.

To meet the needs of both groups we will arrange some coaching sessions early in 2024 season. We will also set aside a session per week, perhaps Friday morning, for those wanting to play in league games to enable them to hone their skills and be guided on competitive play tactics. More details early next season.

We hope to continue playing at Bon Accord. Management of the school is being taken over by an Academy in the early part of 2024 and the School Head has agreed to introduce us to the CEO of the Academy so we can open talks on securing some form of secure tenure over the lawns. If we can achieve that we will be able to apply for various grants allowing us to build a clubhouse and plumbed restroom. Fingers crossed.

In the summer of 2023 Swanage Council called a meeting of all Swanage based Sports Clubs so they could let the Council know of their needs. Simon Parvin led that meeting on our behalf and managed to publicly show that the Council seems to support other clubs but not the Croquet Club and this seemed inequitable. The other Clubs were surprised and voiced support for us which has now resulted in the Council agreeing to reconsider giving us a permanent home at Forres Field. We have asked for a fenced off space for three lawns with permission for a container and some sort of clubhouse. A long way to go before any of that is more than talk, but your committee is working hard to keep all options, including Forres Field, open to us.

All members will be kept up to date with developments, if any, and will have a vote if any major changes are on the table.

Greg Vaughn Chair 4/12/23