

# RICHMOND PARK GOLF CLUB



## ANNUAL REPORT - 2008

How's the memory? Can you remember back to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008? The question is, what if anything, was the same on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008? The simple answer is that if you were in this country on these days you must have encountered some rain!! It didn't rain for all 366 days of 2008, but the fact that there was no hosepipe ban says quite a lot.

For the Club, the beginning of 2008 was a period of trepidation. We were not quite sure how the plans for the Park would unfold and it was difficult to predict how our membership would move during the year. As it happened, the plans did the opposite and folded completely, and our membership leapt forward despite the weather.

Interest in golf was at it's highest in the mid-1980's with the likes of Sandy Lyle, Ian Woosnam, Nick Faldo, Greg Norman and of course Seve leading the world's golfers. These legends of golf increased the profile of golf and there was a surge of new player interest. Of course, coming from a position of total impartiality, I like to think that the resurgence of interest in golf with our Club has in part been a function of what I shall term the 'Harrington effect'!! With back to back Open titles and the US PGA it is comforting to know that despite not getting my name onto the Richmond Park prize list my namesake has managed to get it very nicely engraved on a couple of pretty major trophies in 2008.

One of the reasons for the success of our Club is that a number of members do bits and pieces in a small way, and sometimes in a very big way. I do not intend to list out all the bits and pieces that everyone has done to help us through the year, but there are two mentions that I should make. The first is a thank you to Arthur Dolby who sneaks into the cabin from time to time when nobody is around and he gives it a thorough spring clean. The second is a gigantic thank you to Gary Flounders, Tony Kopczak, Nigel Ward, and not forgetting Graeme Syme as the chief foreman, for contributing their time and effort into rescuing our cabin from the clutches of the weather with a new roof and internal repairs. Despite various previous repair efforts the squirrels kept nibbling away at the old plastic roof and some drastic action was needed to install a new roof above the old one. Whilst this was in progress the chaps paved between the cabins and our surroundings are ten times more comfortable as a result. Given the prognosis that we are likely to be using the cabin for at least another two years the repair was all the more important for us and we are exceedingly grateful to the chaps for the excellent work done.

For some of us 2008 was a welcome respite from the external shenanigans that we had to endure over the previous years; namely the amalgamation issue and the objections lodged against the development plans. As you will glean from below, I have a feeling that the development plan will again be returning to the front burner in 2009, and as the largest Club playing at the Park we will no doubt need to take a lead in expressing the 'views of the golfer' with regard to what is in store for both club and public players. Anyway, before worrying about 2009, let's have a look at 2008:

## **Dinner-Dance and Annual Prize-giving**

One of the highlights of the year is the Club's annual gathering for the presentation of the year's trophies and we return again to The Winning Post on the Chertsey Road at Twickenham this coming Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January. This year we are forecasting an attendance of 80 and although this is slightly more than the norm it would be good to see future attendances back up to the 100 mark. If this seems just a little optimistic, there are some of us who can recall attendances in excess of 150, and one busy event with a tally of 180!

Below is a list of our 2008 prizewinners and it is good to see that we have some new names appearing. All the events have their own moments of drama but the event that holds the most tension is always the Club Championship scratch event played over 36 holes.

- In the men's 'senior' division the early round leader, playing well under his handicap, was Paul Appleton with a score of 74. He was followed by Paul Patching on 77, Ian Smith on 79, and Dave Winter at 6 shots adrift on 80. In the second round there was a change of fortune and Dave Winter played some controlled and stunning golf on a difficult day to score 75 on Dukes and take the Championship for the second time. Ian Smith was second on the day with 81 but his first round deficit was too large to prevent Paul Appleton taking second overall with his 84. In the men's 'junior' division Paul Grand stepped into a first round lead of 80, a full six shots clear of Paul Doran on 86 and Richard Kenwood who trailed behind on 88. The second round was a close contest and although Paul did not have the best score with a 91 he had enough of a lead with his first round to retain the Championship for the second year running. Paul Doran held on to his first round position to collect the runner up spot but this was an 'only just' with Richard Kenwood pulling back a shot on the second round. In the men's handicap trophy the brace of Paul Appleton and Paul Grand both carded net 63's and looked like runaway winners, however whilst everyone was struggling in round 2 it was Dave Winter who carded a net 63 on the Dukes course and he won by a strong margin of 5 shots.
- The ladies' club championship was a very close contest. The first round leader with 89 in the portacabin was Jayne Maxwell, and she was closely followed by Di Jackett two shots behind on 91 and Julie Smith one further back on 92. The second round was played in the slightly tougher conditions and Jayne matched her first round score of 89. Julie was the winner of the second round with an 88 but this was not sufficient to overtake Jayne's first round lead therefore Jayne collects the Championship for the first time and Julie collects the runner up prize, a reversal of last year's results. The ladies' Handicap Cup is for those with handicaps in the range scratch to 24 and it comes as no surprise that Jayne should collect the Cup with a below handicap net 68 followed by another below handicap net 69, giving a total net of 137. Jayne was followed by Di who scored two net 74's, giving a total net of 148. The ladies Pembroke Cup is for those with handicaps in the range 25 to 36. Julie Smyth had a first round lead with a net 67 but she couldn't follow this up in the second round and the winner was Janet Fox with scores of net 68 plus net 75, giving a total net of 143. Jini Beacham was in third spot after the first round with a net 72, however with a net 80 in the second round she clinched the runner up position with a total net of 152.

## **RPGC 2008 PRIZE LIST**

### **EVENT**

Senior Men's Club Championship  
Ladies' Club Championship  
Junior Men's Club Championship  
Men's Club Championship Handicap Trophy  
Handicap Cup - handicaps 0-24  
Pembroke Cup - handicaps 25-36  
J H Taylor – matchplay 0-16  
Two Courses Cup – matchplay 17+  
Ladies' Challenge Cup  
Men's Fourball – matchplay  
Ladies Double C Cup  
Mixed Foursomes – matchplay  
Ladies' Committee Cup  
Grand Medal Trophy  
Silver Jubilee Trophy  
Golden Jubilee Trophy  
Diamond Jubilee Trophy  
Platinum Jubilee Trophy  
Anniversary Cup  
President's Putter – overall  
President's Putter - ladies  
President's Putter - men  
Captain's Prize  
Lady Captain's Prize  
Richmond Park Golf Club Open  
J Q Robertson Trophy  
Coronation Cup  
Shaw Cup  
Spring Mixed Foursomes  
Autumn Mixed Foursomes - Handicap  
Autumn Mixed Foursomes - Scratch  
Burgess Cup - Greensomes  
Summer Cup  
Top Dog Trophy  
Ladies' Dowling Cup  
Lissaman Cup - 3 clubs + putter  
Barton Bowl - Play-off – top 8 against captain  
Charity Cup  
Winter Competition

### **WINNER**

Dave Winter  
Jayne Maxwell  
Paul Grand  
Dave Winter  
Jayne Maxwell  
Janet Fox  
Paul Patching  
David Keen  
Veronica Mitchell  
Paul Grand  
Toby Hunt  
Ros Gray  
Molly Hood  
Ian and Julie Smith  
Jayne Maxwell  
Graeme Syme  
Michele Mair  
Simon Beard  
Paul Grand  
Graeme Syme  
John Morris  
Nigel Marsh  
Lynn Richardson  
Nigel Marsh  
Rowley Barrett  
Sheena Harrington  
D Ruthiven (Putney Pk)  
Francois Lemaigre  
Paul Doran  
Paul Doran  
Louise Williams  
Nigel Marsh  
Julie Smyth  
John Morris  
Julie Smith  
Ian Smith  
Chris Genasi  
Guy Saintfiet  
John Morris  
Paul Doran  
Janet Fox  
Nick Rogers  
Susan Smith  
Osman Chaudry  
Lee Eden

### **RUNNER-UP**

Paul Appleton  
Julie Smith  
Paul Doran  
-  
Di Jackett  
Jini Beacham  
Toby Hunt  
Richard Kenwood  
Jayne Maxwell  
Paul Doran  
Dave Williams  
Maureen Slade  
Cheryl Woodhouse  
Veronica Mitchell  
Richard Owen  
Louise Williams  
Rowley Barrett  
John Morris  
Paul Appleton  
Gurpal Sekhon  
Julie Smith  
Tony Kopczak  
Graeme Syme  
Louise Williams  
Dave Winter  
Julian James  
Graeme Syme  
Stan Potts  
Di Jackett  
Arthur Dolby  
Julie Smith  
Ian Smith  
Ian and Julie Smith  
Kerry Sargeant  
Graeme Syme  
Paul Robinson  
Lee Eden  
Kerry Sargeant  
Stuart Nash

## Membership

Last year I reported “the weather in the summer months was poor even by London standards, and through 2007 there were many weeks when it looked as though we were the only players evident when scanning *both* courses!” All I need to say is ‘ditto’ for 2008. There were some weeks when the old 20<sup>th</sup> century suntan lotion came in useful, but not enough days to worry about running out this decade.

The weather, very typically, has a pretty detrimental affect on the propensity of golfers to consider the leap from casual friendly play to club membership, however I am very pleased to report that this condition did not prevail in 2008. In fact, it seemed to be quite the opposite and on the men’s side we received a very substantial number of membership enquiries that translated to full membership of the Club. The ladies did not receive a similar rate of enquiry at the beginning of 2008 but towards the latter part of the year it was encouraging to see new ladies join the Club.

As I have mentioned in previous years, the lack of attention to the needs of the golfing public by Glendale makes our job of attracting new members all the more difficult. In spite of the continued absence of sensible facilities at the Park we are fortunate that the independence of the Club and our general operational arrangements are conducive to comfortable competitive play and this has a quaint attractiveness that keeps our members’ interests alive.

The recent pattern of our membership trends is shown in the table below. The membership of the ladies’ section has been increasing steadily over the years which is a very healthy sign and this bodes well for the future. The men’s section witnessed a worrying fall in 2007 and some of us had concerns that there might not be a recovery of numbers, however for 2008 we experienced a complete change of fortune. The results speak for themselves, with a net increase of 16 new men and a restoration to the membership level of 2000 when the total club membership stood at 123.

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
Men:							
Regular	78	62	69	69	73	78	67
Senior	7	7	8	6	7	7	6
Junior	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Honorary (playing)	1	1	1	3	1	1	1
Total Men	<u>86</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>75</u>
Ladies:							
Regular	38	36	34	33	32	29	30
Senior	5	5	5	2	4	3	3
Junior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Honorary (playing)	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
Total Ladies	<u>44</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>33</u>
Total Membership	<u>130</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>118</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>108</u>
Joiners:							
New men	27	7	15	13	19	22	13
New ladies	6	4	5	4	4	1	7
Rejoiners – men	1	1	4	2	0	1	5
Rejoiners – ladies	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Total	<u>34</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>26</u>

From the table we can see that in 2008 we gained 34 new members but with a net gain of 18 members it means that in the same year we also lost 16 members. This is in fact less than our average loss of 20 members and we should keep our fingers crossed that the present economic environment does not impede the membership progress that we made in 2008.

As regards membership movements, we are not alone and it is a common feature of all golf clubs that members move on for a wide variety of reasons, but mainly as a result of changed personal circumstances. It is with the knowledge that rotation occurs at a steady pace that the Committee devotes where possible, considerable attention to the introduction of new members to the Club. In theory, this seems like a fairly simple and straightforward process. However, for 2008 we decided to look at the statistics and to give everyone an idea of the time commitment. For the men's section in 2008 roughly 40% of membership enquiries progressed to the point of the potential member coming to visit us at the Park – and we then saw 51 potential members at the Park, of whom 27 joined - and for the handicap qualification process we marked 121 cards!!

For 2009 we have already collected a sizeable number of membership enquiries and there is plenty of scope for the Club to grow in numbers. We are, however, very conscious that there is a daylight playing limit to the number of games that we may field on Sunday mornings, and if our playing numbers increase substantially we will be keeping an eye on membership levels to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to play when they choose. With our current playing ratio we will not encounter a membership squeeze for a little while yet and in theory we have room for another 40 or 50 players.

## **Inter-Club Matches**

It is unfortunate that the very poor facilities at the Park are not conducive to hosting new inter-club 'friendly' matches and the Club is somewhat constrained as a result. We are fortunate that we still have some matches and these are always played in a good spirit. Our results for 2008 are as follows:

### Men vs Rickmansworth:

In 2007 Ricky rather convincingly clobbered us and we thought that the tide had turned when we took a lead in the first leg of 4-2. The optimism was short lived when the Club returned to Ricky for the second leg and was subjected to a 6-0 drumming. The overall result was a Richmond loss of 8-4, just marginally better than 2007.

### Ladies vs Mitcham:

The Richmond ladies had held the trophy for four years and it became apparent that in 2008 there would be a tough battle when the Mitcham ladies won the first leg 3-1. With the second leg played on home territory the advantage moved back to the Richmond ladies and there was a home win of 3-1. The overall match was tied and by virtue of the 2007 win Richmond managed to retain the trophy

### Ladies vs Amida (Twickenham)

The Amida match was inaugurated in 2007 with just one match to be played each year and the courses alternated year on year. It was the Club's first visit to the Twickenham 9 hole golf course and the Club secured a 3-1 win. The Richmond ladies have won both the events that have been played.

### Association Keys Trophy (Strokeplay)

With a break from tradition it was decided to hold this four-man team strokeplay event on a Sunday to encourage greater club participation, however on the day it was just the Club and Putney Park who were able to field a team. Putney Park scored exceptionally well to record a net 280 versus our own score of 293.

Association Salver (Stableford):

Putney Park was the only other club to field a team for this event. I know that the Richmond men were victorious, however I do not have the score data.

## **N.A.P.G.C. Competitions**

### **Clapham Common Shield (men) [Greensomes Stableford]**

In 2008, the round 1 draw was pitched against Wycombe Heights which is a very hilly course that overlooks High Wycombe. By a remarkable product of circumstances our home team lost by two points and our away team won by two points which gave rise to a points draw after 18 holes. By assessing the back 9 scores for both courses it soon became apparent that Wycombe had the superior result and we were not to progress to round 2.

### **Hawtree Trophy (mixed foursomes matchplay)**

Details are a bit scant but I can confirm that the Club lost 3-2 in the first round to Leaside.

### **White Webbs (ladies singles matchplay)**

Two teams were again entered in 2008. The 'B' team had an unfortunate draw and lost in the first round by 2-3 playing at Portsmouth against the 2007 winning team. The 'A' team found themselves at home for the first round and were victorious over Iver with a 3-2 win. In the second round the team met stiff opposition at Hoebridge and were unsuccessful with a loss of 4-1.

## **Internal Matches and Competitions**

### **The Bontor**

In 2008 the ladies fought back from a near whitewash in 2007 but could not capture the trophy and the men were successful with a win of 9½ to 7½.

### **Ladies' Invitation**

A bit of a rest from golf did not dent Tracy Wright's performance and partnering Kerry Sargeant they came in the winners with 36 points, one point ahead of the second place held by Cheryl Woodhouse and Paul Doran.

### **Men's Invitation**

It was a true case of last but not least because the final pairing of Lia Donath and Paul Grand scooped the winning prize with 37 points. In the runner up position was the pairing of Julie Smyth and David Keen with 34 points

### **The Lockie Trophy**

The Ladies' Spring Weekend Away was held at Donnington Grove where the conditions were very wet and blustery. The course was an interesting mixture of hilly and river-hugging holes separated by a very large main road which ensured that we had plenty of walking exercise. The conditions did not cause any major problems for Anne Koychev who won the

Lockie Trophy with a two-day score of 54 points and Anne was pleased to see the return of the door stop which she last held in 2006.

### The Gill Hibbs Trophy

Perhaps there was a thought that a return to France for the Ladies' Autumn Weekend Away might be a good bet for some good weather. Judging by the reports received from those who travelled it sounds as if the rain was even more severe than we commonly encounter in this country. The French party played three courses and despite the foul weather Ros Gray fared well and was the Club's winner of the Gill Hibbs Trophy with a score of 74 points. This was the second year that the Trophy had been played for.

### Individual Achievements

- In the Open competitions played at the Park in 2008 we had some notable successes:
  - The Ruskie Hall Open was not staged.
  - In the Putney Park Open Dave Winter was the runner up.
  - The Centurion Open was cancelled.
  - In our own Richmond Park Open Dave Winter was the runner up.
  - In the Association Trophy, Stan Potts was the runner up.
  - The winner of the Trevor Allen Open was Stuart Nash with a net 63.
- There was one hole in one in 2008 – Maureen Slade at the 3<sup>rd</sup> hole on the Dukes course during the Men's Invitation on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July.
- In 2008 no honours were taken in the rain-affected Bournemouth Open week.
- Our new handicap software has a few interesting data reports and one of these just happens to list the number of birdies (or better) scored in a given period. Out of idle curiosity, for the men our birdie champion was Kerry Sargeant with a total of 35 and Kerry was hotly pursued by Ian Smith with a tally of 30. For the ladies it was Julie Smith highest with 12 birdies and Di Jackett in second place with 6 birdies.

### 2008 – a relatively quiet year at the Park? Not entirely.

#### (a) Development Plan

In 2007 I reported at some length that we had devoted considerable effort to the review of the proposed development plans and that it had been necessary to lodge a number of major faults and weaknesses with both Glendale and the Royal Parks Agency. We had gained some limited success in having parts of the development plan changed but there remained some fundamental problems on which we could not convince Glendale to make changes. We were led to believe that there remained a fairly simple rubber-stamping exercise by the Planning Department of the Richmond upon Thames Council and we could expect work to commence in 2008. Well – we now know that everyone was hugely misguided.

It transpired that in addition to a nod of approval from the councils of Richmond, Wandsworth, Wimbledon, plus the Highways Agency and Transport for London and, not forgetting English Heritage, there was the little matter of an additional nod being required from the Greater London Authority's Mayor of London office. In April 2008, the GLA's letter on the development plan questioned the adequacy of the environmental considerations, it also questioned the transport impact, and finally it questioned the need for such a large clubhouse. We gather that there was something of a realisation that as things stood it would

take some mammoth effort to get the necessary approval from the GLA, and it now appears that it was a case of heading back to the drawing board.

We understand that Glendale and the RPA have a desire to resurrect the development plan in 2009 but with some modification of the original plan published in 2007. On the basis of the comments received very recently it seems likely that the proposed alterations to the courses will not be changed and this is very disappointing because this aspect was by far the most damaging of the new development. At the moment, we will endeavour to monitor the progress of the new plans and provide input where the opportunity exists.

(b) RPAGC.

In 1965 the five clubs at the Park formed an Association to represent the interests of the clubs in third party discussions. Through 2007 and 2008 it was agreed to replace the Association with a new collective body which has been named the 'Richmond Park Association Golf Club'. The five clubs are all members of the RPAGC and a sixth club named the Alton Society has recently been granted member status. The objectives of the new RPAGC include the same representative status of the old Association and a plan to liaise more closely on certain issues such as handicapping at the Park. We are very fortunate to have Richard Owen as the Secretary of the RPAGC and this ensures that our thoughts and ideas are well represented.

(c) Handicapping.

After years of planning, you would think that the boffins at the EGU, EWGA and CONGU would have finally settled on an agreed optimal handicapping system when the new unified rules became effective on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Paul identified a problem that needed a ruling by CONGU and this in turn prompted revised instructions to be issued to the licensed handicapping software suppliers.

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 our handicaps will be classified as 'active' or 'inactive'. We are yet to see the precise rules but members of all clubs will be flagged as 'inactive' if they fail to play in three 'handicap qualifying' events during calendar 2009. This means that the new process is already 'in progress' but all clubs are still waiting to hear the official notification of this change.

The EGU and EWGA are pushing ahead with a 'centralised database of handicaps' and trials with a sample of clubs are presently in progress. It is to be expected that the new centralised recording of handicaps will provide some measure of compliance check, however we are relaxed on this matter because we are confident that our procedures and processes meet the necessary standards.

## **Extra Curricular Activities**

In 2008 we again enjoyed some interesting extras:

On 28<sup>th</sup> March Julie had arranged for the ladies' spring weekend away at Donnington Park. The results of weekend are reported above. The weekend was another one of Julie's roaring successes and we are all hugely grateful for her endeavours to ensure that the arrangements for the weekends are as smooth and comfortable as possible.

On 30<sup>th</sup> April, on one of the wettest days of the year, Dave arranged for us to pay a visit to Coombe Wood where the Secretary is our former President and Honorary Member Geoff Seed. Geoff, who is renowned for playing in impossible conditions, started in the first game in the morning and lasted as far as the second hole before giving up. Some members



persevered rather than retire to the bar. The conditions in the afternoon were marginally better and we were able to complete the day. Once the soggy cards had been checked it transpired that the winner was Tony Kopczak.

On 5<sup>th</sup> September the Club enjoyed the special 'Gill Hibbs Day' which is reported on below.

For the ladies' autumn weekend away Julie had organised the journey to France as reported above. The party set off on 3<sup>rd</sup> October and immediately ran into some bad weather which set in for most of the weekend. [Although it is of no consolation the weather was poor during the previous French visit 10 years earlier in 1998 when the party of 40 'waded' round Hardelet]. Despite the playing conditions the reports from the participants are very favourable and it turned out to be a very enjoyable excursion.

The Ruffians Ryder Cup match against Ludlow was not played in 2008, again as a result of fixture congestion on both sides. It is hoped to resurrect this match in 2009 and the thought is to play over a couple of days at a neutral venue in the Midlands which promises to be an interesting event.

### **www.RichmondParkGolfClub.Org.Uk - The RPGC Website**

The Club's website continues to be a huge success story. Our President-elect Tim Meyer commenced the website in 2002 – and week-by-week it grows by the odd couple of pages or more. With all this activity the website now contains over 2,000 pages of Club data!! Keeping this lot in order and keeping all the linkages in place is no small task, and as I have said before it is no small mean feat that the 'website style' is common throughout. Some would say that it is indeed a work of art. We are all exceedingly grateful to Tim for his endeavours for giving us a website that is up to date and full of the latest happenings.

For the club's newer members, and perhaps some of the more seasoned members I will mention that on the website's home page it is possible to see the Sunday competitions and member's playing order for the forthcoming weeks, it is possible to check your handicap, and amongst other things it is possible to check on the weather! One quick trip and you'll have all the information you need for a Sunday morning before you've reached the car park.

And now for a simple puzzle. What do the figures 31,622,400 and 29 have in common? Don't look yet – but the answer is at the end.

### **The Committee and helpers**

In 2006 and 2007 the Committee was involved in a considerable amount of extra curricular activity dealing with the grand amalgamation issue, followed by the new development plans for the Park that had been prepared by Glendale. By comparison 2008 was a relatively quiet year and it was a welcome respite from the frenetic activity of the previous years.

It is a good sign of a committee that operationally the machinery ticks over without any great drama or too much interference. In 2008, under Richard's stewardship as Captain of the Club we succeeded on this score very well and the Club functioned admirably without any hiccups.

On 2008 I have a few brief comments:

- At the beginning of 2008 both Richard Owen and Di Jackett stepped up to the plate to assume their respective Captain's positions and this meant taking over control of year's proceedings. It was clear from the start that the year would run smoothly and efficiently. The two Captains really pushed the boat out for refreshments for our Saturday events

and for the Captains' Day, and all those that participated were very appreciative of the personal touches which made a big difference to everyone's enjoyment of the events. Di has not been able to continue for her full term of office and the mantle has been handed over to Jayne Maxwell who is coping exceedingly well in the deep end.

- Yet again, the person who has worked the hardest to keep the 'show on the road' is Paul Grand. Paul looks after the men's handicap records and at the beginning of 2008 Paul had to contend with the adoption of the Club's entirely new software package. More recently he has been involved with the new changes mentioned above. When not working on handicapping, Paul prepares and controls the booking sheet data for the website and delivers the playing order to the cabin on Saturday mornings. After our Sunday games Paul prepares the results data for the men's and the joint competitions and he distributes the sweep winnings. All in all Paul looks after most of our weekly routine from beginning to end which is no small feat.

## **A Double Whammy**

At the AGM we are seeing the departure of two of the long-standing officers of the Club.

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Julie Smith retires as the Club's President. Julie started committee life on the Ladies' Committee around about 1987, and she probably didn't expect to still be at it over 20 years later. Julie was Lady Vice Captain for the years 1988-1989 and this introduced her to the main committee. In the early 1990's Julie collected the role of Club Secretary which she held for about 10 years until January 2002. After continuing with general committee duties it was in January 2005 that the Club witnessed its first ever Lady President when Julie was elevated to the Club's most senior role. In conjunction with her main committee officer positions, Julie was also a member of the ladies' section committee where she looked after various tasks and since the last century Julie has been the ladies' handicap secretary. Julie and Ian have moved to a location some distance from the Park and the journey to the Club is a bit too lengthy for her to continue to perform her committee duties.

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After about five years of indicating his desire to stand down it has finally come to the point where Dave Williams retires as the Club's Treasurer. Dave joined the Club in 1974 when the only way to get a Sunday block booking for the Club was to queue in Roehampton Lane from about 3:00am on Sunday mornings. Dave kept his head down for a while but in August 1989 he was pulled onto the Committee and apart from a short sabbatical he has been propping it up ever since. We have lost track of the timings but it would appear that Dave has been the keeper of the purse for at least the last 15 years during which time he has also been instrumental in establishing the Club's away days.

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Over the years there are always one or two members who plough in many many hours of conscientious effort year after year for the benefit of the Club and its members, and Julie and Dave fall very positively in this category. By using their knowledge and experience they have helped the Club to move forward over the last 20 years. They have helped to ensure the continuity of the Club's events and functions, and they have helped ensure that the Club has adhered to the necessary rules and procedures. We will undoubtedly miss them both from the Committee – but the good news is that we know where they are for those occasions when we get stuck on something!

## **Gill Hibbs Day**

Many of us remember Gill as one of our fully committed members who was eventually taken from us in February 2007. We learnt a short while later that Gill had bequeathed £5,000 for a golfing day out at her expense.

Plans were put in motion and after some assessment of available venues by Dave Williams it was decided to hold the Day at The Drift Golf Club near Leatherhead. A concerted effort was made by Richard Owen and Di Jackett to attract as many members as possible and it is a credit to their efforts that a total of 60 players signed up for the day.

Unfortunately, in common with all days out in 2008 – it rained. However, this did not seem to dampen the spirits and everyone settled into the day's golf.

The course is not long but it is a good test of golf and scoring was far from easy. In the main afternoon event Jack Koychev won the men's trophy with a score of 36 points and Tim Meyer took the runner up prize with 35 points. For the ladies, Michele Mair took the honours with a commanding 36 points and Anne Koychev claimed the runner up prize with 30 points. The day also included a team event, and a putting competition which sorted the men from the boys.

The day rounded off with a champagne reception and fine meal provided by The Drift.

It is fair to say that the day at The Drift was just the sort of golf day that Gill would have revelled in and it was a fitting tribute to her bequest.

## **The Final Word**

I hope you all have a most enjoyable golfing year in 2009 with a few success stories on the way and I will keep my fingers crossed that we will not see so many soggy days as last year.

Peter Harrington  
Secretary  
31<sup>st</sup> January 2009

31,622,400 = number of seconds in 2008

29 = website hit rate

1,093,236 = website hits in 2008