

RICHMOND PARK GOLF CLUB



ANNUAL REPORT - 2007

Becalmed! The doldrums! The eye of a hurricane! Perhaps not this extreme but at the beginning of 2007 we 'enjoyed' a period of calmness before the storm that we knew was on the horizon. The weather was pretty average, we endured a pretty typical winter and El Nino (whoever this chap is on the other side of the world who decides if the course will be muddy or not) was sleeping quietly somewhere in the Pacific. At the beginning of 2007 we knew that Tony Blair was going, and that Glendale was manager-elect for the Park for the next 20 odd years.

Many moons ago students of law poured over the old Sale of Goods Act that referred to the supply being 'fit for the purpose'. Later, in 1979, some bright spark extended this to 'fitness for all purposes', and then in 2007 there emerged the now common term 'fit for purpose'. Although the Committee might have seemed fairly quiet in 2007 as compared to previous years it is fair to say that once the gathering storm emerged the Committee devoted a considerable amount of time working behind the scenes to ensure that the golf courses at the Park remain 'fit for golfers' – something absolutely imperative which seems to have by-passed those in positions of responsibility who are now in charge of the future of golf at the Park. As you may suspect, there will be a few comments on this later.

We started 2007 with the legacy of the failed amalgamation of the Association clubs in 2006. From a playing perspective this did not have too much of an impact, but there were a few minor procedural situations where we needed to resurrect some life into events that should in practice have run their course. Given the events of 2006 it is probably fair to say that the Committee was somewhat pleased at the start of 2007 that amalgamation did not occur, and that the Committee could resume its thoughts about the development of RPGC and not concern itself with the other clubs and their members.

Overall, I consider 2007 to have been a year of stability but perhaps a slightly disappointing year in terms of the golf. The overall figure for Club membership shows a small reduction which is not of major significance, however we have noticed a significant fall in playing propensity. For the old timers playing golf regularly on Sundays it is very apparent that the number of members playing on a standard weekly basis has dropped, and this is of particular relevance to the men's section where there has been a progressive decline in attendance stretching back for over 20 years. It is important that we all make an effort to halt and hopefully reverse this trend in 2008. This will be something of a major challenge given that we anticipate that the courses will undergo the start of some major development work commencing in 2008, so it is fair to say that we will all have our work cut out on this front. However, enough of this for the moment, and let's have a look at 2007:

Dinner-Dance and Annual Prize-giving

As a result of events beyond our control the 2006 prize-giving was held earlier than desired in January 2007. It was decided to move the date of the 2007 season's dinner-dance into early February 2008, however a clash with rugby at Twickenham has caused us to defer the dinner-dance to Saturday 23rd February at our usual venue – The Winning Post. The arrangements for the 23rd will be the same as usual and we hope that the later date will see us return to our usual attendance of close to 100.

Below you will find a list of our 2007 prize-winners. Congratulations go to all on the list but especially to our Club Champions Ian Smith, Julie Smith and Paul Grand (junior). In 2004 and 2005 Ian had to settle for the runner-up trophy in the Club Championship so it is good to see that he has taken the number one slot. In the first round on the Princes course Ian had a commanding 7 shot lead over Rob Urquart. At the half way stage of the second round the result of the Club Championship was far from a foregone conclusion, however Ian held on for a second round of 80. In the final analysis Ian played the best gross round of the day which was matched by Rob who collects the runner-up prize. Julie retained the ladies' trophy for the fourth successive year! After the first round on Princes Julie held a narrow lead of 2 shots over Jayne Maxwell. The second round on the Dukes course was a strong test of nerve with Julie edging forward and she finished with an overall lead of 5 shots. The Junior Club Championship for the men was a good battle royal in 2007. The first round leader was Richard Kenwood by one shot over Stuart Nash and lying one shot adrift was Paul Grand. The second round on the Dukes course took its toll on both Richard and Stuart, with Paul coming in the winner by two shots from Tony Archdale.

The AGM day is also the tax return deadline day. In true political correctness the form says that to claim the blind persons allowance 'go and read section..' Those not in need of this allowance will spot the addition of the 'Double C Cup' (or is it cups?) for a new event inaugurated and promoted by Cheryl Woodhouse who is donating the perpetual cups. The format of the event is pairs matchplay knockout, and the first winners as shown are Sheena Harrington and Julie Smith.

RPGC 2007 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

WINNER

Ian Smith

Julie Smith

Paul Grand

Peter Harrington

Jayne Maxwell

Ros Gray

Paul Appleton

Stan Potts

Di Jackett

Kerry Sargent

Graeme Syme

Sheena Harrington

Julie Smith

Doreen Dolby

Phil Flanagan

Di Jackett

Ian Smith

Phil Flanagan

RUNNER-UP

Rob Urquhart

Jayne Maxwell

Tony Archdale

Peter Cunningham

Julie Smith

Susan Smith

Phil Flanagan

Paul Robinson

Angela Flynn

Richard Owen

Rob Urquhart

Jini Beacham

Angela Flynn

Pia Langeland

Arthur Dolby

Julie Smith

Jon Cooper

Golden Jubilee Trophy	Janet Fox	Ian Smith
Diamond Jubilee Trophy	Itsawat Mahdumrongkul	Tom Scarr
Platinum Jubilee Trophy	Jon Cooper	Tony Pickard
Anniversary Cup	Jon Cooper	
President's Putter – overall	Tony Kopczak	
President's Putter - ladies	Ros Gray	Christine Stewart
President's Putter - men	Tony Kopczak	Nigel Ward
Captain's Prize	Toby Hunt	Ian Smith
Lady Captain's Prize	Ros Gray	Sheena Harrington
Richmond Park Golf Club Open	Phil Flanagan	Jini Beacham
J Q Robertson Trophy	Ros Gray	John Ahad
Coronation Cup	John Bennett	Paul Appleton
Shaw Cup	Veronica Mitchell	Lia Donath
Spring Mixed Foursomes	Julie Smyth	Sheena Harrington
	Stan Potts	Jon Cooper
Autumn Mixed Foursomes - Handicap	Janet Fox	Julie Smith
	Paul Grand	Ian Smith
Autumn Mixed Foursomes - Scratch	Julie Smith	
	Ian Smith	
Burgess Cup - Greensomes	Kerry Sargeant	John Ahad
	Graeme Syme	Tim Meyer
Summer Cup	Richard Kenwood	Francois Lemaigre
Top Dog Trophy	Paul Appleton	
Ladies' Dowling Cup	Ros Gray & Jayne Maxwell (Trophy shared)	
Lissaman Cup - 3 clubs + putter	Lee Eden	Jim Fogarty
Barton Bowl - Play-off – top 8 against captain	Maureen Slade	
Charity Cup	Norma Lynch	Michael Rossiter
Winter Competition	Gurpal Sekhon	Kerry Sargeant

Membership

Those of us that have played regularly at the Park though the year will have noticed a general fall in weekend golf activity by members of the public and club members. 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!

We all know that the Park lacks reasonable facilities for golfers and the condition of the courses has been sub-standard, something of a double whammy in terms of attractiveness. It naturally follows that if Glendale does not maintain the courses to an acceptable standard the desire of the Park's players to join a club at the Park is lessened, and I am sure that our Club has suffered because of this. One of the other clubs at the Park has succeeded in attracting new members as a result of a Glendale connection, however this is untypical as evidenced by Glendale's decision to disband its own club and one of the Sunday clubs is now a shadow of its former self.

Our membership data is shown in the table below. In 2006 I was able to report that we 'held our station', but this it is not the same story for 2007. It is good to see that the ladies have again increased their membership to the highest number in modern history – a total of 42. In percentage terms the ladies have moved forward from a ratio of 34% to 38%. The results for the men are somewhat disappointing for 2007 with a 10% fall from 78 to 70 members. The

men's section did receive interest from a number of potential members but this interest did not translate into new joiners.

The analysis below shows the profile of our membership over the last six years.

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

In common with other golf clubs we find that every year some members do not rejoin because of a various personal reasons. I think that everyone is well aware of this situation and we are all conscious of the need for the Club to attract new members. For the Club to remain vibrant it is just as important for us to field a healthy number of regular playing members, and the Committee does indeed devote significant time to these issues.

The good news is that the prognosis for 2008 is already encouraging. The Club has received a number of general enquiries and we have some potential members passing through the handicap qualification phase. The new banner on the side of the portacabin was installed specifically to attract new members and a significant number of leaflets have been handed out. If we can return to our average of 20 new joiners for 2008 I am sure that we will be looking healthier for the beginning of 2009.

As an aside I will mention that golf in the UK was at its most popular in the 1980's. During this phase the management team at the Park imposed a game restriction on the clubs and for RPGC the number was 21. The Club's membership was restricted to ensure that on a general weekly basis we did not have more than 84 players clamouring for the available tee slots. Twenty years ago, the 1988 membership (excluding honorary members) stood at men – 100, and ladies – 29. It is interesting that the total of 129 is just 17 greater than our current membership, but that with this membership we were fielding close to 80 players on a week to week basis. The other difference in 1988 was that the Club had a waiting list of 50 potential members!

Inter-Club Matches

The inter-club matches are an important integral part of the Club's range of activities and with the lack of general facilities at the Park we are fortunate to have retained the matches that we have. In 2007 we had success in four of the five matches as follows:

Men vs Rickmansworth:

In 2006 we scored a win against Ricky and there was a degree of optimism that we could do the same in 2007. The first leg was played at home and did not go according to plan when Ricky took the lead by 3½ to 2½. Unfortunately, Ricky dominated the second leg on their home territory with a 5 - 1 win, and the overall was a Richmond loss of 3½ - 8½.

Ladies vs Mitcham:

In 2006 Richmond scored a third successive win. In 2007 Richmond started well in the first leg at home with a 3½ - ½ win. The competition was a bit sterner for the away leg at Mitcham but Richmond held on for a 2 - 2 draw. The overall result was a 5½ - 2½ win for Richmond taking us to four years of successive wins.

Ladies vs Amida

The Amida match is a new annual friendly that has been added to the fixture programme. The format of the match is 4-ball better-ball matchplay. The Amida Golf Club is a comparatively newly formed club that is located at what used to be known as the Twickenham Golf Club. The annual fixture will comprise one leg only that will alternate each year between the respective courses. The first match was played at Richmond Park and the Club scored a 2 - 1 win.

Association Keys Trophy (Strokeplay)

The format for this event is aggregate strokeplay for a four person team with the lowest aggregate score being the winner. I am pleased to say that Richmond Park won this event. Unfortunately I do not have the details other than the knowledge that the Club was the winner, and this information came from Putney Park!

Association Salver (Stableford):

The format for this event is 4-ball better-ball Stableford with two pairs per club. Traditionally, this event is played by the men, however for 2007 the Club fielded two men plus Sheena Harrington and Julie Smith who succeeded in conquering their Putney Park opponents, and the Club was the winner of the event.

N.A.P.G.C. Competitions

Clapham Common Shield (men) [Greensomes Stableford]

In 2007 the round 1 draw was against Wexham Park and our team succeeded with a 10 point win. The second round draw was against Thorney Park, against whom the Club scored a 9 point win in 2006. However, the same result was not repeated and Thorney Park were the 2007 winners by 13 points.

Hawtree Trophy (mixed)

The Club's first round was drawn away at Batchwood Hall near Beaconsfield. The team came unstuck in the first round with a loss of 2-3, however the match report indicates that it was a close call with two of the five games ending in a half.

White Webbs (ladies)

Two teams were again entered in 2007. The 'B' team lost in the first round by 2-3 playing at Blue Mountain. The 'A' team found themselves at home and drawn against Thorney Park for the first round. The result was a win but it was a close call with the match finishing halved in points and it was left for Di Jackett to secure a win on the 19th hole to take the team forward to the next round. The second round was played away at Bird Hills and on this occasion the home team were the winners 4-1.

Internal Matches and Competitions

The Bontor

In 2006 the ladies were successful with a win of 7½ to 6½. In 2007 the men took revenge and came in the winners with an impressive score of 13½ - ½ !!

Ladies' Invitation

Jayne Maxwell was the one who wisely selected Graeme Syme and they took first place with a commanding 44 points. In second place with 37 points and a best back 9 eliminator were Sheena Harrington and Martin Wright.

Men's Invitation

Apologies but my mind is blank on this. Perhaps the winners can recall who they are!

The Lockie Trophy

The Springs Hotel near Wallingford in Oxfordshire was the venue of the Ladies' Spring Weekend Away. Although the course was quite 'young' it offered some interesting challenges and played well. The Lockie Trophy is awarded to the winner of the combined Saturday and Sunday events. The winner was Maureen Slade who regains the trophy after previously winning in 2004.

The Gill Hibbs Trophy

With the sad passing of Gill Hibbs in the early part of 2007 it was decided to hold an event in her honour at the Ladies' Autumn Weekend Away. Sonia Inniss and Maureen Slade kindly donated a glass trophy for the event which has been named 'The Eternal Flame'. After a count back on the best back 18 holes the first winner of the event was Anne Koychev.

Individual Achievements

- In the Open competitions played at the Park in 2007 we had some notable successes:
 - In the Ruskie Hall Open David Keen triumphed with a net 62.
 - The Club did not participate in the Putney Park Open which clashed with our Club Championship event.
 - The Centurion Open was cancelled owing to flooding, and it was not just rain-water! On the re-scheduled day Phil Flanagan was runner-up with a net 66.
 - In our own Richmond Park Open we failed to take any places!
 - In the Association Trophy, Simon Beard was the winner with a net 65.
 - The winner of the Trevor Allen Open was Kerry Sargeant with what I consider to be the best round of the year. Kerry shot an amazing gross 66 (net 60) on the Princes course. The runner-up was Di Jackett with a net 64.
- There was just one hole in one in 2007 – yours truly on the 3rd hole at Ufford Park on the ladies' autumn weekend away.
- In 2006 we amassed a number of impressive placings in the Bournemouth Open week. Sadly there was no such repetition of this in 2007.

2007 was a 'Moving Year' – and major changes are expected for 2008!

(a) New Management Contract

I can't recall precisely when Glendale's new management contract was concluded but I believe that it was roughly at the beginning of the summer of 2007. We have not been informed of the details of the contract but it will be for a period of at least 15 years and possibly up to 20 years. We hope that with this long-term commitment Glendale will start to think 'long-term' with regard to a proper scheduling of golf course maintenance however only time will tell if the overdue course repair work and a more thorough maintenance programme are attended to.

(b) Development Plans

It is well known that the new long term management contract places an obligation on the course operator to carry out the specified changes including a new clubhouse, driving range, academy area and car park, all of which are to be accessed from the Park's Chohole Gate entrance from the A3.

Glendale produced plans as part of the contract tender process that these are the plans that have received approval from the Royal Parks Agency for the project to move forward.

The plans were first shown to the Club and the public in July 2007, and after a review it became obvious that the overall development scheme is woefully inappropriate. There is no merit in discussing all the points in detail but the Club has submitted four statements itemising aspects of the plans that we would like to see either withdrawn or improved. The points that have been raised by the Club concern many matters that will be of importance to both club golfers and also members of the public, and for Glendale's benefit we have specified the residual consequences in terms of operating efficiency, likely financial consequences, or serious failings of course safety. In short, taking all the points together we have a convincing argument that the new arrangement will be a long way short of being 'fit for purpose'. Richard Owen and myself attended a meeting with Glendale and the Royal Parks Agency to discuss the development with particular reference to the course changes and we believe that we have had some influence on the final design of some of the proposed

hole modifications. However, despite the representations made the new arrangement will see the Princes course reduce in length to something in the order of 5,200 yards off the white tees and no doubt a distance appreciably less off the yellow tees and the ladies' red tees. We recognise this as the most significant major failing of the new plans. As Julie has commented, to describe the new layout as an 'enhancement' is a complete sham. Our own proposal has shown that it is possible to use the existing holes to produce two courses both in excess of 6,000 yards. Inevitably, the Committee is most disappointed that the Glendale plans demonstrate a complete lack of imagination with regard to the new layout and a cavalier disregard to the wishes of both club golfers and members of the public.

At present the development plans are progressing through the planning approval process of the Planning Department of the Richmond Upon Thames Council. The Council will be concentrating on the adequacy of the new clubhouse rather than the course changes and we believe that unless there is something of a hic-cup the plans will receive approval within a matter of weeks rather than months.

(c) Commencement of Development Work

The major part of the development will be the build of the clubhouse which will be close to the area encompassing the 8th and 10th Princes tees. It just so happens that discounting the ponds and ditches at the Park the new clubhouse is being located on the wettest section of both courses, hence the need to put the clubhouse on raised ground!

We have heard from Glendale that the aim is to retain 36 holes of golf during the build phase, however we have no details of what is intended. Glendale has marked out two areas on the 7th and 9th Princes fairways that are intended to be temporary greens whilst the build is in progress. It is inevitable that there will be some major disruption occurring during the build phase and we will all have to make the best of what is available to us. We recognise that there will be major issues for the Club to resolve concerning the acceptability of the altered Princes course for competition use and handicapping, and we will obviously follow the rules that are set down by the golfing authorities.

We hope very sincerely that Glendale will manage the development well, otherwise the consequences for the club would be very harmful.

(d) Amalgamation.

It has been well documented that for a few fundamental reasons the amalgamation of the Association's clubs did not occur in 2006. During 2007 there have been general discussions with the other clubs concerning a replacement of the Association, or perhaps a revision of the Association's Constitution. These discussions will be ongoing through 2008, and for the time being all the clubs at the Park will continue to operate independently.

(e) Handicapping.

CONGU has implemented new rules for handicapping with effect from 1st January 2008. One of the new rules places an obligation on clubs to use accredited software. Unbeknown to most clubs members is that the software that we have been using was a bespoke system designed and built (if this is the right term) by Ian Smith. Ian first used the software during his term as Handicap Secretary and then handed over the system to Paul Grand some years ago. As CONGU introduced changes Ian was able to adapt his system accordingly. It is most unfortunate that the new rules are specific and accordingly we have bought 'Handicapmaster' which we are now operating. We owe Ian a huge vote of thanks since his endeavours have effectively saved the club many hundreds of £'s by not having to incur software acquisition and maintenance charges.

(f) Rules of Golf.

Although starting with effect from 1st January 2008 please watch out for the new Rules. There are some subtle changes which we will encounter at the Park.

Extra Curricular Activities

2007 was not such a busy year with our extras, but the few events staged were very successful.

In May we travelled to Dummer for an excellent day's golf on a course that had a links feel about it. With Dave's typical well organised arrangements we enjoyed excellent golf in the morning and afternoon and a superb meal in the evening. There were many prizes to play for and the champion of the day was Paul Grand with 39 points.

The ladies' spring weekend away took us to the Springs Hotel in Oxfordshire and for the ladies it was the battle for the Lockie Trophy that is mentioned above. The arrangements for the hotel and the golf were dealt with by Julie Smith and despite some fierce weather the weekend was a roaring success. Although relatively new, the course was very interesting challenge and will be even more interesting in a few years with further maturity.

For the autumn weekend away Julie took us to Ufford Park where the ladies played the inaugural competition for the Gill Hibbs Trophy. Both the hotel and the golf course were an excellent pick. The course had a mix of long and short holes and it soon became apparent that it was one of the few facilities where all the holes have substantially different playing characteristics. At the end of the weekend there was a general view that a return to Ufford Park at some future date would be very welcome.

For those that have not experienced a weekend away it is clear for all to see that the organisation of the accommodation, the meals, the golf tee times, the competitions, the prizes, the sweep monies, and the scoring etc all require detailed planning and some significant effort to ensure that everything runs smoothly, and those that do attend are very appreciative of Julie's efforts that make these weekends so successful.

The Ruffians Ryder Cup match against Ludlow was not played in 2007, partly as a result of fixture congestion on both sides. The last thought was to hold the match over two days at a neutral course and this sounds like an appealing prospect.

www.RichmondParkGolfClub.Org.Uk - The RPGC Website

The Club's website is a huge success story and this is all due to the efforts of Tim Meyer who has been plugging away since 2002. Tim has had many work and other commitments through 2007, however despite spending time away on business I am aware that Tim has been working assiduously in the background to keep the website up to date with the latest information. Administering the website is not just a case of 'dumping information', the more discerning observer with notice that all the information is in a particular style format together with a cluster of linkages connecting all the relevant pages and sections. It is this attention to detail that makes the difference and the reason why the Club receives such a high number of compliments from our assortment of visitors.

The website provides a huge service to the Club in terms of the provision of general information, details for potential new members, notifications of forthcoming events and the

Club's archive of results etc. It is correct to say that without the website the Club would be in dire straights.

Information for the website is not just for the preserve of the Committee and Tim will happily welcome anecdotal contributions from members, in particular news items concerning golfing successes at external events such as Bournemouth which helps us to recall the odd moment of glory.

I happen to be a slow reader, and probably getting slower year by year. This does not have much relevance to golf but from the website heading above it takes me – give or take a bit – 56 seconds of reading to reach this far, and this is the time interval for the average hit rate for the website through 2007; that is, we scored in excess of 560,000 hits. The largest proportion of hits is technical but from the stats it is interesting to see that we have visitors from all over the world.

The Committee and helpers

2006 was the year of the aborted amalgamation, an experience that none of the Committee wishes to repeat. There was a desire to return to sense of normality in 2007, however just when we thought that the we were in for a comfortable time the development plans arrived and we had to jump into overdrive to collect our thoughts and plan our responses. Needless to say, the email traffic between the committee members was huge, both in numbers and content with hours of time devoted to a critical assessment of the plans and the preparation of proposals for Glendale and the Royal Parks Agency to consider. This work has not yet finished.

Despite this heightened activity the Committee managed to keep the Club on the straight and narrow and as usual it was teamwork that made the difference. I have a few brief comments:

- Both the 2007 Captains, Jon Cooper and Cheryl Woodhouse successfully completed their second years at the helm and now take a well-deserved rest from duties. Both Jon and Cheryl have been involved in the major issues of the last two years and I am sure that they were not anticipating such frenetic activity when they commenced office. As the two captains step aside their two vices – Richard Owen and Di Jackett now move forward from supporting roles to commence their period of stewardship.
- Dave Williams has completed yet another year as the Club's treasurer. We are very fortunate, because every year Dave looks forward to handing over to someone new, and we then bribe him with a supply of Eccles cakes to carry on. In addition to keeping tabs on the Club's finances Dave organises the away days and is our promoter and controller of the dinner dance attendances. Seriously though, if we have someone out there who could join the committee with a view to taking over the Treasurer role Dave's wife Lou would be very pleased.
- Yet again, I will mention that the person working the hardest behind the scenes is Paul Grand. It is with thanks to Paul that our the men's weekly handicaps are administered which is no easy task, Paul prepares the booking sheet data for the website and the portacabin, he prepares the competition format sheets and relays this to the portacabin on Saturday mornings, he produces the weekly reports and distributes the prize money. In addition, Paul has to deal with the myriad of incoming emails, a few of which are not from me.

Absent Friends

One of the joys of golf is the ability to mix with members from all walks of life and to socialise with people that we would not otherwise come across. At the Park it is clear for all to see that it is the members that make up the Club and over the years casual acquaintances develop into strong friendships. In 2007 we sadly said goodbye to three such friends who all passed away at relatively young ages.

The old stagers in the Club will remember Arthur Curd who rose through the ranks to become Club Captain in 1995. Arthur died suddenly of a heart attack in February 2007 at the age of 65. At the time of Arthur's death he was still very active at work and he played golf on a regular weekly basis. He moved from the Club at the end of his Captaincy, but remained in touch with some old compatriots, and the grapevine kept us informed of his exploits.

In March 2007 we said goodbye to Adrian Wilder. I have a comment on Adrian on the website and I will not repeat the same here. Outside of Adrian's immediate friends there were just a few of us that knew of the existence of Adrian's illness shortly after he joined the Club and he preferred not to burden others with his trials and tribulations. Adrian was always such a jolly and optimistic chap that he was a true inspiration to others. It was only after Adrian died that it became apparent how much he really loved his golf, and in particular he had a huge affection for the Club and the friends that he had made in period that he was with us. As I commented in March, Adrian always appeared to me to be an instant friend of everyone.

In February 2007 we said goodbye to one of the true favourites of the Club, Gill Hibbs. It was in 2003 that Gill first realised that she had cancer and from this moment onwards she lived life to the full with travelling, socialising and playing golf when she was well enough to do so. During this period Gill helped organise some of the ladies' away weekends and she assisted with some other chores. Despite her illness Gill was invariably in good spirits. She made lasting friends wherever she went and the Club was no exception. Shortly after Gill passed away the Club received news that Gill had made a bequest to the Club in her will. The Committee agreed to take no action until the bequest had been received and the wishes of Gill had been correctly advised to us. This has now happened and the Club has recently received £5,000 from Gill's estate. Over the coming weeks both the Committee and the Ladies' Committee will give due consideration to Gill's legacy and we will be informing the members of the decision reached on how it will be appropriated.

The Final Word

I hope you all have a most enjoyable golfing year in 2008 and a few success stories on the way.

Peter Harrington
Secretary
31st January 2008