

**FEBRUARY**

13th Coffee Morning  
"Call My Bluff" and Quiz  
Faith Supper + £1 1900 hrs start

17th Club afternoon social 1400 hrs start

18th Gardening Group - 1400 hrs

24th Ladies lunch

**MARCH**

3rd Club afternoon social 1400 hrs start

7th Jess Conrad Cabaret 1900 hrs

9th Management Group - 1000 hrs

10th Club afternoon social 1400 hrs start

13th Coffee Morning

17th Club afternoon social 1400 hrs start

22nd SBC AGM - 1900 hrs start

24th Ladies lunch

Colour key: Men: Ladies: Mixed: SBC

**Letters of thanks**

Dear Committee and Members

I would like to thank you for putting my name forward to the Trustees of the (LBA) Benevolent Fund and for the beautiful basket of fruit I received at Christmas. Best wishes for the coming season.

Many thanks

**Ron Morris**

Dear Committee and Members

I am writing this on behalf of my husband, Len, to thank you for your very kind gift of a basket of fruit. It was very much appreciated by both of us.

Following a few months of health issues, we are now starting to improve. Len still has a problem with his eyes. He is still not able to drive but feeling positive for a better 2010.

Kindest regards

**Len & Brenda Smith**

**I know how he feels!**

I would be unstoppable - if only I could get started!

**Daft or what?**

**SO** you're a senior citizen and the government says no private health care or increase in pension for you. What do you do?

Our plan gives all those who are 65 years or older a gun and four bullets. When the time comes, you are allowed to shoot two MPs and two senior government officials. Of course, this means you will be sent to prison where you will get three meals a day, a roof over your head, and all the health care you need! New teeth? No problem! Need glasses? Great! New hip, knees, kidney, lungs, heart? All covered!

And who will be paying for all of this?

The same government that just told you that you do not qualify for health care. Plus, because you are a prisoner, you don't have to pay any income taxes any more.

**Daft - or what?**

**Dingbats competition**

**DISAPPOINTINGLY**, only 5 entries were received for the December "Dingbats" competition from which **Valerie Foreman** was drawn as the lucky winner. She will receive a special prize voucher for one month's free entry to the 49 Club (worth £5) For those unlucky runners-up - and others who found the competition too difficult - the answers were as follows:

Built-in wardrobe  
Lost for words  
Jack in the box  
Bend over backwards  
Split timing  
What goes up must come down  
Back stroke  
Bit on the side  
Jack in the box  
Fair and square  
Bags under the eyes  
All for one and one for all

**www.systonbowlingclub.org**

for Diary, Fixtures, Results, Honours Boards, Press Releases, Newsletters, photos and other Club details

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**THE SYSTON GREEN**



Official Newsletter of the Syston Bowling Club

No 47 - February 2010

**A VERY important meeting!**

**Vital that you should attend & participate**

**THE 2010 AGM** scheduled for Monday 22nd March will be one of the most important meetings in the Club's recent history. Members will be invited to address a number of vitally important issues facing the Club as we enter a completely new phase in our development. It is therefore vital that as many as possible should attend in order to ensure that the decisions taken are truly representative of the whole membership.

**Challenges**

As previously reported in this Newsletter, the Board has been successful in negotiating a new 28 year lease, including release from the requirement that we use the Town Council groundstaff for the **maintenance of our green**, and have contracted with one of the County's leading specialists to take charge of the green. It is the hope that, in due course, we can restore the surface to its former quality as one of the best in the Region.

Inevitably, this change has involved the Club in increased annual expenditure and will place significant additional responsibilities on individual Members to help keep the margins of the green in tip top condition.

We have been given full planning permission to **extend the Clubhouse** changing and toilet facilities and are currently seeking quotations for the completion of the work. While we currently have no firm figures, we anticipate the total cost to be in the region of £30,000.

Also as reported, 2009 saw a significant drop in **Bar revenues** and we have no way of guessing whether this is a one-off "blip" or whether we can assume a return to former levels in the near future

All of these factors combine to place serious pressure on Club finances and challenge us

to find solutions which will ensure the future financial health of the organisation. As always, we have the twin options of cutting costs and/or increasing income.

**Response**

As an immediate response to the challenges presented, your Board representatives agreed an increase in Bar prices effective from 1st January 2010. In so doing, they were at pains to ensure that our tariff remains very competitive with other Clubs in the area which might be viewed as "competitors".

We have cut back on operational costs for next year as far as possible. Thanks to the voluntary work of our Officers, our administrative costs are, in any case, very modest, offering the Board very little room for manoeuvre.

Following a full review of the current and future situation, and bearing in mind that both Sections and the Club itself have modest reserves which might be called upon to mitigate any longer-term threat, the Board will seek at the AGM to gain membership approval for an increase in subscriptions from £60 to £80.

Recognising that some Members might find such an increase difficult to meet, the Board have agreed that for 2010, at least, membership subscriptions can be paid in two equal instalments of £40. *Continued...*

**Your views, opinions, news and any other material of interest to Members would be welcomed for publication in future editions. Please send to **George Dodge**, as Editor, by the first Monday in every month**

Most importantly, Members are being asked to recognise that even after we benefit from the effects of the cuts and the increase in subscriptions, and if Bar revenues and membership remain at 2009 levels, the Club will still not be able to balance its budget.

**A modest deficit in 2010 appears inevitable.**

#### **Additional revenues**

It is therefore clear that we have very limited options - unless we can find and exploit alternative sources of significant income. Any suggestions would be warmly welcomed and fully investigated by the Board.

For this reason, the introduction of a regular Wednesday afternoon Social and regular meetings of the Gardening Group have been warmly welcomed. While an individual event raises only modest income, it does go some way towards "bridging the gap". Members are invited to consider forming and promoting other "special interest" groups which might bring Members and their guests into the clubhouse on a regular basis.

It has been suggested that we might explore the potential benefits of following the example of some other Clubs which have developed links with local supermarkets giving the Club a "commission" on all purchases made by Members. (*Apparently, Members use a special card when paying for their purchases to bring the system into play.*)

**By public demand!**

**Sunday 7th March 2010**

*Pop legend*

**Jess Conrad**

*supported by*

**Jackie Lee**

*Great local talent*

**Tickets: £9.50**

Available **NOW** from **George Dodge**

**BOOK NOW TO AVOID  
DISAPPOINTMENT**

*Friends, family and other non-members  
welcome*

#### **Spreading the burden**

What we must try to avoid at all costs is developing a programme of activities where the same "hard core" minority of active Members find themselves paying for additional activities and services to be enjoyed by the majority. Ways must be found to share the "load" evenly across the membership and, ideally, we need to identify schemes that can save the individual Member money and/or give benefits in kind as a consequence of his/her active support for the Club.

#### **What YOU can do**

First you should give careful consideration to the actions of your Board representatives and decide whether you approve of their performance in managing the Club over the past year.

Then, you should make every effort to attend the AGM to share your thoughts and opinions with your fellow Members.

Third, you should closely examine the copy of the audited accounts for 2009, which you will receive at the beginning of March, and evaluate the budget set for 2010 in the light of what the accounts tell you about the financial health of the Club.

At the AGM you should be prepared to question the Board about their 2009 performance and their proposals for 2010 and put forward proposals for any changes that you feel appropriate.

Fifth, you should decide, in the light of discussion, whether you can support the Board's recommendation for an increase in subscriptions and vote accordingly.

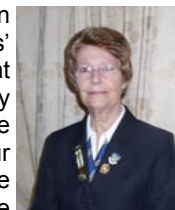
Sixth, you should consider whether you might offer yourself to help the Board - either by serving as an elected Director or by serving on one of the sub-committees which the Board plans to establish in 2010 (*Premises, Facilities, Regulatory Compliance, Social Programme*) to assist in the efficient management of the Club and the development of additional revenue-generating activities..

Finally, you should use your vote to satisfy yourself that the best people available are elected as Directors to represent your interests and to steer the Club through the difficulties that lie ahead over the next few years.

Over to **YOU!**

## **Ladies!** *President Ruth Wheeler*

**AS PRESIDENT**, and in partnership with our Ladies' Section, I am aware that there are inevitably ongoing changes for the efficient running of our Club. It is obviously the intention that we continue to make a positive contribution in the matters affecting ourselves as well as the rest of the Club.



We are fortunate in having the facilities and social events which run throughout the year, unlike some other Bowling Clubs. The Winter drags on, but the weekly games afternoon and regular weekend events are most welcome and thoroughly enjoyable - if not challenging, at times!

Let us continue to support those who plan these activities as well as those needing to make decisions that affect us all.

#### **Condolences**

Our thoughts and sympathies are with **Marjorie Clowes** at this time of loss. Most of our Members knew **Derek** well and over a long period of time (*see separate tribute below*), so it was good that so many were able to attend the funeral. We will continue to support **Marjorie** in the difficult days of adjustment that lie ahead.



## **Lest we forget**

*Doreen Payne leads tribute*

**EVERYONE** was sorry to learn of the death of **Derek Clowes** and we all send our sympathies to **Marjorie** and her family.

**Derek** was a Member of our Club some time ago and has always been a supporter of **Marjorie** in her tireless work for the Club. Over the years, **Derek** has been one of the "backroom boys" - delivering, collecting and generally fetching and carrying, many times when no-one else was around. More recently, he would regularly supervise the sale of raffle tickets at our monthly coffee mornings while **Marjorie** was in the kitchen.

**Derek** was one of those reliable people who was there in the background, never seeking the limelight, and someone we will never forget.

*Thank you Derek!*

**RIP**

## **Weekly afternoon social launched**

**WEDNESDAY** afternoon social events have got off to a very encouraging start with up to 20 people each week turning up between 2.00 and 4.30 p.m..

Each week, so far, we have started with a keenly fought pub quiz after which groups are formed to play cards, darts and dominoes - something for everyone.

Of special interest has been the introduction of a special American-style game of dominoes involving 136 "bones" or "tiles" stretching up to double 15! The game involves players forming individual "tracks" from a central terminus on which to run their "trains" by following suit on their own or other "open" tracks. Up to 8 players can be involved in any game.

A charge of £1 per head includes a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits. The Club bar is open for those preferring a soft drink - or something stronger!

Apart from the quiz, there is no formal "structure" to the programme. You join in with whatever takes your fancy or you could bring along your own favourite board game, or other pastime, and invite others to join in.

**George Dodge** would be happy to receive any suggestions for additional activities to attract further support.

Strong attendance figures seem to indicate that these social sessions provide an answer to a real need among the membership during these dismal Winter months.

Family, friends and other non-members are welcome. **Why not come and join us - even if all you want is a natter or a bit of company and a cup of tea? You can be assured of a warm welcome.**



## Thank you!

*Doreen Payne responds to honour accorded by her peers*

**AT THE** Ladies' Section AGM in November, I was given the honour of becoming a Life Member of the Club. This was a complete surprise but nevertheless something which means a great deal to me. I joined the Syston Ladies B.C. In 1977 but, as at that time I worked part-time at Syston Library, it was not until retired in 1996 that I was able to play regularly.

However, I was Club President in 1988, 1993 and again in 2003. As I was about to retire in 1996, I was elected as County Junior Vice-President and subsequently proceeded to the posts of County Senior Vice-President and finally County President in 1998. While this was a great personal honour, I considered it as a tribute to Syston Ladies as it was the first time that a Syston lady had been elected. The ladies of the Club gave me tremendous support during my term of office which I will never forget and for which I will always be grateful.

My late husband, **Harry**, while not being a bowler, also gave great support to me and to the Club in general.

When I joined, the pavilion was an old wooden hut but later the building we now have was erected and furnished. Harry donated all the original tables to replace the old trestle tables which were in use at the time and willingly gave help wherever he could. I am sure that he would eventually have joined but fate dealt him a different hand. He retired in May 1966 but, after a short illness, died in September of the same year.

Syston Ladies' Bowling Club has been a big part of my life and I am sure that the same can be said by many other ladies. There have been many changes over the years - and more are to come - but what I am sure will never change is the comradeship and friendship we all derive from our membership of this fine Club.

Thank you, my friends, for the honour that you have now bestowed on me.

DP

**Countdown to official opening of the 2010 Season on 5th April**

## Gardening Group update



Molten metal pours from the furnace

Mountsorrel.



Decorative bells

**ON** 21st January, 23 Garden Group Members and friends enjoyed an interesting afternoon at the **John Taylor Bellfoundry Museum**, Loughborough, having first eaten an exceptionally good lunch at **Slate** restaurant in

The tour round the works, which is part of the world's largest bellfoundry, was very interesting and we were lucky enough to see the men casting a bell mounting frame.

At the following meeting, held on Thursday, 4th February, which coincided with the first anniversary of the Group being formed, one new Member was welcomed. Membership has now grown from about 12 to over 20 people regularly attending meetings and outings. The Group discussed issues connected with the range of tasks involved in the garden at this time of the year and considered ideas and suggestions for the future programme of activities.

It was agreed that we would have a speaker for our next meeting and this has now been arranged. **Mrs Kate Ward** will give a talk and slide show on "Gardens to visit throughout the year" in the Clubhouse on Thursday, 18th February starting at 2.0pm. Non-members are also welcome to attend.

**Editor's note:** More photos of the bellfoundry visit and other Club events and activities will be found on the web site [Picture Gallery](http://www.systonbowlingclub.org)

[www.systonbowlingclub.org](http://www.systonbowlingclub.org)

Suggestions from Members about other Special Interest Groups which might be formed (?Photography ?Arts & crafts? Cookery? Flower arranging? etc etc) would be welcomed.

A small charge of £1 per head, to cover the cost of refreshments and use of the clubhouse, is all that is involved. Bar facilities by arrangement. Friends, family and other non-members are welcome.

## 49 Club update

**LATEST** lucky winners are:

**Anita Lowder, Ruth Wheeler, Arthur Calver, Margaret Trigg, Ray Dexter (x2), Mark Newman, Diane Lewis and Roger Bentley**

**49 Club** members are asked to advise **Anita Lowder** if they do not intend to sustain membership after the end of March.

## The final inspection

The soldier stood and faced God,  
Which must always come to pass.  
He hoped his shoes were shining,  
Just as brightly as his brass.  
'Step forward now, you soldier,  
How shall I deal with you ?  
Have you always turned the other cheek ?  
To My Church have you been true?'  
The soldier squared his shoulders and said,  
"No, Lord, I guess I ain't.  
Because those of us who carry guns,  
Can't always be a saint.  
I've had to work most Sundays,  
And at times my talk was tough.  
And sometimes I've been violent,  
Because the world is awfully rough.  
But, I never took a penny,  
That wasn't mine to keep...  
Though I worked a lot of overtime,  
When the bills just got too steep.  
And I never passed a cry for help,  
Though at times I shook with fear.  
And sometimes, God, forgive me,  
I've wept unmanly tears.  
I know I don't deserve a place,  
Among the people here.  
They never wanted me around,  
Except to calm their fears.  
If you've a place for me here, Lord,  
It needn't be so grand.  
I never expected or had too much,  
But if you don't, I'll understand."  
There was a silence all around the throne,  
Where the saints had often trod.  
As the soldier waited quietly,  
For the judgment of his God.  
'Step forward now, you soldier,  
You've borne your burdens well..  
Walk peacefully here on Heaven's streets,  
You've done your time in Hell.'

Author Unknown

## Carpe diem

*(Seize the day!)*



Another year has passed  
and we're all a little older.  
Last summer felt hotter  
and winter seems much colder.  
There was a time not long ago  
when life was quite a blast.  
Now I fully understand  
about 'Living in the Past'  
We used to go to weddings,  
football games and lunches.  
Now we go to funeral homes,  
and after-funeral brunches.  
We used to have hangovers,  
from parties that were gay.  
Now we suffer body aches  
and doze the night away.  
We used to go out dining,  
and couldn't get our fill.  
Now we ask for doggie bags,  
come home and take a pill.  
We used to often travel  
to places near and far.  
Now we get sore asses  
from riding in the car.  
We used to go to nightclubs  
and drink a little booze.  
Now we stay home at night  
and watch the evening news.  
That, my friend is how life is,  
and now my tale is told.  
So, enjoy each day and live it up...  
**before you're too damned old!**



Thanks to Janice & Rob Wilbourn for this inspirational piece