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THE
50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF
MUIRHEAD & BIRKHILL BOWLING CLUB
1955-2005



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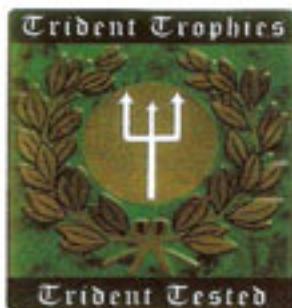
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Members and friends of the “Birkie” Bowling Club I am very pleased to have the honour and privilege of being your President during our Golden Jubilee Season.

Preparations for our historic year commenced just after the Annual General Meeting of 2002. A sub committee of twelve had been selected to organise the events etc. for celebrating our special anniversary. Now as the season is fast approaching I believe we have most things in place to make it memorable in every way.

I sincerely hope everyone who takes part in our celebrations enjoy themselves.

Sincere thanks are extended for the good work and accomplishments carried out by the sub committee over the past two years.

I cannot tell you who will be organising the events for our Seventy Fifth Anniversary however I do know they will have something to live up to because, — like good wine, — our Bowling Club improves as it gets older.

Mike Dunning – President Muirhead & Birkhill Bowling Club

As Junior Vice President of the Scottish Bowling Association it is really an honour for me to be asked to pen a few words for the Golden Jubilee of the "Birkie" Bowling Club. Fifty years is a long time in life, but short in bowling terms. "Birkie" is the youngest of the 30 clubs I council for, as District Secretary, in Angus.

Yes, maybe the youngest in years, but one of my strongest in bowling ability, especially in the Ladies section. Their achievements, in and out of the county are huge, as shown on other pages of this booklet.



Your President on the opposite page remarks that, like good wine, the bowling club improves as it gets older. The Scottish Bowling Association has 912 private clubs in the association, with 390 over 100 years old and Angus must have the biggest share of aged clubs in the Scottish Bowling Association. In Angus alone I have one club 150 years old, four clubs 140 years old, 6 clubs 130 years old, four clubs 120 years old, 2 clubs 100 years old, and the rest running between 50 and 100 years. So there is a lot of good wine there.

Part of the success of "Birkie" lies with the longevity of its officials. I don't like naming persons in my few words as I know many people must have put in a lot of work over the years to make "Birkie" what it is today. However, in my capacity as District Secretary, 75% of my contact with the clubs is with the Match Secretaries. You had Alex Kidd for 14 years & Eddie Mason for 11 years, which combined, is half the club's lifetime. It can't be an easy job, especially with all the club's competitions (20 in all); some going. Without willing boys like them, the Club wouldn't function and I am sure some of the younger membership will be there when you celebrate your 100th Anniversary.

So to all at "Birkie" - - - A Happy 50th Anniversary

(My usual ending) - *Win with Pride, Lose with Dignity,
Remember nobody's bigger than the club*

J H Bell, Junior Vice President, Scottish Bowling Association

Authors Note

When the idea came to create this booklet it appeared that the task would not be too onerous. How wrong can you be?

Unfortunately a lot of the information that would have made this work entirely comprehensive is not available. In some respects this can be put down to insufficient records covering major events or perhaps it is the way current society views the conservation of this type of material. As a consequence some "Artistic Licence" has been used to fill in the gaps and I sincerely hope that all readers will enjoy the experience.

With this in mind I would make the comment that any mistake omission or lack of acknowledgement is entirely accidental and give my apologies unreservedly to any person who may feel implicated in such.

Additionally I would exhort all who read this booklet to become more rigorous in keeping material which may have potential for use in later years.

With a view to the future, and further anniversaries, our club has now created an archive in which all contributions will be deposited. The club will be delighted to receive all such items.

To gather the information has required a great deal of effort, and time, on the part of the contributors and the author. It is therefore my duty to thank everyone who assisted, in any way, towards the successful conclusion of this work.

Thanks must also be given to all who took advertising space thereby enabling the booklet to be of a higher grade publication than may have been possible otherwise.

Ken Johnston

Francis Drake (on Plymouth Hoe when told the Spanish were approaching): The Armada can wait, but my bowls cannot,

A history of the beginnings of the game of Bowls

Probably the earliest evidence of a bowls-like game was found in the nineteen thirties in Egypt. In the grave of a child, there were implements that dated back to 3,200 BC which were allegedly used for a primitive form of the game.

Roman soldiers introduced it to the countries that they colonised and it spread through Europe, including Britain. In the 11th and 12th centuries, the game of 'jactu lapidum' (throwing the stone) was popular.

It is likely that the name 'jack' for the object ball in the modern game came from this source.

Earlier bowls were made of iron (cannon balls?) and stone, then wood. At that time it was a game of **contact**, with a target rather like marbles.

In later years this was not considered subtle enough so, to make it more difficult, bias was introduced. The bias was achieved by putting weights into holes drilled into the wooden bowl and this made them roll on a curve towards the target. There is a story about Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, shattering a stone bowl during a game played at Goole in mid-16th century. On going indoors to fetch another, he spotted the newel at the foot of a staircase and decided to saw it off. When he resumed the game to play with the newel it showed new characteristics by running on a curve.

That this was the origin of bias makes a good story however unlikely. What is true is that, with the introduction of bias, the game of bowls was altered. It changed from a game of **contact** to one of **proximity and tactics**.

In England, from 1561 to 1846, the State declared bowls illegal for 'commoners' to play but it remained legal for the nobility. The reason given was that it interfered with archery practice! This act was repealed only in the reign of Queen Victoria. There was a similar prohibition in Scotland during the reign of King James VI but it applied to the playing of golf as it was stated that this game was conflicting with archery practice.

Drake's famous bowls match against Hawkins on 19th July 1588, before tackling and defeating the Spanish Armada, was played on Plymouth Hoe over rough dirt ground more in the style of the French game of boule or petanque. It was legal for Drake and Hawkins to play since they were both noblemen.

Wooden bowls excavated from the Plymouth Hoe area were found to be biased so the game was moving on. It suffered a setback with the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the middle of the 16th century but was kept alive in public houses and inns.

In Scotland, the earliest recorded green was at Holyrood Palace where King James VI and I of England (1566-1625) competed with friends for small stakes.

Although bowling in Scotland was a more democratic game than in England with less State interference, closer analysis indicates that its participation was confined to the middle and higher ranks of Scottish society. About 1730 Scottish bowling was described as 'chiefly a favourite with the graver order of citizens'. In the 19th century, when the game of bowls became legal for all to play, it lost its respectability and was rowdy, drunken and even violent.

Bowls had developed slowly from a primitive game of contact to one of proximity by rolling a biased bowl along the ground towards a target ball. Weights in bowls became illegal and bias was accomplished by shaping the tread of the bowl eccentrically. At this stage there were no standardised Rules or Laws of the game and this is where Scotland comes importantly into the story.

*Tell me and I will forget, Show me and I will remember,
Involve me and I will learn*

In 1848, at a meeting of 200 clubs in Glasgow, an abortive attempt was made to form a national body.

However, a small committee (that met in 1849) was formed to look at standardisation of laws for the game. The committee's secretary, W. W. Mitchell, a Glasgow lawyer, drew up a complete code of laws that was adopted by the West of Scotland clubs and was adhered to for many years. This Manual of Laws was published in 1864.

A second attempt to form a national body was made in 1889 and this time it was successful.

The Scottish Bowling Association was born in Glasgow in September 1892 with James Brown as secretary. Mitchell's Rules were revised and altered, resulting in the Manual of Bowls, published in 1892.

Thus it was the Scots who introduced the modern game of bowls to the world. The Scots laid flat greens of sea-washed turf, divided these into rinks, surrounded them by ditches and introduced 'touchers' into the game.

In 1893 a standard bowl made by Thomas Taylor, Bowl Maker, Glasgow, and described as being a little under No.3 Bias, was produced and accepted.

Travelling Scots (sailors, soldiers, and merchants) took their game around the world like the Roman Army had before them. In this way it spread to be played by the countries of the Empire, now the Commonwealth.

Today, there are 914 clubs in the Scottish Bowling Association with approximately 68,000 bowlers and the game of bowls is played in 34 other countries worldwide.

Compiled by Denis M Naulty of Fairfield Bowling Club

The Muirhead & Birkhill Recreation Park

In the beginning, circa 1949, there were a few local people who decided to create an Amenity Park for use by the populations of the Muirhead and Birkhill villages. It seems a Mr David S Moyes, the local Schoolmaster, was one of the prime suspects regarding the generation of the idea.

It therefore seems likely that separate groups with particular interests would have been brought together in the first instance and then left to develop independently thereafter. This is born out by Messrs Moyes etc. continuing to be involved i.e. part of the first committee set up by the Bowling Club.

A location was pinpointed, fundraising commenced, negotiations took place, and agreement was reached with a landowner and the local council. The local estates of Stoneygroves, farmed by the Clayhills Henderson family, were also benefactors in that they supplied a field at preferential rates.

It is not quite clear whether the facilities/equipment which were to be in the park had been finally decided upon at this stage. It seems more likely that the people behind the project would have taken the view that any facilities/equipment they would wish for would have to be provided by local fundraising/effort made by the people with a particular interest in that amenity.

Indeed it appears that the first addition to the park was a Football Pitch and that the second was the Tennis Court. At some point along the line Children's Play Equipment was sourced but it is not clear when these additions were made.

In this way, ground to begin the process of building a Bowling Green was procured, and the hard work of the members, which has epitomised our club over the years, began.

*Problems become opportunities
when the right people come together*

The Formation of our Club

Although the idea of providing the villages of Muirhead and Birkhill with a bowling green had obviously been stated earlier, the first written evidence found in the club's records so far is in a "Historical Note" by Mr A Brown, a future Chairman and President of the Bowling Club, dated 22 September 1952.

The Village's Recreation Committee; (the local voluntary body), represented the village in talks with Monifieth District Council with the purpose of the development of a "Playing Field", (football pitch, tennis court) for the community.

At their Annual General Meeting under the chair of Mr David S Moyes the local school headmaster, it was decided that the "policy of the Committee for the ensuing year should be directed towards the provision of a bowling green for the village". At this public meeting, Mr Moyes then explained that the proceeds of the following Summer Fete (organised by this voluntary committee), as well as donations from various affiliated bodies such as the National Playing Fields Association, would be used for this purpose.

The "people of the village with bowling interests" had, at a public meeting in the Ex-Servicemans hut on the 03 November 1952, elected the following on to a committee to see if the idea of forming a bowling club was practicable.

Those elected were; Mrs Stephens, Mrs Stewart and Messrs A Brown, A Cant, A Falconer, R Scott and J Stewart.

Four days later at a meeting in the school, Mr A Brown was elected the proposed bowling club's convenor and representative to the Recreation Committee.

Great achievements are nurtured by minds with a common vision working towards a common goal

In order to obtain a reliable indication of the amount of support that such a scheme would receive in the community, it was decided to "canvass the village" offering membership of the proposed club at 5/- (shillings) a year until a green was available for play. After this time the difference between the amount paid and thirty shillings would be due from those who wished to remain members.

It was also agreed at this meeting that, if a minimum of 80 members were forthcoming, the Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club would be formed. The response to this market-research exercise revealed that a potential 180 members had expressed interest in the scheme.

Thus, on 08 December 1952, the Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club was initiated. At a public meeting of the club in Muirhead Hall on 11 February 1953, at the suggestion of Mr D Moyes, the bowling club elected new members to its body and formed both a "Green" committee and a "Social" committee.

Those newly elected members were; Mrs Gonella, Mrs Jeffrey, Councillor Geddes and Messrs Hampton, Robertson, Hastie, Moyes, Baggesen, Johnston and Wilson.

The cost of the bowling green was estimated to be in the region of £1,000 - £1,200. While it is difficult to relate this amount to present day figures, as this was before the introduction of a retail price-index, it may be in the order of £40,000 to £50,000, a not inconsiderable sum.

According to the figures referred to by Mr Hastie at this meeting, the financial cost could be offset somewhat "if free use of excavator plant could be obtained, and, provided local volunteers were forthcoming".

Together we can go farther than we could ever go apart
The Community coming together

As both the Minute Books and Mrs Gonella (one of our founder members) related many of the members were "well-wishers". They did not intend to play however their membership highlighted the degree of community interest and backing for this project. The club had considerable "manpower" to draw upon as the following table illustrates.

Breakdown of Club Membership according to Residence

	Ladies			Gents			Total		
	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1955
Birkhill	27	27	23	56	56	39	83	83	62
Muirhead	26	20	16	69	59	28	95	79	44
Outwith	0	2	2	13	19	13	13	21	15
Totals	53	49	41	138	134	80	191	183	121

(Adapted from Minute Book entry: 14 March 1956)

At the end of April 1953, Mr D Moyes announced that Mr A S Briggs of Lundie Castle, a prominent businessman, had heard of the village's efforts and had given:

- An immediate gift of £100.
- A promise of all possible mechanical assistance in levelling the bowling green site and supplying drainage bottoming.
- A promise of a further gift of £150 when the club had by its own initiative, collected a similar amount, provided such a sum is collected before December of this year.

Also noted as a generous financial contributor was Mrs Dippy who, in earlier years had been proprietor of the local Post Office, which at that time, had been located in what is now Hope Cottage.

However, along with the money, "In Kind" donations (such as Knowledge, Tractor & Bogie, and Hard Labour) were what made the project viable.

*Those who say it cannot be done
are usually interrupted by those who are doing it*

When reading the minute book it comes to mind that, along with the indigenous people of the locality, many of the "Leading Lights" originally interested in forming a club had either come from Aberdeenshire to find work in Liff Hospital or returned from India and had chosen this area to live in during retirement.

Considerable time and effort was put in by members in regard to the construction of the green itself. Many of the members used their professional skills to help reduce the financial burden of the project. Mr Hastie, an architect, drew up the plans for the green itself as well as plans for a proposed pavilion and whose services were valued at £240.

By July 1954, the "hard labour" members had put in a "total of 760 man-hours". A Mr Campbell and a Mr Jim McDonald are mentioned, Mr Campbell for the Cement Work and Jim McDonald for a variety of tasks. There must have been many others whose names do not appear but who no doubt contributed as much if not more.

The second Annual General Meeting (23 March 1955) also pays tribute to this degree of self-help that was invested in this fashion as the entry states; "Mr Brown thanked all members and a few non-members, who assisted at the green during the summer.

It was a great effort. On 42 evenings, members worked a further 743 hours, and this represented at least £100 in labour".

The "value" of this effort to the club's finances can be shown in the following extract:

	1953	Balance	£203-13-05p
	1954	Expenditure	£127-04-11p
		Balance	£76-08-06p
Add	1954	Income	£111-14-04p
	1954	Balance	£188-02-10p

Work on the green had started in the first week of May 1953 and a considerable number, and variety, of fund raising methods were tried prior to and also while the actual work was taking place.

These ranged from; Whist Drives, Raffles, (including one for a TV set which, in the mid-50s, was quite a valuable prize), to Summer and Christmas Fairs and a number of "Concerts".

One such concert, that included fiddlers and an exhibition of Scottish Country Dancing as well as other examples of Scottish culture, was held on 29 January 1954.

That 144 people attended this concert (which made a profit of over twelve pounds) is not only indicative of the level of support in the local community, but, perhaps is also reflective of a form of rural/communal entertainment that has been in decline due to the growth of television and home entertainment.

These concerts were designed for the "family" with a reduced price for children. Contemporary attitudes towards the social behaviour and control of children - on the old adage that "children should be seen, but not heard" may be reflected in their footnote from the meeting previous to the concert; "On the behaviour of the children at this concert will depend future availability of reduced price tickets".

Concerts were also held by the Muirhead & Birkhill Amateur Dramatic Society, these again indicative of the village resident's determination to provide their own entertainment and pastimes.

Another type of concert was organised by Mrs Gonella who, in the recruitment of most of the artists, was ably assisted by the well known violinist Ron Gonella. One of the more noted artists (a young girl at that time) was the well known actress Leslie Mackie. This being in her formative years before fame as an actress came; Miss Mackie danced and gave recitations.

Jeffery,

JOINER, BIRKHEAD

For work of quality at a modest "bark,"
Mr Jeffery of Birkie is the man for the job.

Webster,

PAINTER AND DECORATOR, LOGAN

When things get dull and low their shores,
Dare Mr Webster, he'll stroke them oars.

Divers,

GENERAL STORE, MUIRHEAD

For sugar and spice and all things nice,
"Divers" is the shop you'll visit twice.

Buchan,

TAXI SERVICE, MUIRHEAD

For a ride of a dollar or that special dose,
There's Buchan! He'll not let you be late.

Whyte,

BACKMUR DAIRY, MUIRHEAD

It's a long, long way to Tipperary,
But it is not as far to Whyte's Hygienic Dairy.

"Leap for Joy"—it's been hard work

ON Wednesday night Muirhead and Birkhill Musical and Dramatic Societies present their most ambitious effort in "Leap for Joy!" a Leap Year revue.

They have been fortunate in obtaining the services, as producer, of Mr Antony Oakley, well known to theatregoers through his former association with Dundee Rep.

The revue is non-stop, and contains 12 items—one for each month of the year.

Mrs Stella Young, Muirhead, who wrote last year's show herself has again composed the lyrics and music for the entire show. Mr Oakley wrote the sketches, and the dance items have been arranged by Mrs Oakley.

"Everyone has worked very hard for this show," said Mr Oakley. "They have rehearsed steadily every Tuesday evening since June. But, with holidays and one thing and another, we were not able to get the whole cast together until last Thursday."

When gaps in the cast had to be filled three members of Dundee Y.M.C.A. Players, for whom Mr Oakley is also producing, volunteered. The men, Robert Buchanan, Ian Donald, and Ian Mitchell, have been among the keenest in the cast of 18.

"We set out to introduce some really Irish decor," said Mr Oakley. And they have achieved it. It has meant a great

deal of hard work. Members have made their own dresses, and have worked like Trojans on the scenery.

"We were well behind with the scenic pieces—which were designed by John MacPherson—his really brilliant—until a member of the cast, Mrs Beasdale, came to our rescue. Her husband is the village painter, and since he took over the whole thing has gone like clockwork."

Most of the large pieces of scenery were made in Mrs Young's garden. The lawn at times resembled a Technicolor scene, with splashes of distemper everywhere. Two of Mrs Young's bedrooms are crammed with scenery, and Mr Young has difficulty in squeezing his car between the "bars" stored in the garage.

"Mr Lester, the minister, came to our aid, too," said Mr Oakley, "by allowing us the use of the Scotch Hat to paint and store the smaller scenery. Even at that there are bits of scenery scattered throughout the whole village."

Rev. John Lester is naturally cast in two of the sketches, "Burns Night" and "Harvest Thanksgiving." He plays the role of a minister. Fortunately, he does not have to speak in the Burns shawl. The Irish brogue might sound a little inappropriate there!

A light-hearted note is struck in the "Whimsical Moments" as "Telephone by C. P. S.," "Clematis by Greta Paul," "Habitats by Wanda M. Kippax," "Stockings by I. Connors-Dunne," and "Shoes by Tactful F. Burns."

It's that light-hearted spirit which ensures that when "Leap For Joy" opens its four-night run on Wednesday it is going to be a big hit.

Muirhead players



Muirhead and Birkhill Dramatic Societies opened a three-night performance of Richard Llewellyn's "Fanny Hill" on Thursday with the scene set by Mr T. Young as the minister, Elizabeth George Mitchell as his daughter's fiancée, and George Mitchell as his daughter's fiancée.

their previous productions, to express her ready musical compositions.

Each of the artists, including Mr and Mrs Young, has spoken his or her lines into the machine and had them played back. The process has been repeated again and again and the improvement has been remarkable.

Mrs Young (musical for once) shares the lead with her husband, and other parts are played by Miss Macintosh, Elizabeth Oakley, Ian Donald, George Mitchell, Anthony Oakley (who is also producer), Chris McCann, Chas. Macdonald, Betty Davis, Jas. Fitchett, Arthur Bramhall, Colin McCragg, Sophie Whyte, Phyllis Duke and Helen Beasdale.

MAKE-DO-AND-MEND GIVES PLAY OUTSTANDING SCENES

"**THANK Your Lucky Stars**" is the title of a revue which Muirhead and Birkhill Amateur Dramatic Society is presenting this week.

Produced by Mr Anthony Oakley—Dundee Rep. fans know the name—it is the theme the signs of the Zodiac.

Mr Oakley wrote the script—"Mostly 'of the cuff' stuff," he'll tell you—and Mrs Stella Young, Muirhead, has provided the music and lyrics for the show, which is nonstop.

Once again the show has entailed a lot of "homework" for members. Mrs A. Smith, wardrobe mistress, has sewn up 40 new curtains in the last three months.

Her husband, as stage manager, has lent a hand with this big job, besides dealing with problems of his own.

Brunt of the work has fallen on the capable shoulders of scenic designer, Mr J. S. Macpherson. He has designed all the costumes and produced some very effective stage scenery from bits and pieces.

"Nobody in the society throws anything away now," said Mr Macpherson. "They bring it along to me to ask if it will be of any use. I always accept."

"I body pitches in with suggestions," he added.

He got the idea for one of his most effective pieces from three-year-old Andrew Lester, son of the minister.

Andrew is a frequent visitor to the scenery workshop in the Scout hall. Last Saturday he toddled in with a jigsaw puzzle of Edinburgh Castle.

"I just what I want for my Scottish

scene," said Mr Macpherson. He borrowed the puzzle and copied the silhouette of the castle on a large piece of cardboard. It looks like the genuine article with a light behind.

President of the society, Mr R. S. May, Dundee solicitor, gets an opportunity to use his legal talents in the justice scene under the sign of Libra, the scales. He has written a prologue and epilogue for the part.

Perhaps the most effective is the underwater operetta, "The Mortal Mermaid." This is performed behind a screen of green muslin, and much ingenuity has gone into the design of costumes.

Mermaids' tails

Crabs and oysters and mermaids' tails were all made by members, but Mrs Young's improvisation of a sweet-fish costume for her husband takes pride of place. She used an inner lining suit for the job, and the result is most effective.

In previous shows, the marionettes, presented by Helen Burns and James Fitchet, have proved most popular, and they find a place, with puppets this time.

Mrs Burns and Mr Fitchet play the comedy roles. Leading singers are Helen Bramhall and Sophia Whyte.

Proceeds will go towards the cost of village playing field.

Dundee audiences will see the show on Tuesday, October 27, when it will be presented in aid of the Woman's Guild of St Luke's Church, Lochee,

and on October 30 and 31, in St Mark's Church Hall, Dundee.

Last year on the night before the performance in Dundee, half the costumes were stolen by children from a hall in Lochee.

The police retrieved them in time, however.

"We had to 'borrow' the costumes from the police for the show, and then return them as 'exhibit A,'" chuckled Mr Oakley.

Muirhead and Birkhill Dramatic Society

PRESENTS

"THANK
YOUR
LUCKY
STARS"

FRONT

Dundee, Written & Produced

By

Stella Young & Anthony Oakley

RESERVE

THEATRE

6



"Lucky Stars" in this scene from the play are Chris McLea, David, Queenie Burns, Audrey Luskie.

Coburnhouse,
Muirhead of Liff,
by Dundee.
30th. April 1934.

To Members of Muirhead and
Birkhill Bowling Club.

Last month when the Recreation Committee was to review its programme for this year I drew up a statement showing the extent of the effort made by this community during the last three years and indicating what money would be required to carry out the necessary work in 1934. This statement, which was submitted to the Annual General Meeting of the Bowling Club, showed the part played by all the bodies concerned and gave such an encouraging picture of the progress being made, that your office-bearers considered every member of the Club ought to have the opportunity to study it. We have therefore had it typed out and a copy of it is attached hereto.

You will note that a sum of £3,923 has been needed to purchase and develop the Field. Of this £2,545 has been raised directly by local effort within less than three years. This is indeed a fine achievement, made possible only with the enthusiastic help of all the organisations, and the good-will and co-operation of all those residing in the district. The result has been that, in a much shorter time than might reasonably have been expected, most of the playing facilities planned for the Field have now been provided and, with the completion of the Bowling Green this year, the most difficult part of our task will be over.

It will be observed that to make the final payment for this last big project a sum of £500 will be required this year. So good, however, are the relationships which have been established with the District Council and the National Playing Fields Association that both bodies have indicated that they will probably be prepared to help us. It would seem likely, therefore, that what we shall require to raise by our own efforts will be a sum in the region of £200 to £300.

We have been greatly encouraged to get willingly about raising this amount by the renewed generosity of Mr. Briggs, about which many of you will know. When given a copy of the statement of our finances Mr. Briggs expressed admiration for what had been accomplished and offered to give us £1 for every £1 gathered this year up to a maximum of £250. He hoped this would prove an incentive to us to intensify our efforts to raise this last big sum of money required. The Recreation Committee have received this most generous offer enthusiastically and have made plans to raise our £250 by having a Sale of Work in August. In connection with this Sale a Raffle for a T.V. Set is to be run during the summer and it is hoped that, along with others, every member of the Bowling Club will do whatever is possible to help with the distribution and sale of tickets.

You will know that when the Recreation Committee was charged by the District Council with the task of developing a Playing Field for this district they adopted the policy that when they had provided a facility at the Field - e.g. Tennis Court, Bowling Green, etc., they would hand this over to a club of interested people to be run by them for the maximum benefit of all players in the district. To be successful this policy obviously required the greatest good-will between the clubs themselves and the greatest co-operation between them and their parent body, the Recreation Committee. This has indeed been forthcoming and nowhere has the plan worked more successfully than with the Bowling Club. With enthusiastic leadership, you have shown a fine spirit of self-help - a spirit which has resulted in the splendid sum of £500 raised for your own purposes during the first season of your winter activities. The Recreation Committee fully appreciate the good work done and it is with every confidence that they now invite you to join with them in taking up Mr. Briggs' challenge - and completing this year our common task.

David J. Meyer

Chairman,
Recreation Committee.

Statement showing all monies and services raised and given in connection with the purchase and development of the playing field at Birchley.
 Purchase Price of Field. (Paid by District Council) £475.

Monies and Services from all sources since development began in 1933.

	Local Efforts	District Council.	Playing Fields Assoc.	Education Committee
Rates, Sales etc.	£900			
Contributions by Local Organisations.	£463			
Doctor's Fees	£213			
Mr. Wright	£250			
(a) Cash Donation				
(b) Work done. Scaffolding etc. (Valuation)	£300			
Mr. Hayes (Architect) Professional services Scaff. Trip, Valuation	£240			
Voluntary Labour Excavation of equipment, Grass-cutting etc.	£150			
Grass Seed Ordered by Local Commitee, Dist. Comm., and Playing Fields Assoc. on basis of 1/2nd each.		£125	£125	
Purchase Price of Mower of Grass Seed Mat etc.		£100 32 £132		
Money towards Children's Corner.			£170	
Spent for use made of field by School.				£40.
	£2945	£307	£275	£40
Total for development Purchase price		£3,248. 475.		
		£3,723.		

Estimate to be made before starting Year 1934, with estimated costs.

WATER SUPPLY - Water supply £20, fencing £72, Grass Seed £20.	Total	£142
Balance of £1000 to Maxwell Hart (Contractors)		£735
WATERING. Payment for Delivery and Spreading.		£170
		£1053.
Recreation Committee, Bank Balance 26/4/34.		445
		£608.

Money to be raised.

The fruits of all this effort, by Spring of 1955, saw the Bowling Club's Committee start to consider the organisational arrangements for the "Opening of the Green". As the opening of the Bowling Green was "considered an event of general interest as well as Bowling Club interest" arrangements would be co-ordinated with the village's Recreation Committee.

For his generosity, Mr Briggs was voted Honorary President of the Bowling Club. Despite being a non-player, Mr Briggs also gifted to the club its first trophy in the form of the "Briggs Challenge Cup" at the start of the club's first season. It was decided that Mr A S Briggs conduct the formal opening and that it be held, in the afternoon, on Saturday 28 May 1955.

As seen on pages 23 to 27 contemporary press photographs of this event show a well attended event, a minute book entry refers to "a minimum of 200" to be catered for. This formidable task was undertaken by lady members of the club, such as Mrs Cant, Mrs Paul, Mrs Robertson and many others. Mrs Gonella well remembered the effort made as she "never seemed to stop baking".

As part of the festivities "representatives" from the under noted clubs were invited to play some of our members;

Baxter Park Bowling Club
Broughty Castle Bowling Club
Invergowrie Bowling Club

Lochee Bowling Club
Strathmartine Bowling Club
Newtyle Bowling Club

The results of these games are not mentioned however it is noted that all who took part thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Relationships with these clubs have stood the test of time, for example, we currently have an Annual Challenge match, for the Bobby Cadden Trophy, with Broughty Castle Bowling Club. This trophy was donated by Jean Cadden in memory of her husband, the well known rose grower, who had been a member of both clubs at different times in his life.

Muirhead
and
Birkhill
Bowling
Club

Season 1954 - 1955

Hon. President:
Mr A. S. BRIGGS

President:
Mr A. BROWN

Vice-President:
Mr G. GEDDES

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer:
Mr F. BAGGESEN
"Citizen," (initials)
(Tel. Murchison 494)

Members of Committee:
Mrs L. Gonella, Mr W. Jeffrey,
Mrs D. Stephen, Messrs Cant,
A. Falenner, N. Hanpton, J.
Hastie, W. Johnson, D. Moyes,
F. Robertson, R. Scott, J.
Stewart, Wilson.

Member's Name

A. G. Henderson

Ref. No.

Copy of the first Season
Membership Card

Muirhead bowling green opened

Mr A. S. Briggs, Old Lundie House, opened Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club's green on Saturday afternoon.

Mrs Briggs threw up the first jack, and Mr Briggs the first wood. Mr A. Brown, club president, threw up the first club wood, and Mrs Ann Dippie followed suit on behalf of the ladies' section.

Mr D. S. Moyes, chairman of Muirhead and Birkhill Recreation Committee, presided at the opening ceremony and paid tribute to Mr Briggs' practical and financial help.

Mr George A. Mudie, Monifeth District Council chairman, and Major E. S. Piddes, secretary, Scottish branch, National Playing Fields Association, also spoke.

Thanks were proposed by Mr J. P. Hastie, vice-chairman of the committee, who presented Mr Briggs with a silver-inscribed quich, and Mrs Briggs with a box of chocolates.

Mr Briggs has donated a silver trophy for the club singles event.

Copy of newspaper report
dated 30th May 1955

Please note the comment
regarding presentation of
the Silver Inscribed Quich
Further reference later.

What they aspired to



D Scott, W Stewart and R Low



Mr A S Briggs addresses the gathering



Mr D S Moyes addresses the gathering

What they achieved



Mrs Briggs throws the first Jack



Mr A S Briggs throws the first Wood on the green

What they achieved



Mrs A Dippie throws the first ladies bowl on the green



Mr A Brown throws the first Presidents bowl on the green

Alex Brown-1st President



MUIRHEAD & BIRKHILL BOWLING CLUB



Mrs Briggs, throws 1st jack



Mr Briggs, presents cup



Mr A.S. Briggs, with 1st Bowl



Opening Speeches

OFFICIAL OPENING MAY 28TH 1955



Mrs Dippie - 1st Bowl for Ladies

The design of the Club Crest is often debated. Nevertheless it seems fairly certain that the legend of the instigation of the Estate of Camperdown (not to be confused with the later, and somewhat more famous naval gentleman who won the Battle of Camperdown) seems the most likely given that the local Headmaster was one of the early driving forces for the club.

Folklore has it that when people won battles for their King they were rewarded with land and how this particular estate (the Camperdown Estate) came about was no exception.

The amount of land constituting these estates was decided by a variety of means but the folklore says that the area of Camperdown Estate was decided by releasing a Falcon.

The amount of land to be secured as part of the estate was to be dependant on the stamina or veracity of a bird i.e. the North, South, East and West extremities of the estate were to be wherever the Falcon landed.

This exercise took place and Camperdown Estate was born.

While we have some knowledge of the reason for the falcon being in the crest unfortunately the reason for the choice of colours remains obscure.

However, given that it was a rural area in the nineteen fifties, the fact that the crest is reasonably plain would seem to explain itself.

As readers will have noticed the club has again moved with the times, and the apparent fashion consciousness of today, in that the Anniversary Tie is quite different to the original.

Since the early days the club has seen it as very important to provide a service to members although at times the members could not agree on the way forward.

The issue of Sunday Play is a good example considering it took a few attempts to get this passed at the Annual General Meeting. Letters to the Scottish Bowling Association brought very little in the way of guidance from the association rules but the general feeling against was made very clear. On 14th March 1961 (by a vote of 18 to 2) this subject eventually received limited approval, in that play could take place only after 12-30pm. In later years, in line with the general change in outlook, this restriction was lifted in stages and bowling can now commence at any time.

During the initial years the focus was on providing a bowling surface however developments concerning facilities had been progressed in various steps after the formation of "The Green".

The establishment, with the tremendous assistance of the volunteers, of a small Clubhouse and the planting of the hedge and trees surrounding the green brought additional comfort and amenity. Mr Briggs again proved his generosity by donating the roof of the clubhouse and the introduction of Locker facilities took place when Mr Briggs added to his philanthropy by donating the money required to have lockers made.

During this period various stalwarts such as the first elected green keeper Mr W Stewart, ably assisted by Dave Scott, put in a great deal of time. They can be seen, along with Mr R Low in one of the early pictures shown on page 22. Mr J Elder and his merry band then carried on this good work.

In those early years the emphasis was on obtaining equipment, tables and chairs, lockers etc. however the introduction of the Alcohol Sales Licence changed matters and assisted the committee to be more adventurous. Again in this sphere Jim Elder was to the fore taking the position of Bar Steward for many a year.



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*Congratulations to
Muirhead & Birkhill
Bowling Club
on your 50th Anniversary*

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MUIRHEAD & BIRKHILL BOWLING CLUB

ON YOUR 50th ANNIVERSARY

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REDWOOD LEISURE ESTABLISHMENT**

A section of the current membership





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MOBILE: 07770 864534

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Our green in 1956



Our green as it was in 1989

Friendly competition is the essence of achievement

Advancement in other directions has also taken place. From the original trophy presented by Mr Briggs on the opening of the green we now have many club trophies to be played for over the season. On the playing side it is known that some of the early members were successful in other club's open competitions however the date or name of the first Muirhead & Birkhill member to win another club's open competition is not recorded. Internal Competitions developed with the donation of individual trophies over the years

Current Muirhead & Birkhill Trophies:-

Briggs Challenge Cup	Gents Singles Donated by Mr A S Briggs on the occasion of the opening of the green
Consolation Cup	Gents Singles Donated by Skol Brewers
Helen Senior Commemorative Cup	Ladies Singles Donated by Mr Senior in memory of his wife
Sadie Low Consolation Cup	Ladies Singles Donated by Sadie & Martin Low
Esplin Trophy	Mixed Singles - Handicap Donated by Mr Esplin a manager with D C Thomson Ltd
William Morrison Rosebowl	Mixed Singles - Points Donated by Mr Morrison a Lochee Draper
Dave Scott Trophy	Over 60's Mixed Singles Donated by the Elder Family in memory of Dave Scott a founder member
George Crichton Trophy	Under 35's Singles Donated by Ina Crichton in memory of her husband
Coupar Trophy	Mixed Pairs Donated by Mr Coupar

Friendly competition is the essence of achievement

Tom Hanlon Trophy	Mixed Rinks Donated by Tom and Mary Hanlon
J D Minto Trophy	Gents Nominated Pairs Donated by J D Minto
Aitchison Pairs	Ladies Two Bowl Pairs Donated in memory of Nancy Aitchison
Gents Pairs (Two Bowl)	Gents Two Bowl Pairs Donated by Isabella Haxton
Hogg Triples Rosebowl	Mixed Triples Donated by Andy Hogg a Dundee Newsagent
Macmaster Trophy	2 Bowl Mixed Triples Donated by Ann and Graham Macmaster
Open Pairs	Open Pairs Donated by Scottish Brewers
Jim Elder Pairs	Nominated Pairs Bestowed by the club with thanks for the invaluable work of Jim Elder a founder member
Isa Mitchell Trophy	Club Pair to go furthest in the Open Pairs Donated by the Mitchell family to commemorate Isa, a longstanding member of the club.
Bob Cadden Trophy	Annual Competition - Broughty Castle B. C. Donated by Mrs Cadden in memory of Bobby
David Steele Trophy	Annual Competition with the B.T. & P.O. Veteran's Association Donated by Mr Steele

Long term benefit rather than short term gain

Although there is no record of the original lease, it states in the Recreation Committee accounts that the District Council paid £475-00 for the field which was to become the Muirhead & Birkhill Recreation Park.

It seems clear from this that a lease must have been granted, probably for a term of 20 years as the new lease started in 1974.

At this time the President was Ed Mitchell and in 1998 the same gentleman, together with his family, contributed towards the Club Trophy Collection by donating the Isa Mitchell Trophy.

Isa was a long term stalwart member of the club and this trophy is now presented, in her memory, to the club members who progress furthest in our annual Open Pairs Tournament.

Another signatory to the lease was the then Secretary George Crichton. George was another long term stalwart member of the club whose relationship with the club, and whose love of bowling, was sufficiently strong for his family to ask that they be allowed to scatter his ashes on our green. In addition there was a Trophy in commemoration which is presented to our Under 35's Singles winner.

Of the two other signatories, Stan Nicoll is no longer a member and Jimmy Reid, Past President has recently returned to the club.

As the copy of the lease shows this contract was to run for 40 years and, as was the custom at that time, was given for a "Peppercorn Rent". Also written in is a clause which signifies that, providing the ground is still used for its original purpose, the council are required to continue the lease.

It is somewhat debatable if the current political climate would allow this type of lease to be written today.

Later in the club minutes there is a copy of a Council Minute. This clarifies that the officers and sitting members were at pains to ensure that, after the integration of the Angus, Dundee and Perth area's into Tayside Region, leisure facilities in rural places such as Muirhead & Birkhill and Wellbank would be safeguarded.

MINUTE of LEASE between Montfith District Council constituted in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1929 (hereinafter called "the Landlord") and Edward Gray Mitchell, Fifty five Findhorn Place, Fintry, Dundee, President of the Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club and George Guild Crichton, Fifteen Edward Place, Muirhead, Dundee, Secretary and Treasurer of Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club and their respective successors in Office as President and Secretary and Treasurer of the said Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club, as Trustees for the said Club (hereinafter called "the Tenants")

- (FIRST) The subject of let is that area of ground presently occupied by Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club upon which is formed the Bowling Green and upon which stands the Clubhouse and other appurtenances of the said Club.
- (SECOND) The subject of let is to be used by the Tenants for the normal and customary functions of a Bowling Club and in accordance with the Constitution and Rules and Regulations of the Muirhead and Birkhill Bowling Club, and for no other purpose.
- (THIRD) The period of let is 40 years from and after the term of Whitsunday Nineteen hundred and seventy four, notwithstanding the date hereof, declaring however that the Landlord shall be bound to continue the let from year to year thereafter so long as the subject is used for the foregoing purposes.
- (FOURTH) The rent shall be One Shilling per annum, if asked only.
- (FIFTH) The Tenants shall be liable for the whole expense of upkeep of the subject and for all rates exigible therefrom with any other burdens therefrom arising, no obligation for payment of which shall fall on the Landlord.
- (SIXTH) Assignees and sub-tenants are excluded: IN WITNESS WHEREOF these presents are executed by the said Edward Gray Mitchell and George Guild Crichton at Dundee on the Sixteenth day of September Nineteen hundred and seventy four before these witnesses Jimmie Reid, Manager, "Lochalsh", Cospar Angus Road, Muirhead and Stanley Nicoll, Toolmaker, Forty McLean Street, Dundee: And they are executed on behalf of the said Montfith District Council having been signed on their behalf by William James Grant, Joseph Murray and Alexander James Waddell Robertson Cospar being respectively the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk to the said Montfith District Council altogether at Dundee on the Twenty third day of said month of September in the year last mentioned before these witnesses Robert Whittet Mitchell Gordon, Clerk and James Symo, Law Assistant, both at One Bank Street, Dundee.

It is to be

Edward Gray Mitchell

George Guild Crichton

Robert Whittet Mitchell Gordon

James Symo

John Smith

The best After Dinner Speech ever heard – "I'll take the Bill"

Gents Presidents

1955 A Brown
1956 A Brown
1957 A Brown
1958 J P Hastie
1959 W Johnston
1960 A Low
1961 W H Nicoll
1962 G M Souter
1963 G M Souter
1964 G Geddes
1965 D Cuthbertson
1966 A Hogg
1967 E McIntosh
1968 G Crichton
1969 G Crichton
1970 A R Kidd
1971 G Mathers
1972 M Steel
1973 J Reid
1974 E Mitchell
1975 S Nicoll
1976 S Nicoll
1977 H Keeffe
1978 J Reid
1979 D Fergusson
1980 J Reid
1981 G Findlay
1982 J L Watson
1983 H T Smith
1984 A Nairn
1985 H Eggo
1986 D Webster
1987 G Motion
1988 M Dunning
1989 I McBean
1990 R Ferguson
1991 D H Steele
1992 J D Minto
1993 R Garnham
1994 J Green
1995 K G Johnston
1996 G J Macmaster
1997 J Watson
1998 A Nairn
1999 G Millar
2000 J D Minto
2001 T H McGrath
2002 A C Murray
2003 L Mitchell
2004 J Soutar
2005 M Dunning

Gents Championship Winners

1955 R Fisher
1956 J Stewart
1957 J Elder
1958 G Ross
1959 D McPherson
1960 H M Simpson
1961 H M Simpson
1962 J Stewart
1963 G Mathers
1964 G Ross
1965 D Byars
1966 A W Hogg
1967 J Stewart
1968 D Scott
1969 R Low
1970 A Robertson
1971 G Crichton
1972 A Low
1973 I Elder
1974 J Elder
1975 G Ross
1976 S Nicoll
1977 A Kidd
1978 G Findlay
1979 P Forbes
1980 G Ross
1981 S Vigrow
1982 G Findlay
1983 J Minto Jnr.
1984 H T Smith
1985 G Findlay
1986 G Findlay
1987 J Watson Jnr.
1988 G Findlay
1989 E Mason
1990 G Findlay
1991 G Findlay
1992 M Biondi
1993 J Wilson
1994 W Carlin
1995 R Robertson
1996 A Nairn
1997 J D Minto
1998 M Biondi
1999 R Ferguson
2000 G Findlay
2001 E Mason
2002 R Ferguson
2003 J Mulholland
2004 R Carlin

Gents Honours Board

1973 Ferguson Singles
1974 Ferguson Singles
1981 City of Dundee Triples
1982 Killacky Pairs
1984 Killacky Pairs
1990 Findlay Leslie Trophy
1992 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
1992 City of Dundee Rinks
1993 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
1993 Thomson Trophy
1994 City of Dundee Under 35's Singles
1994 Angus Bowling Association Fours
1994 Guthrie Fours
1995 City of Dundee Rinks
1997 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
1997 Angus Bowling Association Pairs
1997 City of Dundee Under 35's Singles
1997 City of Dundee Pairs
1998 City of Dundee Triples
1999 Hunter Cup
2000 Hunter Cup
2000 City of Dundee Triples
2000 Findlay Leslie Trophy
2001 Findlay Leslie Trophy
2001 City of Dundee Under 35's Singles
2001 Thomson Trophy
2002 Thomson Trophy
2003 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
2003 Ferguson Singles
2004 City of Dundee Pairs

*A good speech is like a good dress –
short enough to be interesting, but long enough to cover the subject*

Lady Presidents

1955
1956
1957
1958 M Martin
1959 G Gonella
1960 G Gonella
1961 H Johnston
1962 H Johnston
1963 R L Ogilvie
1964 J Geddes
1965 A Nicoll
1966 R L Ogilvie
1967 R L Ogilvie
1968 E Kidd
1969 G Gonella
1970 R McPherson
1971 B S Cant
1972 M McNab

1973 I Hogg
1974 C Armstrong
1975 M McNab

1976 S Mathers

1977 I Watson
1978 J Rutherford
1979 J Elder
1980 C Keefe
1981 E Duthie
1982 I Kidd
1983 H Minto

1984 M Forbes

1985 M H Dunning
1986 A S Macmaster
1987 A S Macmaster

1988 M H Dunning
1989 M H Dunning
1990 E Morion

1991 E Morion
1992 A S Macmaster
1993 A S Macmaster
1994 S Low
1995 S A Johnston
1996 S A Johnston
1997 A S Macmaster

1998 A S Macmaster

1999 D McLaren
2000 D McLaren
2001 E A Moran

2002 M H Dunning
2003 F E Smith
2004 V Starrock

2005 H S Nairn

Ladies Championship Winners

1955
1956 G Gonella
1957 N Robbie
1958 N Robbie
1959 W Paul
1960 B S Cant
1961 G Gonella
1962 G Gonella
1963 R L Ogilvie
1964 G Gonella
1965 E Kidd
1966 G Gonella
1967 J Elder
1968 E Kidd
1969 I Mitchell
1970 I Mitchell
1971 M McNab
1972 J Elder

1973 M McNab
1974 J Elder
1975 J Elder

1976 I Mitchell

1977 I Mitchell
1978 I Mitchell
1979 J Elder
1980 J Elder
1981 J Elder
1982 A Elder
1983 I Mitchell

1984 A Elder

1985 J Elder
1986 J Elder
1987 I Kidd

1988 I Kidd
1989 J Broadhurst
1990 J Broadhurst

1991 D McLaren
1992 I Wilson
1993 J Broadhurst
1994 M H Dunning
1995 H S Nairn
1996 D McLaren
1997 D McLaren

1998 D McLaren

1999 M Forbes
2000 D McLaren
2001 M H Dunning

2002 M H Dunning
2003 J Elder
2004 H S Nairn

Ladies Honours Board

1983 Angus & Perthshire Singles
1983 Forfarshire Rinks
1984 Angus & Perthshire Singles
1984 Angus & Perthshire Triples
1984 Forfarshire Triples
1985 Angus & Perthshire Singles
1988 Forfarshire Rinks
1989 Scottish District Pairs
1989 Forfarshire Triples
1992 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
1992 Scottish District Two Bowl Pairs
1992 Forfarshire Rinks

1993 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
1993 Scottish District Triples
1993 Forfarshire Triples

1994 Scottish Championship, Singles
Runner Up
1994 Angus & Perthshire Triples

1995 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Singles
1995 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Rinks

1996 Angus & Perthshire Singles

1997 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
1997 Scottish District Rinks
1997 Forfarshire Pairs
1997 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Rinks
1997 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Triples

1998 Scottish District Two Bowl Pairs
1998 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Singles

1999 Scottish District Singles
1999 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Singles

2000 Scottish District Triples
2000 Angus & Perthshire Rinks
2000 Forfarshire Triples

2001 Scottish Championship Rink
2001 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Singles
2001 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Rinks
2001 Forfarshire Triples

2002 Sidlaw League Champion of
Champions Pairs

2003 Scottish Championship Triple
2003 Scottish District Mixed Pairs
2003 East of Scotland District Rinks
2004 East of Scotland District Pairs
2004 Angus & Perthshire Triples

Developments, in terms of club house and green facilities, have been numerous over a long period of time.

Leading up to the 25th Anniversary of the club in 1980 a lengthy debate took place and it was decided to extend our building to provide a Function area, a new Kitchen, new Toilets and a Committee room. (The area now taken up by the Ladies & Gents lockers and the pool table).

I can well remember being involved, one Sunday, knocking through what had been the rear exterior wall. Various people had been using a sledgehammer but appeared to be making very little impression. In walks big Jim Smith (now of Craigie Bowling Club) and asked what he could do to help. Being a sizeable chap, to everyone's surprise, on swinging the sledgehammer he managed to explode it straight through the wall. There are still those who say it would have happened anyway with the next blow but, in those days, Jim presented "a fine figure of a man" (some say he still does) however the truth about this event will never be known.

Following the completion of this extension the club now had a dedicated function area which was put to good use in the ensuing years.

It may seem strange to some therefore, that the Celebratory Dance was held some distance away in the Meadowbank Inn.

On the other hand this function was also the Presentation Dance as the picture opposite shows and our new function area could not have coped with the numbers who wished to attend.

There is not much in the way of records to tell us what other forms of celebration took place in this, the Silver Anniversary, an important year for the club. There have been some suggestions, for example, "drinks were priced at 25p for the 25th Anniversary celebrations" however the fact is, that I cannot find anything to substantiate them.

It seems much more probable that these views are the "Rose Tinted Glasses of Memory" talking or just "Wishful Thinking".

*The past is History, The future's a Mystery,
But today is a Gift, that's why it is called "The Present"*



Founder Members:
Mr A Falconer, Mr J Elder,
Mr W Milne, Mrs Gonella,
Mrs Cant *(Taken at the 25th
Anniversary Presentation Dance, 1980)*



Trophies competed
for in 1980

Trophies competed
for today



As the years move on the need to develop the "Evening Social" aspects of club membership became more apparent.

The fact that the population was taking more cognisance of the ability to "go out socialising" in the evening created different opportunities for the committee.

The members demand for an Alcohol Sales Licence was debated, sometimes with great vigour, at a few Annual General Meetings prior to a licence finally being obtained.

Whilst there was, on an odd occasion, professional entertainment organised, various other "Member/Artists" provided home talent to create the Saturday Evening's entertainment.

The fact that alcohol was now available probably added to the hilarity on a Saturday night when worthies such as the aforementioned Bobby Cadden, Tom McBean and a good few others provided "Party Piece" entertainment for the assembled members. Bobby's legendary mime of a Game Keeper getting "caught short" when on a shoot on the hillside comes to mind.

Over the years the situation has changed and a variety of different types of social entertainment have been seen in the Club.

These changes have in some way been spontaneous, reacting to the needs of the members, and sometimes have happened as a result of the provision of enhanced facilities (the addition of a Dance Floor etc).

Another service to the members was introduced in the form of "Private Functions" whereby the member could have the use of the function area for free (instead of incurring cost when hiring another venue). This has resulted members defraying the cost of their celebrations and, on numerous occasions, very enjoyable evenings for the celebrity/celebrities of the day.

O' wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us, to see oursels as ithers see us!

Events such as the Coffee Morning, one of the events which provide a testament to the effort the Ladies have put into the club over the years (not forgetting the Plant sale and general assistance given freely by the male members); have stood the test of time. This event continues to be a good way of bolstering club funds and provides an avenue for children and grandchildren to be introduced to the club through the fun competitions such as target bowls.

Among a myriad of other notable diversions from the norm the entertainment in past years has included members providing Amateur Drama Nights, Mr and Mrs Competitions, and Ceildhs.

In today's climate bringing in professional acts seems to be what the members like best and support. The days of the old fashioned "Sing Song" and provision of home made entertainment seemed to be numbered, that is, until the ladies, as is their wont, thought differently. Initially, the male members wish to demonstrate their appreciation of all the hard work the ladies carried out throughout the year, took the form of the men "Donning their Pinnies" and serving the ladies a meal.

At the request of the ladies the format was changed to one which has proved to be one of the most successful events that has been introduced, and which has now been ongoing for a number of years.

Someone had the bright idea to organise a night when it was *Ladies only* and that the Ladies Committee would provide "entertainment".

This started with a reasonably small attendance, however was so enjoyable that, in recent years, it has been very difficult to accommodate all those who wish to attend.

Many a good evening has been enjoyed by the ladies of surrounding clubs invited by our existing members.

The "entertainment" provided by the Ladies Committee has developed into costumed cabaret and some wonderful productions have been seen. The Ladies Committee members who have taken part over the years are to be commended and special mention has to be given to the "Producer" Eleanor Motion.

Winners- Scottish Rinks Championship 2001



M. Dunning, P. Stewart, E. Moran & F. Smith

Winners- Scottish Triples Championship 2003



E. Ferguson, J. Broadhurst & S. Coleman

Progression in other areas of the club concerning the Ladies has also been apparent.

This club, over the years, has been in the forefront of equality for female members. Initially, for the first two years, the Ladies were not allowed to join in with the men however in the 57/58 season this changed. In these early days equal green time was put in place and later combined competitions became the norm.

This had developed, and progressed, to the point, where competitions and other activities within the club are all on an equal basis. In 2000 our constitution was re written to reflect the existing thoughts at that time. A large amount of consultation took place, a questionnaire was sent to all members, and a Special General Meeting was held to decide the way forward. As a result equal voting rights and places on the General Management Committee were given to the ladies. Today our Management Committee are elected on a proportional representation basis. i.e. Six positions are designated to be filled with Lady Members. Our Lady's Committee President, Lady's Committee Vice President and Ladies Past President have preference and the three other members are voted for at the Annual General Meeting. The downside of this is that while, in the early years the ladies had a reduced fee, their fees are now also on an equal basis.

Regarding developments on the bowling side mention has to be made of the fact that the Ladies have progressed further in the national competitions than the men. Jokingly some of the men would argue that mixed bowling and consequently a higher level of competition is what has enhanced their development.

Congratulations to the four who won the Scottish Rinks Championship in 2001 and went on to represent Scotland in Wales the following year.

Congratulations also to the three who won the Scottish Triples Championship in 2003 and who represented Scotland in the 2004 Championships in Jersey.

Following the 25th Anniversary the buildings/facilities of the club remained fairly static until the late 80's.

During this period there were people who favoured improving the playing surface prior to any further building alterations.

A sprinkler system was introduced, new bankings were installed and a combination of events led to the club employing, for the first time, a professional Greenkeeper.

Our green had been known to many as being "a Good but Heavy Green" however after the employment of Mr A Crichton things changed. In keeping with the local tradition the club had employed a person who had "grown up" in the village to do this job.

Arthur's talents as a greenkeeper had been nurtured with Dundee District Council and developed working on private golf course greens before he branched out to form his own company. Arthur has his own methods (including cutting the green in bare feet) but he came with good references.

He has succeeded in bringing our playing surface to a level where this, allied to the good facilities that we can provide, has meant the club has been chosen to host Cities & County games over the last decade.

Thanks have to be given to the great number of volunteers, who throughout the years have been responsible for the attractive surrounds. Everyone does this in their own style (one such effort involved the creation of the letters M&BBC in the main centre flower bed) however all should be congratulated for their efforts and the expertise shown.

In recent years the growth of the trees round the extremities produced debate as to whether their height should be reduced. The "ayes" had their way and the trees have been lopped.

One step forward, two steps back

In order to solve a roof leakage problem and prevent significant ongoing problems (including the potential of higher maintenance costs) it was decided to add a pitched roof to the original extension area.

The committee had, over previous years, managed to put some monies together and with prudent application and the help of the volunteers the new roof was added.

When it became apparent monies were available another great debate began:

- Should we, or should we not, develop the buildings any more?
- Should we create Indoor Rinks with sectional flooring providing the dance area for functions?
- Should we build upwards, another level on the existing buildings
- Would floodlights be a useful addition?

Members were undecided, a plethora of ideas were forthcoming, architects were consulted, models were built and eventually it was decided to create a new locker room to the south of the existing structures.

This structure was completed in 1990 although during the erection of this new addition minds changed again and the end result was a new function area. This left our original function area to be converted to the current Locker Room.

Once this was completed the committee were persuaded that;

if you do not move forward →

↔ you are in fact not standing still ↔

← but are actually moving backwards.

They were persuaded to think longer term and produced a package that included new Kitchen facilities, new Bar facilities, an upgrade of the Lounge Bar and redecoration and new furniture for the Function area.

Prior to any building work commencing various possibilities were explored. It was decided to use a step by step approach based on the amount of finance available at that point in time. Luckily we managed to accomplish the whole plan over a short period of five years.

First came the kitchen (1994) and, being heavily involved, I remember it well. Great efforts were made to ensure the ladies were part of the decision making process. A variety of technical hitches had to be overcome, site problems, special purpose drainage, regulations etc. however my memory directs me to other kinds of complications.

One that comes to mind most easily was being able to demonstrate to the ladies (and achieve consensus for) the new kitchen design prior to build. On more than one occasion chairs were set out to simulate the walls, doorways etc. giving a tangible, visual portrayal rather than looking at an architect's drawing. These efforts were not in vain as all who have viewed or used the kitchen agree that the end result made these exertions worthwhile.

Thereafter (1995) came the bar where the changes produced other dilemmas, from floors at different levels, to plumbing, to design. Whilst contractors were employed to complete the actual works, Ivor McBean (now of Baxter Park B.C.), Stan Barrie and Jim Buchan were three among others who gave invaluable assistance in connection with these installations.

Anyone who can remember the old, small "boleyholes" that served as the kitchen and the bar for so many years will appreciate the difference that these changes have made.

More recently, the décor and equipment in the lounge (1999) and the function area (2001) have been upgraded to provide higher levels of comfort to the members and guests alike.

In total over recent years, the spend has been in excess £160,000.

*Tom & Dave compete in a district final,
The newspaper reporter's friend Tom lost however
the reporter disliked Dave.*

Next Day in the newspaper:

*Tom finished second in last night's final: -
Dave came one from last.*

Events do lend themselves to unusual occurrences and I am sure there are plenty stories that can be told.

One that comes to the author's mind, perhaps because it was he who was involved, contains elements of the old and new - the essence of this booklet.

During a game where the combatants knew each other very well the banter that existed was, as normal, quite substantial. (This was nothing to the banter which came after the incident). Perhaps the laughter and continual bending were the reasons for the occurrence but this we will never know.

A male member of the club, who was watching this game, received urgent signals from his wife (who was taking part). It had transpired that the elastic in her underwear had "given up the ghost" and our member was given instructions to go and retrieve another piece of underwear from their nearby house. As husbands do, he asked the question "Where do I find them". Flustered, his wife gave him directions to "take them off the washing line" and then tried to continue with the competition.

Behind the rink, sitting enjoying the bowls and sunshine were two elderly lady members. Although long past the stage of actually playing the game they were still "thinking" every bowl from their spectator's position and were party to the events as they unfolded.

On his return, with a replacement for the offending article crushed up in his palm, the husband attempted to attract his wife's attention. On doing so he passed over the article with the thought that she could visit the ladies room and "re dress the balance".

At this point, in unison, the two elderly ladies commented -
"Aye, young lad, you wouldn't get my knickers
to crush up in your hand like that"

The shortest and saddest school report:

"He does his best, I'm afraid"

Over the years we have had many who have "done it more than once", whether this was winning a particular competition or assisting in the work of the club. This historical tale would not be complete without mentioning a few of the many.

In this respect names come forward and they should be admired for their skill and/or commitment:-

Mrs Jessie Elder – Winner – Ladies Singles Championship ten times between 1967 and the year 2003

Mr Glen Findlay – Winner – Gents Singles Championship eight times between 1978 and the year 2000

Various officials have had the tenure of post for extremely long times and therefore they also deserve our respect for their dedication.

Messrs A Brown & J Reid – each being Male President three times

Mrs A Macmaster – Lady President over six different years

Mr Hugh Keefe – Secretary for ten years

Mr Mike Dunning – Treasurer for Nine years

Mr Alec Kidd – Match Secretary for fourteen years

Mr Eddie Mason – Match Secretary for eleven years

Mr S Barrie – Decorator in Chief for the last twenty odd years and, in addition, Hat Night Convener for the last nine years.

As well as all of the above, who have had an immeasurable effect on the club, we must include the unnamed heroes who have worked and played alongside the few I have mentioned to produce the club that we have today.

As can be seen during the reading of this booklet without the volunteers any club would not function. Energetic people to take on tasks such as official positions, committee responsibilities and/or to carry out necessary works for the club are in great demand.

Our thanks must be given to the many who have contributed so much in the last 50 years.

We must hope that this culture continues and the club continues its progress and remains in the forefront in the coming years.

The following poem (origins unknown however the copy obtained from a Fife Bowling Club whilst playing in the "Three Counties") asks the age old question regarding club members.

"DO YOU JUST BELONG"

Are you an active member - the kind that would be missed

Or are you just a member - that your name is on the list

Do you attend the meeting - and mingle with the crowd

Or do you stay at home - and grumble long and loud

Do you ever help in any work - or leave it to just a few

And talk about the "Clique" - that never includes you

Come to the green more often - and help with hand & heart

Don't just be a member - but take an active part

Think this over members - you know the right from wrong

Do you wish to be remembered - or do you just belong?

It is therefore a comment that I would encourage every President, of any club, to enthuse the membership - in order that the volunteers come forward when required.

As mentioned earlier, at the opening function on 28th May 1955 the major benefactor, Mr A S Briggs, was given a presentation. The item was a Wooden Quaich, with a Silver Centre, suitably inscribed.

As the picture and newspaper article on the opposite page will reveal, on the club's Fortieth Anniversary we were very lucky to retrieve this heirloom.

It transpired that the Quaich had somehow or other been on sale at the Errol Boot sale. On purchasing the article and taking it home this latest club benefactor Mr Henry commenced cleaning the Quaich. When doing so he revealed the inscription and subsequently contacted the Bowling Club with a view to donating it back to the club.

This Quaich is currently on display in the Trophy Cabinet.

.....

In a similar vein, when our clubhouse was being spring cleaned ready for the alteration in 1995 we found a pair of bowls which had appeared from nowhere. On investigation it was revealed that they were connected to the Bridge of Earn Bowling Club.

We can only guess that the connection was through Broughty Castle Bowling Club.

Given some research the conclusion was that the Bridge of Earn Bowling Club at one time had a fixture with Broughty Castle Bowling Club, would sail down the river to it, and that these bowls were related, in some way to this game.

The fact that we had a fixture with Broughty Castle Bowling Club would seem to explain why these were found in our club.

Bridge of Earn Bowling Club was contacted and a meeting arranged. On arrival to present the articles to Bridge of Earn Bowling Club the group representing our club were pleasantly surprised. A Cheese and Wine reception had been organised together with an exhibition of the memorabilia already existing in their club.

(Bridge of Earn Bowling Club dates back to 1859)

A man, flying a Hot Air Balloon, decided on descent to find a landmark.

There was no landmark, only a man walking his dog in the fields

"Can you tell me where I am", the balloonist shouted.

"In a balloon 200 yards above the ground" was the reply

"Are you a member of Muirhead & Birkhill Bowling Club Committee? he asked"

Yes I am, how did you guess? The man on the ground replied.

"Because that Committee comprises of people full of useless information" he replied



Frank Hendry presents the bowl to club president Ken Johnston watched by, from left, Andy Wilson, Sylvia Jackson, Richard Pye, Eddie Mason, John Watson, Will Milne, Stan Barrie & Mike Downie.

Photograph Courtesy of the Courier, Dundee

A CHANCE buy at an Errol car boot sale has turned up a missing piece of a bowling club's history perfectly in time for their 40th anniversary celebrations at the end of this month.

Muirhead and Birkhill members had believed that a commemorative bowl presented to a patron whose generosity helped establish the club was lost forever.

Dundee man Frank Hendry bought the large shallow wooden bowl a couple of Sundays ago and only began to wonder if it was something unusual when he noticed it appeared to have a coin embedded in the bottom. However, it was actually an engraved commemorative medal.

Once he knew the bowl's history, Mr Hendry offered to donate it

back to the club.

Struck by the Muirhead and Birkhill Recreation Association, the medal and bowl was presented to Mr A. S. Briggs to mark the opening of the bowling green on May 28, 1955.

Club secretary and historian Andy Wilson was "bowled over" by the discovery.

He explained, "Mr Briggs made an initial donation of £250 when the Recreation Association was trying to get itself established in 1951.

"Then, when the men decided to build a bowling green, they set about doing it themselves.

"Mr Briggs used to pass in his car and one day he stopped when he saw them working. When he was told they were building a bowling green, he offered to match every £1 that was raised to set up the club."

In 1987 Carpet Bowling was introduced to the club by Rab McQueen. Initially it was a small number who took part and fundraising was required to obtain the equipment.

The interest in Carpet Bowling grew and now provides a welcome digression for our members in the winter. Given that our floor is of a good standard, our playing surface is recognised as being among the best in the area.

Numbers increased to the point where, in the 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999 seasons there were 8 teams (approximately 54 members) who took positions in the Dundee Area Leagues Teams.

In addition other member's, outwith league players, took part in the Monday evening Hat Nights. This increase necessitated the purchase of another carpet and it is necessary, at this point, to thank Rab McQueen and all others who assisted in any way with the provision of the original, and over the years, the replacement equipment.

This section of the club appear to be more than self supporting, in that they have organised reciprocal visits with other clubs, they organise and deliver a Christmas Dance and a Burns Supper. It is right to express our gratitude to the members of the Carpet Bowling section in particular Rab, John Robinson, Norma McLeod and all the others who have assisted over the years in creating and maintaining this winter activity:- I'm sure the "Monday Gang" would miss their evening get togethers.

In 1999 the Carpet Bowling British Legion Fours Competition was given another name for the one year only. It was renamed "The Gold Cup" in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Carpet Bowling League. Thanks to Morag & Danny Fraser, John Robinson and Ron Ramsay, who were successful in this Knockout Competition (beating some very strong teams along the way); this one off Anniversary Cup now resides in our Trophy Cabinet.

Annually the quality of our member's play is again shown in club representation at the Dundee League Prize Giving Evening where many a trophy has come the way of our members.

Different strokes for different folks

In the winter an increasing number of our members enjoy playing at the Dundee Indoor and, here also, the club name is held in respect.

At a rough count the current number of members taking part would be in the region of between sixty and seventy although this fluctuates from year to year.

Some would describe the Indoor as more competitive but others would favour the argument that the Outdoor is just as competitive, but certainly much more social, thus giving the impression of being less competitive.

Whilst most would agree the social side of bowling is not as evident in the Indoor as it is during the outdoor season most Indoor members will describe:

- the absence of Saturday Afternoon Inter Club Fixtures
 - the absence of the associated meal halfway through
 - the fact that most people are driving
 - the minimal opportunity to "nip to the bar"
- as restricting the opportunity to socialise thus creating a totally different atmosphere.

However, notwithstanding that this therefore changes the essence of the interaction between bowlers, it is nice to have the opportunity to keep contact with fellow bowlers during the winter.

Generally we have members (male & female) who play for the indoor select and the club is normally represented during the finals gala week.

In terms of competition our club members are held in regard with a variety of people, both male and female, in the forefront.

Notable among others are Jane Broadhurst, Margaret Dunning, Mary Forbes, Eddie Mason, John Minto & Alex Nairn for their play over the years but, probably the highlights in recent years have been Alex Mawhinney - Gents Singles runner up in 1997 and Doreen Mason winning the Ladies Singles in Seasons 98/99 and 99/2000.

While we had good bowlers in past years, if a measure of good is winning, then we currently have one of the strongest memberships for many a year. Examples of players in the Cities and Counties teams, the number of Scottish, Local and Club Open Competitions where the Muirhead & Birkhill Club is represented in the final stages and indeed carrying on to win, is indicative of quality. This is apparent when perusing the Honours Listings on pages 42 and 43.

In recent years the strength and depth and also the grade of the current membership has been demonstrated by being runner up in the third year, after winning the Thomson Trophy (6 rinks, aggregate score) two years in succession. In the same vein, the club was fortunate to have won the Findlay Leslie Trophy two years running; one of those wins in the same year as the Thomson Trophy.

The ladies have already been mentioned, in terms of their success in the Scottish Championships however, we should not ignore their efforts in local competitions. Not only have they done well in Sidlaw League and local open competitions they have travelled further (Bridge of Earn, Dunning etc.) and have achieved success.

Entries into mixed competitions have also been apparent, some as far afield as the Helensburgh area, and a measure of success has also been achieved in this sphere of competition. The most recognisable, in terms of status, being Bob Ferguson and Margaret Dunning who, in 2003, beat the local and area competitors before travelling to Paisley and reaching the Semi Finals of the Scottish Mixed Pairs.

The debate continues as to whether the culture of the club should be to

- give every member, who wishes, an opportunity to take part in these competitions.

or to

- send out, what is purported to be, the strongest teams in an attempt to win honours for the club.

In the years to come the newer/younger members will have a history to emulate but this should not be impossible in view of the fact that we already have two youngsters (Ross Carlin & Chris Stewart) playing for the Cities & Counties and Indoor Select teams.

Year 2005 Programme Highlights

Issue of the new "Anniversary Logo" Ties, Scarf's & Booklets	15th & 16th/04/05
Opening of the Green - Social Evening - Clubhouse	15/04/05
Dedication of Nine New Spectator Seats and Viewing Area Tables/Chairs for the green surroundings	16/04/05
Opening of the Green Charity Game-(President V Vice President)	16/04/05
Ladies Open Pairs	07/05/05 & 08/05/05
Planting of the Anniversary Flower Beds	20/05/05 to 31/05/05
Anniversary Dinner/Dance - Invercarse Hotel (Dress optional)	03/06/05
Anniversary Celebration Invitation Games (provisional dates)	08/07/05 15/07/05 22/07/05
Open Pairs Weekend	05/08/05 to 07/08/05
Anniversary Celebration Invitation Games	12/08/05 19/08/05 26/08/05 02/09/05 09/09/05
Finals Gala Days	11/09/05 & 18/09/05
Closing of the Green Charity Game	24/09/05

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