

The History of Byfleet Bowls Clubs

The first Minute Book I can find starts May 11th 1931, which includes the item 'minutes of previous meeting' I do have the Accounts book for 1926 onwards. Other early information has been located elsewhere – Parish Council records, Woking News & Mail, Surrey Herald etc. I would be grateful if anyone has any additional information, or even the location of the minute book for 1925 – 31.

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The recreation ground was opened about 1898.

The bowling green was laid in 1923 by W. Gregory. (In the 1950s the park keeper was Bill Gregory-known as 'Wormy'- was this the same man?). In November 1923 the Parish Council authorised the recruitment of two men to assist the groundsman with the laying of the green.

In July, 1925 the Council agreed to the erection of a pavilion to accommodate bowlers, cricketers and tennis players. It should have a veranda. Berry & Sons were granted the contract, but it had to be completed by October 31st. In November they wrote again, unless there was progress by the 23rd they would take away the contract. The pavilion was completed.

At a public meeting in the village hall – on November 30th 1925 - it was agreed to form a bowls club. Mr. FC Stoop was elected president in his absence. (His apology for absence included an agreement that if chosen he would be willing to serve). The meeting agreed that people from adjacent parishes could be admitted to the club. It was reported at the meeting that the pavilion and green cost just £220.

Meanwhile, the Parish Council agreed to purchase for public use:-

12 woods size 5/16, and 12 bowls size 5/18 at a cost of £18.6s.0d. 4 jacks 16/-, 12 pairs of rubber undersoles £2.14s, 4 rink markers and 4 "ditto with scorers" £1.10s. Total – less 10% 22.1s. 4 mats were ordered from Bovril @ 8/- each.

The Council also ordered a rustic gate and posts £2.5s.0d. Insurance against fire, burglary and housebreaking cost £2.7s.6p. W.G. Tarrant gave a flag staff in June.

F.C. Stoop was President and there were three vice presidents. The Secretary – W. Turner – also doubled as Treasurer. (These Turners like their money!)

All members addresses were, of course recorded, but often only the house name or the road is mentioned. (E.g. V. Howell "Ferney" E.H. Elkins "Shalfleet", and A. Randall High Road)

Mr. Stoop was still president. There were no less than 8 vice presidents. They included people who were active in village affairs outside the club. (W. Holroyd for instance was at one time chairman of the Parish Council).