

# SOME ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE DERBYSHIRE ASSOCIATION'S HISTORY.

The initial preliminary meeting to consider the forming of our Association was called by the late S.G. Spurr Esq, Stanton Iron Works Hallam Fields B.C. on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1950 and I quote from the first minute recorded – Quote – At the request of Clubs interested in E.B.A., Mr S.G. Spurr ( Stanton Iron Works Hallam Fields B.C.) had circulated 18 Clubs affiliated to the Derbyshire Bowls Association also two Clubs in Derbyshire affiliated to the Leicestershire E.B.A. inviting them to send representatives – Unquote.

Probably due to the prevailing weather conditions (snow, hard frost.) five Clubs were represented, Heanor Excelsior, Long Eaton West Park, Ilkeston Victoria Park, Stanton Iron Works Club House and Stanton Iron Works Hallam Fields.

Mr H.Crofts (Derbyshire Bowls Association) was appointed to Chair the meeting.

Mr T.J. Large moved that an E.B.A. section be formed

The proposition that the Derbyshire ( E.B.A.) Bowls Association be formed was put forward by Mr T.J. Large and duly seconded by Mr F.W. Barber. Mr Alec Page ( Norfolk), Immediate Past President of the E.B.A. offered to assist in the formation and was prepared to attend the next meeting. To save time at the next meeting it was agreed that the following suggestions be put on the agenda, that the first annual subscription be not more than £2 / 2 / 0 and the individual entry fee to the four competitions be two shillings per player per competition.

The inaugural meeting of the Derbyshire (E.B.A.) Bowls Association took place at the White Horse Hotel, The Morledge, Derby on Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1951. At the request of those present, Mr A. Page, I.P.P. of the E.B.A. took the Chair. With the necessary six clubs being assured it was proposed by Mr H. Crofts ( Heanor Excelsior B.C.) and seconded by Mr J. Crosby (Derby Litchurch B.C.) that the Derbyshire (E.B.A.) Bowling Association be formed forthwith and that application for affiliation to the E.B.A. be made.

From these humble beginnings and despite the competition from both the Derbyshire E.B.F. and the Crown Green Association the County Association currently (2005) has a total of 18 affiliated Clubs.

It is believed that Derbyshire is the only County with all three codes of bowls within its boundaries.

At this moment of time in the history of the Derbyshire (E.B.A.) Bowls Association we have not provided a President for our parent body, the English Bowling Association. The late Paddy Donoher was nominated for this high Office at the 1996 National A.G.M. but unfortunately was not successful at the ballot.

The Derbyshire Association affiliated to the Midland Counties B.A. in 1952.

Prior to the formation of the Derbyshire (E.B.A.) B.A. a number of Clubs were affiliated to the Nottinghamshire Association and quite a few members were awarded their County badge with the Nottinghamshire Association. It is worth noting that the Long Eaton Town B.C. were one of the founder Clubs of the now Midland Counties Bowls Association when it was then an Association of Clubs, and not County Associations.

During this period of time eight members of the Derbyshire Association have held the Office of President of the Midland Counties B.A. namely T.J. Large ( 1956), A.B. Inglis ( 1962), Seth Spray ( 1969), Len Biancoli ( 1976), Paddy Donoher ( 1983), Sam Summers ( 1990) David Waggett ( 1997) and Ray Jones ( 2003.)

Two members have served as Secretary of the Midland Counties B.A., the late Ken Clark (1974 / 80.) and the late Paddy Donoher (1987 / 91.)

1984.

The then Hon: Secretary of the Derbyshire (E.B.A.) Bowls Association, the late R.J.(Robert) McGill presented the Midland Counties B.A. with a Cup to be played for by the Hon: Secretary of the M.C.B.A. and the seven County Secretary's of the affiliated Counties

1987.

The late John Matthews (Past President – Derbyshire.) presented a Cup to the Midland Counties B.A. to be played for in the M.C.B.A. Pairs Championship.

During its fifty four year history the Derbyshire Association has had 8 members who have served as County President twice. Mr Frederick Scopes, later to become Sir Frederick Scopes ( 1951 / 52 ), Seth Spray ( 1963 & 77.) Ron Banks ( 1975 & 76.) Paddy Donoher ( 1979 & 86.), David Waggett (1982 & 99.), Les Bruce ( 1991 & 2001) and Colin Ware ( 1996 & 2003) and Brian Woodcock ( 1997 & 2000.)

2005 Saw Charlie Heaps serve his second term as County President and in 2006 Mr.C.J.W. Ware went one better and served his Third term of office.

Also during its fifty four years existence the Association has been served by only six Secretaries and eight Treasurers namely,

Hon: Secretary's - T.J. Large ( 1951 / 57.) E. Fretwell ( 1958 / 63.) R..J. McGill ( 1964 / 82) S.K. Hall (1983 / 2005)  
C.W. Briers (2006 –2007 ) J.R. Bowley (2008-  
Hon: Treasurer's – F. Kirk 1951 / 61. W.J. Sandall 1962 / 79. S.C. Summers 1980 / 95. G.R. Shaw 1996 / 2000,  
B.E. Woodcock 2001 / 04. W.R. Jones 2005 –2006 A.S Morris (2007-2008) P.Wilkinson (2008-

There have also been fourteen Assistant / Competition Secretaries namely,

E. Fretwell 1951/54. G. Taylor 1955/56. E. Adams 1957/82. J. Matthews 1983/84. D.R. Waggett 1985/89. B. Wilkinson 1990/93. W.R. Jones 1993. B. Wilkinson 1994/97. T. Simmons 1998/99. R.G. Sheldon ( 2000 / 2003). W.R. Jones ( 2004),  
C. Briers (2005). P. Briers (2006 –2007) D. Smith (2008-2009) H. Bowles (2010- ) .

There have been eight Benevolent Fund Secretaries, E. Pitchford 1959/68. H. Wheatley 1969. A. Baker 1970/75.

G.L. Bradley 1976/81. J. Matthews 1982. R. Barker 1983/86. G.W. Lewis 1987/91 and currently R.G. Sheldon 1992 / .

On the "National" scene Derbyshire has been recognised with two full Internationalist's

S. Skelton (Senior, 2001 / 2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9, and Michael Bowley ( Senior in 2006 ), and six Senior International trialists, Ken Dooley(1969), Ray Woodcock (No record of year.), Roy Brotherhood (1971); Stuart Thomas 2001/2 and Les Gillett 2002.

In the National Under 25's P.B. Wilkinson represented his Country in the following years (Under 25's, 1991 /2/5/6).

Ian Griffin (1995) and Jason Hayes (1996) also had trials with the England Under 25's but were unsuccessful in being selected for the National Team. Following on his success in the National Fours Championship in 2001 Darren Allsopp was awarded an Under 25's international trial in 2002 but he too was unsuccessful in being selected for the Under 25's International Team.

In the year 2002 Simon Skelton was chosen to represent England in the Commonwealth Games held in Manchester. Simon was a member of the England Fours and with his three colleagues were successful in winning the Gold medals in this particular competition. Stuart Thomas and Les Gillett were also senior trialists in that year. In 2006 Simon was accorded the honour of England Team captain in the tests against Ireland and is still part of the England squad being selected after the trials in May 2007.

Three of our Under 25's were fortunate to attend the 2007 International trials at New Lount but were, unfortunately, not selected. However P. Broughton, J. Haskins and Dan Smith were very worthy of their selection to these trials

Again in 2008 three of our under 25's attended the International trials and this year both Phil Broughton and Dan Smith were chosen to represent their Country in the Home Internationals. In 2009/10 Dan Smith was again chosen to represent his Country in the Home Internationals.

Hon: County Secretary, S.K. Hall was awarded an Honorary Life Membership of the E.B.A. in 1995 in recognition of his services to the game of E.B.A. bowls as Hon: Secretary, services rendered to his Club (Long, Eaton Cooperative B.C.), the Derbyshire (E.B.A.) Vice Presidents Association and with the County Association since 1983, a period of 43 years.

Over the years the Derbyshire (E.B.A.) Bowls Association have always struggled to contain the other County Associations with far bigger memberships but over the past decade or so we have certainly become a force to be reckoned culminating in the year 2000 when the County team qualified for the quarter final stages of the Middleton Cup for the first time in the Associations history. History repeated itself when we again Qualified for the Quarter Finals in 2006, losing a close fought game to a very strong side from Cumbria. It would appear that this is becoming an annual event as we again had the very same experience in 2007, again losing to Cumbria.

Our Golden Jubilee Year, 2001, saw the County Association win its first National E.B.A. title when Messrs A. Harris, D. Allsopp, M. Allsopp and S. Thomas won the National Fours Title at Worthing and returned to the scene of their victory in 2002 to represent England in the British Isles Championships. Unfortunately, they found their opponents from Ireland a little too hot to handle.

Following on to this success Darren Allsopp (Number 2 in the rink) was awarded the " Bowls International Young Bowler of the Year 2001" at the E.B.A. Dinner in the December of that year. Darren and his father, Martyn, were again at Worthing in 2006, representing Derbyshire's qualifying teams, the Under 25 County team and County Two Fours, respectively.

In 2006 Michael Bowley and Simon Skelton lost in the semi-final of the doubles.

In 2008 the County finally won it's first 'team' championship when it won the National County Top 2 rink competition by beating Cornwall in the final. The winning team members were Andy Harris, Martyn Allsopp, John Bowley, Philip Broughton and Michael Bowley, Dan Smith, Anthony Barke, Simon Skelton. The County also nearly pulled off an unique double when the following day the under 25's became runners-up in their similar competition . Simon Skelton also came runner-up in the singles competition so he very nearly won two National Finals in a week.

In 2009 Simon Skelton won the National singles competition and will represent his Country in next seasons British Isles Championships.

THE DERBYSHIRE ( E.B.A.) BOWLS ASSOCIATION AND ITS CONNECTIONS WITH THE “ IMP’S ”.

Since the “Imp’s were founded in 1968 members of the Derbyshire Association have played a prominent and supportive part in this organisation.

The “ Imp’s” , founded by the late Jim Locke of Skegness, are a body of bowlers who are invited by member “Imp’s” within their own County Association to become “Imps” in recognition of their services to the game of bowls at all levels..

It was the wish of the “Imp’s” founder that the “Imp’s” play a representative team from the Derbyshire Association on the last Sunday in June annually at the Long Eaton Town B.C.

A member of the “Imp’s” is not allowed to play against his fellow “Imp’s” without special dispensation from the “Golden Imp”.

On being accepted into the “Imp’s” individual members are known as “Silver Imp’s”, the highest Office in the organisation is that of “Golden Imp”.

The late Ken Clark, Robert ( Bob.) McGill ( both members of the Derby West End B.C.) and Seth Spray ( Stanton Club House B.C.) were amongst the organisations founder members

Currently , Derbyshire have twelve members with three more, Eric Thompson ( Derby West End B.C.), Brian Woodcock and Michael Swift both of Long Eaton Town B.C., to be added at the Annual Imp’s “ Get Together” at the Petwood Hotel in Woodhall Spa in early April 2005.

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Past President and then Hon: County Treasurer of Derbyshire, Ray Jones, acted as the Imps Scribe” ( Hon: Secretary / Treasurer.) for a period of seven years.

At the Ladies Festival and gathering of the membership of the organisation at Woodhall Spa in March 1999, Stuart Hall, who was then Hon Secretary of Derbyshire and an “ Imp “ since 1983, was appointed to the Office of Deputy Golden Imp for the period 1999 / 2000 to be followed by the Office of “ Golden Imp” 2001 / 02.

This was the first time that this Senior Office in the “Imp’s” had been held by a Derbyshire “ Imp “.

This was a great honour to both the County Association and to Stuart particularly as it fell during the County Associations “Golden Jubilee” celebrations.

GOOD LUCK, GOOD HEALTH AND GOOD BOWLING IN THE YEARS AHEAD.