

## Welcome to our Spring Update

**Welcome to the latest edition of the Club Newsletter. May I start by wishing all members and their families a belated Happy New Year.**

My first pleasant task on being appointed Club Chairman was to thank my predecessor, Andy Booth for his excellent stewardship of Club affairs during his period in office. His practical "can do" attitude helped enormously in pushing forward and completing a number of projects - including the excellent alterations to the Dining Room. He also brought a good dose of wit to the role of Chairman, as those who heard his extremely entertaining speech at last year's Annual Members Dinner will know. He will be a hard act to follow.



However, I start my Chairmanship knowing that we have an excellent manager and team in place covering the day to day running of the Club and that I will also be able to draw on the expertise and support of experienced Board members.

I am also delighted to confirm that Keith Ferguson has accepted my invitation to become Vice Chairman - and will continue to bring the benefit of his accountancy skills to the overseeing of Club finances. Gerry Barnes and Pauline Young have also kindly agreed to continue as Club President and Club Vice President respectively, which is excellent news.

I believe it is some time since a solicitor was last elevated to the lofty heights of the Chairman's office. There may have been an understandable reluctance to promote those from within the legal profession, on the basis that they are not generally known for their brevity - and therefore may create a log-jam to the efficient dispatch of Club business. However, I will try not to revert to type - and will keep my contributions to the newsletter as brief as possible.

Looking forward, the Club is generally in good shape as it approaches its 130th anniversary later this year. Membership levels remain robust, and the varied programme of social events is well attended and supported by members. We have been able to proceed with important refurbishment projects to improve Club facilities - including much needed expansion of the

Dining Room - notwithstanding the challenging economic conditions over the last few years.

However, for the Club to continue to succeed we need to ensure events remain attractive to members and that Robert and his team are able to provide an effective offering for private and business functions - without sacrificing the high standards of quality for which the Club is known and respected.

To this end, I intend to work closely with Robert to see that we continue to listen to members' views and support those who give so much of their time voluntarily to organising a wide range of activities in which the wider membership can participate. We will also do all we can to increase awareness (both within and outside the membership) of the excellent facilities the Club is now able to offer for functions.

Ultimately, the success or otherwise of the Club depends upon members using its facilities and attending events. Please do therefore get in touch with myself, Robert or any other members of the Board, if you have any ideas either for events or new ways of doing things. This will do much to ensure that we can continue to provide a social programme and facilities which are enjoyable and relevant to the membership.

I am very much looking forward to the next two years as Chairman, and to meeting many of you at the various forthcoming social events.

**Stephen Firmin**  
Chairman

## A note from the President

**The Social Calendar for the last half year has been well received with interesting lunch time speakers as well as the variety of evening functions.**

Among our lunchtime speakers was author, Tom Williams who gave a fascinating insight into the work required to produce a book.

Thanks are due to Peter Kent who was responsible for the Sunday lunch and tour of the Jockey Club in Newmarket, which was much enjoyed by those attending.

Of the evening dinners, probably the outstanding event was the Trafalgar Dinner with an enthralling after-dinner speech on Lord Nelson by Mark Mitchels. Two annual events must also be mentioned with the Annual Members'

Dinner providing for record numbers thanks for the completion of the extended dining room.

The other, of course, was the well-attended, (although not quite up to previous numbers,) eighth Annual Club Carol Service, held at the neighbouring St Mary le Tower Church.

We are, of course, always very appreciative of Robert's mulled wine beforehand and the excellent buffet, better than ever, provided by our catering staff afterwards.

I would also like to take this opportunity to mention the great success again of the Club Fashion Show arranged by our lady members, led by Carole Booth, who raised some £1,000 for the Icen Project.



The teething problems with the extended dining room are gradually being overcome with one solution being an improved loudspeaker system (and my appropriate training!).

Once again our thanks are due to Robert for obtaining speakers and providing an excellent programme of events.

**Gerry Barnes,**  
Club President

## From the General Manager's Office

A big thank you to all who were so supportive and understanding during our major Dining Room expansion.

It's all been well worth the effort as we are now able to host both larger club events plus take enquiries for outside events that customers would have not have considered the Club for in the past.

I am pleased to report that (touch wood) we have been able to retain all of our key staff due partly to you as members. The staff are always commenting on how nice it is to work at the Ipswich & Suffolk Club as the members are so polite.

The only negative is that on occasion some members or their guests can place the staff in an awkward situation when inappropriately dressed.

The Dining Room minimum for gentlemen is open neck shirt with jacket, with jacket and tie preferred.

Ladies (and gentlemen,) please also



remember that jeans are not allowed, regardless of their "designer status" – at the Club they are still jeans!

I have been working on your new Social Calendar and concluded that even if events have worked in the past, we should still look at changing some events and introducing new ideas.

With this in mind, I will use this year to focus on you the members and not building works, as I very much prefer to be downstairs with the membership than upstairs in my office negotiating with builders, planners and Conservation Officers.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

**Robert Coppin**

## On the Fabric Front...

2014 proved to be a big year for the Club fabric team, with the programme of repairs, renewals and improvements continuing apace.

However, all is now fairly quiet on the fabric front and we look forward to a significantly less disruptive year for the members and of course the staff.

Now the Dining Room extension has finally been completed, I very much hope you will agree that this is a great improvement to the facilities that the club is able to offer. We all look forward to enjoying the benefits for many years to come.

This year we are proposing to install a much needed air conditioning unit in the bar and Pykenham room, in order to make both more comfortable on hot days.

In addition to this, we are working on a scheme to make the Pykenham room more IT friendly, which together with the new air conditioning, will make this meeting room much more appealing.

**Richard Hawkins.**

## Snooker and Billiards News

The 2014/15 Snooker & Billiards Competitions are in full swing and I am again grateful to George McLellan for organizing things and David Goldsmith for persuading those Competitors as necessary to play their matches in time.

The winners of the Autumn Cooper Tankards were Neil Jackson and Bernard Clarke. The winners of the



Winners of the Mardi Bash: Vic Gray and Lewis Johnston.

Dick Berresford Mardi Bash were Vic Gray and Lewis Johnston. Congratulations to them all.

We duly hosted the combined Snooker and Golf matches against the United Club, Guernsey on the last weekend of October 2014. Whilst the results were in favour of the visitors for both events, the social side was enjoyed by all. The return match will take place in Guernsey in Autumn this year which gives us time to improve our games.

Tuesday evenings are Club evenings when both tables are reserved for all Club members to play between 5.00pm and about 9.00pm. There have been increased numbers recently resulting in there being quite a buzz in both the snooker rooms and the bar – it is more like "the old times" and long may it continue. All members are welcome regardless of ability.

**David Green.**



Mardi Bash runners-up: Robin Watson and Peter Shepherd.



...and winners of the Mardi Bash Plate: Phil Thorndyke and Dick Berresford.

## Golf News



**Our Annual Golf Day at Purdis in September, with 16 Ipswich & Suffolk players and 5 guests, was once again a great success.**

The results were: In first place Bernard Clarke, followed by Peter Shepherd in second place and, Norman Conder third. The best front nine score was won by George McLellan and the best back nine by Russell Leeburn.

The final of the Northgate Trophy, our annual golf knockout, is yet to be played between Dave Tuckwell and Adrian Fairburn, due to a short delay caused by an unforeseen medical problem.

We are now in contact with Colchester Garrison and the Bury Farmers Club for this year's Annual fixtures, for which teams will of course be required so please do get in touch if you would like to play.

Very Best Wishes for a good golfing year.  
**Allan Gosling**



## Bridge Club

The Bridge Club has enjoyed another good year. Many thanks to Tim Hedley who has been looking after the club since early November, during a period of illness on my part.

Talking to my GP it appears unlikely that I will be able to participate in the running of the club in the immediate future, so hopefully Tim will be able to take it over if he has the time.

So far this year we have achieved an average of six and a half tables and a total membership of forty, thirty five of which qualified for entry to the Bridge Trophy Competition.

My congratulations go to this year's winner Lesley Norton with 57.7% and to second and third place Don Betts with 53.7% and Glenis Moxon with 53.5%. Well done all three!

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Bridge Club members for inviting Margaret and myself to a splendid Christmas Lunch at the club on 16th December.

The organiser this year was Eileen Keavey, who presented me with a good bottle of whisky and a delightful bouquet to Margaret.

Steve Croucher

## Ladies' Charity Fashion Show



Last Autumn, the club once again played host to a highly enjoyable evening of fashion and fundraising. Ladies were treated to a seasonal selection from Rachel's Boutique of Hadleigh and accessories courtesy of Maureen Gerber.

We are delighted to report that over £1000 was raised for the highly-regarded local charity, The Iceni Project.

Iceni Chief Executive Brian Tobin was invited to the club to receive our donation, when he expressed heartfelt gratitude to all ladies who supported the event. (Facebook followers can see the Iceni Ipswich page of 18th December with Brian's message of thanks to all those who contributed.)

I should like to add my sincere thanks to all who came along on the evening and donated so generously, and once again, to Rachel and Maureen for their enthusiastic support for the event and kind contribution to our fundraising.

Lastly, I am particularly indebted to Rosemary Holley for her invaluable assistance and for organising the raffle.

The club looks forward to hosting our Spring/Summer Charity Fashion Show on 26th March when Coes Womenswear will be presenting their latest collection.

Tickets are priced at £30 which includes welcome drinks, a two course meal with wine and a donation to Genesis Orwell Mencap.

This exceptional local charity provides personalised much needed services to support people with disabilities and their families and carers. Genesis also runs enterprises that include the manufacture of garden furniture and the Green Bike Project.

Please do come along in March to welcome in a new season, enjoy an evening of fashion and also support a most worthy local charity.

Carole Booth



## Money Matters

You will all have received a set of our accounts and by the time you settle down to read this column, many of you will have attended the AGM and heard a presentation on the accounts on very similar lines to the points I would like to now mention.

The club finances are in good health. We have net current assets just short of £130,000 which provides a buffer for the demands our magnificent property can place on us at short notice.

For example, the discovery of part of the banks of the River Brook under our dining room fascinated most of us last year but gives an example of how an old building hides its secrets.

Whilst we made a loss in the year to September 2014 of £3,916 after tax, we hope that this will not be a continuing trend.

The loss is mainly attributable to the projects we have undertaken, either directly as a cost of the project or indirectly due to the dining area utilisation being restricted in the summer.

Robert and his team diligently control our overhead costs, excluding repairs, and these have increased by less than 1%.

The membership subscription income is very consistent and robust thanks to the support of all our members.

There are however challenges and most of the members will know we have benefitted in the past from the hard work that Robert and his team have put in to promote and run club and external functions. The income we have received from catering and bar has decreased in the year and when we take out the fact that the restaurant was restricted for a long period in the summer, it is clear that we also face increasing competition.

The board would like to thank everyone who enjoys the regular events for their support and obviously would encourage all members to sign up for events and enjoy the new facilities, especially as we now have increased capacity.

Keith Ferguson,  
Vice Chairman

## Recent Club Events

In recent months, there have been a large number of highly successful events held at the Club.



The Ipswich Choral Society Choir welcomed all to the Annual Members' Dinner with a fine selection of seasonal songs and Christmas carols.



We were delighted to welcome members of the Guernsey United Club when they visited us for both golf and snooker matches.



A full complement of over sixty members and their guests enjoyed an excellent dinner accompanied by fine wines at the Club's vintage wine event.



## From the Wine Committee...

I am delighted to report another successful and fun season since September, with the new dining room enabling more members to enjoy our tasting (and dining) evenings.

Both our North American and Vintage tasting events still managed to sell out and proved to be both informative and fun evenings.

We also have high numbers booked for the February 'Members Wine selection' evening. This will give you the opportunity to taste numerous wines and vote for their inclusion on our club wine list.

Our events in the new programme, will give you the opportunity in April to

taste some extremely fine and very well-made wines from Austria. No that is not a spelling mistake, the wine committee has sampled a number of the wines and found them to be exceptionally good!

We have also slightly revamped what is usually the 'Champagne and Strawberries' evening in July. It will still start and end with appropriate bubbles, but we will be trying out some refreshing summer wines with the meal, for a change.

Book early to ensure a seat and stay in training!

**Bruce Murrill**

## Welcome to our New Members

The Ipswich & Suffolk Club warmly welcomes the following new members to the Club:

William Young  
Christopher & Gloria Lee  
Brian & Pamela Simpson  
Derek & Erika Wilkin  
Peter Cloke  
Elizabeth Alexander  
Janet Covel  
Abigail Royal  
Carly Buckenham  
Angus & Frances McGready  
Margaret Fetherston  
Peter Tubby  
Katie Jones

