

“Spring News”

August 2022

WE'RE BACK - Here is your SPRING edition.



A great turn out to our 2022 AGM – saw induction of our new President, **Michelle Templeman** here follows her first Presidents Message to members.

In this Spring edition of our newsletter, it gives me enormous pleasure to extend a really warm welcome to our new members. Earlier this year we embarked on a programme of processing applications from a mixture of would-be Croquet Players – those new to the area and those who simply wanted to try something different. To my certain knowledge, none have been disappointed by what they have found – either in the game, or as members of this thriving club. In turn, I feel privileged to be President, sharing the custodianship of NSCC with all members of the Committee.

Last week we enjoyed the taster of a few sunny days – risky optimism to imagine that it might continue! This week quite the reverse, so when will Spring make an entrance? I make no predictions, but have confidence that it will and we are prepared.

You will be encouraged by the fact that the results of our lengthy, productive committee meeting on 10 August were positive and steady progress is being made. As Carol so wisely commented, “It’s really busy working through our plans at the moment faced with a lot of important decisions. But this intense period won’t last once we have set the scene for the future”. Fingers crossed her prediction is just about

spot on! Since the AGM in June our monthly meetings have been very focused – all members assuming responsibility for a variety of projects both large and small. Your Committee remains approachable, willing to listen and open to new ideas or comments. Shortly, a list of Committee Members’ names will be posted on the Notice Board. Our stated aim is to wisely serve the Membership using our varied skills, experience and best endeavors.

Our biggest challenge currently is to **replace a large section of the perimeter fence**. We learnt from our Fencing Sub-Committee that three quotes have been received; identifying organisations to approach for Funding is also in hand. We are extremely grateful to Ross, Greg and Murray for spearheading this major work. It is plainly evident that **The Clubhouse** has undergone something of a metamorphosis, thanks to an exemplary team effort. The core Working Bee of Suzanne, Charlotte and Carol were armed with mops, brushes and buckets, determined to rid the kitchen and toilets of dust and dirt, and anything that is surplus to requirement. You can read more of this in our Club Convenor, Suzanne Caron’s article.

Producing the **Monthly Club Calendar** is the responsibility of Linda – please let her know dates for personal events that you hope to organise. Linda keeps the website updated via Dave Blake, working with Carol to organise Corporate & Private Hire Functions in addition to publishing our quarterly newsletters.

Poor weather impacting on play has been exceptional, coming as it did hot (or more accurately wet) on the heels following months of gloriously sunny weather. Looking at the wider scene in NZ, we are not alone as most Auckland clubs were in a similar situation. However many clubs in Otago and Southland actually close for the three winter months each year or have to boldly restrict play. In the UK, lawns are completely closed for Winter (often far longer than three months). So we should really count ourselves fortunate that the heavy rain, whilst frustrating, has been relatively short-lived!

The **schedule of Club Playing days** has now been finalised and will be introduced as a Pilot Scheme from the start of the 22/23 season on 1 September. You will see from the schedule that we have not made huge changes but with a growing membership we felt it important to add variety. A 'singles only' club half day, increased flexibility to organise your own games, combined with the opportunity to try new ideas - randomly publicised from time to time. **We will need your feedback**, so give it a go, and then around mid-November please let us have your views. Charlotte will prompt you nearer the time.

Our inaugural **'SWING INTO SPRING' Club Competition** will herald the start of the new season. I can now confirm that it will be held on **Saturday 17 September (09.00 – 12.30)** approx, followed by a Sausage Sizzle. **Please see the notice on the back page, flier on the noticeboard and your Inbox.**

If you are phased by the prospect of a Competition, let me reassure you that this is a very informal, fun event – doubles play, names out of a hat and take pot luck! An opportunity for newer members to meet the wider team and for the older, crustier ones to look a bit silly at times! Some may even win a prize.

I hear concerned whispers about using the old rusty BBQ on the deck for such an event! As it happens we will shortly be the proud owners of a brand new replacement thanks to the generosity of Linda and the sterling research efforts of Carol. So it will be a BBQ baptism in the hands of an experienced chef! Meanwhile the old one that served us well for many years will be consigned to scrap (I'm referring here to the BBQ, not the Chef!). *Did you know that only a handful of years ago, we used to BBQ on half an oil drum using charcoal that stayed hot for hours - far more hit-and-miss but no less enjoyable.*

...And that in turn leads me onto our **Competition and Tournaments calendar** which Charlotte and I have been finalising with Committee contributions. The calendar extends from September to May 2023 (details on back page) plus this will be on the website and in the clubhouse. It is a work in progress, so put some dates in your diaries please and be on the watch for flyers by email and on the notice board. Our own competitions, friendlies with local clubs and Croquet Auckland competitions will all be added as dates become available.

World Croquet Championship this year was won by Matthew Essick, a formidable American Player who beat Englishman Robert Fulford at the end of a full week's play. Some of those matches were well worth watching, others were like the proverbial paint drying. A pity that some of New Zealand's

highly talented young team were unable to participate – hopefully next time. As it happens, that Championship was due to be held in NZ, but because of Covid entry travel restrictions we had to pull out, the date was put back, then it was relocated to UK!! With any luck we will have another opportunity.....

Not quite the same, but something else that will provide a very high standard of play is the **Auckland Women's Tournament** being held in Takapuna on 10 September. See separate details – and again flyer on the board. I will be there, but sadly not in a competing capacity – just as scorer and I do hope to see some of you. Watching these players, several on minus handicaps, is always an education, so consider it part of our continuing coaching and learning curve if you're able to go along.

..... and then there will be the annual **Croquet Auckland 'Golden Grades'** Competition in October. Open to anyone who is a Gold Card Holder. The Novices on 29 October (Handicaps 12+, managed by yours truly) and also the Primaries on 30 October (9+ managed by Rod) will be held here in Devonport. Intermediate, Seniors and Premier players at Takapuna. More details to follow.

Finally, thank you to you all for your help and support in so many ways. I'm now really looking forward to joining in some games very soon.



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CHALLENGING WINTER



Acknowledging all our members' patience with our pitch availability this season. We've had resurfacing, major maintenance and weather issues....



Before the major rains, pitch C experienced some radiance obstacles...Greg was seen to comment that he saw Murray hit a good straight ball from Hoop 3 which was headed directly to the middle of Hoop 4 when it did a 90 degree turn (almost) and ran past.

"Did you see that," Murray exclaimed a little testily.
"See what?" Greg replied and proceeded to play his ball!!!

THE BIG CLEANOUT

You know it is long overdue when you discover a ladies white pelmet croquet bonnet, circa the 1950's, hanging on the clubhouse coat rack, forgotten behind the toilet door!

The BIG CLEANOUT took place in July when three committee members – myself, Carol and Charlotte, decided that the old must be swept away to make place for the new. So, we spun through the kitchen cupboards and all that they contained, ditto the cleaning supplies cupboard off the men's and the cabinets in the toilets, like a whirlwind. We disposed of many items that elicited the word "Yuk" from our lips and loaded Carol's car to the gunnels for a trip to the oh so friendly Devonport Tip. The remaining items which we deemed acceptable to pass on to some lucky recipient were piled onto the tabletops for foraging to commence. Subsequent gold coin donations, totaling \$62.00, were a welcome return for all our effort.

The hope is to eventually replace items like the disposed of microwave with new and maybe to install a heat pump when the club's fortunes allow, likewise with the aging pink carpet. Quotes are being obtained for replacement carpet and the committee will be looking for funds to support this.

Meanwhile, less expensive measures have taken place. You may have noticed the two co-joined bins in the kitchen- one for recycling and one for rubbish, which are now in a handy position tucked under the kitchen bench. This was made possible by removing half the shelf under the counter with the reliable help of John Sutton. John also helped me to install the more hygienic paper hand towel dispensers in each toilet.

So, we are making progress toward upgrading and maintaining a cleaner and healthier environment in the clubhouse and are always open for suggestions. Anyone know of a croquet playing artist with a talent for designing posters who could paint a colourful mural featuring our sport on the blank kitchen wall?

Suzanne Caron
Club Convenor



HANDICAP ASSESSMENT AND COACHING

We had a very successful series of coaching sessions over the tail end of the summer months and are working on some more dates. If you are interested in handicap assessments please contact Greg on 021487602

SPECIAL DISCOUNT OFFER FOR MALLETS



For clubs or individuals who consolidate orders of 4 or more mallets, Wood Mallets are offering a 20% discount.

Visit the website

<http://www.woodmallets.com>

If you have any queries or just want some advice, please don't hesitate to contact George Wood. If you are contemplating buying a mallet and would like to take advantage of this offer put your name on the whiteboard in the Clubrooms.

MYSTERY OBJECT

Do you know what this is?



CROAKIES - Informal 'Book Club'

It was the 20th July, a dismal rainy day; 'Knott' had banned us from the lawns, so a small number of 'Croakesses' stopped by the clubrooms to begin an informal book club. A very pleasant couple of hours were spent, and yes, book titles and authors were swapped, along with enjoying one another's company. As the weather continued to let us down, a week later, on the 27th, the 'Croakesses' book club, at short notice once again, reconvened, this time with some new faces. Everybody in attendance appeared supportive of sharing titles and authors, rather than expecting all to read the same book and give opinions. There was also a suggestion that, if agreed, on occasions it could be an opportunity to focus on something different such as sharing favourite recipes. At this stage, it is very informal and not exclusive to the 'Croakesses' as 'Croakers' would be very welcome. If there is a desire to keep it going, I, along with supporters Jacqueline and Jenny, are prepared to organise it and set a regular meeting day/evening and time. In the mean-time it will remain informal with 'WhatsApp' as the main source of contact. I appreciate that there is already one 'WhatsApp' group operating, and I am happy to start another one for those interested in the above concept.



On another note, it has been lovely sharing coffees at the Vauxhall café, usually on Saturdays after play, but not confined to that day, when a coffee is more appealing than going home to undertake housework!! Once again, attendance by all is welcome and not exclusive. It has been great of late having some of the "Croakers" join, what previously had been dominated by the "Croakesses". It was an initiative kicked off a couple of months ago, when coffee heads Jenny and Di decided it would be a nice way to round of the Saturday morning croquet session.

Dianne Hale

Croakies Co-ordinator

JOHN'S CORNER - In Praise of Grass

The word 'grass' comes from a word meaning 'to grow' which is totally appropriate for a plant which in its many forms covers vast parts of the earth. The great variety of grasses plays a pivotal part in the life of the natural world. They can also be things of beauty. There is something aesthetically pleasing to see a large expanse of newly mown lawn, or endless acres of golden wheat.

Food Factories Basically grasses are food factories of one kind or another. Without them all life would perish. They produce food by trapping sunshine by using the magic of photosynthesis and convert it into sugars and proteins. In one form or another they are the origin of food for almost all animals. The grass grows, herbivores or omnivores eat it, carnivores eat herbivores, and through urine, faeces and the decomposition of their bodies nutrients are returned to the soil for the grass to grow and so the cycle continues.

A very big family The grasses in our lawns are two or three varieties of a huge family consisting of more than 12,000 different branches. Apart from lawn grasses, it includes much larger ones like, toi toi, pampas, and bamboo. Numerous indigenous grasses modestly cover the nakedness of great tracts land throughout the world. Other grass families produce seed which is a source of food; rice, oats, barley, wheat and maize, sorghum, not forgetting the most saccharine member of the family, sugar cane.

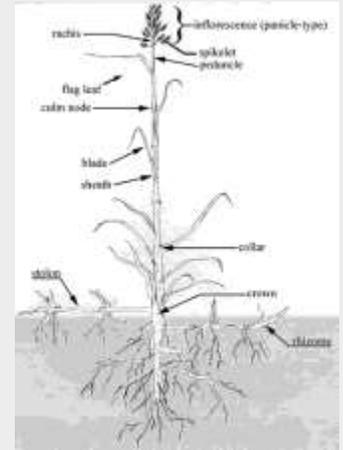
They are as their name suggests, growing machines

As any gardener or groundsman knows grasses live up to their name. They have an amazing ability to grow despite being continually eaten (read 'mown' for lawns) trodden on, frozen, flooded, burnt or scorched. They truly are ubiquitous, appearing in cracks in concrete and stones, in roof and road gutters and of course where you don't want them in your garden. This ability to survive repeated chomping and mowing is why they are used for lawns. Their tenacity is due to the way they grow. Unlike other plants, which grow at the tips of the plant, grass grows from the base up. At the base, sitting just above the soil, there is a small but amazing part called the crown. It is tiny, white and carefully protected by sheaths. It contains cells which are able to reproduce. If a mower is set too low and scalps the ground these growth cells are destroyed so preventing any further growth. The cells once produced differentiate to become cells of leaves, stems, rhizomes (underground 'branches') and stolons (above-ground branches). The leaves, stolons, and rhizomes also have similar reproducing cells at intervals along their lengths. As long as the crown remains it produces new cells. In fact the rule is, the more you cut grass the more it grows and spreads provided it is fed with nutrients, light, warmth and water.

World Domination

In addition to their prolific seeding grasses, use one or two of three weapons for smothering their rivals.

Tillers These are lateral shoots which grow from buds created by the crown. By producing tillers the grass widens the diameter of its base. The fescue growing on A, B, and C lawns is this type of grass. Large stropy grasses like paspallum use tillers and are weeds because they make the lawn surface very uneven.



Stolons. These are finger like branches which spread over the ground. At each node new roots and a shoot grows. Kikuyu and Carpet Grass use this method to create a lumpy carpet of stolons. Creeping Bent is a lawn grass which uses stolons but its stolons and leaves are fine and make a good playing surface.

Rhizomes. These are an underground network of branches which spread from the crown and put out roots and shoots at nodes. The couch on lawn D grows like this as does the brown top on other lawns.

One day we may have artificial lawns to play on and while that may make Greg's life easier I will regret not having the cushion of the living green, green, grass of home to walk on.

John Sutton



Thanks as always to our resident paparazzi – Wendy Strain for providing us with wonderful candid shots of our club.



WHAT IS THE.....MYSTERY OBJECT?

This is a 'bisque board' used in the game of association croquet; it is a means by which all players kept track of the bisques i.e. free turns of another player. Bisques to be used are stored on the lower ledge. Once a bisque has been used a peg is moved to the back board. The number 7 refers to the lawn being used; in past years the lawns we now know as A B C D were halved, explaining why the Open/closed board on the front of the clubhouse is numbered 1 to 9, so No. 7 was half of our Lawn D. No. 9 was a practice lawn in front of the clubhouse part of which is now the pétanque terrain.

CROQUET AUCKLAND WOMANS GOLF CROQUET OPEN

Members will be interested to learn that the inaugural Croquet Auckland Women's Golf Croquet Open is to take place at Takapuna Croquet Club over the weekend of September 10th/11th. This event is a precursor to the CNZ Women's Open which takes place in BOP a few weeks later. NSCC members are welcome to go along to watch; at least two CNZ team members will be competing in this event, which will give some of our best Auckland players a rare opportunity to play against world class competition.

TWILIGHT CROQUET

For some this may be a new venture, for others it was their steppingstone to Club Croquet and for many more it is a weekly social outing. Organised and managed by NSCC member Martin Bailey martinbailey@mgbca.co.nz it has been part of the spring/summer scene here at NSCC for many years.

- Commencing at 5.45pm on Wednesday 6 October and repeating every *first and third Wednesday it completes its cycle at the end of daylight saving in March 2023.
- A gentle game is followed by (good quality) sausages with sides provided by the players and your favourite tippie too.
- Club members are invited to make a gold coin donation; other non-members pay \$10 each session. Cash please.
- Wear flat shoes and comfortable clothing, bring your mallet or use a club one.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

* Twilight is still subject to the vagaries of weather and occasional lawn closure for treatment.



"SWING INTO SPRING" TOURNAMENT

**Saturday 17th September
09.00 start time 09.30**

**Morning Tea at 10.30am
SAUSAGE SIZZLE at 1.00 pm**

Followed by Free Play in the afternoon

Doubles competition – names out of two hats, random selection.

All members welcome, for very 'new to Croquet' and seasoned players



3 doubles games



Best of 7 hoops



First to score 4 hoops wins



Double banked



No handicaps or cards used

**Spot prizes PLUS prizes for winning pair
and runners up.**



TOURNAMENT MANAGERS COURSE



Croquet Auckland ran the first of two courses for prospective Tournament Managers in our clubhouse on Friday August 5th. Alex and Jenny Begg were the main presenters, Anne Mortimer introduced attendees to Croquet Scores, the World Croquet Federation online scoring system, and CA President Melba Scott presented on the creation of

tournament flyers. There were 20 delegates from Auckland clubs, including three from North Shore. Alex Begg, CNZ Senior Examining Referee, will be back next month to run a half day course entitled 'Becoming a Golf Croquet Referee'. Any members interested to attend either of these two September courses should email Rod Templeman rodtempleman@me.com



Our summer newsletter is due in Nov – if you have news/articles to submit please contact linda@no9productions.co.nz

**PROPOSED COMPETITION / TOURNAMENT
SCHEDULE
SEPTEMBER 2022 TO MAY 2023**

MONTH	COMPETITION/ TOURNAMENT	MANAGER	COMMENTS
SEPTEMBER 2022			
Sat 17	Spring Competition + Sausage Sizzle See Flyer	Linda McKay + Michelle	+ Vols
OCTOBER 2022			
Tues 4	Interclub – 3 grades poss Primary grade for NSCC? Runs 1 day monthly until Autumn 2023	Manager + Team required	Varying Auck locations inc NSCC
Sat/Sun 29/30	Croquet Auckland Golden Grades Primary and Novices (Intermediate at TCC)	Novices Sat Michelle Primaries Sun Rod	
NOVEMBER 2022			
Sun 20	Novices (training from June to Sept 2022) Level - AHS Cards. Doubles and singles? Winner and Runner Up Prizes	Charlotte	Intro to competitive play
DECEMBER 2022			
Sun 4	Club Christmas Celebration	Details tbc	
Wed 7	Mixed Doubles 2 grades Detail tbc	Greg Hall	New World Trophies
2023			
JAN Tues 24	Oval Tournament H/Cap 10 to 14. Prizes	Charlotte	
FEB MAR	Neighbours Tournament with TCC Friends Tournament with Mt Albert	Charlotte tbc	Hosting NSCC
Apr 1/ 2 Sat/Sun	Hosting Croquet Auckland Silver Badge Competition Finals Grades tbc	Michelle	

KEY

YELLOW

BLUE

TURQUOISE

NSCC IN HOUSE EVENTS

JOINT EVENTS WITH OTHER CLUBS

NSCC HOSTING CROQUET

AUCKLAND EVENTS