

# “The Patient Malleter”

February 2022

## THE TIMES

‘The Patient Malleter’ indeed! Goodness, it’s been a long time since our last edition – but then Covid-19 arrived just a couple of months after our last Newsletter, and we all know what that has meant. ‘Patience’ in abundance!

And just in case you had forgotten what the place looked like back in Pre-Covid times, do you remember this scary sight?



**The past 24 months** have certainly been challenging for us all, however those months have been put to good use, and thanks to the sterling work carried out by John Sutton, Greg Hall, and other on the lawns, and Charlotte Millar, Sherilyn Hurman and others on the gardens the Club is once again looking as pretty as a picture. Surely there is no other club in NZ that can match ours on a good day – sun shining, birds singing, friendly banter between players (well, most of the time!) – we are certainly very lucky.

The unwelcome arrival of Covid-19 in early 2020 with the attendant Protocols shifting us back and forth through the Levels and then into the Traffic Light system certainly tested all of this and did put a halt to many of the normal activities of the Club, and indeed of the several groups who regularly use our premises.

Nevertheless, while predicting the future is always fraught,

there have been some very encouraging developments – above and beyond the huge improvement to our playing surfaces.

Our membership numbers have been growing, with the total number of full members now standing at a healthy 56. It’s wonderful seeing new faces around the club these days, and a more structured coaching program for new members is being planned.

Club finances remain robust, and notwithstanding the limitations imposed by Covid, events have continued to



provide a solid source of income. Although Covid has again ‘got in the way’, some internal and local tournaments have been staged, with more coming in the next few months.

A significant update of our NSCC Website has been undertaken, and this should provide members, prospective members, other

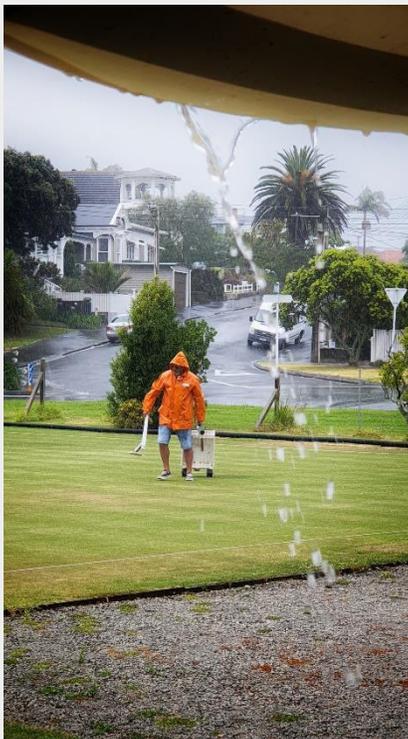
clubs and the general public with a much clearer picture of who we are and what we are doing.

In trying times your Committee has continued its endeavors to ensure the Club runs smoothly, and most importantly, continues to provide a venue where people can gather, have a great game of croquet, and thoroughly enjoy themselves in the process!

### THE LAWNS

Where would we be without good lawns? The never-ending struggle against weeds, pests, summer droughts and the like continues relentlessly, and as noted we are delighted with the progress we have made. At the time of writing the lawns are looking great, albeit with some better than others and all requiring on-going attention. Our key lawns personnel – John Sutton and Greg Hall - continue to work closely with our lawn contractors, Turf Solutions, over the timing and scope of our lawn maintenance programme and their expert advice is invaluable. Looking ahead, larger projects on the drawing board include a further levelling of Lawn D during March and further remediation work on Lawn C in Autumn. This latter work will potentially involve scarifying and resewing the northern and southern thirds of the lawn.

While 2021 saw the usual periods of wet weather (braved here by Tony 'It's only water mate' McNeight) this certainly has not been the case recently with months of hot, dry weather.



This prompted a decision to carry out an overhaul of our existing irrigation system, with many faulty sprinkler heads replaced and adjustments made to others to ensure better water coverage. The work has proven very worthwhile, with the revamped sprinkler system already making a noticeable difference.

Given the age of one of our mowers in particular (the machinery that is) the Committee made the call recently to invest in a new one. Our thanks go out to the

private donor who contributed 50% of the very substantial cost of the mower, and to member Ross Jewell for facilitating this. The new mower arrived just before Christmas and has been used on several occasions now. Because it is physically larger than our existing two mowers, we had a little problem fitting it inside the Shed. Fortunately, Members Paul and Sally Burge came to the rescue and kindly agreed to house it in their garage across the road, where Greg attended to its every need and administers frequent polishings. This was just a temporary arrangement however, and the current shed door has now been widened to enable the mower to be properly housed.

Our thanks to builders John and Thomas (below) for their



work, with 'The Beast' looking very happy as its tucked away for the night.

Our thanks of course also go to others in 'Team Mowing', including John S, Grant, Suzanne, Murray, John R, Ross, Pete and Patrick - the latter two can be seen below showing impressive concentration and professionalism as they hold to yet another perfectly straight line!

New mowing contractors have been engaged and started work with us in January. They will mow once a week on Friday mornings, so if you see Hayden or Tai, do say 'hello'.



Members may also have noticed the results of a general shed cleanout – our thanks to the volunteers who assisted with this annual de-cluttering and tidying up.

### THE GAME

**Club days** at NSCC now span 4 days – Monday and Wednesday from around 1.30pm, and Thursday and Saturday at 9.30am. The format for the Thursday and Saturday sessions is more structured than on Mondays/Wednesdays, with draws made from the players present, time limits applying to games, and a regular rotation of players. In contrast, the Monday/Wednesday sessions are less structured, with players who turn up organizing games amongst themselves. This combination of formats seems to work well in meeting the differing needs and preferences of Members.

**Hoop Trolleys** - Some of you will already have noticed a change to where the hoop trolleys are now stored. In order to make room for the new, larger mower, trolleys for Lawns A and C are now stored in the smaller shed over by the Petanque terrain. Trolleys for Lawns B and D remain in the old shed

**Coaching** for new Members is being planned, and indeed is becoming more pressing as our numbers start to grow and the rules of the game evolve. Coaching can be formal or informal of course, and new Members can learn a great deal by joining in games with more experienced players. In spite of the restrictions imposed by Covid-19, a number of activities have taken place over the past few months.

### Neighbour's Tournament

This regular 'friendly' between NSCC and Takapuna CC – hosted this time by NSCC - took place last April and was a big success. The lawns (courtesy John Sutton) and the scones (courtesy Lynne Knott) were outstanding, as was the hospitality shown the Takapuna players. In spite of all that, the visitors insisted on retaining the Trophy! But not without a fight by a gallant NSCC team – 24 games were played in total, with NSCC taking 10 and TCC 14. And of those 24 games, 14 resulted in a score of either 7-6 or 7-5, so it was a tightly fought battle. It was also heaps of fun.



And we will be seeing more of our Takapuna friends in the coming weeks. During March/April all 4 lawns at TCC will be under repair (scarifying, levelling and over sowing), and not playable. Just as they did when we undertook similar remedial work on our lawns, we will be inviting TCC members to come down and join us on Club days. In addition, from 23 March through 27 April, Wednesday mornings will be offered TCC for their exclusive use. That said, on those mornings one lawn will be set aside for AC, and TCC have invited any NSCC players with AC handicaps to join them.

### NSCC Winter Championship Tournament

This competition involving level singles in 2 Divisions was



scheduled to run August through September 2020. Interest was strong with around 25 Members registering to take part. In brisk conditions (see above) the competition got off to a great start, with plenty of enthusiasm and results logged by event Manager (and competition inventor) Greg Hall as matches progressed.



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A number of excellent games were staged, with close finishes being the order of the day.



Sadly Covid-19 intervened midstream, with the restrictions imposed meaning the tournament had to be abandoned. We are hoping to repeat this tournament again in 2022, when hopefully the full event can be staged.

### NSCC Handicap Doubles Competition

This competition with drawn partners selected from 24 Members took place in July. Despite the bitterly cold weather (hard to imagine right now), five rounds of doubles played in two sections took place during the day until our finalists were found.

Roun- robin winners were Val and Rob, Shirley and Greg, Michelle and Carol, and Linda and Patrick.

Into the finals then, where Shirley and Greg prevailed, with Val and Rob coming in a close second.



An enjoyable after-match function followed where the wine and food offered a pleasant relief from the chilly conditions. More of these events are on the cards in 2022.



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### inter-Club

A small team of four, drawn from a pool consisting of Carol, Charlotte, Jim, Marie, Michelle T, Tony, Wendy and Rob have completed two rounds to date. Although opposition teams have generally fielded stronger lineups than we have been able to muster, NSCC has nevertheless put up a strong showing and held its own. More importantly, the team is learning and growing – and having a great time in the process!

### The Twilighters

With new Officer-in-Charge, Martin Bailey, at the helm, our dedicated group of twilighters gathered for our first summer session on 8 December. A goodly number of 18 people turned up on that occasion, however bad weather prevented the second and final session for 2021 taking place the following week. 2022 began very strongly however, with 27 people coming along to enjoy themselves on 19 January. These fun evenings involve eating, drinking, and even a bit of playing and take place on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Attendees include full NSCC members as well as casuals, friends and family who pay \$10 and bring along a salad and drink of choice – the club proves sausages, a sit-down meal, and mallets. The Twilight programme has provided a useful avenue for people wanting to try the game in a convivial setting and has produced a number of new full-memberships over the years. The season ends at the cessation of daylight saving.

watering, the black mulch applied to Hibiscus and Camellia gardens, and of course Sherilyn's nimble fingers are keeping those areas looking great.

In past years we have been able to use the services of Community Workers from the Department of Corrections to keep the vines under control, along with many other tasks. The arrival of Covid-19 has put that on hold for a time however, so in its place you may well hear a call for assistance via working bees or the like going forward.



### THE EVENTS

Not surprisingly the number of venue hires for events towards



the end of last year and the beginning of 2022 has been down on previous years.

Nevertheless we have seen a number of organizations and individual take advantage of our facilities to stage their functions. These activities provide valuable income for the club, and our thanks go to those members who volunteered to assist.

Without exception those hiring the premises have all

spoken highly of the good times they have had, evidenced by the



### THE GARDENS

One of the things that sets NSCC apart from many other clubs is its beautiful setting – and its beautiful hydrangeas! Spearheaded by Charlotte, a band of keen helpers – Sherilyn to the fore – have worked tirelessly to keep the gardens and surrounds looking just so.

The extremely dry weather of late prompted a call to members for urgent help to water the hydrangeas, and many thanks are due those who heeded the call. These hydrangeas have been a feature of the club for many decades and are usually quite well able to care for themselves. Nevertheless, even though it looks like we may have been through the worst of the dry period, please keep your eye on them and if you see obvious wilting a bucket of water would probably do the trick. This

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number of repeat bookings we get. Some of the colorful characters who turn up certainly contribute to that as well!



### THE BIG ‘THANK YOU’!

Two stalwarts of the club who have given outstanding service over many, many years decided to call it a day recently. Life member Llew Owens diligently maintained the club’s mowers for over 20 years, while Don Lane contracted to mow our lawns for over 30 years!

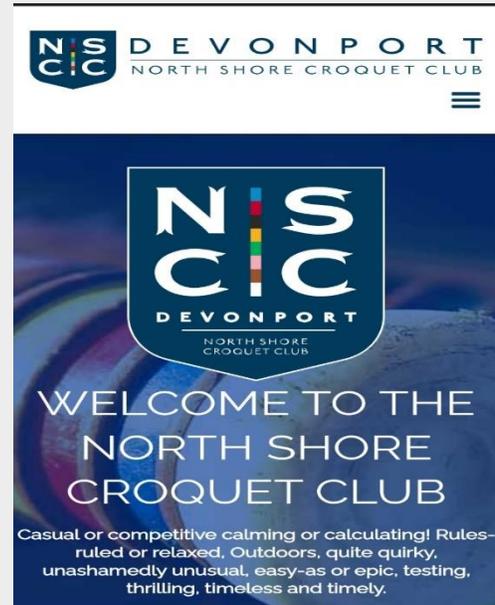


Here we have Llew and Don receiving a presentation recognizing that wonderful contribution from Club President Murray at a ceremony recently.

### THE TALK

In spite of the gap between the last Newsletter and this one, we are keen to get you connected! Recently a lot of work has

been undertaken by Linda McKay to update our **website** and revamp it so that it provides a ‘one-shop-stop’ for most queries regarding play-days, meetings, interclub schedules, internal and external competitions, venue bookings and so on.



*Our NSCC Website Home Page*

We have updated our online **calendar of events** so you can easily see what events are upcoming, when the club has been hired out etc. It is important to keep the content of the website up to date, so if you have any information that you feel would be useful to share – eg tips on buying a mallet, fun photos, video links to coaching, national/international tournaments etc please let us know.

In addition a **WhatsApp group** was formed mid-last year which provides a great communication tool for keeping in touch with fellow members – ‘anyone want a game?’ etc. You can create your own WhatsApp group for groups who regularly play together or ask to join and existing one. Feel free to reach out to the Committee for tips on how to do this.

For those of you Facebook devotees, don’t forget our very own **NSCC Facebook page**. You are able to upload pictures, comment on stories and chat with other using this tool as well. No substitute for coming down to the lawns, but a great way to create a sense of community nevertheless.

And keep an eye out for our next *Patient Malleeter* too – it’ll be hitting the streets in May 2022!

### THE FUN AND GAMES!

Without doubt the reason why so many of us head down to the club for a game is to have fun! We have a unique club in terms of its beautiful setting, facilities and lawns and our membership clearly relishes this. And as our membership numbers grow, we are keen to maintain this spirit. So, if you see someone looking for a game, please invite them to make up a foursome, switch to a 2 vs 1 game, or start a game of

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singles with them. And if you are new, please don't hesitate to introduce yourself to others who may be there.

A club IS its people, so in conclusion here are a few more photos of just some of the characters who make 'our place' great!



Wendy and Linda presenting Malcom with his very special Birthday present – and lookin' good buddy!



Greg all concentration as he attempts a tricky 'grapefruit' hoop, while trying hard to avoid a 'squash'



Some of our more senior members taking part in a complex exercise designed to keep the mind active and improve mental agility. Unfortunately, this one didn't pan out too well, with the marquee ending up on the roof of the clubhouse ...!



And finally, some great shots, courtesy photographer extraordinaire Wendy Strain!

