

## THE ORIGINS OF SENIORS SECTION



### The Early Years

The seniors started meeting on Monday mornings on a regular basis from the 29<sup>th</sup> July 1996. The founding members of the group were Neil Howard, Brian Darch, Bob Speed, Peter Busson and Roy Coleman. By early 1997 the following had joined the group – Peter Osmond, John Robbins, John Hayter, David Martin, Tony Timbs and Gordon Housley.

Although there was no official Seniors Section, from early 1997 to mid-1998 the numbers increased to 20 and during the summer of the year the group decided to have its first competition. This competition took the form of a Pairs Matchplay competition which was played on the Greenwood Course and was won by Bob Speed and Peter Busson. They won by one hole against Rodney Gutsell and Brian Wheeler. The Winners Cups were presented in an informal fashion which prompted the thought, by mutual consent, to have formal discussions with Trevor Pearce with a view to forming an official Seniors Section at East Horton Golf Club.

Trevor was in full agreement and arrangements were made for the group to have the first AGM of the Seniors Section to elect Officers and produce a constitution. This AGM was held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 1999 and the following were elected to office:

Frank Gill – Captain and Chairman  
Neil Howard – Secretary  
Ken Jones – Treasurer  
Brain Darch – Committee Member  
Brian Wheeler – Committee Member

The first Seniors Committee meeting was held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 1999 in “The Railway” public house at Botley. By April 1999 there were 24 paid up members of the newly formed Seniors Section.

In January 2000 Rodney Gutsell took over as Secretary and the trio of Rodney (Secretary), Ken Jones (Treasurer), and Brian Darch (Committee member) all held office until January 2006. Along with various Captains this group took the Seniors Section through it's early informative period bring consistency and structure and they developed an annual Fixture / Events Programme with the objective of playing competitive golf in a friendly and informal atmosphere where those participating derived enjoyment from the company of their fellow competitors.

The practice of having a Monday Morning draw so that members played against and with as many members as possible throughout the course of a year has stood the test of time and continues to be the format of tee time designation and playing partners to this day.

### **Charities**

The Seniors Captain elected each year selects a charity which every member, if they so wish, donates to on a weekly basis. Over the years the Seniors have raised substantial amounts for charity. Those charities can be found in the Role of Honour alongside the captain elected in that year.

### **Sponsorship**

Sothorn Exhaust Systems were the first sponsors with a sum of £50. From 2001 to 2004 A&M Pople (local builder) sponsored the Seniors to the sum of £1400. This was arranged by Ralph Ricketts and was used to subsidise The Seniors Championship and Presentation Evening.

In 2001 £100 was received from Russ Lindsay of the Blue Fin Media Organisation. This was used to purchase a trophy and sponsor the Turkey Trot that year. Russ was the son of David Lindsay who was the Seniors Captain in 2002. In 2010 David presented the Lindsay Cup to the Seniors which has now superseded the Blue Fin Competition.

From 2004 to 2009 A&M Pople again sponsored the Seniors Section. During this period Mark Pople would come along and play with the elected Captain of the day and present the Trophy and prizes which they had generously donated on the Captain's Charity Day.

### **The Seniors Section**

As with any organisation involving men in the senior years of their lives it is inevitable that sooner or later a member of our organisation will leave us prematurely. We have to date lost 19 of our number who have sadly passed away since the Seniors Section began in 1996.

Those who shall forever remain members of the Seniors Section include:

Wally Bevis	John Hayter	John Robbins
Tony Lammas	Ged Powell	John Ward
Ian Harper	Dave Leather	Alan Llewelin
Brian Darch	Alan Harnett	Chris Jones
John Cecil	Frank Gill	Peter Stillwell
Roy Sanders	Jim Sheppard	Tony Mason
Paul Osborne		

A feature over the years has been the Winter and Summer Away Days which comprise of an organised day at another golf club in the region. Attending members would play 18 holes of golf, enjoy a meal and celebrate with the winner of the day at the prize giving. In the early days these days were organised by Brian Darch and was then run by Tony Mason until 2010. We are grateful for their dedication and hard work. In 2011 it was decided to drop the Away Days however current Captain of the day (2015) Tom Carr re-instated this event and aims to deliver two each year. This year's event was at Skylark Golf & Country Club

As the years have gone by the Seniors Section has grown in numbers and in 2010 reached 79 members. The Seniors Section is held in high regard at the club for the efficient way that it is managed and the camaraderie displayed by the members.

A significant contribution of the Seniors Section charity giving is achieved from the takings of the raffle held at the end of each Monday rollup competition. For many years Wally Fall and Jim Brightman ran the raffle and every week ensured that wine and chocolates were purchased for prizes. By 2011 Jim Brightman had left the Seniors' section as a result of illness and Wally was endeavouring to continue with help from wherever he could get it. Eventually at the end of 2011 Wally called it a day and his role was taken over by Alan Harnett and John Consterdine, a double act in more ways than one who would target players as they returned to the Greenside Bar to part with their money. In 2015 Brian Harding & Pete Stillwell volunteered to carry out the role of running the weekly charity raffle.

Alan Llewellyn and Ian Harper superseded Rodney Gutsell and Ken Jones as Secretary and Treasurer respectively in 2006. These two stalwarts remained in these positions until 2011. Sadly due to illness Ian Harper was forced to give up his role as Treasurer and Eddie Winter stepped into the breach mid-season to ensure continuity. Regretfully Ian never did recover from illness and passed away in January 2012. Alan Llewellyn handed over the reins of the Secretaries role at the end of the 2011 season to David Gasson to enable him to take up the office of Seniors Captain for 2012. Sadly Alan passed away suddenly in September 2012 in the middle of a very successful Captaincy period. Because of the extent of their contribution Ian and Alan will both be sadly missed.

A memorial bench has now been dedicated to the memory of the fallen Seniors. This bench is strategically placed at the tee to the 11<sup>th</sup> hole on the Parklands course. Being Seniors this placement is significant as it is the first point at which the Golf Club comes back into view on the return leg of the course - a welcome sight, particular during matches in inclement weather.

### **Seniors Competitions and Matches**

EHGC Seniors Section has always been enthusiastic supporters of inter-club matches. By 2010 the Seniors had 20 matches against other clubs, 10 home and 10 away, plus 2 mixed matches comprising of the Seniors and Ladies Sections of EHGC against the same from Chichester and Hampshire Golf Clubs.

By 2012 the number of inter-club matches had risen to 24 but the mixed matches had been dropped from the programme as the EHGC Ladies Section struggled to gain sufficient members.

In 2013 Home and Away inter-club matches have been arranged with:

Wickham Park	Meon Valley	Blacknest	Chichester
Gosport & S/Bay	Tylney Park	Leckford	Hartney Wintney
Meon Valley	Paultons	Hampshire	Southampton

Since 2009 there had been an annual match against the EHGC Men's Section which was played in September of each year. Other Senior Section cups and trophies that are regularly contested each year include:

Captains Day  
Secretaries Pairs Cup  
3-Club Championship  
The Seniors Championship  
The Lindsay Cup (<2017)  
The Peter Stillwell Cup (>2018)  
Captain's Charity Day  
Summer Single and Pairs Competition  
Winter Singles and Pairs Competition

Additionally the Seniors' section also participate in the Ladies Evening held on the Marwell Par 3 course and our Christmas event the annual Turkey Trot.

The Seniors main celebration of the year is the annual Presentation Event which is held towards the end of each year. In 2011 the event was attended by 110 people including representatives from the club management, the Pro shop, the Men's section and the Ladies section as well as the Seniors themselves.

The last presentation of the evening is the Captains Rose Bowl which is awarded to someone that the serving Captain feels has given a significant contribution to the Seniors' Section during the course of the year.

### **Acknowledgement**

Until September 2012 this record of the Seniors Section History was created and maintained by **Alan Llewellyn**. Much of the early material was derived from information gratefully received from **Brian Darch**, **Bob Speed**, both founding members and **Rodney Gutsell** and **Gordon Housey**.

Following Alan's sad death in September 2012 **Eddie Winter** undertook to re-write Alan's work, expanding its contents, inserting omissions and updating the record to include information following Alan's departure.

This document is placed in the custody of the newly elected Captain. It is a stand-alone record and is not intended to be maintained.