

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at
Withington Golf Club
243 Palatine Road, West Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2UE
Held at 7.30 pm on Friday 16th October 2020.**

Copies of the business agenda, list of attendees and proxy votes are attached.

The Chairman opened the meeting with a warm welcome and stated for the record that due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the attendance this evening has been restricted to outgoing and incoming Officers and Directors of the Board. Financial Year end Accounts and Directors Reports have been circulated to all the membership and posted on the Clubs website.

The Chairman stated that it is always sad to lose friends and this year is no exception. A moment of silence was requested for the sad passing of friends: – Alastair Crombie, Ted Gardner, Ian McIvor, Stan Marsh, Vince Shrapnell, Dorothea Shurden and Alec Wardle.

The Chairman asked that the Notice convening the meeting be taken as read. This was duly approved by a unanimous show of hands.

The Chairman asked that the previous minutes of the AGM held on the 18th October 2019, which have been publicised and posted on notice boards and Club website, be taken as read. This was duly approved by a unanimous show of hands and 17 proxy votes For, None Against.

The Chairman asked that the Annual Report, that has been circulated, be taken as read. This was duly approved by a unanimous show of hands and 17 proxy votes For, None Against.

The Chairman invited the Finance Director, Mr Terry McIvor to give an overview of the accounts for 2019/20.

The Finance Director stated that this year was the first in many, that the subcommittee, made up of a group of people all with accountancy background had studied the monthly and Year end Accounts. This clearly is good financial practise and discipline. He recommends that this is adopted moving forward. Shaun Webb as incoming Finance Director was in agreement.

The Finance Director stated that the Club is in a reasonable financial position due to the influx of new members. The test will be subscription renewal in May 2021 and membership retention.

The Chairman read the nominations made for the Election of Life Members on behalf of Norman Jones:

Mr David Bentley Mr Trevor Egan Mr John Shurden

It gives John Southwick and I great pleasure to propose and second the appointment of Messrs David Bentley, Trevor Egan and John Shurden as Life Members of Withington Golf Club.

With a combined membership of some 150 years and in view of the many positions they have held within the Club contributing greatly to club life, they have clearly demonstrated their loyalty and service to the Club - which still continues to this day.

All three are Past Captains and Trevor and John are also Past Presidents. They have all served for years on many and varied Club committees. David has organised countless social events with Trevor and John running the Seniors Open competition for some 13 years. All these various events have of course raised many thousands of pounds for the Club finances.

Our thanks to the Board for the award of Life Membership to these most deserving gentlemen.

Proposed by Norman Jones
Seconded by John Southwick
(both via email)

The Chairman stated this has been a busy year for the Club with the following major issues to grapple with:

- Flooding of the golf course
- Insurance claim
- Members donations
- Covid=19
- Staffing restructure

All these have been well documented in members' bulletins and the Directors' Reports.

The Chairman read the nominations for the Election of Honorary Officers; Captain, Lady Captain, President, Club Directors and Sub-Committee Members for 2020/21 as stated in the nomination notice. All were duly elected by a show of hands and unchallenged.

Steve Wells asked if the Club was seeking a Marketing Director. The Chairman replied, no member had come forward to fill this role. He would encourage the right person with a marketing background to come forward. They could be co-opted or made a Director to the Board by board resolution.

The Chairman announced the Junior Captain for 2020/21 as Ben Currie. Ben is an excellent golfer and ambassador for the Club and he wished him all the very best over the next 12 months.

The Chairman invited the retiring President to address the meeting.

Mr Captain; Lady Captain; Past Captains and Presidents and fellow members.

Well this is retro, “a room and not a zoom meeting “I have been accustomed to seeing everyone lined up on my lap-top like an audition for University Challenge. For Paxman read Keates (although Tex doesn’t appear to have received the email that we lost in the semi-final!)

I have been honoured and delighted to represent our Club as its President for the last year, albeit a very challenging one. We have of course seen significant changes both on and off the course and extremely difficult decisions have been made to preserve the Club’s future. I hope that we all pull together to ensure that we are able to enjoy golf and friendships for many years to come at Withington.

A huge thank you to everyone at the Club for their hard work and tremendous support, whether that is in official, voluntary or membership capacity. It has also been a pleasure to share office with Ang and Steve and to help raise valuable funds for Parkinson’s UK.

A special personal thanks to Pat and Kath, for their great services to the Club. But most of all for their friendship, which I hope will continue for many years.

Finally, it is my great pleasure to introduce this year’s President. A lady who has twice been Lady Captain of Withington and as Tony so ably demonstrates, has great organisational skills. Brenda started off in banking and then ran a successful business for 16 years. She has been a member for nearly 30 years; served the club in many areas and been an enthusiastic supporter of mixed golf.

I hope that you have a great year in office Brenda and am sure that along with Ken and Jacqui, you will be a great team.

The President address the meeting.

Lady Captain, Mr Captain, Chairman and Directors I would first like to record my thanks to the Past President’s for nominating me as Club President. It is a tremendous honour and I will do my utmost to fulfil the role to the very best of my ability.

The past year has thrown up unprecedented challenges for the Club and my predecessor Alan Stewart has done a stalwart job as President and has been an excellent role model for my year to come - leaving big shoes for me to fill! Thank you Alan for your kind words and thank you for your consideration throughout the year in keeping me up to speed

I am looking forward to the year ahead – whatever that may bring in terms of Covid restrictions, the good old British weather or flood water – all matters beyond our control. I feel that we must try to stay positive and cheerful and make the very best we can of every situation. Obviously social events cannot be planned at present, but we are fortunate enough to have an excellent golf course, which, in addition to the challenge of the game also provides plenty of opportunity for safe, social interaction, something that many other people are missing at this time.

In light of the Club management restructure, which is currently in progress, I would like to take this opportunity to express my own thanks to Patrick Keane and to Kathy Donegan, who have both served the Club faithfully for many years, and to wish them both well for the future.

I am very much looking forward to working with the incoming Captain's Ken Hulme, Jacqui Bliss and Junior Captain Ben Curry. This year's Club Charity, which we will all be supporting, will be announced by Mr Captain.

I am hoping to play with as many members as I can through the year, although it is with some trepidation, that for the first time in all my years at the Club, I will be playing in Saturday competitions! It will, however, provide me with the opportunity to get to know some members that I perhaps would otherwise not meet – particularly in the current situation.

There is usually an opportunity at the end of this meeting for the new officers to buy a drink for all those present, obviously that can't happen this year, but once restrictions ease it may well be possible, (if you are quick enough), to catch me at the bar after a round of golf, when I can put that right.

It is now my pleasant duty to introduce my Vice-President for the year and the President for 2021-2022. This gentleman has been a member for over 30 years and since his retirement in 2014 has been a stalwart member of the Seniors Section, when he is not off travelling to visit family in Australia. He worked for 23 years with the Dunlop Rubber company, where I believe he worked alongside my late Mother-in-Law and the late Martin Quine, a Past Captain of WGC.

In 1984, with two colleagues, he set up his own Rubber product manufacturing company, which he ran until his retirement. He was married for 44 years to Christine, who sadly died in 2011 and has a son in Australia and a daughter in St Albans, who have provided him with 4 grandchildren. His main hobby is golf, but I have bumped into him a few times at the theatre and understand that he is not a stranger to treading the boards himself, having been a regular pantomime performer for many years!

I am delighted to announce that my Vice President is John Dowling.

Finally, I would like to urge members to give a warm WGC welcome to our new management team of Carol and Will, to support our Board of Directors, as they work through the ever changing COVID rules and to exercise patience and good humour with any hiccups which may crop up as we go through a period of transition.

I would like to wish everyone a good golfing year.

The Chairman asked the retiring Lady Captain to address the meeting.

Mr Captain, Mr President, Past Captains and Presidents, ladies and gentlemen.

As we have had many new members joining WGC this year, I would like to inform them of the role of Lady Captain. The Lady Captain is the Captain of the Ladies Section and represents the Ladies Section both within WGC and for WGC when in attendance at other golf clubs. In addition to this she has, to date, been chair of the Ladies Committee overseeing the running of the Ladies Section and can attend board meetings, if she wishes to do so.

As Lady Captain I have attended Board meetings this year and it has given me a more in-depth understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Chairman and Directors and the difficult decisions that need to be made by them to ensure the smooth running of the Club V1 both now and in the future.

I would like to thank the Ladies Committee who have continuously supported me during my year in office. There have been several highlights in a difficult year for all of us. The Ladies Committee have met regularly despite restrictions on our activities both on and off the course.

They have done a fantastic job this year, constantly managing the running of the Ladies Section during these unprecedented times. I would like to say a personal thank you to those who have worked continuously on Match and Handicap supporting all the ladies with the new ClubV1 system and the speed at which they worked to update the continuous changes in the diary once we were able to play competitive golf again. I would also like to thank the Lady Director who has diligently represented the Ladies Section and supported me throughout the year.

There are many of you who volunteer behind the scenes upholding the face of WGC, so thank you to all of you who have given your time, especially the gardening committee who have continued to work diligently to re-establish and maintain the flora around the course after the inclement weather conditions last year. I would also like to thank the Grounds Staff and everyone involved for their hard work in restoring the course to its former glory, in what I feel was a relatively short time, and for the ongoing improvements and maintenance.

At the beginning of the playing year we had the Welcome Night and Christmas Social functions which got the year off to a good start. It has been an unfortunate year in relation to postponement/cancellation of the many competitions we would usually participate in, hopefully we will be able to participate in these next year. In addition, we were unable to go ahead with the Lady Captain's Weekend Away, which both I and the ladies were all looking forward to.

On a lighter note, the highlights of my year were 'Lady Captain's Prize to 7 Day Members' and 'Lady Captain's Prize to the Ladies'. These were well supported and enjoyable events which will provide me with many happy memories in the future. It's at times like these that you realise how supportive and friendly the members are.

I have been very fortunate to have had Steve Wells as Captain, and Alan Stewart as President, alongside me this year. As long-standing members with lots of experience, they have been both supporting and very entertaining throughout, especially on the dance floor! Although it

has been unfortunate that we have not had the opportunity to play golf together as much as we would have liked, when the occasion arose it was a pleasure to play with such talented golfers with whom I have established great friendships. I was also honoured to be invited by Mr Captain to participate in the Captain's Picnic at Leigh earlier this year. We never did get the opportunity to play together as 'Team Metallica' but I'm sure we will in the future!

As for my golf, it has continued to be a pleasurable experience, well most of the time, having played both social and competitive golf with new lady and seven-day members where possible. And, reducing my handicap, boy is it getting difficult!

This year has been one of celebration for four of our ladies, one having reached a magnificent milestone of 70 and two who have reached 80 and still playing strong. The fourth was a celebration of a different kind, having achieved a magnificent run of first place in 3 major competitions, Captain's Prize to the Ladies, Lady Captain's Day and President's Prize to the Ladies.

Earlier this year we received the news of the passing of Dorothea Shurden, a long-standing member of WGC, the ladies committee and a past Lady Captain, who, along with others, will remain in our thoughts. I had the pleasure of meeting Dorothea at social events over the past few years and soon came to realise she was a magnificent lady who was much loved by all.

Throughout the year I have had the honour to meet and get to know many long-standing members of the Club, many of whom have a story to tell and some very interesting ones indeed! It's amazing how some of the nicknames came about. I'm sure there are still plenty more of these stories to come on a Saturday afternoon. As a member once said to me 'you get out of this Club what you put in', never a truer word spoken.

We have raised over £7000 for the Captains' Charity, Parkinson's UK, from the social events we had prior to lockdown, by organising activities ranging from car washing to the tee signs, and much more. Thank you to everybody for their generous contributions.

It has been both a privilege and an honour to be your Lady Captain and I will now hand over to our new Lady Captain, Jacqui, and I wish her every success and enjoyment in the year ahead.

Jacqui joined the golf club in 2016 and has been integral to the Club ever since. Not only has she joined in with both ladies and mixed golf, and social events, she has also been an outstanding Lady Director. Jacqui is well respected in the Club and is one of the most supportive, accommodating and proactive people I know, and a great friend. She definitely knows how to enjoy herself both on and off the golf course, as I'm sure you'll find out when she joins you for a round. Is that golf, or at the bar?

The Lady Captain address the meeting.

Mr Captain, Mr President, Past Captains and Presidents, ladies and gentlemen.

Firstly, I would like to thank Angeline for all the hard work and effort she has made against a backdrop of tremendously challenging circumstances. Not only has she faced accidental floods, naturally caused floods and a pandemic, she has had to adapt to working from home

and managing a full-time job throughout lockdown! Together with the Captain and President they made a great team, unfortunately they didn't get to enjoy much of the golfing season, or social functions, but at least Lady Captains; and the Presidents and Captains Prize to the Ladies all went ahead.

When Angeline asked me to be her Lady Vice Captain, I was very flattered and am honoured to serve the Club.

I am aware that there are high expectations of this role and I feel I have the structures in place to enable me to fulfil my duties to the best of my ability.

Sadly, Covid is still with us and we will have to adapt as best we can to ever changing circumstances.

I have a great team around me and looking forward to an enjoyable year with our new Captain, President and Junior Captain.

I will be supporting the Captain's Charity, Withington Golf Club. This may seem a surprising choice but Mr Vice Captain is of the view that 'charity begins at home' and in the current financial climate for our sport we need to protect the future of the club, any improvements, no matter how small, will make our club more viable.

I am looking forward to playing golf with Ken, I am not sure how patient he is but we will soon find out! Just to say that being a good golfer is not a prerequisite of being Lady Captain. I think I will have to buy him a fair few pints to earn his forgiveness.

I am not sure I am looking forward to the drive in, you can probably bet on 40 yards if you want my tip!

It is my great pleasure to introduce our new Lady Vice Captain, Biddy Schilizzi.

Biddy joined the Club in 2010 with her husband Richard, had a sabbatical to do a further degree and then re-joined in 2014. She is a valued member of the Ladies Section. To describe Biddy as a good allrounder is an understatement; she has a background as a scientist, is an accomplished artist and her horticultural skills are well evidenced around the Club. She heads up the Gardening group [the unsung heroes of the Club -always looking for volunteers!] and designs the planting of the borders, pots and other 'off course' areas of the club. She also plays golf- a lady with 'Green Fingers' on and off the course.

Biddy is an asset to the Club and will be a great ambassador for us.

At this moment, all social occasions are 'off' but hopefully the new golf season will bring us some welcome respite and I will be able to buy you all a drink in due course.

I will do my utmost to represent the Club and the Ladies section to the best of my abilities.

Stay safe.

The Chairman asked the retiring Captain to address the meeting.

It would be very easy to paint a gloomy picture of my year as Captain of Withington Golf Club, but I would prefer to dwell on the positive aspects. Firstly, the honour of having been Captain and of sharing my year with friends Alan Stewart and Angeline Crawford, who have been very supportive in difficult times. The periods of sunny weather once golf got going again made up for the long wait and the excellent work of Paul Higgins and his team to organise competition golf under rigid restrictions should not go unmentioned.

I would like to acknowledge the help and support of Pat Keane during the year and particularly in organising the Captain's Picnic at Leigh Golf Club, which stands out as a highlight for me, not least because it was my only opportunity to play with Steve Marr during my year, the weather was sublime and it was a rare occasion when I played decent golf this year.

Another highlight has been raising money for Parkinson's UK and we have been quite successful with raffles for 4 balls, car washing and selling tee names. We have raised just under £7,000 and thanks go to Kara Norbury and Marcus Powell for their help in this.

Enough of my year. The future beckons and with it a new Captain. I am delighted to introduce Ken Hulme; someone I have always held in high regard. Ken is a Manchester lad and travelled the globe for 40 years as an electrical engineer. He started to play golf in 1978 and joined Withington in 1984. His handicap was in single figures for some years, including at the age of 70, and he still plays off 13. He spent time on Match and Handicap and was President in 2007/2008, therefore carrying on the precedent of ex-presidents becoming Captain. As President, he raised funds in collaboration with Paul Lilley to publish Mike Casey's history of the Club in 2014. His notable wins at Withington are the Centenary Cup in 1999, the Seniors' Championship in 2006 and, recently, the Seniors' over 65 Championship in 2020. He has had 3 holes in 1, the most recent in May 2020. You can see that he is still a very good golfer. Obviously, he is taking over as Captain at a time of continuing Covid restrictions and I sincerely hope that things improve for him, with more Mersey League matches and social gatherings.

I give you your Captain, Ken Hulme.

Members of Withington Golf Club.

When Steve Wells contacted me almost fifteen months ago asking me to be Captain of this great Club, I have to admit it took me by surprise and of course I needed to think about it for several seconds before accepting.

I consider myself truly honoured to have even been considered, let alone nominated.

My thanks go also to the past captains committee and I will be forever grateful to them for their trust. I promise to do my utmost to honour the traditions of this long-established Golf Club and I further promise to be the conduit between all members and our Board of Directors.

I should like to thank the outgoing Captain, Dr Stephen Wells for the hard work he has put in over the past twelve months in what has been a very challenging and demanding year under the circumstances.

Hopefully, the coming year will be kinder but there is no guarantee the next twelve months will be any different. I sincerely hope things do improve for the sake of all members. Without social functions our Club is lifeless and devoid of atmosphere.

The President, Lady Captain and I have spent a considerable amount of time deliberating the pros and cons of our joint charity.

It was at last year's AGM that a certain member of the Board reminded me of my long-held belief that Charity Begins at Home. Home in this respect is Withington Golf Club.

In 2008 as President, I teamed-up with Mike Casey and Paul Lilley to produce the second of Mike's Book, Withington Golf Club – An Illustrated History 1892 -1974. Every member of the Club had the opportunity to get their hands on a copy for themselves. Although Mike has more than enough material for several more books, I am not sure Withington is ready for a third volume at this particular juncture.

Promoting & publishing a heavily subsidised book is one thing, asking members to donate to a charity that is ostensibly WGC, is something entirely different. You might say it's a step into uncharted territory. Although some have thought about doing it, no one has actually taken this step. I hope we do not fall flat on our faces. To be perfectly honest, it is almost like asking members to voluntarily increase their annual subscription.

It is no secret that Withington's most loyal members are the most generous. Members who regularly attend Club functions and who frequently make good use of the lounge and bar areas are the people who take the brunt of our social team urging members to participate in one thing or another for the Captains' Charity.

Year after year, the same wonderful generous people continually support what I will refer to as proper charities. So, we ask you, why not Withington this year?

In the current financial climate, our Club needs as much assistance as it can possibly come by and, therefore, I would ask each and every one of you to enthusiastically support the Captains' charity in the coming year.

All income collected from raffles, auctions etc. will go towards a specific tangible project that we believe will be beneficial to all members of the Club.

Selecting a suitable project has its limitations, not least is cost. Jointly we have concluded that a viable project for 2021 is the refurbishment of the practice nets that are currently looking worse for wear and decidedly tired. In addition to new safety netting, target nets and mats, we envisage a granulated rubber & resin walkway from the path that leads to the 1st tee to the practice nets and its surrounding area. A soft underfoot surface is not only pleasant to

walk on, it makes a statement to visitors and members alike when they see a clean and tidy area, surely it will instil a sense of pride in all members when they walk to the nets.

It is not untypical for the Captains' Charity to raise somewhere in the region of £7k so we feel new practice nets may well fall within this budget providing we are able to call-in a few favours.

Moving on from our Charity to the golfing side of my tenure, I hope to play with as many members as possible throughout the coming twelve months. My intention is to work through the start sheet from early morning to late afternoon with a view to meeting as many of you as possible. When you see my name on the start sheet in your favoured time slot, please take this as an open invitation to join me. Who knows, if you twist my arm, I might buy you a drink from the bar afterwards.

I will be disappointed if you decide not to join me in the Clubhouse afterwards if only for a chat. For those of you, who, for one good reason or another, are unable to make it to the Clubhouse afterwards... and before anyone asks... NO! It is not acceptable to nominate a substitute to sup on your behalf.

At this point in the proceedings, it is my pleasure to introduce you to your new Vice-Captain who really needs no introduction. He is well known and highly respected throughout the membership. I know this announcement will delight everyone who knows him.

Shay Daly has been a member for more than 40 years, joining in 1980. Although he had a break from golf for a number of years, he never once let his membership lapse. Highly commendable you may think, however, this only serves to illustrate one of two things. He either has a terrible memory or he has more money than he knows what to do with. He is a master of the English language and for many years held a highly respected and responsible position as an examiner for students sitting GCSEs and A-levels. So, for those of you who flunked English, this guy could well be responsible.

As a former President of the Club, Shay has more than sufficient knowledge and aptitude to deal with whatever lies ahead of him. During his year in office as President he never failed to entertain us with his wit and dry humour. I for one am looking forward to more of the same when he takes up the mantle in twelve months' time.

Finally, I would like to revive a tradition that appears to have been forgotten in recent times. It is one whereby the incoming Captain shows appreciation and gratitude towards the outgoing Skipper by handing over a small token of thanks that hopefully will remind him in his dotage of the good times he had when he was not only a member of, but Captain of Withington Golf Club (Framed collage of the four outgoing officers).

Under normal circumstances, at the end of my speech, it would be customary to invite everyone attending the AGM to have a drink from the bar at my expense. Unfortunately, Covid restriction prevented you attending, and I have saved a small fortune.

By way of compensation I will endeavour to catch up with as many of the regulars as possible to put things right in this respect ASAP. Somehow, I do not think I would have got away without buying a round even had I not mentioned it.

I wish all members the very best of golf.

In concluding, the Chairman paid thanks to the outgoing officers for their wise counsel during the course of the last 12 months, you have all provided great service to the board and the Club in difficult circumstances. The Chairman also wished the incoming offices all the very best for 2020/21 and urged them to enjoy their year.

The Chairman would like to thank Patrick Keane for all his hard work over the past 15 years. In particular, the last 12 months have been very challenging with:

- Course flooding
- Insurance claim
- Members rebate – resulting in re-invoicing individual bills to the entire membership
- Covid – 19
- Influx of over 160 new members

On behalf of the membership the Chairman wished Patrick all the very best for the future.

The Chairman also thanked Kath Donegan, the Club's steward who will also be leaving after 20 years of service. Kath is a friend of a great many members and she was thanked on behalf of all members for all she had done for the Club and was wished all the very best for the future.

The Chairman confirmed the next Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday 10th November at 6.30pm.

The Chairman thanked all for attending, the meeting closed at 8.15pm

In attendance:

Martin Keates

Steve Wells

Alan Stewart

Ken Hulme

Brenda Dagnall

Jacqui Bliss

Drew Folland

Paul Higgins

Terry McIvor – via Zoom

Carol Southern

Shaun Webb

Patrick Keane