

MINUTES OF THE 68th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT THE WARREN GOLF CLUB 8 MAY 2023

Dot Greaves (Lady President), welcomed all those attending the 68th AGM of the Society, especially all the current Lady Captains.

1) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Carolyn Harris (Braintree), Celia Larkham & Ruth Eyre-Pugh (Colne Valley), Carol Lewis & Julie Dent (Five Lakes), Helen Williams (Burnham on Crouch), Andrea Wisbey (The Rayleigh Club), Stephanie Lawrence, (Garon Park), Sandra Goff, (Rochford Hundred), Margaret Bentley, Barbara Rowe, Betty Cox & Lesley Garnett, (Stoke by Nayland), Jan Nicholson, (Benton Hall), Linda Mead & Jenny Luke, (Mardyke Valley), Hazel Hastings & Lyn Brand, (Ballards Gore).

2) MINUTES OF THE 2022 AGM:

Duly circulated, taken as read and accepted as a true record. Proposed by Dawn Marriott (Forrester Park), seconded by Judy Podd (Forrester Park).

3) MATTERS ARISING: Carol Bell

There was some discussion about our merchandising at the AGM in 2021 & 2022- this will be covered in the treasurer's report.

4) CORRESPONDENCE:

Resignations had been received from Sheila Mines (Benton Hall), Maureen Fretwell (Risebridge), Caroline Fields (Braintree) & Jennifer Brandon (Langdon Hills).

5) PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Dot Greaves

Last year I said I hoped things would return to normal after the pandemic – for 2 years we had to cancel or curtail meetings. We did not have to cancel any meeting in 2022, though Covid restrictions have disappeared our numbers, especially ladies attending meetings are down. Many of our members have become Lady Captain again which reduces our membership.

I would like to thank all the members of the Committee who have done a great job in organising our Society over 2022. Carol for doing all the bookings, Pennie for organising and refereeing the Ida Bunting, Maggie for keeping our finances in order, Jane for taking the bookings and cancellations and Barbara for the friendly matches and Hilary for our merchandise. Where would be without them? Things have gone really well. As you know I am stepping down this year, I have been on the Committee since 2008 and wish Carol and the Committee the very best for the future. I feel it is time to have some new blood and perhaps more ladies stepping forward to do the various jobs.

6) HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT- Carol Bell

Our annual Mailshot was circulated to current members, all new Lady Captains and some past lady captains interested in joining/rejoining. In total we sent to around 280 ladies. The vast majority of these are now sent via email, though we did need to do a fair amount of chasing to ensure emails had arrived and were actioned. That part of the process now works reasonably well. I was delighted to see that the introduction of an electronic payment system this year for Subscriptions and meeting fees has been well received. More about this side of things from Maggie in her Treasurers Report. There were a couple of things regarding the booking of meetings that were problematic this year. Booking forms returned electronically rather than by post – creating extra work for us. We will look at this process again to see if we can make it more flexible but please read the instructions more carefully and if requested please send your form back by post. Secondly the number of members who failed to send a stamped addressed envelope for the return of the Confirmation of Meetings. This caused extra work and some additional postage costs. We have examined this process for the future and rather than sending individual confirmations by post in future we intend to post a list of players who have entered each meeting on our website towards the end of March early April. This should work well as it will be similar to when we post final details a few days before each meeting with the list of players and will encourage our members to access the website more often. Our website is not sophisticated enough to allow bookings or payments directly through the website, but it does provide an excellent media to provide information to our members at zero cost. We intend to review our series of FAQ's this year to see if we can improve or add questions where appropriate. If you do have a question, please check the FAQs on the website before making an individual enquiry as this saves us all time. Currently we have 203 members (including 10 non playing members) this is up 3% on last year's figure of 197. Applications for 2023 meetings were received from 135 ladies an 5% /increase on the 2022 figure (128) and in total 281 requests were made for individual meetings this is 5% increase on last year's figure of (267). This year we have altered the calendar with no Meeting in busy July and extending our season into early October. We will review how this works to see what we do for 2024. Currently we have spaces at all our meetings, Burnham in June, which is during their Centenary week, Stoke by Nayland in August for our annual team event which is always great fun, The Rayleigh Club in September has a particularly low entry, and Langdon Hills in early October. Please consider entering another meeting if you can and encourage other past captains to get involved. We are grateful to all our host clubs for supporting the Society this year. Securing venues at an affordable price is becoming increasingly difficult, so we may consider having a 1 course meal in the evening at all events next year. We have already had one Friendly Match this year with the Men's Captains Society at Maldon Golf Club. This as usual was a friendly team game which is always popular. If you have not requested to play in any matches this year there is still time to apply and the form is downloadable from the website or speak to Barbara Church today.

It is not easy to get ladies to join the Committee especially for some of the key roles. This is my last report as Hon Secretary and I wish Pennie Lipscomb all the very best in taking over this role. That leaves us with a vacant position of Ida Bunting Organiser, so if anyone is interested in finding out more about this role please speak to Pennie or me. Thank you, ladies, for your support and we hope you enjoy what we have to offer this year.

7) HON. TREASURER'S REPORT- Maggie Stevenson

I hope you have all seen the statement of accounts that was sent out with the renewal at the end of January. It shows that the Society still has a healthy balance of £4623, £277 less than last year. In 2022 we had 5 meetings. Overall attendance was up slightly on the previous year, but the value and number of prizes were the same to keep the cost within our budget. This year we introduced a new payment system for subscriptions and meetings allowing payments directly into our new bank account. Overall, this has worked very well with about 2/3 opting to pay on-line. As is often the case with any change, there have been a few minor hiccups but most were easily resolved.

- Payments made in full rather than just a deposit
- Late payment of the balance for meetings
- Cheques sent for the deposit only
- Cheques made out to the wrong account

We continued to support the Essex Ladies County Golf Association with a £200 cheque and trophies for the girls Championship. The cost of meetings was increased to £40.00 this year due to higher charges by the golf clubs. For an early light lunch, golf, and dinner this represents good value for money. Regarding merchandise, a question was raised at the AGM in September 2021 about whether we could stock a pink jumper with logo. I reported at the AGM last year that we had not been able to progress this as there was no one in the Merchandising post. Hilary Adams, who looks after our Merchandising now, asked a lot of members whether they would be interested in a pink society jumper and there was a lot of interest, thank you ladies for your feedback. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to source pink society jumpers at a reasonable cost. Instead, we have added an embroidered badge to our range which you can sew or iron on your own jumper or T-shirt. We offer a wide range of merchandise but will not replace some less popular items once they are sold. Statement of Accounts, the acceptance of the accounts was Proposed by Lesley Knight (Colne Valley) and seconded by Susan Wilson (Forrester Park).

8) IDA BUNTING MEMORIAL TROPHY REPORT- Pennie Lipscomb

The 2022 knockout competition went smoothly with many players commenting on how much they had enjoyed their matches. The winner was Ruth Collins playing handicap 25 - Three Rivers and the runner up Kim Highfield, playing handicap 26 - The Warren -further details on the website My thanks to Benton Hall Golf Club for hosting the final and to Ballards Gore Golf Club for hosting the semi-final. 33 players have entered the 2023 knockout competition and the first-round was completed by the 21st April. The entry forms for the 2024 competition will be sent out in June. If possible, please could you give me your Lady Captain's email address. Please note that if you wish to qualify/play in the Ida Bunting Trophy you must be a full playing member of the Society at the time you both qualify and play.

9) ELECTION OF OFFICERS/COMMITTEE (NOMINATIONS BEFORE 1/4/23)- Dot Greaves

As you know I am standing down as President and have nominated Carol Bell to take over as president. It was mentioned in the notice of the AGM that we needed a new committee member either as Hon Secretary or Ida Bunting Organiser. Sadly, as is often the case no one has come forward to join the committee. Consequently, Pennie Lipscomb our current Ida Bunting organiser has agreed to take over the Hon Secretary's role

The following positions need to be confirmed

President	Carol Bell	(Benton Hall)
Proposed by	Dot Greaves	(Forrester Park)
Seconded by	Pennie Lipscomb	(The Warren)
Hon Secretary	Pennie Lipscomb	(The Warren)
Proposed by	Carol Bell	(Benton Hall)
Seconded by	Hilary Adams	(Benton Hall)

Confirmed by a show of hands

Carol read out details of all the other Members of the Committee who were prepared to continue in their roles and asked for a proposer and seconder for the rest of the Committee en block:

TREASURER	Maggie Stevenson	(Formerly North Weald)
COMMITTEE MEMBER/MEETINGS BOOKING COORDINATOR	Jane Collier	(Forrester Park)
IDA BUNTING TROPHY ORGANISER & REFEREE – vacant		
COMMITTEE MEMBER/ MATCH ORGANISER-	Barbara Church	(Burnham on Crouch).
COMMITTEE MEMBER /MERCHANDISER –	Hilary Adams	(Benton Hall)

Proposed by Jan Collier (Forrester Park) seconded by Brenda Young (Braintree)

10) APPOINTMENT OF ACCOUNT CHECKER - Pennie Lipscomb

Sheila Fitzpatrick had kindly offered to continue to undertake the role of Account Checker.

Proposed by Cecilia Jackaman (The Rayleigh club) and seconded by Val Cook (Benton Hall).

11) PRESIDENTS INAGURAL SPEECH – Carol Bell

First of all, I want to say a huge thank you to Dot, on behalf of all our members, for her services to the Society over the years. She has served as Friendly Match Organiser, Ida Bunting Organiser, Treasurer and of course President. Much of her latter role was through difficult COVID affected years which was not easy.

Dot, please accept these gifts on behalf of all our members. Please put your hands together to show your appreciation for all the work Dot has done over the years.

Also thank you to Pennie for stepping up to the plate and taking on the role of Hon Secretary. I look forward to continuing to work with all the Committee.

For my part, I became Lady Captain of Benton Hall in 2007 and I have always considered it an honour to have been Lady Captain at my club. It is an even greater honour and privilege to be invited to be President of this Society which was founded in 1954 by Ida Bunting of Thorpe Hall. I attended my first Meeting at Ilford Golf Club that year. One of the past Lady Captains at Benton Hall said to me before the event, knowing my organisational skills and attention to detail – 'Carol, you won't like it!' Actually, I loved the opportunity to meet and talk to other current and past lady captains. Though I did have to agree the organisation left some room for improvement. I went on to host a meeting at Benton Hall that year and I've been passionate about the Society ever since. Next year we will celebrate our 70th anniversary and we will be giving some thought as to how to do that. I am only the 6th President of the Society, but don't worry I'm not planning on staying in the role too long as I believe it's important to give others the opportunity to undertake the role. The Society has seen lots of changes to its practices and procedures over the years. For example,

- Competition format changes from Foursomes to Greensomes and now 4BBB
- From paying on the day, to paying in advance by cheque and now electronic payments
- Developing and maintaining our own website

I'm hopeful we can see more improvements over the next few years to better meet the needs of our members. But remember our days are not just about playing in the competition, they provide the important opportunity to meet, network and sometimes make lasting friendships with other past and present Lady Captains. At the end of the day, no Society can survive without the support of its members. Whilst our numbers are still lower than pre COVID, we do have a very loyal band of followers and we continue to appreciate your support. Just remember we will not be able to please everyone all the time.

12) ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No issues raised.

The Meeting closed at 11.25 a.m.