



# newsletter



David Marsh conducting field trials on an experimental lawn at Elie, on the north coast of the Firth of Forth. The free-draining surface is watered twice a day using a pre-programmed automatic system. All games are subject to time limits. Photo by Sally Marsh.

## Annual Dinner



The Annual Dinner took place at the South Beds Golf Club on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November, attended by 21 members and guests including Anto Davies, making a welcome return visit. Many thanks to Eric and Wendy Audsley for organising it.



David Marsh – Ashwell Cup



David Morris – De Grey Plate



David Marsh – B level Cup



Eric Audsley – 14 point trophy



John Bevington – Steel Cup



David Marsh – Archer Cup

Chairman Tim Brewer presented the trophies for the club competitions, including a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary special of a bottle of wine for the most improved player of the year, which was won by David Marsh.



Eric Audsley – Golf croquet cup



Eric Audsley – Steel runner-up



David Marsh – most improved player



Late night line-up – Rod Ashwell and John Wheeler compare tasting notes (the Malbec won by a nose).

## You can take croquet out of Wrest Park . . .

The new guidebook for Wrest Park (very informative, well illustrated and a bargain at £3.99) contains the family tree of the owners until 1917. The grandson of Thomas Robinson (the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl de Grey, who built the present house) was Francis Cowper (the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl Cowper), whose sister Adine married Julian Fane in 1866. Their daughter Ethel, who lived at Wrest Park in the 1870s, married William Grenfell in 1887. Ethel, or Ettie, became a significant figure in Edwardian society.

William Grenfell was awarded a peerage in 1905, taking the title Lord Desborough. One of the many offices he

held during his long and active life as sportsman and public servant was that of President of the Croquet Association, from 1908 until 1933. Typing “Lord Desborough” into Google lists articles about him and Ettie – the links are not included here for technical reasons.

## This could be the last time #1

The lawns had their final autumn scarification recently, aided by continuing dry mild weather. On the 19<sup>th</sup> October the woodyard shed roof was re-felted and lawns 3&4 scarified E-W. A week later lawns 5&6 and 1&2 were scarified in the same direction.

Six days later all the lawns were scarified NE-SW. The autumn fertiliser was applied on 23<sup>rd</sup> November.



The three stages: scarifying (George Collin), sweeping (Gill Brewer) and mowing (Bryan Harral). Not shown, as it proved impossible to get everyone in the same shot, is Richard Brewer who was manning the wheelbarrow.

Our thanks go to John and Pandora Wheeler and Bryan for mowing the lawns all year, to George in his role as groundsman in what has been a trying season, both with regard to the weather and limited access to the lawns, and also to the English Heritage reception and ground staff for their invaluable assistance.

## Club competitions update

**Thomas Philip Earl de Grey Cup (B level)** Winner: David Marsh  
Runner-up: Tim Brewer

**14 point advanced** Winner: Eric Audsley  
Runner-up: Rod Ashwell

**Golf croquet** Winner: Eric Audsley  
Runner-up: Edward Ashwell

## Winter play

Weekend play can continue as the park is now open on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year. It is suggested that anyone wishing to play on weekdays calls in advance in case there are events taking place.

A Merry Christmas to one and all.