

ACTING HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT – December 2013

In last year's Secretary's Report, December 2012, at the very end Damien thanked the outgoing Captain Brendan, and in his words said "what had been a very difficult year". Well 2013 has been an extremely difficult year for the Club.

Firstly, I would like to thank our 2013 Captain John Flack for guiding us through this very difficult year and all of the other members of the Executive Committee, namely Vice-Captain, Pat McAleavey, Past Captain, Brendan Smyth, President Jack Moore, Honorary Treasurer, in his first year, Patrick Brannigan and Honorary Secretary, Damien Murray (who resigned from his post early November) for all their hard work and the service and advice they have given the Club in 2013.

Course

I would like to thank past Captain Brendan Smyth, Greens Convenor for the work he has carried out and the savings he has made in 2013, working closely with Head Greenkeeper, Ian McCarragher and the rest of the green-keeping staff. It has certainly not been an easy task.

Societies

Over the last few years, income from societies has gone down and this is an area that needs marketing. Thanks to Richard Black for taking on this convenorship in 2013.

Bar

I thank Colm Quinn, Bar Convenor for his efforts in 2013 in working with Bar Manager, Barbara and Martin and also with working with the Savings Committee in this area of the Club where we are hoping to make considerable savings – another very difficult task.

Catering

Eric Hamilton has worked closely with Dobbs (our Caterer) during 2013 in trying to come up with menus to suit the needs of our members. The caterer has had reasonably good success during the golfing season, but since October onwards trade has dropped considerable and finds it difficult to profit from his labour at this particular time.

Entertainment

Our Entertainment's convenor Marty Daly has the difficult task of when to OR when not to have entertainment in the Clubhouse – it is a very difficult balance. Marty has worked with closely with the Caterer and he has brought a lot of new and exciting musicians to the Club this year. Thanks Marty.

House

We have been very fortunate in 2013 with Jim Bruce as our House Convenor. With his background and considerable experience in this area, Jim as initiated a number of changes which has resulted in reduced energy costs throughout the Clubhouse.

Juvenile Convenorship/Child Protection

Thanks to Paul Kelly for doing a wonderful job as Juvenile Convenor and crowned the year off by the winning the Craigavon Shield which is competed for by 16 clubs from Dunmurry G.C in Belfast up to Killymoon G.C. in Co Tyrone and 14 clubs in between.

Art McCrory undertook the very important role as designated Child Protection Officer and his co-operation and help to the juvenile convenor and the Captain was much appreciated.

Professional

Thanks to Alan and Tony in the Professional shop for their continued good service to the Club members during 2013 and to Jim Kirk for his continued liaison with them during the year.

Teams

Thanks to all the Team Captains during 2013. They have given so much time and effort, time and effort that are rarely appreciated by the majority of Club members. Last year we did not enter the Barton Shield (GUI) and the Sam Rutherford (Cowdy) competitions in order to save money but that will be rectified in 2014. In the GUI competitions, we didn't do very well, with one exception – the Pierce Purcell foursomes team. They qualified in 4th place at Clones G.C. and then went on to beat Concra Wood, Banbridge, and the very fancied Letterkenny team at Killymoon G.C. in dramatic circumstances only to be beaten in the final by the 2012 runners-up Rossmore at Balmoral G.C. We thank Paddy Duffy for getting us through the qualifying stage, but having fled to the USA, it was left to the dual team of Paul Wasson and Declan Lenagh to bring them through the knockout stages. Well done.

Sadly, we did not partake in the All-Ireland Mixed qualifying section due to differences of opinion in team selection, even though we had been entered to take part.

In the Cowdy competitions, only the Senior Cowdy team performed with great merit, reaching the final once again, only to be beaten by the same opposition as in 2012 – Banbridge G.C. by a narrow margin. Thanks to Richard Black for accepting the captaincy of this team and leading them to the final.

The Mid Ulster Senior League Alliance team under the guidance of our President Jack Moore captured the Septuagenarian Trophy – 10 teams take part in this competition – well done guys.

Competitions/Sponsorship/Handicaps/Club PRO/Website

As Competitions convenor during 2013, I would like to thank the competition team: Gerry McCreesh (Seniors Competitions), Turlough Brady (the very popular Tuesday Cup), Art McCrory (Matchplay competitions) and Brian Hughes who has always covered for me for the week-end competitions when I was unavailable. Regarding competitions, I want to thank the competition playing members who were asked to pay £5.00 for all white marker qualifying competitions from end of April to end of September – the net figure increase in competition fees this year was £11,000. Thank you.

In conjunction with the Competitions, I want to thank John Flack for obtaining sponsorship for the majority of competitions during 2013 – this task is certainly not an easy one.

Thanks to Colm Shannon for his diligence in keeping an ‘eye’ on all of the handicaps, particularly during the qualifying season. His attention to detail is unsurpassed.

I personally, over the last two years as Competition convenor, could not do without the Club website as a means of communication to our playing members regarding results of competitions, presentations, etc. Thanks to Cormac Knott for this great facility - simple to use and much appreciated by the members.

In conjunction with Competitions, our PRO Richard Stewart deserves tremendous thanks for his reporting of competitions and taking photographs of our prizewinners, both for the website and the local newspapers. This is a very onerous task. Thanks Richard for a very professional job during 2013.

Savings Committee

The Savings Committee, under the Chairmanship of our Vice Captain, Pat McAleavey, together with Colm Shannon, Patrick Brannigan, Kieran Grimley and Dougie Somerville, produced a very in-depth report to Council in September, which was the result of a very painstaking investigation into all aspects of the Club and how costs could be curtailed and more income generated. This thorough investigation took months to complete, and at the moment we are in the very difficult situation in trying to implement their recommendations. Without the full backing of Council for measures suggested, we will be in a more difficult place this time next year. (Under point 6 on the Agenda, the Chairman of the Savings Committee will give a fuller report on what has been happening.) Thank you all for the unenviable task you are performing on behalf of the Club.

Finally

I wish everyone connected with the Club a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Patrick Burns
Acting Honorary Secretary (9th December 2013)