



MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN/WINTER 2008

Welcome to the latest edition of your newsletter. I hope you will have noticed that Council, acting on your behalf, has made a number of very positive improvements both on and off the course in recent months. In doing so we have been mindful of the need to exercise prudence with Club funds in the current difficult financial climate whilst ensuring that the Club continues to move forward in to the future for the benefit of all concerned – more about that later.

On behalf of myself, Lady Captain Cheryl and our respective Councils, may I take the opportunity of wishing all our members and staff a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Jimmy Crooks
Captain

Membership. Although we have lost some members in the last few months including our late Past Captain Harry McConnell, we continue to welcome new members as follows:-

Full – Ray McClenaghan, Chris Baird, David Fitzgerald, John McDonnell, Hugh Fleck, Johnny Newburn, Darren Donaldson, Peter Weir, Des Johnston, Colin Graham and Paul Anderson.

Lady – Nuran Fleck.

Juvenile – David Whyte, Stephen Hamilton, Ben Wilson, Andrew Glass, Jonathan Holmes, Gregory Weir, Andrew Eastopp, Ryan Horner and Lee Horner.

House – Neville Glass, Billy Baird and Robert Clarke.

Council Changes Jim Buchanan has been co-opted to Council following the resignation of David Addley.

Developments I hope you will agree that the repainting of the main lounge and members' bar has helped improve the overall appearance along with the refurbishment of the seating. It is difficult to meet everyone's personal preference but David Lynas our House Convenor has done an excellent job. He has also been responsible for bringing forward the much needed refurbishment of the first floor toilet areas which are nearing completion as well as new internal signage. Further work is planned for other areas of the Clubhouse as resources permit. On the course the provision of the new top dresser has made a tremendous difference to the condition of the greens and aprons have been saved from wear and tear by line marking – thanks are due to all members for keeping trolleys off these areas and we are seeing the benefit. Greens are being hollow tined (**not slit tined**) and top dressed and all these measures will help ensure that they are brought up to a much higher standard than previous years, a source of legitimate complaint by most playing members. We are also considering the feasibility of installing a proper irrigation

system to help complement the routine maintenance of the greens and tee boxes regardless of the prevailing conditions throughout the year. The tree pruning and felling programme has been taken forward and has met with general approval as has the construction of more pathed areas. The removal of the large tree at the 18th has improved the general view from the lounges and whilst this was a difficult decision to take and not without its objectors, I hope you will agree that it was the right decision and that the advantages have outweighed the disadvantages. As most members didn't notice it had gone, the impact has been minimal. Tenders have been received for the driving range and we are keen to get this moving as quickly as possible. This will give members and our professional a much needed year round practice and training facility and at the same time generate pay back income which is currently being diverted to neighbouring competing facilities.

Notable achievements by Club members. At the time of writing we offer our congratulations to Gareth Maybin on securing his European Tour card and competing so well in his first event, the Hong Kong Open – we wish Gareth every success for the coming season and appreciate his public acknowledgement of his links with his home club Ballyclare. Also performing well under the Ballyclare badge is young Hannah Henderson who has qualified for the Wee Wonders finals at Pinehurst USA next July – go for it Hannah. Shirley Harvey is due to complete her 4 year study at the University of South Alabama in May 2009. After making the cut in the British Womens' Amateur Championship in August she has led her Division 1 College Team to success in the Sun Belt Conference and has achieved 2 top ten finishes including 3rd place at Troy in the last event of "the Fall" series. The University has recently recognised Shirley's academic and golfing performances by voting her the 2008 Womens' International Athlete of the Year. Congratulations also go to Megan Thompson who has been selected for the Ulster U18 panel for the incoming season. I hope that that our up and coming juveniles will recognise from all of these examples the opportunities that are available to them through hard work and dedication and as a Club we will continue to support them in any way we can.

Up and Coming Events. As we approach the festive season we are grateful for the support for our Christmas dinners – a limited number of tickets are still available for the 6 December dinner – contact the bar staff for details. The 13th and 20th Dinners are already sold out. Entertainment has been arranged for New Year's night in the main lounge and the Childrens' Party will take place on Saturday morning, 6 December – see notice board for further details of all of these events. We also plan to reintroduce our annual Burns Night in the New Year – more details will be displayed in due course. Please do your best to support our various events throughout the year.

Christmas Presents Colin has a wide range of Christmas gifts available for the discerning golfer (if we can't play well as least we can look well) – visit the Pro Shop and be sure of a bargain.

Twinning Arrangements Finally did you know that we have a twinning arrangement with Massereene where our members can play at member's rates – we hope to extend this facility to other neighbouring clubs – ask Colin or Billy Millar for more details.

JH

PS – photos of Prize Night are now on the Club website