

Thorndon Bowls Club

Ancient History!

I suppose it depends upon what you mean by 'ancient'. As a Club we are very grateful to the Coy family for their continued, and continuing support of the Bowls Club and the history of that is well documented and can be found in our Website but bowls has been played in Thorndon for much longer than we have been hosted by their family.

The first Thorndon bowls club was started shortly after James Tydeman moved into White House Farm around 1904. He gave permission for part of Whites Meadow, behind the Black Horse, to be a bowling green.

The first written record I have been able to find is in 1906 when there are two reports of matches played between Thorndon and Worlingworth. In the Evening Star of 30th July 1906 the report says 'Played at Thorndon on Friday Evening. Owing to showery weather, the game was a little delayed. The result of the match was a victory for Worlingworth. Playing for Thorndon were R. Noller, S. Hodgkinson, F. Clarke, A. Hammond, F. Hammond, T. Claxton, J. Balls, C. Weston and J. Tydeman. The return match, in Thorndon, was played on 8th August and once again Worlingworth were the winners despite the two changes in Thorndon personnel being the addition of F. Gill and R. Cook. Where either match was played is not mentioned...

Eye White Lion visited in June 1907 as did Debenham, and a return match with 'every Jack being fiercely contested'. In the following year we know that the Debenham Club played at the Red Lion and again there were home and away matches. In 1909 there are reports of matches with Mendlesham, Eye White Lion, Walsham le Willows, Debenham Cherry Tree.

Bowls is a very social sport and in 1913 the Bury Free Press reports on 16th August that 'On Thursday the members of Thorndon and Debenham Bowling Clubs were entertained by Mr and Mrs Cripps at Stanwell Lodge, Thorndon. A game of bowls was played by the two clubs being the third match this season, the result being a win for Debenham by 8 points. About half way through the game the players adjourned to the croquet lawn where an excellent tea was served. Thorndon also played Hoxne and Occold the same year.

I expect that the news reports are merely a small part of the number of games played by the Thorndon bowlers prior to 1914 and the outbreak of World War One.