

THE LOUISVILLE ESTATE-SANDHAM GROUNDS

By Dave Bambrough Part three.

A set of regulations were drawn up by the Committee for the tennis courts, to be placed around the local hotels and boarding houses notifying people of the impending opening. Proposed fees were: 4/- an hour for doubles, 2s 6d for singles with books of tickets to be available from the Council offices until the end of September.

By May 1924 things were moving on nicely with respect to the development of the grounds, but a letter from Messrs. Roach Pittis & Co., (Solicitors) stated that no reply was yet to hand from Messrs. Breeze & Tyler (Barristers) with reference to the claim of Messrs. Webb (will executor) to certain plots of land on the Louisville estate. At the end of this meeting, Commander Horsley in reply to the letter said that they were advised that the Council's title to the plots now in question was good; if the matter was carried further the Council must ascertain their rights. He further stated that if the five tennis courts were not ready by the end of May, at least two of them would be. The Council also thought it undesirable that any advertising should be allowed in the grounds unless sanctioned by the Chairman of the Committee.

The Sandham Grounds Recreation Park officially opened on Friday 13th June 1924, without ceremony, as the Council favoured saving the expense and putting the money towards further tennis courts. Four Sandown ladies claimed the distinction of playing the first game on the courts, Mrs Warne, (had the No. 1 ticket from the roll), with Miss Westbrook, Miss Brook and Mrs Wheat making up the quartet.



Anyone for tennis, just after the opening in 1924.

The grounds were an immediate success with takings higher than expected, causing people to be turned away with the courts fully booked. The total takings for July 1924 were, £139 19s 5d, well in excess of the expected amount.

No doubt Council members were very satisfied with their achievements after the initial success of their project and must have been very surprised, when on August 15th 1924, the plaintiffs, Edwin Charles Webb and Charles Gresswell, executors under the will of Thomas G. Ackland, commenced action on his behalf against the Sandown Council. The court hearing was set for October 1st 1924. Reference to this will follow the conclusion of this article.

Just a week prior to the announcement of the court summons another reminder that the question of absolute ownership was far from resolved occurred, when a letter arrived from a Mr. J. Peacock, claiming ownership of plots 71 & 72. The Council's solicitors then wrote to Mr. Peacock repudiating the claim, receiving no immediate reply.

Still oblivious to the recent and outstanding requests for consideration over the unresolved compensation on certain plots, plans for further development of the ground were submitted. Consideration was given to the eight plots involved in the impending court case but it was deemed that this area would not be worked on, and even if it was, the value of the plots would not be enhanced. The second phase of the Grounds development consisted of; six more "Dura" hard courts £1,150, putting course £460, construction and formation of pathways £360, grass lawn in grounds £390, bowling green £1,100, entrance gates £50, groundman's lodge £700, pavilion, shelter and café £1,200 and contingencies. (A lot of the money borrowed for various developments around Sandown at this time came from the Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society).

Work proceeded on the second part of the development in November 1924. Tenders were put out for the erection of dressing rooms and a Groundsman's Lodge, these had to be directed to the Council no later than December 11th 1924. The accepted tender came from Mr. Wm. Brown of Alfred Road Lake,

£515 for the dressing room and £825 for the Groundsman's Lodge. Some members had doubts having never heard of the gentleman, but they were more than satisfied when the name of John Janes was mentioned as possible surety. (John James Ltd were coal merchants and farmers at 116 Avenue Road).

January 1925 brought an agreement with Suttons to provide the additional six "Dura" tennis courts at £588, and a bowling green to be laid with Cumberland turf for six rinks at £600. Tenders were also advertised this month for the building of a Café and Pavilion, the estimate for completion was four

Preliminary Notice.

Sandham Grounds,
SANDOWN.

OPEN DANCE
AUG. 4th, 8.30 to 11.30.

The Royal Marine's Band
AUGUST 16th,
AFTERNOON & EVENING PERFORMANCES.
Entrance to Ground on both dates, 1/-

months with hope both would be ready for the forthcoming season.

A public telephone (Sandown 146) was installed in the grounds at a cost of £1. 15s per quarter. Evening attractions were also now being considered by way of bands and dances, and a poll taken from local residents in June 1925 as to whether or not tennis should be played in the grounds on Sundays. This went heavily in favour of the opponents: - for play on Sundays, 158, against 958, majority against 800.

At a meeting in October 1925 it was revealed that the outcome of the financial situation regarding the recent court action, totalled £100 for the original purchase of the land,

legal expenses and the purchase of the disputed plots £300, which was considered satisfactory by all concerned.

Messrs. Langford & Son, of Portsmouth supplied the Sandham Grounds flag. A white flag with a red cross, with an association of the past in the top left hand corner depicting a Castle, which flew from a mast at a cost of £2. 6s.

Bringing this story to a close, the formation of the Sandown Bowling Club was accomplished at a public meeting held in the Council Chamber on Friday October 23rd 1925. Members fees were suggested at 5/- per annum, which were hoped would cover all expenses. It had been hoped that the Bowling Green would be ready for play during the summer season of 1925 but due to subsidence in certain areas it was not.

The charges fixed for summer 1926 were; each player including the use of two bowls, 3d per hour,

Sandham Grounds,
SANDOWN.

OFFICIAL OPENING of
NEW BOWLING GREEN
ON
Saturday, May 8th, 1926,
BY TEAMS OF
The English Bowling Association
AND
Isle of Wight County Association.
Play to commence at **3 o'clock p.m.,**
punctually.

SANDHAM GROUNDS,
SANDOWN.

The Official Opening
OF THE
New Bowling Green
FIXED FOR
Saturday, May 8th,
IS
CANCELLED.

season tickets £1.1s; Club members season tickets, (temporary measure) 16s, weekly tickets including the use of two bowls 4s, Club matches, per match, 5/-. Three rinks were allocated for matches but only in special circumstances would matches be allowed in August.

There was an announcement that there would be an auspicious opening of the Bowling Green on May 8th 1926. The English Bowling association were sending a team of five rinks who were to compete against the best bowlers from around the Island clubs. The team were due to be entertained to luncheon at the Royal Pier Hotel by members of the Sandown Town Council. Prior to their departure they were also booked for tea at the Sandham Grounds Café. Despite all of this being advertised in the Chronicle, it was cancelled without reason being published and the Bowling Green opened without ceremony.

The first match on the new green took place on Wednesday May 19th 1926 against Shanklin. The margin of victory was one shot, Sandown 56 – Shanklin 55. The team representing Sandown on that inaugural occasion were; G. Lowe, H. Dore, J. H. Griffin, J. Denham, H. Phillips, L. C. Guy, C. Westbrook, W. E. Martin, R. Barber, C. W. Adams, C. Alexandra and C. J. Atwell.

For all of the trials and tribulations encountered by all sides at the beginning of this venture the end product has served the town well ever since. Development has continued from the onset of the

Grounds by way of; supply of gas and electricity, huts, entertainment, provision of café requirements, children's amusements, a steam train, crazy paving on the east side of the pavilion, years of maintenance and sundry other changes that are too long to list here. The very reason for the development of the land was to supply recreation for visitors, which began primarily with the provision of tennis courts, a most popular game at the time. Having lost its popularity locally, part of the tennis court area has recently been converted into a skateboard park for youngsters, how times change. Some things however just never go away, as claims for compensation were still arriving at the Council Offices in December 1925. Probably the last one, it came from a Mr. H. D. Matcham for plot No. 73. It was referred to the Sandham Grounds committee for consideration and more than likely compensation!! The disputed plots claimed by Mr. Thomas G. Ackland were still to be resolved in the local courts. (This concludes the story of The Sandham Grounds. Next Chronicle, the **Court Case**)



Sandham Grounds.

Dancing

will be held on the Lawns EVERY EVENING from 8 p.m. to 10 o'clock p.m.

FULL ORCHESTRA

Under the direction of
Mr. STANLEY BURFORD,
of Newport, Mon.

Admission to Dancing Enclosure 6d

When weather prevents Dancing in the Grounds, the Orchestra will give a Concert in the

CAFE PAVILION

where DAINTY SUPPERS may be obtained.

The Orchestra will also Play Daily in the CAFE from 4 o'clock to 6 o'clock p.m.

BOWLS.

We recently played our first game of bowls on the splendid bowling green at Sandham Grounds. If we did not play very good bowls, we at least gained a great deal of information concerning the bowler's vocabulary. For the benefit of the uninitiated we have endeavoured to put into verse some of the idioms used in the art of bowling. There is no reason, however, why anyone should refrain from indulging in this pastime on account of the language difficulty.

The square of turf with velvet sheen
Where bowlers play is called a "green,"
Each section with its fellow links,
And these are always known as "rinks."
The chief of all the bowling goods
Are not called bowls but simply "woods,"
And they are always brown or black
Except a white one called a "jack."

The place from which the bowlers send
The "woods" is always called an "end,"
The "jack" is "trundled" far away
And where a "wood" stops that's a "lay."
A "steamy" shot is one that's fast,
A "short" one when the pace wont last,
And if a "wood" goes wide from hand
The latitude is known as "land."

The scoring method put in rhyme,
Would mean a task requiring time,
It all depends on how you "lay,"
And better learnt by actual play.
But all this knowledge without end
Is yours if threepence you will spend.
So give the game of bowls a trial,
For it is really worth your while.

J. F. LATHAM.