

**MMTCC AGM 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020**  
**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2019**

Last year was a year of calm before the storm ... 2019 compared to 2020 was, for the Club, a year of consolidation - courts and tournaments were busy, a pleasing profit was made, the concrete lintels at the entrance side of the court were repaired and preparations were progressing well for the renovation of the court floor and raising funds for it. We were in a position to look forward to 2020 with great optimism.

The accounts for 2019 show a significant and welcome increase in court usage – so many thanks to Tom for masterminding a vital boost to the Club's finances. Tournaments and matches were well supported again – the court and club continue to be a popular destination for connoisseurs of the game and we were pleased to host the Field Trophy Final and the Category C 20-29 T&RA tournaments.

As ever, a Club like ours depends hugely on the good will and hard work of volunteers. The Committee has been busy, particularly Bruce Paxton, whose organisation of the court floor repairs has been truly professional. He has completed research on what materials should be used, how to remove the existing floor and he has put together after much investigation and tendering, a team of contractors to carry out the works in 2020. I am confident that his efforts will result in MMTCC members playing on one of the best surfaces in the world. So fingers crossed! Bruce has understandably relinquished his successful editorship of the Court Circular which has now been taken on by Professor Lloyd Pettiford. As Vice Chairman, Bruce has always offered wise counsel.

Mike Harwood has been the Club's Honorary Treasurer for 18 years during which time he has done sterling work in supervising our accounts and reporting at the end of each financial year. I'm deeply grateful to him for all his efforts over the years and for playing such an important role in keeping our finances in a healthy state and also for dealing with employees' PAYE etc. from his Warwick office. He was also Bar Chairman for many years.

Mike's role has now been undertaken by Steve Walsh who has kindly prepared the 2019 accounts and will be pleased to answer any questions you may have at the AGM. Steve has been instrumental in replacing the unincorporated committee with the new company- Moreton Morrell Tennis Court Club Ltd which will be holding its first AGM on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July. You will find the Company's Articles of Association as part of your AGM package and I should like to thank Tony Branfield for his forensic work on the Articles and the incorporation of the Club Rules as bye-laws, as well as his work with the website, social media, and merchandise which he has now handed over to Tom. I should like to thank Martin Trees for liaising with the professionals and offering sound, common sense advice to various important debates and negotiations, Lynne Hamilton for overseeing child protection and health and safety, John Miller for administering among other things the committee meetings, and Keith Beechener for his contributions to the Club's well received social media output.

It's pleasing that Lloyd Pettiford has settled in so well as assistant professional and with great enthusiasm and professorial imagination and attention to detail, bringing a different skills set to the role. His popular evening pennant goes from strength to strength and it was a shame that ideas he had for this summer have not been possible. He has also kept a watchful eye on handicaps and tournaments.

I mentioned earlier that Tom has improved court utilisation greatly but has also offered members a friendly and warm welcome. Tournaments have been popular and well organised and his lessons have been in great demand. He has the knack of spotting technical errors and patiently tries to eradicate them – dependent of course on his pupil's willingness to listen and learn!

I should like to thank Nick Jury for his efforts over the years – another popular face at the Club. It's to our benefit that he has continued to make excellent sets of tennis balls.

Philip Shaw-Hamilton has kept a tight rein on our day to day income and expenditure with enthusiasm and conscientious attention to detail. Clare Lubrano is to be thanked for her excellent catering at weekends and we were sorry to lose Andrear, our cleaner who returned to Romania but we were very fortunate to take on Luis Lourenco who hails from Portugal and has lived in Warwickshire for 18 years. Tom, Lloyd, Philip, Clare and Luis make for an excellent team.

I point this out every year but the Club is very fortunate to have members who are prepared to help out and I do hope I have covered everybody – Mark Savage our in-house Master of Wine, George K for catering at various events, Bernie Spratt for his negotiations with Sport England for a substantial grant, Mat Fattorini for waging war on the weed population, Paul Wilson-Gunn for supervising the MMTCC Company accounts and AGM, Richard Thornton for organisation of the 100 Club and sponsorship of the Owen-George trophy, Adam Stokes for invaluable professional help given to Bruce Paxton, Professor John Murphy, Martin Ryan and Simon Hobson for their contributions to the floor research, Richard Wills and Paul Holland for a tree felling session, Dr. Richard Seymour Mead for maintaining the Honours Boards and giving the wisteria its annual TLC, Jill Slora for helping Tom with youngsters from Moreton Morrell Primary school who visit the Club once a week. Hugh Antrobus offered to sort out the waning lighting system in the changing room, Dr. Alastair Robson helped sort the drive potholes and once again Peter Mason has most generously sorted downpipes and drains and the redecoration of the pros' room and the dining room which looks superb now. If any of the above were done in 2018 I'm sure another mention won't cause any upset!

I must of course mention Gavin James who has been incredibly generous to the Club over recent years, paying for the fantastic new lights, cleaning the upper walls, sanding down the gallery posts and ledges, replacing the marble steps and in the current year, replacement of the window panes on the west side of the court which will be unveiled in due course! In acknowledgement of his generosity, the Committee offered Gavin Honorary Life Membership and were delighted that he felt able to accept.

To have nearly 30 club members offering their time to the Club is a fantastic situation for the Club to benefit from and I can assure you that there are many Club Chairmen around the country who would be green with envy. And of course, members have been most generous with financial contributions to the Floor fund, too many to mention here, although I should like to thank Chris Griffith-Jones and the Neale Trust for a grant of £5,000. All of this, I feel, makes for a healthy club in the most unhealthy of times.

Competitions, matches and tournaments have been well supported. We still haven't sorted winning the Brodie Cup, indeed more than one round would be a bonus! – maybe this is something to do with the integrity of our handicapping! The MMTCC team that plays in the Pol Roger, the top 8 clubs in the country, has once again defied the odds and managed to stay up – a case of Bournemouth AFC rubbing shoulders with the likes of Arsenal and Manchester United and we actually managed to get into the semi-finals and thus avoid a relegation clash thanks to the generosity of Marylebone Cricket Club in the quarter-final. All good things must come to an end, but if Covid19 in 20-21 allows us to compete, let us hope for another successful battle in the top tier.

The fabric of the building is in good shape, the concrete repairs at the front of the building have successfully smartened up its aspect and the kitchen looks excellent with new flooring. We now, however, have to concentrate on the court floor and I trust you will all be patient as I suspect the real tennis lockdown may have ended by the time of the AGM, - a Zoomed AGM that will be very different to any held in the preceding 57 years of the Club's existence!

*'Ferocitate et fraternitate'*

Sir Andrew Hamilton      Chairman MMTCC