



Bowmen of Ardleigh
Small Newsletter No. 125

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Another of our new members, David, matching the colour of his shirt with where his arrows are! This is the first time David and Sandra shot with us on a Club night. Both show great promise!

We had the last of our arranged sessions on Sunday 8th August so the help of members was, again, much appreciated. Our newer members will also be very welcome to help, if you wish, to have a chat with the people on the introductory sessions we'll be running in the future as you will know exactly how they are feeling!

We've had the biggest intake of new members (with possibly more to come!) and the assistance of members will, again, be much appreciated in "absorbing" them into our Club. We've put a temporary "hold" on taking any more new archers

I have to say, we also have the good fortune to have gained so many potentially excellent archers. Temporarily, we've put a hold on running sessions for new archers but expect to commence these again some time in October. We will, though, be holding sessions for those people who would have taken part in our original sessions during July and August but for a variety of reasons, couldn't take part then.

Sadly, I have to report the death of Tom Major (Pilgrim Archers) on 16th August after a long illness. His funeral is at Upminster Cemetery Chapel on Friday 3rd September at 12 o'clock. Tom and his wife Iris have been great friends to our Club over the many years we've known them and were usually to be found when we booked County Coaches to come to our Club. Tom and Iris both coached archers to National level and Tom was, in every respect of the word, a "gentle man". Tom made the wonderful Arrow Head Trophy that they both gave us in memory of our late Treasurer, Jann Watchman and her Husband Jim. Members will be represented at the funeral.

Members will already have received details of when we're shooting at the moment. The restriction on numbers shooting have now been removed but we are continuing the procedures with sanitising, hand gels, etc. and we still have the QR code for registering when at the Club.

Friday and Monday evenings in the barn should be well-attended and we're very pleased to see more of our more-established members putting in an appearance again. Lots of new faces and people to meet! So far this year we've gained over 40 new members, which I think is possibly the most we've ever had in such a short time.

Members will see from these newsletters that I do use first and last names and occasionally photographs. If anyone would rather not appear then please say so. (This may cause problems, though, when results of Club Competitions are posted.)

I think from the current membership there are quite a few who will be in our teams next year but people do need to do some practice at 80 yards, firstly to see if their bows will make the distance and secondly to gain confidence at the closer distances. For our newer members there's no rush, either to buy bows or arrows yet or shoot 80 yards (unless they wish to). The winter season gives the chance to consolidate your style and settle in. We'll start shooting outdoor rounds next April and that gives the chance then to see what your bows can do. These are the results for our August Essex Summer Albion League Match.

ARDLEIGH		Mayflower	
Archer	SCORE	Archer	SCORE
Dave Clegg	733 (PB)	Michael Judd	936
Chris Pollard	728	Matthew Webb	864
Chris Lowe	717	S. Fenton	741
Gary Prior	614	M. Vidgeon-Hart	699
Chris Phillips	557	J. Craw	684
Totals	3349		3924
Dave Cook	542 (PB)	N. Norris	671
		N. Beardwell	650
		P. Cotter	613

A win for Mayflower by 599 points! Ardleigh are still supporting the rest of the teams in the results table. Full results can be found on the Essex and Suffolk website (ecaa.org.uk).

Our scores do compare quite well but, somewhat regrettably, we always seem to bring out the best in other clubs! Mayflower's top two scores are from a member of the current Great Britain Squad and Matthew has shot for England so there you go!

Our last match of the season in the Essex Summer Albion League is on Sunday 5th September and if any members wish to shoot alongside it's intended that sighters will be at 11.00am so assembly will be at 10 o'clock.

I remember, back in the day, when I joined our Club (when the Earth was young!), we were all competing to represent Ardleigh in the Summer League. We couldn't wait to be selected to shoot the Summer League Albion Round. The Albion consists of 6 "sighters" arrows at 80 yards (these don't count and are used to adjust your sight according to the weather) then 36 more and the same number at 60 and 50 yards and we usually did quite well.

We introduced the "252" Warwick awards to enable beginning archers to get a handicap rating (3 rounds need to be shot to get this) and this has now been extended to all members rather than just for people with the Club for less than two years. This has been a bit too successful in that the four dozen arrows shot in a Warwick Round can be done in an evening or afternoon to the exclusion of any other rounds. You need more stamina for rounds of 6 dozen (Nationals), 8 dozen (Westerns), 9 dozen (Windsors, Albion and St. George) and 12 dozen (Yorks and Herefords). There are laminated lists of both indoor and outdoor rounds being prepared for our new members by Jan and Chris Lowe and you should get these quite soon. The handicapping system will require three rounds to be shot indoors as well. The ratings for indoors and outdoors are kept separate.

We've entered both 'A' and 'B' Teams in the Essex Indoor Bray 1 League (30 arrows using a 40cm face at 20 yards) so the top 10 scores when the matches are shot will count. If you are included in a team there are appearance awards to be achieved.

Under normal circumstances there are handicap competitions every month and within our championships but things might settle down more next year but it is intended that our Club Field Championships do take place this year, all being well but the date for this hasn't yet been set.

Members are reminded that arrows shot outdoors should be used in sets of 6. It is most important arrows that miss must be found as we share our field with other sports.

This is just a note for our members regarding Havering Council's possible plans for the development of Bretons as a member has asked what they are.

I'm as sure as anyone can be, dealing with this Council, that we'll be as secure as we've ever been in the 45 years since we moved to Bretons. We seem to feature quite well in the review and plans the Council has at the moment, but these are around the 6th in a long line of reviews that have never, as yet, come to anything much at all.

The current plans are that the car park outdoors we use at the moment will be made bigger so we'd need to move further down our field. We've been told, though, that there won't be football at the bottom of where we shoot. They also say they want to use the barn for, as yet unspecified purposes after the plans for Bretons as a wedding venue were dropped! Bearing in mind the barn was listed (Grade 2, I believe) that alone would need a considerable amount of money spending on it to bring it up to anywhere near a useable standard to keep the weather out! They tell us that a purpose-built indoor sports venue to replace the barn will be built the other side of our hedge, the same size as the barn so table tennis and Archery, etc. can continue as it does now. There would also be an all-weather artificial floodlit football pitch there as well, hence the bigger car park. What this venue if it's ever built, will cost us to use is unknown.

They also proposed building 12 houses on the other car park but appeared nonplussed when the question arose about where the football clubs would park as that's already at capacity on Saturdays and Sundays during the season now.

When this will all come to fruition, if ever, is beyond my comprehension as the plans also involve building another venue for the Bretons Community Association to carry on doing what it's doing now or face a great deal of opposition locally if it wishes to do otherwise. What will be done with the Manor House is presently an unknown. (The talk so far has been about letting it out as offices or residential accommodation)

There was a meeting at the Town Hall early last year to discuss the current proposals that was remarkably light on detail and our Club has had one individual meeting with the Council when the details listed above were given to us, in the same way as they were to the table tennis club and Abbey Bowmen who also use the Tudor Barn on a regular basis. The barn is certainly most useful for training archers as well as somewhere out of the rain that is also available at a price that doesn't usually put off a group of members using it as well, aside from our normal bookings.

The best thing that could happen for all the users at Bretons is for the Council to leave things as they are but, ultimately, there will probably be a plan that does come to something but when that will be is another matter, but it may be, as with so many other matters, that Covid has changed things.

You now know as much as I do! As I've said before, we must make the most of what we have, while we can, which may hopefully be for some time yet!



Above Dina and Ioannis on the line on what, occasionally, turned out to be quite a nice day, Chris Phillips getting his 252 Red Long Warwick Badge and certificate from our Vice-President Jan and Dave Cook with his Green and White badge awards for Short Junior and Junior Warwicks. It's best if you do them in order so you don't miss any out! (Short Junior 30-20 yards, Junior 40-30, Short 50-40, Warwick 60-50, Long 80-60 and New Warwick 100-80). Originally these badges, for scoring 252 or more for any Warwick Round, were only available to members who'd been with us less than 2 years and only two of the New Warwick Badges have been awarded up to this year.

Just a final note for our newer members who haven't yet got their own equipment (this has been repeated elsewhere!). Please don't rush into buying anything. If you can't resist it, finger and arm guards can be purchased, perhaps even a quiver to hold your arrows, but do take time with bows and arrows, etc. Advice is always available but please take care with buying anything on the internet from Ebay or other sellers.

Sometimes people are very lucky and get just the right equipment that suits them but do consider getting things from a reputable retailer as you will also get good guidance from them and they won't sell you anything that isn't right for you, plus you can get the colours you want as well! Some of our members have already been to see Andrew at Merlin (Essex) and he won't sell you anything that isn't right for you. I do have a "shopping list" of things you might need but obviously it depends on your budget.

You can get a bowsight that costs around £16 and a quite reasonable, more versatile one that will cost around £35. These, however, need to be checked while shooting to see if anything's come loose or dropped off and providing you do check these will be fine. For around £20 more you'll get one with a better mechanism that can't move until you want it to and this will last all your Archery career if you wish it so. As with cars, you can spend a lot more but at this stage, if ever, this is unnecessary and it's the same with bows and arrows.

A good bow handle that will last you costs around £100 and a set of limbs £60, plus all the other bits and bobs and something to put them in will cost around £300 but people are often tempted by things that are the right colour and unless you are very strong-minded things can escalate. What to buy archers for birthdays and seasonal gifts is never a problem because there's always something in an Archery shop that an archer definitely needs!

Merlin Archery at Rettendon will be closed from the 7th to the 11th September inclusive. I take from this that the shop won't be open after it closes on Saturday 4th September and, as the shop is usually closed on Mondays, opens again the following Tuesday week, 14th September.