

William Walton an Appreciation

Bill who has served continuously for 39 years has announced that he will not seek re-election to the Middlesbrough Bowling Club Management Committee but will remain a Trustee of the club.

Bill Walton left school in 1945 to take up an engineering apprenticeship with Head Wrightson Machine Co in Middlesbrough. His interests at that time included membership of 1869 Squadron of the Air Training Corps from which he graduated to the Aux. Air Force with 608 Squadron at Thornaby Aerodrome. A serious motorcycle accident left him with an arm and a leg in plaster. Completion of his apprenticeship saw him being liable for National Service. His injuries however did not prevent him being asked to report at RAF Padgate for basic training. Later when his injuries had healed he undertook trade training qualifying as an aero engine fitter.

In 1954 he married his long term partner Joan Edwards at St Barnabas Church Middlesbrough a happy union which is sustained to this day.

In 1974 he was appointed Works Manager of HW Machine Co.

Following closure of the works in 1979 he spent 3 months working in India but was hospitalised on his return which convinced him that the sub continent was not for him.



Following a spell at Head Wrightson Teesdale and Bowater Richardson Bill retired from gainful employment in 1995.

Bill's connection with Middlesbrough Bowling Club began when he was elected to membership on 11th March 1968 being sponsored by Billy Walker his mentor who recognised immediately the advantage of having an engineer on the maintenance team. Election to the Management Committee followed on 25th November 1970 and he has served the club in this capacity continuously to this day, performing many duties with distinction, including latterly as Chairman. At the end of 2009 Bill will have given the committee 39 years of distinguished service. In 1971 Bill joined the bowling selection committee whose task it was to choose the

members who would represent the A and B teams in the EBA League.

At the AGM held 13th December 1971 Bill joined the Ground Maintenance Committee. in 1986 he became the local area coordinator of the E.B.A. GREENS MAINTENANCE ADVISORY SCHEME

This scheme was first introduced to the Northern Region in that year to sponsor seminars which were

held at different clubs. Comprising a full day with practical and theoretical aspects of greenkeeping and the latest update of new techniques and machines. Under Bowls England any bowling club registered may request advice and or assistance in the management of their own green and since the local coordinator is Bill Walton, the M.B.C. and the greenkeepers have been able to give much appreciated assistance to other clubs in the



area.

Over the years Bill has been involved in many projects designed to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the Middlesbrough Bowling Club these have included



- * Coordinating the design and installation of the Automatic Pressurised Water System.
- * Ensuring the efficient repair and maintenance of all the clubs machinery.
- * Applying his engineering skills to all manner of tasks including repair of the central heating boiler and one special task was the refurbishment in 1972 of a Coin Changing Machine (for the One Armed Bandit) which the Cricket Club were selling for £8. After Bill's expert repair a deal was struck with the Cricket Club for £2.

Today Bill while trying to offload some of the more physical tasks still keeps a keen eye on the condition of the green and instructs and cajoles his willing band of helpers to obtain the best possible results taking into account the prevailing weather conditions.

For many years Bill has been a valued bowling member of the "A" team and has helped them achieve success in the North Yorkshire EBA League as well as assisting the Club to success in the Marshall Shield competition.

1973 and again in 1975 saw him victorious in the Clubs Presidents prize competition

In 1974 he was, together with R Robertson, B Hannaford and P Inch, beaten in the Final of the Yorkshire County Fours Championship by a team from Holgate the score being 22 - 21. Again in 1989 he was the beaten finalist this time in the Yorkshire County pairs competition when partnered with Tony Frosdick

A proud moment in Bill's association with the club was when he was installed as President during the club's centenary celebration in 1993 and to commemorate the event Bill commissioned his brother to carve in oak a magnificent plaque depicting Middlesbrough Bowling Club and which is now displayed prominently in the pavilion.

