

## The Story of the American Plaque

Throughout the summer of 1986, Bill Poole, Secretary of the Chester Veterans Bowling League and the Chester Marketing Bureau, liaised with an American Tour Co. and Fos Sampson, an American Lawn Green bowler, to arrange a visit and a friendly match between themselves and Chester Crown Green bowlers while on a tour of England and Scotland.

From the Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> A.G.M. of the Chester Veterans Bowling League, held at Upton Royal British Legion Club on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 1986, mentioned in the secretary's report is the following...

*"I feel that I ought to mention the visit of the California Lawn Green bowls team to Chester on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 1986. This was an innovation, both for them as well as us.*

*Being Flat Green Bowlers this was the first time they had experienced Crown bowls, and although it was a bit dicey getting started, I think all their members and the dozen or so of ours who turned up had a very enjoyable afternoon. Their Captain gave us a plaque, which I think should be included in the Secretary's wares, not being able to think of a more suitable place.*

*I have also received a "thank you" card from all those who attended, indicating how well they appreciated our hospitality; even though we only gave them tea and biscuits. (Perhaps the bar being open at Hunter Street had something to do with it.)*

*Also, in A.O.B... secretary had referred to the visit of the American Flat Green Bowlers and the plaque they had given, in his report. Members were requested to bring to the next committee meeting the views of their clubs on what to do with the plaque. The new chairman had suggested it might be used as a trophy for annual competition.*

It seems that there were so many competitions being played and the season starting later than it does now, that the league officials were at a loss to find a time to play for it. Club competitions also take up a lot of bowlers' time so the American Plaque was left on the shelf for some time before it showed up as a League competition.

The plaque itself is a piece of stained oblong oak about half an inch thick, about 15 inches by 8 inches. There is an inscribed bronzed plate at the top which says

"IN APPRECIATION OF YOUR HOSPITALITY EXTENDED

THE SOUTHWEST UNITED STATES LAWN BOWLERS 1986"

There are 8 club badges inserted into the plaque in a circle. The clubs are:- Laguna Hills, Laguna Beach, Berkeley, Summyvale, Saddleback, Santa Barbara, MacKenzie Park and walnut Creek. In the centre is the badge of the Southwest Division of the A.L.B.A. There is nothing outstandingly attractive about the

plaque. After all, it was only a memento of appreciation, which came out of a one-day social match. That does not stop it from being one of the most hotly contested competitions of the Chester Veterans bowling season. It rounds off the summer bowling very nicely and it's a sweet one to win, believe me.

(FOOTNOTE FROM THE PRESENT SECRETARY...

I FIND THIS ENCHANTING AND CHARMING... TO THINK THAT WE ARE STILL ENJOYING THIS PLAQUE. I WONDER WHAT THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHWEST LAWN BOWLERS WOULD THINK IF THEY KNEW THAT THEIR PLAQUE WAS STILL MUCH TREASURED? WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT TO FIND OUT? BUT, SADLY, I DON'T SUPPOSE ANY OF THEM ARE STILL ON THE PLANET!

HAVE A LOOK AT IT WHEN YOU CAN...IT IS CERTAINLY AN HISTORIC OBJECT OF MUCH INTEREST. THAT'S MY VIEW!

LESLEY