

GRASS ROOTS TENNIS IN NEWPORT PAGNELL



Knotts and McDonels of Lakes Lane.

Following the War, the only club that survived was the Bury Lawn Club with Castle Meadow members merging as social barriers were removed. The Lakes Lane site was vacated in the Autumn of 1976 when the owners sold the land for development and this was the end of grass court tennis in the town. The Club moved to its present site in the sports complex at Willen Road in the Spring of 1977.



In the early years there were no formal leagues although there were inter-club matches and local tournaments with the present Milton Keynes Tennis League only formed in 1968 as the then Bletchley and District Tennis League. Bury Lawn were founder members.

Today, although no longer played on grass, Newport Pagnell Tennis Club boasts 4 all-weather courts with 3 fully floodlit courts and a clubhouse. The last clubhouse in Lakes Lane was demolished in 1976 and consisted of a wooden pavilion constructed from two old ex Wolverton Works railway carriages.

Of course it was not always high-powered graphite fibre racquets and pressurized balls thumping down at 148 kph on hardcourt surfaces – there were more sedate times with the typical English garden party atmosphere, a social occasion mainly enjoyed by the business elite and more wealthy social groups but nevertheless still competitive. Prior to 1875 croquet was the only game in which ladies participated and most country houses and vicarages possessed a croquet lawn that could easily be converted into a tennis court – and so the big “social event” was born. In Newport Pagnell it is believed that the Tennis Club originated from the existing croquet club sited in Lakes Lane as early as the late 1890’s. The club was originally called the Bury Lawn Tennis Club and it is interesting to note that to this day in other locations such as Stony Stratford Tennis Club, there is an adjoining croquet lawn.

Before the Second World War tennis was played in Newport Pagnell at at least eight different locations, there being three main clubs including the Bury Lawn Club in Lakes Lane for the elite social groups, Castle Meadow sited where the Bowls club is today, catering for the general public and Salmons Sports Club, the forerunner of David Brown and Aston Martin and very much a Works Club. There were other private courts owned by the Homans and Inwards of Wolverton Road, Comptons of Tickford Street and



The Club today is a thriving, family-friendly club that welcomes players of all abilities and ages. Members have all-year round access to all facilities: adult and junior coaching, dedicated clubnights for adults and juniors, social events and a full calendar of competitive tennis for players of all ages including participation in MK Tennis League and Bucks County Shield Competitions. We have a fully qualified Club Coach, a dedicated Committee and a growing adult and junior membership. If you are looking for a great Tennis Club with a long tradition, look no further.

The Club has recently been accredited with **Clubmark** status which means that we are recognized by Sport England as a quality Club that meets LTA standards.

Why not give tennis a try and come and join us, our next **Open Day is on Sunday 14th April at 2-6 p.m.** or alternatively come down to one of our Clubnights on Wednesday and Sunday evenings from 6.00 p.m. April to October.

For youngsters looking for something to do in their school holidays we will be holding an **Easter Tennis Camp for boys and girls aged 5 – 17 years from and Summer Camps run by our Licensed Club Coach, Nigel Willard.** Book early to avoid disappointment.



If you would like more information about the Club and coaching please check the website on www.newportpagnelltennis.net or contact Mary Hartley on 01908 605435 or email info@newportpagnelltennis.net for a membership application form.