

Brunstane Bowling Club celebrates centenary

**After the Great War a band of bowls
-playing railwaymen decided to form
their own club and, renting a plot
of ground on the fringes of the
extensive Portobello marshalling
yards, laid out their green,
converted an old carriage into a
clubhouse and launched their
venture under the banner of
Portobello and District LNER club.**

This year, now bearing the more family friendly title of Brunstane Bowling Club , their enterprise celebrates 100 years of bowling during which it has developed into prominent members of the Edinburgh bowling community, competing in a wide range of events.

Among the achievements of the past century, pride of place goes to Brunstane's pioneering work in women's bowling. Within the first 10 years the railwaymen had welcomed women's participation, with their own President and full rights on the green – a position not matched in many clubs even by the turn of this century. Brunstane were founder members of the Scottish Women's Bowling Association, the East of Scotland WBA and the Edinburgh Association.

A decisive turning point in the club's journey came when the

club bought their green and clubhouse from British Rail, LNER's successors, in 1988, a transaction – piloted by East Edinburgh MP Dr Gavin Strang – which allowed the club to develop, building a fine new clubhouse with extensive facilities and improving the green from “challenging “ to one of the best in the area, fit to host major competitions.

Over a week in the season, Brunstane fields teams in the Edinburgh BA League, the Edinburgh Retired Men's BA and the South Edinburgh SBA, while the ladies compete in the EBA Monday League, the SEBC Tuesday Leaguer and the Forth League on a Friday, as well as several inter-club encounters. There is also a wide range of internal club competitions.

The centrepiece of Brunstane's centenary celebrations will be in the month of June when, over four Saturdays, the club entertain guest rinks drawn from the Portobello area, the wider Edinburgh bowling community, local associations, and even farther afield, in friendly competition and post-match hospitality.

Club Ladies President Linda Middleton said “This is a momentous time for Brunstane as we celebrate our 100th birthday. We can look back to humble beginnings and thank the generations of bowlers, men and women, whose hard work and enterprise has raised us to our present comfortable position.

“For now, it is time to party and we invite all our friends and neighbours in the bowling world to join us in the celebrations. The emphasis will be on friendly and we intend to prove ourselves good hosts and hostesses”.

