

Foreword

When Roy took up the challenge to write this book on the past half century of Laleham Archery Club, we guess he never envisaged the mass of history facts that he would unveil, and his dedication and devotion to represent Laleham Archery Club from all viewpoints is exceedingly commendable. We know that the effort he has put into this account cannot be underestimated. Frankly, we never thought he would achieve it. He has produced a book with a huge collection of readily digestible facts and figures, most of which have lain dormant for many years, and many assumed lost forever. He has brought these facts to life, cleverly weaving them into the story that is Laleham Archery Club.

This book covers all the aspects of Laleham Archery Club to date, and Roy has meticulously collected and researched a comprehensive volume of historical data, from wide and varied sources, which have then been analysed to provide an insight into how the Club has operated, leading ultimately to its successes both on and off the field. He has interviewed a large number of past members from across a wide spectrum and timescale, and used their anecdotal recollections to form interesting, entertaining and often amusing paths through the book for the reader. His analysis and use of the information provided has been sensitively handled, and provides an accurate record, none more so than when dealing with the split of Laleham Archery Club in the mid-eighties, where it is important to reflect on the differing views held by members at that time.

A club like Laleham, which has been through the highs and lows like all major sports clubs, can only be like it is today, thanks to all those folk who have worked tirelessly to ensure that archery could continue to be practised in the locality. Many of those members acknowledged within have formed life-long friendships, and with people moving

around, it has meant that everyone who has at some stage touched the Laleham badge, now benefits from a wide circle of archery friends, whose company is enjoyed when we meet.

We were honoured to be asked by Roy to write this Foreword on behalf of the Club and the family, as the life of the Potts' family has been intimately intertwined with that of the Club over most of its history. Our involvement with "Laleham" goes back to the earliest times, when George decided to take up the sport – little did he realise then how much a part of his life archery, and Laleham, would become. At one stage our family had three members shooting and/or involved with administration, whilst additionally, dad's brother, Ken, was also heavily involved.

Reading the book has been both evocative and cathartic, a little like dipping into the recent family history, and indeed Graham's own childhood, allowing us both to rediscover some of the long forgotten events, names and achievements - quite revealing, and also very difficult to put down. It has also been fascinating to read the scores of anecdotes provided by many Club members, which confirm to the reader that, underneath it all, a club is about the people. It is also a reminder to us that many of those within the book have sadly passed on, none more so for the family than (brother and uncle) Ken Potts, who was quite often the "life and soul" of the social scene at Laleham.

We hope you will enjoy this "autobiography" – a term we like to use in this instance, given that Roy is very much a part of Laleham Archery Club today. This is a special, beautifully illustrated insight into the last 50 years, and we hope very much just a stop gap, which will be updated in 50 years time! We recommend it to you all.

Graham & George Potts, 2008