Umpire Badge

Whilst researching our new social history collection display ‘Join Our Club’ we came across an umpire’s badge for the British Thomson Houston (BTH) Recreation Club.

BTH was an electrical engineering company which came to Rugby in 1896 and by the Second World War were employing around 17,000 local people.

With this much invested in a local workforce it was important to keep staff well and happy both at work and play. A recreation club was built on Hillmorton Road in Rugby and opened in the 1920s.

The employee’s handbook from the 1950s stated:

*“Membership is open to all BTH (Rugby) employees, and it is the purpose of the club to promote healthy outdoor and indoor recreation and generally encourage good sportsmanship amongst its members. “*

Along with the well-equipped clubhouse and grounds, there were tennis courts and bowling greens with facilities for cricket, rugby, football and hockey.

Also on display in our new exhibition are photographs of men’s and women’s sports teams at the club from the 1940s and 50s and the original architects’ drawing for the clubhouse.

Join Our Club is on now until 17th June 2023.