
**A RECORD OF THE CLUB'S
HISTORY**



**RICHMOND
WORKING MEN'S CLUB
CHRISTCHURCH**

RICHMOND WORKING MEN'S CLUB CHRISTCHURCH



CENTENARY

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Published by:

Richmond Working Mens Club Centennial Book Committee,
75 London Street, P.O. Box 26-036, North Avon, Christchurch.
(Mr Maurie Langford, Mr Don Crerar)

© 1987

Editor: Dion Crooks

Design & Co-ordination: Shirwin Haines Advertising

Production & Typesetting: Quickset Platemakers Ltd.

Film & Plates: Christchurch Photoengravers Ltd.

Printing: Photo Process Printers Ltd.

Binding: S.I. McHarg Ltd.

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Welcome to Centennial Year 1988
A Message from The Centennial Committee Chairman

FOREWORD

For the past five years a small, but very dedicated, group of Club Members have come together to organize the activities of our Centennial Year. I am deeply indebted to my Committee for the selfless determination they have shown in organizing all the events, both social and sporting, which will make 1988 a truly memorable year.

Special thanks are paid to Don Robertson (Secretary), Bill Baynes (Vice-Chairman), Don Crerar (Social, Sporting and Centennial Book Convener), Maurie Langford (Book and Souvenir Convener).

We can look back with pride on our achievement since 1888, the year when a group of 34 enthusiasts banded together to form a club under the name of Richmond Workingmen's Club and Mutual School of Arts.

A vast and varied range of events and activities have taken place since that time. Some reflect the fellowship and comradeship of club life, others the triumph and tragedy of the times. Some are milestones in club and community life, others relatively insignificant sidelines. But all have a place in the club's history; all have helped make the club what it is today.

Many men have worked hard and long down the years and, especially in the early days, have given financial assistance to help keep the club going through hard times. Just after the turn of the century, it was not unusual for members to have a 'tarpaulin muster' to raise the cash to fund the next round of refreshments.

The Great Depression of the 1930's hit hard at the club's progress, but the will to survive won through and the club continued to expand in terms of both buildings and activities.

Almost since Richmond's inception, members have been involved in interclub competitions — billiards, snooker and cards. Cricket followed in 1910, then quoits in 1923.

Rifle shooting, bowls (both indoor and outdoor), darts, golf, travel, table tennis, pool, squash, boxing and fishing have since been added to the sporting selection. And several section members have gone on to achieve prominence at provincial and international level.

The Richmond Workingmen's Club of today may be a far more involved and sophisticated operation than it was in 1888, but the spirit and determination which saw it born and nurtured remain just as strong and offer a sturdy platform on which to build an equally successful future.

A special welcome is extended to all our past and present Members. May our visitors and guests enjoy the warmth and hospitality which our Club will extend.

T.A.F. Withers
Chairman, Centennial Committee

THE BEGINNING

A community need for a social and recreational meeting place provided the seeds which led to the formation of the Richmond Workingmen's Club. During the mid to late 1880s, Richmond was experiencing a population growth spurt which focussed attention on the lack of community facilities. Although Richmond was only a few kilometres from central Christchurch, the limited transport and communications of the time imposed a physical separation.

After several meetings and considerable discussion, 26 Richmond residents signed a letter to the colonial secretary in Wellington. Dated September 11, 1888, it said:

"On behalf of the persons whose signatures are attached I have the honor to apply for a provisional charter under the 229th section of the Licensing Act 1881 to enable them to establish a workingmen's club at Richmond in the Linwood electoral district. The neighbourhood is well and respectably populated and there are no licensed houses within a mile of or other places of recreation in the district. I enclose copy of the rules it is proposed to work under

and have the honour, to be, Sir,

your obedient servant,

J. Abercrombie

Sec pro terma

The signatories were:

G.B. Muschamp (builder), T. Purto (carter), W.H. Clabburn, T.F. Ridley (builder), G.T. Bearsley (bootmaker), J. Ford (blacksmith), W. Ledsham (carrier), John Bell (iron moulder), Joseph Broadley (baker), J. Abercrombie (storeman), L. Barnes (baker), J. Dutton (builder), Edward L. Wallace (accountant), John Lloyd (butcher), A.J. Williams (builder), James Horling (baker), George Swann (solicitor), D.H. Brown (joiner), Alex Mitchell (storeman), J.W. Roberts (baker), D. Cochrane (painter), R. Sunderland (baker), Marty Bowron (commission agent), S.D. Seymour (dentist), William C. Fleming (salesman), H.W. Ross (salesman).

All were solidly part of the district's social and commercial fabric . . . indication that the club was part of the development of the north-eastern part of the city.

As one account of the early Richmond area put it: "The early Richmond (Bingsland) settlers built a church, school, police station . . . then a workingmen's club as a recreation centre".

A provisional charter was granted on December 18, 1888 and the club officially opened on February 23, 1889 with 34 members — described in a newspaper report of the time as a "very fair" membership.

The 34 originals were:

Messrs D. Barnes, R. Sunderland, R. Newton, G. Muschamp, J. Lloyd, — Mitchell, R. Wallis, J. Hughes, A.P. Gibson, A.J. Williams, J. Dutton, J. Abercrombie, J. Roberts, J. Broadley, J. Ford, J. Free, J. Bell, F. Ridley, T. Hammond, A. Brown, J. Rhodes, D. Cochrane, H.W. Ross, W.C. Fleming, J. Cowper, P. Cusack, R. Sullivan, A.W. Jones, W.A. Murray, G. Pengelly, J.R. Tulby, W. Miles, W.A. Tribe, J. Nelson.

And the first committee:

President, D. Cochrane; treasurer, J. Abercrombie; secretary, J. Bell; trustees, A.W. Jones, J.R. Tulby, G. Muschamp; committee, J. Dutton, A.P. Gibson, A.J. Williams, J. Ford, James Hughes, R. Newton, F. Ridley, J. Lloyd, R. Wallis, J. Broadley, W.A. Tribe, D. Barnes; honorary members, Loughrey, Major Frances, C.E. Godfrey, L.B. Seymour, Captain Bowron, E.F. Wallace, George Swann (chairman of the Richmond School committee for many years and one of first councillors from district).

William Clabburn was appointed the first custodian.

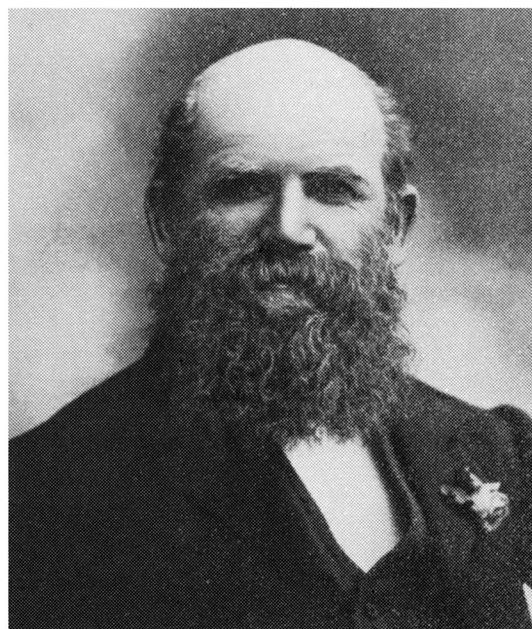
Said the Lyttelton Times, of February 23, 1889:

“Efforts of a number of working men resident in and near Richmond to form a workingmen’s club have been constant and arduous but at last they have been crowned with success.”

The Times also noted there would be no public opening ceremony as members were reserving club resources for “many calls which will be made on them”. Nor would Richmond be open on Sundays as were most other clubs at the time.

Permanent charter was still a couple of months away — that was granted under the hand of the colonial secretary, W.R. Russell, on April 24, 1889.

The club had bought a quarter-acre property next to the schoolhouse in London St. Built in the early 1880s, it had originally housed a benevolent society and then the public library. Indeed, the club inherited most of the books for its own library. A stonemason was reported to live above the club.



The Clubs first President Mr D. Cochrane

* * *

The Skellerup Woolston Brass Band, now one of New Zealand’s best, would not have been pleased with members’ response to its predecessor’s performance at the 1930 picnic. Members were generally dissatisfied with the Woolston band’s services.

* * *

These were the days of prohibition orders when people could legally be stopped drinking. The club tabled a rule allowing any member against whom a prohibition order had been taken out to be readmitted after the order had been expired for 12 months.

* * *

There are plenty of places to carve a pig — as Ted Emmett knew. Ted was busy carving and jointing a pig in the boot of his car — in preparation to take it into the club to sell in a raffle — when along came the president, Eric McPherson. Unfortunately for Ted, Eric was a butcher by trade and he went butcher’s hook at Ted.

TURN OF THE CENTURY

Club records are scarce through the 1890s but at the 1904 half-yearly meeting, the President, Joseph Richards, commented on the improved condition of the club premises and the general conduct of members.

There was also prolonged discussion on which beers the club should stock . . . a topic which was to provide a lot of debate down the years. Some members wanted to get rid of Mannings beer but the consensus was to continue drawing Wards, Vincents and Mannings. However, the next year, the anti-Mannings drinkers got their way when a general meeting voted to draw Wards and Vincents for six months.

But another annual meeting and another discussion. This time, five beers were suggested and the club decided to vote on drawing three. The result: Wards 48, Vincents 44, Mannings 26, Speights 21, Strachans 2.

Monetary matters from executive meetings reflect the 1904 level of trade and the club's interests. Monthly accounts ranging from £71 to £139/12/6 were passed for payment; bar profits for three months were £61/7/-; £5 was granted to the library committee to buy books; £4 was voted for entertainment committee spending; the house committee was empowered to spend £1 on plants for the garden; and a notice was posted, signifying the intention to buy a cash register for not more than £50 (the 1905 annual meeting voted 33-24 in favour); a recommendation was put to the supply committee to buy only non-husk tobacco if practicable.

Then there was the case of the disappearing cash register from the bar counter. Eventually, it was revealed that a member had moved it in return for a beer from the custodian.

A FEW ROUGH EDGES

Just to prove that staff problems are nothing new, the custodian was dismissed. Exactly why was not stated but a tag placed on the new custodian's appointment provides a clue — he was not allowed to give credit and a card advising of this was to be placed in the bar.

Obviously, club members felt differently because they petitioned for reconsideration and a deputation put the case for reinstatement. At first, the committee could see no reason to alter its decision but a month later, reinstated the custodian as a club member. No explanation was given for the change of heart.

Members' liquor consumption was causing a problem or two as well. It was decided to enforce the rule that members not be allowed more than two bottles of beer within the 24 hours and members were warned they would be suspended if caught drinking in the streets and gateways adjacent to the club.

S.G. Carnervon's 1905 membership card, signed by W.L. Barr (President) and F. Plunket (Secretary), set out these conditions: Entrance fee, 2/6; subscriptions, ordinary members — 10/- a year, honorary members — £1/1- yearly, both in advance. Arrears: Any member being in arrears six months will have his name posted on the unfinancial list, together with the amount owing, and if the arrears are not paid within two weeks after being notified, he will be suspended. Note: Members are particularly requested to see that their subscriptions are correctly entered on their cards.

A special meeting had been called the previous year to consider £1 subscriptions but "after a great deal of adverse criticism", the proposition was thrown out.

THE COST OF BELONGING

Club administration was in a state of flux during the 1905-06 year. Within a fortnight of the annual meeting, the secretary, F. Plunket Jnr, resigned and Mr Plunket Snr took over until a replacement was obtained.

Then the President resigned. No sooner had he agreed to a committee request to withhold his resignation until a special meeting than one of the committee resigned. The special general meeting had a curious agenda:

- * A motion to reduce draught beer to 2d/half-pint was lost 18-19.

- * A motion that committee members each receive £2/10- honorarium a year, the President £10 and the Vice-President £5, and all free drinks cease, was discussed and withdrawn.

- * Mr J. Stapleton was elected Secretary, and arrangements made to inform the Colonial Secretary who had to be notified of any change in Secretary or Treasurer.

- * Regret was expressed about Mr Richards' intention to resign. Eventually, he agreed to stay for the year.

That seemed to be that — until July when Stapleton was sacked as Secretary and Plunket Snr again stepped in until a replacement was found.

For all this, the club warranted laudatory comments from its auditor, Mr Malley, who told the half-yearly meeting he considered Richmond "occupied the premier position among the workingmen's clubs in Canterbury, if not in New Zealand". He recommended augmenting the library and maintaining the sociability of the club, eulogised the work of the librarian and club officials, described the custodian as a "real treasure" and urged further grants to the library. He complimented the club on the good feeling among members and deprecated the view that it was "a drinking den".

COMINGS & GOINGS

CARDS & BILLIARDS . . . THE CHALLENGE SHIELD



"We won the shield." Graeme O'Connor (left) and Maurie Langford with the Combined Cards & Billiards Challenge Shield in 1984 when Richmond broke a 22-year series of losses.

There was still a footnote to be added to the secretarial musical chairs. In 1907, James Plunket, who had replaced Stapleton, announced he was leaving the country — an announcement carried by "acclamation and with musical honours"; nominations were called six months later; then a few days later, Plunket withdrew his resignation as he was not now leaving Christchurch.

The Inter-Club Challenge Tournament Shield — decided at cards and billiards — was originated by the Christchurch, Richmond and Kaiapoi Workingmen's Clubs in 1902. Christchurch won the first contest; Richmond's first success came in 1908 and Sydenham's in 1909.

Richmond also accepted a challenge from the Linwood Rugby Football Club in 1906 for a match of cards (12 players) and billiards (five players). The result is not known. A return match had to be postponed until the next rugby season.

Its 1908 success certainly inspired Richmond to get serious about the tourney — the nine billiards players selected to represent Richmond were granted free use of the club table to 8pm every night except Monday and Tuesday.

Under the original rules, there was a 3pm start, with 16 players for euchre and crib, three for billiards on a 200-up. There was a trophy worth a guinea for the highest break. The minutes secretary was paid 10/6.

In 1958, the rules were changed to a 2pm start, with 12 games of euchre, eight of crib, and 150-up in billiards.

By 1964, the competition was between Kaiapoi, Christchurch, New Brighton (which joined in 1955), Woolston, Riccarton and Richmond.

Today, the competitors are Richmond, Christchurch, Papanui, Kaiapoi, Hoon Hay and Riccarton and Woolston. Richmond has now held the shield 19 times, and survived a 22-year drought before winning in 1983-84.

Richmond has provided the Secretary-Treasurer of the emergency committee since 1979. Graeme O'Connor was succeeded by V. Mora in 1984. The efforts of Brian Kennally (Papanui) saw women members allowed to play in 1980. An inter-club lapel badge was obtained in 1983.

Although one of the originals in the inter-club competition, Richmond did not actually have a cards and billiards section in its own right until 1985. Previously known as Saturday Cards, c/- All Sports Section, the Combined Cards and Billiards Section was formed in late 1985 with O'Connor as Chairman and Mora as Secretary-Treasurer.

CRICKET BEGINS

The Richmond Workingmen's Club's first recorded game of cricket was on Easter Friday 1908 against the Christchurch Workingmen's Club at the "Domain", now known as Richmond Park and the section's present home ground. Although few of the early records have survived, it is known that cricket was suspended during World War 1 and when it restarted in the early 1920s, the team was known as the Richmond Workingmen's Club Cricket Club.

Matches were arranged by the Richmond Workingmen's Club executive against sister clubs, Kaiapoi, Oxford, Ashburton and Christchurch, as well as other suburban and city cricket clubs.

Richmond's annual home and away series with the Petone Workingmen's Club began at Hutt Park in 1938 and apart from a break during World War 2, has continued uninterrupted. The instigator was Jim Mills, a Richmond Workingmen's Club Secretary who left Christchurch to become Secretary-Manager of the Petone Club.

The main trophy is the Arthur Bowden Shield, named after one of Petone's great supporters who became Patron of the club's cricket adjunct. One of the most sought-after trophies however is a bent and twisted piece of metal discovered by former Richmond President Eric McPherson, then a Cricket Section member, after it had been through a mower in Maidstone Park in 1940. "The key" — the Key of Friendship — is given to a member of the visiting team each year.

Until 1983, an annual fixture was held against Christchurch Workingmen's Club just before Easter. This game was used as a pre-selection game for both teams — Christchurch played Wellington Workingmen's Club as Richmond did Petone.

Richmond was granted permanent use of the New Brighton racecourse as its home ground in 1933 . . . the pavilion a double loosebox with a keg mounted in a corner. Centuries, hat tricks and golden ducks were recorded on the walls and ceiling, and included such names as F.P. O'Brien, A. Burgess, B. Taylor, P. Fleete, R. Langford, R. Fleete, B. Morrison, and All Blacks Bruce Watt, Bill Birtwistle and Alex Wyllie.

Over 40 years, this became known as the best wicket in Canterbury with facilities to match. And to have your name recorded in chalk on the ceiling or walls of the stable-cum-dressing room for outstanding performances with bat or ball was the peak of many a career. The names of many prominent club, provincial and international players names were etched on this building but unfortunately, no photographs were taken before the stable was bulldozed down in the early 1970s to make way for Queen Elizabeth II Park and the 1974 Commonwealth Games.

Sunday games had always been played at St James Park, Papanui, and at this time, that was all the section was playing. In the mid-70s, a team was again entered in Saturday suburban competitions and several section members — prominent senior players in other clubs — joined the team. The team started in the two-day junior grade, now known as second grade. It did so well it was soon promoted to Senior B

where the top team still plays today. Indeed, one year, Richmond supplied seven of the Senior B suburban representative team.

Neil Thompson, Dick Webster and Malcolm Hobson, who between them represent over 60 years of section history, from that original team are still playing at this level. Neil Thompson, the present chairman, and Dick Webster, as club Captain, look after more than 70 members and four suburban teams.

The Pitt brothers must hold a record in club history. No less than five brothers played together — Charlie, George, Frank, Fred and Dick. Dick once took nine wickets for two runs — three hat tricks — against the Air Force at Wigram. A feat not known to have been equalled. Another outstanding bowler of latter years, Jimmy Tiweka, took seven wickets with seven consecutive balls in the Christchurch Workingmen's Club centennial knock-out tournament.

There were also many father and son combinations. The Fleets — Raymond, Percy and Leo — who were outstanding cricketers and were succeeded by equally talented sons; the Dalys of whom Pat, a very quick bowler, later became the Richmond Club President; the Langfords — Walter was the section's first Patron, Ray was the first member of the sub-committee appointed to liaise with the club executive when the cricket club changed its name to the Cricket Section in the mid-1930s, and Maurie, the present section Patron and Richmond club President.

Walter and Maurie Langford are two of only three Patrons the section has had in its 80-year history. The third, Wally Bampton, held all positions on the section committee for nearly 40 years, and was Patron until he died in 1986, sitting in his chair at home listening to the Cavaliers rugby team playing the Springboks in South Africa. Wally was an ardent rugby follower and seldom missed a game at Lancaster Park where he had his own personal seat. But cricket was his first love. An exceptional player, he rarely missed a match and his car was nearly always at section matches, Saturdays or Sundays. And he would always know the score, down to the last run even though he never kept a book. The section's first life member, he has since been joined by Graham Gurr and Maurie Langford.

The recent leasing of Richmond Park by the section and extensive alterations on the pavilion should provide a strong base for the section's future.



The start of the Petone-Richmond Workingmen's Club cricket rivalry in April 1938. From left: Petone president W.B. Reesby, Shield donor Arthur Bowden and Richmond president Ron Grant with the Arthur Bowden Shield.

* * *

The death of a Prime Minister stirred the club's patriotism in July 1930. A letter of condolence was sent to the relatives of the late Sir Joseph Ward.

POLITICS — CLUB . . .

The first recorded contact with the chartered club's organisation came at this time too. In response to a circular on new licensing legislation, Richmond agreed to support any action the association felt necessary.

In January 1905, Mr Beazley was appointed Richmond's delegate to the Association of Chartered Clubs conference. He was instructed to raise the question of whether it was advisable for workingmen's clubs to continue under the Friendly Societies Act, and argue for life members of all affiliated clubs to be honorary members of other affiliated clubs.

Later in the year, the association requested delegates from clubs to form a deputation to the Premier on the removal of clauses in new licensing laws affecting clubs. Richmond felt a letter of support was sufficient in this case but when the licensing changes eventually led to a further meeting of the association, the club sent the President and Vice-President to ensure that its interests were not overlooked. This meeting decided to ask parliamentary candidates to support a proposal to restore club charters.

Richmond was clearly taking the club movement seriously when in 1911, it sent two delegates, Messrs Barr and Richards, to a conference in Wellington, granting them a total of £7 expenses — payable on report.

The death of the Premier, Richard John Seddon, in June 1906, drew comment from club President Barr. The club's books contain a resolution affirming the committee's "deep sense of the great loss sustained by New Zealand by the death of the Premier".

Later in the year, the Mayor of Wellington, W. Hislop, wrote seeking support for a proposed technical university as a national memorial to Seddon. Richmond donated £5 to the fund which led to the establishment of what became Seddon Memorial Technical College. The following year, the Richmond club bought an oil picture of Seddon from a Mr Cambridge for £5.

Richmond's patriotism was never in doubt. When King Edward VII died in 1910, the club closed for the afternoon.

. . . & COUNTRY

* * *

Women were reported drinking in the club during 1960. The President undertook to put a stop to it, the executive minutes recorded solemnly.

JUST A PICK-ME-UP

Concern for sick members has always been a club concern but the medical profession probably squirmed at the cure-all of those early days. When D. Burns' ill-health was brought to the executive's notice, it was decided to grant him a bottle of whisky every fortnight "in the meantime".

It didn't always work however. Witness the President's reference to the death of Coles Mitcherson. The President (Mr Barr) had seen Mr Mitcherson, expressed sympathy with him and taken him a bottle of whisky and a bottle of brandy. Whether there was any connection was not stated. Not long after, it was decided to close the club for two hours during members' funerals.

When an old life member, George Cullen, fell seriously ill in 1933, he was donated a bottle of brandy and a tin of New Zealand tobacco every week.

GO SOUTH, YOUNG MAN

The club's Antarctic connection began on December 10, 1907 when the Nimrod (Shackleton's ship) crew was granted the freedom of the club. A social evening was organised for the crew, "a drag to be found at the Railway to take the visitors to and from the club".

On March 24, 1909, it was the turn of the Scott expedition when the crew of the Terra Nova was invited to a social at the club. They returned again at the club's invitation to another club social on November 22, 1910.



Bill Burton . . . the Richmond club's oldest member at the time of publication and the only surviving member of the Scott expedition to the South Pole. Members of the expedition were guests of the Richmond club in March 1909 and November 1910.

Bill Burton, the last survivor of Scott's 1910-13 expedition, is now the Richmond Workingmen's Club's oldest member. Bill, a former whaler, was stoker-engineer with Scott. His most vivid memory of the expedition (apart from visiting Richmond) — a three-day storm when the crew had to keep the ship afloat by continuous bucket-bailing for 36 hours.

The Sam Weller swarry — an upmarket 19th century version of the smoko — became an annual event at Richmond from the club's very early days. By 1909, the cost was 1/6 a ticket.

Sam Weller? He was the colourful, Dickens character from *Pickwick Papers* with a love of grub and grog. And swarry? An anglicisation of the French soiree — an evening together.

The word, soiree, probably conjures up visions of a pleasant, genteel evening of music and sharing a glass of wine; but the traditional swarry was anything but a delicate affair. Veterans of the Richmond swarrys recall them as highly enjoyable occasions, usually on a cold winter night, with the floor being well nigh awash with ale.

True swarrys were distinguished by two points — the participants dined on boiled mutton and caper sauce; and they smoked long-stemmed, "churchwarden", clay pipes provided by the club. Part of the tradition was to get the pipes home intact and members became well practised in the various arts of achieving this — quite some feat when you remember that most of the revellers were biking home.

A "Christchurch Press" reporter, who weathered several Richmond swarrys in the '30s, remembers being presented with a pipe as he was leaving the club to deliver his report to the newspaper office. Which he managed to do, despite the burden of excess alcohol. He then headed home towards Merivale on his bicycle, still puffing on his prized "churchwarden". However, the concentration and strain of making a teetering turn from Colombo into Gloucester St proved the killer — his clenched teeth bit through the stem of the pipe.

The Mayor and various notaries were invited, and the official part of the evening was devoted to numerous toasts which became increasingly enthusiastic as midnight approached.

Take the 1933 Sam Weller which celebrated Richmond's 44th anniversary as an example. The programme — orchestra overture; toast to king; orchestral selection; instrumental item; song; toast to press; humorous item; song; response by press representative; saxophone solo; toast to visitors; song; mandolin solo; response by Mayor; song; band selection; song; orchestral selection; song; toast to kindred clubs; song; response by visiting Presidents; saxophone solo; toast to President, officers and committee; mandolin solo; band

WELCOME SAM WELLER

selection; toast to entertainers; song; humorous item; response; song; Auld Lang Syne.

With a special note: "By special request no encores".

The 1936 Sam Weller was the last to be held in the club. The function drifted around various halls over the next few years before dying out during World War 2.

A suggestion in 1948 that the club revert to Sam Weller swarrys was rejected on the grounds that they were "a thing of the past". The swarrys had given way to "smokos", up to three a year, and increasingly regular dances. Friday and Saturday night dancing was popular in the post-World War 2 years, many a club member finding his wife at these functions. Dances, of the modern variety are still held on Saturdays, with a variety of bands.

Sam Weller's exit from the club in 1936 coincided with a major "ladies' night" to mark the opening of the first major extensions to the club building. Space was a bit tight — and the revellers had to keep their wits about them as they danced around the billiard tables.

However, the club's first "ladies social" was in September 1905. The cost was 2/6 a head, expenses totalled £10/10- and ticket sales returned £3/15-.

A club dance in 1910 cost 2/6 a couple — and the club provided 15 gallons of beer, three bottles of wine, two of whiskey, three dozen soft drinks, and 12/6 for prizes.

For the past 25 years or so, sporting sections have run their own "ladies' nights" each year, partly to raise funds but more importantly as the high point of the section's social calendar.

PICNICS START

The first of the club's annual picnics — they are still a major club event — took place at the Burwood Tea Gardens on Saturday, February 22, 1909. Club officers did the catering, the Stanmore Band was engaged and the club was closed from 2pm to 7pm. The cost — 1/- a head, all-inclusive for members and their families.

Complimentary tickets were given to the brewers (Ward & Co, Vincent & Co, Manning & Co), liquor wholesalers (Shand & Co, Maling & Co, Roper & Co) and Kaiapoi, Christchurch and Sydenham club Presidents.

Three trams were ordered to transport the picnickers, £4 was spent on pastry and cakes, £2 on fruit, and supplies included three hams, three lambs, 80lb of bread and 10lb of butter. The entertainment committee provided 272 gallons of soft drinks and ginger beer. The club President, Mr Barr, attended to beer, and the club stood three bottles of whisky, one of brandy, and eight of wine. The custodian provided milk and sugar.



Club members at an early Richmond Workingmen's Club picnic. The picnic was probably before the First World War and is believed to have been held at the Riccarton Racecourse.

The occasion was an outstanding success and enlarged photos of picnickers and committee were ordered and framed at 22/6 each.

The 1911 picnic must have been a beauty. A tram with four cars was chartered to take members to Burwood and the picnic continued a few days later on Good Friday at J. Douglas's residence, Dallington.

Because the records are unavailable, the early days of the Billiards Section are sketchy. However, in keeping with its wide popularity of the time, billiards was one of the main recreational interests for club members from the beginning.

So billiards took its place alongside cards by right when the Challenge Shield interclub series began in 1902. And the housing and maintenance of the tables was a regular discussion point at early executive meetings.

In October 1911, a sub-committee was formed to investigate the possibility of running a club billiards championship. The idea had been suggested by Alcock & Co., a manufacturer of tables, and the club agreed to contribute a guinea towards legal fees for the company to test the legality of pool billiards.

But while the club was happy enough to co-operate with commercial interests, it wasn't prepared to sell its soul to advertising. In November 1911, Bing Harris & Co was refused use of the club fence to advertise Winfield cigarettes.

Not even the lack of precise documentation can disguise the fact that the game's strength and popularity in the club remained undiminished through a couple of world wars and a depression.

BILLIARDS

When world ranked New Zealander Clark McConachy gave an exhibition of billiards, snooker and trick shots in the club in 1948, he drew a big crowd. He cost the club 10 guineas. McConachy returned for another exhibition in 1955. In the meantime, his great rival, Horace Lindrum, had visited the club for a snooker exhibition in 1953.

Alan Innes, who won the Canterbury championship in 1948 while representing Richmond, was probably the club's best player of the 1940s. Bill Cranfield was another prominent player about that time.

In 1951, Tom Yesberg joined the club and put together a formidable record during the fifties and early sixties before moving to the North Island. In all, he won 12 Canterbury, one South Island and three New Zealand titles while playing for Richmond. In 1964, he represented New Zealand in the world championships at Pukekohe.

Doug Hallum, who joined Richmond on his return from Australia, won the Canterbury open and the South Island snooker titles in 1980 and 1981.

In recent years, the club has had an influx of top players — headed by New Zealand representatives Brian Kirkness, Peter De Groot and Ken Giles. Richmond is now the strongest club in the South Island, possibly New Zealand.

Giles represented New Zealand at the 1981 world billiards championships, while De Groot, the 1985 New Zealand snooker champion, represented New Zealand in the world championships.

The 1986 New Zealand billiards final was an all Richmond affair with Kirkness beating Giles in a close game, earning the right to represent New Zealand at the world championships.

GOOD WORKS

From the Richmond club's earliest days, members have associated with many charities and community organisations . . . either providing manpower, helping with projects or simply making donations. Most of this activity is now channelled through the All Sports Section.

During the influenza epidemic which hit the country following World War 1, the club reading room was turned into a depot for relief of the sick. Colonel Hogg and Dr Hogg were in charge, with nursing supervised by Nurse Bassitt, the wife of a club member. Voluntary workers from the club provided relief for many sick people.

But much of medicine obviously remained a mystery. The next year, a member was asked not to visit the club because he was suffering from cancer.

On the other hand, club members entertained patients from Jubilee Home, with the club paying the transport costs. And the club has been a regular contributor to many charities and community organisations.

Immediately after World War 1, the club chose to help blinded returned soldiers. Numerous functions and outings were organised, and help provided to families during the 1920s and in 1928, the club's half-yearly meeting approved a move to invite all blind soldiers and their attendants to all club social functions.

Contributions were also made towards Christmas trees and gifts for the children of deceased and disabled World War 1 soldiers; donations were made to the Unemployment and Relief for Distress funds of the 1930s; a Save the Children Fund boy was adopted in 1947.

The St John Ambulance was a regular recipient and recognised Richmond's longtime contribution by making the club a life member of the association in 1960.

Even during the hard times of the Depression, club members still had a thought and tangible help for others less fortunate. Such as the people of the West Coast hit by the Murchison earthquake in 1928 and Napier in 1932. A letter of condolence was sent to the Napier Workingmen's Club, offering whatever help and debenture circular was posted in the club.

Richmond was invited to send a representative to the opening of Napier's new clubrooms. Unable to be represented, the club sent a letter wishing every success and offering Napier members hospitality at Richmond.

Also during the Depression, the club sent a cooked ham to the public works camp at Arthurs Pass "to help the boys over Christmas" 1934.

Organisations with which the Richmond has had a close association include:

RSA; St John Ambulance Association; Richmond School; Christchurch Free Kindergarten Association; Relief for Distress Fund (depression); Richmond Old Girls' Basketball Club; Derry's Band; Poppy Day; Bradshaw Scholarship of Music; King George Memorial Fund; Save the Children Fund; New Zealand Red Cross; Canterbury Surf & Lifesaving Association; Patriotic Board; Leper Fund; Plunket Society; Institute for the Blind; Richmond Burgesses' Association; Shirley Intermediate School; St Saviour's Orphanage.

* * *

Some problems are timeless. Such as the wife who wrote during 1930 complaining about her husband staying at the club and not going home for tea. The question was discussed with him and he gave his assurance there would be no further cause for complaint. And the club received a stormy letter from an irate wife blaming it because a member, E. Bidwell, was neglecting his business. The response — he was put on restricted hours at Richmond and the Christchurch Workingmen's Club was asked to deny him privileges.

OF SPITOONS . . .

A major crisis hit the club in December 1923 — spittoons were removed from the social hall. Members complained and the stewards were promptly instructed to replace the spittoons.

Spittoons were the centre of further discussion in July 1926 when a suggestion that two of them be placed round all tables, billiards tables and by the bar was rejected. The club decided to stick with the notices asking members not to spit on the floor. Six weeks later, there was a change of heart and two spittoons were placed around each table, three in front of the bar and three alongside each of the seats by the billiards tables.

. . . AND HORSES AND CARTS

Horses reared their heads in 1927 when a rule forbidding members to leave a horse and cart unattended for more than 20 minutes outside the club premises was put in place.

But that was nothing to the shattering news of March 31, 1931 when a 20-minute time limit was placed on parking horses and carts outside the club. The following year, club members F. Arps and E. Kiesanowski lodged an official complaint about the time limit. Twenty minutes, they argued, was a short time considering that the road had been widened to a full chain and London St was out of the congested traffic area. Both said they always watered and fed their horses before leaving them outside the club.

They won their point and the time limit was lifted. But only temporarily. Police complained about horses and carts outside the club and a one-hour maximum was imposed. Another police enquiry in 1935 about the time horses and carts were left unattended near the club led to a warning that those in charge of horses and carts would not be served after they have been on club premises for 30 minutes.

More complaints surfaced the following year and an old club identity, Ted Kiesanowski, was suspended for three months for exceeding the 30-minute limit. Almost a year later, in February 1937, the executive confirmed its decision to enforce the rule on horses and carts.

However, by September 1938, the poor old horse and cart had evolved into more modern form — the President was delegated to interview a member who left a car outside the club for long periods.

* * *

The rat race is said to be a modern phenomenon. But in 1927, the winner of the old buffers' race at the picnic was disqualified because he didn't fulfil the age conditions.

By the start of 1923, club activity had grown to the point where a second custodian was appointed. Increasing numbers of visitors were already causing concern and members were restricted to bringing only one visitor a week to the club.

The positions of Secretary and Treasurer were combined at the 1924 annual meeting. All very well until May 1925 when the Registrar of Friendly Societies ruled that Secretary could not be treasurer as well.

Everything within the club was chummy at the 1925 annual meeting. Entertainment Chairman R.B. Woodward reported a “very satisfactory” six months with good support for tournaments. And each staff member was granted a bonus. The meeting agreed to employ a third steward and raised the president’s honorarium to £15 a year.

In May 1925, the club membership rule was amended to provide for a 5/- nomination fee, a 5/- quarterly fee, 10/- half-yearly or £1 yearly. All payment would be in advance.

But it was very much the lull before the storm.

BETWEEN THE WARS

July 20, 1925 was a significant date in the club’s history — it was the first indication that all was not well with the finances. A special committee meeting was called to discuss the balance sheet and auditor’s report, the custodian resigned, and the assistant custodian and barman duties ceased. The jobs were advertised and all were invited to reapply.

Amid the seriousness of the financial worries, the half-yearly meeting on July 30 contained a touch of farce. The names were left off the ballot papers, and the election declared null and void. A vote of no confidence in the committee was lost on a show of hands. After the auditor had reported, a new committee was formed to investigate finances and report on steps to reduce spending.

A further step in streamlining the finances came in October when a separate finance committee — the President and three others — was set up. It was quickly into action, recommending a 20 per cent cut in free refreshments, smaller glasses for beer, smaller nips, 30 per cent reduction in whisky strength, and notification of non-financial members.

Next, the committee recommended abandoning the picnic because of the financial state of the club, and sought a report from the President and chief custodian on reducing expenses. The result — no picnic and the third assistant’s hours were curtailed.

Still, there was sufficient cash to finance new curtains (£10), linoleum (£30/2/6), a heater (provided it didn’t cost more than £10) and put the quoit pitches in order (£15/18)

By the half-yearly meeting at the end of July, the club finances had improved to a state where they were described as healthy. The club

A MATTER OF MONEY

had 39 new members and had bought 108 new library books. Six weeks later, the executive was told the finances were “going along in a most satisfactory manner” and £500 was paid off the mortgage principal.

Continuing interest in improving club facilities reinforced these reports. The new hall was scrubbed, nine new lights bought (for around £3 each), new fans (£10-13 each) investigated, and a decision made to buy 176 books for not more than £9.

Not only was the picnic revived — at the New Brighton racecourse (now Queen Elizabeth II Park) on Boxing day — but the club splashed £70 on it.

A massive water bill from the City Council left club administrators rather quizzical. Council defence was to point to the meter, saying that was the amount of water recorded. Which puzzled the club even more and prompted the secretary to write to the Town Clerk, pointing out it was incredible such an amount could have passed through the meter when most of the club water was drawn from its deep well.

Then in November 1927, entertainment chairman H.J. Hughes was asked to resign from the job and hand over any club money in his possession within seven days. He was expelled for dishonesty with club funds.

QUOITS

Although there is a record of a quoits challenge being accepted from Sydenham in 1909 and a match against Ashburton in 1923, the Quoits Section's first official game was against Christchurch Workingmen's Club on October 13, 1928. This game was for a trophy donated by the Christchurch Vice-President, J. Gray; now known as the Gray Shield, it is still competed for annually by local workingmen's clubs, and is regarded as the premier competition. L. Banks and F. Aldersley were two of Richmond's 1928 players.

Quoits is now played only in the workingmen's clubs in Canterbury. Quoits are made by hand and the section has been fortunate in having the capable and experienced hands of Alan Donaldson to make and maintain the quoits.

Richmond and Christchurch were joined in quoits competition by Ashburton in 1929, then New Brighton in 1954.

Many trophies, mostly donated by outstanding personalities who have contributed a great deal to the section, are now contested. They include: Perrow Cup, Anderson Cup, Miles Cup, McArthur Cup, Victory Trophy, V.E. Day Cup, Longley Cup, Cox Cup, Hurrell Memorial, Les Ogg Shield (with Ashburton), Paviell Cup (with Christchurch), Stapleton Cup (with Woolston), Minchington Cup (with Shirley-St Albans), Yardley Cup (with New Brighton).

That Richmond is now regarded as having one of the best sets of quoits pitches anywhere is a tribute to the hard work and enthusiasm

of the likes of Bill McArthur, Les Ogg, Roy Fisk, Tom Hurrell, Tom Bush, Bill McFadden (and “blockbuster”), George and Bert Sawtell, Keith and Bert Cox.

In recent years, an enthusiastic group of older club members have joined the section ranks. The Old Timers Quoits Club plays every Wednesday throughout the year and its members often help out the team in Saturday competitions.

The group was founded in August 1978 by two Quoits Section stalwarts, Bill Todd (organiser-treasurer) and Bert Cox. They enlisted eight more old-timers to play every Wednesday. Noel Wills is now Chairman-Club Captain and Trevor White Secretary.

The club now has around 30 active members and about the same number of supporters. Over the past few years, it has been able to take members to the Lyttelton Club and New Brighton Workingmen’s Club. This hospitality is reciprocated at the club’s August birthday party and Christmas party.

The first three months of 1928 were to be described as the worst in the club’s history.

As the Depression gripped, the club should have been concentrating its efforts towards helping its members and perhaps brightening life occasionally. The annual club picnic did in fact become one of the year’s bright spots.

But the club had problems of its own to sort out. There had been a continuing worry about the results from the bar. Many committee members were sure the percentage profit could be higher and a committee was formed for a two-month investigation to discover the best method of trying to achieve such results.

A special general meeting in April — the first time a club meeting had been attended by more than 100 members — was “astonished” by reports from the club’s accountants and the investigating committee. By a 54 to six vote, the meeting requested the general committee to “at once take such course of action as will remedy the trouble”.

The committee acted swiftly. Within days, it dispensed with the services of all custodians, had employed temporary staff and advertised the jobs.

By mid-May, the finances were reported to have been “steadied” but a petition from a former custodian and others had forced a general meeting of members to consider staff terminations and club finances. About 200 turned up to overwhelmingly back the committee’s actions.

Percentage profits and the club’s financial position were both on the up by the end of the year. At a general meeting on January 30, 1930, the auditor, W.A. Smith, kept assuring members the financial

DEPRESSION BITES

position was “sound” or “satisfactory” . . . the results “showed well considering the abnormal times passed . . .”

But by February 1929, the club’s tight financial plight was clear — there was only £95 to meet £269 in accounts . . . “a tight rein would have to be kept on things as there was furnishing to be paid for, further architect fees and the yard required attention”.

Committee members suggested the club could be “cleaned up a bit” — some unfinancial members were borrowing money. All unfinancial members were given a week’s notice and struck off if it was not paid.

The deficit continued — in March when there was £456/18/2 in the bank to meet £474/18/3 of bills; in April £258/18/11 to pay £429/14/9; in May £233/16/9 to pay £411/5/5; in June £26/0/5 to pay £150/11/11; in September £255/10/7 to pay £517/5/10; in October £90/13/8 to pay £199/11/4; in November £176/13/7 to pay £278/14/8. All the time, however, the bar percentage was running between 55 and 65, only once dipping under 50.

A comparison of April takings over the past five years pinpointed the decline: 1927, £587/3/4; 1928, £544/6/5; 1929, £488/2/7; 1930, £489/19/8; 1931, £388/12-. Weekly takings of £100/16/9 in 1930 had dwindled to £85 (net profit, £1/17/2). In 1930–31, the club was up for £1041/1/6 in salaries and £621/12/8 in expenses.

“Members must realise that very strict economies would have to be practised,” warned Woodward. The custodians’ wages were reduced; the President, Treasurer and librarian took reductions in their honorariums and the Secretary a 10 per cent cut.

Even so, auditor Smith continued to talk of a “very creditable” balance sheet and the club’s “very sound position”.

Members were adamant the picnic should go ahead as usual because they had been “badly let down over the holding of a sit-down dinner in connection with the opening of the new building”.

Economies were made wherever possible. An offer to buy a vacuum cleaner was held over, and the executive did its own catering for the Sam Weller swarry, with two members supplying vegetables free.

The club trustees came up with their set of cost-saving measures; the custodians proposed a pay cut for themselves; despite members’ feelings, the committee was unable to recommend that the picnic go ahead; it was decided to try to manage a Christmas tree but that too was canned.

Woodward still maintained the club was financially sound — it had £165 in the Post Office Savings Bank and, assuming takings of £90 a week, there would be £50–60 credit after squaring off current accounts.

The December cash situation did show considerable improvement — £254/14/10 in the bank and £274/13/4 of accounts. But by January, the gap had widened again — £343/16/6 in hand to meet £440/10/6.

Former President Ron Grant resumed the chair at the beginning of 1932 — and it didn’t take him long to sort out a thing or two.

Within a month, he reported he had found several vouchers missing from the cashbook. The auditor had confirmed his findings (and had

noted that the balance sheet had taken more work than usual). When approached, the Secretary, Mr H. Grimes, had confessed in writing to appropriating club money in the last six months of 1931 — £85/4/2 was unpaid. That same month, the pendulum swung into the black — temporarily.

No prosecution was brought but the President and auditor investigated further to try and discover if anyone had helped Grimes cash cheques. Receipt vouchers were to accompany accounts on all future payments and a fidelity bond was taken out against the Secretary.

Further cuts were made in staff wages and holidays, the third steward dismissed because of the financial position, and members told more economies were necessary if they wished to keep the club in reasonable financial condition.

Grant was certain a continuous audit would help. However, the April outlook was gloomy. The club had £266/2/10 in the bank against £305/1/1 in accounts. Unfinancial members owed £44/7/6 and the bar percentage had collapsed to 34.5%.

What's more, the custodian reported trouble with petty pilfering, leading to a notice threatening severe action for anyone caught. There was also a suspicion that some members were dodging paying for billiards.

But May 10, 1932 was a "black letter day". The club's bank account stood at £256/0/5 and it owed £254/15/1. A credit of £1/5/4 — the first for six months. The percentage had picked up to 38.7.

As if to celebrate, the entertainment committee started monthly sing-songs and the executive donated 10 gallons of beer to them. A hot bar luncheon was arranged in June, another month of good monetary news. Accounts totalling £346/4/2 were more than balanced by £426/6/11 in the bank (a credit of £80/2/9) and the percentage soared to 84.6.

Ron Grant was able to report to about 85 members at the annual meeting in July: "On taking over office at the beginning of the year, I found the finances of the club were at a very low ebb and while this in itself was affecting the morale of the members, it was also imperative, in my opinion, that a drastic overhauling of the business side of the club was essential . . ."

The Secretary — and £85/18/2 — had gone and "quite a considerable amount of money had to be written off".

"I consider the management of this club was at fault in not seeing that a correct voucher system was in force; for not insisting on all cheques being made out in a business-like manner; and for not insisting that all cash transactions were immediately accounted for in the cash register.

"The office and bar system are now being handled in a businesslike way, and if members will give their support to the foundations which have now been laid, the club members should have no need to worry about the future finances of the club."

He also contended that too much stock was being carried for size of turnover, and "more judicious" ordering was necessary. The club



Despite the gloom of the Depression and the club's grim financial plight, there was still time for fun such as Sam Weller swarrys. Here's a Sunday morning after shot from around 1930 . . . (from left), Albert Queree, Frank Houselander, Stewart Godfry and Bill Queree. Three of the four anyway managed to get their pipes home.

could now pay for goods on the due date without having to wait until last month's stock was sold. "In other words, we were in debt and adopting a bad trading policy."

However, he regretted that the club finances had not improved sufficiently for the club to help the large number of members who were unemployed.

By the 1933 annual meeting, finances had improved through what Grant termed a combination of tighter accounting measures. "We are now in a position to meet all demands on due date and take advantage of any discounts which are offering.

"All men out of work have been given every opportunity to retain their identity and still have the privileges of the club. It is hoped that any member taking advantage of this concession will, when the opportunity comes, endeavour to meet his liability . . . It is regrettable that on account of the depression principally that quite a number of members have been unable to retain their membership and therefore the list of members has not increased very much during the last 12 months."

However, by mid-1933, well over half the club members were behind with their subscriptions, owing a total of £67/10-. The executive wrote off £27/10- and 35 lost their membership in a subsequent purge. "It is up to you gentlemen, to stand by the club and not to expect your cobblers to carry the baby."

Although monthly profit figures continued to rise gradually, the purchase of a radio was held over (it was eventually bought for £15 in September 1934) and the custodians were asked to refrain from giving more than the agreed net measure of whisky.

Early in 1934, a club deputation met a government minister, J. A. Young, seeking assistance to reduce its liability by a grant from art union funds. Housie was held in the club for the first time on March 8, and was reported a great success. However, it was decided to concentrate on euchre evenings (police permission had been granted).

The 1934 swarry had all the trappings of the heydays. Complimentary tickets were sent to other clubs, newspapers, blind soldiers, and all old members over 80, members bought 150 tickets and 40 were sold to other guests.

And after coping with wage increases in November 1934, the club's annual meeting in January agreed to the repayment of the mortgage balance. As it turned out, the mortgage was renewed with Jas Shand & Co at 5.75 per cent and a recommendation to repay £250 and spend £75 on renovations throughout the club was adopted by the annual meeting.

When Walter Langford donated a guinea for the member introducing the most elected members during 1934, he had no idea he would be providing President Ron Grant with a send-off present. Ron earned the guinea then retired from the Presidency at the start of 1935. His contribution to the club was recognised by the presentation of an eight-day clock and election to life membership.

Further evidence of the club's financial recovery was provided at the 1935 annual meeting. The stewards' bonuses were set at three guineas, three guineas and five pounds, and the President and Secretary were each granted a £25 entertainment allowance for the year.

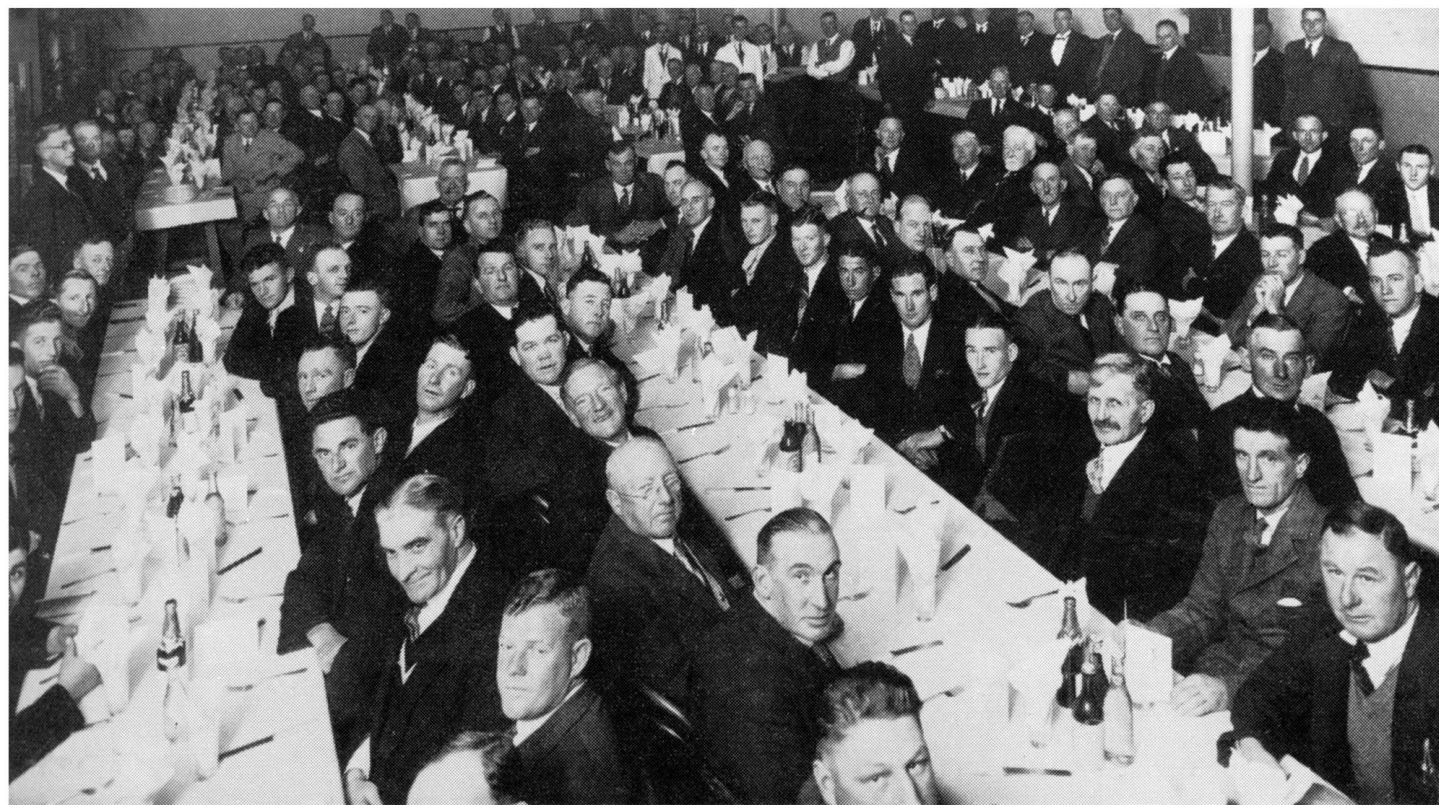
But disparities in the percentages between the two bars caused the now wary executive to lay down stern guidelines for one of the stewards. He "must give more attention to the business of the club, greater attention and civility to members, also that his percentages must increase otherwise the executive will have to take serious steps to enforce this resolution".

This was no empty threat. All three stewards were sacked in May and there were 214 applications for the jobs. About a year later when the chief steward was sacked for abusive behaviour, there were 45 applications for the position.

The old story of the club beers arose again. Two of the three were trialled for draught for six months when a vote confirmed Wards 46 Crown 52 Hickmotts 64, with Southern Cross to go.

The club got a new (of sorts) President — and almost a new name — during 1936. After just a year in the wings, Ron Grant returned as President. Then a general meeting of 44 members turned down a proposed change to the Richmond Cosmopolitan Club but supported the new name, Richmond Club, 27-7. Five weeks later, a petition by 50 financial members swayed a general meeting of 75 members to overthrow the resolution on the name change. The club remained the Richmond Workingmen's Club and Mutual School of Arts.

The faces of a Sam Weller swarry . . . this one in 1936 was the Richmond Workingmen's Club's 47th and the last to be held on club premises.





The Richmond Workingmen's Club was packed for the first "ladies night" in 1936.

Subscriptions for ordinary members were set at a guinea a year for five years then 10/- a year for five years. Once £7/10- had been paid, the member could transfer to life membership.

Elections were tidied up too — candidates were no longer able to withdraw within 24 hours of closing time, otherwise the election would be null and void; and candidates for President, Vice-President, Trustee or Treasurer must have been a member for three years and have spent at least 12 months on the committee.

By 1938, the club was buying large cheeses — 25 at a time — which were delivered from the Wairua Co-op Dairy Company at Little River.

When attention was again focused on the library in 1938, 70 books were repaired and 50 new books bought over two months. The executive's normal £5 monthly grant was enough to buy 21 new books one month, 35 in another. The library had 173 members.

* * *

Some club meetings have been known to go on . . . and on . . . and on. But Martin Drake probably holds the record for attending the longest meeting — he was there all night.

Martin went upstairs to the toilet when the meeting ended and fell asleep. When he woke up, all the others had gone and he was locked in. And he couldn't go downstairs to let himself out otherwise he'd set off the burglar alarm.

So Martin had to spend the night in the club. Although he did ring the police to let them know his predicament.

THROUGH ANOTHER WAR

Having only just recuperated properly from the Depression, the club was now faced with another war. Protection of World War 2 servicemen's membership was a priority — no member was penalised for non-payment of subscriptions while in the armed services, and any member going overseas automatically became a life member. This was later refined so that any pre-war member going overseas was granted life membership.

Although Ron Grant was confident about the club finances, members were not about to throw money about too loosely. They trimmed a suggestion to donate £400 to the National Patriotic Fund back to £25 in 1940 and £50 the next year.

There was also concern about the "excessive" number of free drinks. While no agreement could be reached on regulating shouts, there were firm thoughts that less should be spent on free drinks and more on evening entertainment.

Ron Grant retired as President — again — in 1941, handing over the keys to Eric McPherson after nine and a half years. McPherson was sure "the present good standing of the club, both from a financial and social point of view, was to a large extent due to Mr Grant's initiative and ability".

The grim side of war caught up with the club on May 20, 1941 when tribute was paid to D. Neil, the club's first war casualty; and Secretary Max Mills had to resign because of his duties as an air force officer. But there was brighter news in Christchurch where a club member, Ernie Andrews, was elected Mayor.

A suggestion to send "parcels of comforts etc" to club members overseas had to be revamped when investigations revealed the club was unable to send parcels to individuals overseas because gifts were packed collectively and sent all over the war area for distribution. Instead, the club held the money for distribution among war widows of members.

In October, horror — it was discovered that an unregistered alien had been accepted as a club member. His membership was cancelled. Even worse, brandy was in short supply and the price rose to 9d a nip. And an extra £3200 insurance was taken out on club premises and furnishings as an emergency measure during war.

War hit two club events. The picnic had to be cancelled when military authorities took over the New Brighton racecourse, and the annual Petone cricket visit was postponed for the duration of the war — it resumed in 1944.

On the financial front, McPherson reported a "very satisfactory" year's trading and felt the past 12 months were "something to be proud of" — there had been considerable reduction in both the bank overdraft and free refreshments.

But six months on, the news was not so bright. McPherson reported a difficult six months, mainly because of the increased cost of goods and smaller profits. Spirits were "practically unprocurable" apart from small quantities. Despite this, he said, the club was in a sound financial position.

Some members, probably conscious of feelings of déjà vu, maintained too much was still being spent on free refreshments and wanted to know who got the benefit. Most of this, explained McPherson, went on entertaining soldier members going overseas, plus two bottles a week for the custodians, and drinks for various tradesmen.

Women visiting the club were creating problems — they were leaving their room very untidy and abusing their privilege. No women were allowed in the club on Saturdays and holidays, and the door kept locked.

The story continued much the same. In Eric McPherson's words, a period of "wonderful success from the social point of view but not so good financially, also the conduct of members had been exceptionally good". Members had had the benefits of lower prices but "we could not carry on at the lower figure". The club took out £500 in Liberty Loan war bonds and invested a further £500 in the National Bank's victory loan.

The recurring problem of percentages arose again and the new president, Bill Willcox, suggested a firm of public accountants be hired "to go into things, and inform us what we ought to receive, and try and locate any leakages and endeavour to formulate a plan where we can expect to get a fair return from the bar trading account". But the accountant's quote was too high and the club decided to continue with its own weekly stocktaking.

Percentages perked up and improvements to the library and lounge were paid for out of profits; the 1945 balance sheet showed a 30 per cent return on sales; membership had reached 1000 and been closed off; and there was optimism with the end of the war obviously imminent.

A victory ball was organised to celebrate peace so that members and their wives could enjoy the club's hospitality . . . "all members had to do was roll up and enjoy themselves."

The only cloud was a beer shortage because supplies of bottled beer had not arrived; a six-bottle limit was placed on members.

* * *

The 1968 half-yearly meeting obviously provided the 230 members in attendance with plenty of entertainment. Recorded the minutes:

"Mr Nottingham started with a big harangue about not receiving the balance sheet before the meeting. He was smartly called to order when it was pointed out to him that the balance sheet had been exhibited on the club's notice board for seven clear days prior to the meeting. This was in accordance with the club's standing orders, and if he did not see fit to make himself acquainted with the position, that was his fault. The same speaker rambled on about the telephones, referring to privacy, but by this time the meeting had had enough of his bobbing up and down, and he was howled down".

BOWLS

The persistence of 20 to 30 Christchurch Workingmen's Club members playing at Nunn's indoor rink in Tattersalls Lane provided the foundation of the Christchurch-Richmond M.S.A. Bowling Club. Their efforts were recognised in 1944 when their parent body accepted bowls as a sub-section.

After the RSA Bowling Club and the Richmond Workingmen's Club had said no, the Christchurch club grabbed the £400 offer of a bowling green laid in Petrie Park by the Christchurch City Council.

The immediate necessity was a clubhouse with tea making facilities. Members of the new club built a wooden structure and added two army huts.

B.H. Jones and J. Mikkenson revived the idea of a bowling section in the Richmond club in 1952, outlining a proposal costing about £200 which would be repaid in two years. The executive approached Christchurch's bowling section about Richmond members but while it was agreed this could happen in time, the Richmondites favoured doing their own thing and decided to take advantage of the first offer of ground.

Nothing happened until 1958 when about 40 Richmond members approved a scheme to raise about £600 for a bowling green. A section was available near the Shirley green and the project would take about five years. By this time, about 60 Richmond and 40 Christchurch players were in the Christchurch WMC club based on the Petrie St green. However, joint ownership was not acceptable to Christchurch and the Richmond executive could not reach a decision. Only seven people bothered to turn up to a meeting about forming a bowling club.

So the status quo remained but by the late '60s, the asset which had been built up for the Christchurch Workingmen's Club was the cause of irritation among Richmond Workingmen's Club members who by then made up more than three-quarters of the membership. Fifty-fifty amalgamation was suggested, but it took two years of contentious arguments and conferences before the two parent bodies reached agreement. Christchurch approached Richmond about amalgamation in January 1969 but it took Richmond until October to decide to respond. Eventually, in 1971, Richmond's offer of \$6000 to become an equal partner was accepted. The club's new name, the Christchurch-Richmond M.S.A. Bowling Club, was accepted at the annual meeting on July 30, 1972.

The original clubhouse had been adequate until 1960 when, with the gradual influx of Richmond Club people increasing the membership, a new larger building was needed. Work on the new pavilion began on Queen's Birthday 1960. The final runs of concrete were finished by torchlight 19 weeks later. Apart from Bill Gale, a building foreman who laid out the work and supervised the project, the job was done with voluntary labour.

Tom Hogg, President of the time, recalled the attitude of members after they had voted in 1959 to build the new pavilion. He received a telephone call at work — the lads wanted to know what to do with the bowls stored in the army huts. A couple of questions cleared up

his confusion — they had removed the roof and were about to demolish the rest. “But good God,” he said, “we haven’t got the building permit yet!”

The burgeoning club was now hampered by financial strain but the Christchurch Club guaranteed a continuing overdraft of £700, allowing planning to start for another green. Laid by the city council’s Parks and Reserves department, it was opened for play in the 1964–65 season.

The women, many of them wives of members, who had helped during the club’s developing years by making morning and afternoon teas and raising money to provide shelters, were granted permission to form a women’s club and enter the Christchurch Ladies’ Centre. In return, they paid £100 a year and looked after the club’s catering arrangements.

A strong Scottish element provided the club with such vivid personalities as Tom Hill, Scotty Anderson, a great singles player, Johnny McGowan, who never let his small stature hold him back, Harry McWhinnie, a teetotaller in his later years, Jock Connelly and Bill Crookson. Ray Thomson — a fine administrator, top flight bowler and Canterbury rep — became almost a father figure during his years with the club.

Continually increasing membership led to the decision to extend the pavilion to accommodate future growth.

However, subscriptions and raffle profits were not keeping pace with expenses and rising prices. During his term as president, Roy Byford approached the Richmond Workingmen’s Club about running a weekly housie evening. He succeeded and from then on, the bowling club’s financial problems were eased.

The members’ lounge was extended and named the Byford Lounge, and alterations made to the toilets, bar and locker room. The new facilities, which can cater for 144 in the lounge and 250 in the social hall, were opened in 1978 — coinciding with the granting of an ancillary bar licence.

Club playing standards have improved steadily, with some members reaching championship status and others chosen to represent the Christchurch Bowling Centre. The club has been headquarters for the South Island fours tournament for more than 20 years.

Old wooden boundary fences were becoming a liability — maintenance was continuous and costly. Concrete block fences were endorsed by the 1982 annual meeting.

The condition of No. 1 green had been giving some concern over several years. Eventually, two inches were planed off the surface and the green resown with maniototo weed. About 40 members, armed with shovels and barrows, removed 80 square metres of soil over three days.

Inside, the floor of the first part of the pavilion was laid with the prospect of full-sized outdoor bowls being used in an indoor tournament in mind. These tournaments have proved very popular.

Both the Eric McPherson (No 1) and Tom Hogg (No 2) greens (both cotula — 120ft x 120ft, 120ft x 115ft) have been named after members

who worked untiringly in the club's formative years and were Presidents of the parent bodies.

Stan Snedden who twice represented New Zealand in Empire Games bowls — at Vancouver in 1954 and Cardiff in 1958 — has been the club's top player. He has also served the Richmond club as entertainment chairman.

Club successes have included: Champion of champion colts — Ivan Edyvean, 1960–61; Lance Tredinnick, 1982–83. Centre pairs — L. Marshall and K. Grant (skip), 1966–67; S. Piper and D. White (skip), 1969–70.

If a short story were to be written on the adventure of a club identity, it would have to be titled "The Ride of Leonard Booth". At some unspecified time and date, Len Booth left the club to cycle to his home in Innes Road. No one in Belfast saw him, no cyclist was apprehended on the northern motorway, Clarkville was honoured with his presence for a short time before he declared "mission accomplished" and headed homewards. The tape of this epic journey self destructed 30 seconds after he arrived home. He denies sniffing glue or smoking pot so what conclusion are we left with?



A group of early Richmond Workingmen's Club bowlers.

* * *

Frank Garland really did attend his own funeral at the club in 1967. His father, Samuel Francis, a member of the Christchurch Workingmen's Club, had died and Richmond club members had thought it was Frank.

They sent a wreath to the funeral, ceremoniously waving it goodbye as it left the club. Then Frank turned up at the club to the inevitable question: "What the hell happened?" By this time, the club bureaucracy had begun to move and Frank had been struck off the roll. "I had to do some fast talking to get back."

DEALING WITH PEACE

When the war finished, returned soldiers were given first option on joining the club, as long as they were sons of a member or living in the Richmond district, which was defined as: Cashel St, Barbadoes St (including Flockton St), Kensington Ave, Philpotts Rd to Styx River, Buckleys Rd.

Interest in the club was certainly running high by the annual meeting in 1946 when a record attendance of 250 members heard that the club was virtually freehold and would be in a position to consider a building programme when building restrictions eased.

But the ticklish state of the finances was underlined by the warning that though the year had produced a £1345 profit, a suggestion to reduce beer from 4d to 3d a glass would put the club into a “substantial loss”.

Gambling was causing concern too — there were reports of bookmaking, sales of tote tickets and sweeps in the club “to an increasing extent”. Willcox was sure “something had to be done or else the club was likely to be brought into trouble”. Selling tote tickets and running sweeps were prohibited, the club’s phone was not to be used for gaming purposes, and any person “reputed to be bookmaking or acting as an agent” was not allowed to use the phone or receive calls on race days.

And the club struck rocky times with its secretary, Bill Joyce, who had taken over from a gravely ill Frank Turnbull. Joyce wanted an interpretation on what power he had over the bar. As the holder of the club charter and the club’s licensing laws representative, he maintained he wanted to clarify his authority, especially after hours. If he was responsible for breaches of law, he must have some authority.

He got no satisfaction from the President and Vice-President who had traditionally controlled the bars, and were not prepared to hand over any powers or privileges to the Secretary.

Seven or eight months later, Joyce resigned because the executive refused to send him to the Chartered Clubs conference and Petone club diamond jubilee in Wellington despite an invitation to him. He took this as a vote of no confidence. J.A. Randle was appointed.

The resignation of two committee members quickly followed — though there was no direct connection between the three — and the hullabaloo led to a special general meeting of 150 members “to acquaint the members generally with the facts”.

Allegations of jack-ups, backbiting within the committee, short-changing of the entertainment Chairman’s allowance, a “Gestapo at work in the club” flew back and forth. The outcome was inconclusive. No one changed their position and Randle was duly confirmed as Secretary.

Another two executive members resigned during the next year, one because he did not consider conditions in the club went to promoting harmony, the other because he didn’t feel he had the executive’s confidence.

Whisky, brandy and rum were still in very short supply; gin, sherry and wines were a little better. Supplies were expected under the club’s

import licence but the ship had been diverted. Biscuits were “practically unobtainable”.

The old problem of permanent visitors just would not go away. Who was a visitor, someone asked? Answer: a person from another part of the city or another town visiting a club member and brought to the club and signed in the book by a member. However, the same names were appearing week after week and the executive was asked to “take drastic steps to curb unlimited visitors on Saturdays and busy periods”. Members were tired of being “pushed around” by 50–60 visitors every Saturday. The answer: only visitors from affiliate clubs would be admitted after 1pm Saturdays.

The 60th jubilee programme was organised — a smoko, ball, picnic and unveiling of a memorial plaque for those killed in the war. Supper for the jubilee ball cost 2/- a head for tea, sandwiches, cakes, savouries, ice cream and fruit. An eight-piece orchestra was hired for 18 guineas.

Next, when was it to be held? The charter had been applied for in September and granted in December. But December was considered a bad time for celebrations and it was decided to wait until February when they were spread over a week.

Despite a gloomy half-yearly prognosis, the club ended the 1949–50 year with a £434 loss — “a remarkable recovery”, according to the President, McPherson, who retired in favour of Willcox. The Secretary’s position was made fulltime at £10 a week.

By July 1950, all spirits apart from whisky were in good supply.

The rifle section was given approval to go ahead with a rifle range on the club section. Materials were estimated at £250 and a working bee would provide labour. Legal opinion suggested that neighbours could not prevent erection of the range but could seek an injunction to stop its use if it could be proved a nuisance.

In April, 1951, the Christchurch City Council advised that neighbours’ permission was needed to build a rifle range on the boundary. After further discussion, the neighbours agreed — provided the executive guaranteed to curb any unreasonable noise. The range was completed by the following April for a cost £905.

Members’ sons over 16 were allowed to join the section from 1953, and at the start of 1969, Shirley Boys’ High School was given use of the range for practice.

The great hare and goose drives of the late ’50s and early ’60s helped swell section numbers. Ron Tabley organised busloads of shooters for hare drives, usually to the Broken River, Castle Hill or Glentui areas where farmers welcomed anything likely to reduce rabbit and hare numbers.

BULLS-EYE

BEEN THERE, SEEN THAT

Younger members would patrol the tops directing the targets down to the more ancient — and more cunning — brigade to claim credit for the kill. Alistair (Keep Your Powder Dry) White, Eric Stock and Theo Partridge were names to conjure on these trips which usually yielded enough hares to pay the expenses.

A faulty trigger on the section's No 2 rifle was the centre of general business at the Rifle Section's first committee meeting on May 27, 1965. Club captain G. Rumsbatch chaired the meeting which was attended by T. Lewis, T.H. Gill, A. Pullar, K. McGee and L. Laycock with I. Matthews and W. Kingsland absent. The section subscription was 10/-

The annual meeting on March 10, 1966 was attended by G. Rumsbatch, W. Kingsland, R. Kay, N. Blain, J. Matthews, K. McGee, R. Keys, C. McMenuss, R. Tabley, T. Lewis, W. Crowning, T. McGill, A. Weckesser and A. Pullar.

From that meeting, Mr Weckesser became a prominent member of the section continuing to serve the section until the mid-1970s. Bill Key was a section workhorse . . . running raffles, serving as treasurer, coaching young and old shooters. Tom Pinkerton (still shooting) and Lester Key represented the Christchurch Small Bore Rifle Association. Ray Mitchell (still shooting) was the first Section member to shoot for the South Island and New Zealand. Others who followed were Gavin McKay and J. MacKenzie. Over the past few years, Craig Cormack has done much to keep the section going.

Early in 1951, the auditor reported bar profits were lower than they should be. A bar manager was appointed, the same Mr Joyce who had briefly been secretary. But again, he and the committee found they could not work together and he resigned.

The new President, A.R. Hutcheson, was keen for each section to be self-supporting or at least receive more equal treatment. Nor was he happy with much of the running of the club — he had been elected by a large majority and declared his intention to use the power to make changes.

A special committee meeting in August 1952 heard that the Secretary, J. Randle, had been dismissed for dipping into club funds. Mr C.V. Rawley was appointed and no action was to be taken against Randle.

Hutcheson outlined a difficult year to the annual meeting in May 1953: problems with the previous Secretary; union difficulties arising from short payment of wages to auxiliaries; permits to short time stewards were taken away, resulting in employment of more stewards; the bank manager had indicated it was time the club improved its financial position. New arrangements were made, a bar manager appointed and one buyer appointed for club purchases.

"By dint of much effort by the whole committee, the club was placed on a proper financial basis".

At last, in July 1953, the restrictions on the supply of whisky eased. But a further shortage was predicted for 1954.

In August 1953, more trouble with the secretary. Rawley was unable to fulfil his secretarial duties because of ill health and was asked to resign. He produced a doctor's certificate to say he would be right within a month. But by January, he was still unable to carry out his duties and was asked to resign. Mr E.H. Boland was appointed.

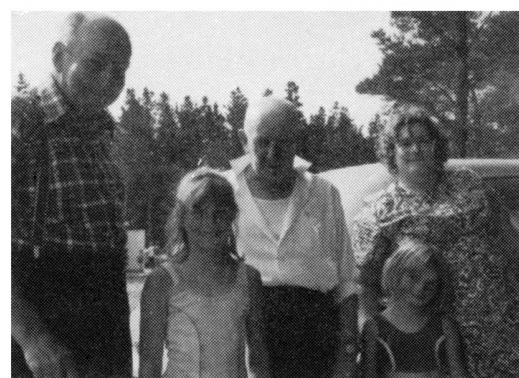
At the half-yearly meeting in November, Hutcheson reported the club's improved financial position was reflected in the transition from a £1639 overdraft in September 1952 to £3330 cash in hand. When he retired the following May, the club finances were very strong after having been in a very weak state when he took over.

The improved affluence was further reflected in the decision to pay all expenses for W. Sweeney to represent Richmond at the Greytown Workingmen's Club 75th celebrations.

A social function had been suggested for elderly life members who played cards in the afternoon. The 1954 annual meeting picked up the idea, recommending a special point be made of setting aside one afternoon a year to entertain members aged 65 and over (old-timers). Evidence of its popularity and success came immediately in the form of a letter from W. Grenfell thanking the executive for the free afternoon . . . "the first time any executive had seen fit to honour them". Longer term, the Old Timers' Day has become a permanent and welcome landmark on the annual club calendar.



A "baggy trou" parade at a picnic on the New Brighton racecourse.



The changing face of stalwart President Eric McPherson is captured at club picnics with daughter at the Riccarton Racecourse . . . with Messers Hutcheson (left) and McBryne (centre) . . . with daughter and grandchildren.

THE BOARD OF APPEAL

In 1977 a five member Board of Appeal was established. Each member elected triennially by ballot. The purpose of the Board of Appeal was to hear the grievances of members of any decision handed out by the Committee entailing suspension or expulsion.

The first Committee consisted of Messrs W. Baynes (Chairman), R. Dalgety (Secretary), J. Yagodzinski, R. Henderson and P. Helmling.

INDOOR BOWLS

From the days when bowls was played on a couple of mats between the billiard tables, the thought of an Indoor Bowls Section had often been mooted. That section was formed on April 26, 1955 when 26 club members met at a special meeting chaired by entertainment Chairman D. Barrett.

The first committee was: Chairman, B. Pitcairn; Vice-Chairman, L. Booth; Secretary, N. Wills; Committee, E. McPherson, W. McBrayne, A. Cain, F. Bone, G. McLachlan.

Two sets of bowls and mats were bought and Monday nights established as the official section night. By the end of the year, games had been arranged against the Kaiapoi, Christchurch and Ashburton Workingmen's Clubs.

In a few years, section numbers had grown and numerous trophies had been donated by past and present members. They are still competed for today.

Vic Nankeville (Mr Whitebait) was a man of allround talents. A jovial character who always caught the most whitebait and often had to produce the goods to prove his point; he was also the only bowler of his time to win five section singles championships and was the section's first life member.

Another early character was Frank Chellew (Tusi Tala — teller of tales), a true blue Oz who never stopped telling Australian yarns. His jokes were always about Aussies and his involvement with Australian Railways.

As the section grew, competition play became a greater part of the game as a whole. Tom Berry, Jim McFarlane, Pat Boucher and Leo Dobbs represented Richmond at the first national workingmen's championships in Auckland in 1969. Although unsuccessful titles-wise, they firmly established Richmond's commitment to future championships.

Richmond has since won two titles — B. Glasgow (skip), A. Roberts and E. Carrington taking the 1980 triples and G. Peters (skip) and T. Holden the 1985 pairs. Three singles titles have just eluded Richmond. Murray Davis in 1970 and 1974 and Barry Glasgow in 1981 were both narrowly beaten finalists.

However, Richmond has twice won the coveted New Zealand Aggregate Trophy — in 1978 and 1980. The trophy is presented to

the club accumulating the most points during the week-long national championships.

Closer to home, the 1982 success of M. Davis (skip), B. Glasgow, R. Hartwell and R. Shatford in the Canterbury Indoor Bowls fours was warmly welcomed by the club — this was the first time Richmond had won this title. The same year, Richmond won its first Bush Kennedy title — a tournament between all Canterbury workingmen's clubs.

Richmond's share of these workingmen's club championships and champion of champion titles has been a good ration for a section with an average of 30 members.

At club level, Glasgow and Davis have won 30 titles between them and have gone on to represent Canterbury. Allan Roberts was the first Richmond player to win a place in Canterbury's A.S. Paterson Trophy team.

The mid-50s were another time of tight economics. For instance, a special general meeting was called in December 1956 when 150 members discussed a cash deficiency of about £2000. About 300 members turned out for the annual meeting in May to hear that bar percentages had improved over the second half of the year.

A report to the 1957 half-yearly meeting indicated that the committee was perturbed at the low gross profit of 24 per cent — the club was losing about £250 a month at the present prices. However, a move to rescind the liquor prices set by the special general meeting failed.

The trustees stepped in in January, advising that the liquor prices were uneconomic. The new prices were: beer 1d/oz with 9oz glass for 8d; bulk 12/- a gallon; local bottles 2/8. They recommended a revision of cordial prices and sports sections could buy 6d cheaper.

Subscriptions were revamped in April — a 30/- entrance fee; £1 subscription a year for 20 years, with no right of pre-payment, for life membership. The aim was to increase membership to 2100.

A special meeting in July hoisted the bulk beer price by 6d a gallon, and free drinks to tradesmen were discontinued. Dustmen were exempt however — they could have a free drink if they felt like it.

In August, a special meeting amended the rules to allow for the appointment of a Secretary-Manager for the club and Mr R.F. Hathaway was appointed in September.

The eventual gross profit of £9257 for the half-year was “not brilliant but reasonably good bearing in mind the many difficulties which had arisen”, said Hutcheson.

Members couldn't have been doing too badly though — consideration was to be given to a request for facilities to change £5 and £10 notes at the club.

TIGHT TIMES

A group at one of the earliest of Richmond's Old Timers' Days . . . (from left) Doug McQueen, Bill McFadden, Tom Carrol, Fred Rose, Ernie Titheridge and Tiger Lyons.



TABLE TENNIS

Table tennis in the Richmond Workingmen's Club started on one table in 1958.

The Table Tennis Section's first match was against the Steel Wagon Club in 1958 and the same year, it took on the Woolston Workingmen's club. The two workingmen's clubs met three times a year for the Cockburn Cup (donated by W. Cockburn); this is now played for once a year.

Matches were also played in the early years against the Darts Section, Bascands, Ministry of Works, BOB Carriers, Avonside Table Tennis Club. In later years, the opposition included Dalgetys, Canterbury Malting Company, Lyttelton Harbour Board, Ministry of Transport, Post Office and Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The first committee, elected on March 11, 1958, was: Chairman, A. Dunbar; Secretary, W. Cockburn; Committee, O. Braxton, N. Hart, R. McClurg; club captain, O. Braxton.

Cups were donated by M.A. Perrow, N. Cook and A. Stapleton and the first-year winners were: MAP Trophy, V. Empson; Stapleton Trophy, A. West. Further trophies have since been donated by J. Darby, B. Hix, R. Fisk, G. Rowlands, G. Wilson and A.H. Frazer. Club competitions are now held in four grades for open and handicap singles and doubles.

By 1961, Richmond was playing the Woolston, Hornby, St Albans/Shirley workingmen's clubs. When they were joined by Kaiapoi the next year, the five clubs called a meeting on September 18, 1962 to make up a draw for an inter-club competition. The Canterbury Workingmen's Club Table Tennis Association was subsequently formed.

The original five teams had grown to 45 six-player teams in 1984.

Richmond has been represented at every South Island workingmen's clubs tournament since the first at Oamaru in 1971. The tournament is run over five grades, with four players per team. A women's grade has been introduced in recent years.

In 1981, Richmond won the C Grade and in 1982 the B Grade. Sixty-six teams entered the 1984 tournament in Nelson, including one from Otahuhu in Auckland.

The section has always held an end-of-season function for members and in 1967, the first "ladies night" was held at the club. Bus trips and dinners have been subsidised and well supported.

As the administrative workload increased, so the committee has expanded — from the original six to 15. Two life memberships have been awarded — to A.H. (Sandy) Frazer, a Chairman and committee member, and C. Kirner, Secretary-Treasurer from 1965 to 1977.

The mid to late '50s also spawned the Darts Section which began in what is now the billiards room. Among the foundation members were Ben Hooper, Percy Tyer, Sam Miller, Joe Apps and Jimmy Eade. Britt Jones provided the constitution and Frank Duffy made the original darts cabinets.

An annual tournament with the Dunedin Workingmen's Club darts section was begun soon after the section's formation. Richmond has hosted many top tournaments, including the South Island finals, New Zealand finals and the annual cricket fours. The New Zealand men's and women's finals will again be held at Richmond in 1988.

Two section members, Ken Smith and Mike Fagan have represented New Zealand.

Section membership stands at 45.

DARTS

By 1960, membership was slightly over 2150, sporting sections were receiving an annual grant (darts £30, billiards £30, rifles £50, table tennis £65, indoor bowls £100, cricket £125, quoits £102, inter-club cards £45), half the £7000 mortgage on the new building had been repaid, the club had joined the South Island Association of Chartered Clubs.

Application was made for a housie permit but after taking advice on its legal obligations, the club decided not to go ahead at this stage.

A familiar name and face returned to the club's administration in 1961 when Ron Grant was appointed Secretary-Manager. And two long-serving administrators, Trustee Frank Nankivell and Treasurer Phil Aldersley retired.

SWINGING INTO THE SIXTIES

By the annual meeting in May 1962, the mortgage had been cleared and the premises freeholded. Alterations were proposed to the bulk bar to cope with increased flagon trade. Builders were looking for work and the project could be financed out of income.

With a £90,736/12- turnover, 1963-64 was a record trading year. The following year, turnover topped £100,000 for first time — £98,628/9/9 in the bar and £6787/0/2 on tobacco, a total of £105,415/9/11. The net profit was £9436/11/7 (£8020 the previous year).

Honorariums were: President £200; Vice-President £100; Chairman entertainment £50; house £40; other executive officers £20; Trustees £10.

The club celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1963, with a banquet (15/- a head), ball (£1/double) and church parade. A thousand souvenir programmes were printed.

ALL SPORTS

Grand National Day 1964. A Christchurch Transport Board bus left the Richmond club for a tour of other Christchurch clubs. The day cost £1 a head, including refreshments at each club, and six pensioners went along as guests at no charge. The entourage covered 83 miles in visiting the Hoon Hay, Lyttelton, Woolston, New Brighton, St Albans-Shirley, Kaiapoi, Hornby, Riccarton and Christchurch clubs.

The journey was organised by E. Purcell (Vice-President), helped by Cliff Pierce and Eddie McNeill, the bus was driven by a Mr Donald and the party was serenaded by Ray Barnett with a giant mouth organ. Guests included Bob Watson, Jack Tudhope and Moaner Gregg.

The All Sports Section evolved with the advent of new clubs in Christchurch. A few members got together to hire taxis to make club tours on Saturdays and introduce the Richmond club. As more members became interested, a meeting was called on March 4, 1967 and a committee formed to promote fund raising for larger tours by bus. This committee consisted of: G. Purcell (Chairman), E. McNeill, C. Pierce, J. Burrows, J. Gobbe, B. Deady, M. Langford, C. Leader, E. LeBreton, A. Heath. The Trustees were G. Purcell, C. Leader and N. Columbus. The raffle organisers were: C. Leader, A. LeBreton and A. Heath.

These people headed the fund raising ventures, with the proceeds going towards helping other sporting sections establish themselves, tours to other clubs and tours away on long weekends. One of the first of these subsidised long weekend tours was to New Zealand's oldest club, Greytown, in the Wairarapa. This remains the only North Island tour. Most trips have been around Christchurch, or to the West Coast, Nelson and Blenheim, or "home" territories, often with calls to local breweries.

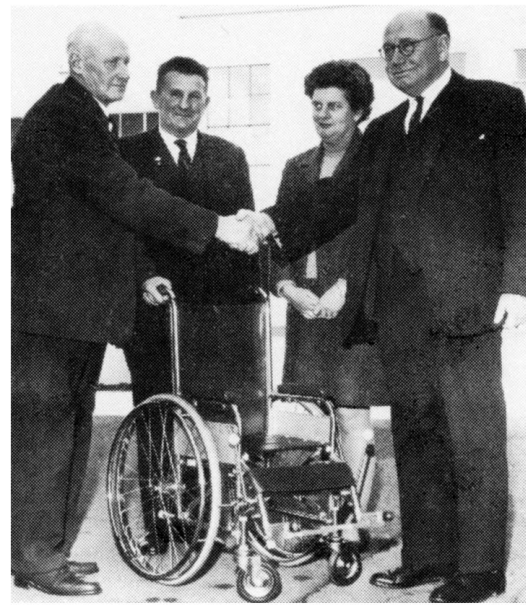
On one tour to Nelson via the West Coast, refreshments were a problem — the host club was in the middle of rebuilding and had no liquor available. The Richmond team, however, solved the problem by visiting a “local” and returning with the necessary.

Every member of the Richmond club is automatically an all-sports member — in other words, no subscription is required. Funds from all-sports raffles generate the means of providing financial aid to widows of members, disabled members and members in hospital, and paying schoolboys organised to mow lawns and dig gardens for such people. All-sports volunteers have delivered trailer loads of firewood and have removed rubbish from pensioners’ grounds.

The section has also provided a lot of help within the club — helping organise the picnic organisation, looking after children and organising bus transport.

On the broader community front, section members have organised collection tins on the bar and met requests to help with door-to-door collections for many charities.

Indeed, the section has often been praised for its “round of good deeds”. It took a group of crippled children to Spencer Park in 1971, donated \$200 towards a van Asch (School for the Deaf) College trip to Auckland (the club added another \$200) in 1975, has distributed Christmas trees and toys to orphanages for many years, raised \$1000 and donated books and toys to the orphanages in 1986.



The All Sports section presents a wheelchair to the Canterbury and West Coast branch of the New Zealand Crippled Children's Society on July 9, 1969. From left: Richmond Workingmen's Club President Eric McPherson, Clarry Leader (All Sports Section Treasurer), Mrs M.L. Bernacchi (Crippled Children's branch Secretary) and Professor H. Field (branch President).



All-Sports activities take members to all sorts of places . . . the races.

* * *

Norm Wills can't remember his longest day at bowls. Norm was biking past the club to the bowling green, resplendent in his bowling gear — “I looked like a white butterfly” — when some of his mates started chiacking him.

His attention was distracted, and his bowls in a cloth bag on the handlebars whacked him on the knee. Off he came — and he woke up in hospital at 6pm.

GOLF

The golf section had its beginnings when five club members met at Doug Fraser's house in April 1967. The others at the meeting were M.C. Hart, N. Columbus, J. Darby and G. Cormack.

A second meeting followed in the club lounge on May 31, 1967, at which the first committee was formed: acting Chairman, G. Purcell; Committee, I. James, J. Darby, R. Hill, M. Hart, E. McAllister; Secretary, S. Hadley; Trustees, M. Hart, J. Darby, S. Hadley. Morel Hart was then elected chairman and held the position for five years.

Games were arranged at Burnham, Ashburton and Amberley. Bruce Wallace headed 59 opponents to win the first section game at the Burnham course on August 20, 1967, and received a rosebowl donated by Ron Grant, a former club President and Secretary-Manager. As games were organised with other club golf sections, visits were made to many courses around Christchurch. Many of these have become annual fixtures.

The section committee arranged a number of monthly games at the Amberley course, including the most important use of the 19th facilities in the old "Tin Shed". Amberley is still regarded as the section's home course and just over half the games are played there.

With the development of a golf course on the Combined Workingmen's Club recreation area at McLeans Island in 1968, the section did its share of clearing stones from the fifth and sixth fairways allotted to it.

A weekend golfing trip to Kaikoura in July 1970 continued for many years, developing into solid competition with Kaikoura Golf Club members. Some section members still have their weekend in Kaikoura.

One of the section's major successes was winning the South Island Workingmen's Clubs' tournament at Blenheim in 1974. The team was: Dan Robertson, J. Sewell, E. Hill and R. Carrington.

After peaking between 180 and 200 in the early years, section membership dropped back to around 160. The reason was a problem shared by all workingmen's clubs' golf sections — after learning their golf in the section, members joined clubs where they could take part in Golf Association tournaments and championships. Membership now averages 110, with a fairly regular attendance of around 40 at games.

A few "do you remember" posers:

* The return trip from Charteris Bay after the Richmond-Shirley 1969 game when the bus was caught in the fog, and a line of members at the first telephone box ringing home to say why they were late — and for once, they were telling the truth.

* Another bus returning from a game at Amberley in perfect weather adjourned to the Waimakariri riverbed near the road bridge and held an impromptu concert with music supplied by Ross Clancy on clarinet and saxophone, supported by section members in very good well lubricated voice.

* The occasion when the manager and sales manager of a brewery supplied a number of cans to members to help them on their round. But these members were not able to have a drink for the first 12

holes because the manager had put the cans in the deep freeze instead of the fridge — and they were frozen solid.

* The case of the section handicapper who managed to break three or four clubs during a social game at Amberley and the sight of him putting on a green on his knees with a putter which had a shaft about 12 inches long. He is understood to have since given up scotch.

* August 22, 1982 when in very windy conditions at the Weedons course, the section was presented with its first hole-in-one by Arthur Allen on the 124m 16th hole.

* The game in which a normally well performed golfer had three “gin shots” on the first tee. Not many on the tee that morning will forget Malcolm Cox.

Section chairmen have been: G. Purcell (six months), M. Hart (five years), E. Hill (two years), R. Burrell (two years), D. Fraser (one year), W. Thomas (three years), G. Gurr (three months), J. Sewell (two and a half years), A. Fraser (three years).

S. Hadley was Secretary-Treasurer for 11 years from 1967 to 1977, W. Thomas, followed his three years as Chairman (1979–80) with eight years as handicapper (1979–86), and Don Robertson has filled four roles — handicapper (two years), Vice-Chairman (two years), club Captain (a year and a half) and Treasurer (four years).

The late 1960s were boom days . . . of apparently endless record turnover and profit . . . when handy properties could easily be bought up and turned into club car parking . . . when membership soared upwards . . . when ambitious building projects surfaced regularly . . . when bigger and bigger numbers turned up at annual meetings to hear the continuing good news.

At the 1966 annual meeting, Ron Grant reported a record turnover of £125,548/2/4 which yielded a £12,240/9/5 profit (up from £9436/11/7) for the 1965–66 year. But had all accounts been squared, the club would have been £13,500 in the red.

In 1971, more than 400 members heard of another record turnover (up \$56,129 to \$356,535) despite rising wages and staff increases. In 1972, again a record turnover, and a gross profit of \$132,585 despite a \$9000 increase in wages.

Decimal currency arrived in 1967 just in time to accommodate a decision to spend up to \$20,000 extending the bar.

The only dark spots were Ron Grant's resignation early in 1969 and the concern some members' dress had caused at “ladies' nights”. These problems were solved by Jack Browne's appointment as Secretary-Manager and an executive edict that men must wear ties at “ladies' nights”.

BOOM TIMES

CARDS

Like billiards, cards dates back to the very beginnings of the club. But it wasn't until 1960 that anyone saw any point in evolving a sporting section out of the continuing round of tourneys in the club. But there was such a poor response to a meeting to form a cards section the idea was abandoned and the card players carried on with tourneys.

Nine years on, the proponents were better organised and the Cards Section was duly formed in 1969, with a committee of L. Murray (Chairman), C.H. Miller (Secretary), K. Dickey (Treasurer), J. Brown, J. Mackley, C. Hannigan, W. Parker and C. Bishop.

To be classified as a regular, a member had to attend 20 nights. Others were classed as social members on 30-cent subscriptions. Progressive euchre was held two nights a month.

C. Bishop took over as Chairman in 1971 and subs rose to 50 cents.

Progressive euchre had increased to three nights a month by 1972 and club trustee Martin Drake congratulated the section on the way it had carried out its business.

Although it was not specifically part of the Cards Section, a 45s club thrived for many years. Up to 48 players, mainly former West Coasters, tried their hand in tournaments organised by Harry Howarth helped by Joe Kelly.

In 1973, N. Murray, son of foundation Chairman L. Murray who had died the previous year, joined the committee. Foundation treasurer Keith Dickey was elected Chairman in 1974. The same year, the section decided the Chairman would in future, be elected at the annual meeting.

Bus trips were paid for by the section from 1975. Hornby, Riccarton, Woolston and New Brighton accepted invitations to visit Richmond to play cards. One year, Richmond was on the receiving end of a similar invitation from St Albans-Shirley.

And after 10 years of running the section's weekly raffle, Keith Dickey reckoned that was enough. When he retired from the committee the following year, Dickey received a unanimous vote of thanks for the work he had done.

Subscriptions had now reached \$1 a year and the new Chairman was Graham O'Connor. As section finances improved, a trip to the Oxford Club was arranged. Dominion and Lion Breweries sponsorship of annual card nights followed in 1978.

Because of his commitments as club President, O'Connor resigned from the section in 1979 and was replaced by A. Mundy. In 1980, the Darts Section agreed to share the hall with the Card Section on the third Wednesday of each month.

Subscriptions rose to \$2 in 1981 and the buoyant finances were evidenced through a \$10 donation to the Squash Section to help with its lounge and \$50 to the All-Sports Section for Christmas tree gifts. The section won six cups and hosted Hornby and St Albans-Shirley.

During 1982, \$1000 was put aside for the club centennial. J. Muir took over the chair in 1983 — the year a trip was made to Twizel. Home and away games were played with Tinwald, St Albans, Shirley, Hornby. A \$25 donation was made to the All-Sports section and a

further \$500 was put in the centennial fund. The following year \$200 was donated to the St John Ambulance.

A friendly discussion over a jug of beer in the Richmond Workingmen's Club provided the germ of the Squash Section. Eddie Bourke, Russell Thomas, Wade Carson and Bill Baynes decided a challenge between private and public schools was on. They chose squash as a suitable vehicle because one member from each type of school had played a couple of games and the other two members had never held a squash racket.

After a round robin series over a few months, the idea progressed to the formation of a club Squash Section. This followed in June 1969. The foundation committee, formed on September 11, 1969, was: Chairman, Bill Baynes; club Captain, Eddie Bourke; Secretary-Treasurer, Russell Thomas; Committee, Eric Blythe, John Suttie, Trevor Edwards, John Plew, Norm Matthews, Ed Brocket; Trustees, Trevor Withers, Bob Smitheram.

Top of the agenda was raising some money. Alan Drake, who was entertainment chairman at the time, approached the club executive and obtained permission to run two raffles a week — the most allowed at the time. The 500 tickets were printed black on bright orange and sold at 20 cents each for frozen turkeys.

As there were no courts at the club, an approach was made to Shirley Boys' High School to use its courts but it was against the school board of directors' policy to hire out courts. An approach to the Y.M.C.A. was successful and two courts were hired for three hours every Wednesday night. The subscription was set at 50 cents a year, with all players paying 50 cents a night.

In November 1969, Ed Brocket donated a silver cup, named The Brocket Cup, for an annual handicap tournament. This remains a very popular day's competition. The first draw, arranged by Eddie Bourke, was a mammoth task. As membership steadily increased, members played in rotation.

All money raised was invested in the hope that one day, the section would be able to build its own courts at the club. The section's first "ladies' night", early in May 1970, was an outstanding success. A dance, organised by the old firm of Baynes, Bourke & Thomas, was held upstairs in the small hall which is now the restaurant. Tickets were sold at \$4.80 a double and costs were: refreshments \$200; doorman \$4; stewards \$10; orchestra \$63; catering \$1.50 a head; house steward \$5.

A squash badge — bright orange with black lettering — was designed and produced in June 1970.

Numerous successful club trips were made to other centres over

SQUASH

the next few years and several more well patronised, successful “ladies nights” were held.

By 1974, membership was growing quickly and 85 playing members were now accommodated on five Y.M.C.A. courts once a week with a draw designed by club Captain Selwyn Baynes with help from Barry Stammers and Ross Williamson. Games started at 5.30 pm and finished at 9.30 pm — just time for a quick shower and back to the club for a beer before closing time!

A yardstick of how hard players had tried was the number of red spots on their backs (or elsewhere) from a well(?)-directed squash ball! Unless labelled with one or more of these spots, players were considered to have been slacking.

If a ball went into the nick in those days, a let was played because it was considered a fluke shot. None of the players knew the rules very well — although all thought they did. A let was given for almost anything for which players didn’t have an answer.

One money-making project was cleaning the Civic Theatre, a mass clean-up before Television One moved in to its new premises. The section was still raising money for its beloved courts which were now in progress at the club. Don Crerar had organised the clean-up and he directed the “military operation” as members arrived with mops, buckets, rags, detergents etc to spend a Saturday scrubbing and cleaning.

Another fund raiser was the Gainsborough Hotel project for Peter Diver. The idea was to demolish the interior of the upstairs living areas which were to be rebuilt as conference and bar areas. It was an occasion for the sledge hammer and axe brigade.

All money raised by these working bees was given to the club in appreciation for the new squash courts which by now were almost finished.

The new courts were ready for use by March 1975 and were officially opened by the President, Morel Hart, and the squash Chariman, Bill Baynes.

Once the section was established in the new complex, an interclub competition was organised by club Captain Jim Bassett. This has been particularly popular with members and is still played each week. It started with two teams and has now increased to eight.

The section committee and members have built a bar in the lounge area, provided a pool table, a colour television and a refrigerator. All general maintenance, painting, cleaning and repairs has been carried out by section members.

Norm Matthews, Peter Diver, Don Crerar, Bill Baynes and Bob Watson have been the section representatives on the executive. Bill Baynes, who was made a life member of the section when he retired after 15 years as chairman, and was succeeded by Murray Withers, Doug Watson and Mike Bowden.

Others who have worked for the section have been Norm Matthews, Peter Diver, Don Crerar, Bill Baynes and Bob Watson (section representatives on club executive), Tom Baughan (Secretary), Don

Crerar (Secretary), Rex Burrell (club Captain), Peter Diver (club Captain), Mike Bowden (club Captain), Bill Rowe (club Captain) and Ray Casey (tournament control). Don Crerar was awarded Life Membership in 1987 for services rendered to the Club.

It was probably inevitable that the hunting instinct in a group of men would eventually lead to suggestions of fishing — one of Man's oldest pursuits for food, recreation, skills and cunning. Those suggestions surfaced in 1971, and 30 members attended a special meeting on March 26 1971 (chaired by the then Vice-President, Sandy Fraser) where a general policy of activity was suggested and a 14-strong Fishing Section committee formed.

The first outdoor event was a very sunny, mid-winter, family surfcasting day at Birdlings Flat on July 17. Despite the absence of any great quantities of fish, the attendance of 40 gave encouragement for further outings. Trips to Wainui, Pigeon Bay, Charteris Bay, Pines Beach, Kairaki, Lakeside Taumutu, and a bus trip to Akaroa indicated a good future for the section.

At home, the committee organised raffles, planned events and ran a film evening every couple of months. By 1974, membership had grown to 100. When the section was allocated a "ladies' night", it became a trendsetter by inviting members of other clubs' fishing sections. Mixed format sporting evenings involving indoor bowls, darts and table tennis were also fostered by the section.

The first major attempt to organise an expedition to a good fishing venue led to several trips to Whatanihi, the former major guest house on Pelorus Sound. Fourteen members spent four days during Show Weekend 1972 in various forms of recreation . . . fishing, yarning, elbow bending.

And they brought home enough fish fillets to prove the trip was spent as planned. Verdict — when's the next trip? Well, these trips did continue, several further up the Sound at Te Rawa Boatels. These trips eventually fell away mainly because of rising petrol costs.

However, another early activity had involved looking into buying a small fishing cottage within reasonable range of Christchurch. After advertising for a bach at Milford Lagoon out of Temuka, the section plumped for an alternative suggestion to buy a caravan as a mobile base for outings. This was used very successfully at Kairaki, the annual club picnic, the Lake Coleridge inter-club back country opening weekend and various other spots. Eventually, section members were able to hire it.

By 1977, the caravan was not getting sufficient use to justify its maintenance and was sold. By this time, a small runabout had been bought and the section no longer had to rely entirely on the goodwill of members with boats. This led to the purchase of a larger 15-foot

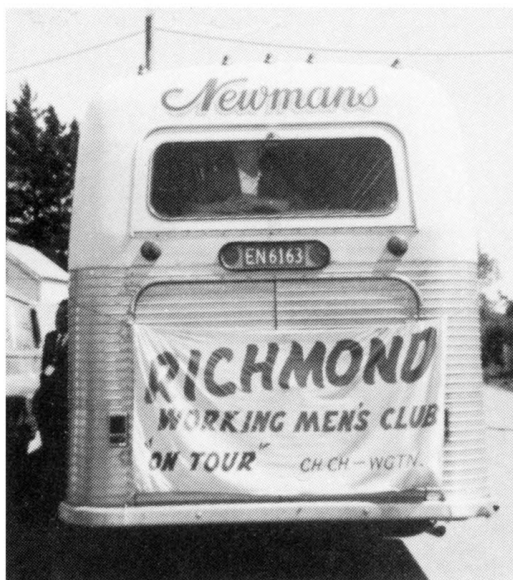
FISHING

. . . continued on Page 54



"Where on earth will I hide my slippers now?" the Richmond club's resident bookie of the '50s and '60s, Donny Sutherland, could be asking as he watches his choice spots disappear to make room for new buildings.

Squash Section, Canterbury Inter Club Team 1975. Left to right: Bill Baynes, Larry McKeever, Trevor Kelly, Ken Gardiner, Doug Garty, Barrie Stammers.



Comfort Stop. The Richmond Club on Tour.



Squash Section Members 1975.



RICHMOND WORKING MEN'S CLUB AND M.S.A. CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Back Row: W.J. Falloon; W.R. Flett

Middle Row: J. Yagodzinski; M.L. Langford; S. Clarke; N.S. Wills; T.F. Palfi; M.L. Davis

Front Row: D.A. Crerar (Assistant Secretary); W.N. Baynes (Vice Chairman); T.A.F. Withers (Chairman); D.A. Robertson (Secretary); R.M. Dalgety

Inset: N.J. Quinn; W.P. Daly



*D.A. Crerar
Convener Sporting and Social Events 1988*



The original Bowling Club pavilion.



The start of the new Bowling Club pavilion on Queen's Birthday, 1960.



The new Bowling Club pavilion completed . . . 19 weeks later.



Tom Hogg (left), President during the building project, and Len Booth, of "The Ride of Leonard Booth" fame.



Cards Section members are all concentration as they get down to the serious business of a club tourney.





The present Old Timers Quoits Club.



Jack Castel (left) and Mike Fagan congratulate one another after winning the national workingmen's clubs darts pairs title in 1977. Mike, a member of the New Zealand Workingmen's Clubs team from 1975-1977, went on to represent New Zealand in 1978 and 1979.



The first Pool Section committee: From left: front row, G. O'Connor, K. Hand (Vice-Chairman), M. Kavanagh (Chairman), A. Hand (Secretary-Treasurer); back row, K. James (Trustee), C. Hand, E. McAllister, C. Goslin.



The Table Tennis Section takes over the main hall.

Some that didn't get away from the Fishing Section.





The All-Sports Section brings warmth into the lives of old people . . . section members . . . load firewood for distribution to pensioners.



All-Sports activities take members to all sorts of places . . . the road . . . the nearest "local".



The Richmond Workingmen's Club Travel Section on the move. Australian Tour 1986.



Ken Giles — New Zealand representative at 1981 World Billiards Championships.



Bill Baynes (right) Squash Section Chairman for 15 consecutive years receives his Merit Life Membership Award from Ken Chellew (left) and Don Crerar 1983.



Richmond club president Pat Daly (left) congratulates the Boxing Section's Kevin Pyne on his silver medal at the 1981 New Zealand Games. Helping out are Boxing Section trainer Wally Darrell (second from left) and club vice-president Sandy Fraser.



Kevin Pyne — New Zealand boxing representative, Australasian light-middleweight champion 1980, New Zealand Games silver medalist 1981, Oceania Championships silver medalist 1982.

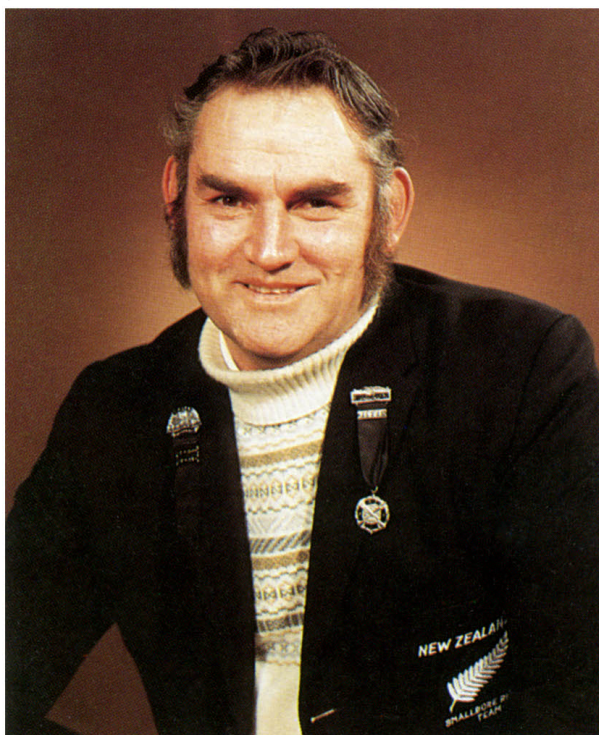


Ray Mitchell — New Zealand smallbore rifle shooting representative 1981.



John Chandler — New Zealand deaf table tennis representative at World Games for the Deaf in West Germany, 1981.

Gavin McKay — New Zealand smallbore rifle shooting representative 1981.



Mike Fagan — New Zealand darts representative 1978–79, New Zealand Workingmen's Club team 1975–77.



fibreglass plylite fisherman with a 50hp Mercury motor, replacing the well-used private boat, Maui, which was the basis of the moki, butterfish etc. catches on the many weekend trips to Akaroa. Several forms of accommodation have been available at Akaroa . . . the Goodwin caravan, Bruce Morton's house and finally, Campbell McGregor's house in Woodalls Road.

To start with, storing the plylite boat was a bit of a problem, so as funds were available, a mixture of willing tradesmen and labourers voluntarily built a boat shed as an extension of the quoits pavilion with an opening into the carpark. The section now had a home base.

The most recent advance occurred in 1985 when the plylite boat was sold and the \$10,000 invested in a late model fibreglass, 17-foot Lightning with a 115hp Evenrude motor — an ideal craft for working in and out of Akaroa Harbour.

From the fresh water angle, section activities have been lower profile. Mainly because this is more a loner's pastime not given to group activity. Still, there have been successful trout catches at Lake Lyndon, Milford, Lake Coleridge, Seddonville, and section salmon seekers have fished at Moeraki, the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers, and Lakes Coleridge and Mapourika. One or two freshwater instruction evenings were well supported in the early days, as was a net slinging and repair evening.

For some years, the section has held an annual Sportsman of the Year night involving darts, bowls and pool. Very few members have failed to get their name on the trophy; some have done it twice. Numbers have fallen a bit recently but the hard core of the section continues to make regular outings.

INTO THE INFLATION ERA

Declining bar takings were causing concern by 1973. This was put down to inconvenient parking, traffic checks and sections playing away from the club more often; but it was, of course, the beginning of a new Kiwi inflationary way of life.

Although the situation improved in the short term, the longterm outlook was still not good. Salaries and wages were up \$6000, members were "drifting away", turnover was down, and operating costs were up. Lack of parking was seen as significant factor.

Then the chief steward, Ernie Stigley, a longtime club employee, died in July and entertainment Chairman Morel Hart paid this tribute: "He had always been a great help to those who had anything to do with the entertainment in the club. His loss would be felt by all the sections."

Trading reached the point where an accountancy firm was hired to investigate percentages, bar trading and weekly stocktaking.

BOXING

The idea of forming a club section to promote boxing originated towards the end of 1974 from Arthur Underhay who had noted that the Woolston Workingmen's Club had already done so some years before. Compared with other existing sporting sections, boxing was a radical concept — emphasis would be on youth, with no preference to sons of members or local Richmond people.

Although the Boxing Section's first recorded meeting was on April 8, 1975, the section had been formed some months before, probably in January, with Arthur Underhay as interim Chairman, and had already begun fundraising through club raffles.

Club President Morel Hart chaired the second's inaugural annual meeting on June 18, 1975. This was attended by entertainment Chairman Cyril Flattery and 21 other club members. By balance date, the section had \$166.04 in the bank and equipment with a book value of \$351.04. Peter Pyne was elected Chairman and Terry Sweeney Secretary.

Because of the nature of its activity, the section faced many trials in establishing a home within the club complex. The scout den, across the park next to the club, was hired as the first gym. While a very spartan venue, the section had to live with it for a time as various forces seemed determined to stop boxing from becoming established in the club proper. One of these was the refusal of the police to allow under-20-year-olds to enter the club premises, even for training purposes.

However these problems were overcome and the gym transferred to the small social hall early in 1976 — an improvement even though equipment could not be left set up between training sessions. It lasted only a short time — the club decided to convert the hall into a restaurant. Along with other sections, boxing was shunted into the main social hall where it had to try and fit in its activities with other sporting sections and club social events. The hall proved unsatisfactory for a gym and the section felt it was being pushed around. As retaliation (boxing-wise) was inappropriate, the section looked elsewhere for a solution to the problem.

The section committee set its sights on a large old house in Cumberland Street, one of a few buildings left intact following acquisition by the club. The club committee approved the proposal and in 1978, one of the two flats was granted to the section for use as a gym. Internal walls and a chimney were no match for the demolition team making room for a boxing ring and general training area. When possession of the adjoining flat was obtained in September 1979, the demolition team again went into action. Out came more walls until a halt was called in case the building was weakened even though the ceiling had been strengthened. Along with the removal of the remaining double chimney, interior painting and alterations, these many hours of voluntary work created Richmond's boxing headquarters.

As a means of contributing to the promotion of boxing in Canterbury, several tournaments were hosted at the club in 1976. These were not restricted to amateur boxers and included professional bouts featuring Richmond's Eric Briggs, seconded by his long-time trainer, Wally Darrell.

However this was shortlived as the club committee, conscious of its new complex, withdrew its consent alleging that the ring was damaging the floor of the main social hall.

While this decision may have disappointed the section committee, it may well have been received with some relief by those who had to erect and dismantle the ring — it consisted of 44 gallon drums which supported a very sturdy base. Muscles probably still ache at the memory of lugging this stuff up and down the stairs to the social hall.

The tournament idea was revived in 1980 when Wally Darrell raised the idea of holding the 1981 annual Golden Gloves tournament in the club. The club committee approved on the condition there would be no damage to the hall floor. It was obvious a new boxing ring, incorporating new concepts in design and construction minimising much heavy carrying, was needed. A section member, Warwick Aldridge, not only designed the new ring but also built the steel framework which forms the stage.

Sponsors — Hamilton Perry Industries Ltd, Fletcher Woodpanels Ltd, Canterbury Timber Products Ltd and Mr Martin Drake — supplied many of the materials. Without their support, the section would have found the cost beyond its means.

The 1981 Golden Gloves was an allround success — even if there were a few tense moments. When the new ring was being erected the day before the tournament began, all went well until it came time to attach the ropes. They were too big and hung loose from the corner posts. There was doubt that the splicer could redo the job after the ropes had been shortened. With boxing due to start the next day, this was hardly a matter to leave unresolved overnight. But a saviour arrived in the form of a visitor to the club who had come upstairs to collect his boxing raffle prize. With guidance from this ex-boxer, the job was redone and everyone adjourned leaving the tension in the ropes instead of themselves.

Annual tournaments have been held in the social hall since 1981. And the Canterbury Provincial Association also uses the hall for its tournaments.

The section's first trainer was Arthur Underhay's son, Bill, with Laurie Ny as co-trainer. They were followed by Wally Darrell, a trainer of many years experience at the Linwood Boys Gym until its closure, who had taken an active interest in the section since its inception. Eric Briggs helped for several years and then, Kevin Pyne, after a successful amateur boxing career, was appointed co-trainer in 1983.

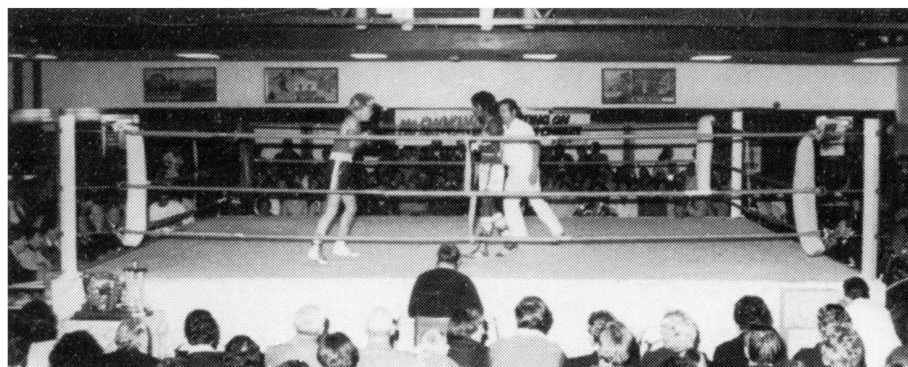
Together, Wally and Kevin have increased the number of boys training and entering competition in Richmond colours. While not all have stayed on, a very good nucleus of boys, both young and older, has been formed with new faces appearing each season. The section has become an accepted and respected part of the boxing scene not only in Canterbury but throughout New Zealand.

The section's most successful boxer has been Kevin Pyne who represented New Zealand in seven international contests winning five

fighters. He won the Australasian light middle-weight title at Invercargill in 1980, and in 1981, took the silver medal at the New Zealand summer games in Wellington after going the distance with Canadian Shaun O'Sullivan who became world champion later the same year. Danny Morris was the 1983 and 1984 New Zealand intermediate welterweight champion and holder of South Island titles, Vaughan Crouch and Lance Austin were finalists at New Zealand championship level, Tony Johnstone held South Island and New Zealand championship titles as an improver in 1986, and Campbell McKeowen has a South Island protege title.

After the foundation members had drifted away after the first few years, the section administration went through a time of flux. However, Brian McKeowen has been Treasurer since 1978 and Don Robertson Secretary since 1979. They were joined by Graeme O'Connor who had four years as Chairman from 1981 to 1985 and is back at the helm after a season's break. Foundation members Peter Pyne and Wally Darrell have been on every committee since the start, another foundation member, Alan Hand, is back on the committee after an absence, and Kevin Pyne and Warwick Aldridge have been consistent committee members.

The section has consolidated, built up training equipment, improved the gymnasium and accumulated funds for general purposes and travel.



A boxing tournament in progress in the Richmond Workingmen's Club's main hall.

* * *

Photographs of King George VI and Winston Churchill were procured to hang in the club in 1941. But attempts to stop the practice of drinking toasts after the funeral of a deceased member were unsuccessful.

* * *

In May 1960, Secretary-Manager Hathaway outlined the predicament of Mr D. Sutherland, who for many years had cut club members' hair free on Saturdays. His clippers were worn out and Hathaway wondered if the committee could do anything about this, as Sutherland was performing a service to club members. Eric McPherson took much pleasure in presenting a pair of clippers to the club for use by Sutherland.

CHANGING TIMES

I ncreasing numbers of women were joining many other clubs and were wanting to come to Richmond — which remained solidly male — as members of teams or simply as visitors. The Richmond executive responded by ruling that female members of affiliated clubs were to be admitted only on “ladies’ nights” when accompanied by a male member of an affiliated club.

The number of women coming into the club was questioned again in 1984 but the executive was warned that the Human Rights Act prevented discrimination — even if the club was right.

In February 1985, it was decided women members from other clubs would be allowed into Richmond’s unrestricted areas as long as they obeyed club rules. In July, women achieved equality in this little corner of the world — all affiliated women members were given the right to use all club facilities.

The same year, a special general meeting of members agreed that a referendum on mixed membership should be held. This was done in conjunction with the 1986 election of officers; the proposal for mixed membership was defeated by 14 votes.

On hearing of a petition during 1986 to get 50 signatures to call a special general meeting, the club’s executive committee sought legal opinion, then decided to hold another referendum with the 1987 election of officers. This time, the vote favoured mixed membership by 104.

Changing social mores were also reflected in what the traditionalists viewed as declining standards of dress in the club during the early 1970s. Again, the executive ruled — singlets were not permissible and shoes must be worn; no overalls in the billiards room and stewards were not to serve anybody in a singlet. Further discussion led to the acceptance of tank tops in March 1975.

A couple of years later, the subject of dress arose again. This time, singlets, tank tops and bare feet were ruled unacceptable in men-only bars. A reasonable standard was required in the social hall, with shorts, walk sox, shirts and footwear the minimum in summer.

The question of dress in the members’ bar and social hall surfaced in 1985. The edict: no bare feet; no gumboots; no dirty boots, shoes or other footwear; no dirty overalls or outer clothing; no tank tops; no bush singlets or bush shirts; any other form of dress which could offend most members; no work jeans or work clothing in social hall.

In 1986, the executive voted by nine to five to allow 18-year-olds in the downstairs bar, provided they were accompanied by their father (but not a guardian).

* * *

And what do you give a valued club member as a farewell present. Well, when J. Stapleton left in 1925, he was presented with a case of razors. Three years later, when entertainment Chairman C. Buettmeyer retired, he received a pipe.

When another Avalon St property was bought and Bill Cadigan was appointed the new Secretary-Manager near the end of 1975, the club was reported to be in a sound position, with working capital predicted to come through profits.

In President Morel Hart's words, the club finances were "soundly structured and satisfied the requirements of our bankers and trustee for debenture holders".

"Any major business undertaking, as this club is, must be aware and plan for meeting the inroads made by inflation and increasing costs. Our current building programme is completed and we must consider ways and means of meeting our interest commitments, to bankers and debenture holders."

In the new year however, Cadigan warned that recent wage increases and government approval for some increased charges would have a "serious effect on the club's ability to meet its financial commitments unless action was taken".

"Loss of confidence by our debenture holders and the bank would place the future of this club in jeopardy."

Not only did the club face higher and higher bills just to stay in business, but its income, particularly from drive-in sales, was being squeezed by liquor price wars among Christchurch hotels.

Hart summed up 1977 as not an easy year and promised little respite ahead. But more than \$1 million had gone through club hands and it was "a terrific business". Cadigan compared the \$60,000 net profit — "the best attained in its chartered existence" — with \$42,000 in 1972 and the \$17,000 loss of 1976, and attributed the turnaround to member support.

Yet despite this, Hart had to tell members in July 1978 that the club was making only enough to pay its bills and he was convinced another levy on members would be inevitable within the next three or four years.

The annual meeting agreed to an annual \$10 levy on members for the next five years. However, the resistance organised and forced a special general meeting in 1979 at which the levy was thrown out. But 87 members petitioned and another special general meeting reversed the anti-levy decision.

Richmond cracked the magic million dollar turnover in the 1979-80 year, and when new president Pat Daly assumed office in 1980, he was greeted by a booming turnover — up \$165,411 (29%) in his first six months. Most was due to drive-in sales, up \$102,154 (39%) and flagon sales up \$65,316 (64.8%) and bottled beer up \$21,603 (42.1%). Members had become orientated to self-service and a greater emphasis on home drinking. "We are now equipped to take advantage of this trend," commented Cadigan. Monthly accounts were running in the order of \$60,000-90,000.

MONEY AGAIN

CHANGING NATURE

When two of the club's most notable administrators died within a couple of years of each other — Ron Grant, executive member, President and Secretary-Manager, in July 1976 and Eric McPherson, executive member, President and Trustee, in April 1978 — the club lost more than two top men. Their deaths perhaps sealed the changes which had crept up on the club during the '60s and '70s.

As membership climbed (3232 in 1980) and the realities of survival forced the club to be run on strict commercial lines with the aim of producing as high a profit as possible, so the club inevitably lost the personal touches of its earlier years.

A member who joined in 1942 recalls that the club was “like a family”: “Everyone knew everybody, the president knew everybody. Someone would come in and everyone would say: ‘There’s so-and-so’. You could leave your hat, gloves, walking stick, whatever at the door and they would never be touched.”

It’s a pattern common to most organisations which have lived through the past 50 years. It’s frustrating too because it’s an insidious thing which generally happens before anyone sees it happening. But even if they did, the causes have been so deep-rooted in society, it would have been unlikely anyone could have reversed the process.

THE RISE & FALL OF THE MUSIC SECTION

A Music Section was formed in 1977 and members agreed to perform in the club on Friday nights at no charge. However, problems arose when the quality of the band was questioned and it was blamed for poor crowds on Saturday evenings. The Billiards Section also complained about the band’s poor quality at its “ladies’ night”. The band lost its right to play in the club until it demonstrated it was up to public performance standard.

The section had other problems too. The idea of two voluntary orchestras had to be dropped because the section had only 12 members. And members found it difficult to practise because a number of them were professionals. Problems reached a head in August 1977 when with section still short of members, the executive took over its finances. Within 18 months, the section was in recess — though reserving the right to start again.

* * *

Morel Hart was narrowly beaten in a bid to become President of the Federation of New Zealand Workingmen’s & Cosmopolitan Clubs during the late 1970s.

Eight people put pool on an official section footing on July 31, 1979. At that first meeting were entertainment Chairman Graham O'Connor and K. James (Trustee) C. Hand, E. McAllister, C. Goslin, K. Hand (Vice-Chairman), M. Kavanagh (Chairman), A. Hand (Secretary-Treasurer) who became the first committee.

These days, the section has around 70 members and three teams competing in the Canterbury Eight-Ball Pool Association competition.

Individual and team achievements have included:

* 1983 — L. Harpur, runner-up, champion of champion singles, Christchurch;

* 1983 — A. McKay, semi-finalist, South Island singles championships, Christchurch;

* 1983 — B. Savage & J. Hand, semi-finalists, South Island pairs championships, Christchurch;

* 1986 — V. Afato & C. Anglem, semi-finalists, New Zealand pairs championships, Rotorua;

* 1986 — Richmond Green team won Section 3 of Canterbury Association competition.

Two members, M. Quartly and R. Hopkins, hold New Zealand referee's badges, and since 1981, Richmond has been regularly represented in the Canterbury eight-ball pool team.

The 1988 New Zealand workingmen's clubs national championships will be held at Richmond in 1988. Organisation is being headed by tournament convener C. Anglem.

* * *

From the time the new Social Hall opened in 1974 to 1981 dance bands were employed every Friday and Saturday night. As time wore on this form of entertainment had less and less appeal until in 1981 Friday night entertainment was stopped. In 1982 Housie was introduced on Friday night and this move proved an outstanding success.

Chairman of Entertainment, Don Crerar (1980 to 1984), recognised that the future of the Social Hall lay in introducing "big name" entertainment shows and for four years a major show was featured every month. These shows put the Richmond Club on the entertainment map and were tremendously successful.

THE ENTERTAINERS



Patsy Rigger . . . the Richmond club's most popular entertainer. She has performed several times at the club . . . and has filled the house on each occasion.

NO EASY ANSWERS

Handwritten notes:
 Mum
 Ben & W. C. Baker
 next to BK
 6/10/2002

The many and varied famous artists who have appeared on stage read like a who's who of the entertainment world — Herb McQuay, Shane, Dusty Springfield, Acker Bilk, Des O'Connor, The Platters, Gray Bartlett, Toni Christie, Tony Williams, Bunny Walters, Howard Morrison, the New Zealand Army Band, Tina Cross, The Drifters, Debbie Davis in the Top Cat Show, Les Girls, Sydney by Night, Bob (On the Buses) Grant, Susan Raye, Patsy Riggir, Jenny Blackadder, Jodi Vaughan, Suzanne Prentice, John Hore, Rusty Greaves, Jade Hurley, Vicki Galloway, Chyrle Bacon, Wayne Horsborough, The New Seekers, Johnny Tillotson, George Hamilton IV, Garner Wayne, Brendon Dugan, Danny McGirr, Noel Parlane, Tracy Gardyne and many others.

Entertainment was introduced to the restaurant in 1982 with Dennis Gillison (The Busker). Dennis has been a feature of the restaurant every Sunday night and has a wide popular following.

A series of difficult trading years, in which lower member spending power and more intense competition for their disposable dollar, has made the 1980s a time of unpredictability for club leaders.

While December 1980 broke all sorts of monthly trading records, overall turnover for the year was up only around 6.2 per cent in real terms and sales volume was down. Which prompted Cadigan to observe the club couldn't keep up with the "ludicrous position" the Christchurch liquor war had reached and it would be "suicide" to try to match some prices. He hoped "some degree of logical marketing" would soon return to the industry.

New members were continuing to join at a faster rate than ever — an average of 21 a month compared with 19 a month the previous year.

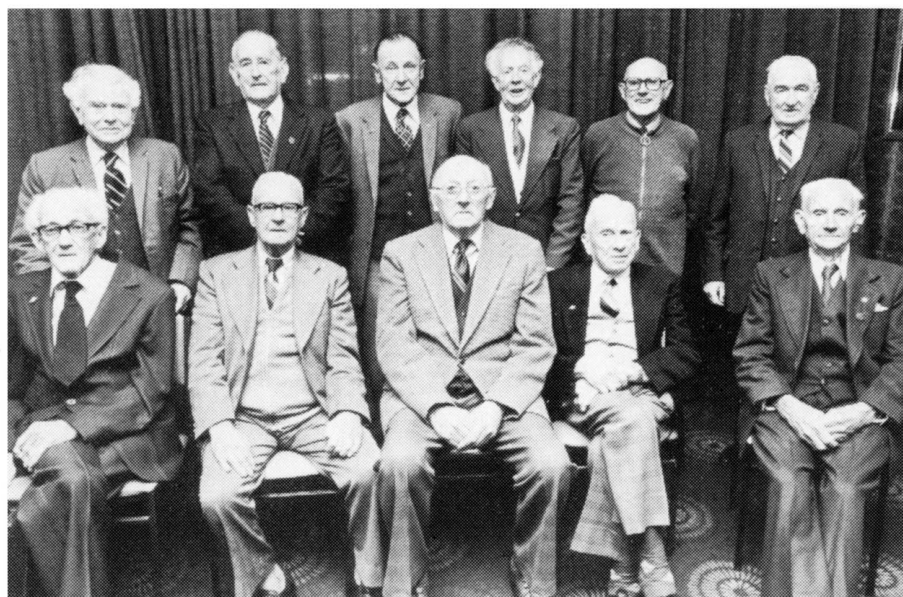
Then came December 1981 — and another quite extraordinary set of monthly sales records. Enough of a boom to convert a \$31,504 drop in sales over the previous seven months into a \$1943 increase. The upturn continued in 1982, inspiring Cadigan's comment: "Gone are the days when each 31st March was a major trauma".

Total sales for the year topped \$1.7 million — and increase of \$181,137 for the year; the club building was revalued by more than \$1 million to \$5.247 million; by mid-year, the term loan had been reduced to \$245,000 and three mortgages repaid.

But such booms had regularly shown themselves transitory many a time in the past 20 years. Cadigan urged consolidation and curbing capital expenditure: "The days of voting spending on this or that simply to satisfy an unnecessary whim must be an event of the past."

President Graham O'Connor ruffled a few people when he suggested bringing in a New Zealand Breweries expert for an industrial survey — staff management, stock etc, with a view to longterm streamlining.

He denied he was pointing the finger at anybody: "What I am trying to do is prove we are doing the right thing". The brewery representative found no fault.



There was 932 years between these 11 old timers — that's an average of 85 — at Old Timers' Day 1982. Back row (from left): Percy Kirton (85), Vern Goodhall (82), Ken Trevella (81), Ernie Duckworth (82), Gordon Kay (80) and Les Hopkins (89); front row (from left): Ben Boyd (84), Bert Evans (82), Eric Copplestone (80), John Foster (93) and Bill Burton (94).

Trips and tours to create further interest for members were the main objective of the Travel Section, formed in July 1983.

Officers elected at the inaugural meeting in August 1983 were: Chairman, Allan Goodwin; Vice-Chairman, Bryce Sims; Secretary-Treasurer, Warren Falloon; committee, Jock Muir, Brian Jenkins, Ivan Jackways, Eric Paskell, Don Crerar, Joe Yagodzinski, Aubrey Powell, Kevin McKenzie, Allan Mundy.

Membership rose to around 40 and bus trips were introduced to other clubs in the area. Then, in July 1984, 23 members and wives spent nine days in Sydney and Canberra (where the group was hosted by the Canberra Workers' Club).

Over the next months, race trips were organised to Kaikoura, Methven and Kumara. A trip with a difference was aboard the M.V. Tuhoe, which sails from Kaiapoi to the Waimakariri estuary — the outing was followed by a banquet supper at the Kaiapoi Workingmen's Club.

When an all-sections indoor bowls tournament was held in 1986, the travel section team was made up entirely of committee members. Eric Paskell (lead), Ivan Jackways (second), Murray Ransley (third) and Warren Falloon (skip) had 100% success in four games. The section had also won the Card Section trophy in its first year.

Another tour was made to Australia in July 1986, this time with a party of 43 club members, wives and friends. Most of the tour was centred at Surfers' Paradise before finishing in Sydney.

TRAVEL

THE WAY AHEAD

Subscriptions were increased to \$25 from April 1, 1984 and the entertainment committee investigated promotional games and lucky jug numbers. It was too early to discuss lotto, said entertainment Chairman Don Crerar, but it would come quickly if approved and was “a tremendous money-making system”. They were to prove prophetic words.

Bill Cadigan resigned as General Manager in April 1984. The new General Manager Tib Palfi emphasised the role of proper assessments and regular stocktaking in profitability. Within a few months, he reported that gross profit had been cranked up from 30.5 to 31 per cent — and 0.5 percent of \$1.8 million was \$9000. He was convinced more could be achieved with proper assessment and stock control.

He earned a powerful ally when Don Crerar was elected President. The drive towards stock control intensified, Crerar pinpointed the need for “sound, balanced decisions” and the need for information — monthly trading figures, stock assessments, staff, correspondence, new members, general comment.

Club administration and sales were quickly on computer, and a long-range 10-year budget was established, in addition to the general manager’s annual projected budget.

While sales were down profitability was up, demonstrating that trading disciplines were being observed, particularly cash and stock controls. In fact profitability was looking better than at any time over recent years — 1983-4 \$25,829, 1984-5 \$90,212; end December 1985 \$107,176.

As some sections were struggling to pay their \$1000 a year towards the club building fund, a stepped reduction was introduced, leading to abolition after 1987-88.

And the price of those library books — 12 of them now cost \$284.36.

Auditor Bert Bullen predicted turbulent times ahead with GST, increased liquor prices and a new wage round. He believed 1986-7 would be a much harder year in which to make a profit and he would be happy with \$100,000. At the same time, the club must protect its very good cash reserves.

Bullen urged priority on upgrading the club interior. The club must provide better facilities, he argued, better surroundings, a more congenial atmosphere. Members must share in profits by the provision of a happy, pleasant situation, something in return for \$30 subscription.

* * *

Cliff Winter really fell for it one night after rifle shooting. He had been shooting on the old range and tried to climb the fence on his way out of the club. He tripped over and broke his arm. To scant sympathy from his mates who merely opened the gate beside him and demanded: “Why the hell didn’t you use this?”

Crerar also alerted the club to the ramifications for club financing of gambling machines. New South Wales experience suggested those with most machines did best, and machines would probably be allocated on membership. “We must increase our membership if we are to get our market share. Gambling machines, raffles and housie are very positive fundraising projects. Our financial future is locked into these ventures and we must make sure they survive.”

Always strong on behaviour in the club, Crerar summed up a case before the executive: “Here we have the classic situation of two mature adults supposedly enjoying the MSA side of our club resorting to gutter violence. They have broken all club laws in relation to good behaviour and have, in fact, resorted to common physical assault as a means to settle their differences.

“This club is not a battleground for members to fight in. The background and lead-up to the eventual confrontation is irrelevant. There is no justification in using alcohol as an excuse for violent behaviour. To become so intoxicated on club premises is an offence in its own right.

“The time has come when we must take a strong stand against violence. The very reason that we have clubs is to avoid violence. The whole club movement is based on safety and comradeship for our members. Violence in our community is now our country’s greatest curse . . .

“I believe the club movement must set an example and stamp out physical violence. If anyone wants to violently offend and end up in the district court, then this is not the place to start.

“Anyone who fights should be expelled from the club movement. They have forsaken any right to the privileges the clubs can provide. They are completely disregarding our rules of discipline and decency, and as a consequence no longer belong in our fraternity.”

A spectacular fire — reported as the biggest in the area to that time — and a local businessman’s consequent misfortune provided the club with its first opportunity for expansion. The 1905 fire destroyed Findlayson’s furniture factory and timber stacks, next to the club on the London St/Stammore Rd corner. Fuelled by resins and spirits in the factory, the fire blazed while the fire brigade was forced to watch helplessly because of lack of water — Richmond did not get high pressure until 1907. When Findlayson decided he had had enough and headed to South Canterbury to start again, the property was sold to the Richmond Workingmen’s Club.

Proposals and counter-proposals for additions and changes to the club buildings have been part of life at Richmond — right from the 1905 decision to alter the bar and renovate the interior of the main room as soon as possible.

SPREADING OUT

About the same time, the club chose to sink a deep well. A similar well across the road was drawing water from 13ft. A bathroom was built capable of taking two baths — although only one was installed to begin with. Members also asked that ventilation be considered immediately.

But the club was not so flush it could afford to splash out too liberally. Indeed, it was not unusual for a tarpaulin muster among members to raise funds for the next supply of beer and spirits.

Still, sketch plans for alterations and additions were presented. Including improvements to ventilation, they were estimated to cost £680. The executive felt the suggested two-storeyed building was a bit rich and asked for a revised plan for single-storey additions. It also wanted to look at a revised plan for two rooms, lavatory and bath on ground floor — which was adopted at an estimated cost of £245.

Before a nail was driven, the club had the offer of two sections — Mr Muschamp had offered a section for £525 or a 40–41 ft frontage for £400, and Mr W. Langford had offered the 40ft frontage Stanmore Rd property next to the club for £300. It was decided to buy the Stanmore Rd property (where the custodian could live in the house), alter the club bar and “leave other matters in abeyance”.

The £300 was raised through £200 cash and a £100 mortgage at 5 per cent for 12 months. A tender of £120 was accepted for alterations to the bar. Later in the year, a tender of £6/10 for cycle stand extensions, and an offer to asphalt the yard for £5/1/3 were accepted.

SOCIAL HALL

Next on the building list was a social hall. A committee member, W. J. Lloyd, made the first suggestion on July 22, 1909. Someone was listening because a couple of months later, a sub-committee was formed to investigate alterations to improve accommodation in the building.

Recommendations were quickly approved and it was decided to borrow £500 from Ward & Co at 5 per cent interest for five years. Ironically, only a few weeks earlier, the club had told Wards that unless the quality of its beer improved, Richmond would stop drawing it.

A new bikeshed was built, a new wall constructed, 12 new chairs bought and two seats upholstered. And this time, there was an opening night to celebrate refurbishing.

About this time, the first steps were taken to connect the club with the sewerage system. Plans and specifications were approved for improving the outbuildings, and sewer work.

March 9, 1909 was a milestone in the history of the club — £100 was lodged on fixed deposit for 12 months at the National Bank.

And “comfort” was coming to the club interior — but with a small “c”. Seats were to be upholstered with second-class leather and cushions hair stuffed.

The growing affluence of the club was reinforced by a decision in April 1911 to pay £200 off the Ward mortgage. A recommendation was made to the 1912 committee to pay off the balance as soon as possible.

The following month, the committee decided to obtain paper samples for renovation of the main room, and to advertise for tenders. The samples were quickly approved and a £20/3 tender accepted to paint the room. At the half-yearly meeting, a committee was established to look at improving and popularising the library.

Soon after World War 1, club members caught the building bug again. The 1923 annual meeting set up a nine-member special committee to look into extensive alterations and report to a general meeting.

A decision to go ahead with renovations to the social hall was made in September and a £95 tender accepted. At the same time, a sub-committee was appointed to investigate rebuilding.

Just over a year later, the club agreed to terms for building extensions. James Hickmott was to advance £2500 by progress payments as building proceeded on first mortgage to April 1929 at 7 per cent a year. The club had the right to repay at least £500 at any time.

Although members conceded the cost of a circular bar was a barrier to putting in a cellar in 1930, they nevertheless commissioned an architect to draw up a rough sketch plan of the new cellar proposal. A £290/10 tender was accepted and club members wheeled the spoil from the excavations in barrows to a section owned by the club.

The architect, Gordon Harris, was then appointed to remodel the club premises, and the executive determined to obtain £2500 from the public trustee at 6 per cent interest.

The Sam Weller swarry was sidelined for the year and “a big dinner” planned to celebrate the completion of the new building on the Stanmore Rd/London St corner, a section bought under the presidency of Ron Grant. The 16 tenders ranged from £2198 to £2990, with the lowest (from W. Williamson — “a very reliable man who had done considerable work in the city”) accepted. However, the contract could not be signed until finance was confirmed.

A loan of £2000 at 7 per cent was accepted with Jas Shand & Co. The other contender was Quill Morris Ltd which however wanted a fair chunk of the club’s trade as well.

The new building was officially opened on February 21, 1931.

BACK AT IT

A NEW BUILDING

Next, the club negotiated an overdraft with the National Bank of New Zealand. Plans, costs and an architect's report were prepared for enlarging the bar and the club agreed to buy a London St section for £350. Sixty-five members gave the go-ahead for a rearrangement of the bar, billiards and card tables, installation of a fireplace, and provision of comfortable furniture. A £48/10 tender was accepted.

Those plans grew more and more ambitious . . . the building committee came up with a price of £501/3/6 for new linoleum, floor levelling, 100 chairs, 25 tables, blinds and curtains, and new lights . . . then it grew into a new building and the acceptance of a £3378/5 tender from W. Calvert & Son.

But the senior trustee, Mr Appleyard, assured members they should have no worry about financing the new building programme, although some small privileges may have to be curtailed. The auditor, E. Smith, confirmed that the club finances were "very satisfactory".

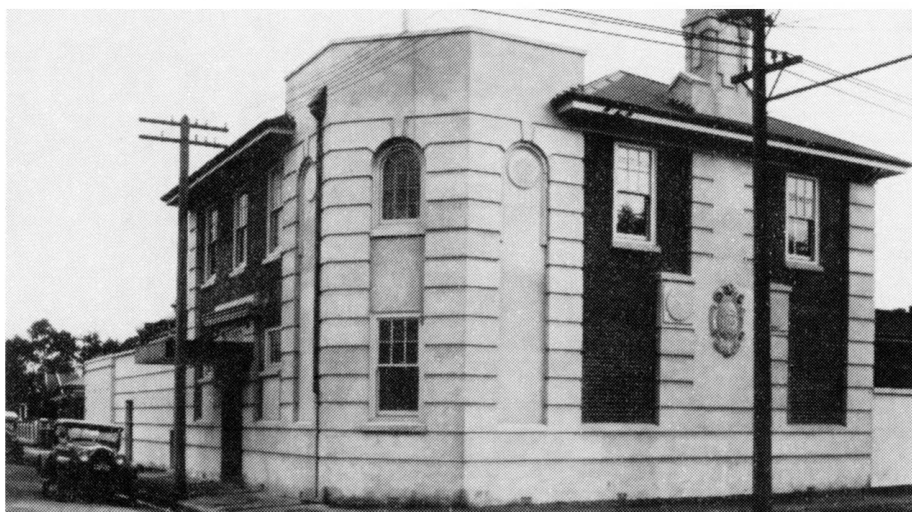
Members responded by passing a vote of confidence in the president and executive for the sound state of the club and particularly the progressive attitude adopted in proceeding with new building.

The manager of the National Bank checked out the bank's loan by visiting the club. He declared himself impressed with the building, general layout and cleanliness, and satisfied about the bank's liability.

Railways minister Dan Sullivan officially opened the new building at a ladies' evening on August 10, 1938 . . . a night of dancing, musical items and a buffet supper.



The original 1888 building.



The new building opened on February 21, 1931.



The club after the new additions had been opened on August 10, 1938.

* * *

Erection of a cycle stand was a serious business in 1949. Richmond sent out a deputation to inspect the bikesheds at the Kaiapoi Club and the New Brighton racecourse (mobile) before making a decision.

* * *

And in 1957, club members were discovered to be leaving bikes in passageways where they were taking varnish off the walls. Out went the edict — no bicycles in passageways.

A VERY DIFFICULT MATTER

By the half-yearly meeting in November 1946, the next lot of proposed extensions looked “a very difficult matter” for at least two years. The club was freehold with about £500 in assets above liabilities.

A proposed new bar plan was submitted in September 1949. Once it was completed, plans could go ahead for the rest of the building. Plans and specifications for the building to be drawn up while bar negotiations continued.

In September 1955, Mr Holliss suggested a suitable building could be built on the back section. Another storey could not be built on top of the hall because the necessary strengthening would be out of proportion to the results but provision could be made for an additional floor on top of the proposed building. It would be possible to build an equivalent room on the front of the section.

The rifle range could stay where it was until a further floor was erected on the proposed building. The rear of the section would provide 2200 sq ft of bar space, the front 3100 sq ft. Both could be joined by a hall through doors cut through present windows. A plan was obtained for a back section building and Mr Hollis prepared a sketch plan and estimates, and provided for a second storey over the back part. Double foundations would be needed to allow a second storey.

The President, Mr D. Barrett, went to Wellington to discuss the proposals with the buildings controller and the Licensing Control Commission. However, the club ran into trouble raising finance for the new building. James Shand & Co was unable to meet the £10,000 sought (it could provide £3000) and an approach to New Zealand Breweries yielded “rather doubtful” results.

A special general meeting was called to consider whether another building was needed and if so, where; should specifications be obtained; could the club spend up to £20,000, could it borrow £10,000, and would members advance money on debentures?

About 200 members voted to build on the London St site, with plans and specifications to be obtained subject to total finance. The committee was empowered to spend up to £20,000, and if unable to raise the necessary finance, approach members about debentures. Permission was given for the club to borrow up to £10,000 and give reasonable security.

Hollis submitted the plan to a special meeting in October. A beer cellar or room would cost £2000, while a circulating pump off present tanks would cost £800. The proposed building would cover 1620sq ft.

But a month later, the half-yearly meeting was told the building programme had been deferred. There had been a 10 per cent decline in the club's gross percentage.

A decision to build in the quoits yard by extending the lounge bar was confirmed by yet a further special general meeting. And there was a change in the building site – from London St to Stanmore Rd.

In June 1957, the bank approved a £5000 overdraft for the new building. And by this time, Hollis had a new plan . . . 2690 sq ft, concrete

base with false roof, brick walls, recommended oil burning plant for heating, would take about six months.

Yet another special meeting accepted a £12,725 tender from Leader Construction Co Ltd for the new building. Heating would cost about £2600. Messrs Barrett, Evans and Willcox were appointed as a permanent building committee to liaise with architect and builder on variations etc.

Progress on the new building was slow. The sub-contractors were blamed and no definite completion date could be given. A £7000 mortgage was arranged through Joynt Andrews & Co to go with the £2000 bank overdraft.

After a rejig of the plan for the bars had been approved in 1965, some members expressed reservations and suggested an alternative. New plans, incorporating this recommendation, were submitted and approved unanimously.

The job was expected to cost £23,000. Hence the executive's astoundment that the tenders — £37,184, £39,120, £38,095, £39,902 — varied so much from the architect's estimate. Quantity surveyors were asked to investigate the price structure. Eventually, the architect reported that Fletchers could reduce the price to the "vicinity of £28,000" with several modifications. The job could be done for £27,184 — provided the new bar was done straight away and the others were left until the alterations above the lounge were ready to start. The final figure of £27,653/2/10 included an emergency provision of £440.

By the annual meeting in May, the President, Roy Fisk, told members he was sure the new social hall was "second to none" in New Zealand. The new hall was officially opened in October 1966 by the Deputy-Mayor, Mr H.P. Smith.

Another building began to take shape on August 2, 1971, The building committee — E. McPherson, A. Drake, M. Drake, A. Fraser, L. Murray and E. Browne — met the architect, engineers and builder, and it was decided to prepare tentative plans for a new building. The plan was accepted by the executive and building committee.

Finance was to be raised through debentures.

However, a special general meeting in February contended that sub-committees had not been consulted about the new building and there was consensus that the billiard room was too small. A move to force the club to call tenders and appoint a consultant/architect was lost 128-52.

Meetings with sections elicited full support for the building project. Sections agreed to run extra raffles and contribute \$1000 a year, one section offered to hand back its grant, and the squash section agreed to hand over \$2000 raised for a squash court.

SHAPING UP

A special meeting in October accepted M.J. Prendeville & Co's \$641,858 tender for the new building.

By the 1972 annual meeting, debentures were half-subscribed — \$222,660 from 279 depositors. By August, they were close to the quarter-million mark.

The \$750,000 extension was opened on June 10, 1974. The two-storey building contained three squash courts (the first in a New Zealand workingmen's club), an indoor rifle range, library, general sports areas, four furnished and carpeted lounges, the largest of which held about 1000. It was on a site which once flanked a stream flowing down London St, then turned north alongside what was then Stanmore "Mud" Rd.

RESTAURANT & MEETING ROOM

After a restaurant was built in 1977 at a cost of \$11,000, quotes for alterations to provide a meeting room on the first floor were obtained. When the club hosted a New Zealand Chartered Clubs executive meeting, the lack of such facilities was clearly evident when the meeting had to take place in the restaurant.

Renovations in the new committee/president's room were started, then held over until finances available.

Downstairs, up to \$500,000 is to be spent on reshaping and refurbishing to construct a bistro bar, connected to the restaurant by a dumb waiter, demolish the canteen and incorporate it into the billiard room. This work to be completed before 1988.

This prompted renovations to form a new committee/president's room in the upstairs, south-eastern corner.

THE NEW LOOK

As the club's centenary approached, there had been a lot of discussion about a centennial project and a revamp for the club's interior. Finally, about the middle of 1987, the decision was made to go ahead. Six months later, the first major work on the club since the new building in 1971 was complete ready for the centennial celebrations.

Upstairs, a dumb waiter was built into the restaurant kitchen and the social hall refurbished and decorated. The lounge area along the northern windows was provided with a new bar and curtains hung to allow it to be partitioned off from the empty bulk of the hall.

Downstairs, a bistro bar was incorporated along the eastern wall, with meals supplied via the dumb waiter from the restaurant above. The canteen disappeared into the billiard room, making way for six billiard and four pool tables. The billiard room ceilings were lowered and a toilet sited in the south-eastern corner.

Paraplegic and women's toilets were added to the bar area which was redecorated and recarpeted, and the gambling machines confined to their own private room.

Out front, the entrance foyer was redeveloped, with the club photographs moved to the upstairs landing (between the social hall and the library) to form a feature display of the many of the club's most notable names and faces. A new trophy case has been built and all available old photographs restored (many were caught just in time — another year or two and they would have been beyond help).

So the never-ending process of change and adjustment continues. The club's founders would undoubtedly be bewildered could they return to the club today, especially when they discovered carpet part way up the walls. But just as they were innovators in their day, so they would almost certainly recognise the inevitability of change.

The first century of Richmond Workingmen's Club history has covered the greatest period of change the world has seen; now the second 100 years has begun with change — and indicators point to even more startling changes ahead. Some things, it seems, never change.

The Centennial Committee has spent five and a half years planning and organising the Richmond Workingmen's Club's centennial year. Club president Graham O'Connor convened a meeting on July 5, 1982 to form a committee to organise the 1988 centennial activities.

Club invited and accepted as members of that committee were: T. Withers (Chairman), D. Robertson (Secretary), D. Crerar, M. Langford, A. Henderson, W. Baynes, N. Quinn, D. Earl, J. Yagodenski and W. Cadigan (Club Manager). P. Daly and S. Clarke were added in August 1982, D. Earl resigned in February 1983 and A. Henderson left in October 1984. The committee also lost Norm Quinn who died during 1984 and Pat Daly who died in June 1987.

In August 1985, R. Dalgety, M. Davis, W. Falloon, W. Flett and N. Wills were invited to join the committee.

Regular meetings have been held throughout the build-up to 1988. The first projects were to obtain the services of an editor for a centennial magazine and to raise funds to assist with activities in 1988. Both objectives were achieved early on by obtaining a permit to run housie in the social hall of the club on Friday nights.

The committee then looked to promotional work and obtained the services of Charles Haines Ltd. Logo and advertising material were designed and souvenirs ordered. Sporting sections were encouraged to apply for and hold tournaments, especially national or South Island, during 1988, and the committee concentrated on helping promote and co-ordinate these activities. Application was also made to hold the New Zealand chartered clubs conference.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

CLUB PRESIDENTS

1888-90	D. Cochrane	1936-41	R.M. Grant
1891-92	J. Dutton	1941-43	E. McPherson
1893-94	W.H. Howard	1943-49	W.F. Willcox
1894-98	J. Stapleton	1949-50	E. McPherson
1898-99	J. Bell	1950-51	W.F. Willcox
1899-1901	C.E. Beasley	1951-54	A. Hutchison
1902-05	J. Richards	1954-55	R.D. Gray
1906-12	W.L. Barr	1955-59	D. Barrett
1912-15	C. Broun	1959-60	A. Hutchison
1915-17	R.S. Ward	1960-64	R.T. Newman
1918-19	J. Hughes	1964-69	L.R. Fisk
1919-24	J.W. Malcolmson	1969-74	E. McPherson
1925-27	R.B. Woodward	1974-80	M.C. Hart
1928-29	J. Dougan	1980-82	P. Daly
1929-31	R.B. Woodward	1982-85	G.P. O'Connor
1932-35	R.M. Grant	1985-87	D. Crerar
1935-36	C.W. Mann	1987-	M.L. Langford

* * *

The 1967 annual meeting was a loser's affair. A move to end half-yearly meetings was lost; so was an attempt to raise the subscription from \$2 to \$3 (although a \$3 penalty was to be added if the sub wasn't paid by January 31).

* * *

1971 and the club picnic at Rangiora had been an outstanding success — record crowd and a large number of children who put a strain on the supply of sweets and fruit. But after a triple dead heat in the committeemen's race between Alan Drake, Martin Drake and Sandy Fraser, there was talk of the judges being given other duties next year.

* * *

Just as well it was 1930 and not 1980 when on December 10 a motion was passed that Chinamen and Hindus would not be admitted as visitors to the club.

Another member had to be written to for introducing "an undesirable person" into the club. The details of "undesirability" were not spelt out.

NEW ZEALAND SPORTING REPRESENTATIVES

Billiards:

Tom Yesberg
Brian Kirkness
Ken Giles

Bowls:

Stan Sneddon

Boxing:

Kevin Pyne

Cricket:

Dick Motz

Rugby league:

Alastair Atkinson

Darts:

Mike Fagan
Ken Smith

Rugby:

Sid Carleton
Craig Green
George Scrimshaw

Smallbore rifle shooting:

Gavin McKay
Ray Mitchell

Snooker:

Peter De Groot

Soccer:

Ray Davey
Merv Gordon

Softball:

Arnold Hall
Jimmy Hall

Table Tennis:

John Chandler (New Zealand Deaf)

KILLED IN ACTION

World War 1:

J. Austin
W.D. Bryden
A.E. Burson
F.W. Coton

A. Nankerville Jnr

N.H. Packham
M. Singleton
C. Townsend
H. Wright

World War 2:

E.J. McEachon
D. Frazer
D.W. Neil

CLUB LIFE MEMBERS

1932	Stan Hix — services to the club
1935	Ron Grant — services to the club
1954	Tom Yesberg — services to sport
1980	Morel Hart — services to the club
1987	Don Crerar — services to the club

1988 CENTENNIAL YEAR PROGRAMME

Convener of Social and Sporting Events Don Crerar

Saturday, January 30: 7pm

Official opening of Centennial Year and dedication of trees by the Mayor of Christchurch, Sir Hamish Hay. Everyone welcome.

Friday, February 12-Sunday, February 14:

Chartered Clubs national darts championships.

Saturday, February 13:

Darts Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Sunday, February 14:

Annual picnic.

Tuesday, March 1-Sunday, March 6:

Chartered Clubs and invitation national squash championships.

Saturday, March 5:

Squash Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Saturday, March 12-Monday, March 14:

South Island Workingmen's Clubs and Chartered Clubs outdoor bowls tournament.

Saturday, March 12:

Outdoor Bowls Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Friday, April 1-Sunday, April 3 (Easter):

Cricket — Richmond Workingmen's club v Petone Workingmen's Club.

Saturday, April 2:

Cricket Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Sunday, April 3:

Invitation golf tournament, McLeans Island — open to all present and past members of Golf Section, plus invited clubs.

Sunday, April 3-Monday, April 4:

South Island country music awards — everyone welcome.

Saturday, April 23-Sunday, April 24:

Card tournament.

Saturday, April 23:

Cards Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Sunday, April 24:

Fishing contest — North Canterbury surfcasting competition.

Monday, April 25 (Anzac Day):

11am — Anzac Day parade. Lunch in social hall.

Sunday, May 8:

Table tennis singles tournament — Canterbury chartered club members only.

Sunday, May 22:

Bush Kennedy indoor bowls tournament.

Saturday, June 4-Monday, June 6

(Queen's Birthday weekend):

South Island Golden Gloves boxing tournament, social hall — everyone welcome.

Sunday 17 June

Annual Club boxing tournament

Sunday, June 19-Sunday, June 26:

New Zealand Workingmen's and Cosmopolitan Clubs national indoor bowls championships.

Friday, June 24:

Indoor Bowls Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Friday, July 1-Saturday, July 16:

Travel Section centennial tour to Singapore and Hong Kong — bookings now open.

Saturday, July 23:

Les Havler indoor bowls tournament.

Sunday, July 31:

Combined Cards & Billiards Section crib, 45s and euchre tournament.

Saturday, August 6:

Table Tennis Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Sunday, August 7:

Canterbury Chartered Clubs table tennis doubles competition.

Saturday, August 13:

Combined Cards & Billiards Section euchre tournament.

Monday, September 5-Saturday, September 10:

National billiards singles championships.

Sunday, September 11:

Billiards Association annual meeting.

Monday, September 12-Saturday, September 17:

National snooker singles championships.

Thursday, September 22-Sunday, September 25:

National workingmen's and cosmopolitan clubs snooker pairs championships.

Saturday, October 1-Sunday, October 9:

New Zealand Chartered Clubs national pool championships.

Saturday, October 8:

Pool Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Wednesday, October 12:

Old Timers' Day.

Saturday, October 22-Sunday, October 23

(Labour weekend):

Chartered clubs regional quoits tournament.

Saturday, October 22:

Quoits Section cabaret — everyone welcome.

Sunday, October 23:

Invitation golf tournament, McLeans Island — open to all present and past members of Golf Section, plus invited clubs.

Friday, December 9-Sunday, December 18:

Centennial Week.

Friday, December 9:

Welcome guests to Centennial Week, social hall, 7pm-1am — everyone welcome.

Saturday, December 10:

Centennial Christmas cabaret — everyone welcome.

Sunday, December 11:

Sports and socialising day — section members and guests.

Tuesday, December 13:

Open house (convened by All Sports Section) — all members with 40 years of continuous club membership and anyone aged over 80.

Wednesday, December 14:

Past committee members night, plus invited presidents and guests.

Thursday, December 15:

Conversazione 7pm-11.30pm.

Friday, December 16:

Sam Weller swarry for men; women's night at Centrepont. NB: A Sam Weller swarry is an upmarket 19th century smoko — free clay pipes, tobacco and traditional food.

Saturday, December 17:

Cabaret and supper — everyone welcome.

Sunday, December 18:

Church parade and farewell — everyone welcome.

Saturday, December 31:

"Goodbye Centennial Year" New Year's Eve party — everyone welcome.