

This historical record of Drouin Golf Club, “The Dust Never Settles” was written by Mr. Hugh Mapleson affectionately known by all of us as “Hughie”. Hughie was a Jindivick dairy farmer; his son Bill is currently a member of the Club. Hughie took it upon himself to put this story together in his own words as he was involved in the reformation of the Club in 1955. Hughie’s account of the Club’s history is both factual and at times humorous as Hughie possessed a dry sense of humour. Sadly his story ends in 1971 as he passed away rather suddenly at the age of fifty four (54).

THE DUST NEVER SETTLES

Entrusted with the safe-keeping of our Club’s only copy of historical information, I felt it part of my duty during a term of office, as our Club’s honorary Secretary, to provide an alternative source of information for club historians of the future.

I have endeavored to confine observations to a minimum, yet at all times hoping to achieve an interesting and readable story.

Please understand that I have only sparingly referred to activities of other sections of our Club, such as the Associates, the Social Committee, and other sub-committees who have all worked to their maximum in providing our course and amenities, but to fully cover all of these activities would require much more research time than I am able to provide at this stage.

I sincerely hope that the following pages will re-live memories for our long-standing members, and provide a background of information for the more recent additions to our membership list.

After a couple of months of street corner and hotel-bar discussion and argument, a Public Meeting was called to enable all those interested to discuss the possibility of forming a Golf Club in Drouin. This meeting, held in the Public Hall on July the Seventh, 1955, was formally convened by Assistant Manager of the Drouin Co-op Butter Factory, Joe Sharkey, who was also at the time, President of the Drouin Race Club, and a member of the D.A.D.C.O. Committee.

Sharkey outlined the history of golfing activity in Drouin and the various venues of this sport in this particular area in the past and made the suggestion that golf links could be constructed at Matthew Bennett Park. A suggestion made from the body of the hall, “That investigations be made into the possibility of forming a Golf Club in Drouin”, was rejected, on the grounds that this type of investigation had already been done and a

Motion, “that a Golf Club be formed in Drouin”, was passed.

Shire Engineer, Gordon (Don) Roberts was nominated as President, with Postal official, Warren Wales as his deputy, dental surgeon Bruce Drysdale was harnessed to the Secretarial position and the dual role of Assistant Secretary and Treasurer was accepted by newsagent, Don Barker.

Elected to form the foundation Committee were: fibro-plasterer Alan Wilson, concrete contractor Alan Dunstan, Shire Secretary Tom Ryan, Drouin South farmer Frank Prophet, Bank Manager Bill McLaughlin, Shire assistant engineer Bill Young, Earthworks contractor Jack Cuthbertson and Baker Jack Caddy.

Alan Wilson made a proposal that “golf club subscription be two guineas”, Tom Ryan thought that was too much and suggested that Members pay thirty bob and Associates Members pay fifteen, and Bruce Drysdale, wanting a heap of money in a short time, suggested that members pay their subs a couple of years in advance. Banker Bill McLaughlin went off at a tangent and wanted an estimate of the cost to start the project, this cost to then be shared by the foundation members. Postie Warren Wales then immediately changed the subject and wanted a Constitution. The matter of fees was held over, pending a cost survey by Don Roberts, and would be decided at a later date by the Committee. Don Roberts also volunteered to take levels of the area, take ground contours from existing maps and contact a Mr Campbell, a retired Public Works Engineer, with an interest in golf-course architecture, to find out if he could plan an eighteen-hole golf course on Matthew Bennett Park. Warren Wales suggested that an Associate’s Committee be formed, and this being decided, Mesdames Prophet, Cuthbertson, Roberts, Dunstan, Barker, and Taylor were elected.

“Strike while the iron is hot” was the motto and the first Committee Meeting was held in the Shire Offices on the Thursday of the following week and a plan of attack was formulated on the rubbish and regrowth in the area enclosed by the race track. Jack Cuthbertson and Drouin South farmer Ross Bell, volunteered to supply tractors and mowers and Alan Dunstan would commandeer a truckload or two of sand from the Jackson Track area. This sand would be gathered on the following Sunday, carted, and spread in nine patches to form “greens”. It was decided at this meeting that intending members would be required to pay a combined entrance fee and annual subscription of two guineas, and that a cheque account would be opened at the Commercial Bank of Australia, and Bill McLaughlin was given the position of Club Handicapper, along with this account. The secretary informed both D.A.D.C.O. and the Race Club of these decisions and asked the Race Club if their building could be used as a Clubhouse. By August 18th, the Club had a credit balance of 52 pounds 1 shilling and at that stage, local newspaper Proprietor, Tom Pettit, was invited to attend all committee meetings as the D.A.D.C.O. representative.

It may be wise at this particular juncture to explain D.A.D.C.O. The Drouin and District Carnivals Organisation, or D.A.D.C.O., was formed, under the auspices of the Buln Buln Shire Council for the purpose of gaining Government grants to be used at

Matthew Bennett Park. One or two sports meetings were held at the Park, with less than moderate success, the Harley Motorcycle Club of Victoria was attracted to conduct motorcycle scrambles on the old pony-race circuit and a grant was received for the building of Public Toilets. D.A.D.C.O. members were responsible for the building of these toilets, along with other works, such as clearing and forming of the public car park, and although a few of its members tried very hard to make this organization a success, the dice was heavily loaded against such a possibility. Sporadic and infrequent activity could never improve the area to any great extent, and the diversity of the sporting interests of its members made any specialist sporting activity a hurdle to its overall and permanent success. Nevertheless, one could say that its greatest triumph was the interest it created in the possibilities of this area as a sporting rendezvous.

On returning to the Golf Club scene we find that nine temporary fairways had been planned and the main activity was centered in this area. The first tee was situated where our ninth green now stands, and the first green, or sand patch, was situated to the left of the eighth green. The second ran from behind this green to a position near our eighth tee. The third was a short hole back towards the start of our eighth fairway and the fourth ran from North to South down the near side of the centre dam. The fifth came from our sixth tee to a position half way up the hill to our sixth green and the original sixth was another short hole from there to a green just short of our present tenth. The seventh was played from near that green to an area in front of our seventh tee. The eighth ran parallel to the final 200 yards of our present third, and the ninth tee was placed in the racecourse chute and played up the racetrack to a green situated at our first tee. A five-pound packet of seed was purchased to spread around the greens, along with a bag of Super and Ammonia.

Jack Cuthbertson volunteered to make cups for the greens out of piping, a bit big in diameter but that wouldn't matter, and another committee member said he could "lay his hands" on some S.E.C. insulators that would make good tee markers. Bill Young took on the job of making and painting tee boards. The Committee at this stage had its first encounter with surface water, for, as rubbish was cleared, great pools of water appeared, and D.A.D.C.O. allowed the Club to dig some shallow drains. Don Barker, Don Roberts and Bill McLaughlin were authorized to draw up a Club Constitution. This project was accomplished in four hundred and eighty well-chosen words and considered broad enough in its concept to be the Club's guiding light for ten years.

Less than two months after the formation meeting on the Third of September 1955, the opening of the Drouin Golf course took place. Dignitaries who were present on that day included the President of the Buln Buln Shire, Cr. Tom Holland J.P., other Shire Councilors, the President of the Race Club, the President of the Warragul Golf Club, and the President of D.A.D.C.O. After performing the opening ceremony, Cr. Tom Holland called on Shire Secretary, Tom Ryan, to stand upon the first tee and strike a ball down the first fairway. Some miraculous golf shots have been played on our course in the intervening years, including holes in one, but this shot, although only traveling fifty yards and some thirty degrees off line, was the most important of all golf shots to be played on our course. Twenty-four pairs took part in a Mixed Foursomes event, but the rain came

tumbling down, and play was abandoned. However, a long drive competition was held, with Jack Caddy filling first place and Tom Pettit running second. Alan Dunstan had the honor of winning the approach shot competition. These players received trophies to the value of ten and sixpence. The Associates looked after the catering arrangements, the Club had purchased a kerosene stove, and Don Barker had been authorized to purchase teacups and hire the most necessary glasses. Nobody had thought to elect a Club Captain prior to this day, but as he could hit a ball further than anyone else, Jack Caddy was elected to this position.

Being demons for punishment, the Committee decided to have another big day on September the 18th, when an invitation was extended to ex-Australian Cricket Eleven Captain, Lindsay Hassett, who owned a city sports store, and his store's professional golfer, to play exhibition golf at Drouin. Don Roberts and Don Barker, being the best looking chaps in the Club, had the task of playing a few rounds with the visitors in Gleeson's Hotel, before taking them to the course. Apparently Hassett and his mate had had too much practice at this game for the two Dons, and instead of bringing the visitors back to the field, they were easily able to account for Jack Caddy and Lindsay Smith in the afternoon match. Before this match, local rules were made and adopted, and many of these rules are still operative today. After this match, some members of the general public became interested in the game of golf, so green fees were set at three shillings a day and a box was nailed to the Southern wall of the building for the collection of these fees.

Working bees had been held every Sunday since the inception of the Club and although agricultural mowers had made a good start to the formation of fairways, the Committee felt that it was time for improved mowing. With this in mind, Don Roberts approached the Warragul Shire Council and the Warragul Golf Club to find out if either body was willing to hire a set of gang mowers. As was anticipated, both of these bodies were reluctant to hire their valuable machines as ti-tree roots and crab holes mounds are not the best materials to run through a set of finely adjusted gang mowers. The Clubhouse received further equipment in the form of a kettle, teapot, 24 teaspoons and a dozen more cups.

Ten weeks after the start of play, it was noticed that the steel cups protruded by half an inch above the surface of the "greens", so an auger was borrowed from the Bowling Club and the holes were shifted. Plans were being made for the clearing of more timber as players were already becoming tired of playing on a small merry-go-round and plans were also being made to shift "greens" to more suitable positions. In fact these plans were being made before the dust settled after the initial foray.

A decision was made to hold a General Meeting in late November at which the future prospects of the Club would be fully reviewed and debated, as some pessimism was being felt by members. At this meeting on the 25th, it was asked why this Club could be any more successful than the three or four previous Golf Clubs had been in the past in Drouin. Confidence, in this case, could be placed in the fact that this was the first time that golf was being played in Drouin, on public property, and that golf committeemen

were also members of D.A.D.C.O., and were vitally interested in Matthew Bennett Park. This was contrary to their counterparts on earlier Golf Committees, who were interested only in the pleasures of the game of golf, and not in their town or civic well-being. The difficulty of borrowing gang mowers was discussed, but nothing was resolved at this juncture, as was the D.A.D.C.O. decision to hold further motorcycle scrambles at the Park.

An estimate of 500 pounds was received for the clearing of the remaining area of the Park, and the Committee set about the task (which was to become perennial) of raising more money. The Committee decided that the best way to do this would be to issue debentures, costing five pounds each and returning four per cent for a period of ten years. Tom Pettit advised the committee that D.A.D.C.O. would clear ten acres in the Northern section of the Park, and that this work would be completed by the eleventh of December. The Harley Club held another of their scrambles in early December, and a Golf Committeeman reported to the next meeting, "that little damage had been done to the golf course, two greens were damaged, and one completely destroyed, but it could be easily and quickly repaired." But the Golf Club sent a strong representation to the following D.A.D.C.O. meeting to see if some restriction could be placed on this type of sport at the Park. This was the beginning of a lengthy and, at times, bitter battle to curb this activity.

Also at this stage the Race Club threw their first spanner in the works advising that their Club was formulating further extension to their course. It was planned to lengthen their circuit by 200 yards and increase the width by 12 feet. This caused a flurry in the Golf committee resulting in the Golf Club seeking purchase of adjoining land, but none was available.

Debenture sales, as a result of this anti-golf campaign, were slow, local residents in the main were lacking in confidence of the ability of the Golf Club to persevere, let alone grow. Having no finance to extend its operations, the Club decided that the only way to show the public that it meant business at Matthew Bennett Park was to follow up the original plan and peg out the complete course of eighteen holes. This was done and members were rostered to canvass for debentures and Alan Rogers was to issue the actual forms.

D.A.D.C.O. failed with their intention to have clearing done, and a finance committee of Caddy, Wales and Drysdale elected, with their main object to getting as much clearing done as possible, with the available funds, and in February of 1956 Jack Cuthbertson was asked to do as much clearing as he could before the Annual meeting on March the nineteenth.

This meeting, held in the Fire Brigade Hall, saw a roll-up of twenty-five members, and a credit balance of forty-seven pounds. Don Roberts was re-elected to the chair, as was Warren Wales, Jack Caddy, Don Barker and Bruce Drysdale. For the election of the Committee, a ballot was needed: Bill Young, Alan Dunstan, Jack Cuthbertson and Frank Prophet held their places, whilst Tom Ryan, Alan Wilson, and Bill McLaughlin lost ground to Farmer Keith Grant, Archie Lugton, Grocer Ken Bell, and chemist Alan

Rogers. Affiliation with an Association was desired and Alan Dunstan was nominated as a delegate to attend a West Gippsland Golf Association meeting to project our image. Fees were set at three guineas for Members and thirty shillings for Associates. A social committee was formed with hardware man Jack Paynter, carrier Don Aitken, Alan Rogers, along with Mesdames Stroud, McMillan, Drysdale and Miss Joyce Crofts, Mrs. D. Aitken, being elected. After the meeting, two golfing films, loaned by the Shell Company and shown on Bill Kraft's projector operated by Colin Maxfield, were shown. Apparently grass had by now pushed its way through the sand on the "greens" and it was decided to mow the greens on the 25th April in readiness for the opening of the season. The Club, at this time, was making representations to the Shire Council, being the official Committee of Management of Matthew Bennett Park, for permission to construct an eighteen hole course, and on the 23rd January 1956, Council passed the resolution, "that Council approve of the construction of an eighteen hole golf course by the Drouin Golf Club, subject to the course not interfering with other sporting bodies at Matthew Bennett Park". The Golf Club committee, which had started the custom of holding their meetings in the homes of Committee members, printed a golfing programme for the coming season which they sent out to members, together with notes on golfing etiquette, and their annual subscription account. The "greens" were causing concern as the strong growing native grass had taken over the relatively thin coating of sand, so, prior to Opening Day, the Committee decided to spray them with Atlacide. This toxic substance was, apparently, not successful, for at a later date, the "greens" were given a dose of sump oil and kerosene which was mixed together in Alan Dunstan's concrete mixer.

Tom Pettit still attended Committee meetings in an effort to keep the failing D.A.D.C.O. cause alive, and Warren Wales continuously pressed for the adoption of the Club Constitution which had been drafted for nearly twelve months. The Race Club and D.A.D.C.O. were both approached and asked to contribute to the cost of a small amount of grass seed and when both of these bodies refused, Don Barker presented a putter which was to be raffled with the profits channeled to the purchase of seed. The newly formed match committee of Jack Caddy, Alan Dunstan, and Lindsay Smith, introduced a "preferred lie rule" as they considered fairways to be rather rough, a rule, which proved during the time of its operation a subject of many debates. A decision was made at this time to bring in some Cranbourne sand for the greens, sand scrapers were made, and members were allocated greens to prepare and maintain. The Social Committee became inactive, but, after being stirred into gear by the General Committee, held a very successful Cabaret Ball on October 19th of that year.

The attendance at Sunday working bees was falling off so the Committee arranged a couple of secret working bees on Saturday afternoons when seven irons were exchanged for slashers and mattocks and the process of producing a golf course resumed. The problem of recurring growth was causing concern and Hec Lowe, from out Jindivick way, was recruited into service with his tractor and mower during the non-golfing part of the season, and Drouin Fire Brigade was brought in to burn this cut material in the late Summer. At every opportunity, the advantages of a Shire policy, which allowed local sporting bodies to hire, free of cost, shire equipment at weekends was taken, and a large amount of work was done in this way. The contract to clear an area which vaguely

covers the area of our first, second, tenth, and sixteenth, was let to Cr. Tom Holland for a sum of one hundred and fifty pounds, and thirty five pounds was set aside for the beginnings of a fund to buy a set of gang mowers.

Warren Wales' beloved Constitution was adopted at the Second Annual Meeting on March 18th 1957. Don Roberts was again re-elected as President, as was Warren Wales and Jack Caddy to their respective positions. Car salesman Barry Smith took over the Secretarial position from Bruce Drysdale, and Alan Rogers succeeded Treasurer Don Barker. Seven nominations were received for the four-man committee and resulted in Jack Paynter, Ken Bell, grocer Lindsay Smith and chemist Geoff Wadham being elected. A separate entrance fee of two guineas was set, and Tom Pettit moved, "That we affiliate with the V.G.A., the W.G.D.G.A., and the V.L.G.U., and that delegates to W.G.D.G.A. be appointed." Jack Caddy and Ken Bell were delegates to attend D.A.D.C.O. meetings and Don Aitken, butcher, Wes Colquhoun, and petroleum agent Jack Stroud, were elected to the Social committee. One of the chores of this Social Committee was to arrange supply and delivery of one dozen bottles of ale to the course every Saturday. A friendly golf competition was arranged between Lang Lang, Garfield and Drouin clubs. A draw was made for this play, two matches were played at Drouin and while these matches were in progress, Associates were banned from the course. The reason for this ban was never recorded, maybe the language was not fit for feminine ears, or was it felt that their presence would impair the player's concentration?

Alan Rogers and Lindsay Smith were delegated to meet the Drouin Recreation Ground Committee to ascertain if an arrangement could be made with that body in regards to the hiring of their gang mowers. The Golf Club was willing to provide a lock-up shed at the course for this equipment, and to pay five shillings per hour for the mowers, plus the operator's wages. A works committee of Keith Grant, Bill Young, and Jack Stroud was formed with the express purpose of erecting this shed. It was quickly into action with the purchase of a number of Secondhand Volkswagen car cases, and transported to the course by Jack, but it seems that this operation, from that point, lost track of itself.

The Golf Club was becoming perturbed at the lack of apparent interest by D.A.D.C.O. and the Race Club in work or maintenance at the Park so it appointed Mr. Dave Anderson as resident caretaker. Dave and his dog occupied a tin shed, which occupied a position on the site of our practice putting green, and woe betides any wrong doers found in the area whilst Dave was in occupation. The Club asked Shire Council to seek a grant to provide children's playground equipment and set aside twenty-four dollars to cover our share of the cost.

It was decided on the 11th of June, that all greens would be constructed of Cranbourne sand and members of the Committee would be rostered to look after their maintenance. Fairways were also causing concern and Mr. Hosking of the Department of Agriculture, was approached and asked to give recommendations for their improvement. He suggested that Super and Ammonia, at the rate of 5cwt. to the acre be applied. This recommendation could only be kept in mind for the future as no funds were available at this time. Players had to creep under racecourse rails, and Jack Dickers was asked to cut,

and hinge these rails, which were required by the Race Club to be replaced, by each group of players.

After the greens were re-sanded, the Committee found that Finances had hit rock bottom, and Guarantors were sought and obtained to secure an overdraft of three hundred pounds with the Commercial Bank, and members were asked to advance their following year's subscription. Negotiations were also, at this time, proceeding with the Shire Council and the Sports Ground Committee, regarding the purchase of their jointly owned gang mowers and after some weeks of crossfire these mowers were purchased.

The third Annual meeting was held on March 29th, 1958 in the Race Club building, which had been, during the past year, completely enclosed and lined by the Golf Club, and it was now possible to sit in it without freezing to death. The Club's finances had taken a tumble to a Debit balance of ninety-five pounds seven shillings and nine pence, and Don Roberts stepped down from his Presidential position and was replaced by Jack Paynter. Warren Wales remained as his deputy, Jack Caddy remained as Captain, and Barry Smith again took up the pen. Alan Rogers again accepted his position, and after ballot, dry-cleaner Alf Belton, Jack Stroud, Don Roberts and Geoff Wadham were elected to the Committee. This Committee decided to hold a Diggers' Day Golf Tournament during the coming year, and it was decided that this Administrative body would remain in office only until the following November, as that month seemed to fit in better with both local and the West Gippsland golfing calendar. It seemed to the Golf Club, that D.A.D.C.O. had outlived its effectiveness and was at the end of its tether, and the Golf Club approached the Shire Council with the recommendation that a co-ordinating Committee be formed, comprising two delegates each of the Race Club, Golf Club and Council. The Shire Council opened an appeal for the erection of a Memorial Gateway to the Park, and the Golf Club donated five guineas of their meager resources to this fund. All those areas of the golf course not taken up by fairways, were covered with long, dry, grass and ti-tree, and the club's officials were worried with the possibility that somebody would become lost in the jungle, or the whole place becoming burnt out. Agricultural mowers were discussed, but were beyond the financial scope of the Club. Doug McLeish came to the Club's aid, and spent much of his time with his tractor and mower trying to keep the rubbish in some sort of order. The first, second, tenth, and sixteenth fairways had been cleared and fired and the big job of cleaning up the area got under way.

Eventually they were sown and though they were rough, full of holes, and still covered with a fair collection of sticks and broken timber, play was commenced on them in November 1958. The Club's first large fertilizer order, a ton of Hortico, and a Victa rotary hand mower were purchased. Members were delighted with the opportunity of playing a twelve-hole course, and a few new faces were seen among the usual Saturday fields.

This twelve-hole layout played ten of our present fairways, but in a different sequence. The first and second were as they are today, except they were both a little shorter, and the third hole started at the first tee, and finished to the left of the bend in the present third. The fourth tee was in that corner and ran due west to a position near our third green, and

the fifth was our present sixth. The sixth was our present tenth, the seventh, our present sixteenth, the eighth and ninth, our present seventeenth and eighteenth. The tenth was our seventh, and the eleventh our eighth, and the twelfth our ninth. Whilst these new fairways were being prepared an old tractor was acquired. Fred Oxley, a member connected to the used machinery business, took Jack Stroud with his truck to Victoria's Northeast, and collected an old steel wheeled workhorse. This machine, although rather short of "get up and go" and a work of art to operate, was responsible for its share of work in those early days of construction.

The Race Club's building came in for its share of attention, portable gas was installed for lighting, a wood burning heating stove was acquired and the insurance cover on these fittings and other improvements was affected. The matter of grass greens was again discussed but the Committee faced realities and shelved, for the time being, any ideas on this matter.

The fourth Annual Meeting, again held in the Race Club's building, a big improvement in the financial position was disclosed, the Club was in credit to the tune of one hundred and twenty nine pounds four shillings and one pence, and the only changes to take place were Jack Stroud taking over the secretarial position from Barry Smith, and Alan Dunstan becoming the new Captain. Affiliation with the West Gippsland District Golf Association had been gained, and Lindsay Smith and Warren Wales were elected as delegates to this body, with their first duty to press for a three-day open tournament for our Club. The Club received a shock when Dave Anderson, our two pound a week caretaker, announced his retirement.

Our delegates had success at the W.G.D.G.A. level, and we were allocated a weekend at the end of May 1959 as the date for our first Annual Tournament. Members worked feverishly prior to this event, clearing the edges of the new fairways to the stage of being able, with some difficulty, to walk through the area, carting and spreading more sand on the "greens", and placing and painting a ceiling in the Race Club's building. New putting cups were purchased, improvements were made to the flagsticks and motor-works foreman Horrie Leishman, and electrician Keith Anderson were appointed to look after the Player's liquid supply. This tournament was a great success, players coming from throughout the whole Association to find out just what these energetic characters at Drouin were doing.

The Ampol Petroleum Company, after being pressurized by their Drouin representative, Jack Stroud, agreed to sponsor a three-day Gymkhana, and this was held at a later date in this same year, with a fair amount of success.

Junior golf came under the notice of the Committee, and jeweler Jack Kerr, devising an ingenious method of handicapping, was responsible for giving many youngsters the opportunity of playing competitive golf. Jack, not only having the ability to play top class golf, had this same ability to impart his knowledge and many of our present day players were started on the road to golf by this "Happy Chappie".

The green fee box which had been shifted to an outside position during the previous twelve months, causes some imaginary concern to the Race Club's new crop of administrative characters, is again shifted back to the wall of the building.

The mowing of the fairways remained as the Club's number one problem as rubber tyred tractors seemed almost impossible to beg or borrow when one was required. Jack Caddy proposed that the Club purchase its own rubber tyred tractor, which was agreed upon, and Jack began the task of selecting a suitable machine. This was quite a difficult assignment for it had to be light weight, strong in mind and body, easy to start, because it would be operated by most of the members, cheaper still to buy, for there was no money available. Barry Smith eventually came to light with an old Allis Chalmers, missing out on the "easy to start" category, but reasonably suitable in all other aspects. A miss-fire on the first attempt at cranking this impulse start machine was an invitation to receive a kick worthy of a bull elephant.

D.A.D.C.O. had run its race by this time, and the Shire Council saw fit to form a Co-ordinating Committee, comprising delegates from the three remaining bodies with any interest in Matthew Bennett Park. Alan Rogers and Alan Dunstan were elected by our Committee, to cross swords at this party, their first duty being an attempt to settle the green fees box wrangle. Two other contentious issues were regarding a lease for the golf course area and the crossing of the racecourse with Golf Club equipment.

The Social Committee again arranged a Cabaret Ball, and a performance by the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company.

The fifth Annual Meeting changed its venue to the Drouin Public Hall, the attendance was poor, but it was revealed that membership, at fifty three, with thirty three Associates, had doubled since the formation of the Club. Bank manager Basil Haberfield was elected to the Chair, Jack Stroud stepped up to be Vice President, Secretary Jack Caddy, and Treasurer Alan Rogers, remained in those offices. Alan Dunstan had also kept the players contented for the past year, and was re-elected Captain. Jack Paynter was elected to accompany Alan Rogers to Co-ordinating Committee meetings. Much of the Club's progress to this stage was due to the work of contractor, John Henry Cuthbertson, who at this meeting was made the Club's first Honorary Life Member. Mention was also made of the valuable contribution to the Club's success, by Jack Caddy, who apart from his secretarial duties, found time to regularly mow the fairways and continually repair and mechanically maintain the gang-mowers and the smoke blowing, kerosene eating tractor. Geoff Wadham also came under notice for spending much of his valuable time in keeping members of the public, fully informed on golfing and Matthew Bennett Park affairs, by medium of our local press, but Geoff wouldn't accept responsibility for reporting the shot gun episode on our Northern boundary. The Annual Tournament of this year had receipts of three hundred pounds, and it was decided to spend four hundred pounds on the clearing of more fairways.

A Charity Golf Day was held to help the finances of the Drouin Swimming pool fund, and plumber Henry Stevens was employed to install further under ground drainage.

Not only did the Golf Club have to maintain their own area at Matthew Bennett Park, but also had to take the initiative in all matters concerning improvement of the Park in general. The Club applied for, and Council agreed to supply two picnic table units, but the golf Club had to clear the scrub so that they could be erected, and then erect them. A request was made for a picnic fireplace, with no response so Alf Belton went ahead and built one. Negotiations were also started to have water brought to the area. These were eventually successful after the Golf Club had agreed to pay one third of the water rating, and water was brought as far as the picnic area during the following autumn.

The venue of the sixth Annual Meeting was changed back to the Race Club's building, on a Saturday after golf in early November, and although membership had increased by thirteen, the attendance was still poor. Basil Haberfield was re-elected, as was Jack Stroud, with Alan Rogers and Alan Dunstan holding their previously held positions. John Russell, a teacher at the High School was elected as the new secretary, and a renewed position of assistant secretary was filled by Jack Caddy. Bank Manager Noel Robb was elected to check the work of money-holder Alan Rogers, and a new-comer to the local golfing scene, plumber David Johns, was to accompany Basil Haberfield to WGDGA meetings and to tag along with Alan Rogers to battle members of the Co-ordinating Committee.

This period of the life of the Golf Club could be regarded as probably the most important, as we were to show, by our achievements, that we were going to be a real force in any Matthew Bennett Park affairs. The Harley Club was pressing for another of their motorcycle scrambles at the Park and the Golf Club's delegates to the Co-ordinating Committee were able to have the date of this fixture deferred on a number of occasions. The Swimming Pool Committee, which, understandably had a large district following, were to receive the Harley Club's rental of thirty pounds and Council also wanted thirty pounds for the Park's memorial gateway, so the Golf Club gave both bodies thirty pounds and the Harley Club fixture was held in abeyance for a further twelve months. Three more fairways, that is, the present eleventh, fourteenth and fifteenth were cleared, and let us understand, that it was only a very narrow strip that was cleared for all the new fairways and the scrub that remained on their edges was almost a solid mass. Later in this year, hotelier Pat Gleeson and builder Jack Dickers, constructed a grass green on the fourteenth fairway and incorporated a bunker to the left front of this green in the set-up. These members, by their initiative, showed everybody that grass greens could be produced resulting in Bill Young becoming interested in the project and pressing the committee into serious consideration to construct grass greens for the remainder of the fourteen-hole course. Confidence was high, but finances were low, for the Club had recently decided to purchase a Ferguson eighteen horsepower petrol driven tractor from Barry Smith.

This tractor, costing three hundred and fifty pounds together with a rotary slasher costing one hundred pounds, had to be repaid over a period of five years.

Two golf days with proceeds going to Charity were conducted and another special day

for the Swimming Pool fund, swung public opinion to the fact that a Golf Club in the town wasn't such a bad idea after all.

John Kerr was getting fifteen to twenty youngsters to his Saturday morning junior competitions and the Shire Council came to the party by starting a tree-planting scheme. Much of the initial tree planting was a waste of time and effort as the soil was so wet that most of them that started to grow, blew over on reaching a height of three or four feet.

At the seventh Annual Meeting, held after golf on Saturday 28th October 1961, it was revealed that the Club had risen in numbers to ninety-one Members, forty-eight Associates and twenty-six juniors and had a credit balance of seventy-two pounds. Competition fees had bought in one hundred and twenty three pounds, fifteen shillings and eight pence. Labour costs were one hundred and six pounds, course construction was four hundred and thirteen and machinery costs were two hundred and forty seven pounds. Vice-president Jack Stroud moved up the scale to take the chair, Alf Belton became the new Vice-president and Horrie Leishman accepted the chore of cleaning up the mess and clearing the back-log of work left by school teacher Russell. Newsagent Tom Powney, who had bought Don Barker's business, became assistant secretary, and Alan Rogers remained to handle the elusive cash. There was a ballot for Captain between John Kerr and Alan Dunstan with the latter winning in a photo finish. Changes continued into the ranks of the Committee, for, when after another ballot, only Geoff Wadham held his place. The new faces on the Committee belonged to jeweller Jack Kerr, Electrician Keith Anderson and Jindivick farmer, Hugh Mapleson. Jack Stroud and Don Roberts were delegated to the WGDGA, where, later in the year Jack was elected Vice-president, and a member of the executive of that body. Tom Powney and Alan Rogers were delegated to the Co-ordinating Committee, Alan Wilson was elected to take charge of the Social Committee when he disclosed a profit of one hundred and twenty pounds for the previous year's activity and he would be aided and abetted by Tom Powney and truckie, Laurie Kane.

This Committee really got moving on the grass green project and Bill Young was called in to assist in this venture. Bill advised the Committee that soil for the construction was available from earthworks of a new drive-in theatre at Warragul and the decision was made to get stuck into the job.

Council trucks roared up and down the Highway, ferrying in the soil, council equipment, and members with shovels and rakes spread most of it as it arrived. Thirteen greens were set out and constructed during one hot weekend. The final work down and sowing took place the following weekend and everybody had visions of soon being able to sink twenty-foot putts, on these new, true surfaces. But what a disappointment was to follow, for, instead of the expected fine grass sward, all that grew was a beautiful crop of cape weed and thistles, and retired Drouin West farmer and sawmiller George Taylor, who had been employed by the Golf Club, at five pounds a week to look after the sand scrapes, started to wage a war on these offenders with his pocket knife. Hughie Mapleson arrived on the scene with a spray outfit, and after killing the weeds, found all that was left, was a few small patches of water grass. Alan Wilson and Barry Smith lent their cylinder cut

lawn mowers, and George and Hughie set about the task of trying to do something with the remains. Eleven of these small greens were in operation for the opening of the season in April and the whole fourteen were somehow made playable for the May annual tournament. Using lights on cars, all these greens were mown by members on the Saturday night of the tournament. Although these greens were composed of poa-annua and Cranbourne loam, they were the pride and joy of all members.

Electrician Keith Anderson donated a kerosene fridge, to keep the beer cool at this tournament and Ray Croxford, a long-hitting left-hander from Box Hill club, created a new record with a sixty-nine. The golfing caliber of the Drouin club was recognized when John Kerr was selected to play in WGDGA Country Week team.

Finances are again depleted and a drive is made for Country Members, and at the same time, advertisements are placed in the "Sporting Globe" seeking green fee players. These advertisements created an interest for golfers in the Metropolitan area, resulting in a small but steady trickle of visitors to our course.

Our Club was now firmly established at Matthew Bennett Park so the Committee thought that it was time to prepare for our own clubhouse. This position was also aggravated by the fact that although the Golf Club had completely renovated the Race Club's building, that body, or its executives, was continually pinpricking the Golf Club's efforts and planning. The first step in the establishment of a club-house was the purchase of a block of freehold land, so with this in mind, the Club applied to Council to purchase part of their land on the Eastern boundary of Matthew Bennett Park. The Council refused, at this stage, to sell any of their land, but offered, as an alternative, a seventy-five year lease, of half an acre.

The Club suffered a great loss at this time, in the sudden death of a great worker, and able administrator Mr. Basil Haberfield.

For his great amount of work in the establishment of the Drouin Golf Club and its course, Mr. John Caddy was made an Honorary Life Member of the Club.

The Harley Club again made an application to Council to conduct another of their scrambles at the Park, and their officers were invited to inspect the venue of their proposed speedway meeting. These fellows arrived and were met by Council officers, and delegates from the Golf Club and, after a quick look, showed almost disbelief at what they saw, and the transformation that had taken place since their previous visit. After complimenting the Golf Club on its work and apologizing for any inconvenience they had caused by their visit, they turned on their heels and left.

In an effort to attract larger competition golf fields the Club increased maximum handicaps from twenty six to thirty six, and this was immediately successful, field average numbers rose from about twenty to over thirty players.

Negotiations were still taking place regarding the purchase of Council owned land, and in

October of that year, Council agreed to the sale of half an acre of land, together with a carriageway running through to the Princes Highway. This was the first move in the jigsaw puzzle of building our own clubhouse.

The eighth Annual Meeting was held in the Race Club's building on Saturday the Third of November 1962, where it was disclosed membership had dropped to eighty four, with thirty seven Associates and fifteen juniors, but on the brighter side, the Club had a credit balance of eighty two pounds after spending fourteen hundred pounds on improvements and maintenance. Jack Stroud was planted back into the Chair, with Alf Belton again his off-sider, Horrie Leishman again accepted the Secretarial position, and Tom Powney was elected to be his backstop. Alan Rogers again handled the financial side, and Geoff Wadham stood against Alan Dunstan for the position of Captain, but after ballot, Alan remained in that office. Committee seats were raised to six and Laurie Kane with Don Roberts, joined the same four as held office during the previous year. Jack Stroud and Don Roberts were elected as delegates to WGDGA, and the Co-ordinating Committee. Alan Wilson and Laurie Kane accepted the positions on the Social Committee, and the match committee was re-elected. Subscriptions were raised to six guineas for Members, and three guineas for Associates, with the joining fee rising to three guineas. Jack Stroud was this year elected to the presidency of WGDGA, and during his terms in this office was largely responsible for bringing our Club into the forefront of our Association.

Jack Caddy still laboured with the fairway cutting and maintenance of mowers and tractors. Jack Cuthbertson was engaged to clear the timber from the remaining fairways and to construct a dam on the storm water drain behind the fourteenth green. A terrific surge of activity was undertaken by Club members, at the same time as this major construction work, greens were being improved with fertilizer and loam top-dressing, and a programme of weed control was initiated, and polythene piping was laid to the sixth, ninth, tenth and eighteenth greens. The Race Club also engaged itself with tape measures and little pegs and much verbal activity, in an effort to take over the tenth fairway and parts of the first and sixteenth fairways. The Race Club's building, after being enclosed, lined and rejuvenated by the Golf Club, now had a rental value of fifty pounds per year, which the Golf Club had to pay or get out.

As our Club was continually at the limit of its overdraft, and the list of unpaid accounts was growing, more bank guarantors were sought and obtained, and the overdraft limit raised to seven hundred and fifty pounds.

Nilma builder, Neil Warne arrived on the scene and was given the task of making and painting tee marker signs and signs for directional and other information. Hughie Mapleson and Hallora farmer, Graeme Brock, accepted the challenge of working on, and sowing the fourth, fifth, twelfth, and sixteen fairways, and after both becoming bogged on a number of occasions, this job was completed. The Club's first tractor-trailer was purchased for thirty pounds and the tedious job of picking up loads of sticks and timber off the new areas commenced.

George Taylor tries footwear from rubber boots, through dancing pumps, to slippers, the

Club doubles his wage to ten pounds a week, but his feet still give him hell. Factory Production manager, John Arnold, and Geoff Wadham finance the sum of two hundred and twenty pounds for the purchase of a new Scott Bonnar greens mower and George forgot all about his aching feet when running to keep up with the new machine.

Another advertisement was placed in the "Sporting Globe", seeking green fee players and we had the first contact from Clubs such as The Reserve Bank, The VRI and Eagle, who for many years played some of their golf on our course.

Discussions in committee again centered on building of a clubhouse and plans were started which provided a temporary clubhouse, doubling for a machinery shed when a permanent home was built. This was a pressing issue as the Race Club's building was continually being broken into and materials being stolen. Tom Pettit donated a shield, which would be held by the player with the five best nett scores for the year. This shield was presented with the hope that more players would play competitive golf for a longer period each year.

Twenty-eight members were present at the ninth Annual Meeting, held after golf on the third of October 1963 to see President Jack and Vice President Alf returned to their respective offices. Horrie Leishman, and Tom Powney, along with Alan Rogers, were also returned to their previously held positions. Geoff Wadham became the new Captain, Graeme Brock took Geoff's place on the Committee and Laurie Kane stepped into John Kerr's position. Geoff Wadham, Hughie Mapleson and Keith Anderson were delegated to the Co-ordinating Committee and the Social Committee comprised, Wilson, Kane, Arnold and local Ampol representative, John Watson. A building committee was formed at this meeting and comprised Don Roberts, Bill Young, Alf Belton, and Alan Dunstan. Fees were raised to seven guineas and three pounds ten shillings, and the Junior age was raised to twenty-one years.

For his planning and work in establishment of the course and particularly for his contribution to the establishment of the new greens and tees, William George Young, was elected to Honorary Life Member of the Club.

The official opening of the eighteen-hole course was carried out on the seventh of December 1963 and the Water Trust at this stage refused the use of polythene piping, and our Club was forced to alter its original watering scheme. The polythene piping between the picnic area and the race track was ripped up and replaced with galvanized iron pipe, and as our Committee believed that polythene piping was the only material to use, both in efficiency and cost, we contacted various other Trusts and Authorities, who assured us that polythene piping was quite suitable if it was used in conjunction with a pressure reducing valve and a pressure relief valve. Samples of piping and this information was passed onto both the Shire Council and the Water Trust. Whilst waiting for a reply, Hughie Mapleson, after consultation with firms dealing with this type of irrigation, planned a scheme to take in all greens and tees, incorporating the dam at the fourteenth green. At last the "go" ahead was given for the scheme and the necessary valves, pipe and outlets were installed by working bee power to the ninth, sixth, eighteenth and tenth

greens. After installation, this portion of the scheme was inspected by employees of the Water Trust who believed the reducing valve to be anything from an eel trap to a dirt filter. During the following summer the advantages of watered greens became apparent to all concerned and the Committee wanted to press on with the complete scheme, but, once again finance was the controlling factor, and an approach was made to the Shire Council for some kind of financial assistance.

All fairways outside the racetrack circuit and some of those inside were showing the effects of increased use, and because of consolidation, all the newer fairways were marked with depressions. Bill Young again came to the fore and arranged Shire vehicles to transport over six hundred cubic yards of filter sand from the Warragul sewerage works to these fairways. Club members, who were continually stoking fires in mountainous heaps of felled timber, gathering sticks and broken wood, rallied to the call, and spread this material to the affected areas. This was a fantastic effort when we recall that the first fairway was completely resurfaced, half of the second, a hundred yards of the third, a hundred yards of the fourth, sixty yards of the fifth, the same at the tenth, two hundred yards of the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and sixteenth, and a hundred yards at the fifteenth and eighteenth. Bill Young and Hughie Mapleson also planned and started a scheme of open drains to take storm water from the course. At the same time of all this activity Race Club executives felt an urge to create and once again starting driving little pegs in the ground, and building castles in the air. The fairways received their first dressing of Super and Lindane and the greens their first dressing of lime.

Mick DeVries was engaged with his medium sized tractor and blade to clear up an area around the dam and to smooth out the dam banks, and on the golfing scene, Laurie Kane recorded our Club's first hole in one, at the fourteenth, during the United Distillers Trophy.

Interest again reverted to the building of a clubhouse when the building committee advised the Club that a large house was available, at a low cost, from Woolworths recently purchased block in Warragul. A special meeting was held to discuss various way of raising the fifteen hundred pounds. Bank guarantors and the purchasing of life-memberships were given away to a Co-operative financing scheme, and Tom Powney and Don Roberts were authorized to survey such a scheme as in operation at the Lang Lang Club.

The tenth Annual Meeting on third October 1964, was again held after play, in the Race Club's building, and Jack Stroud was again elected to the Chair. Alan Dunstan became vice president, Geoff Wadham remained as Captain, and Tom Powney replaced Horrie Leishman as secretary, with John Arnold his off-sider. The committee for this year comprised, Wilson, Roberts, Leishman, Mapleson, Keith Anderson and Laurie Kane. The match committee members were Wadham, Wilson, Lindsay Smith and a new comer to the Club, brilliant ex-Warragul golfer, John Blake, and Mapleson, Wadham and Anderson were to represent the Club at Co-ordinating meetings. Subscriptions remained the same as the previous year, and, for the first time, a country membership fee was set, and green fees were set at six shillings per round. Tenure of the golf course area again

came under discussion and the secretary was asked to apply to the Council for a lease of the area, similar to the lease held by the Race Club for their area of the Park. Tom Pettit made a proposal which was passed, that members pay an extra shilling per competitive round of golf and this money be placed in a building fund, and Don Roberts was asked to prepare a plan for a brick clubhouse. Ex-Jindivick farmer, Norm Clark was employed on a casual basis, to cut fairways and to give some assistance to George Taylor, and the Shire Council donated one hundred pounds worth of polythene piping to assist in the fully reticulated watering system. Five more greens and tees were connected to the watering systems by means of two immensely successful weekend working bees. The main line was taken as far as the fourteenth green, with secondary lines to service the eleventh and thirteenth greens, the twelfth and fourteenth tees, and the seventeenth green and eighteenth tee. Horrie Austin lent the Club a tractor and mole drainer, thirty members worked in December's hot and dusty conditions, and nine greens and a few tees received their first artificial rain.

The Buln Buln Shire council had applied for our lease but the Crown Solicitor advised that it was not legally possible for Council and Golf Club to effect any lease agreement. This same gentleman also dropped a bombshell, when he advised the Council that the previously contracted lease with the Club was invalid, and had been so for the past three years. This earth-shattering announcement, quashed for all time the previously held belief that the Race Club had some priority in the practical use of Matthew Bennett Park.

The greens which were previously mown in squares or ovals were now being given some character, by being mown into different shapes and the banks around the greens were left to grow a little longer and be mown with the rotary mower.

To deter any individuals who might have other interests in the flatter areas of the Park, and to give the centre area of the course more interest, a programme of mound construction on some fairways was undertaken. The soil for this project was taken from an area between the sixth and seventh fairways and which would eventually become another dam.

In May of this year, our Committee realized that the work involved in the maintenance of our course was too arduous and specialist for George Taylor and a handful of member volunteers, who had up to this stage done a remarkable job. Jack Stroud, who had recently disposed of his Ampol agency, was engaged as the Club's first full-time curator. George was given a small parting gift in appreciation of his genuine interest and help in establishment of our course.

Lindsay Price was employed with his 'dozer' to spend a couple of days, deepening a part of the new dam and Drouin South contractor, Reno Salce was brought in to excavate a mile or so of open drains. The mowers needed continual repair owing to the rough terrain, and Ernie Saddington, who operated a repair service in his spare time, was permanently engaged to affect repairs to these machines. The Ezy-Flo Company helped to sponsor the Annual Tournament and the old hole cutter, ingeniously invented by Jack Caddy was retired to the scrap heap and a shining new model was purchased. The

watered greens gave their first hint of complications with the appearance of fungus disease such as fusarium and brown spot.

A golf exhibition was held in September organized by Jack Harris, top Melbourne professional, who was giving professional services at our Club every second Monday. Jack brought big hitting Eric Wishart with him but the local lad John Blake, partnered by Allan Ellis of Warragul, were too good for the visitors on the day. The Central Services League saw fit to play some of their matches at our course and along with the publicity of these pennant matches and the coverage given by Tom Pettit to the metropolitan press, resulted in a large increase of city visitors to our course on Sundays.

The Clubhouse building project was given much thought in committee and various avenues of raising the necessary finance were frequently debated. No final decision could be reached but the first legal battle was approached when the Club's constitution was redrafted.

The Eleventh Annual Meeting was held in the R.S.L. rooms, on the second of October 1965, and twenty-six members attended. Alan Rogers, Treasurer of the Club for many years, was elected to the Chair, with Hughie Mapleson as his understudy. Horrie Leishman handed over his pen to Tom Powney, with John Arnold as his assistant. Newly arrived bank manager, Cam Sheffield, was elected to the post of Treasurer, and John Blake became the new Captain. Ex-badminton executive Jack Street joined the committee, comprising, Geoff Wadham, Laurie Kane, Alan Dunstan, Alf Belton, and after a committee absence of a few years, Alan Wilson. Tom Powney, Geoff Wadham, and Hugh Mapleson were delegated to attend Co-ordinating Committee meetings with Alan Rogers and John Blake to attend Association affairs. Sterling currency gave away to decimals and fees rose to seventeen dollars for Members, nine dollars for Associates and the joining fee rising to seven dollars.

For his many years of both administrative and manual endeavour during the establishment of our Club and course, an Honorary Life Membership was conferred on Jack Stroud.

Attention was now focused to the watering of the full course and another successful working bee was held to lay piping to the remaining greens. Two new members, Ian Dent and Bob Dennis, gave an indication at this workout of their future value to the Club. Keith Craig, who conducted the Caltex petroleum depot at Warragul, offered our club a galvanized iron storage shed, which was generally accepted, and at a further working bee, on the twentieth of November, was dismantled and transported to our course. Two hundred and twenty green fee players flocked to our course during this November and December, the Club's monthly accounts rose to over a thousand dollars and extensions were made to some of our greens.

The Race Club again plays spoilt kids when they refuse to attend Co-ordinating Committee meetings, complain to the Shire Council that we cross their precious track too often with heavy equipment, and erect a fence at the rear of our tenth green. The course,

up to this time, had been played in many differing hole sequences, but in December it was played for the first time as originally planned. This meant that the first phase of the Club's history had, after ten years of hard work and earnest endeavour, been completed.

A large rotary type hand mower was purchased in an endeavour to maintain the increased area and improved species of turf grasses were being contemplated. Rabbits cause damage to the course, but Council will not allow them to be shot, so the Club had to resort to poisoning of these pests.

A Special Meeting was held in the R.S.L. rooms, on the eleventh of February 1966, where, after Tom Powney had reviewed avenues of raising finance for the clubhouse-building project, the Drouin Golf Club Co-operative was formed. Shares with a face value of two dollars would be sold to Club members and other interested persons at a call of twenty cents per share, with a maximum individual purchase of fifty shares. By this means it was hoped to raise eleven thousand dollars, which was the estimated cost of a brick building, designed, and costed by Bill Young. General merchant, Jack Armstrong, was elected secretary, Tom Powney would be the Chairman of the elected directors, and High School principal Clarrie Wilson acted as auditor. The Club's constitution was again redrafted and tenders were called for the erection of the building. The building block was cleared and filling was brought in to build up the area prior to building. The Social Committee is urgently requested to raise additional finance and Chairman Ken Bell and his committee answer the challenge. Meanwhile, work continues on the course with more extensions to the greens and tees and further extensions to the surface drainage being affected. A finer and closer growing turf grass was sown to these extensions, which were made playable for the tournament of that year.

Liaison Officer to the Victorian Golf Association, Jock Williams, visited the course and is amazed at the progress the Club had made during the previous couple of years. Jock advocated some changes to fairways and lopping of some trees, but as we had already decided on these particular moves, any benefit from his visit was obviously nullified.

The Race Club had another grouch and protested to the Council that the Golf Club was playing golf on race days. We were most concerned at this forbidden practice but on making further inquiries, found that the gentlemen concerned were the Race Club's stipendiary steward and course broadcaster having a sly game prior to conducting their official duties. The Shire Council decided after this fiasco to abandon the Co-ordinating committee and asked that both bodies deal directly with Council on any matter.

Two special general meetings were held, the first to raise the share issue to twelve thousand dollars, and the second, held on the first of July, to adopt the plans of the new clubhouse and to adopt the re-drafted constitution. Jack Street left the district and his position on the committee was taken by Ken Bell, and the committee received their building permit for the clubhouse and machinery shed in late July of that year. A second greens mower was needed and Geoff Wadham helped with its purchase. It was decided to use the money in the building account to erect the machinery shed. Committee meetings, which for the previous three years had been held in public buildings, reverted back to the

homes of committee members and local builders, in the most cases golf club members, were asked to supply quotes for the building of the clubhouse. Gerald Gaff was, at this stage employed to assist in the work maintaining and improving our course.

The twelfth Annual Meeting was held in the R.S.L. rooms on the twenty seventh of October 1966 where it was revealed that green fees had brought in nearly fourteen hundred dollars in a turnover of nine and a half thousand dollars. Alan Rogers was re-elected to lead the Club, with John Blake as his deputy and a new position, that of Junior Vice President, was filled by Alan Dunstan. Alf Belton became the new Captain, Hughie Mapleson, and the new Secretary with Tom Powney as his assistant. Cam Sheffield was again left to handle the cash book and two new faces appeared on the Committee, those of work shop foreman Gordon McDowell and Lardner Road farmer Herb Lindorff, replacing Laurie Kane and Alf Belton. Subscriptions rose again to twenty dollars for Members and eleven dollars for Associates with the joining fee going to ten dollars. The Social Committee under the leadership of Ken Bell had raised four hundred dollars by way of the cabaret ball and the two Cup sweeps, and Ken was again elected to lead this committee. The old Allis Chambers tractor was sold to Reg Mooney for twenty dollars, and the Ferguson goes up in smoke after a refueling accident. The Club is indebted to Gordon McDowell who acquires a tractor from his firm's workshop whilst Pat Kane affects repairs to the Fergy.

Work continued on the building site with the leveling of the earthworks and the financial part of this exercise takes shape with the selling of ten thousand dollars' worth of shares, and a loan of thirteen thousand dollars granted by the A.N.Z. Bank. Our committee felt that the Shire was not fully aware of the Club's efforts at the Park, so an invitation was extended and members of Council were our guests on the morning of their December meeting. Some of these fellows had not seen the area for years, and some had never seen it at all and were most impressed with what had been achieved. How these blokes can vote on a matter on which they have little or no personal knowledge never ceases to amaze.

Jack Harris was hard pressed to find the time to attend our Club so he delegated his assistant, Russell Bedggood, to come along in his stead. Only a youngster, Russ did not have the ability to impart his knowledge and it was some relief to our Committee when ex-Peninsular professional, Bill Clifford arrived on the scene. Bill stayed with us for quite a long time and his teaching ability was overshadowed only by his salesmanship.

April 1967 saw the pouring of the foundations and floor of the clubhouse and the transfer of sods of hybrid bent turf, grown by Hugh Mapleson, to some of the greens. Twilight golf competition was started at this time with a nine-hole competition every Wednesday. Greens were still being watered in May, this was the beginning of the big 'dry', and nobody at that time realized the difficult time that lay ahead.

Although a great revenue booster, visiting Social Golf clubs were causing great concern with their drinking habits, knocking off at any time, anywhere on the course, to knock off a few cans. Their resultant play became slower and slower and our Secretary had to take

sterner measures with these clubs in an effort to make them toe the line. A telephone box had been acquired from the P.M.G., set up at the first tee, furnished with a book, envelopes, and lock-up box to become our green fee collector.

The clubhouse was well under way by tournament time this year but it was apparent that concrete rendering of the inside walls would be an added expense. The building of the machinery shed, which was intended to coincide with the clubhouse construction, had been forgotten and the piles of materials for this project lay rusting on the ground but the tournament was most successful with entries rising by one hundred and twelve to an all-time high of five hundred and sixty, due mainly to concentration of publicity through the metropolitan area.

The Co-operative ran out of funds and the Golf Club was required to pay six hundred and forty five dollars in outstanding accounts on its behalf and at a Special General Meeting a resolution was passed that required all present and intending members to purchase a minimum of fifty shares.

A new steel trailer was purchased, together with a second small rotary type hand mower, and the Council was being pressed to modernise the smelly 'hole in the ground' public toilets.

The new clubhouse came into use for the first time at the end of July, for the WGDGA singles championship, after golf had been banned on the previous weekend, so that members could concentrate their efforts in painting their new building.

The 'A' Grade Pennant team missed out on playing in the Association finals by a mere one game, and the erection of the machinery shed got under way, when Alan Dunstan poured the foundations, the Shire's vehicles brought filling and Edwards Engineering got the contract to erect the steel work and sheet about two thirds of the structure.

Prior to his re-election at the thirteenth Annual Meeting held in the new clubhouse on the twentieth of October 1967, President Alan, who was visually affected by the occasion, gave a comprehensive report of our achievements at Matthew Bennett Park since the formation of our Club. These achievements, Alan added, were made in the face of a continual 'pin pricking' attitude by the Race Club, who, because of their insistence that they were the first on the scene had priority of occupancy and could hold the whip handle in any matter at the Park. Although they had done quite a deal of work in the construction of their present amenities, research had shown that it would be incorrect to say that it had done all the clearing work at the Park prior to 1955. The area, now known as Matthew Bennett Park, was cleared of enough timber to construct a race course late last century by a Davy Brown, who, with a horse team, an axe, a crowbar, and copious amounts of elbow grease, carved a five furlong track out of heavy messmate timber and scrub inside the present circuit. It was known as the Whisky Creek Race-course, and races were held at least every New Years Day. The saddling paddock was in the area in front of the first tee, the public extended down the straight of the present course, and a grandstand that seated about two hundred people was built in the vicinity of the ninth

green. A length of hitching rail extended down through the rough between the first fairway and the second green. It is said that heavy wagers were set on private match races and many days were spent at the course for this very purpose. The course, although in operation for nearly thirty years, lost its popularity because so many horses and riders were injured as the horses broke through the surface of the track because of crab-holes. This track was still being used for ponies in the late twenties but it could take the owners a day's work to fill the crab holes before it could be used, and just as a matter of interest, the grand-stand, although still in reasonable order, had been a haven for itinerant workers, was burnt to the ground in the early nineteen thirties, and the area used during the war years by the army, probably as a jungle training centre.

Alan Dunstan was elected Vice President at this meeting, and a new position of Junior Vice President was filled by Geoff Wadham. Alf Belton was re-elected Captain, with Alan Wilson his deputy, and Hughie Mapleson again became Secretary with Tom Pettit as his off sider. There was a big change in the personnel of the committee with the election of linesman Norm Myers, Labertouche farmer Lance Stone, factory engineer Bill Palmer, and Ian Dent and Cam Sheffield, reporting a turnover of nearly thirteen thousand dollars, was re-elected as Treasurer. It was decided to continue golf competitions throughout the summer with twilight events, which were very popular, and the Summer Cup.

A New Year's Eve social was held in the club-house, and the "big dry" continued, water was severely restricted, the dam, after the purchase of a motor and pump, was pumped dry and Shire trucks were employed to bring water from a hole at the rear of the Co-op's grain store. A farm tank was borrowed from Dave Pomphret, Drouin South farmer member, and curator, his assistant, and members work feverishly in an attempt to save the greens. The construction of the new centre dam is shelved by the committee because of lack of finance, and committee members are amazed when arriving for their golf on the following day to find work on the dam in full swing. Who sanctioned this work to be done still remains a mystery, but, never-the-less the dam is here today, and paid for by the Club. Ex-committee member, Laurie Kane, packs his traps, is farewelled by the Club, and heads for the West.

The course was closed during week-ends of this February to ensure that members would finish the painting of the Clubhouse in readiness for its official opening by the President of the Victorian Golf Association, Mr. Alex Brahe. But pennant matches for this year started during this very hot February and players flake out at Moe during the first match, and the opposing captains decide to abandon the show.

John Kerr and Keith Anderson Junior promote Junior Golf on Saturday mornings, thirty youngsters attend on the first morning and within six weeks, and fifty juniors were regularly taking part. Water pipes were laid to the remainder of the tees and the main was connected from the second green to the regulator, thus completing a full circuit of the course.

We are visited by members of the Gas and Fuel Corporation and the Victorian Pipelines

Commission and are told that a natural gas pipeline is to be placed through our course, and work on this line started late in April of this year. We got an indication of their slaphappy methods, when during the second week of occupation, the boundary fence was removed, and a herd of Herefords tore across, and ripped parts of our course to shreds. We played our tournament in reasonable conditions, but then the rain started, and didn't let up, nor did the pipeline contractors. The course became one hell of a mess, the back nine holes were closed, and a trench, eight feet wide and ten feet deep, had been carved right across the course, and thirty inch diameter pipes, and mountains of clay, lay on top of the ground, and a sea of mud extended some thirty yards on each side on the excavation. These conditions existed for three months, but the pipe was eventually submerged, and timber crossings made for the players to negotiate this new hazard. Mrs. Edna Robb had the misfortune to slip on one of these crossings, and break an arm, another unfortunate occurrence, at this time, was the collapse, and death of a Melbourne visitor, whilst having a game with the Eagle Club. Our Club's finances were at a low ebb, members were unwilling to play golf in such shocking conditions, but expenditure remained at a constant level. The course was difficult to maintain, access to the Northern section was impossible, and much of our employees' time was taken up with arguments with an ignorant crew of loafers, who passed as pipeline technicians. A dry September gave some hope to restoration plans, and our Secretary spent much of his time arranging with the pipeline authority a work plan agreeable to both parties. The contractors brought in heavy machinery to work the soil back to some sort of order, but these machines became hopelessly bogged, and we brought in Mick DeVries, who accomplished in three days something that these other characters had been obstinately trying to achieve for about a month. Eventually light machinery was brought to the area, and the seed was sown in late October.

At the fourteenth Annual Meeting, held on the Twenty fifth of October, 1968, it was disclosed that the Club had suffered a trading loss of eight hundred dollars, but amazingly enough, green fees had risen to sixteen hundred dollars, but our water rates had risen two hundred per cent, owing to the excessively dry summer and autumn. The social committee had hit the high spots under the leadership of Geoff Wadham, with a donation of fifteen hundred dollars, and a new source of revenue for this committee was the regular euchre parties, conducted at the Clubhouse by Jindivick farmer, and professional punter, George Notman. Alan Dunstan replaced Alan Rogers as President, and Geoff Wadham moved up to Vice President, and Alan Wilson replaced Alf Belton as Captain, with Gordon McDowell as his second in command. Horrie Leishman came back to the fold, and replaced Hughie Mapleson as Secretary. A change in the term of office for committee members took place at this meeting, when it was decided that only half of the committee retire each year. As a result of this decision, Alf Belton, Lindsay Dunstan, and Ian Dent were saddled with two years, and Keith Anderson Jnr., Hughie Mapleson, and swimming pool manager Stan Anderson were to stand for twelve months.

A number of our associates became interested in the furnishing of the Clubhouse, and these associates were given permission to conduct events and entertainment outside the normal calendar of Associates' activities, to raise money for this very cause. A finance committee was formed to investigate club finances, and to prepare financial estimates for

the current year, this committee comprised, Sheffield, Dent, Palmer and Mapleson, who advocated that the Club's overdraft be increased by one thousand dollars, in anticipation of income re-imburement by the Pipelines Commission. The social committee arranged a Christmas party at the Clubhouse, and conducted a "Silver Circle" competition, in addition to their New Year's Eve social.

Gerald Gaff departed our employ but left behind an account for plant hire amounting to one hundred and forty dollars, and one of one hundred and thirty two dollars for holiday pay. His place was taken by Frank Cobbledick, who would be employed as an apprentice, if and when he completed a satisfactory probationary period of three months.

Ian Dent and Bob Dennis constructed laminex topped tables for the Clubhouse, and the committee see fit to purchase another ninety dollars worth of hoses and sprays, so that all eighteen greens could be watered simultaneously. The match committee had to sort out a knotty problem when a protest was lodged in connection with the conduct of the Summer Cup final. The match committee decided at this stage to conduct the final of the Club championship over thirty-six holes, and to provide two sets of tee markers, with blue markers for green fee players and practice, and white markers for competitive golf. Members were called upon to help maintain the many tree plantings, and Jack Dwyer with Stan Anderson were two who maintained a strong and steady application to this particular venture. The pipelines easement was still quite barren of grass, and its owners were pressed into providing sand paths across this area on a number of fairways.

Twenty four players, with a handicap of five or under play on the men's day of the tournament, and Alan Wilson is appointed manager of the WGDGA, Country Week team, which included Jack Dwyer among its numbers. We had been without professional services for quite some time, and Warragul pro John Toyne was asked, and accepted the position to fill the gap and provide teaching facilities, one day each fortnight.

Our Associates emerge as a golfing power, as they reach the Association final, and Madams Kath Dwyer, Eileen Smith, and Alma Pepperell represent us in the WGDGA Country Week side.

The eleventh green dies out and Jack and Frank replaces it with turf sods cut from a nursery patch, which they had cultivated in an area near the practice green. The greens become difficult to penetrate with water, and the Club purchased a corer, which was hoped would alleviate this situation. Other plant purchases at this same time were a large self-propelled hand rotary type mower and a Kaye rotary type fairway mower. The Ezy-Flo Company, which had for the previous three years, promoted the four-baller day at the opening tournament, decided to conduct a special mid-week golf day. The result was not up to expectations, as far as the Ezy-Flo people were concerned, and doubts were expressed that events such as this one would be any more successful in future years, but Drouin's Royal Hotel donated an annual trophy for our Club's Mixed Foursomes Championship, conducted over thirty six holes.

Our second tractor, an old Ferguson, which was purchased at Edwards Engineering

liquidation sale, some three years previously, and financed, by Geoff Wadham, and Alan Dunstan, cracks up under the strain, and Gordon McDowell has a job ahead of him in trying to track down replacement parts. Gordon was successful in his efforts, Pat Kane affects repairs, and this machine is returned to the work force.

The Committee, which had for many years, been concerned with the consumption of grog on un-licensed premises, applies for, and is granted a permit which allows members to consume their own liquor in the Clubhouse. Labertouche farmers Ron Davidson, and Brian Scandolera, come to our aid when they take the responsibility of spreading fertilizer on the fairways, each autumn. The Cabaret Ball had become the Club's number one social event of the year, and all tables are taken within a week or two of the release of the floor plan.

The Kays mower causes headaches when it continually wears belts and bearings, and the committee is concerned when the makers are lethargic in their service.

The fifteenth Annual Meeting was held on the thirtieth of October, 1969, and the Shire Council, after receiving an invitation, sent along Councilor Harry Smethurst, as a representative. Alan Dunstan remained as President, as did Geoff Wadham as Vice President, but heating engineer, Ian Dent moved to Junior Vice President. Gordon McDowell moved up to the Captain's position, with George Notman as his under-study, Horrie Leishman remained as Secretary, and had as his offside, insurance company representative Ross Maxfield. Cam Sheffield, after disclosing receipts of twelve thousand, eight hundred and sixteen dollars, and a Club liability of thirteen thousand, one hundred and eighty two dollars, resigned as Treasurer, and this position was filled by local State Savings Bank Manager, ex Trafalgar golfing identity, Don Murphy.

The annual trophy costs rise to an alarming figure, and a letter was sent to all members, with the subscription account seeking a donation of two dollars fifty, towards this cost, and this request received a ninety five per cent favourable reply. The Club received re-imbusement for some repair work and administrative costs from the Pipelines Commission, and the Committee decided to set aside annually the sums of three hundred dollars for plant replacement and one hundred dollars for staff long service leave. The Associate's furnishing committee advises that they have the finance required for the carpeting of the Clubhouse, and after long debate in general committee, this expenditure was allowed. The Club purchases a Flymo mower for one hundred and forty dollars, plus trade-in, and the committee seeks relief from sales tax on new plant, by asking the Council to purchase the required machines, and then to re-purchase from Council. The Council refuses this request without giving any really logical excuse for its action. S.E.C. power is connected to the machinery shed and the Committee allows the hiring of the Clubhouse for members' private parties

Jack Stroud is retained by the Committee, to act as starter and steward during weekends, and his retainer is paid directly from green fees, which rise to one dollar, twenty-five cents per round, and Mick DeVries is paid a long-standing debt of three hundred and fifty dollars, dating back to 1964. Membership receives a boost when a party of eight regular

green fee players joins the Club, and an alteration is made to the joining fee arrangement. Since the formation of the Golf Club Co-operative, new members had been required to purchase their share issue, and as this fund was now over-subscribed, all twenty dollars of the joining fee now was channeled to Club revenue. The administrative side of club affairs was improved when a Post Office box was rented, and inward mail, which was being received by all executive members, as well as past executive members, was channeled to this one source.

The social committee purchases materials, and has constructed a dance floor for the clubhouse, conducts regular dinner dances at the Club and changes the format of the Christmas Party to a dinner dance with a four-course menu.

The standard scratch score of the course is reduced from seventy to sixty-six, and the eleventh green again dries out, is again replaced, and re-drained, and a temporary sand scrape green is constructed for play, while it is out of order.

The machinery shed is broken into, and the two greens mowers are stolen and these have to be immediately replaced at a cost of four hundred dollars over the insurance cover. The stable door is shut after the horse has bolted, and the shed is fully sheeted, and lockable sliding doors are fitted.

The sixteenth Annual Meeting was held on the twenty ninth of October, 1970, and Councilor William Martin represented the Council. Geoff Wadham was elevated to become the new President, Ian Dent also moved up the scale to become Senior Vice President, and Neerim South High School teacher, Peter DeVries became the Junior Vice President. Gordon McDowell carried on looking after the game of golf, Horrie Leishman, and Ross Maxfield remained in their respective secretarial positions, and Don Murphy continued to care for the cash. Don's financial statement showed that the Club produced receipts of thirteen thousand, six hundred and twenty eight dollars, which included two thousand, four hundred and seventy from green fees, and fifteen, seventy from competition fees, and a fine donation of two thousand, five hundred from the social committee. The expenditure totaled thirteen thousand, five hundred and fifty five dollars, with the main items, wages four thousand and fifty five, repairs and maintenance nearly three thousand, Club house repayments and maintenance nineteen twenty two dollars, and new plant, eleven hundred and ninety six dollars. The Club's liability at this stage was eleven thousand, four hundred and fifty five dollars. Apart from the social committee's cash contribution, it also provided the dance floor, T.V. set, refrigerator, bar furniture, first aid kit, and thermometer. The committee was made up of hardware representative, Gerald Treasure, steel fabricator Doug Arnold, and telephone technician Bob Patterson, while Alan Rogers, Hugh Mapleson and Ripplebrook farmer Colin Holdsworth would continue for another year of their two-year term.

Under the new S.S.S. rating for the Course, the twelfth became a par four, and the four hundred and eight five yard seventh was also reduced to that figure. This caused great consternation for many members, and under some pressure, the match committee was obliged to reduce the yardage of the seventh by some twenty yards. Soil was brought

from the Drouin Sewerage pondage area for a new fifty-yard long tee at this hole and also for a new tee at the thirteenth, which had been increased in length by thirty yards. The match committee also experimented with a couple of open mid-week events, but as these were not successful, they were dropped from the calendar.

Anybody who had any connection with our Club since its formation, in 1955, was greatly saddened when, at the end of this year, the death occurred of our Alan Rogers.

Alan, a formation member of the Club, a Committeeman in its second year of operation, was Treasurer for eight years, from 1957, relinquishing this position to become President in 1968. In these executive positions, he was a true leader, and held each with dignity and conviction, and many of the far seeing Alan's theories and predictions have been borne out during our Club's history. A man, whose failing health kept him from attending all Club functions in the last year of his life, never failed to rally to a visitor to his hospital bed, or his home, who could bring him news from his beloved Club. Alan was Club trustee and this position, after his death, was entrusted to Alan Dunstan.

Six hundred dollars are withdrawn from the plant replacement fund, three hundred is provided by the Club, the old Fergy is traded, and a relatively new David Brown tractor is purchased. The trees are planted along the boundary at the eleventh hole, and another two hundred trees of mixed varieties, are planted in other sections of the course.

The Shire Council, after negotiations covering nearly twelve months, agree to repair the picnic tables, and erect a third of these picnic outfits. Council also agree to apply for a three thousand dollar Government grant for the erection of new public toilets, with our Club being expected to supply the local contribution of approximately fifteen hundred dollars, another addition is made to the picnic area when Alan Dunstan prefabricates, and sets up, two concrete and steel barbeque fireplaces.

Noel and Edna Robb leave our Club and the district, and head for Queensland's warmer climate, and our employees' efforts are concentrated for a week or two, in clearing the under-growth from between the sixteenth fairway and the race track, and Frank Cobbledick successfully completes a curator's course at Burnley Horticultural College.

With the early resignation of Lindsay Dunstan due to pressure of business and the great loss of Alan Rogers, Doug Arnold and Alf Belton stepped into the breach on the committee.

A feasibility committee comprising, Don Murphy, Alan Dunstan, Horrie Leishman and Ian Dent is formed for the express purpose of investigating the advisability of our Club's application for a full liquor licence, and at a Special General Meeting in mid-October, 1971, a unanimous vote was made in favour of applying for this licence.

Our Junior pennant team had a great golfing year when they won all their home and away games and topped the season off by winning the WGDGA Junior final.

And so we move toward our seventeenth annual meeting where we will see some changes in the personnel in executive positions, and a new face or two on the Committee, but we can feel sure that this incoming Committee will fully maintain our progress, and ensure that the dust never settles.....

Hughie Mapleson

The seventeenth annual meeting was held 28th October 1971, when Geoff Wadham remained in the presidential chair with Ian Dent remaining as his assist with Gerald Treasure moving up to Junior Vice-President. George Notman, Jindivick farmer took on the roll as Club Captain with Arch Lugton as his assistant, and Don Murphy continued to monitor the finances. Ross Maxfield after many years as assistant became the Secretary with Shane Dwyer as his assistant. Stan Anderson, Gerry Butler, Bob Patterson and co planted over 100 trees including the pine trees north of the 11th fairway, with Stan watering each daily until they became established. A herd of stray cows made their way onto the course and made a mess of the 4th green when they walked across it.