



# **Sturt Bowling Club at Unley Oval**

## **Sturt Story**

Primarily what follows is derived from the Sturt Bowling Club Centenary Journal, coordinated by Mr. Leo Fogarty – Chair Centenary Celebrations Sub-Committee 2004. This journal was revised in July 2004 to incorporate suggestions from Barry Whittle and Ron Webster, November 2006 to include comments and corrections from Ron Praite and Margaret Paternoster and again updated by Leo Fogarty in March 2008.

Since 2004, it is believed no formal extension of this journal or like document has been made. Comments from this era have been documented through recollections, conversations and the sourcing of various documents.

It is recognized that the Sturt Story is live. Its original publishing on this website will be reviewed and improved in perpetuity by Club members and those in the wider community who wish to contribute.

## **Short**

Sturt Bowling Club, formed by the General Committee of the Sturt Electorate Cricket Club in 1903, was the fourth lawn bowling club founded in South Australia and amongst the first twenty in the whole of Australia.

The land now occupied as Unley Oval and its surrounds was originally known as the New Parkside Oval, having been donated by Mr. Edward Isaac Trimmer, to be held in trust for recreational and sporting pursuits.

It was officially renamed by Lady Kintore in 1892 and the Sturt Electorate Cricket Club became the governing body of the Oval in 1897, presiding over the various Sturt sporting bodies, cricket, football, tennis, croquet, lacrosse, baseball and bowls.

The founding Committee commenced laying the original Green of 6 rinks in 1903 and on Saturday 5 March 1904 the Sturt Bowling Green was officially opened by the Hon. Mr. John Greeley Jenkins, Premier of South Australia. At that time there were thirty members.

The first President of the Sturt Men's Bowling Club was Joseph Vardon & Secretary was Arthur Churchill Thomas.

The Club immediately entered the Pennant competition and was achieving successful results by 1909.

In 1907 Sturt Bowling Club installed acetylene gas lamps to enable Night Bowls and changed to electric light in 1910.

By 1914 the Club had established 12 rinks.

From 1928 to 1948 many interstate bowls games were held at Sturt Bowling Club and the greens were ranked amongst the best in Australia.

Several prominent SA sporting identities were Members of the Club including Victor York Richardson OBE, perhaps South Australia's greatest all round sportsman, Gil Langley MP, Gordon "Grassy" Green to name but a few.

Dr. Jack Petchell stands out as the Club's champion bowler and whom our clubhouse is named after. A President and Committee Member for 14 years, he won the Club singles Championship 9 times between 1940 and 1968, and was three times Champion of Champions. In 1946-1947 he was Australian Singles Champion and has a host of other trophies to his credit (It is pleasing to see that members of the Petchell family are very active participants in our Night Owls competition at Sturt Bowling Club).

The Sturt Women's Bowling Club formed in 1965. The inaugural President was Doris Johns, Secretary Olive Britton, Treasurer Lil Spry, and Committee Havila Fort & Menza Lang. The Women agreed to support the Men's Club in the Indoor Bowls competition and numerous Pennant successes were achieved.

The Women's Club achieved many SAWBA Pennant successes between 1968 and 1995 but eventually through lack of members the Women's Club ceased in 2000.

The Club's Centenary was celebrated in March 2004 with a function hosted by the Mayor Michael Keenan at Unley City Council, a Centenary Dinner at the clubrooms and a Centenary Day at the Club where then President Lawrie Buckley welcomed Mayor Michael Keenan, Members, former Members of both the Women's and Men's Clubs, visitors and senior executives from neighbouring clubs. Expert catering was provided by volunteers from Reade Park Bowling Club. Match play was enjoyed by those who wished to participate.

The President of Bowls SA, Mr. Bob Peake, presented a special plaque to club.

Since 2004 the club has grown its Pennant playing ranks and financial position primarily through an exceptional Night Owls program. The Club has seen 7 Pennants delivered during this era and generally provides a healthy and friendly atmosphere for all to enjoy.

## Detail

### Early History

Not only was Sturt the fourth Bowling Club established in South Australia, it is also understood to be amongst the first twenty in Australia.

An extract from a late 1950's book - Lawn Bowls in Australia - notes on p78

*" - The first game of Bowls played in South Australia was in 1876 on a one-rink green laid and owned by Andrew Thompson at Kapunda. The bowls were brought by him from Scotland in 1854. Robert Barr Smith, of Adelaide, imported some bowls prior to the formation of the first bowling club.*

*South Australians took up the game much later than was the case in the other States. The Adelaide Bowling Club was the first in South Australia, the date of formation being February 18, 1897. The green fronting Victoria Drive was opened on December 3, 1898. The second club was the Adelaide Oval Bowling Club, whose green is situated within the grounds of the South Australian Cricket Association. The Club was formed in 1901. On October 23rd, 1902, representatives from these two clubs met and formed the South Australian Bowling Association. There were then 80 bowlers in the two clubs.*

*Norwood was formed in 1902, Sturt (formed by the General Committee of the Sturt Cricket Club) in 1903. Port Adelaide (now Alberton Oval) in 1903, Hindmarsh in 1904, Semaphore in 1904, and Glenelg in 1904. In 1907 there were 8 clubs, in 1917 29, in 1927 62, in 1937 84, in 1947 114 (with 6,150 bowlers, in 1957 169 (12,099 bowlers). Of the 169 clubs 53 are metropolitan and 116 country clubs. Because of climatic conditions the grass used is couch, and it provides a fast green."*

and on p79

*" - Bowling by women began in South Australia, at Kensington Gardens, Adelaide, when in 1922 Mesdames JH Vaughan and HR Wheeler tried their hands, and in 1926 the first women's club was formed at Kensington Gardens. Hawthorn was formed in 1927 and Payneham in 1928. These three clubs formed the South Australian Women's Bowling Association on April 9, 1930. In 1940 there were 12 clubs, in 1950 36 clubs (1,284 bowlers), and in 1957 77 clubs and 3,388 bowlers."*

Currently, Sturt Bowling Club is the third oldest bowling club in South Australia being founded in 1903 but importantly the oldest club on its existing and only site at the south western end of Unley Oval on Trimmer Terrace, Unley.

The land now occupied as Unley Oval and its surrounds was originally known as New Parkside Oval, generously provided by Mr. Edmund Isaac Stephen Trimmer, to be held in trust for recreational and sporting pursuits.

In 1892 it was officially renamed Unley Oval by Lady Kintore.

In 1897, the Sturt Electorate Cricket Club became the governing body of the Oval and continued until 1971, under the name of Sturt Cricket Club, later Sturt Sports Club.

In 1971 all Sturt sporting bodies, the Bowling, Cricket, Football, Tennis, Croquet, Lacrosse, and Baseball Clubs were required to take out their own individual leases from the Unley City Council.

A number of those sporting bodies are no longer associated with this wonderful recreational facility, which we at Sturt Bowling Club are proud to have called part of it "home" since 1903.

Early records (unfortunately not named) indicate the site of the present Greens are on the *Wirraparinga*; *"an ample flowing stream which ran from the hills and springs at Glen Osmond, across the lower half of Ridge Park (now Myrtle Bank), and through the centre of where the Greens now exist, past Unley Town Hall and on to the sea."*

It is recorded that in the 1870's, this spot was thick with native flora and fauna. The "Cowandilla" tribe of Aborigines used to camp here amongst flowering gum and tea tree, to take unwary wildfowl. Early colonists apparently found the lagoon here, a happy hunting ground for wild duck. The permanent stream had disappeared before 1900, but apparently water continued to follow the underground stream.

The founding Committee commenced laying the original Green of six rinks in 1903.

On Saturday 5 March 1904, Sturt Bowling Green, located in Parkside Ward, was officially opened by the Honorable Mr. John Greeley Jenkins, Premier of South Australia.

Mr. Jenkins born in Pennsylvania in 1851, son of Evan Jenkins, came from America to this state as an employee of an American publishing house in 1878. He was married in Adelaide on 4 January 1883 to Jennie Mary Charlton. He established his own auctioneering business, and was senior partner in Jenkins & Gurr but became interested in politics, and began his political career as Representative for Parkside Ward on the Unley City Council. Later Mr. Jenkins became Mayor of Unley, and in 1887 he was elected to the House of Assembly as Member for Sturt. He eventually moved to London as Agent General for SA.

In proclaiming the Club open, Mr. Jenkins used these words -

***"This Sturt Bowling Green gives promise of being one of the best in the State".***

The Club was formed with thirty Members, and on Opening Day, Mrs. Jennie M Jenkins, wife of the Premier bowled the first bowl.

The Mayor of Unley in 1904 was Mr. John H Cooke JP.

John Henry Chinner JP (Mayor 1909-12) was a prominent Sturt bowler for some years became Club president in 1909 and Club champion 1914.

William H. Langham, Mayor 1918-20 was Club president in 1920.

Alfred E Morris, Mayor 1922-24, was Club singles champion in 1922.

Benjamin J Sellick, Mayor 1928-30, was Club president in 1927.

Colin R Dunnage MP, Mayor 1939-41 was Club president from 1950-53.

Henry S Dunks MP, Mayor 1943-46, was Club president in 1943.

In 1905, the year following the "Opening", the new clubhouse was erected at a cost of 250 pounds.

Minutes from a Special General Meeting SBC 10 November 1905 indicate;

*"Resolved that November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1905 be fixed as day for opening of the new Club House"*

*"Resolved that Miss Vardon hoist the flag, the Mayoress to throw the first jack and the Mayor to bowl the first bowl."*

In the years to 1909-10 the watering system was very poor. The Green Manager, Mr. J Andrewartha wanted the Committee to put down a Bore, but they were short of funds and he faced a difficult battle until it was eventually agreed that a Bore would be sunk.

A water diviner was engaged and not unexpectedly, he chose a site, near the centre of the old *Wirraparinga* stream - the boring contractor drilled down eighteen feet, hitting two feet of gravel and through that to a hard limestone bottom.

The Committee installed a centrifugal pump on the bore, and then decided to let a contract to sink an eighteen feet well at 8 shillings a foot. Shortly they let a contract to Mr. Jack Smith at 15 shillings a foot, to sink it down to 23 feet and drive two shafts, one 7 feet by 3 feet to the Bore, and one 15 feet long by 7 by 3 towards the goal posts.

When driving these shafts they struck gravel 6 feet deep at each side of the streambed. It took three of them one week from daylight to dark, to finish this work. The men went down in hourly spells, sent the bucket up, and the pump had to be kept going, to keep the water down, so they could work. Those three men made 15 shillings a day, which was good money at that time.

By the time all this was done, there was no money left to buy timber to shore up the well shafts. While still fighting with the Committee to complete this job, Mr. Andrewartha decided to take all the 10" by 2" Oregon seat timber from around the Oval, with a promise to replace it at a future date, which he eventually did.

Prior to this the Green had been extended to 9 rinks, and in 1915 it was extended to 14 rinks.

The Green was cut using a hand mower until two years after the Wayville Show Grounds opened. The Adelaide Show of that year exhibited an Electric Lawn Mower, and after seeing some trials at the Adelaide Club Greens, one was secured by Sturt in 1928.

The Greens caretaker had to look after the Oval, Tennis Courts and Bowling Green (with the help of a lad in the Bowling season). It took him six weeks to cut the grass and hedges and nail and repair fence pickets that had been broken off.

## **The Bowling Club**

Major position holders for the inaugural 1904-05 season:

First President	J Vardon
First Secretary	AC Thomas
First Club Champion	CG Gurr
Runner Up	AEJ Rowley
Handicap Winner	CG Gurr
Champion Fours	G Rowley AE Rowley CG Gurr CH Winnall

The Hon. Joseph Vardon (1843-1913) was born at Hindmarsh SA, had brief elementary schooling, commenced work at age 10 and after apprenticeship in the printing industry started his own business. He served for six years as Councillor and Mayor at Hindmarsh before becoming an Alderman at Unley for ten years. Interested in sport he followed George Rowley as President of the Sturt Football Club in 1902. Elected to the Legislative Council in 1900 he was Commissioner for Public Works, then Chief Secretary in the Jenkins' government. In 1906 he became a Federal Senator.

Arthur Churchill Thomas born 1869 at Unley was the driving force behind the establishment of the Sturt Electorate Cricket Club 1897, and the Sturt Football Club where he was Secretary 1901-1912, his name was commemorated on a stand at the Oval. [John Lysikatos provides an interesting chapter on AC Thomas in his history of the Sturt Football Club "TRUE BLUE"]

Caleb George Gurr born 1856, presumably partner in Jenkins & Gurr, a Councillor 1890-91 and Mayor of Unley 1892 and 1900. Caleb was our first Club Champion. He was father of Gordon Caleb Gurr, captain and brilliant player in the initial years of the Sturt Football Club.

Joseph Vardon and Arthur Thomas continued as President and Secretary for the years 1905 to 1908 but unfortunately there are few records of Club happenings between 1905 and 1909. It is known that during this period Mr. Robert Owen Fox, butcher, Unley Councillor 1898-99 (Club President 1916) was an ardent worker for the Sturt Bowling Club, and did a lot of work to put the Club on a sound and proper business footing.

The Club immediately entered Pennants and by 1909 the A grade had secured one second and four thirds, and one third and one second in B grade defeating Adelaide Drive for the 1909 Pennant.

In 1907 Sturt Bowling Club were the first to use acetylene gas (arc) lighting (provided by WT Mullins of Frederick Street New Parkside), to enable Night Bowls to be played. Mr. AC Thomas, Secretary personally financed the new lighting scheme, and money received from the games playing fee of one shilling, and gate takings, was used to reimburse him. Regrettably, despite its novelty, the gas lighting wasn't particularly satisfactory.

In 1909 Sturt Bowling Club Committee visited St Peters Bowling Club to inspect the Electricity installation at that ground.

## 1910

Tender accepted from Messrs. Ellis & Clark to light the Green with 3 rows of electric lights, each containing 10 lamps of 100 candlepower. Cost 37 pounds.

Prizes for Club Championships were as follows:

Singles Champion	5 pounds
Single Runner Up	3 guineas
Handicap Singles Champion	2 guineas
Handicap Singles Runner Up	1 guinea
Pairs Champions	2 guineas
Pairs Runner Up	1 guinea

Visit by Ballarat bowlers who had been playing for trophies against combined SA teams since 1905. Caters were handled by WH Bishop & Sons.

Sole selectors appointed for A & B grades.

Nine rinks were available. Rinks 1-6 at the end of the season were closed and 7-9 left open, weather permitting, for Members to play in the winter months.

18 players were selected for the A grade. 16 players were selected for B grade.

## 1912

Canvas tent erected for afternoon teas. Coupons at 4 pence each sold to Members for cordials.

## 1913

Honorarium of 10 pounds paid to Secretary.

Membership had reached 91.

Club enjoyed successful season.

Mr. JB Anthony (whose family live at St Peters) was Club Champion.

During the season an annual social for the ladies held at Unley City Hall while teams visited from West Australia and Melbourne Cricket Ground.

300 pounds raised by debentures to build new clubhouse.

First Club By-Laws were printed.

Request made to Sturt Cricket Club to erect shelter seats at the North end of the Bowling Club and to erect Tea Rooms at the South end of the Rinks.

Resolution passed September 1913 - *The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in September each year. The Members shall at that Meeting elect a President, Hon. Sec., Treasurer and seven Committeemen.*

Club's Telephone Number (First Insertion) made in Telephone Book 3 November 1913.

Progressive Total Scoring Boards installed 3 November 1913

Club Colors, Hat Bands and Ties purchased 23 December 1913

#### 1914

3 new rinks planted total now 12 rinks.

New electric light installation put in hand September 1914.

#### 1917

At the AGM on 26 July 1917 it was agreed that -" *all expenses in connection with the Annual Official Opening of the Green be in future borne by the Members and NOT by the President as hitherto.*"

#### 1918

Provincial matches played at Kadina and Kapunda (these and games against Strathalbyn and Angaston continued on a reciprocal basis during the 1920's) and against the Parliamentary Club.

#### 1919

Mr. WH Langham, Club President, elected Mayor of Unley.

#### 1920

Notice posted warning Members against use of narrow bowls after June 1920. In July a Committee appointed to test any bowls of "questionable" draw.

#### 1921

Ice chest purchased for clubroom on 31 May for 10 guineas.

Bonus of five shillings paid to caretaker Mr. EA Smith and three shillings and sixpence to his assistant for their services in the Bar on the function night for "Minda".

Ladies Croquet Club granted use of the eastern end of the Green 24 December 1921.

#### 1922

Mr. M Hart Secretary for eight years from 1914-1922 elected Life Member of Club and presented with a framed certificate.

Club resolved that Cigarettes & Cigars be stocked 9 Nov 1922



### 1923

Membership 168 as at 1 August 1923.

Funds raised for Testimonial to RT White who was granted Life Membership, for long and valuable service.

Resolved to limit numbers to 150 (excluding Electric Light players who were not full members) - 21 August 1923.

### 1925

Moved and agreed (because of complaints) "Crayfish suppers no longer be indulged at Club Rooms"

### 1927

Tragically three Members of the Sturt Bowling Club, Messrs. F Bourne, MR Doolette and GER Lee, returning from a country tournament, lost their lives in a car accident at Blyth - December 1927

### 1928

From this year until 1948 many interstate games were held at Sturt, "sixteen second" greens were prepared for these events, and they ranked as the best in Australia.

### 1935

Sturt Bowling Club took over the management of the Recreation (Billiard) Room, which was located on the southern side of the fence dividing the Oval Grand Stand from the Green. 100 pounds spent on improvements. Thirteen years later, 26 February 1948, this arrangement was made official, on the understanding that the facility was open at all times to all members of the Oval Complex - Bowls, Baseball, Cricket, Croquet, Football, Lacrosse and Tennis.

### 1937

Sturt bowlers Messrs. JH Paine & H Rinders won the SA Centenary Bowling Carnival Championship Pairs.

### 1939-1945

The WW2 years saw membership remain steady, probably due to the age factor, whereas other sporting bodies at the Unley Oval were largely forced into recess.

Our Tennis Club neighbours were impacted by lack of tennis balls, due to rubber not being available from overseas.

In 1941 it was proposed that a suitable fence be erected between the Tennis Courts and the Bowling Club, but this did not occur until 1955.

In 1942 Club President Mr. Gordon Baden Powell Loeser personally paid to have a name board (*The ES Williams Gate*) erected over the Club entrance "Trimmer Memorial" gate. [The salt glazed, moulded brick pillars for the Memorial Gate were made by Adelaide Potteries c1920, and are illustrated p179 in Noris Ioannou's book '*Ceramics in South Australia 1836-1986*']

In 1942 Laidlaw Competition abandoned due to restrictions on lighting. Wednesday Pennant Competition also cancelled.

#### 1946

Memorial fountain erected to Mr. ES ("Ted") Williams in front of the Recreation Room. Mr. Williams was a Member of Sturt Bowling Club for 34 years, during most of which he served in executive office. The fountain was moved to its present site in 1985. (The fountain was badly vandalised by six schoolboys in 1964 and their parents were required to pay for the repairs)

#### 1950

At a "Sturt Sports Club" meeting in this year, Mr. CR Dunnage made the statement that '*Sturt Bowling Club had no major improvements since 1905, because all its money was used to subsidise Cricket!*' The statement appeared in State and Local papers and created quite a furore.

Colin Rosslyn Dunnage (1896-1969) MP, newsagent, was Councillor and Mayor of Unley 1939-41, Member for Unley and Deputy Speaker, President of Sturt Bowling Club 4 years 1950-53, President Sturt Football Club 1956-1964.

#### 1962

Preliminary plans drawn up for additions to the Club House, at an estimated cost of \$8,000 with half the funds to be borrowed from the Council, ten years interest free. The project did not proceed, and it was not until 1979 that improvements were made, using a different plan.

#### 1965

In the 1960's the Unley Council offered Sturt Bowling Club a move to Fairbrother's property, east of Fullarton Rd, in Fisher St. The Club declined because it meant relinquishing their traditional high standing with the RSABA.

In September 1965 the Bowling Club asked the Sturt Tennis Club to move, but they had no wish to leave the Oval complex and declined (we remain amicable neighbours!).

At the AGM in 1965 it was decided that a Ladies Club be formed with a maximum of 50 members, finances to be controlled by the officers of the Sturt Men's Bowling Club.

#### 1966

Sturt Bowling Club Inc. clubroom officially opened by His Worship Mr. Alexander L Hood JP, Mayor of Unley, on 30 September 1966.

## 1968

At a ceremony 11 October 1968 the clubroom was formally named "Dr. Jack Petchell Memorial Clubhouse" by Mrs. EA Petchell

During this season Sturt Div. 6 Green established a new Saturday Pennant record by defeating Payneham 211 to 36.

## 1969

It was decided to separate the Greens into two sections, "A" and "B", rather than have 14 rinks contiguous.

## 1971

A 66 year association with the "Sturt Sports Club Inc." came to an end when that entity was dissolved in 1971, and transferred its lawn mower, billiard tables and other equipment from the Recreation Room, to the Sturt Bowling Club.

## 1972

In October 1972 the Unley Council granted a separate lease to the Sturt Bowling Club, for the first time.

## 1980

President N K (Keith) Robinson and his committee led celebrations for the Club's 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee on 30 November with an all-day Men's Fours sponsored by Lensworth Finance.

## 1981

Super Veteran Badges (at age 80 or over) presented to Men's Club Members R Reeves, N Barron, E Jones, E McDonald, F Fulwood, W Bennett

## 1985

Due to "salt" damage, Members had the opportunity to emulate the energetic efforts of the founding fathers, when they assisted Greenkeeper Peter Newberry in complete replanting of both A & B Green.

On President's Day, 20 April 1986, President Leith Halliday OAM drew the attention of Members and Visitors to the excellent work achieved by Peter Newberry in relocating the "E S("Ted")Williams" Memorial Fountain to its present site.

A time capsule was sealed in the fountain wall containing - (1) a copy of the original letter regarding the formation of the Club (kindly donated by Mr. Jeffrey Thomas, son of AC Thomas, Secretary 1905), (2) short history of the Club prepared by Mrs. Betty Halliday, (3) photographs of Presentation Day & President's day 1985-86 season, (4) a copy of the Constitution, (5) a Club badge, (6) a Club teaspoon, (7) a Club hat band, (8) miniature bottle of St. Agnes brandy, a bottle of sandalwood oil and a container of 1985-86 ASW wheat, as symbols of prosperity.

From mid-1980's, starting at Broken Hill, an informal group of SBC Members have been making annual visits to various towns, especially along the River in Victoria. Bowls are played socially with much fraternal conviviality.

Foundation "tour" organizer Tony Hefron, is sadly no longer with us, but he is well and fondly remembered by the regular tourist bowlers.

#### 1986

A Historical Display was provided by City of Unley Museum for the Sturt Bowling Club at Unley Library, as part of their participation in the State's Sesquicentenary celebrations.

#### 2000

Because of declining Club memberships, various amalgamations have been mooted over the years. Unley City Council took a helpful and pro active role as facilitator with bowling Clubs in their area, and it appeared that Sturt might amalgamate with the combined Unley Park South Park Club.

Sturt Bowling Club Members were reluctant to leave our present facility, and overwhelmingly voted against such a move.

Regrettably in this same year, Sturt Women's Bowling Club was wound up due to insufficient membership to remain viable. Tremendous support and assistance was provided by our Women's Club Members over the forty five years of their existence and the Club acknowledges their very valuable contribution.

#### 2001

Members took action to replant the "Cuth Eley" ("B") green using tiff-dwarf to replace the Santa Anna couch, and the benefits of this upgrading are now being enjoyed by all.

#### 2003

Social Night Bowls recommenced and received good local support. The interest of past and present Sturt Football Club members in playing bowls socially has been a most pleasing development in the last several years.

A sub-committee was formed at a Special General Meeting in August to ensure that our "Centenary" is celebrated and publicised in a manner that reflected the importance of the achievement.

#### 2004

### **Centenary Celebrations & Events**

Treasurer and past President, Tim Young OAM, generously manufactured and donated to all members a distinctive name badge recording their membership in Club's centenary year.

His Worship, the Mayor of Unley, Mr. Michael Keenan indicated in 2003 that Unley City Council wished to mark the historic achievement, with a function for our Members and other guests. A most enjoyable gathering of Members and partners was held at the Council Chambers 6:30pm **Monday 1 March 2004**. Mayor Keenan, a genial and hospitable host, was well informed on the history of our Club, and having eloquently welcomed us all presented a handsome centenary plaque from the City of Unley to our Club President, Lawrie Buckley.

On **Friday 5 March 2004** a centenary dinner for current Members was held at our clubrooms. The evening was well supported. President Lawrie Buckley welcomed guests while Leo Fogarty provided a brief outline of the hidden history contained in Club Minute Books.

Also;

- Our caterers Messrs. Ottaviano were most efficient and provided a very hearty three course meal.
- Barry Whittle acted as master of ceremonies.
- First prize in the raffle (donated by West End) was won by Guido Papagni.
- Bar takings were excellent and probably explained the reluctance of some Members to finally go home, although sampling *grappa* may have been a contributing factor for some.
- Mario Capasso was busy with his camera and subsequently numerous excellent snapshots were put on display at the Club.

All Members past and present, Dignitaries and Special guests were invited to a Centenary Day function at the Club on **Sunday 28 March 2004**.

President Lawrie Buckley welcomed visitors from neighbouring Clubs Clarence Gardens, Millswood and Reade Park.

We were delighted to be joined by President of Bowls SA, Bob Peake and his wife Josephine, Chairman South Zone, Winston Ellis, and Mayor of City of Unley, Michael Keenan.

Quite a number of former Members from both Women's & Men's Club were able to attend including;

- Gordon Green still spry at 95 and wife Menza who was a Foundation Committee member of the Women's Club
- "Hav" Fort, another Foundation Committee member & her husband Ross
- Rex & Rhonda Treagus and other identities.

Secretary Barry Whittle outlined details of the match play for those participating, and whilst the games were in progress, the remainder enjoyed socialising and reminiscing.

A highlight of the afternoon was the expert catering provided by Celo and Bebe, assisted by other volunteers from the Reade Park Bowling Club. Celo prepared the whole pig and lamb on a spit, a delicious meal!

After distribution of trophies to winners, President Lawrie Buckley made a short speech, State President Bob Peake presented a special plaque from Bowls SA and City of Unley Mayor Michael Keenan briefly addressed the gathering.

Mario Capasso again secured some excellent snaps of various guests on the day, everybody clearly enjoying the Centenary of the Club.

To mark our milestone season, the Club obtained from Nepenthe Wines a delightful 2001 Cabernet Sauvignon Shiraz and a Sauvignon Blanc Semillon which were available for purchase bearing our Sturt Bowling Club's 1904-2004 Centenary labels.

Also available for purchase at the Club Bar are souvenir Sturt Bowling Club stubby holders with our Centenary logo.

On **Sunday 20 June 2004** the weather was unkind but the Club held a well attended Social Day for Members and families.

Luncheon was followed by presentation of trophies for Club Championships 2003-04.

President Lawrie Buckley presented "Veteran" and also an "Eights" Badge to "Pompie" Pastore and then distributed Pennant Badges to our successful Wednesday Pennant 3 Red team.

Past President John Griffith presented the trophy for Drawn Pairs won by Lawrie Buckley & Leo Fogarty

President Lawrie Buckley completed the presentations as follows:

- Championship Pairs - Dick Sismey & Joe LoFaro
- Handicap Singles - Richard Sismey (runner up Joe LoFaro)
- Championship Singles - Tony Petric (runner up John Griffith)

## **Pennants**

In 1956 the Sturt Bowling Club achieved a Club record by having all 7 Pennant teams unbeaten on consecutive Saturdays. In 1968 the Div 6 Green side scored a record win of 211 to 36.

Sturt Indoor Bias Bowls Association was formed in March 1969 and closed in March 1993. In 1983 six of its members were chosen to visit Tasmania for the Australian Indoor Championships.

Space does not permit the recording of all the Club's formal competition successes at Electric Light Bowls, Pennants, Indoor Bowls, Laidlaw Cup and various Inter Club Trophy games, by both Men's and Women's Clubs, but Sturt Bowling Club enjoys a proud tradition of historical successes at the highest level since 1904.

## **Champions & Identities**

As can be seen from the Club's Honour Board, there have been numerous champion players at Sturt. For the Men's Club, **Dr. Jack H Petchell**, for whom our clubrooms are named and whose photo hangs today above our Club Bar, was outstanding.

A 1962 issue of "Lawn Bowls – The Australian Way" for which Jack Petchell contributed an article 'How an average bowler can improve' contains an introduction p38 which states;

– "Dr. Jack Petchell –At Scotch College in Melbourne, he was in the first football and cricket teams and at Melbourne University, he won a Blue for football. Later he played League football for South Melbourne and became club captain. He moved to Adelaide in 1931, played tennis for Sturt, and when he found it too strenuous, he took to bowls. Although professional duties sometimes interfered with his bowls, he developed fast, winning the Sturt Club title six times. In 1946 he won the Australian singles from a field of 1500 bowlers at Melbourne where he was successful 21-20 in the final after trailing Dave Downie 3-12 at one stage. He was South Australia's singles representative for the Cardiff Games bowls trials in 1958. In the 1959-60 season, he was the first in S.A. to win the State title and the champion of champions in the one season, a feat which earned him the S.A. "Bowler of the Year" crown. Jack Petchell has retained his youthful versatility in sport and can still make breaks of fifty or one hundred in billiards as easily as he wins bowls games. Shrewd judges rate him as one of the best- equipped bowlers South Australia has had."

Dr. Petchell was not only a top bowler and Skipper, but also served the Club for 14 years between 1940 and 1958 as a Committee member, being elected President in 1946, Vice President 1950. He was Member for Parkside Ward on the Unley Council in the early 1950's.

His remarkable bowling record includes:

- Australian Singles Champion 1947
- Consistency Trophy 1940
- Club Pairs 1939
- Handicap Singles 1940 1952 1953 1954
- Sedgely Pairs 1952
- ES Williams Pairs 1957
- Club Legacy Pairs 1961
- Club Championship 1940 1952 1953 1954 1956 1960 1965 1967 1968
- State Champion of Champions 1952 1953 1960
- Selected for 1<sup>st</sup> Division 1952
- Joined Electric Light competition 1958.

A gold cigarette case was presented to Dr. Jack Petchell by Members of Sturt Bowling Club in recognition of this Singles Championship achievement at national level.

Some of us may recall an old saying "The older I get the better I was"!

The "Doc" really was a top bowler, but as a skipper, and in the fashion of the day, was reputed to have demanding expectations of his rink members.

It is interesting to record that over the years at least thirty of our Members claim to have "led" for him. Another of our Members, who says he tried to observe the "Doc's" technique, was unable to do so successfully, because "Dr Jack was too quick on the mat!" Ross Fort (himself a very skilful bowler) partnered "The Doc" in a Club Pairs match and ruefully reports that they were beaten in their first game.

#### **Other Club identities:-**

- **M Hart**, President 1922 Club Secretary for eight years 1914-1921. Life Member
- **Cuth Eley**, Life Member, for whom our B green was named in 1973 in recognition of years of work given to the Club. Cuth was also a Life Member of the Sturt Sports Club.
- **JS Brown**, Club Secretary for ten consecutive years 1922-1931



- **Victor York Richardson OBE**, South Australia's greatest all round sportsman. Captained Australia and South Australia in cricket; Magarey Medalist 1920; captained Sturt Football Club, Member of Sturt Football Club "Team of the Century" and Hall of Fame; captained SA in interstate football; represented the State at baseball, played top grade lacrosse. President, Sturt Sports Club and first class bowler
- **Gordon ("Grassy") Green** former Sturt Football Club full forward, represented SA. Our oldest surviving past Player in 2004; Gordon married **Menza Lang** who was a Foundation Member of the Sturt Women's Bowling Club and made a great contribution.
- **FG (Fred) Sierp**, Club President 1962, Club Champion 1955 1957 1958 1961 1962 1963; represented South Australia.
- **Norman L Barron**, Life Member, Club President, 1964 1973 1974; member of Sturt Football Club "Team of the Century", played interstate football for SA.
- **Gil Langley MP**, former Australian Test wicket keeper; Sturt footballer and Captain, played for SA, Member Sturt Football Club "Hall of Fame"; Speaker for the South Australian House of Assembly; Life Member, Club President 1967 1976 1982. Gil was responsible for bringing various Parliamentary identities to attend Bowling Club functions. Gil was a legend in his own time.
- **Gordon Wooley**, Life Member, Singles Champion 1976, Club President 1978, Secretary 1982-1990.
- **Keith Willgoose**, keen bowler, (aka the "Goose", didn't mind a 'sarsaparilla' or two) an irrepressible character both on and off the green. President 1989 and as Club Tournament Manager was very successful in getting big numbers to attend at SBC events.
- **Lawrie Buckley**, Life Member, joined Club 1972 and has unstintingly given his time and expertise to the Club, as Player, Selector, President and Committee member. Singles Champion 1995, Club President 1993 1994 2002 2003 2004 (Centenary Year) 2005
- **AJ (Tony) Hefron**, Sturt Football & Kenilworth Cricket Clubs; Life Member; Singles Champion 1984, Club President 1990 1997, regular Skipper in our 1<sup>st</sup> Division. Following Tony's untimely passing and as an indication of the esteem in which he was held, commencing in 2004 our New Years Day tournament was renamed -"*Tony Hefron Memorial New Years Day Fours*"
- **Geoff Clark**, Life Member, Secretary 1993 1994 1998 1999 2000 2001 Chairman of Selectors 1993-2004.
- **Dr. RJ ("Bob") Wadsworth**, Singles Champion 1990 1992 1994 1997 1999 2000 2001
- **WH ("Bill") Bennett**, Life Member, won Club Championship 1974 at age 80.
- **TG ("Tim) Young**, Life Member, skipper, past President 1996 wily keeper of the Club purse for 13 years 1997-2009 and active Club PR man in the Unley community where his affable personality, nautical and commercial experience, have proven a powerful asset for the Club.
- **Norm Peacock & G. ("Joe") LoFaro**, Life Members and both well-known Club personalities, who apart from their participation as bowlers over many years, have given countless hours of their time serving the Club and attending to the refreshment needs of Members and visitors.
- **Idris Peacock**, wife of Norm and a Life member has also been a tireless helper at the Club.

These are just a few names from amongst hundreds of Members who have contributed their time and talents to the Club over the century and whose input whilst not recorded herein has been invaluable.



## Sturt Women's Bowling Club

The inaugural meeting was held 16<sup>th</sup> September 1965 and the Women's Club was founded with 13 Members, of whom Havila Fort, Elma Hunkin, Menza Green (Lang) were still living in the Centenary year.

Foundation Members:-

M Barker Dulcie Barron Olive Britton V Bunyard Beryl Clark Havila Fort Elma Hunkin  
Doris Johns Menza Lang P McDonald E (Lil) Spry Beatrice Schulte M Turnbull

The Men's Committee made the Greens available for play from 12 noon to 4:30 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and Wednesday and Thursday evenings, alternately.

There was quite a controversy about allowing the formation of a Women's Club. However it is wryly recorded in the initial Minutes of the Sturt Women's Club, that when it came to an official vote, the very Members (Men) who had been so loudly and adamantly opposed, were the ones who now voted in favor of the Motion!

Inaugural President	Doris Johns
Inaugural Secretary	Olive Britton
Inaugural Treasurer	Lil Spry
Inaugural Committee	Menza Lang, Havila Fort,

(Women's singles "Club Champion" not played in 1965)

In June 1966 the Women's Club entered two teams in the SAWBA Pennant competition. It is interesting to note that the initial Membership limited to 50 was agreed to extend to 55 in September 1968, but for some years, there still remained a waiting list of applicants for Membership. In that year, due to pressure of applications from players at other Clubs, a policy was adopted of only accepting new membership applications from immediate family of members of the SBC Men's Club.

Inaugural Patron of the Women's Club was Mrs. Chase (wife of former Men's President Howard Chase).

The Women enjoyed other social activities in addition to bowling. Cards, indoor bowls, gala days and fundraising to name but a few.

In 1968 the Women agreed to support the Men in the Indoor Bowling competition in the winter months and numerous successes were achieved, as evidenced by the Pennants won over the years.

On Opening Day 17 October 1968, "Grace" was sung to the tune of "Old Hundredth":-

*"We thank you Lord for health and food  
For bowling friends and all things good  
And as another year we start  
GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP IN US IMPART!"*

The Sturt Women's Club competed with Brighton for the "Pritchard Memorial Cup", over the years.

In February 1969 six SBC Women's Club Members attended the Australian Women's Bowling Carnival in Perth WA, (Mesdames Buchanan, Burton, Lear, Ness, Clark, and Miss Pearce.

SAWBA Pennant successes -

1968-69	5 Red
1968-69	5 Blue
1977-78	6 Red
1981-82	2 Green
1994-95	5 Red

#### Well known Members

**Havila Fort** (wife of Ross) Foundation Member and Inaugural Committee, played bowls for 31 years, Club Patron 2000, was in the Centenary year still living at Frederick St, Parkside, with her husband Ross, former Men's Club Champion.

**Menza Lang** Foundation Member married Gordon "Grassy" Green

**Jean Langley** (wife of past Men's President Gil), Life Member, Club President 1976 1977 1982 1992 1993 Champion 1984 1988 1990 1992 1993

**Frances M ("Fran") Othams** (wife of former Men's President, Bill) Life Member, made an outstanding contribution to the Women's Club, serving nine terms as President; 1984 1985 1995-2000

**G. ("Tiny") Shields**, Club Secretary eight years 1990-1997

**Rhonda V. Treagus**, Club Secretary 1998-2000 (wife of Rex who was Secretary of the Men's Club 1992 1993)

An alphabetical list of Women's Bowling Club Members for 1968 provided by Havila Fort as follows:

Grace Allen Edith Boorman Lil Burton Dora Bawden Nancy Barron Ivy Bentley  
Melva Berryman Daphne Bassham Betty Bottger Marion Chaplin Mabs Correll  
Dorrie Chapman Lil Davies Edna Durant Iris Deutron Sue Fisher Havila Fort  
Menza Green Melva Hosking Jean Hunt Jean Langley Edna Lewis Moya Moore  
Kath Marlor Clara McGuigan Ruby Norton Win O'Daniel Fran Othams Erina Pyle  
Jill Ridley Betty Robinson Marie Rogers Gladys Rumball Beat Schulte Rita Smith  
Marie Smith Nell Sandercock Ruth Small Marge Selth Joan Sims Tint Shields  
Rhonda Treagus Gwen Trebilcock Marge Tymmons Alice Wyman Win Welsh  
Kath Watson Olive Wooley Elsie Wilson Phil Wood

#### 2005 to present

Moving into our second century of operation, the standout initiative in terms of lawn bowls participation and the Club's financial bottom line was the growth of Night Owls. Night Owls commenced in 2003 under the guidance of Barry Whittle as competition manager. In 2004 on the back of the popular movie "Crackerjack", Bowls SA launched a marketing program "Get on the Green" to promote lawn bowls to the masses. The Club at this time had strong support from players at Sturt Football Club in our Thursday Night Owl competition.

The Night Owls product was expanded when Peter Kingston moved to the Club in 2006 from Millswood Bowling Club. Peter formalised the competition, introduced the concept of "Blue Shirts" as Club volunteers and generally provided an exceptional service to Sturt Bowling Club in his time with us. John Venning was the drive and provided the acumen in initiating the Tuesday Night Owls competition.

Moving forward to this day the Club's summers have consistently been blessed with more than 200 Night Owl players. Most members have been able to pull on a Blue Shirt over the years and it is this hard work that the Club is eternally grateful for.

Simplicity, structure, friendliness and not taking our Night Owl community for granted have been key ingredients making this program an outstanding success.

Some interesting notes from Sturt Bowling Club Night Owls are as follows:

- Commenced in 2003 with the formal Thursday and Tuesday competitions commencing in 2006 and 2010 seasons respectively
- Inaugural Thursday Night Owl champions were Dead Ends in 2006 and Amigos in 2010
- On Thursdays, the DBs have won three times in 2012, 2014 & 2015 while 120Ys won back to back flags in 2008 & 2009.
- All eight titles on Tuesday Night have been shared by three teams Amigos (2010 2014 2015), Easy Rollers (2016 2017) with The Loose Ends claiming an unprecedented 3 championships in a row from 2011-2013.
- The DBs represented by Paul Datta, Andrew Temple, Luke Kingston and Alex Mew were the 2015 State Night Owls Champions
- Green Machine (formerly Holler's Heroes), minor premier on Thursday Nights 5 times, but have lucked out in the finals series.
- Red Hot Tomales, minor premier twice and runner up on 3 occasions including a one shot loss to Easy Rollers in 2016
- Tuesdays lead Thursdays 3-2 in the Tuesday v Thursday Challenge

In the early 2000s, the Club's future was shaky as declining pennant players and financial difficulties were prevalent. Very strong administration is a feature of the current era and is highlighted by the following:

- For 2018 Bruce Williams is Club President for an unprecedented 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive term and joins John Griffith who has also presided over 5 terms. Both Bruce (2009 2010) and John (2016 2017) have also served as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. It is noted Lawrie Buckley served an unprecedented 6 terms as President the last of which was in 2005
- Peter Hughes, President (2007-10), and joins inaugural President Joseph Vardon (1905-08) and CR Dunnage MP (1950-53) in presiding over 4 terms
- Tim Young, Treasurer, for 13 consecutive years relinquishing the post in 2009
- Errol Koch (2012-2015) and Barry Whittle (2003-06) served 4 consecutive terms as Secretary

Other significant membership and playing highlights of the era (but not limited to these) include:

- Life memberships awarded to Don Reynolds (2004), H Berrett (2012), John Griffith (2014) and Richard Sismey (2014).
- 25 years of membership acknowledged during this era were Leo Fogarty (1979), Don Reynolds (1980), Bob Macdonald (1981) H Berrett (1982) Jim Degenhardt (1982) Joe LoFaro (1982) Richard Sismey (1982) John Griffith (1983) John Opie (1989) P Welsh (1990) R Webster (1990)
- 7 Pennant successes via 2005 BSA Division 4 Red (C) Saturday Men, 2005 BSA Division 3 Red (C) Wednesday Men, 2006 BSA Division 3 Red (NW) Wednesday Men, 2011 BSA Metropolitan League 3 (S) Wednesday (Red Team) Men, 2014 BSA Metropolitan League 2 (E) Saturday Open, 2016 BSA Metropolitan League 2 (E) Wednesday Men, 2017 BSA Metropolitan League 4 (E) Saturday Open
- Andrew McDonald (1999 2006 2008 2017) completes 4<sup>th</sup> Singles Championship while Peter Welsh (2007 2010 2015) has 3
- Ron Webster & Peter Welsh (2008-10) complete 3 consecutive Pairs Championships making their collect 4 in total winning in 1996

From a works, house and greens perspective, the following outcomes are noted (but not limited to these):

- Recommissioning of the ES Williams Fountain under Project Manager Neville Riddle
- Large shade awnings for southern end of B green
- Upgrading of locker room, bathroom, kitchen, bar, disabled toilet and Club entrance areas
- Replacing A green with Tiff dwarf turf and levelling of both greens
- Beautification of garden areas.
- Solar Panels installation and replacement of roof on western buildings.

Great Club Great People.....

*And so the Story continues.....*