

Our First 50 Years - Jack Miller

It was March 1960 at a meeting convened by the Progress Association that formed a sub committee to investigate a suitable site for a bowling green. The preferred site was the one currently occupied today which was reclaimed land, undulating sand dunes, tea tree and marrum grass.

At a further general meeting on 8th August 1960, the Inverloch Bowling Club was formed with Russell Scott our first president.

Negotiations then took place with Inverloch Foreshore Committee, Department of Crown Lands and Woorayl Shire Council who welcomed the project.

After negotiations were completed, a lease of the site was granted and it was all go. At a meeting in November 1960, Mr Emmett, a retired engineer and Murray Kelly, a bricklayer offered to build toilets on site. I can imagine them having it built before the ink was dry on the permit!

The Bowling Club offered 10 pound debentures at 10% interest and by the next meeting on the 4th October, 1960, the treasurer reported a credit balance of £719 made up of £590 in debentures and the balance in subscriptions and donations.

The first annual meeting was held in Mechanics Institute Hall on the 8th August, 1961 and was well attended.

Following on from the Annual Meeting on the 23rd August, 1961, the ladies convened a meeting at the home of Mrs Coral McKay in Reilly Street where the supermarket is now situated. A committee was elected headed by Mrs J McKinnon as President. Note that meetings were held in the old hall, private homes, National Bank and so on as at this stage, clubrooms did not exist.

A massive effort must have taken place because at a September meeting in 1961, it was decided to officially open the green on the 4th November 1961 with the President of the SGBA officiating.

So by my calculations, in the space of 20 months that committee converted sand dunes into a bowling green.

1961 saw the passing of Foundation Member, Arnold Metherall and it is members such as Arnold that this club is deeply indebted to. A trophy day is run in his remembrance.

In winter, euchre nights were run at 2 shilling per head entry fee and prizes to the value of 5 shillings. Raffle tickets were sold to campers along the foreshore at Christmas time, farmers raised calves, progressive dinners were held at member's homes. It was a very active little club and by 1964 it had 51 men and 44 lady members.

Through this period of time, the Inverloch Lifesaving Clubrooms were used for catering purposes so at the October meeting in 1965, a sub committee was appointed to investigate building the club rooms. Plans were drawn and rough costing was obtained.

Permission was given to call for tenders, builders Meehl & Trollope of Drouin were the successful tenderers. Again through the efforts of many members a great cost saving was achieved in levelling the site with tractors, etc. and helping with the building. Noting that members did the painting.

August 29th 1967 saw the opening of the new club house with the President of RVBA officiating in which he made mention of our unique site. Cost of our new club house coming in at \$17,000.

In 1968 with the new clubrooms we saw the start of indoor bowling.

In 1970 an automatic watering system was installed.

The 1973 committee moved that an application be made for a liquor license.

1974 saw the payment of \$4000 to wipe out the overdraft to the National Bank, two years in advance of contract and note this released several staunch members who stood as guarantors.

In 1978 Bingo was introduced and despite some highs and lows over the years, it still makes a great contribution to our bank balance.

In 1981 our first full time greenkeeper was appointed. Previously this had been done by some very dedicated members.

In relation to the club's bowling achievements, Pennant Flags eluded us until the Ladies broke the ice in season 1974-75 in 2nd Division followed by Ladies Division 1 in season 1978-79 with many more to follow.

Likewise the Men in 3rd Division got their act together and won flags in 1984, 1985, 1987 & 1988. Men's A Grade then came to the fore and nailed their first flag in the season of 1997-98 and then to their credit has won 10 out of the last 13 A Grade Premierships.

Our club can now boast 38 premierships. Over the years, the club has produced many champions at Association level, Group 8 level, and State level to put Inverloch on the map.

In summing up the Club's success, it is due to so many dedicated members giving their time and effort. Please take the opportunity to peruse our Honour & Achievement boards.