

Early Days of the Dalkeith Tennis Club

It started for me early in 1938 when I saw a notice on the shop window of Elhers' store on the corner of Waratah Ave. & Roberts rd., stating that a meeting was to be held at the Baptist Hall nearby, regarding the formation of a tennis club.

At 17, I was the youngest single person to attend, with the majority, young married couples. It was decided there and then, to take over from the Nedlands Road Board, the expired lease of six tennis courts, previously held by the Postal Institute. Elections followed with acceptance by :-

President - Councillor Alan Bennett
Captain - Arthur Schupp
Secretary - Norm Edwards
and other Committee Members.

Sufficient members joined that night to proceed with formalities, and to commence playing tennis the following month.

As promised by the Road Board, a brick and tiled Club House was completed in time for the opening of the season later that year. This replaced the open sided palm frond covered shelter we were using.

At the end of each season the presentation of awards were made at the Club House in the evening, followed by a dance with piano accompaniment by a member. (Our first Patron, Mr. Keenan provided the "Keenan Championship" trophies for many years. Club Championships ceased for 3 years during W. War II.) The evening concluded with a bring a plate supper with all those home made goodies, much appreciated by a sweet tooth like me.

About once a year a social was held, which included a dance and a sing song around the piano. One year an evening river trip was arranged from Perth to Point Walter, and we were lucky, as it was a very hot night which made it enjoyable for all.

There was a good family atmosphere at the Club with pre school youngsters happily enjoying themselves while mum and dad played tennis.

Shirley Cruickshank (nee Sanders) and her sister Joan, Jeanette and "Billy" Ridley, seemed to be regulars and all but Joan are included in the photo taken when the Club House was officially opened in 1938.

Since its' foundation 66 years ago, the Club has grown from a small group of about 30 playing social tennis at the weekends, to a large competitive one enjoying considerable success.

Good luck in the future.

Jack Colpus
Jack Colpus - Oct. 2004