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INTRODUCTION

This history booklet has been produced to mark the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the official Opening of the Club in November 1954. Emphasis has been placed on recording the efforts of our foundation members whose efforts and initiative built a bowling club from nothing.

Since that first opening the Club has gone from strength to strength, but this historian suggests that the administrators who followed have merely added to what was already built.

Therefore this booklet concentrates on our formation and the following twenty months of continuous effort that built a bowling club. "Extracts from the Minutes" demonstrates the seemingly endless decisions that had to be made and the tasks that had to be undertaken.

Later in the booklet the history of the Club since the first opening has been summarised. The main source of information has been the official minutes of the Club, supplemented by annual reports where available. Bowling club notes as submitted to the Geelong Advertiser by Alan Ray over a period of years, and excerpts from the Geelong Advertiser have also been utilised.

Important in helping place events in context have been the memories of people such as Shirley Hassett, Thelma Smith, Gwen Ray, Lorraine and Owen Holbrook, Bruce Ford, Lyle Grundell and John Menzies who were there in the beginning.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance that has been provided by Karen Foley in transforming many pages of untidy handwriting into this final version.

Norm Thomas
Club Historian

OCEAN GROVE TO 1952

Ocean Grove is a coastal town on the Bellarine Peninsula, some one hundred kilometres by road from Melbourne, situated beside the Barwon River Estuary to the West and Bass Strait to the South.

The Bowling Club itself is in a prime position just 300 metres from the scenic Barwon River, 500 metres from the beautiful Ocean Grove beach and a short walk of 400 metres from the town's busy shopping centre.



The Chalet

Ocean Grove developed as a township much later than other well established nearby towns such as Queenscliff, Point Lonsdale, Portarlington, Drysdale and Barwon Heads. It was used for mainly pastoral purposes until developers, backed by a group of Methodist ministers purchased the land in 1887 and subdivided it into 2500 blocks. Most of the streets were named after Methodist ministers and a covenant banning the sale of liquor was placed over the whole area. The first building completed in the new settlement was the Coffee

Palace which later became The Chalet and was used for many Ocean Grove Bowling Club committee meetings held before the clubhouse was built for Opening Day 1954.

A large proportion of those who purchased land resided in Melbourne, many of them ministers. Access to Ocean Grove was difficult by coach from Geelong, or from the Marcus Hill station on the Geelong-Queenscliff railway.

The building boom of the 1880s was followed by the Depression of the '90s. Very few of the blocks sold were developed in any way, rates lapsed and titles were lost. Ocean Grove developed gradually but slowly until after the Second World War.

The Booklet produced for the Ocean Grove Primary School Centenary (1991) shows that the number of pupils enrolled rose from 33 in 1944, accelerating particularly after 1949 to 230 in 1954. A large part of the influx was due to Australia's post war migration program. Many European families came to Ocean Grove, living in temporary accommodation at Wynndean before moving into the Ocean Grove community. Companies such as International Harvester and Ford based in Geelong needed labour and provided immediate employment.

As the population grew other local organisations emerged:

- Ocean Grove Cricket Club – 1953
- Surf Club 1948-1950, then 1953
- Football Club – 1962 (previously Barwon Heads/Ocean Grove)
- Tennis Club 1920s, affiliated 1933
- Scouts and Guides 1953

So in 1952 the Progress Association thought that Ocean Grove may be ready for a bowling club to provide an activity for the locals and an attraction for holiday-makers. Accordingly the Progress Association called a public meeting for November 11th 1952.

THE BEGINNING – 1952

On 11th November 1952 at 8.30pm the Ocean Grove Progress Association held a public meeting for the purpose of discussing the ways and means of establishing a bowling club and green in Ocean Grove. The meeting was held in the Rural Fire Brigade Building. Mr. Jim Hammond President of the Progress Association chaired the meeting. Mr. Lyle Grundell Secretary of the Progress Association took minutes of the meeting. Mr. G. Anderson President of the Pt. Lonsdale Bowling Club addressed the meeting, outlining the basic requirements for the founding of a bowling club. Eight others attended the meeting – R. Pierce, H. Wiltshire, R. Wiltshire, W. Archer, A. Gosbell, V. Hassett, O. Holbrook and F. Smith.

An estimated initial cost of £1000 was made up of land (three blocks) £400, fencing £75, timber for ditches £150, seed £30, levelling etc. £100, mower £100, other expenses £145.

It was resolved that all present be members of a committee to investigate the possibility of forming a bowling club in Ocean Grove, to generally promote the project and call a further public meeting in due course.

A sub-committee of Jim Hammond, Owen Holbrook, Frank Smith and Reg Pierce was formed to investigate suitable sites and obtain prices of land.

In the weeks following 11th November the investigating committee worked in the community creating interest, seeking prospective members and prospective debenture holders (200 debentures at £5). They put out a circular "Let's Put Ocean Grove on the Map".

LET'S PUT OCEAN GROVE ON THE MAP - DEC. '52.

At a recent Public Meeting it was decided that Ocean Grove needed a BOWLING CLUB. Apart from the satisfaction to the keen bowlers amongst us it is obvious that such a club would be a valuable asset to Ocean Grove as a township and a holiday resort.

At this meeting a Committee was appointed to investigate the possibilities. Offers have been obtained on three sites in areas considered suitable for a bowling green. Estimates of the cost of establishment have been obtained as follows:-

Purchase of land	£400
Clearing, levelling	150
Fencing	80
Timber	150
Water pipes etc.	120
Seed	30
Other expenses	50
	<u>£1000</u>

It is proposed to finance the formation of the Bowling Club by means of 200 £5. Debentures. Within the next few days a member of the committee will call on you for your support. If sufficient support is forthcoming a meeting of all those who have indicated their willingness to give their support will be called with the object of forming an establishment committee to carry out the project.

It is now up to you. Will you support the scheme by taking one or more debentures?

--oo0oo--

The site sub-committee investigated various sites and a follow-up public meeting was called for on the 22nd January 1953.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
OCEAN GROVE PROPOSED BOWLING CLUB.

A meeting will be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday, 22nd January, 1953, in the Fire Brigade Hall, Ocean Grove to receive the report from the Committee of Investigation on the formation of a Bowling Club in Ocean Grove and, if thought fit, --

1. To adopt a constitution and rules.
2. To elect a Committee of Management.
3. To conduct any other business.

On behalf of the Committee of Investigation we wish to thank you for your intimation of support to the extent of Debentures at £5. each.

R. S. PIERCE
(Secretary).

J. HAMMOND
(Chairman)



Dave Barrie

This public meeting on the 22nd January received the report of the investigating committee and became the inaugural meeting of the Bowling Club when it was decided to proceed with the formation of a bowling club. A committee and office-bearers were appointed as follows:

PRESIDENT	Dave Barrie – Retired – A bowler (Club Champion Auburn in the '30s)
VICE-PRESIDENT	Jim Hammond – Retired farmer
SECRETARY	Reg Pierce – Accountant
TREASURER	Ike Gosbell – Danny Lascelles (excellent cricketer)
COMMITTEE	Alec Hollyhoke – Solicitor Bruce Ford – Dennys Lascelles Harry Edmundsen Vin Hassett – Industrial Chemist (excellent cricketer) Rev. N. Tolhurst – Accounting background Harry Wiltshire – Builder Owen Holbrook – Earthmoving contractor

The Rules and Constitution of the Queenscliff Bowling Club were adopted as the Rules and Constitution of the Ocean Grove Bowling Club subject to amendment by the committee, a final draft to be presented at a later date.

A membership fee was set at one guinea.

OCEAN GROVE BOWLING CLUB - PUBLIC MEETING 22/1/53.
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE.

At a Public meeting held on 11th November 1953 a Committee was set up for the purpose of investigating the possibility of establishing a Bowling Club in Ocean Grove and the following is a report of the findings of that Committee.

The first task was to select suitable land and after inspecting several locations the Committee selected 3 areas as suitable. The owners of the various blocks in each area were contacted and a number of definite offers have been received:

1. between Lelean St. & Dare St. blocks 146, 147, 148.
Price £110 per block... £330.
2. On triangle between the Terrace & Lelean St. Nos. 195, 196, 197.
Price £350 for 3 blocks.
3. The Terrace blocks 212, 213, 214.
Price £400 for three blocks, small deposit balance 2 years.
4. Miss Bell's Subdivision 3 blocks
Price £300 for the ~~same~~ No. of Trees

At the next meeting of the Committee the question of the cost of putting down a green was examined and, after making fairly extensive enquiries, the minimum amount required was assessed at £1,000, to cover construction of a 7 rink green, 120' x 120'. This would only cover the green, including the cost of land, but would not include mower, roller, etc.

The final problem facing the Committee was the question of financing the project. Accordingly a circular was prepared outlining the objects and advising the residents of Ocean Grove that a member of the Committee would call on them to enlist their financial support. A list of residents was prepared from the Voters Roll and each member of the Committee undertook to make a personal call on a certain number. We realise that this survey has been by no means complete and wish to assure those who have not been called upon that it has not been intentional, but rather due to lack of time at our disposal.

However the general response to our enquiry in regard to finance has been such that we feel that the project can be launched as soon as possible with assurance of success.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the members of the Committee for all the hard work which they have put into this preliminary survey. We feel that the Investigating Committee has done its part and it is now up to us to carry the project through to a successful conclusion and not let it fall, due to lack of support, either financial or moral.

Dezuni 11/2/53

EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES...

26th January 1953

The main business for the evening was the inspection and selection of land from the sites put forward by the Investigation Committee. The Committee then proceeded to inspect the sites. After the inspection the meeting was resumed and a general discussion took place on the suitability of sites and cost of purchase.

It was moved by Mr. Ford, seconded by Rev. Tolhurst "that the blocks 195,196 and 197 between The Terrace and Lelean Street (Pitman's) be purchased at the best price obtainable, with a maximum of £350, subject to an option on the adjoining blocks 193 and 194".

Carried

It was resolved in the motion of Mr. Ford, seconded by Mr. Hollyhoke "that Mr. Gilbert, the owner of block 194, be approached with an offer of £150 for the block and the condemned house thereon, and that the owner of block 193, Mr. James Brown, be approached to purchase it with a limit of £125".

3rd February 1953

The position of the land had been resolved. Block 193 was available for £62. Block 194 had proved difficult but there was a solution.

"It was resolved on the motion of Rev. Tolhurst, seconded Mr. Hollyhoke that Pitman's blocks be purchased and block 191 be purchased from Toc H and exchanged for 194, owned by Mr. Gilbert."

Also at this meeting Mr. Hollyhoke undertook to peruse the draft constitution, club solicitors were appointed, N.B.A. was appointed as the club bankers, arrangements were made to open a club bank account, the Treasurer was authorised to accept subscriptions of one guinea and the decision was made to hold a public meeting on 11th February to report on progress and invite applications for membership.

10th February 1953

The secretary of the R.V.B.A. had been contacted and had offered any possible assistance and forwarded a book of rules.

- The constitution had been completed and was ready to be approved by the public meeting on 11th February.
- Samples of soil from the five blocks would be sent to the Department of Agriculture for analysis.
- Thoms (surveyors) would be asked to survey the site.

11th February 1953

Public Meeting held as arranged, to report on progress to date, accept the constitution and authorise continuation of the project.

16th February 1953

- Secretary had unsuccessfully sought funds from the disbanded Ocean Grove Surf Club.
- Site Notice Boards should be prepared.
- President would approach certain ladies in Ocean Grove asking them to form a ladies section for affiliation with the Ocean Grove Bowling Club.
- A suitable debenture form could be based on that issued by the Angelsea Golf Club.

23rd February 1953

- An excellent start had been made to clearing the trees from the site of the greens. Owen Holbrook had provided a tractor and his services for clearing purposes free of charge.
- Debenture forms had been suitably amended and should now be printed.
- Mrs. Wallace had been approached about the formation of a ladies section and would give the matter consideration.
- The bank balance was now £178 and membership stood at 31.

3rd March 1953

John Menzies had offered to have the club notice-boards (sign boards) painted at his expense.

Excellent progress had been made with clearing and scrub would be burned during the ensuing week. Rates on blocks 194, 195 and 196 should be paid (total cost 19/6).

10th March 1953

Mrs. Wallace was unable to undertake the organization of a ladies section but would be happy to join as a member. The burning off operation had been a success thanks particularly to Jim Hammond.

Owen Holbrook would organise the levelling of the ground for the greens. Dimensions of the green would be 115 feet N & S, the maximum permissible E & W.

17th March 1953

Application should be made to State Rivers and Water Supply for water to be connected to blocks 193, 194, 195, 196 and 197 with the maximum diameter of piping permissible.

A list of ladies (32 named) would be invited to attend a meeting on 13th April at the Public Hall to discuss the formation of a Ladies Section.

24th March 1953

165 feet of piping would be required to connect with the end of the present water main in Lelean Street. The club would apply for a 4 inch main to join the present main in Lelean Street to service the bowling club and other residents, then apply for a 2 inch tapping for the bowling club.

A circular was approved to be sent to the 32 ladies listed plus another 21 names submitted at this meeting. It was resolved that the membership of the ladies section be limited to 50.

31st March 1953

Levelling for the green area was now complete. Work could now be completed by the Council grader, levelling an average topsoil of approximately eight inches. Approximately 200 yards of topsoil remained to cover any discrepancies.

A sub-committee was formed to investigate the advisability and cost of concrete ditches.

The question of suitable grass for the greens was discussed. Preliminary tests on the soil had been received but it was decided to wait on a final report before proceeding further.

Fencing was discussed. It was suggested that the possibility of obtaining ammonia piping should be investigated.

7th April 1953

The Bellarine Shire had agreed to provide the use of their power diesel grader free of cost.

Mr. Hassett undertook to order 400 feet of 1½ inch galvanised pipe for the water tapping. Mr. Gosbell was authorised to purchase 2 coils of 10 gauge wire for fencing purposes.

14th April 1953

Soil testing had been completed and a decision now had to be made on the type of grass most suitable – R.V.B.A. would assist.

It was possible to purchase a re-conditioned Scott Bonner 20 inch cutter for approximately £60.

Moulds had arrived for the concrete ditching. Mr. Hammond hoped to make the first samples during the coming week. Messrs. Barrie, Hollyhoke, Edmundson and Tolhurst had represented the committee at the inaugural meeting of the Ladies section. 17 ladies were present and the section was duly formed.

20th April 1953

Mr. Hammond was authorised to proceed with the manufacture of the ditches.

Mr. Wiltshire had inspected the Portarlington clubhouse, which was to be dismantled, but it was unsuitable for our needs and the cost of transporting it would make it an unprofitable proposition.

27th April 1953

The Ladies Section should be advised that we fully approve of their ideas and wish them every success and we shall help them in any way we can.

Mr. Hammond had now made 23 sections of concrete ditching. Mr. Wiltshire was instructed to inspect a roller at Drysdale. Steel posts should be purchased for screeding purposes. The Treasurer reported a bank balance of £588.2.9. £1030 was the total of debentures received; £88.4.0 had been received in subscriptions, £7.12.0 in donations.

4th May 1953

It was resolved that the N.E. end of the grounds be examined as a possible site for the erection of a shelter for a mower, roller and other equipment which would be purchased.

A letter had been received from the Ladies Section suggesting a Popular Girl Quest to be held as a fundraiser.

11th May 1953

A quote had been received for plastic hose at a cost of £24 for 300 feet.

A rubber-tired galvanised iron wheelbarrow had been purchased at a cost of £18.6.4.

An advertisement was to be placed in "Bowls" and "The Age" for either a manual or power-driven roller (7 1/2 cwt to 10 cwt).

The Ladies Section was to hold a kiosk (in Geelong) on Saturday 16th May.

18th May 1953

A working bee would be held as usual next Saturday and Sunday.

The Ladies Section was to hold a Flag Bridge Night on Monday 25th.

A letter should be sent to Council requesting that the Shire Engineer grant permission to install the water main in Lelean Street as soon as possible as the matter is urgent.

25th May 1953

Messrs. Hassett and Wiltshire should investigate the relative cost of ammonia piping and red-gum for use as fence posts.

As the committee wished to support the Ladies Section Flag Bridge Night the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

8th June 1953

It was resolved that hardwood posts be used for fencing. Red-gum posts 5" x 3", 6' posts, 2' in ground, spaced at 15' with steel post centres with 3 strands of wire, one strand of barbed wire on top with 3'6" of wire netting. Corner posts and gate posts to be 5" x 5", gates of cyclone type.

Approximately another 330 man-hours would be required to complete ditching, levelling and seeding before grass could be grown. A circular would be sent to all members to report for a working party next weekend.

15th June 1953

Timber for fencing and ditches would be available at the end of the week. Working party would be needed for laying pipes and erecting fencing.

22nd June 1953

Authorisation had been given to proceed with tapping the main in Lelean Street. Council should be approached for use of their grader to level the top portion of the bowling club site so we may erect fencing. Barwon Heads people who had been members of the Barwon Heads Club should be accepted as members according to the Club Constitution.

13th July 1953

Scott Bonner should be approached for information re their combination cutter and roller, price and size.

Each member should be written to and advised of the working parties each weekend and asked to participate.

27th July 1953

Gates – three 3' hand-gates and one 12' gate should be purchased. 3' gates £2.2.6 each, 12' gate £7.

All timber was now ready. President Dave Barrie was in hospital and all wished him a speedy recovery.

12th August 1953

The Chairman, Mr. Jim Hammond in declaring the meeting open stated that the club had sustained a great loss in the recent death of President Dave Barrie. Dave had been an inspiration right from the start and his enthusiasm had been a great spur to our efforts. It was now up to us to carry on the good work. The committee then stood for one minute in silent tribute to our late President.

Grass – After considerable discussion on the type of grass to be planted it was decided to accept the offer of Bruce Ford to visit Queenscliff Golf Club and obtain supplies from them.

Water Piping – Would be laid on Saturday 22nd August.

Electricity – Once the pole had been erected everything would be in readiness for the S.E.C. to connect power.

31st August 1953

Grass – Greens were now ready for planting, Messrs. Ford and Hassett would collect the stolons on Friday afternoon. Working parties would be required for planting on Saturday and Sunday.

Water – Pete's Pump Service should be invited to demonstrate their sprinkler systems on the first available weekend.

14th September 1953

The working bee had made a good start on planting the grass but at least one more weekend would be required to complete the task. The rotary sprinklers had been trialled, found to be effective and should be purchased. A shed should be erected to provide for storage of tools and equipment. Mr. Wiltshire to present plans and estimates to the committee.

28th September 1953

The Progress Association would be asked to support the up-grading and coordination of The Terrace from Presidents Avenue through to Sweetman Parade (now Wallington Rd).

After the payment of accounts presented there would be a credit balance of £328.14.00 although the land purchased from TOC H had not yet been paid for.

12th October 1953

The Ladies Committee should be congratulated on achieving a fine bank balance of £94.1.4.

Shrubs had been planted along the northern boundary.

Shed plans had been passed by the inspector and a permit would be obtained free of costs – 12' x 8' cement sheet, skillion roof, 9' walls, door 4' width, concrete floor.

26th October 1953

The most satisfactory type of roller appeared to be 7 cwt, split cylinder, concrete-filled. Enquiries should be made at the bowling clubs in Geelong and quotation sought from several foundries.

A roster system should be adopted for watering the greens on Tuesdays, Thursdays and at weekends.

9th November 1953

Committee members had been invited to attend a meeting with the G.D.B.A. in Geelong.

A glass fronted notice board 18" x 14" should be constructed for use of the ladies section.

7th December 1953

CRESCO should be approached about providing quantities of fertilizer. Greens should require watering only twice a week.

11th January 1954

Mr Holbrook had been informed that the roller would cost about £120. A roller was becoming a necessity. The width of the roller should be ascertained so that the doorway of the shed could be completed.

Electricity should now be connected to the power pole. Meter boxes and power points should be organised and necessary application should be made to the S.E.C.

During a visit by Mr Lowe, RVBA Chairman, he stated that Barwon Heads Bowling Club was definitely wound up and would be paying about 16/- in the £1.

An extraordinary General Meeting would be called for Sat 30th January in the Fire Brigade

Hall – Agenda

- (1) Progress Report
- (2) Methods of Future Development of the Club.

25th January 1954

It seemed that the choice of mower lay between a 20 inch Ransom (£180) and a 24 inch Scott Bonnar (£150). Further investigation should be undertaken with other Bowling Clubs.

Top dressing had been carried out in certain spots only but the entire green now required top dressing. Twenty yards of soil should be put at the north end of the green, spread at intervals to facilitate top dressing.

After provision for outstanding accounts there would be a credit balance of £208.7.6.

30th January 1954

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

See MINUTES and LETTER TO MEMBERS - (Appendix 2)

8th February 1954

Greens now required screeding and top dressing, which should be started this coming weekend.

The club Notice Board (in the main street) had been removed for building to take place. It was decided to re-erect it on the PMG block, along side the shops.

Investigations suggested that the Ransom mower was superior to the Scott Bonnar mechanically but the extra weight may make it more difficult to handle. Further investigation should be made and further discussion take place next meeting.

15th March 1954

Electricity is now ready to be connected when required.

20th April 1954

An order had been placed for a 20 inch Scott Bonner Super Cut Mower and 200 feet of cable. Delivery has been subsequently received.

6" x 1" hardwood lengths and suitable stakes should be procured as ditching for east and west ends of the green.

Approaches should be made to people who had promised to take up debentures but not yet done so.

24th June 1954

The roller had been delivered and found to be very satisfactory.

The Treasurer reported a credit balance of £146.3.8.

The AGM should be held on 17th July at 8.00 p.m. in the Fire Brigade Hall.

At the AGM Membership fees should be recommended as £4.4.0 for Full members, £2.2.0 for Associate Members (ladies) and £1.1.0 for Non-playing Members.

A letter of thanks should be sent to Mrs. Archer for the ongoing use of the Chalet for committee meetings.

27th July 1954

The Bank had agreed to an overdraft of £175 in order to make the final payment on Pitman's land.

The resolution requiring new members to take up at least two debentures was rescinded.

Opening day should be left until just before Christmas although greens should be available for play from mid-October.

Members should be notified of these proposed dates and be asked for prompt payment of subscriptions owing to the urgency of erecting a clubhouse.

10th August 1954

Mr. Murray's clubhouse plan was produced to the meeting but had not yet been costed.

Mr. Ford was empowered to act on behalf of the club to obtain the titles of Pitman's land to further the obtaining of the extra overdraft.

31st August 1954

Cost of the proposed clubhouse to lock-up stage including septic tank and lavatory but without lining – materials only was £785.

It was decided that the club could not possibly hope to raise sufficient finance for this and it was resolved that a further approach be made to Mr. Murray with a view to producing a clubhouse approximately half the size and half the estimated cost.

The president reported on a visit made to inspect boom sprays at Pt. Lonsdale, fitted with an automatic device, which would cost £62.10.0 plus cost of boom.

The following donations had been offered to the club:

- Mr. Collins – £5.5.0 for prize for first championship;
- Mr. Wilk – seat for the club;
- Mr. F. Adams – 24 boundary markers and rink marker;
- M. G. Thorne – 12 mats and 12 jacks.

14th September 1954

The meter for the boom spray had been ordered and Mr. Smith had agreed to accept half the amount this year and the balance next year. Mr. Jones of Queenscliff had offered to construct the boom at an approximate cost of £18.

Three thousand score cards should be printed and Mr. Davey's offer for advertising should be accepted.

The secretary was instructed to obtain insurance cover on buildings and equipment for £500 and workers compensation for part-time greenkeeper for £250 per annum.

The Victorian Government Tourist Bureau should be advised of the fact that there was now a Bowling Green in Ocean Grove.

28th September 1954

To conform to regulations the clubhouse must have area of at least 24ft by 12ft with concrete foundation and 10ft walls, this would cost at least £500.

Mr. Hollyhoke was authorised to obtain an immediate overdraft of £500 and an ultimate overdraft of £800 to enable us to erect a building to the value of £500.

Opening Day was set for 20th November. The R.V.B.A. should be asked to send one of their senior officials to the opening of the greens.

It was agreed that the President should purchase one dozen spoons suitable for trophies.

It was unanimously agreed that Mr. Edmondson be elected as Bowls Secretary of the club.

Messrs. Hassett, Ford and Hammond were elected as Grounds Committee of the club.

12th October 1954

The Bank was quite satisfied with the overdraft proposal and would advance £500 immediately but the further £300 would have to be considered.

The President had again seen Mr. Murray regarding the clubhouse plans but the proposition was still too costly. He had subsequently seen Mr. Chomley who had agreed to produce plans incorporating a main clubroom of 30' x 12'. It was resolved that the action of the President in negotiating with Mr. Chomley and the resultant plan be accepted.

The new watering device had been tested and found to be very satisfactory.

26th October 1954

The Bank had stated that the ultimate overdraft of £800 would be approved.

Clubhouse plans had been received and Mr. McKeown had obtained the building permit the following day. Mr. Wiltshire had been given a copy for costing and quantities. The septic tank had been approved. Mr McKeown had offered to donate a flagpole.

The R.V.B.A. were sending their president Mr. F. L. Yott to officiate on Opening Day, accompanied by vice-president Mr. O. W. Parkinson and a member of the council Mr. K. Newman.

9th November 1954

Progress was being made with the clubhouse. Mr. Plummer of Barwon Heads had donated timber to the value of £71. A start had been made on the building and a team was going down on Friday to do the concreting. Materials for lining the clubhouse would be ordered through Mr. Menzies.

Concrete bases and sufficient timber for three outdoor seats had been delivered.

Timber had been ordered for trestle tables.

Working Bees would be held on Saturday and Sunday in an effort to have the clubhouse completed for the Opening.

23rd November 1954

At this meeting held after Opening Day it was agreed that letters of thanks be sent to the following:

Mr. McCleary of Myer Emporium for flags and bunting;

Mr. and Mrs. Thorne for mats and jacks;

Mrs. Thorne for the donation of a seat;

Mr. and Mrs. Williamson for four seats;

Mr. Thomson for donation of £10.10.0;

Mr. Blair for carpet bowls;

Mr. and Mrs. Fisher for donation of £1.1.0;

Mr. and Mrs. McKeown for donation of fluorescent lights;

Mr. and Mrs. Adams for coir matting;

Mr. and Mrs. Archer for use of the Chalet.

It was resolved that on Sundays bowling visitors be charged three shillings to include afternoon tea, our own members two shillings.

It was resolved that the trustees be authorised to sign the mortgage to the National Bank to secure the amount of the Club's overdraft from time to time.

It was resolved that a letter be sent to the Council requesting that work on the Terrace hill and in the vicinity of the bowling green be expedited as promised.

Two years and nine days after the public meeting, called to discuss the possibility of establishing a bowling club in Ocean Grove, the new club was up and bowling, officially opened and on the way to a successful future.

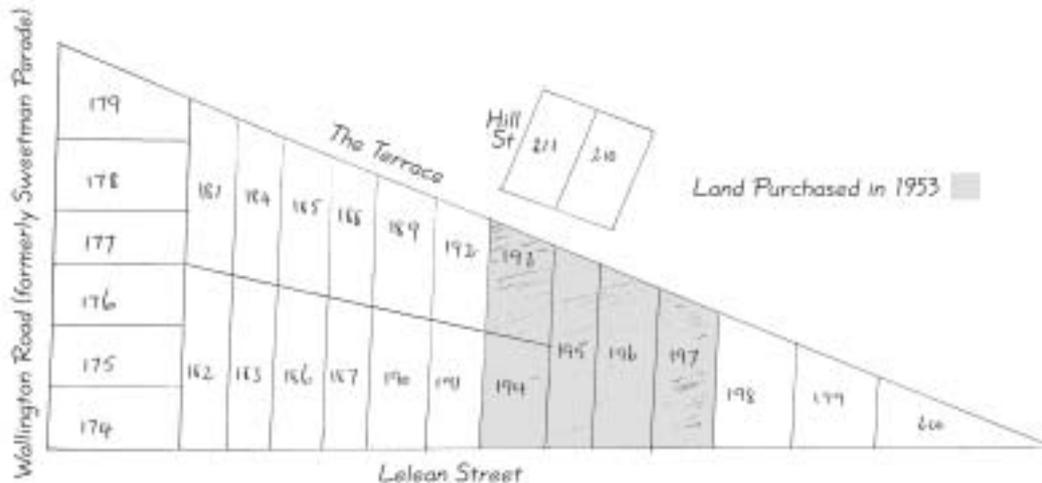
In those two years land had been found and purchased, cleared and levelled, fenced and connected to water and power. Greens had been formed and sown, ditches built, all kinds of equipment investigated and purchased. In the three weeks before the opening the clubhouse had been built.

Those two years must have seemed like a continuous working bee interspersed with frequent committee meetings. That so much could be achieved in such a short time by few people, is testament to the foresight, drive and continued effort of our founding members and to the qualities and abilities they were able to apply to the tasks at hand.

A Geelong Advertiser report of the Official Opening is included as Appendix 3.

THE LAND

At the Public Meeting on the 11th November 1952, it was decided that three blocks of land, side by side, (blocks in Ocean Grove are mostly 66' x 132') would be the minimum required for a bowling club. A sub-committee consisting of Jim Hammond, Frank Smith, Owen Holbrook and Reg Pierce was formed to investigate suitable sites and obtain prices.



At the public meeting of 22nd January 1953 the sub-committee reported that it had inspected various sites, contacted owners and received prices. Blocks 146, 147 and 148 between Lelean Street and Dare Street were available at £110 per block - £330.

Within the triangle formed by The Terrace and Lelean Street were blocks 195, 196 and 197 (part of existing site) priced at £350 for three blocks. Blocks 212, 213 and 214 in The Terrace - £400 for three blocks (west of Hill Street). All three sites were in the same area and water pressure was at its best in this area. The soil was sandy (easily pushed around); the land was flattish and sheltered.

As part of the first bowling club meeting all three sites were inspected by the newly formed committee. The area between The Terrace and Lelean Street was made the first priority. Lelean Street was then a dirt track coming from the direction of the river and Wallington Road, petering out at a cliff or sandhill before reaching Field Street. The Terrace was also a dirt road running from the town to Wallington Road.

This same meeting decided that to cater for future development more than three blocks should be purchased. Five blocks should be acquired rather than three. It was decided then that an offer be made to Pitmans for blocks 195, 196 and 197 subject to obtaining options on blocks 194 (Gilbert) and 193 (Brown). The committee was prepared to offer up to £150 to Gilbert (condemned house on site) and £125 to Brown. Gilbert proved difficult but would settle for a swap for block 191 owned then by Toc H. This swap was achieved by purchasing 191 for £105, Browns was purchased for £62, Pitmans at the original offer of 3 blocks for £350. (£175 cash, £175 in three years, no interest). So the land which formed the basis of the bowling club was purchased for £350 + £105 + £62, a grand total of £517.

Again looking to the future the club decided it needed more space for a car park. In February 1957 block 191, which the Club had purchased for £105 to swap for Gilbert's block 194, was repurchased from Gilbert for £550, well over market price.

Fortunately much of the land surrounding the Club remained vacant for many years. Blocks 210 and 211 became available in 1976 and were purchased to enable the construction of the green over the road (C Green), enabling the original long 15 rink green to be divided into two seven rink greens (A and B).

In 1983 the old house adjoining the clubhouse (block 192) was purchased and removed to make way for extension of the car park.

In 1994 the Club was fortunate to be able to purchase the adjoining Green Valley Caravan Park at a cost of \$875,000. The Caravan Park had been developed by its original proprietor George Young who had purchased the land from Toc H and individual land holders. The Caravan Park consisted of eleven town blocks, 181 – 190 plus block 177 which fronted Wallington Road.

In its prime Green Valley was a frequent award winner. In its later years ownership had changed twice. It had long been looked at enviously by Bowling Club committees. Some two years before the Bowling Club finalised the purchase the Caravan Park had been for sale at a much higher price at a time when interest rates were rampant. By the time of the purchase in 1994 land prices had settled and interest rates had decreased.

Gaming machines had been introduced to the club in 1992 and this revenue stream linked with falling interest rates and the more affordable price made the purchase possible. This purchase coupled with the profitability of the Club's business provided the Club with scope to further develop in the future a thriving Bowling Club complemented by holiday accommodation for visitors and extended facilities for members. The loan taken out to buy the caravan park was repaid in three years. Three adjoining Wallington Road properties became available in 1999 and 2000. The Club purchased these properties (blocks 179, 178 and 176) just before the escalation of land prices in Ocean Grove.

These purchases are the last in a sequence of land acquisitions. They reflect the forward thinking of Club administrations who for fifty years have always looked ahead to the needs of future generations as well as catering for the present.



THE CARAVAN PARK COTTAGE

The cottage was converted by George Young from the Toc H dining room. The Toc H buildings were built by voluntary labour often with 'scrounged' materials. The flooring of the cottage was obtained from one of the Geelong Wool stores then being pulled down. It was 1³/₄ inch Canadian pine sent to Australia as ballast cargo on the returning wool clippers.

TOC H

The Ocean Grove branch of Toc H had been formed in the 1930s to provide beach holidays for disadvantaged children from city and country. By donation and fund raising it had been able to purchase eight blocks of land which would later form the basis of the caravan park. The excellent Toc H program was disrupted by the war years and in the 50's the branch was disbanded and the property sold off. Proceeds were distributed to local worthy causes such as the baby health centre and the Church of England.

THE LADIES

This very important section of the Club is first mentioned in Club minutes of 16th February 1953, less than one month after the Club was formed. At that meeting it was resolved that "The President be authorised to approach certain ladies in Ocean Grove asking them to take initiative in forming a Ladies Section for affiliation to the Ocean Grove Bowling Club, subject to a General Meeting agreeing to such formation, the suggested subscription being £1.1.0 to 30th June 1954".

At the next committee meeting held 23rd February the President reported that he had interviewed Mrs. Wallace in connection with the formation of a Ladies Section and had received an excellent hearing.

At the committee meeting held 10th March the President reported that Mrs. Wallace had contacted him and stated that owing to many previous commitments she was unable to undertake the organising of a Ladies Section but would be pleased to join.

At the committee meeting held 17th March it was resolved that "the following ladies be invited to a meeting on Monday 13th April at 3pm to discuss the formation of a Ladies Section and committee of the Bowling Club, with all members of the Club committee who can attend, in the Public Hall at Ocean Grove". A list of 32 names was attached, including Shirley Hassett, Lorraine Holbrook, Gwen Ray and Thelma Smith, all who shared their memories with us at our 2002 Nostalgia Night. A further 21 names were added at the next meeting when it was also resolved that the membership of the Ladies Section be limited to fifty, subject to the approval of members at a General Meeting.



Mrs Jessie Barrie

Subsequently seventeen ladies met with four members of the club committee on 13th April 1953 to discuss the formation of the Ladies Section. This became the inaugural meeting of the Ladies Section. The first office-bearers were Mrs Jessie Barrie (President), wife of the President of the Club Committee, Mrs C Willimott (Secretary) and Mrs M Skinner (Treasurer). By 30th June 1954 the Ladies membership had grown to 31.

The Ladies Section immediately set about raising much needed funds. Items mentioned in Club minutes of the time were Popular Girl contest, Teenage Quest, kiosks, flag-bridge nights. Street kiosks/stalls were held in Geelong as well as Ocean Grove. The flag-bridge nights were held regularly at The Chalet. The Ladies Section was autonomous from the beginning. It had its own constitution, conducted its own affairs and ran its own bank account. Substantial amounts of money were raised, banked and handed to the Club committee, at the Ladies' discretion, annually or at times of need.

At a Club committee meeting of 12th October 1953, the Ladies were congratulated on a fine bank balance of £94.1.4.

At a Club committee meeting of 22nd February 1955, the Ladies were sent a letter of thanks for £100 and the offer of windows, seats and lockers for the clubhouse.

The annual accounts of 1955-56 show that of a total Club income of £1661.5.6 in the year, £305.13.0 was gifted by the Ladies Section. For the year 1954-55 the Ladies had handed over £276/16/4.

The Ladies own annual meeting held in July 1956 reported that £500/15/- had been raised during the financial year and that after presenting £300 to the men's section, purchasing a piano and sundry other items, the year finished with a credit balance of £98/17/2.

In congratulating the Club's founders for their untiring efforts and vision there seems no doubt that the efforts of both the men and women of our early years were superb, working as separate committees and for the Club as a whole.

Unfortunately, possibly because of lack of storage at the bowling club or the frequent changeover of office-bearers, most of the records of the Ladies Section's early years cannot be located.



*Early success at State Level -
Runners-up in the Victorian Metropolitan and Country Fours - 1959-60
Laura Watkins, Anne Green, Margaret Sinclair, Hilda Adams*

CLUB LIFE AFTER THE OPENING

The club's fifty-year history after Opening can be divided into three periods as follows,

- 1954 – 1972 The Era of the First Clubhouse – A Period of Establishment and Growth
- 1972 – 1992 The Second Clubhouse to the Introduction of Gaming Machines – A Period of Consolidation
- 1992 → Gaming Machines, New Clubhouse and Land Acquisition – A Period of Commercialisation



1954 – 1972

The Era of the First Club house A Period of Establishment and Growth

The Club had affiliated with R.V.B.A. in September 1954, the Ladies with the R.V.L.B.A. soon after. Representatives from both bodies were present and part of the Opening on 20th November 1954. After the Opening the Club was up and running. No pennant commitments meant the Club was available for social bowls on Thursdays, Saturday and Sundays. Sunday social bowls were not played in Geelong and the Sunday game at Ocean Grove became very popular and a valuable source of revenue. The first clubhouse measured 30' x 12' and consisted of kitchen, toilets and a hall

section. Many of the 120 people who attended the first opening day washout stood outside in rain coats. Just before the 1955 Opening voluntary labour added a room of 25' by 23' for the accommodation of visitors and members for refreshments, as a social room for entertainment and for carpet bowls. The entrance to the club was enhanced by the addition of a large electric clock and the name of the club in block lettering over the doorway. The Ladies then bought a piano for the clubhouse.

Our early bowlers recall a vital club with regular social occasions in the clubhouse and much fun on the greens. Carpet bowls were held throughout the winter and fortnightly through the bowling season. Most of the bowlers were learning as they went and their performances in early years were excellent.

The men entered their first pennant team in 1955 and won the pennant.

"C" Pennant Red
OCEAN GROVE v. CORIO
 O.G. C.

F. Currie, E. Olive, F. Adams, J. Kitchen ..	19	—
McGorlick, A. Jarman, Caldwell, Allen ..	—	17
J. Payne, W. Kong, B. Ford, H. Pettersen ..	14	—
F. White, H. Marshall, W. Twentyman, D. Firth ..	—	10
H. Edmondson, J. Hammond, A. Ray, S. Brown ..	17	—
Hewitt, E. Haaler, C. Morgan, H. Wray ..	—	10
	50	37
Ocean Grove won by	13	POINTS.



*Result of the Pennant Game
 Played 15/10/55*

*Mens Pennant 1956. Unbeaten in their first year.
 (Front) J Hammond, J Payne, F Currie, F Adams, W Kong, H Pettersen
 (Rear) B Ford, E Olive, A Ray, J Kitchen, G Flitton, S Brown*

The ladies entered their first pennant team in 1956 and won the pennant.

Seek Fine Day
 Geelong bowlers are hoping for better weather on Saturday to get under way with the pennant bowls season.

Women's Pennant
 Results of Pennant matches played on Tuesday.—
OCEAN GROVE v. E. PARK.
 O.G. E.P.

Mesdames McKeown, Wilks, McKenzie, Haines ..	14	—
Mesdames Bendle, Morris, Baker, Bradbury ..	—	18
Mesdames Crichton, Mitchell, Ray, Pettersen ..	14	—
Mesdames Cox, McCracken, Smith, Boyd ..	—	21
Mesdames Mitchinson, Davies, Sinclair, Adams ..	19	—
Mesdames Lock, Wolfenden, Fowler Hill ..	—	21
	47	60
Eastern Park White won by	13	points.

*Result of the Ladies first Pennant Game
 Played 9/10/56*

The men's top team won the pennant in their first three years and had been promoted to top division by 1960. The ladies had reached top division by 1961 and actually won the division one pennant in that year.

So by the early '60s O.G.B.C. was already one of the strong clubs in the Geelong District. Men and Ladies pennant teams were playing top division. Our achievement boards show individual and team successes at District level as well as pennant flags won. The club had been an innovator in the development of Sunday social bowls and was an attractive venue for visitors from all over the state at Christmas and Easter holiday times. It was popular with bowlers from Geelong all through the bowling season.



1ST Div. Winners Geelong Advertiser Shield 1960-61
 Back Row: L. Butters, E. McKeown, J. Crichton, L. Watkins, M. Carroll,
 H. Adamthwaite, R. Finnegan
 Front Row: M. Sinclair, K. Mitchinson, M. Brown, H. Adams, M. Cameron,
 A. Green, Absent: F. McKenzie, G. Haines



1965-66 Division 5 (This team included several Geelong based members)
 Back Row: J. Smith, F. Collyer, L. Watkins, J. Kennedy,
 E. McDonald, K. McKeown, E. Douglas
 Front Row: W. Batchelder, C. McKeown, J. Smith, F. Morrish, A. Mitchinson

One of the reasons for the rapid growth of the club was the involvement of Geelong residents in our club as bowlers and later administrators. Names such as Watkins, McDonald, Mitchinson, Carroll, Long and McHugh are on our bowling and administration honour boards and are examples of Geelong folk who learnt their bowls in Ocean Grove and continued to bowl at Ocean Grove.

Others such as the Hassetts helped found the club and continued their involvement after they moved back to Geelong. The other source of growth in early years, as right through the club's

history, was the arrival in Ocean Grove of bowlers who came to Ocean Grove to retire and bowl. Vin Hassett's 25 year history of the club (See Appendix 1), suggests that throughout the '60s the membership seemed to average at something like 90 men and 60 associates. This was to change as from 1969.

As early as 1963 the club had taken steps to acquire a liquor licence. The process had stalled several times mainly because of the anti-liquor covenant covering all of Ocean Grove. A new member, Keith McLeod, Superintendent of Police, was a man with much drive and excellent connections and must be given a lot of credit for helping overcome the obstacles. The liquor licence was granted in March 1969 and new clubhouse bar room extensions were opened in September 1969. Membership applications flowed in. In 1971 a Special Meeting was held to alter the rules to lift the permissible membership of male members from 150 to 190 and of associates from 100 to 120. By 1972 male membership was full at 190 and a waiting list in operation. At the time the new clubhouse was completed, membership was 190 men, 100 women. The new clubhouse then enabled the membership restriction to be lifted.



Top table at Ocean Grove's opening on December 15. Club president Keith McLeod (left) is busy about his duty as host.

Life members Harold Petterson, Vin Hassett, Alan Ray and Hilda Adams deserve special mention for their efforts in the early years. Harold, Vin and Alan were all excellent bowlers and clubmen. Harold was President from 1954 until 1959. Harold and Vin were both committee men from the very beginning until 1975. Harold was a very entertaining

speaker, a great advocate for the club and widely known in the bowling world. Alan Ray was an excellent secretary from 1957 until 1968. His attention to detail has done much to ensure that early club records are so well organised.

Hilda Adams was one of our best lady bowlers. She was secretary of the Associates from 1957 to 1962 then President from 1963 to 1966.

The first President, Dave Barrie took movie film of early working bees held to establish the club. Films were also taken of the 1955 opening. What a shame these movies went missing. Someone may have thought, "No one would want these old films".



1972 – 1992

The Second Clubhouse A Period of Consolidation

The new well equipped 1972 clubhouse was of brick construction, built at a cost of about \$80,000, financed by bank loan and the issue of debentures to members. It was built around and over the old wooden structure, utilizing parts of the old building.

Subsequently membership applications flowed in and by 1978 membership consisted of 345 men and 150 associates. Not all members bowled. The modern facilities and lack of a hotel in Ocean Grove meant that the clubhouse became a very popular "watering hole". Bar profits became the club's major source of income. The spike bar was a popular area where the dress code was relaxed. On Friday nights the local tradespeople crammed in to celebrate the end of the working week and many a deal was done.



Hi Jinx on C Green

*Joy Johnston, Nancy Noble, Amy Grey, Millie Niddrie,
Al McLeod, Altie Horwood*



***This 1960's postcard shows the long green
before its division.***



***1979 Winners of Country Fours, Runners-up State Fours.
Les Long, Vin Hassett, Harold Pettersen, Jim Kennedy.***

The club did well financially and quickly paid off the bank loan. The number of bowlers continued to increase and the long 15 rink green became inadequate and difficult to manage. In 1976 the club was in a position to purchase two blocks when they became available opposite the clubhouse in The Terrace. These blocks were consolidated to form C green. This was a difficult construction because of the height of the land in the north east corner. What would have been a prohibitive cost of building the high retaining walls and undertaking the drainage works required was largely eliminated by the effort of Ron Field, a member and earth moving contractor who provided equipment and labour at little or no cost. (Ron later became club president and was made a life member in 1978)

The building of C Green in turn allowed the division of the long 15 rink green into what is now A and B greens. (At least two playing rinks were lost in the division).

By the late 1970s the men were putting seven sides into pennant each Saturday.

Men and Ladies continued to do well in Association Events and Pennant. The men's pennant efforts reached their peak in 1983-85 playing off for the top pennant three years in row, winning the club's first and only white flag in 1984.

Ocean Grove in historic victory Geelong West down in pennant final

by G. F. HOPLEY

FINAL was played between Ocean Grove and Geelong West at Highton on Saturday, March 17, in very good conditions before a large and enthusiastic crowd who saw Ocean Grove take the coveted white pennant for the first time since taking its place in the top GDBA Division in 1960.

Result: Ocean Grove d Geelong West 81-70.

G. Wilkinson, G. Fry, H. Pettersen, N. Thomas drew with B. Sheila, B. Wayth, P. Sheila, D. Taylor 21-21.

L. Costello, L. Lyons, K. Goldsmith, P. Mitchell d E. Smith, S. Thuley, D. Bruhn, A. Elliott 23-16.

L. Harris, T. Toleman, C. Maslen, A. Carroll d N. Hocking, B. Dew, R. Ryder, D. Hewat 15-15.

E. Doney, N. Price, I. Evans, L. Watkins d D. Dower, L. McNece, J. Norton, G. Lindell 20-18.

Geelong DBA President, Lex Vivian and RVBA country vice-president, Bob Poulton visited Ocean Grove on Thursday evening, May 31, to present the A1 White Pennant to the club.

Ocean Grove President, Brendan Galvin accepted the pennant on behalf of the club. Present were members of the A1 team and the winning B5 pennant team.



History making

Ocean Grove White Pennant Premiers 1983-84

Back Row: I Evans, C Maslen, R Thorley, L Lyons, G Fry, G Wilkison, K Goldsmith, N Price

Middle Row: E Doney, T Toleman, L Johnston (Mgr), L Costello, H Pettersen, L Harris

Front Row: A Carroll, P Mitchell, B Galvin (Pres), L Watkins, N Thomas



B.D.L.B.A. A1 Pennant Winners 1981-82

V Field, J Johnston, D Evison, S Hassett, M Niddrie, E Ballingall, M Long, M Pinder, S Cassidy, E Harris, L Maslen, L Watkins, C Kemp.



B.D.L.B.A. B1 Pennant Blue Winners 1981-82

G Allen, D Lunn, P Hucker, D Kiddle, D Drage, M Smith, C Lennox, S Lamb, M Johnston, M Dorward, S Savage, B McDonald, M Allen, L Monkhouse, E Polglase

The Ladies won two top pennants in the G.D.L.B.A. before it was divided into two separate associations in 1981. This division appears to have been initiated by the Geelong clubs' reluctance to travel. The actual Geelong clubs and those country clubs north and west of Geelong remained in the G.D.L.B.A., the coastal clubs and those clubs on the Bellarine Peninsula formed the B.D.L.B.A. From the beginning of the B.D.L.B.A. Ocean Grove was a powerful force. In the first ten years of the new association Ocean Grove won four division one pennants and thirteen pennants in all. One disadvantage of the split has been the frequency with which our Ocean Grove sides have to play each other.

With its attractive clubhouse and bowling facilities our club grew in stature in the bowling world. The R.S.L. interstate test series was held in 1981, the finals of the R.V.B.A. state fours were held in 1989. The R.V.B.A. coaching seminar for the best young talent in the state became an annual event at Ocean Grove.



*Visiting Bowlers at the Classic
Harold Pettersen, Laurie Costello,
Bob McLeod (Pres), Harry Dolphin,
and Tim Toleman (Organisers) in the background*

The inaugural Ocean Grove Classic Fours was held in February 1986. The first Classic attracted interstate and Australian representatives among a high-class field. Apart from one year when the quality of our greens could not be guaranteed the Classic has continued to attract excellent bowlers every year. The high quality of competition, clubhouse facilities, greens, catering and excellent organization has ensured that the Classic has remained a high priority for bowlers while so many annual tournaments at other clubs have fallen away.

In 1989 the club had a total of 602 full bowling members, one of the highest memberships in the state. After much negotiation the club in 1983 had purchased the old house adjoining the clubhouse (block 192) and demolished it to create more car parking space. By the late '80s the existing clubhouse was again suffering from lack of space for the increasing activities desired by members. Carpet bowls were increasingly popular and the Indoor Bowls Committee set

up in 1989 organised regular club events and entered the district pennant competitions. Clubhouse extensions were again looking necessary in the near future. At the same time the profitability of bar trading was looking less assured due to the changing patterns of social drinking. It seemed opportune that the possibility of becoming involved in the gaming industry arose in the early '90s.

1992 →

A Period of Commercialisation

In the financial years 1989-1990, 1990-1991 and 1991-1992 the Club achieved net profits before depreciation of \$35,000, \$38,000 and \$32,000 respectively.

The State Government introduction of gaming machines to Victoria seemed to provide an opportunity for the bowling club to raise its profitability to another level. A Special General Meeting of January 1992 empowered the Committee of the Club to negotiate the installation of E.G.M.'s. The 20 machines were duly installed and commenced operation on the 2nd January 1993.



*1993 - The opening of "The Pokies"
Brian Heron flanked by Ron Cameron (Secretary)
and Alan Marshall (President)*

Brian Heron, then Treasurer, became the Venue Operator. Staff levels naturally increased and staff training was a considerable cost in the early months. In the financial year to March 1993 the profit before depreciation was \$22,000. The impetus brought to the Club by the gaming machine patronage soon became evident. In the year to March 1994 a bar net profit of \$179,000 and a Tabaret profit of \$78,000 contributed to a net profit before depreciation of \$165,000. In the year to March 1995 Bar profit of \$178,000, Tabaret profit of \$290,000 and a caravan park trading profit achieved a net profit before depreciation of \$373,000.

Since the installation of the E.G.M.'s the clubhouse had suffered from an increased lack of space. In 1994 the Club had purchased the adjoining Green Valley Caravan Park at a cost of \$875,000. The financial impact of the gaming machines (now 35) had made the purchase feasible. The space and parking restrictions facing the Club now seemed solved. Previously, ideas to redevelop and extend the clubhouse had been held up because of the Council's requirement that we must first provide extra car parking.



Immediately after the caravan park purchase some land was taken up for parking and the process of planning the new clubhouse began. Paynter Dixon Constructions was hired as consultant and was subsequently awarded the building contract. After some delays and frequent consultation between Board, Council and consultants building of the clubhouse commenced in April 1997 and was completed in October.



Board Chairman Peter Gardiner and Tom Reynolds M.L.A. unveil the plaque at the opening of the new clubhouse.

Net profits before depreciation of \$310,000 and \$336,000 for the financial years ending March 1996 and 1997 respectively, combined with the above 1995 result, meant that the caravan park had effectively been paid for in three years.

With the growth of the Club's business and increasing number of E.G.M.'s (now 45) and staff, it became apparent that the time had come for full time professional management. In 1997, after much unpaid effort on the Club's behalf, Tom Bramwell was appointed our first Manager, a position he held until December 2000.

Since foundation in 1953 the General Committee had been responsible for conducting the affairs of the Club, including bowls. The program of men's bowls had been carried out by the elected bowls secretary, and ladies bowls and other activities were conducted by the ladies committee. 1994 saw the introduction of the new structure whereby the Ladies and Men's Bowls Committees became responsible for all bowling activities and the newly created Board of Management focussed on the business activities and overall development of the Club. Alex Slocombe became the Club's last Committee President and its first Board Chairman. Ted Mohn was elected the inaugural Men's Bowls President and Anne Rose became the first Ladies President under the new structure.

Ian Latham's appointment as greenkeeper in 1997 resulted in the restoration of the greens to previous standards. The new clubhouse was bright, modern, tastefully furnished and provided excellent viewing of the greens. The Ocean Grove Bowling Club was once again a very attractive venue for members, visiting bowlers and gaming visitors. Important association bowling events became regular events at our Club.

Overall Membership has remained relatively stable during the last decade. In 1993 there were 487 full members (men and women), 7 life members and 88 social members. In 2004 there were 381 full members, 14 retired members, 143 social members, 8 junior members as well as 2026 gaming members. There had been a shift from full membership to retired bowler and social categories by people who did not wish to bowl, but enjoyed access to all club facilities except the greens.

The program for junior bowlers has been most successful. Currently we have 21 junior members, 1 girl and 20 boys, many playing pennant. Of special note is one of our first junior members Victoria Webb-Taylor, who has represented the state several times and has been a representative of the Australian Under 25 side.



Junior Members at Practice.
*Adam Webb-Taylor, Dan Sheather,
Fraser Beard, Dean Beard, Jack Gere*

Our bowling men and women have continued to perform well in pennant and Association events. Our ladies won Division 1 pennants 5 years in succession from 1999 to 2003.



BDLBA Div. 1 Pennant Winners 2002-03

*E. Catania (Emergency), G. Goldsmith, S. Townsend, J. Pugh, P. Virtue,
N. Quinton, V. Cook, V. Izzard, M. Lowey (Emergency), D. Fordyce
M Hughes, L. Maslen, B. Toleman, O. White, L. Hunt*

Our men's top side, playing in the Geelong/Ballarat Premier League since its inception in 1998 has reached the Grand Final in 2002, 2003 and 2004, unsuccessfully in each case, but indicating that our club fields a strong team in a strong competition. The number of pennant teams entered has also remained relatively stable with usually 8 men's teams and 7 or 8 ladies teams. (In 2004/5 the men are actually fielding 9 teams due in part to the influx of juniors)

The club's financial profitability enabled the Board to follow its policy of land acquisition. In the years 1999 and 2000 the Club was able to purchase three Wallington Road properties, all adjoining our caravan park, just before the escalation of property values began. The Board of the time was confident that with these properties, the caravan park and the continuing profitability of the Club's business, scope had been provided for future administrations to progressively create a bowling club of on-going quality and strength.

When the new clubhouse was built in 1997 the Board was aware that further clubhouse extensions would be required in the future. In 2000 as part of the process of obtaining a permit for further carpark development the Club was required to produce plans indicating the next phases of clubhouse extension and the possible future use of all our property. Our current Board in consultation with members must now decide if these plans still suit our needs or whether we should proceed in different directions.

(Appendix 1)

THE FIRST 25 YEARS – By Vin Hassett

In 1952, the Ocean Grove Progress Association, following a suggestion from two local residents that a Bowling Club should be established at Ocean Grove in order to tend to the needs of retired gentlemen, decided to call a Public Meeting to test the feeling of the community toward such a venture. A meeting was called for the 11th November 1952, and was addressed by Mr. Anderson who was President of Pt. Lonsdale Bowling Club and one of the main instigators in the formation of that Club. He pointed out the requirements for a club and gave an estimate for a 7 rink green at 100 pounds. He also mentioned that they had raised money on a Debenture System. A motion was moved and carried that all present be formed into a committee to investigate the possibility of forming a Bowling Club etc. in Ocean Grove and to generally promote the project and call a further Public Meeting in due course.

A sub-committee was formed to investigate suitable sites and obtain prices of land. A pamphlet was circulated headed 'Let's Put Ocean Grove On The Map' stating that apart from the satisfaction to the keen bowlers amongst us it is obvious that such a club would be a valuable asset to Ocean Grove both as a Township and holiday resort. It stated the cost to produce a Bowling Green and that it was proposed to finance the formation of the Club by means of 200, 5 pound interest free Debentures. It was also stated that within the next few days a member would be calling on them. If sufficient support was forthcoming a meeting would be called to form a committee to carry out the project. Following this, a Public Meeting was called in the Fire Brigade Hall on 22nd January 1953. The investigating committee had earlier reported that the response had indicated the viability of the plan and had submitted 4 sections of land for perusal at the Public Meeting, after hearing reports and discussions, a motion was moved and carried that a Bowling Club be formed in Ocean Grove. This was the Inaugural Meeting. The first President was David Barrie, a keen bowler; whose untimely death within six months was a sad blow to the newly formed Club. The Rules and Constitution of the Queenscliff Bowling Club was accepted, subject to amendments by the Committee as it thought fit, and was then to be presented to the General Meeting at a later date. The Committee chose the present position of five blocks of land, which were purchased for 517 pound. Working bees immediately went to work on the thick undergrowth and large Tea-Trees and by 11th March the site was cleared and rubbish burned.

The Associates held their Inaugural Meeting on 13th April 1953 and immediately very successfully set about raising badly needed money for the Club. After very careful levelling the Green was ready for grassing in early September.

Owing to the lack of finance it was decided to obtain Cocoos Creeping Bent stolons from Queenscliff Golf Club and set the Green by hand. It was estimated that 64,000 pieces of grass were dibbed into the green. This grass proved to make an excellent green but was finally lost by the introduction of other seeds. A ditch former was borrowed and this enabled the Club to save further money by making their own ditches. Finally the grass was ready for cutting in early January. Until a suitable mower could be obtained the Green was cut using hand mowers. It had previously been decided that as land was available the plan of a 7 rink green would be supplanted by one of 15 rinks. The Club affiliated with the R.V.B.A. in September 1954, but did not enter the G.D.B.A. pennant competition that year.

Practice was started in September and the only cover was a 6ft by 4ft tin shed. The date for the official opening was set for 20th November 1954 and the committee decided that an effort should be made to build a 30ft by 12ft pavilion. This was built by a working bee in 3 weeks and included a kitchen, 2 sets of toilets and a hall section. The official opening party consisted of the President of the R.V.B.A. Mr. F.L. Yott assisted by the Vice President Mr. O. W Parkinson and Historian Mr. Munro. The day was mostly remembered for an unceasing downpour and thus the wisdom of the committee was verified.

The first Club Champion was Harold Pettersen with his wife Claire as Associates Champion. In 1955-56 the Club entered a team in the G.D.B.A. pennant competition and for the next three years were successful in winning the Pennant each in a higher division. The 1959-60 season once again saw the Club in the final of No. 2 Division but was beaten by Eastern Park who could not advance higher as they already had one team in No. 1 division. Thus Ocean Grove advanced to No. 1 Division and has held their place ever since.

Teams have been entered in other divisions and have met with many successes. Meanwhile the Associates had similar success to the men but have been more successful in the top division, winning the Pennant on two occasions and once again having many successes in the lower divisions.

The Club Membership was rather stable at approx. 90 men and 60 associates but this did not stop the greens from being full each Sunday, there was no Sunday bowls in Geelong. It is interesting to note that for the greater part of the '50s an average of 6500 people played on the green each year. In 1963, the Club, in order to extend the social side of the game, decided to make application for a licence. This was finally granted in March 1969 and the Bar Room extensions were officially opened by the Shire President on 22nd March. The facilities now offered by the Club attracted many new members and by June 1970 the number of new members had jumped to 150 men and 85 associates. By 1972 the growth of membership was so great that it was decided to demolish the old Clubhouse and replace it with a modern brick building of much greater dimensions at a cost of approx. \$80,000. The extra members also caused a shortage of green space and land was acquired in The Terrace, over the road from the Clubhouse and a new 7 rink green laid down at a cost of approx. \$54,000. The old green in front of the Clubhouse had been divided and the soil replaced with a better type. The Club actually now has 3 new greens. Further building is now taking place to include a Social Bowls Secretary's office, locker rooms, changing and green equipment space. The standing assets of the Club would be approx. 1/2 million dollars.

The membership now stands at 340 men and 160 associates. The men field 7 teams in the G.D.B.A. pennant competition and the associates 6 teams.

When it is remembered that four members of the Club stood on a partly made green late in 1953 and because of lack of help and interest were considering whether they should continue with the project it must be realised what tremendous strides the Club has made in little over 25 years.

*This history was written by Vin Hassett to mark the occasion
of the 25th Anniversary of our Official Opening.*

(Appendix 2)

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE OCEAN GROVE
BOWLING CLUB HELD ON 30TH JANUARY, 1954 AT 8. P.M.

PRESENT: Mr. Hammond (in the chair) H. Wiltshire, C. McKeown, Petterson, Hollyhoke, Spargo, Pickles, L. Storrer, Thorne, Wilks, Ron Jones, A. McKeown, Holbrook, Gosbell, Willimott, Hassett, Ford, McKelvie, Davey, Grundell, Pierce.

Apologies: A. Ritchie, Menzies, Miles, Adams.

REPORT: The Chairman stated that the meeting had been called primarily so that the Committee could give a report to the members on the work carried out by the Committee over the past 12 months.

Land: Although there had been the possibility of obtaining some crown land the Committee did not favour this and, after careful consideration selected the present site, which seemed to meet with general approval.

Clearing and Levelling: The Club was greatly indebted to Mr. Owen Holbrook for the use of his equipment in clearing, without cost, in addition to his assistance in general. For the levelling we had hired a bull-dozer and grader. It is with some satisfaction that it can be reported that the levels are good.

Grass: A very thorough search was made for the most suitable grass for the conditions of the soil and it was decided that that used at Queenscliff would be the most satisfactory. By courtesy of Queenscliff Golf Club sufficient was obtained and the greens were planted from stolons by hand. There had been a few bad patches caused by the high winds, but it was certain that these could be corrected. Mr. Hassett had tested the levels two weeks before the meeting and there was very little discrepancy.

Ladies Auxiliary: A Ladies Auxiliary had been formed with a membership of 25, which had already done an excellent job and were planning to do more.

Committee Vacancy: This had been filled by the appointment of Mr. C. Willimott.

Financial Statement: The Chairman gave a report on the accounts presented to the meeting.

Mr. Petterson said that, on behalf of the members, he wished to compliment the Committee on the excellent job they had done within 12 months with the funds at their disposal.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Considerable discussion took place on the need for further funds to complete the greens. Mr. Ford pointed out that it was a matter for the meeting. There were several means of raising more money, an approach to Barwon Heads people who might be interested in membership, our own members give more in debentures, or get more new members.

Membership Fees: The membership fees would have to be settled, bearing in mind competition with Queenscliff and Pt. Lonsdale. It was reported that Pt. Lonsdale had received £240 in green fees in January. Mr. Hollyhoke stated that we could raise more money by debentures, invite potential members from Barwon Heads concentrate on Debentures and not worry about subscriptions at present.

Voluntary Labour: The question of the shortage of voluntary labour was raised and it was pointed out that it was unfair to expect the Committee, few of whom were bowlers to carry all of this burden themselves. Those members who are residents should also pull their weight. Mr. Wilks suggested that the Secretary circulate all members.

Debentures: It was resolved on the motion of Messrs Thorne and Spargo "that the Committee endeavour to increase the number of debentures issued in an attempt to reach the authorised figure of £2000"

There being no further business the Chairman thanked those present for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

OCEAN GROVE BOWLING CLUB.

9th February, 1954.

Dear Member,

For the benefit of those members unable to attend the extraordinary General Meeting, held on 30th January last, your Committee decided to circularise all members and give them a report on the meeting.

The main purpose of the meeting was to receive a report from the Committee on their activities over the past 12 months. The Chairman, Mr. J. Hammond, in making this report, stated that there had been a real job of work carried out in the construction of the green from the clearing and levelling of the ground, erecting a fence, building concrete ditches, planting grass by hand, to the final act of keeping the greens watered, cut and rolled. Apart from the hiring of a bulldozer and grader, this entire effort had been carried out by voluntary labour.

It is interesting to compare our original estimates with our expenditure to date:

	8 Rink Green <u>Estimate</u>	12 Rink Green <u>Expenditure</u>
Purchase of Land	£400.	£377 6 11.
Clearing & Levelling	150.	250 0 0
Fencing & Timber (Ditches)	230.	235 0 3
Water Pipes etc.	120.	128 7 2.
Seed	50.	- - -
Other Expenses	50.	76 19 8.
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£1000.	£1067 14 0.

(A further £175 for land, due in 2 years time).

The total Revenue of the Club to 30th January, 1954 consisted of:

Debentures	£1150 0 0
Subscriptions	108 8 0
Donations	10 10 0
	<hr/>
	£1268 18 0.

Now that we have the greens established we wish to put them in first class order for the opening next season and at the same time to purchase maintenance equipment etc. To do this we shall require further finance and it is felt that, some of our Members may be interested in taking out further £5 Debentures.

In case you may know someone who would be interested in becoming a member of the Club or even in taking a few debentures, a further circular, together with an application form has been enclosed. Should you desire any further application forms they may be obtained from the undersigned.

Your co-operation in this regard will ensure a really successful opening for the Club next season.

Yours faithfully,

New Bowling Green Officially Opened At Ocean Grove

Owing to adverse weather, the official opening of the Ocean Grove Bowling Club took place in the newly-constructed clubhouse on Saturday.

The ceremony commenced with the singing of the National Anthem at the close of which Mr. Harold Pettison, president of the club asked those present to observe one minute's silence in memory of the late Mr. D. W. Barrie, J.P., who was the club's first president.

Mr. J. P. Monro, author of the Bowls Encyclopaedia and historian of the R.V.B.A. gave a brief summary of the history of the game of bowls. He said that, contrary to the general belief that the game of bowls originated in England, there was a theory that it had been introduced by Greek sailors from the Island of Rhodes to Marseilles when that city was under Greek influence.

Mr. Monro then performed the ceremony of unfurling the club's flag which together with the flag-pole had been presented to the club by Mr. and Mrs. C. McKeown in memory of Mr. McKeown's father, the late Mr. Matthew McKeown, a close friend of Mr. Monro.

The president called upon Mr. Yott, president of the R.V.B.A. to perform the opening ceremony.

Mr. Yott said he was astounded at what the club had accomplished in such a short time and was very impressed by the spirit of teamwork which had helped to bring the project to such a successful conclusion. This augured well for the future of the club.

Prior to declaring the green open Mr. Yott invested the president, Mr. Harold Pettison with the badge of the R.V.B.A. He then declared the greens officially open.

A home-made afternoon tea was served by the associates of the club to the visitors who included, besides Mr. Yott, Mr. O. Parkinson, vice-president of the R.V.B.A. and Mrs. Parkinson, the official rules and appeal officer for R.V.B.A., Mr. Tricks, president of the V.L.B.A., Mrs. Cox, secretary of L.V.B.A., Mrs. Williams, and the representative of the Geelong and District Ladies' Bowling Association, Mrs. Dowley, Cr. Atkins, president of the Bellarine Shire Council and Crs. Hall, Ibbotson, Nash.

Mrs. Parkinson thanked the ladies for the lovely afternoon tea and Mrs. Cox supported her remarks.

Mrs. Kerr presented shoulder sprays to Mrs. Parkinson, Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Thorne and Mrs. Pettison.

The excellent amplification system which contributed so largely to the success of the ceremony was provided by Mrs. Winstanley.

Thanks also were expressed to Mr. A. G. McKeown for the loan of flags and bunting from Myers Emporium, Geelong, and to Cr. Plummer of Barwon Heads for the handsome trophies suitably inscribed which he presented for the opening day. As play was postponed owing to heavy rain, the trophies will be competed for at a future date.

Despite unfavorable weather conditions approximately 120 attended the opening ceremony—a fact which points to the keen interest which is being shown in the welfare of this newly-formed club.

History Of The Club

First steps in the formation of the club were taken in November 1952, when the Progress Association appointed a committee to investigate the possibilities. An inaugural meeting on January 22, 1953, authorised the first club committee elected at this meeting to procure a site for the construction of a green and club house. The first president of the club was the late Mr. D. W. Barrie, J.P., whose enthusiasm and foresight contributed largely to the marked progress made. It was decided to purchase land between Lelean Street and the Terrace for the sum of £550. Work then commenced on clearing the site which was done by voluntary labor except for leveling and grading which was done in co-operation with the Bellarine Shire Council.

After fencing, concrete, ditching, plumbing, etc. had been done, suitable grass was obtained from Queenscliff and planted in a nursery from which the

green of 12 rinks was planted by hand, some 64,000 cuttings being set. All this work was done by voluntary labor. Mr. Lowe, of the R.V.B.A. Green's Advisory Committee inspected and was high in his praise of the progress made. It was at this stage of the club's progress that Mr. Harold Pettison, keen bowler and a member of the Pt. Lonsdale Club, was elected president. An ardent worker, he is playing a most important part in the club's development.

Clubhouse finance was obtained on October 26, 1954 and in little more than three weeks from that date a clubhouse of approximately eight rinks and valued at £1500 was erected by voluntary labor working week-ends and at night.

To finance the project £1250 was raised by debentures and expenditure to date on greens and clubhouse, thanks to gifts and voluntary labor has been only £2000. The members, 75 inclusive of associates and social members, were mostly new bowlers.

The green, set in beautiful surroundings promises to be one of the finest on the Bellarine Peninsula and will be a very great asset and added attraction to Ocean Grove.

Mr. Blair of Henselite Bowls presented the club with two sets of carpets bowls which will be a feature of club activities during the Winter months. Each Thursday mixed rinks competitions will be held at 2.15 p.m. All district bowlers are invited to participate. Those desirous of playing should ring Ocean Grove 13 before 1.30 p.m. Next Saturday and Sunday the usual mixed rinks competitions will be held. Those desirous of playing must put their names on the list at the club house or ring Ocean Grove 13 before 1.30 p.m. on these days respectively. The regular card night will be held at night in the club house.

(Appendix 4)

LIFE MEMBERS

1971	A. H. Pettersen
1971	A. C. Ray
1975	V. X. Hassett
1975	Mrs. F. I. Adams
1975	K. M. McLeod
1978	H. R. Field
1980	C. P. McKeown
1981	L. E. Watkins
1982	Mrs. K. M. McLeod
1991	P. C. H. Mitchell
1992	B. Heron
1994	Mrs. L. R. Harris
1997	M. Gorman
1997	K. McKeown
1999	N. C. Thomas
2000	T. Toleman
2002	H. Dolphin
2002	A. Slocombe
2002	H. Taylor
2003	Mrs. B. Toleman

