




100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

Tennis ACT acknowledges the Ngunnawal people, the traditional custodians of the land where we are gathered this evening.

Tennis ACT acknowledges and respects their continuing cultural beliefs and ongoing connection to the land.

Tennis ACT respectfully acknowledges all elders past, present and emerging and any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people with us this evening.



100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations on a milestone achievement.

Tonight has been 100 years in the making and we are thrilled to celebrate the Canberra tennis community that has made this milestone possible.

To all the players, coaches, administrators and volunteers – past and present – we thank you for your dedication to our great game.

Whether you are a legend of the sport, Aussie champion, rising star or one of our grassroots community heroes who make it all possible from the ground up, tonight is about you.

We hope you have the opportunity to reflect on your own tennis journey; the influence it has played; the opportunities it has enabled and how it has led you to be here.

We also look towards the future and how we can continue to work together to grow our great game and get more people to play tennis regardless of who, what, where or how they play.

We have seen many changes to our sport this past century but one thing remains constant – Tennis is and always will be a welcoming environment for everyone.

Congratulations once again and enjoy the celebration.



Craig Tiley
Tennis Australia
CEO



100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

WELCOME

Welcome to the centenary celebration of Tennis ACT.

Tonight we recognise and celebrate the last 100 years of our great sport - what a 100 years it has been!

It is fantastic to celebrate this milestone with our tennis family; the key people who have been responsible for shaping our sport into what it is today. Thank you to our players, coaches, officials, presidents, board members, Walk of Fame inductees, staff and all our volunteers. We thank you for your fantastic contribution to our great sport.

Tonight we reflect back to 21 March 1923, when tennis began in the ACT and Region. From the humble beginnings where five affiliate clubs competed in the A Grade Men's Competition... 100 years on, Tennis ACT now has 31 clubs, 36 affiliates, 82 partner schools and 32,426 participants (July 2022). Our sport is thriving and open to all no matter your age, gender, ethnicity, ability, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Tennis truly is a sport for life and we welcome you with open arms.

We hope tonight provides you the opportunity to look back fondly on the last 100 years and to imagine what the next 100 years of tennis in the ACT and region will look like. A world of opportunities and growth for all.

Enjoy the night!



Ben Fuller

President, Tennis ACT



Kim Kachel

CEO, Tennis ACT





100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

PAST PRESIDENTS

Jack Esmond (1923 - 1926)

Ivo Smith (1926 - 1929)

Les Marriott (1929 - 1932)

JC Stephen (1932 - 1937)

Dr JRA McMillan (1937 - 1940)

FA Piggin (1940 - 1942)

Les Crawley (1942 - 1947)

FA Piggin (1947 - 1948)

WJ Walker (1948 - 1952)

Charlie Gibbs (1952 - 1954)

Charlie Boag (1954 - 1963)

Ken Willis (1963 - 1977)

George Scott (1977 - 1980)

Graham Gordon (1980 - 1984)

Roy Smalley (1984 - 1993)

Kingsley Barker (1993 - 2001)

Colin Mason (2001 - 2006)

Tony Lane (2006)

Bruce Lilburn (2006 - 2010)

John Cattle (2010 - 2015)

Dan Bisa (2015 - 2019)

President Ben Fuller
(2019 - present)

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Graham Bartlett OAM*

Charles Boag OAM*

Peter Breugelmans

Keith Carnall*

Les Crawley MBE*

Charles Gibbs*

Graham Gordon*

Anne Haycock OAM

John Heinemann

Brian Hynes*

Arthur Ide*

Alison Ide OAM*

Clem Maloney*

Colin Mason

Frank Piggini*

Bill Quealy*

Ken Randall*

Roy Smalley OAM*

Ted Tudor*

Isobel Watson*

Ken Willis OAM*

*deceased





1923-1932

The Organising Years

CLUBS AND COMPETITIONS EMERGE

- On 21 March 1923 - Federal Territory Tennis Association (FTTA) is formed, with Jack Esmond as President 1923-1926
- **1923** Pennant competition commences amongst five affiliated clubs - Canberra, Eastlake, Northbourne, West Ridge and the first ever winner, Queanbeyan
- **1925** name changes to Canberra Tennis Association (CTA)
- **1927** affiliation with NSWLTA enables entry to Country Week Championships, with Canberra's #1 team victorious
- **1928** six gravel-court Manuka complex open as headquarters of CTA
- **1930** name changes to Federal Capital Territory Lawn Tennis Association (FCTLTA) and the next year disaffiliates with NSW
- **1930** first ACT Open Championship - men's winner S Gee (J Ridley Cup) and women's winner, V Kemp (W Sandral Cup)

The Association Annual Ball was held on 18 July 1930 as a gala affair with a theme of *'Romance of the Night'* with guests enjoying *'the full Ambassador's Orchestra and a delectable supper'* and all this to *'ensure patrons had a night of undiluted joy'*.



↓ Opening of
Ainslie Tennis
Courts, 1928



100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

1933-1942

The Growth Years

ACT IS OFFICIALLY 'TENNIS MAD'

- **1933** Manuka Pavilion opens in conjunction with first ACT Resident Championships - Inagural winners; Men S Bell (Johnson Cup) and Women L Yates (Piggin Cup)
- **1934 - 1938** exhibition matches involving Viv McGrath, Jack Crawford, John Bromwich, Arthur Huxley, Bill Sidwell, Joan Hartigan, and Thelma Rice at Manuka and Hotel Canberra
- **1936** player registrations peak at 929, approximately 10% of Canberra's population - more than the number of those with a driver's licence
- **1939** name changes to Australian Capital Territory Lawn Tennis Association (ACTLTA)
- **1940** Joan Shumack (later Le Nevez) wins the last of her 6 ACT Resident Singles titles and 3 ACT Open Singles titles
- **1942** tennis competition ceases in Canberra

'...We arrived [in Canberra] at 4 on Saturday afternoon. Tennis was being played here, there and everywhere. "We're tennis mad!" was the reply to a query. There were 37 teams in competition that afternoon in connection with the Association, in addition to private play'.

Cootamundra Herald, 11 May 1934

↓ Exhibition on Hotel of Canberra Bowling Green, 1935



1943-1952

The Disrupted Years

WAR'S DRAMATIC IMPACT

- **1943** Association must renegotiate lease of Manuka courts due to dire financial situation
- **1945** Resident Championships return
- **1946** Resumption of ACT Open Championship
- **1949** first Life Memberships of Association to Les Crawley, Keith Carnall, Charlie Gibbs and FA Pigginn
- **1949** reaffiliation with NSWLTA
- **1951** Davis Cup displayed in Canberra

1942 was the first year in the history of tennis in Canberra that no competition was held due to the depletion of players because of enlistment, petrol rationing and other related war activity.

The situation worsened in 1943, with difficulties in obtaining quorums for association meetings, the parlous state of association and club finances, the lack of tennis balls and hoses caused by the shortage of rubber.

The Manuka courts were '*in a deplorable state*' with fencing down and the pavilion windows broken by vandals.

↓ Davis Cup,
Canberra
1951





100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

1953-1962

The Rebound Years

A TASTE OF THE PROS

- **1953** exhibition match at Manuka with Wimbledon Champion Maureen (Little Mo) Connolly
- **1955** Roy Emerson ACT Men's Open Singles Champion (again in 1958) and Fred Stolle Junior Boys Champion
- **1959** Neale Fraser Men's Open Singles winner (again in 1960)
- **1959** Kramer Professional Troupe Exhibition on Manuka Oval – Pancho Gonzales, Lew Hoad, Ashley Cooper and Mal Anderson
- **1961** Reg 'Blackie' Bennett wins the last of a record 22 Resident Titles and ACT Open titles and 9 ACT Open titles
- **1962** Margaret Smith wins ACT Open Singles, Doubles and Mixed titles

The Queanbeyan News reported on 23 April 1954*ROBERT BROS STOLE SHOW IN EASTER TOURNAMENT!*

"In a thrilling Open Doubles final in the Eden-Monaro Open Peter and Cres Roberts of Canberra scored a big upset by defeating [Sydney Stars] and No. 1 seeded pair Max Anderson and Trevor Davis. All four players veritably 'climbed the wire netting' at the back of the court in their excellent retrieving work. The skilful play, exciting rallies and closeness of the scores, kept onlookers at *'fever pitch'*. The Robert Bros have stamped themselves as one of the finest doubles combinations playing in NSW country districts."

↓ Childers St
Tennis Courts,
late 1950s





1963-1972

The 'Golden' Years

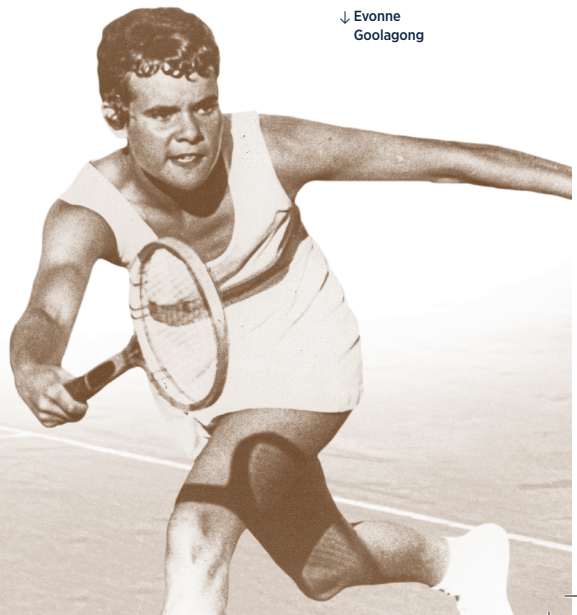
PRESIDENTS, COACHES AND EMERGING JUNIORS DEFINE AN ERA

- **1963** Start of the Willis Presidency 1963-1977
- **1963** Peter Roberts wins the last of nine Resident Doubles titles in a career also including seven Resident Singles and one Mixed title
- **1966** Bruce Larkham NSW Country Singles Champion and in 1968 NSW Hardcourt Doubles Champion (with Dick Crealy) becoming the first ACT player to win a NSW title
- **1969** last Open Championship to be held at Manuka with winners John Alexander and Evonne Goolagong
- **1970** ACTLTA moves to Lyneham, with the National Tennis and Squash Centre (NTSC) officially opened by Patron, Sir John Overall
- **1970** new Association Coach Charlie Hollis arrives in ACT

The arrival of the Association's new coach Charlie Hollis, heralded a golden era for junior tennis in Canberra. The man who Rod Laver wrote of - *'so influential was he that I have no problem saying that if Charlie and my paths hadn't crossed I may never have become an elite tennis player'*, coached in Canberra for 12 years.

Ken Willis in his Foundation Dinner address in 1980, celebrating 50 years of the ACT Open, wrote 'his [Charlie Hollis's] juniors and those of the other coaches are now World Class. Young Wally Masur made the Quarter Finals at the Wimbledon Junior Event this year and he has always been an Australian Champion for his age. Charlie Hollis must be given the major credit for the lifting of tennis playing standards in Canberra in the last decade'.

↓ Evonne
Goolagong





100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

1973-1982

The Progressive Years

THE ARCHITECT OF MODERN WOMENS' TENNIS IN THE ACT

- **1973** sees the Golden Jubilee of the Association - from the initial five affiliated clubs in 1923 to 20 in 1973
- **1975** Bruce Larkham wins a record eighth Resident Singles title and Barbra Winder (nee Walsh) wins the last of six Resident Women's Singles titles
- **1979** name change to Australian Capital Territory Tennis Association (ACTTA)
- **1980** Opening of AIS with tennis, under Ray Ruffles as National Coach
- **1980** Helen Holcombe, Pat McNicol, Kay Schiavinato, Narelle Raftery win Div 1 Country Week
- **1980** Wally Masur first ACT Junior to represent NSW in Linton Cup
- **1981** Alison Ide Life Member
- **1982** Charles Boag first ACT Veteran selected in Australian Veterans team competing in an international event

'In his book on the tennis history of Canberra, Roy Smalley wrote, "*she [Alison Ide] can rightly be described as the architect of modernising womens tennis in the ACT*". A full womens tennis program was developed, and the Ladies Auxiliary elevated from its historical connotation as 'tea ladies' to branch status, with its President becoming a full Tennis Association Vice-President, Board member and member of the Grading Committee.'

↓ Country Week
Champions,
1980





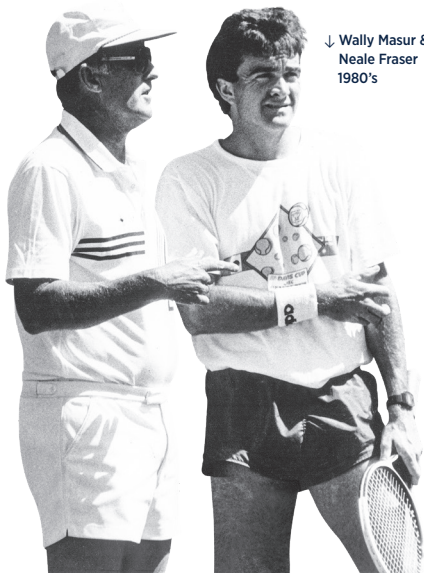
1983-1992

The Expansion Years

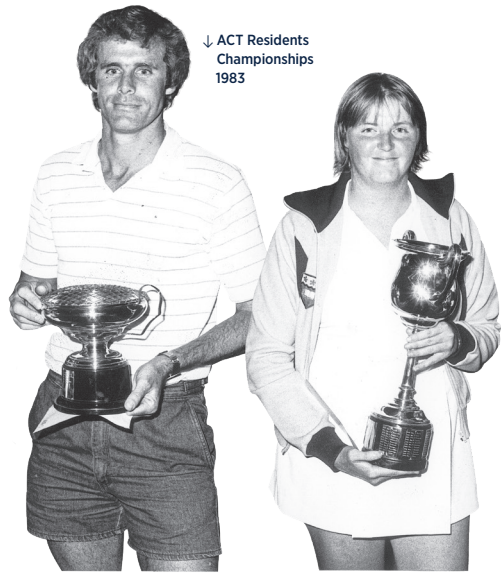
OPENING UP BORDERS AND BREAKING DOWN BOUNDARIES

- **1983** Pat McNicol first ACT Senior Woman to represent Australia
- **1984** Women refused entry to men's pennant competition, which was reversed in 1987
- **1984** second Rio Challenge held in Canberra featuring Ivan Lendl, Matts Wilander, Joachim Nystrom and Pat Cash
- **1985** Wally Masur first ACT player selected in a Davis Cup team and later Rebecca Bryant selected in Federation Cup Squad (1987)
- **1990** Kay Schiavinato member of first Australian seniors team to win International Cup and then ACT's first individual World Veteran Champion

'It is not so long ago that the idea that the top woman player in the ACT should be allowed to play in the sacred mens singles competition was greeted with shock, horror and derision. Now in a quiet revolution, the principle seems to have been accepted... some days ago there were matches going on simultaneously on adjoining courts. ' WARDEN'S WAFFLE, SET POINT, November 1987.



↓ Wally Masur &
Neale Fraser
1980's



↓ ACT Residents
Championships
1983



2002
24 CLUBS

100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

1993-2002

The Player Years

LOCAL TALENT SHINES AT HOME AND ON WORLD STAGE

- **1993** Wally Masur reaches career high World Singles ranking of No 15 and No 8 in doubles
- **1993** Annabel Ellwood, Jodi Richardson and Jenny Popovic win Wilson Cup and Annabel and Jodi members of Australian Junior team, coached by Helen Gourlay which won the World Youth Cup
- **1993** ACT changes trading name to Tennis ACT and in 1994 gains voting rights on LTAA
- **1994** Ben Ellwood wins Boys Doubles and Singles at Australian Open and Boys Doubles at Wimbledon and US Open. Ranked No 1 Junior in the World
- **1996** Ros Balodis wins a record 8th Womens Resident Singles title
- **1997** Annabel Ellwood reaches career high ranking of No 57. In 1997/98 she represented Australia in three Federation Cup ties and in the Hopman Cup
- **2001** inaugural Canberra International WTA event in Canberra, won by Justine Henin (BEL)

Prior to her clean sweep in the Helsinki World Seniors Championships in 2017 noted sports journalist Jeff Kavanagh, in describing Ros Balodis as a master of her art wrote *"Ros Balodis probably doesn't conform to most people's mental picture of a top flight tennis player. There's no gold chain dangling from her neck, branded headwear or flamboyant flourishes of her racquet. Instead, behind the façade, a precise approach to shot-making and the heart and mind of a fine practitioner of her sport"*.

↓ Annabel Ellwood
with Pat Rafter -
Hopman Cup, 1998



100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT



2003-2012

The Performance Years

ELITE COACHING AND ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH

- **2006** ACT High Performance program introduced with Todd Larkham as full-time coach
- **2007** New constitution with transition from association to company, Tennis ACT 'limited by guarantee' and registered under the Corporations Act
- **2008** New board structure and the end of the National Sports Club
- **2012** John Blom achieves world Gold Badge umpire status

In 2006 the ANU Great Hall was packed for a special tribute dinner to honour Alison Ide. Alison spent the evening reminiscing of her tennis memories in Canberra; a fitting acknowledgement for the women known as the '*head mistress*' - a born organiser, high achiever, and genuine Canberra sporting legend.



↓ Optus 12s
ACT Team,
2010



100 YEARS OF TENNIS ACT

2013-2023

The Thriving Years

MATURITY AND RESILIENCE

- **2013** Nick Kyrgios wins Australian Open Junior Singles, makes Davis Cup debut and in
- **2014** wins the Newcombe Medal
- **2015** Opening of new Lyneham Tennis Centre by Chief Minister Andrew Barr
- **2015** Wally Masur captain of Australian Davis Cup team
- **2015/16** return of professional tennis to Canberra with Canberra International, Canberra ATP Challenger and ACT Claycourt International
- **2016** Nick Kyrgios reaches a career high World ranking of No 13, becoming the highest ever ranked ACT player
- **2016** Establishment of ACT Tennis Walk of Fame with inaugural inductees, Wally Masur, Ken Willis and Keith Carnall
- **2018** Australia, led by Ash Barty, wins Federation Cup tie 3 – 2 over Ukraine at Lyneham
- **2020** Canberra International 2020 moved to Bendigo two days prior to the start due to bushfire activity in the ACT and region
- **2020** all tournaments, events and court play cancelled under health regulations due to Covid-19
- **2022** Nick Kyrgios wins Australian Open Doubles with Thanasi Kokkinakis, first Canberran to win a Grand Slam title, and later to reach a Wimbledon Singles Final, the first ACT athlete to ever do so
- **2022** Charlie Camus represented Australia at the Junior Davis Cup, continuing on the tradition of ACT players on the world stage
- **2023** 100 Years of Tennis ACT

↓ Nick Kyrgios and Thanasi Kokkinakis Australian Open 2022 Men's Doubles Champions

↓ Fed Cup Australia vs Ukraine 2018

↓ Nick Kyrgios Wimbledon Finalist 2022





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