



RIVERSIDE TENNIS CLUB

50 YEARS ON

Introduction

As President it is my pleasure to introduce this short history of the Riverside Tennis Club, which has been prepared to celebrate our 50th anniversary.

The following document is a testament to the capacity and energy of our founding members and the commitment of the club committees over Riverside's 50-year history.

At a time when many tennis clubs are struggling to remain viable, Riverside has maintained both a steady membership of around 170 and a very sound financial position.

The continued success of our Club since those early days has been due to the club's capacity to offer excellent facilities, maintain a welcoming environment and achieve a high level of continuity in committee membership.

A quick glance at the Honour Board on the final two pages of this document illustrates the long-standing commitment of past and present club members to serving on the Executive and the General Committee.

Our past president and life member Jim Witheford has meticulously prepared this club history. Jim has been actively involved in the Club over the past 40 years and it is more than fitting that he has prepared such an important document.

I trust that this history provides inspiration to future club committees and club members to maintain their enthusiasm, support and hard work for our wonderful tennis club.

Rod Meldrum

DEDICATION.

This brief history of our club to date is not only a chronological record of a series of events, but very much a heartfelt tribute from our present committee and members to those men and women who toiled endlessly to establish the whole Riverside area in the late 1950s and early 1960s and to those who later in the club's history were, because of their efforts, able to develop our particular section of the suburb to its present high standing.

These early residents were not only active in setting up the Tennis Club, but pioneers of the wider Riverside community - public spirited citizens who applied their talents, skills, powers of persuasion and energies into making, what was in those days, a new suburb with young families, into a more pleasing and entertaining place to live.

It is mainly due to their vision that the present generation of local residents can enjoy things like the Swimming Pool, the Bowls Club, the Golf Club, the Health Centre, the Church Hall and of course the Tennis Club.

Foremost amongst the most generous was Bruce Freeland who, we understand, donated the land on which we enjoy our tennis to be used for recreational purposes. Bruce and later his wife Alice were our Patrons for almost 50 years

As our club has now reached its half century of active tennis, we give sincere thanks to those who laid the foundations of our present facilities and particularly dwell on the contribution of our hard working eleven Life Members.

Regrettably many of these good people did not live to see Riverside Tennis Club reach the status which it holds now, but there are still a few members from the sixties around and we are able to salute them today together with our more recent Lifers for the work done by them.

Most of the information in this document has been gleaned from the minute books of the club from its inception and from the recollections of some of our more mature members.

We hope we have given mention to all who have been major contributors and apologise to those who we have not.

THE FIFTIES

The first early signs of interest in a tennis club emerged on April 11th **1957** when a group of interested citizens attended a loose community meeting at the Riverside High School where a Mr R. Pierce moved that such a tennis club be formed which would be based at the Windsor Park Recreation Ground. This was the moment when our present tennis complex was conceived and also when the first major difference of opinion raised its head.

Some of those present wanted the club to have its home at Windsor Park and the others wanted the courts to be closer to the houses at Riverside. It was a hung parliament but at a later date, a democratic vote was able to settle the issue.

At the same meeting a motion to make the fees one guinea for seniors and half a guinea for juniors was soundly defeated and the subscriptions were fixed at half that rate.

Well-known Launceston identities who were at those early meetings were businessmen R.Woodfield and M.French (Haulage Contractors), C.Begent, (Furniture Shop owner) and E. Richards (Real Estate) - all very useful identities to have on your side, and names which live on in Launceston business quarters.

There was no official committee formed for the first four of five years since there had been no official meetings, and the personnel who arrived at gatherings varied but Mark Young and John Lewis were certainly ones who attended all meetings and did an enormous amount of early work in setting up the club, as did Arthur Brumby, the first official secretary now applying his administrative talents at the Riverside Golf Club. **Mark Young** was our **first Life Member** and **John Lewis** our **second**

Of all things, a piano was donated as the first major fund raiser and after a "committee" member drove south, to have a look at the Cygnet Tennis Club it was found that the cost of two courts similar to the ones at Cygnet was going to be about £300 . The idea of lighting was also investigated.

Absolutely nobody known to the committee had any idea of how to construct a tennis court or what was involved in the preparation of the land except that they all naively turned up with picks and shovels when it was really a bulldozer that was needed.

Reg Davis, the Chairman, who had only the faintest idea where Cygnet was, offered to travel south and he arranged for some clay of similar makeup to the Cygnet courts to be transported by

rail to Launceston and spread in the back yard of a committee member to see how it would settle. It didn't and this was the first setback of many which were to unfold in the club's history.

Unfortunately Reg had to leave the Riverside area before the club became fully established and he didn't see the results of much of his hard work. On a visit to Reg in 2001 he expressed to a committee member his pride in the way the club had grown.

Our first Secretary in the first four years of our growth was Arthur Brumby who, but for the receipt of new hip would have been with us tonight.

By June 1957, after a great deal more discussion, even argument, it was finally decided that the site of the club should be closer to the few houses which were in the area at the time and not down in the fields where the new Health and Well Being Centre and Riverside Olympic's soccer ground is now.

A barbecue was organised and after it attracted more than a hundred people and raised £150, which at that time was the approximate cost of one of the proposed courts, the club was a goer. Consider this effort when we estimate the cost of a tennis court these days would be about \$20000 or more.

More research based on Cygnet T.C. found that the surround netting was going to cost £55, the posts £57 and the gates £10. Later it was decided to erect a pavilion once the courts were in playing condition.

The first real A.G.M. was held on 13th October **1958** and it was decided at that meeting to confirm that the proposed site would be the land behind the Council Chambers which is, of course, our present site although we have resisted several attempts at moving us to either Windsor Park or the Tailrace area over the intervening years. In view of our present large membership, sometimes we wonder if we were right in restricting our club to a four court complex.

At the second A.G.M. it was decided to base the first working constitution on the one used by the Trevallyn Tennis Club, even though our club was still not operative. Master builder Gerald Box was not only the prime mover in all construction tasks at this juncture, but also club Treasurer.

The Beaconsfield Council (as it was then) offered to assist in the construction work by donating free use of machinery for excavation work etc. and anyone donating £100 would have a court named after them. This was the first of many services provided by the council.

Court No. 1 is the Bruce Freeland Court in memory of that lifelong Patron of the club. Bruce's widow, Mrs Alice Freeland continued the family association by maintaining the Patroness's position after Bruce died in 1974 and she supported us until her death in February 2005. The photograph display board in the clubhouse was donated by her just before that time.

The first auditor of the club was Brian Booth whose daughter Maree became the second circuit player from the Launceston area to reach Wimbledon standard. Maree (now Coulson) found circuit life not to her liking but she still plays an excellent game and not too long ago won the Australian Over 35 Womens' Singles Championship. Good at all sports, she has now become a very accomplished golfer.

THE SIXTIES

By the third A.G.M. in September **1960** a start had still not been made on the courts, but following a further donation of £100 from a defunct Child Welfare Centre Committee, work started on the site in earnest, the plumbing was organised and the plans for a small pavilion drawn up. This old “pavilion” is featured in some of the photographs on the display board and in this family snap from 1968.

At this stage the minute book showed the club finances to be the princely sum of £226.80 and it was decided to try for a £500 loan. Committee members made many calls to local tradespeople for help without a great deal of response. Another setback!

In **1961**, with the ever present stalwarts John Lewis and Mark Young at the helm, a grant from the State Government of £100 started things moving, and monthly socials and street cake stalls organised by the ladies of the club brought in between £10 and £15 a month. So successful were these efforts that by June of that year the slab had been poured and the “clubhouse” actually finished before the courts.



The fourth A.G.M. held in September still found the club without playing facilities, but after an estimated 1200 man/woman hours of voluntary labour by no more than a handful of hardy souls, the club was officially opened on 21st October 1961.

The Grand Opening was coupled with the opening of the Health Centre and commemorated by a Grand Gala Supper, Cabaret and Dance.

The **third Life Member** to be recognised is **Jack Stronach** who teamed well with the Young/Lewis combination and was mainly responsible through his association with the HYDRO for the installation of the first floodlights.

These were situated not only on the outside of the courts, but also down the centre where a particularly deft wide return would see the receiver wrapped around any one of the six supporting poles.

Night tennis initially cost 10 shillings per court per hour which sounds extremely dear considering that the annual subs were only £3 per year at the time. That would make our present rate to be about \$12 an hour!

By February **1962** the club was moving well and with 50 adult members and 75 juniors, its overdraft of £431.13.9 didn't seem too unsurmountable.

One of the first coaches at that time was a slip of a lad called Paul Graham-Jones, who became a really well known tennis identity and who is still plying his skills on the North West Coast.

The first match committee was formed soon afterwards in order that players could be graded with a view to playing inter-club fixtures, the first of which was played between Riverside and Invermay Catholic on Sunday 9th December 1962 when six men and six women represented the club in its first ever match.

By the sixth A.G.M. in **1963** matches were a regular thing and fees were fixed at 2/6d per match with night tennis still an exorbitant 10/6d per court per hour.

However, things must have been looking rosy because we donated a massive £5 to the fledgling Riverside Swimming Pool Committee mainly because many members of our original committee had by then applied their talents to the construction of the pool. The generalissimo in this, and later, many other community projects was a dedicated and highly regarded local gentleman

called Mark Young who, as was mentioned before had been awarded our first club Life Membership.

At this juncture the club only had two courts and the finances were minuted as £173. It was believed that with a big Christmas Stocking Raffle we might earn enough to start courts 3 and 4.

By the 7th A.G.M. in **1964**, two courts had been endowed, the club had a balance of £227 and in October of that year a youngster named James Mayne (later to be President and star A Grade player) was inducted into the club as an Intermediate member.

On Australia Day 1965, the good ship “*Fairstar*” brought to Melbourne a family from Britain called Witheford. Two weeks after arriving in Launceston they were introduced to the tennis club and became lifelong members.

Life Member number **five**, **Beryl McNee** was a leading player and worker in the club in those days and her husband Len was Secretary .As later pages will show the McNees were Riversiders through and through.

At this stage the membership had risen to 56 seniors, 3 intermediates, and 21 juniors, the fees having risen to £3.3.0. And the minutes showed that monthly tournaments which seemed to have attracted a good following at 3/- a pop were a good fund raiser.

At this time a Building Fund was established and the first Ladies Social Committee under the guidance of Pat Cobern and neighbour Barbara Wathen started a long series of activities which kept the club’s head above water for many years.

Barbara and Pat lived on that little road leading from the Woolworths Car Park overlooking the courts and these two ladies somehow never received the recognition for their efforts which they deserved. However, when in the late nineties Barbara left for Adelaide, the club presented her with a set of our commemorative glasses in appreciation of her work.



The First Recorded Winning Riverside Team – 1965
Jim Witheford, Geoff Cobern, Neil Pitt, Mel Williams
Beryl McNee, Pat Cobern, Joan Turner, Margaret Birtles

Saturday and Midweek Pennants were very popular and became a family way of life in the mid 60s. with as many as 40% of our members playing in teams.

Decimal currency was operative by the 1966 A.G.M. and \$7.00 was the going rate for subs and the club was fielding seven teams in the City and Suburban rosters.

In **1966** we recruited another wonderful player for our gallery of A grade players. Bill Crow who came from Trevallyn, was not only a very good player, but

another of the band of workers destined

to make Riverside the top local club.

Bill was such a well credited junior that in his five years as a member of the Linton Cup team he played Singles and Doubles on equal terms against no less than seven contemporaries from mainland states who went on to be champions at Wimbledon. These included Lew Hoad, Ken Rosewall and Neil Fraser who Bill billeted at least twice at his home

1967 saw the start of the bottom two courts, again basically using voluntary labour. A loan of \$1000 was easy to obtain from the local Riverside branch of the Bank of N.S.W. since our Treasurer at the time just happened to be the manager!

The 10th Anniversary A.G.M. saw membership of the club steady at 104 members with the two bottom courts almost completed. These had to be laid in the North/South direction because of the lack of space, but this turned out to be a good thing because we can now avoid the morning and late evening sun by simply switching courts.

Thirty metres away the Swimming Pool Committee had also done its stuff and so it was decided that the pool and our two courts should be opened on the same day - 16th December **1967**. The net result of all this expenditure left the club in debt to the tune of \$6.23 but a day of Social Tennis on 17th December soon fixed that problem.

Family participation, social Sundays and barbecues were the order of the day when there were not so many other outlets and interests, and there were many happy hours spent at Progressive Dinners, Whist Drives, Fancy Dress Nights and the like.

In 1968, our long serving Past President Jim Witheford was elected to the Committee for the first time and in the following year was asked to take over the Secretary's job on the tragic death of Len McNee. Len was a committee member for six years from 1962 and secretary for four of those years when committee work was not at all easy. A memorial plaque naming our Life Members on the northern wall recognises the value of Len to the club

Happy to pay back the Ten Pound Pom image Jim later took on the Presidency for four years before his over commitment to organising local soccer forced him to have a rest from tennis administration.

The minute book of the day, reminiscent of a Dibley Village Council meeting, recorded that the clubhouse was burgled and \$2.00 was stolen. This nefarious activity was the chief source of pocket money for the local hoods until it was decided to remove the Coca Cola machine from our suspect clubhouse.

Even after all this, the clubhouse was again burgled of \$6.00 and the temporary pavilion was therefore considered grossly inadequate. Plans were hastily drawn up for a new one which was designed to incorporate a second storey in the future.

The estimated cost of the new clubhouse Stage 1 was recorded as about \$7000 which made the final burglary of 60 cents, 14 full bottles of cordial and 6 empties seem a mere nothingness.



A Grade Mid-Week circa 1968
Pat Cobern, Joan Smythe, Margaret Birtles, Beryl McNee

In **1969**, records show that Max Byrne had moved to Launceston and was appointed our coach. He began a lengthy spell of dedication on and off the committee which brought a new expertise to the club.

For several years, our club delegates at Northern Tennis Association meetings were involved in a lengthy acrimonious battle, which was initiated in 1969 and not won until the late nineties. This issue was to have all City and Suburban clubs affiliated with the N.T.T.A. and also to Tennis Australia and for players to pay a levy for the improvement of tennis in general. Events have proved that this conflict was well worth the effort, being the foundation upon which Tennis Tasmania and indeed Tennis Australia was based.

THE SEVENTIES

According to the minutes, in **1970** Max was charging 50 cents for a 30 minute coaching session and it makes many of us oldies distressed to realise that we wasted an opportunity which could have launched us out as real tennis players.

A special item on the 14th A.G.M. Agenda was to decide on whether to move club activities to Windsor Park. The 47 members present (almost half the total membership) again voted unanimously against the move.

By **1973**, Riverside was fielding no less than nine Weekend teams and six Midweek teams and fund raising was just keeping ahead of the broken windows and some small amateurish attempts at breaking and entering.

In those days teams consisted of eight players and matches sometimes lasted from midday until well into the evening. Some of us well remember playing at 7 LA under the headlights of parked cars!

However, that year was a very frustrating one for the committee which seemed to have to spend all its efforts on raising money sometimes by the most ingenious methods. A loan from the bank fell through because of lack of guarantors, a council loan was promised but was not forthcoming, a grant from the Government was taking time and the sole finance at that stage was about \$4000 which the club had raised. The plans were there, the builder Jack Bratt, was ready, John Oldenhof, the plumber was working voluntarily, but the cash from other instrumentalities was not materialising.

At this time the hardest worker during the years of improvement and change was **Jim Cooper**, father in law of present player Daphne and our **sixth** Life member. As well as a dedicated committee member he was both Secretary and then President for a spell of nine years between 1969 and 1976, probably the era when the club made its most progress. Like many others of our committees over the years, Jim eventually turned to lawn bowls and became a well known bowls administrator.

In spite of all the problems, things did eventually fall into place regarding the clubrooms. A dollar for dollar contribution from both the government and the council saw the craftsmen ready to start, and the most famous working bee of all saw a record number of members arrive one Sunday morning equipped with sledge hammers to effect a Demolition Derby on the old edifice, spurred on by the thoughts of cream cake and cheesy scones provided, as always, by the ever-present ladies.

Jake Smythe was a dynamic committee member for nine years when things were really tough and he was awarded our **fourth** Life Membership. He was our 1970s D.I.Y man. One committee meeting found Jake unusually missing, but he was completely forgiven when he eventually arrived from Bicheno toting a tuna of mammoth proportions which he had sliced into convenient pieces for each committee member present.

Regrettably for the club, Jake moved to the East Coast where he became well known in that area for his expertise in marine motor repairs

The original idea for improvement was to extend the old clubhouse towards the golf club, but



Christmas 1975

eventually two different plans were drawn up for much more grandiose buildings. One of the plans, naturally, was the one which brought about our present rooms, but the second was fairly similar, except that where the kitchen is now would be an internal stairwell leading to a second storey which would consist of a large viewing area. Recent conversations with Jack Bratt the eventual builder, revealed that the structure was built on foundations which could even now be sound enough to incorporate a second storey. Perhaps that might be the club's next major project.

Our present clubrooms were eventually officially opened on 21st September 1975 by Michael Barnard

the Minister for Lands and Works

It was in **1976** that **Beryl McNee**, one of the most dedicated members Riverside has ever had, took on the job of Secretary for three arduous years and then graduated to be our first, and so far, only Lady President. She was also our first lady Life member and chronologically the **fifth**.

Beryl went on to win an Australian Veterans Mixed title and represented both the club and the Veterans Association in matches until she was in her eighties before being forced, like many others, to graduate to the gentler art of lawn bowling.



Beryl McNee

In the seventies, fund raising continued to be a way of life if the club was to survive, let alone develop, and each year at the Annual Dinner the Ladies Social Committee invariably presented a cheque generally in the region of \$500, the proceeds from cake stalls, whist drives, parties and barbecue social days, while another feature of those years when there were so many children associated with the club was the annual visit of Father Christmas who looked, over the years very much like Mark Young, Max Byrne and even Beryl McNee.

Due to the lack of reindeer at the time Beryl, playing Mother Christmas, was conveyed to the club, on one warm December day on the pillion of a motor bike owned by track racing motorcyclist Ross Allison.

Family days out were regular events and one of the most remembered activities was when all the club members were invited for the weekend to Weymouth to shacks owned by the Smythes and the Wathens, when we were to be seen hooning around the river mouth on one or other of Jake Smythe's high powered motor boats.



Four of the Best
Rod Meldrum, Bill Broadhurst, Paul Webb, Mark Webb

Regrettably we have no photographs of Beryl's first attempts at water skiing but it was a sight to remember.

THE EIGHTIES

Records show that the club instituted its annual Championships in **1980** and these have been held every year since.

The Byrne family's name has dominated the Championship Honour Board for almost thirty years – if it wasn't Max it was Val or any one of their three daughters playing in the Finals. Another name to grace the honour board for almost twenty years was Barbara Tyson (now Whybrow) who completely dominated women's singles titles not only at our club but in the North and often in the State.

Barbara still plays a good game of tennis and when she finally took up bowls on a part time basis because of husband Merv's interest, she immediately became a champion.

For many years these Championships were organised by Jim Mayne and Pam Roe who earned our gratitude for her dedication to club activities and committee work and was later justly rewarded.

Jim Mayne was another of those hard working servants of the club who had to balance his work for the club with his teaching career and his involvement, on and off, to Riverside as player and official spanned around forty years. Under his tuition, in August 2011, Jim's Scotch Oakburn Boys Tennis Team won the state championship for the sixth consecutive year.

He and Heather Munro who is well known as a valuable staff member at L.I.S.A. were awarded special service awards in later years. Heather was a regular team member of both Saturday and mid week teams.

The minute books show that the lights on Courts 3 and 4 were installed in 1982 after an immense amount of effort by Max and the committee and also that the incidence of wayward golf balls peppering the courts prompted the committee to look into special insurance cover.

This is still a minor problem, but the up-side is that some club members now have a good collection of practice balls and any necessary insurance is the province of the golf club.

In **1984** a team of culinary experts from the club scooped the pool at the Launceston Show with Lyn Woodfall the star cake maker. Later, Exeter teacher and Riverside team member Noel Button won so many Launceston Show prizes in the Cookery section that they had to make him a judge. When Noel was in their Reserve A Saturday pennant team, there was a reluctance on the part of the lady members to bring home-made cakes for afternoon tea, so on match days, Noel often made the afternoon tea and the ladies paid for the tennis balls.

In the mid eighties, artificial grass courts were springing up all over the place - no pun intended- and it became obvious that our clay courts were both time consuming and difficult to maintain. Quotations gave us a clue that it was going to cost about \$32000 per court to change over - a mammoth task for those on the committee at that time.

The mass of correspondence which the archives have thrown up shows that there were many quotations made before a decision was made with Max Byrne and the secretary of the time Jill Oldenhof the recipients and despatchers of a large volume of letters and technical details connected with the new type of court.

It took two years of study, begging, borrowing and cajoling before the courts were laid down and eventually officially opened on 22nd February **1987** and what an asset artificial grass has

been. We were lucky when we put down our courts because we managed to get the right grade of sand first time. The courts laid at Hart Street at the same time had a much shorter duration.

Riverside, by then, was a club running at a profit, with a stable membership, new courts, good lights and a more than satisfactory clubhouse. There were no contentious issues to split the club and for a few years the committee could sit back and adopt a “*steady as she goes*” policy. Committee meetings became less formal and more jocular and volunteers were not only much easier to find but lasted much longer in office. Life memberships, often awarded after a short time in the early days became harder to acquire.

Four years of stable administration later, the courts were being paid off at a rapid rate and evening pennants were a good way of raising finance. Night pennants on a time basis were introduced and became very popular.

Treasurer of the day, June Haberle (Pearton) was the welcome motivator in these pennants and brought many new members to the club.

THE NINETIES

Hazardous sparking and frequent failures to the old lighting system, which featured dangerous poles down the centre of the courts and had been installed when the top two courts were first laid, activated the committee into its next project in February **1992**. New lights!

Unfortunately the heavy duty support poles needed for the modern lights were designed to be positioned outside the court surface area and this was not possible because of the roadway on one side and the golf club on the other. Their present position at the ends of the courts saved a great deal of money, but this placement was technically not the preferred option.

The same electrician who had installed lights on the bottom courts was commissioned to do the work and in November they were glowing three nights a week and bringing in much needed finance.

In July **1993**, the trees which had sheltered the courts on the swimming pool car park side from prevailing north easterlies and the noise of the swimming pool were the victims of an arson attack and had to be removed. New fast-growing bushes took their place in quick time due to the close connection between a certain committee member Denise Walsh and her husband who served as a council member.

Denise was another of our regular committee members who was a great supporter of events around the club and played in teams and served on the general committee for more than ten years.

At this time, a big administrative change took place which has aided the club ever since. The Tennis Club committee which up to this point had been a sub-committee of the old Beaconsfield Council was given leave to operate alone. Under the agreement the council thankfully took over the maintenance of the grounds and we paid a peppercorn rental on the area. We had to be responsible for the courts etc and the clubrooms, but the Council tended to the grounds. This generous arrangement is one of the reasons our club is so financially secure.

In August **1994**, the constitution, which had been first written in 1960 caused great hilarity when it was produced at a committee meeting and the two Jims, Mayne and Witheford were entrusted with the task of revision.

Amongst some very odd clauses they found in the original constitution, was one which stated that: - ***“Rule 5. There shall be nine members on the committee, one of whom must be a woman.”***

All matters financial were still written in £.s.d. and this was nearly thirty years after decimal currency came in.

The new constitution was ratified at the **1995** A.G.M. and at this meeting was instituted the Presidential Certificates of Service. These were to be presented to long serving general committee members who had not really qualified to be Life Members. The first recipients being Jim Mayne (13 years), Pam Roe (12 years), Jim Witheford (13 years) and Heather Munro (14 years) pictured here.



1996 was the year of “The Great Flood”.

It was realised that the original plumbing leading to the courts, installed in 1960 was deteriorating when a gusher from a burst pipe inundated Court 2 and only after a great deal of hasty plumbing and vibrator rolling was the court made playable again. Consequently, the water supply was cut off to the courts until it would be possible to install new piping.

When the top courts were eventually replaced, mains water was not reconnected because it had become the fashion to carry individual water bottles and it was decided that in the summer the water would be lukewarm when it exited the taps anyhow. Also, our artificial grass courts no longer needed the same amount of watering as the previous en tout cas surfaces had done.

There was sadness for the older members at the end of **1998** when first Mark Young and then John Lewis, two of the real stalwarts of the club died.

As mentioned in the early pages of our history, Mark was not only a constant worker for the good of tennis, but also for the community at large, while John was a founder member and was on the committee continuously from 1957 until 1968 serving as Treasurer, Secretary and finally as President during the club’s formative years when being on the committee needed a non-stop work ethic. John’s daughter, now Debbie Bushby, continued playing at the club for some time.

During the late eighties and early nineties, Riverside had been one of the clubs progressive enough to believe that all clubs should unite under a common Tasmanian Tennis Association banner and that the City and Suburban Association be inducted as part of this union. It wasn’t until 1998 that this was brought about with Ken Hudson, one of our members the prime mover in this change in spite of much spirited resistance from other clubs because there was to be a player levy instituted.

By this time Riverside was functioning so well that it was gaining members hand over fist and building a bank balance which allowed us to employ tradesmen to do casual tasks around the courts which our amateur working bees used to do. No longer were we prepared to accept band-aid jobs on the fences and the hedges. DIY became GAMI (Get A Man In).

In May **1997** a visit by the council engineers found that Court 4 was collapsing slowly into the neighbouring vegetable patches of the gardens of two neighbouring houses in Fairway Crescent and fissures in the court had spread to the retaining wall alongside. It was painfully obvious that big money would have to be spent to solve the problem - and a great deal of it looked as though it was going to be ours. How right we were!

On the plus side, at about this time the club joined the 20th century and became one of the first in the North to become computerised. The first machine, a second-hand Apple 486, with a screen about the size of an A4 sheet of paper, was to be co-handled by the Secretary and the President who had to go on a steep IT learning curve. The initial \$800 outlay seems now to have been exorbitant but subsequent machines became a godsend to the administration and the club secretary at the time Lesley Baird, showed great fortitude in learning computer-speak.

At the end of 1997 the club lost a respected committee member in **Pam Roe** who died after many stressful years of illness. Her positive attitude during her time in hospital was an inspiration to us all and before she passed on she was awarded our **ninth** Life Membership.



Pam Roe and Jill Oldenhof

Pam was a long-standing member of our committee, a player of note with an annoyingly ambidextrous ability and became the Treasurer of the City and Suburban Association for several years. Her particular forte at Riverside as mentioned earlier was the organisation of the annual club championships along with Jim Mayne.

The anti-cancer “Slip, Slop, Slap” campaign in **1998** brought a request from the midweek ladies that the club construct some sort of structure over the seats on court 3. This was designed by Ross Blackwell and built by Ross, Jim W. and Peter Rose.

Peter by this time had become our Treasurer and, as a retired accountant, we couldn’t have asked for a more competent addition to the fold.

In later years, after receiving a Telstra account charging us for an Internet connection which we didn’t have, Peter earned his crust when he took on the monolithic Telstra and after considerable duress and many phone calls got them to reconnect our phone and admit that they had based their account on the name of Gai Cross (our treasurer from twelve years back) who hadn’t been a member for more than ten years.

By September **1999**, the club sported about 160 members, it had been a leader in the re-organisation of Tennis North and it was financial enough to pay for the two new courts as well as having the top two water blasted so that they looked like new.



Naming of Courts 3 and 4

before it

became part of Nos 23 and.25 Fairway Crescent. For more than a year we had no play on either of the two bottom courts and had on occasions to borrow courts for some of our matches.

This decade of stability was brought about by a committee which was happy to work for the club and prepared to commit itself to a protracted period of service. Having retirees with administrative and computer skills was a great bonus.

1998 brought a catastrophic twelve months after it was confirmed that the retaining wall around Court 4 was indeed collapsing and needed urgent attention

The West Tamar Council, being the land owners sent out tenders to contractors and then paid the majority of the cost, but the club offered, what was at the time, a massive \$14 000 as its contribution to the work. The whole project proved a mammoth task

After the so called “completion” of the work by the contractors, we thought all was well, but unfortunately it turned out that the carpet on Court 4 had not been replaced correctly, the net posts were the wrong height and the contractor refused to relay the grass because he had already been paid by the council which had written the cheque without asking us to inspect the work. New carpet was necessary and after more than twelve months of negotiations for second hand carpet from the Indoor Centre, its delivery and its subsequent vandalism by local BMX riders as it lay in the roadway ready to be put down, we had to have the whole lower plateau levelled, re-sealed and a completely new carpet laid. One net post had actually been reset four inches below the correct level.

For months a recommended tennis court construction firm from Melbourne proved to be the worst possible people for the job until the manager went on holiday and the work was subsequently done extremely efficiently by his underling in less than a fortnight.

From the start in May 1998 until the completion in December **1999** there were hundreds of phone calls and visits and much frustration for the President who, being close at hand and retired, bore much of the responsibility for liaison with the contractors.

Court Number 3 had earlier been named after Max Byrne and the first committee decision in the new millennium was to decide to name this fourth court after Jim, and following all the hassles connected with its completion, it could well have been known as “*The Jim Witheford Memorial Court*”.

The dedication of Courts 3 and 4 was one of the highlights as we turned into “*The Noughties*” of the 21st Century and both were very gratified that so many members attended the dedication events.

According to the wall plaque, **Max Byrne** was awarded our **seventh** Life membership and **Jim Witheford** our **eighth** and there is no doubt that these two have played tandem and important parts in the development of this club. More about them later.

Preparing for the naming day, the old brick barbecue (circa 1962) got its marching orders and we invested in a mobile gas powered version. This was baptised and well used during the festivities of Dedication Day.

THE NOUGHTIES

The drink company Milo sponsored a series of Tennis Milo days around this time and February **2000** saw the third of our Milo Fun Days and, as with previous ones, it was a great success with more than 40 people taking part, many of them being new faces. Each year the club seemed to collect a few new members through this event. Regrettably Milo later turned its sponsorship dollars towards Junior Cricket.

During the nineties our club members had always been to the forefront of the Tasmanian Tennis Veterans’ Association, mainly due to the



encouragement over the years of Beryl McNee, Nancy Hodgson, June Bratt and Lesley Baird and by the end of 1999 the association had 23 members from Riverside, most of whom represented Tasmania on the mainland in the annual Australasian Championships.

Beryl always used the annual Australian Championships as her main holiday and she won a National Mixed title while Max Byrne, still ranked highly in the world at his age group, went one better and won world titles in South Africa as well as many State and inter state honours. Lesley, Wayne Vertigan and Jim were on the Veterans' Executive Committee and were collectively responsible for organising three day computer assisted Tournaments each June long weekend at LISA.

These championships lasted from Friday night until Monday night and often featured between 80 and 100 players. Together with Max and Val Byrne, Bill and Anna Broadhurst were probably our most successful pair and won many age events.

Max was a regular international player for Australia until 2008 and was competitive enough to merit quite a high World ranking, playing for Australia on just about every continent.

Regrettably, like many other things, the Tasmanian Veterans' Association folded in August 2011. Its events are still being held, but now managed by Tennis Tasmania and we, as a club, will continue to hold our popular Over 35s Day each April

There have been many of our club members who have contributed greatly to the development of local tennis over the years. Foremost amongst them was Ken Hudson, a highly respected President of the NTTA, Julie Tripp the Secretary/Treasurer of the NTTA for many years and more recently

Carolyn Welch, a dedicated worker and computer operator for the Junior Development body.

2001 was a highlight year in the club's history and we celebrated forty years of play by producing a brief history booklet, a boxed set of commemorative wine glasses and by organising a wonderful dinner at the Golf Club which was attended by a good gathering of our former and current members.



The Hudson Entourage at the Dinner

Several of our members from the sixties were in attendance and Bill Crow gave a short address on "The Old Days".

Having a decent bank account at this stage, plans were drawn up by Phillip McArthur for a timber decking to extend beyond the front doors and after we obtained Council approval we searched for a reliable builder to do the job.

It was a stellar year also for participation in pennant matches with no less than nine midweek and four weekend teams representing the club in Pennant North matches.

By this time, the honour board with its distinctive gold lettering had become so full that we had to find another way to keep our information about committees and champions in view, and Jim was commissioned to make another one which would have enough space to cater for entries for a few more years. The passing of the old traditional one was a shame, but necessary as we were fast running out of wall space.

Minutes of that year show that we had constant concerns about two things, firstly the tree in the garden adjacent to Court 4 and the state of the drain between the lawns and the courts.

Committee member Ross Blackwell was qualified to guide us through the establishment of a new drain which we did with one of our few necessary working bees, while overtures were made to the owner of the offending tree for either its removal or the trimming of its lower branches.

Tennis Australia's court expert Phillip Bowden has always made periodic inspections of our grounds and proclaimed that ***"Tennis Courts and trees just don't mix!"***



Ross Blackwell, Bryce Weaver and David Percy

The saga of that arboreal enemy, whose branches we managed to get cut back during that year, is almost as long as the history of the club itself. Later in this history will be told the saga of its demise.

In **2002** tenders showed that our proposed decking was going to cost between \$7000 and \$8000 and we considered it such a potentially great improvement that we decided to splash out and get it built using Phil MacArthur's plans.

Highly commended builder Mick Flaherty was awarded the contract and it took just a few weeks before we were sitting out in the sun on our new sundeck and under our new umbrellas.

Regulations proclaim that the top rails of such luxuries should be of a certain minimum height – unfortunately this coincided exactly with the eye levels of seated spectators. The short extensions which you see on each of the vertical poles nowadays were added by Gerald Dobber and the usual woodworking culprits.

Having a host of new umbrellas and brooms cluttering up the place meant we also needed a new cupboard and Ross Blackwell's above average woodcraft skills again came to the rescue and he made the necessary piece of furniture which has become a very useful addition to the club rooms. Jim later built into this space a new lockable box for tea and coffee etc and another for the Saturday/Monday social players' tennis balls.

Riverside has always welcomed visitors and in **2003** a party of Veterans from the Sunshine Coast came for a weekend of fun tennis on their way to Hobart. They donated us a memorial tablet which is fixed on the wall near the photo board.

Later in the year Wayne Vertigan, Jim and Secretary Lesley Baird were asked to host a family of Japanese players who wanted to play on a Wimbledon-like surface after spending years on their bitumen courts in Tokyo, and so they were taken out to the Launceston Golf Club courts for an afternoon. Their tennis was infinitely better than their English and a "thank you" e-mail received subsequently thanked us for arranging the games and expressed pleasure at having the chance to play on "real grass".



Japan v Riverside

The Port Sorrell Tennis Club committee also visited us to inspect, and play on, our courts with a view to renewing theirs. Our courts were beginning to be famous.

In 2003 also, Bryce Weaver, who had become a very active committee member during his spell at the club, retired after injuries. Bryce was a very lively and persuasive Weekend Captain and was also another of our representatives on the Tennis North committee.

During his term on our committee he recruited some very useful players for our pennant teams, but had to forsake tennis due to injury, and like many others took up bowls very successfully.

Other excellent tennis players who immediately performed well on the grass rinks were Ted Talbot, Barbara (Tyson) Whybrow, Nancy Hodgson, Lesley Baird and Beryl McNee

On the administration side, in order to try and reduce expenses, we bought a second hand photocopier and also set up an address list of members who could be reached by e-mail. The first was actually little more than a nuisance and needed constant attention, whilst the second has saved the club hundreds of dollars and lots of time addressing envelopes.

Whilst e-mailing was an advantage in running the club, the 2003 A.G.M. saw the club lose the services of our Secretary **Lesley Baird** after 12 years of service, seven of which proclaimed her as the longest serving Secretary in the club's history up to that date. She was the popular leader of a great band of lady members during those years and as recognition of her continuing work for the club she was made our **tenth** Life Member in September 2007.

Lesley, at this stage, was looking to other sporting pursuits, and as previously mentioned, quickly turned her attention to Lawn Bowls. As is her nature, she just as smartly took on a similar voluntary administrative post at Kings Meadows Bowls Club.

The loss of our Secretary proved no major problem because in typical Riverside fashion Linda de Water took over in a seamless changeover and has so far served for more than nine years in the position.

Anno **2004** saw Max scratching about at the back of courts 1 and 2, with glue and tape making an attempt to effect repairs to parts of the base lines which were lifting and posing a threat to players on the service line.

It began to look as though we would soon be in need of new courts.

The West Tamar Council has been extra good to us in regard to our grounds and when we found that to replace the hitting wall on Court 3 was going to cost us over \$7000, the council offered to knock the old one down and replace it with a fence. Since we already had a hitting wall on the Northern side we didn't really need another and so there was no financial pain. After all, the original wall did have a threatening Pisa-esque inward lean on it by this time



Our Last Saturday Winning Team
Jim Witheford, Mark Webb, Paul Webb,
Barbara Whybrow, Neil Mayne

Regrettably around this time the Saturday Northern Pennant died a death very much to the detriment of the local game.

Many of our young players were schooled in this competition and it was a chance for many of them to learn the art of doubles play in the hands of some of the more sneaky mature players.

The number of youngsters whose faces grace the photo honour board as pennant winners of the past is evidence of the value of the old City and Suburban competitions.

Also in **2004**, a mysterious dark brown river of water was reported running across the lawns and down the road. Its headwater was traced to our back shed and a very leaky hot water system – more financial pain. Tragically at the same time a further inspection by our old friend Phillip Bowden revealed it to be absolutely necessary that the top two court surfaces would have to be replaced for safety reasons.

We had some finances in the slush fund for such an eventuality, but this was going to cost much more than we could rake up and it was going to take a great deal of time and effort to bring it all to fruition

To add to our woes, in that year a Southerly wind was so powerful one night that aided by our windbreaks, acting like spinnakers, it bent some of the fence poles along the roadway so far out of the vertical that the council had to bring a bulldozer in to straighten them.

In early **2005** our forty five year connection with the wonderful Freeland family ceased when our Patron of thirty years Alice, widow of Bruce, died. Until that day, the Freeland family had shared our patronage for a total of forty seven years.

As a consequence the committee decided to ask local identity and pharmacist Peter Bond to be our new Patron. Peter had been a member of our club for many years, playing in both Saturday and Thursday pennants, but was much more accomplished on the golf course.

Improvements to the club over the next couple of years found the committee needing to decide on what new surface we should have for the clubrooms, linoleum or all- purpose carpet. The decision by the ladies to opt for multi-purpose carpet saw us treading on a fine new surface with a nice new vacuum cleaner from the state government to clean it with. Going the whole hog we also spent some money on new bench tops to the tune of another \$5000. Such luxury!

Night clubs rather than tennis clubs are more likely to foster Pole dancing, but in December **2006** we received an unusual request to make our clubrooms available for a group of ladies led by Sheri Edmonds, a specialist in the sport. Naturally there were several male volunteers who offered to make certain everything was above board and one of our older committee members was forced by the committee to visit Sheri on a regular basis. Poor fellow. This polar exercise session proved quite a money spinner until Sheri and her poles moved to another venue.

In February **2006** a decision was finally made to replace the surfaces of the top two courts, and having had the experience of arranging the renewal of the bottom ones, and with time on his hands since retirement, Jim offered to undertake the job of being the first contact with the contractors and have overall responsibility for liaison.

Phillip Bowden again gave us invaluable help with the technical side and Rex Hooper from

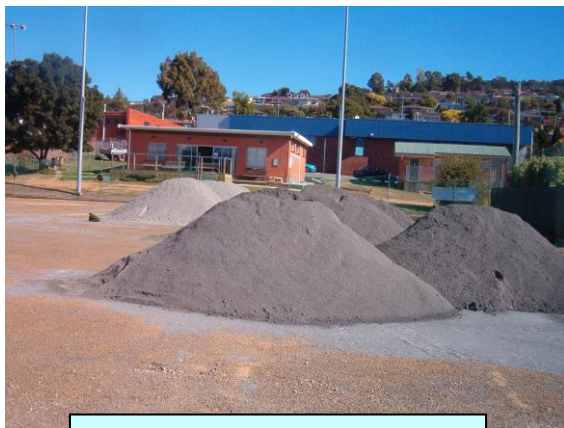


Hobart did a marvellous job as the contractor. Riverside Golf Club said it would be pleased to accept some of the materials from the old fences and could use the old carpet as coverings for pathways and bridges once it had been rolled up, but as usual with projects of this size we met several problems along the way.

Firstly, it was found that the fences at either end were not good enough to remain so they would

have to be replaced. Secondly, a retaining wall would have to be built between the top plateau and the lower courts to prevent water draining on to the lower level and because of this the overall costs began to skyrocket.

Fortunately, after a series of form filling exercises we received a handsome grant from the Department of Sport and Recreation, a lesser one from the Council and a third from Tennis Tasmania.



This is what is under the new courts

The actual work started on the 21st March **2007** and after a young man called Dale Barker who had previously done good work for us arrived with his bobcat, the old carpet was removed and the under surface was revealed. Alas, Rex was unimpressed with its condition and Phillip Bowden bore the sad tidings that a completely new surface would have to be constructed. This entailed the purchase of a huge amount of fine blue metal, the hiring of a laser- guided levelling machine plus a considerable amount of noisy rolling.

This was another expense which was not anticipated, but it had to be done. Consequently some of our ladies' teams were subjected to extreme noise for a couple of their Wednesday matches.

On the 31st March the carpet was delivered and it took no time at all before it was rolled out and a large number of huge bags of sand were emptied onto the new surface. Within days we were looking at two wonderful courts with new fences, new drainage and new posts and nets. We even treated them to new numerals.

The weekend of the 16th April 2007 our social groups had the privilege of trying out our new acquisition and Peter was given the go ahead to send a cheque to Rex Hooper.

Throughout the construction, Jim had kept a detailed progress report was kept, which was added to each day, as the work proceeded, and this showed that there were forty one telephone or e-mail contacts made with the contractor and other various bodies in the thirteen months and five days that it took to finalise the work. The total cost of the courts, drainage and fencing amounted to \$73,457.00 – almost twice what we originally expected.



Opening Day 3rd June

In the final days of construction, the Minister for Sport, Michelle O'Byrne, a former soccer team



member at Queechy, renewed a pupil/teacher connection with Jim and, at a media-promoted gathering, presented her former coach with a very handsome cheque for almost \$29,000. She was given a commemorative wine glass in exchange which she thought was hilarious and the committee thought quite a bargain.

On June 3rd, at yet another of our popular combined Riverside and Veterans Days, there was a ceremonial cutting of the ribbon and the courts were officially opened. This was a very satisfying day, but because of the amount of machinery which had to have access to the courts during construction we were now faced with yet another problem – the renewal of all the lawn area and replacement of the damaged pathways and steps. Once again the Council was wonderful in its support and not only was this accomplished, but it also arranged for a very attractive retaining wall to be built for our new lawns and some under ground piping laid for a possible sprinkler system later on.

We were anxious to show off our new courts and the opportunity came in April **2008** when the club was asked to entertain a very enthusiastic Veterans group from Christchurch, New Zealand for a weekend which turned out to be a time of great hilarity, some very good tennis and a great deal of Kiwi baiting. These folks were so enthusiastic that we couldn't get them off the courts for the whole weekend. Our visitors were most appreciative when they were entertained to a great lunch provided by our ladies. A commemorative plaque is fixed on our wall as a reminder of their visit, and it was a great opportunity to make some new friends.

On their last day 'El Presidente' was tour guide on a bus trip which traversed the Tamar Valley with lunch at Beauty Point and our visitors were very impressed with the Beaconsfield Museum and our beautiful wine route.

In view of the horrors of the later earthquakes in the region we wonder how many of these good people may have suffered in 2010 and again in 2011.

This year, for the first time in many, many years the clubhouse was broken into again. The Sunday morning group arrived to find that the Honesty Box had been levered from the wall and emptied of about sixty dollars. In response to our call, the police arrived within minutes plus finger print equipment and to our amazement, four days later we received a call from the detectives to say that the culprit had been caught and was facing court. However, efficient as they were, the police couldn't come up with our sixty dollars!

Things never stop at Riverside and the next project, as soon as the courts were operative and the lawns settled, took place with the installation of the child proof safety fence which enabled our Division 1 family-oriented team to play with the sound knowledge that their offspring were safely behind bars. Max made contact with the fencing contractor, who turned out to be another of Jim's ex-Queechy students, and consequently we received a very good quote. The Council was again a great help financing this venture and we were happy to offer half the cost (\$2700) as our contribution for what turned out to be such a wonderful innovation.

We had some interesting visiting players around this time. Tom Supensky and his wife Pauline very keen players from the United States came to Launceston as the artist and 'sculptor in residence' at the University. They came on two annual occasions and then later Chris and Marion Males from Staffordshire, England also made Launceston their temporary home and Riverside their tennis base for a short time. They also proved to be very sociable and keen players and became popular club members. Chris, being an anaesthetist, said he would try not to send us to sleep too often.

The two bottom courts had been put down in 1999 and by **2009** one of the net posts had begun to rust away at the base and it was realised that all the posts on these courts were in similar plight and would have to be replaced. More expense loomed. What seemed a simple task turned out to be anything but simple.

Once again our eternal friend Phillip Bowden came to our rescue and not only personally supervised, but physically helped to replace the old with the new. This required digging four holes as big as graves in the courts and filling them with concrete – no mean task.

At this stage, a safety inspection showed that the edges of these two courts were really in an atrocious condition with black soil, leaves, and moss, making Court 4 in particular, a distinct danger. Again we tried to get some satisfactory decision as to whether the offending tree at No. 25 which was causing most of the problems could be felled, but once again there was no reply from the tree surgeon and so we had to go ahead and try to effect some worthwhile band-aid work on the courts ourselves.

Water blasting with home style pressure cleaners proved an impossible task on such a big area, but when Max found a contractor with an industrial blaster we had the work done in next to no time. A delivery of half a tonne of special fine sand a few days later, coupled with a lot of brushing and raking over a couple of weeks and we had both courts looking like new.

Riverside has produced a bevy of local talent over the years, and it was pleasing to welcome to the club around this time Alan Bailey who migrated to Launceston from Sydney to be with younger family members.

Aged 81 Alan was recognised as the best player in his age group in Australia for many years, playing for his country numerous times all over the world and in his younger days made some useful progress in the main draw at Wimbledon. We thought we knew a bit about tennis until his addition to the Sunday group added another dimension to Men's Doubles.



Our photograph shows a pairing which in its age group is truly world class.

In **2009** after a Presidency lasting twenty two consecutive years and twenty seven in total, Jim decided that if he could find a replacement he would retire from the post at the next A.G.M. and was ecstatic when Rod Meldrum showed interest and offered to take over the reins with Jim acting as Past President and remaining on the committee for a turnover period.

Rod, eyeing retirement, coupled the presidency with an interest in being a part of the Tennis North executive committee as well, and has now taken over from Denis Tucker as Northern President. Without any pain the club had yet again found a perfect replacement.

It is difficult to place the award of our seventh and eighth Life members Max Byrne and Jim Witheford into a chronological time line because they have both been serving the club since the sixties. Their commitment to Riverside has been total, particularly since their respective retirements, and evidence of their contributions can be found all around both the exterior and interior areas. For both families the R.T.C has been a home-from-home and tasks performed have never been termed chores.

It is absolutely true that behind good men there are good women and Val and June have always been incredibly supportive and valuable workers on the club scene.

Apart from his coaching of some of our seniors and his involvement with the juniors, Max has been honoured as captain of Australian teams which have travelled world wide and it is him we have to thank mainly for most of the maintenance of the playing areas. He has brushed and repaired, cut down branches, laid lawns and installed wind breaks. He has also been

instrumental in making numerous court brooms and the design of many other pieces of equipment. On Veterans Days Max is the organiser of the tennis and has been a member of the executive of the Veterans' Association for many years.

Like Max, Jim's do-it-yourself amateurish woodwork efforts have been responsible for the renewal of many items around the place including the umpires' seats, court scoreboards, noticeboards, the honesty box, tennis ball storage boxes, spectator seats, paper towel dispensers, the Photograph and Honours Boards. Even the floral areas have his green finger prints on them. Jim was also honoured in another way when he was doubly nominated by both the tennis club members and also by the Soccer Association and subsequently received the Launceston City Council 2006 Australia Day Sports Service Award.

On 17th April **2010** the club expressed its gratitude to the work he had done over the years at a combined Veterans and Riverside Open Day which coincided with his Eightieth Birthday.

This was a massive gathering of players and friends.

Ann Pusta, long time secretary of the Veterans Association together with Max presented the birthday boy with two perfect gifts, namely a new tennis racket (optimism itself) and a voucher for two rounds of golf at Barnboughe.

There is an apocryphal story that Jim lost only one ball in playing the unfriendly course.



The length of membership of these two stalwarts was only equalled by former Ladies Captain June Bratt who was both farewelled and thanked in a similar fashion at another get-together when she transferred her home to Bridport. June was another of those keen members of the Veterans Association who played in our Midweek teams and, of course, was the wife of Jack, who, as mentioned earlier, was the builder of our present clubrooms. June had been a member since the early sixties and a keen Ladies Captain.

The most recent person to be honoured with Life membership was **Peter Rose** who became our **eleventh** recipient also at another of our popular Veterans' Days.

Peter took on the Treasurer's job, without doubt the most demanding task on the committee, in 1997, and was honoured after serving for fifteen years in that capacity. This is the longest tenure of any Treasurer and his handling of our finances has been really professional.

Greg Porter and Chris Egan, who had for some time organised Thursday pennants and social days, along with a few other keen types played in a Mixed Tournament at Legana and enjoyed the experience so much that it was decided to run a similar one ourselves and Bill Broadhurst teamed up with Michelle (Johns) Rowell from Trevallyn to win the inaugural competition. It was decided that this would be a regular event on our calendar from henceforth.

On 20th January **2011** several of our members received invitations to the official opening of the Regional Tennis Centre where Sam Stosur was Guest of Honour. There were some concerns that this new complex might adversely affect our membership, but they were not forthcoming and in fact we have collected a few new members since the opening.



Geoff Lyons, Bass Labour Bass politician in his speech gave special mention to all the volunteers who run tennis with a special mention given to those at Riverside. Few of those assembled realised that Geoff is actually a long time member of our club and a former RHS student.

That same weekend was also an exciting time for our intrepid Sunday Group because one of the regulars, Ian Macpherson, turned up with his son David, who, of course, is the talented coach of the world's best Men's Doubles pairing, the Bryan Brothers.

It was an absolute joy for those who were there to have a game both with him and against him. He was in an especially good mood because his "boys", under his guidance had just won the Final of the Australian Open Men's Doubles. Strangely enough he assured us that he really enjoyed the change of playing with us mugs at Riverside.

One of the longest running sagas of the history of RTC is "THE TREE", which had been enlarging at an uncomfortable rate at No.25 Fairway Crescent and annually shedding its leaves on to Court 4. This arboreal menace has caused us considerable grief since the year dot and on 20th April 2011 it met its demise after a relatively short period of resistance to a well handled chainsaw.

We obtained permission from the householders to fell the tree and a phone call at 8.30 a.m. one morning started proceedings. By high noon the deed was done. The cost to the club was almost \$800 but worth every cent and we now have on record the name of a very competent tree surgeon if anyone needs one.

May 2010 had seen our Division 1 Ladies team win the Tennis North newly formatted major pennant for the first time and the compilation of the team suggests that the old days of the family involvement is returning.

There is much to recommend the edict that states that *"A family which plays together stays together"*. For evidence of this, study this team photograph featuring our star players of the present and perhaps those of the future.

In mid year the Hot Shots Tennis was instituted and Max, naturally, became involved with his grand daughters Laura and Emily assisting. This is a special type of tennis devised by Tennis Australia to encourage tiny tots to start playing as soon as they can hold a racket. All the equipment is small and child- friendly with small rackets, softer balls and mini-nets and it produces better rallies.

During the last ten years or so there has been another branch of our club operating about which little is known to our former members.

Each week there has been a keen group of players organised by Pat and Bert Waite playing table tennis at the clubrooms and these organisers will be keen to welcome more participants

Most of our tennis in recent years has been of a social nature with play on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays organised by our ladies. Putting well balanced games on courts is hard enough,



but when coupling this with organising morning teas and collecting money for tennis balls, it becomes a very special task.

Two of our ladies who have done this organising deserve special praise in this respect and they are Nancy Hodgson and Pauline Baker.

Nancy was a fugitive from the 7L.A. Tennis Club and for many years was a leading light in anything going on at Riverside and the Veterans groups. She was a team player of note until a very mature age, a state champion many times in the Ladies Doubles in the Veterans Association tournaments and a very dedicated organiser.

When she went to join the ranks of the lawn bowling brigade the question was, “How do we replace her? “

Once again finding such a person proved to be remarkably simple. Pauline Baker put up her hand, and she soon became an integral part of social play. She was already a committee member and was becoming legendary for her wonderful organisation of the catering for Open Days, Birthdays and visiting groups from inter state.

These are the sort of people who have made Riverside Tennis Club what it has always been from its earliest days!

Conclusion

The present committee feels honoured to be part of the long term administration of our club and as you read this booklet we hope that you will spare a thought for those people listed on its back pages and acknowledge that it is through their efforts that so much has been achieved during these first fifty years.

That is about as much as could be gleaned about the first half century, so what of the next fifty?

Our prediction is that Riverside has always been a small family club and because of its location it is destined never become a major complex with visions of expansion and this has always been the wish of its members.

So be it!

RIVERSIDE TENNIS CLUB HONOUR BOARD

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

	President	Secretary	Treasurer	Men's Capt.	Ladies' Capt	Patron
1956	R.C.Davis	A.Brumby	J.Lewis			B.Freeland
1957	R.C.Davis	A.Brumby	J.Lewis			B.Freeland
1958	R.C.Davis	A.Brumby	J.Lewis			B.Freeland
1959	W.Gardiner	A.Brumby	G.Box			B.Freeland
1960	M.Young	J.Lewis	F.Laver	J.Lewis	M.Scolyer	B.Freeland
1961	M.Young	J.Lewis	F.Laver	J.Lewis	M.Scolyer	B.Freeland
1962	M.Young	J.Lewis	F.Laver	J.Lewis	M.Scolyer	B.Freeland
1963	J.Lewis	L.McNee	A.Ramsey	J.Smythe	B.Wathen	B.Freeland
1964	J.Lewis	L.McNee	A.Ramsey	J.Smythe	B.Wathen	B.Freeland
1965	J.Lewis	L.McNee	H.Wellington	G.Cobern	B.Wathen	B.Freeland
1966	J.Lewis	A.Down	W.Craw	G.Cobern	B.Wathen	B.Freeland
1967	J.Lewis	A.Down	W.Craw	G.Cobern	B.Wathen	B.Freeland
1968	J.Stronach	L.McNee/J.W	P.Cribb	W.Craw	M.Birtles	B.Freeland
1969	J.Witheford	K.Steele	P.Martin	W.Craw	Y.Turner	B.Freeland
1970	J.Witheford	K.Steele	P.Martin	W.Craw	D.Pellow	B.Freeland
1971	J.Witheford	K.Steele	P.Martin	W.Craw	D.Pellow	B.Freeland
1972	J.Witheford	J.Cooper	P.Martin	G.Pickrell	P.Hart	B.Freeland
1973	J.Witheford	J.Cooper	A.Fraser	W.Mancey	P.Hart	B.Freeland
1974	W.Craw	J.Cooper	A.Fraser	E.Talbot	P.Hart	B.Freeland
1975	W.Craw	J.Cooper	A.Fraser	E.Talbot	M.Fitch	A.Freeland
1976	J.Cooper	B.NcNee	A.Fraser	E.Talbot	M.Fitch	A.Freeland
1977	J.Cooper	B.NcNee	A.Fraser	E.Talbot	M.Fitch	A.Freeland
1978	J.Cooper	B.NcNee	A.Fraser	M.Byrne	H.Munro	A.Freeland
1979	B.McNee	A.Fitzpatrick	L.De Water	W.Mancey	H.Munro	A.Freeland
1980	B.McNee	A.Fitzpatrick	L.De Water	W.Mancey	J.Rose	A.Freeland
1981	G.Woodfall	D.Edwards	H.Munro	J.Mayne	J.Rose	A.Freeland
1982	J.Mayne	D.Edwards	H.Munro	P.Webb	G.Cross	A.Freeland
1983	J.Mayne	D.Edwards	P.Roe	P.Webb	G.Cross	A.Freeland
1984	J.Mayne	J.Oldenhof	P.Roe	P.Webb	J.Bratt	A.Freeland
1985	J.Mayne	J.Oldenhof	P.Roe	D.Scott	J.Bassett	A.Freeland
1986	G.Woodfall	A.Fitzpatrick	P.Roe	T.Crosswell	J.Bassett	A.Freeland
1987	J.Mayne	A.Fitzpatrick	G.Cross	N.Button	J.McKendrick	A.Freeland
1988	J.Witheford	M.Sutton	G.Cross	N.Button	J.McKendrick	A.Freeland
1989	J.Witheford	M.Sutton	J.Haberle	G.Woodfall	L.De Water	A.Freeland
1990	J.Witheford	J.Bassett	J.Haberle	J.Mayne	L.De Water	A.Freeland
1991	J.Witheford	J.Bassett	J.Haberle	J.Mayne	L.De Water	A.Freeland
1992	J.Witheford	J.Bassett	J.Haberle	J.Mayne	D.Walsh	A.Freeland
1993	J.Witheford	J.Bassett	J.Haberle	J.Mayne	D.Walsh	A.Freeland
1994	J.Witheford	J.Mayne	J.Haberle	P.Webb	D.Walsh	A.Freeland
1995	J.Witheford	J.Mayne	J.H-Pearnton	J.Cooper	N.Barwick	A.Freeland
1996	J.Witheford	L.Baird	J.Pearnton	J.Cooper	N.Barwick	A.Freeland
1997	J.Witheford	L.Baird	P.Rose	J.Mayne	R.Scharapow	A.Freeland
1998	J.Witheford	L.Baird	P.Rose	J.Mayne	R.Scharapow	A.Freeland
1999	J.Witheford	L.Baird	P.Rose	P.Webb	L.Baird	A.Freeland
2000	J.Witheford	L.Baird	P.Rose	M.Byrne	R.Scharapow	A.Freeland
2001	J.Witheford	L.Baird	P.Rose	B.Weaver	N.Hodgson	A.Freeland
2002	J.Witheford	L.Baird	P.Rose	B.Weaver	N.Hodgson	A.Freeland
2003	J.Witheford	L.De Water	P.Rose	R.Smith	C.Booth	A.Freeland
2004	J.Witheford	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	S.McArthur	P.Bond
2005	J.Witheford	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	S.McArthur	P.Bond
2006	J.Witheford	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	S.Talbot	P.Bond
2007	J.Witheford	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	S.Talbot	P.Bond
2008	J.Witheford	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	J.Meadows	P.Bond
2009	J.Witheford	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	J.Meadows	P.Bond
2010	R.Meldrum	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	S.Mitchell	P.Bond
2011	R.Meldrum	L.De Water	P.Rose	M.Byrne	S.Mitchell	P.Bond

RIVERSIDE TENNIS CLUB HONOUR BOARD

GENERAL COMMITTEE

1956							
1957							
1958							
1959	S.Midson	R.Davis	.Hopwood	.Jones	R.Lockhart		
1960	S.Midson	Gardner	G.Box				
1961	S.Midson	Gardner	G.Box				
1962	J.Smythe	B.Wathen	M.Birtles	G.Sidebottom	L.McNee		
1963	M.Young	M.Scolyer	M.Birtles	B.Turner			
1964	M.Williams	M.Scolyer	M.Birtles	B.Turner			
1965	M.Williams	A.Down	M.Birtles	J.Lewis			
1966	J.Turner	J.Stronach	L.McNee	J.Thomann			
1967	B.Dunn	J.Stronach	B.McNee	M.Birtles			
1968	J.Smythe	P.Cobern	Y.Turner	J.Witheford			
1969	J.Smythe	P.Cobern	Jim Cooper	B.McNee			
1970	J.Smythe	P.Cobern	Jim Cooper	B.McNee			
1971	J.Smythe	P.Cobern	R.Pellow	B.McNee			
1972	J.Smythe	P.Cobern	W.Mancey	B.McNee			
1973	J.Smythe	W.Craw	W.Mancey	B.Wathen			
1974	J.Smythe	C.Pickrell	Jo Cooper	B.Wathen			
1975	J.Smythe	D.Hoskins	D.Hearn	M.Fitch			
1976	J.Smythe	C.Woodward	M.Byrne	P.Young			
1977	J.Smythe	J.Laurent	M.Byrne	M.Murphy			
1978	A.Fitzpatrick	W.Boyd	M.Byrne	D.Bushby			
1979	J.Mayne	D.Edwards	M.Byrne	D.Bushby			
1980	J.Mayne	D.Edwards	M.Byrne	G.Woodfall	P.Webb		
1981	B.McNee	R.Scharapow	K.Bransden				
1982	A.Fitzpatrick	G.Woodfall	K.Bransden	C.Dolliver			
1983	J.Oldenhof	G.Woodfall	H.Munro	J.Bell			
1984	A.Fitzpatrick	G.Woodfall	H.Munro				
1985	A.Fitzpatrick	T.Crosswell	H.Munro				
1986	N.Button	D.Edwards	H.Munro	M.Barrett			
1987	P.Roe	D.Crosswell	H.Munro	J.Bassett	L.Woodfall	L.DeWater	
1988	P.Roe	D.Crosswell	H.Munro	T.Crosswell	L.Baird	A.Fitzpatrick	
1989	P.Roe	A.Fitzpatrick	H.Munro	L.Woodfall	B.Habel	C.Hudson	
1990	P.Roe	A.Fitzpatrick	H.Munro	L.Baird	N.Button	C.Hudson	
1991	P.Roe	B.Whybrow	H.Munro	C.Hudson			
1992	P.Roe	B.Whybrow	L.DeWater	B.Arnold			
1993	P.Roe	L.DeWater	B.Arnold				
1994	P.Roe	Jo Cooper	H.Munro	L.Baird	L.Dunstone	J.Bassett	
1995	P.Roe	J.Mayne	H.Munro	L.Baird	L.Dunstone		
1996	P.Roe	J.Mayne	D.Walsh	J.Bassett	L.Dunstone	M.Byrne	
1997	P.Roe	J.Mayne	D.Walsh	M.Byrne	L.Dunstone	N.Mayne	
1998	R.Blackwell	J.Mayne	D.Walsh	M.Byrne	B.Maumill	N.Mayne	
1999	R.Blackwell	M.Byrne	D.Walsh	N.Mayne	B.Maumill	C.Woodfall	
2000	R.Blackwell	M.Byrne	D.Walsh	N.Mayne	B.Maumill	C.Woodfall	
2001	R.Blackwell	M.Byrne	D.Walsh	N.Mayne	B.Maumill		
2002	R.Blackwell	M.Byrne	D.Walsh	A.Weaver	B.Maumill		
2003	R.Blackwell	L.Baird	D.Walsh		M.Byrne		
2004	R.Blackwell	L.Baird	D.Walsh	P.Baker	C.Egan	J.Lovell	
2005	R.Blackwell	L.Baird	D.Walsh	P.Baker	C.Egan	R.Meldrum	G.Dobber
2006	R.Blackwell	L.Baird	D.Walsh	P.Baker	C.Egan	R.Meldrum	G.Dobber
2007	P.Baker	L.Baird	D.Walsh	C.Egan	R.Meldrum		
2008	P.Baker	C.Egan	R.Meldrum				
2009	P.Baker	C.Egan	R.Meldrum	P.Spence			
2010	P.Baker	C.Egan	J.Witheford	P.Spence	J.Meadows		
2011	P.Baker	C.Egan	J.Witheford	P.Spence	J.Meadows		

Our Life Members

**Mark Young
John Lewis
Jack Stronach
Jake Smythe
Beryl Mc Nee
Jim Cooper
Max Byrne
Jim Witheford
Pam Roe
Lesley Baird
Peter Rose**

2011-2012 Committee.

President: Rod Meldrum - Seven Years of Service

Secretary: Linda De Water - Eleven Years of Service

Treasurer: Peter Rose - Fifteen Years of Service

Past President: Jim Witheford - Thirty Years of Service

Coach: Max Byrne - Fourteen Years of Service

Ladies Captain: Sonia Mitchell - Two Years of Service

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Christine Egan - Seven Years of Service

Pauline Baker - Eight Years of Service

Jennifer Meadows - Four Years of Service

Peter Spence - Three Years of Service