

from
PADDOCKS
to
PARKS

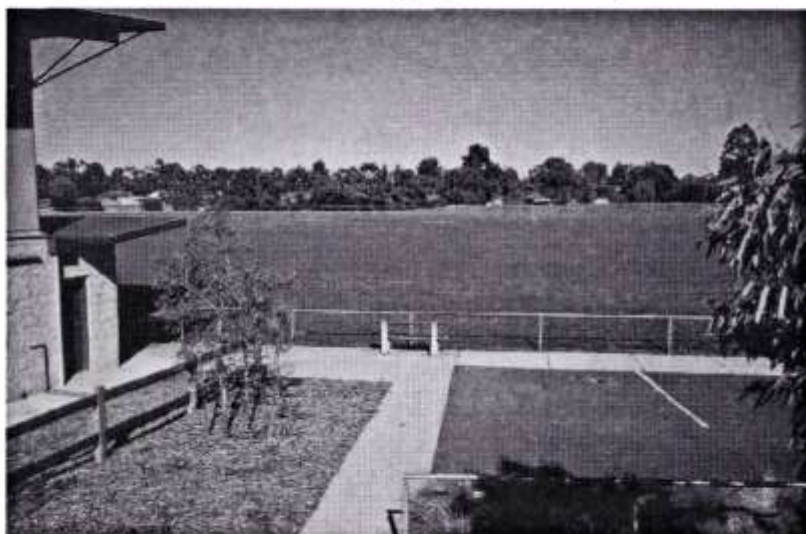
P. McCallum, OAM



*A History of the Development of Cricket
in the Lilydale, Croydon, Ringwood and Ferntree Gully Districts and of
the Ringwood and District Cricket Association*



Ringwood Cricket Ground and Pavilion 1922
(Where Eastland Shopping Centre is today.)

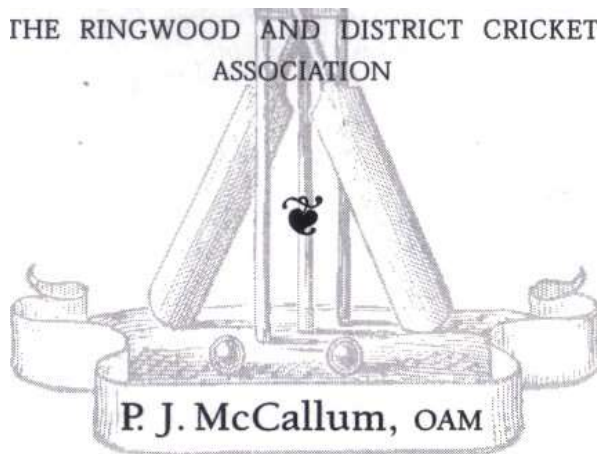


Kilsyth Cricket Ground, 1999

from
PADDOCKS
to
PARKS

A HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRICKET
IN THE LILYDALE, CROYDON, RINGWOOD

THE RINGWOOD AND DISTRICT CRICKET
ASSOCIATION



AND FERN TREE GULLY" DISTRICTS AND OF

Melbourne, April 2001

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T HIS book is dedicated to the pioneers of cricket in this region who built cricket pitches and cleared grounds in incredible places to play the game they loved, to the players that came after them who further improved the grounds planning and achieving the facilities we have today. Also to the ladies who provided afternoon teas and supported their menfolk, sometimes in very difficult conditions, and finally to the many volunteer officials and umpires who despite many criticisms over time, have persevered to ensure that the game survives and is enjoyed by many.

To all these people the game and spirit of cricket owes a great deal.

FEDERATION DAY, 1901

Extract from the Lilydale Express of the 4th January, 1901

The union that has been hoped for and quietly striven for is now complete. The 1st January, 1901 will be remembered in Australia when history has taken the place of personal recollections and the people who cheered for it are only memories. Tuesday's pageant in Sydney was a great one worthy of those who organised it, worthy of the day that it was intended to commemorate. When Australia celebrates an occasion, it does it well. But everyone who watched the popular movements that go to make history, knows that the cheers that went up in Sydney, on the occasion, the nags that streamed down and the cannon that boomed their welcome to the nation, were but the evanescent symbols of the real event—the event that means kinship and good fellowship and common destiny for the people who have made their home in Australia. We have decided for unity under the British nag and we have been more fortunate than our fathers. We have not been driven to Join hands by the pressure of outside influence. Our federation is a federation of the people by the people and the destiny of a united Australia should be the fulfilment of a mission that is enlightened, beneficent and humanitarian —a mission that aims at maintaining the condition of the race.

The inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth was celebrated in Lilydale on Tuesday (New Year 's Day) by the hoisting of the flag by the Shire President over the Shire Hall. By 12.30 a fairly large gathering had congregated in front of the building. The Lilydale Brass Band was also in attendance and at the request of Cr. Lithgow, played the National Anthem, the assemblage adding to the melody of the band by singing the words. The President, Cr. Lithgow, then manipulated the ropes and raised the flag to the top of the flag-pole amid lusty cheering by the spectators. This was followed by the band playing 'Sons of the Sea'.

After hoisting the flag, the President said We were that day celebrating the first day of a new centenary as well as the birth of a new nation. Many years had been spent by the ablest men of the Australian Colonies in drafting a Bill for the federation of Australasia. At the beginning of the century, very little was known of Australia but as gold was discovered, thousands of people flocked to these shores with the result that now at the beginning of the second Century, six of the seven colonies had joined hand in hand forming one great Commonwealth. this we had been considerably helped by the Motherland. Not only have we had her protection, but her ports have been opened to us for the reception of our products. our Union he said, would bind us closer to the Mother Country, and to a very large extent dominate the peace of the world . . . (copy unreadable) . . which is to become a great and splendid nation. the pride of the Motherland.

Some people had suggested we should sever our connection with Great Britain. Was there anyone standing around who approved of that proposal? (A voice No! No!) Federation in his opinion would be the means of sweeping away the border duties, and that there would be free trade between the States. (Hear Hear). With good men federation would be a wand and glorious thing for the people but incompetent men would only make a muddle of it. As President of the Lilydale Shire Council, he had pleasure in welcoming into existence the birth of the great Australian Commonwealth (applause).

After comments by other Councillors, the Band played 'Rule Britannia', and the assemblage dispersed.



PHIL McCallum, in this book, has shown us not only the history of the Ringwood and District Cricket Association, but the foundation of our great game and what life was like in the eastern area of Melbourne Town well before the turn of the century.

He describes the journey from Warrandyte to Ringwood in such a graphic manner that we need no imagination to feel the beauty of the area or the hustle and bustle of days gone by. To my mind, as I drive over the same route in my 'horseless carriage', calling here and there to a local cricket match, the beauty of the area remains with its majestic gums and golden wattles abounding in the countryside, spoilt only by having to keep one's eye on the bitumen and thus not being able to take in all its charms.

As we meander through his writings, we can feel the relaxation, the sudden glories and the friendships made in this great game of ours, along with the tenseness, the disappointments and on very rare occasions, when we and others who have gone before us have used that well-known phrase to describe a raw deal, whether it be on the cricket field, in our private lives or in business: "It just isn't cricket!". Whoever coined that phrase must have had a terrible wrong done to them at some stage, for it symbolizes everything that is unacceptable to all fair minded men and women and cricketers.

Like the game of cricket, however, he doesn't dwell on the negative side of things. He has delved into the very heart of our Association and has researched his subject well, with long hours of study in libraries and newspapers, and again like the game of cricket, he has tantalized me with bits of his writings, a couple of chapters here, a chapter there, in the same manner that a bowler will feed you a couple of balls down the leg side, a couple on the off and then "york" you when you think you have his measure . . . and "york" me he did when he asked me to write this foreword.

After reading this very interesting history, however, the adrenalin started to flow (as did the ink in my pen) and my thoughts went back to those days when most of the parks we now play on, were paddocks and cow paddocks at that, with all the niceties that one expects to find in that situation. What would we say today if a fieldsman wore gumboots to field a ball because of the wet ground, or if you had to jump fences and carry matting, along with all the afternoon tea, because someone forgot the key to the gate that led to the ground a quarter of a mile away. (That was my contribution many years ago!)

And the ladies—what would we have done without them? It was their allotted task to light the fire twenty minutes before afternoon tea-time and be sure the tea was made and poured out ready as the players came off the field.

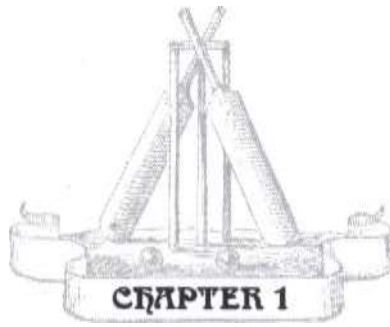
Of course not much has changed over the years. The ladies are still expected to (and they do) carry out those duties. Perhaps the difference in the main is the electric switch, the bench top in the kitchen of the carpeted pavilion and the comfortable chairs around the tables which have taken over from collecting fire-wood, the striking of the match, the billy boiling on the open fire, and the blanket on the ground to hold all those delicacies that we always take for granted.

Yet there is one thing that hasn't changed, and I trust will remain for ever, and that is the bond of friendship that only a game of cricket can bring forth. Phil McCallum in this history of the RDCA has heaped praise on those who have contributed much, either on the field of play or in the role of administrators, and like all modest men, has left out the very considerable contribution that he has made as an administrator for the game of cricket.

As an Executive Officer of our Association for many years and Senior Vice-President, as a delegate to the Cricket Union of Victoria and three years as that body's Chairman of Executive, his contribution to cricket has ensured that cricket in the Ringwood and District Cricket Association and in associations through-out Melbourne, is in a very healthy state.

To all those who have played cricket in parks or on paddocks, I commend this book to you.

BILL DEAN, OAM,
Past President and Patron,
Ringwood and District Cricket Association.



Introduction

*Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!*

—Anonymous, circa 1200 AD.

(Summer is a-coming in,
Loud sings the cuckoo!)



OST of us who play cricket give little thought to how it all began. The knockers who say that cricket is a dying game are also people who know very little about the history of the game. For cricket has been around for at least 700 years and early forms are probably much older than that.

Brian Johnson in his book *All About Cricket* records the fact that as far back as 1272 there is mention of King Edward the First's son, Prince Edward, playing 'Creag' and concludes that this is proof that 'cricket was already a game by then'. Certainly there are various references to the game in the 16th and 17th centuries.

He also speculates that the game may have started when some boy threw stones at a friend who, to protect himself, picked up a stick and hit them back. And what more likely stick would be lying around than

a shepherd's crook which could account for derivation of the word cricket. It would also account for the curved shape of the early bats, which were not unlike hockey sticks. One example is displayed in the Museum of the Melbourne Cricket Club at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The early wickets were formed of two sticks with a 'y' at the top not unlike the stick on which you rest a fishing rod at the river-bank, and a stick lying in the base of the two Ys formed the bail at the top. With this type of wicket, you had the problem that the ball could go right through the middle without disturbing the wicket, even though the wicket was only 6 inches wide. As betting on cricket became common in the latter half of the eighteenth century in Britain, one can imagine this leading to very serious arguments.

Indeed, in 1775 when Hambledon played Kent in a five-a-side match, the ball passed through the wicket several times during the last batsmans innings. This led to the addition of the middle stump and about ten years later the second bail was added.

The first known laws of cricket were drawn up by the London Club in 1744. These were based on what had been previously universally accepted standards. For example, since 1744 no one disagreed that the length of any pitch should be 22 yards. Before this, it had been the custom for the promoters or the captains to draw up articles of agreement on the rules of the game for any particular match, a most important procedure if any money should be wagered on the result.

Bets of up to 1,000 guineas (\$2,100) were wagered on cricket matches, but in those days some men would bet on anything. It is

recorded that bets were laid on whether five geese would beat five turkeys from Norwich to London, a distance of 180 kilometres.

The laws of cricket were later revised by the Marylebone Cricket Club in 1788 soon after that club was formed in 1787. Batsmen could **now be out 'hit wicket' and the ball had to pitch in line with the wickets** for a batsman to be out LBW. Henceforth the cricket world has regarded the Laws of Cricket to be those approved by the Marylebone Cricket Club with only minor variations to meet local conditions.

As the British Empire spread over the face of this habitable globe so did Englishmen take their cricket bats and cricket balls with them, or if they did not carry them, they made them out of local materials. Portugal, Italy, France, the Russian Crimea, Denmark, Norway, Canada, U.S.A. Australasia and the Pacific Ocean islands all echoed to the sound of the cricket ball on willow or on whatever wooden material was at hand to make a cricket bat.

Arthur Grimble in his book *A Pattern of Islands*, dedicated to the men of the British Colonial Service and their wives, records the introduction of cricket into the Pacific Ocean Islands – ‘The beginnings of cricket in the Pacific were not invariably attended by the spirit of brotherhood that this noble sport was once believed to inspire. Something went wrong from the start in Samoa, for example. A match there was an affair of hundreds not elevens; no tally of sides was kept, no amiable warnings of visits were issued; one village simply arose on a day and set forth to give battle to another. "Battle" is the key word. The marching crowd paraded around the village of its chosen enemies with taunts and brandished bats until these emerged

to accept the challenge. The bats, which were made of local hardwood and weighed 11 lb apiece (about 5 kg), were carved into shapes suited at once to conditions of war and peace. Competition was so terrific in the field that winning was a hazardous business. The position of the batsman who scored the winning hit was peculiarly trying. His was the heart of oak who, ringed around by a horde of furious fieldsmen, dared slog his side to victory. These earliest Samoan matches lasted for weeks at a time and often ended in considerable slaughter.

Even today, Samoan women play a form of this particular type Of cricket (without the slaughter of course). In another part of the Pacific in the Trobriand islands, there is also another form of cricket today where the tribesmen have amended the rules to suit previous pastimes in their culture. The interesting aspect of their cricket is that they have reverted to the curved bat which suits the requirements of their game better than the straight bat.

The beginnings of Australian cricket did not present such problems. By the early 1800s cricket was being played regularly in Sydney and quickly spread to the other colonial settlements in Australia.

In its third year, Melbourne founded its cricket club and its progress is very capably traced in Keith Dunstan's book *The Paddock that Grew*. During the next few years, cricket clubs were formed at Brighton, Geelong and in 1841, at Portland. Cricket balls were obviously in short supply at Portland because the club, at the beginning of the 1842 season passed an account for 7s.6d (75 cents) for recovering 'the cricket ball'.

Cricket developed quickly in Portland and in 1848, the Portland Teetotallers Association formed a second club in opposition to the existing club. At this stage, the local newspaper, the Portland Guardian must have thought that its readers needed some education

on this great game or it may have been in response to public demand; whichever it was, the paper printed an article on cricket from Chambers Information for the People. This article gives a picture of the way cricket was played in the 1840s which is worth reading just for a comparison with the rules of the game as we know it today. See Appendix A.



The Cricket Pioneers

*To chase the rollings circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball.*

- Thomas Gray

THE gold rush in the 1850s brought expansion of the game in Victoria as the miners sought entertainment or the chance to make some money on a side bet.

In Victoria, gold was first found in 1851 at Anderson's Creek near the present day Warrandyte. When the news of the discovery reached Melbourne it caused a rush to the new gold-fields and the miners spread up and down the Yarra Valley in search of the elusive metal. Four years later the Anderson's Creek cricket club was formed. The Lands Surveyor's original plan of Warrandyte prepared in August, 1856, shows a ground used for cricket on the present site of the recreation ground.

Louis Cranfield writing in the Victorian Historical Magazine suggests that the first matches would have been intra-club matches such as Marrieds versus Singles, or Whiskered versus Cleanshavens, as this seemed to be the usual custom.

Later, matches were arranged with other clubs such as Caledonia (St Andrews), Eltham and Kangaroo Ground. By the 1880s a children's picnic and a cricket match between Anderson's Creek and Ringwood was a Boxing Day event each year.

Horse and gig, buggy or dray were the means of transport often over rough unmade roads. Evidence of the gold mining days still abounded in Warrandyte and some individuals were still getting a little gold by various means. In 1884, a visitor to Warrandyte described the scene he saw in the vicinity of Warrandyte after travelling from Kew in the 'mail conveyance'.

Next we ascend a steep hill, and at its summit drive over a kind of plateau, when we arrive at the top of what Warrandyte folk call Melbourne Hill, although it is eighteen miles from the city called by that name. Away in the distance between two hills can be seen Anderson's Creek, or Warrandyte, one of the earliest discovered goldfields, and perhaps for its size one of the richest in yielding the precious metal. Sparkling in the sunshine flows the Yarra through the township, dashing on until for some distance its waters divide, the main portion going into a large excavation made some years since through a hill by a party of speculating gentlemen and termed the Evelyn Tunnel. The object of turning the water's course was to obtain the gold supposed to be resting in the bed of the river, and though years have passed away since then, and the floodgates, et cetera, have long since disappeared, only a small portion of the waters of the river flows around the bend of the hill to regain the main volume of water as it issues from the mouth of the tunnel. On we drive down the steep hill and past the police barracks, opposite which may be seen the diggers' holes and excavations for sluicing in, all deserted now, but once the scene of busy action. Ascending a small rise, we find ourselves on a line with the cemetery, whose white gates may be

distinctly seen through the thick green trees. Driving ahead we shortly arrive at the post-office and find ourselves in almost the middle of the township. On the summit of a hill above us stands the State school, where the young minds of Warrandyte are improved in intellectual capacities. Near us stands the police court, and a little farther down is the public library where the literary fancy can indulge itself in some of the leading volumes of the present day. Next is the Commercial Bank, open fortnightly on Monday mornings for two hours only, which does not look well for the financial condition of the population. Then we walk on up the main street beyond a general store until we find ourselves in front of the Anderson's Creek Hotel, where we again stop. This time we are attracted by the noise of waters and looking down we see a crushing machine with its huge waterwheel, while close to it the river goes rolling and tumbling over some falls. After feasting our eyes on this enchanting scene we again go forward past another general store and the Union Hotel until we reach a bridge which crosses the Yarra. In about the centre of the stream at the base of the bridge there is a small island covered with gum trees and tall reeds. Going on we can see some old workings belonging to a reef of which nothing is left but the engine shed and the rocks which were cast aside in extracting the quartz. A little higher up is the reef formerly known as the Defiance, and in a line with that is the Bendigo reef, one of the richest and earliest discovered mines in the district, but deserted now. Following on the course of the Yarra we come to the Yarra tunnel reef, in which a shaft was sunk and a tunnel made under the river level; this at one time with its engine for pumping water and its crushing machine was the busiest part of the community, but where now nothing can be seen but a few old piles, and the sound of workmen and machinery have long

since ceased to be heard. Still keeping near the stream we go on and after a turn in the road, reach what is called the Warrandyte Freehold, formerly owned by a company of gentlemen who worked the reef found on it, and also the diorites so abundant there, as well as erecting machinery to sluice a large quantity of the alluvial soil. It has since then changed hands, and now only a few diggers may be seen scattered about in different parts of the large estate which in a few years has changed from orchard to sheep farm, from sheep farm to gold diggings, and from gold diggings to what it is at present, unused land. Going on past some old workings we stop to look at the Yarra again and see that the stream divides in two parts, surrounding an island several acres in extent. Some years since a structure of piles, &c., was made to turn the course of the river for the sake of working the alluvial to be found under its depths, and though at the time it proved effectual the stream has since worn it to a great extent away, so that now the noise of the waters dashing over the old embankment puts one in mind of the sea on a stormy day; at the same time making you wish for paper and pencil to sketch the pleasing sight. At a little distance up the Yarra we come to what is called a dam. It is a structure made about half-way across the river, and is composed of two rows of piles placed closely together and the spaces between filled up with sand, the whole enclosing a kind of pond bounded with land on the one side. The water in this pond is then taken out by means of a pump, and the earth underneath worked as alluvial. The next thing of interest we come to is a crushing machine, which is for the most part kept working by the diorite claims. These are to be seen on the crown of the hill, and are the principal workings going on in Warrandyte at present. Then we suddenly find ourselves in the midst of the wilds where you

may travel for miles and not see a solitary house. This affords ample scope for shooting and angling, whilst those who prefer more refined pursuits may make collections of ferns and wild flowers or sketch the surrounding scenery. After over a week's sojourn in this quiet little township we set out for Ringwood, another little township about six miles distant. For the first five miles only about six houses can be seen, but they look very comfortable little farms. Beyond these and the rugged ranges which can be seen on all sides no other interesting sights meet our vision until a turn in the road brings the antimony mines and the township of Ringwood to view, lying in a hollow at the foot of the hills. After rather a rough drive over the remaining mile we arrive at the station.. .

I have included this rather long detailed account just as printed, so that you can get an appreciation of what it was like to live in these somewhat isolated settlements in the 1880s. They were virtually small clearings amidst timbered hills on all sides with only very rough roads connecting them together. As they were usually five to ten miles apart, any visit for a cricket match was a major expedition requiring up to two hours in getting there and the same amount of time in getting home. The horse was the major motive power of transport or you walked!

About the time that the Anderson's Creek Cricket Club was being formed (1855), Hugh O'Rourke was building a ten roomed house on 103 acres (41.6 hectares) on Brushy Creek near where Croydon North is today. Settlers had been moving up the Yarra Valley and the first land sales had been held around Brushy Creek in 1852.

Imagine this land as the early pioneers entered the land of the Wurundjeri or the Yarra Yarra tribe. The hills and slopes of Ringwood, Croydon, Warranwood, Wonga Park, Lilydale and other nearby areas were well wooded with peppermint eucalypts and stringy barks. The

sun's rays slipped through the tree canopy like a catch sneaking through a slips cordon and speckled with light, the understorey of sparse shrubs, tussock and kangaroo grass strewn with twigs and old fallen trees. Wattle trees grew along all the creeks shading the maidenhair and other ferns whilst water birds teemed in the swamps on the flat lands of Croydon and Bayswater.

It was the habitat of kangaroos, emus and wallabies and if one looked very hard no doubt one could find an occasional koala in the tall trees along the valleys. Blue wrens nested in the thickets and flocks of parrots and pairs of wattle birds flashed occasionally through the trees.

The streams of clear water ambled lazily across the land and not in gullies as we know them now, where they tend to hurry to their destination as though like the White Rabbit in Alice in Wonderland, they are late for their next appointment.

Such was the country that the Wurundjeri aboriginals had occupied for thousands of years living comfortably by farming the land with the firestick and their immense knowledge of the nature of the land and the habits of its animals.

Brushy Creek quickly became a small settlement and was proclaimed a town in 1860. Hugh O'Rourke's hotel on the present Black and Decker site in there, but one would expect the latter Maroondah Highway, became the social centre for settlers of the surrounding district and his horse races were particularly popular, as well as the all-night dances on the hotel's front verandah.

It is difficult to discover when the Brushy Creek Cricket Club was formed or when the first cricket was played to have occurred by 1860 and the most likely site to have been in front of Hugh O'Rourke's pub. This would be almost where Hughes Park is today. Certainly by the time the Lilydale Express began publication in 1886, Brushy Creek had a full-blown cricket club, which had no hesitation in taking

on any team that issued a challenge. For example, on the Queen's Birthday holiday in 1887, Brushy Creek 54, defeated Palmerston Cricket Club (a Melbourne team) outright, 22 and 18.

Yet Brushy Creek was not fated to continue as the social focal point of the district for very long. At about the time the 'Brushy' was being declared a town, events were occurring further out on Running Creek (now Olinda Creek) which were destined to lessen the importance of Brushy Creek as a roadside stopping place and social centre.

In 1860, the Woods Point Road crossed Running Creek at the present site of Lilydale. No settlement existed there then. In June of that year, the first township sites in Lilydale were sold. New gold fields were discovered in the Woods Point and adjacent areas, and Lilydale became an important coaching stop. Wine had been produced for some time around the Lilydale area and now wine shops sprang up in the new town and became outlets for the local produce.

Lilydale grew slowly at first during the sixties and the seventies. By 1880 its population numbered about 350. Cricket had been played in the local park since 1863 and the first pitch had been laid in the following year. Matches were played as arranged by the secretary of the club either by issuing challenges to other settlements or receiving challenges or by arranging matches between intra-town groups. Some matches were followed by dinner at the local hotel, the costs sometimes being paid by the losers. If visitors over indulged, the horses knew their way home anyway.

In 1881, the Hawthorn-Lilydale railway line was completed. By 1884 the Lilydale correspondent of the Evelyn Observer reported that 'New buildings are going up apace'. Everybody in Lilydale benefited from the railway but it was the death knell for a settlement such as Brushy Creek. Farmers were able **to despatch their produce from the railway station instead of carting it to Melbourne themselves.**

In 1886 the Lilydale Express proudly reported that the station had handled 205 tons of fruit and 4585 buckets of strawberries. Lilydale was now the social centre for the surrounding districts and the overnight stopover for travellers to the Gippsland diggings.

Melbourne was entering the decade of the roaring eighties and its residents were able to travel comfortably and cheaply to Lilydale which became well known for its beautiful scenery and vineyards. and they came in their thousands. Three special trains arrived one holiday week-end in 1886 full of visitors. Consequently, Lilydale grew rapidly. In July 1887 Lilydale contained 300 dwellings and the population was about 1500.

Cricket boomed in Lilydale. There were at least two teams . and sometimes more. Social matches were played between local teams and the players were always keen to try their skills against teams from Melbourne. Matches were usually of one day duration.

The Express on 6 October, 1886 announced:

The Lilydale Cricket Club will open the season next Saturday when they will proceed to Wandin to try conclusions with the Wandin Club. The Lilydale will be represented by the following: Harman, McGhee, Poyner E. (Capt), Hooper, Leach, Kings, Mortimer, Hales, Laidlaw, Downham, and Poyner J. Emergencies: Hill, Johnson and McNiel. The above players are requested to meet at the usual place tomorrow (Thursday) evening to arrange for travelling to Wandin. In the event of any of the above players being unable to play, they are requested to communicate with the secretary on or before the 7th inst.

No doubt the 'usual place' was the Olinda Hotel in Lilydale! The club had a particularly active season and the following indicates the types of matches arranged. The next match was against Mooroolbark. Unfortunately, only five players turned up for Lilydale and

'consequently they suffered a severe defeat'. In the first innings Lilydale made one run and in the second nineteen runs whilst their opponents beat them easily in the first innings. Then followed:

Lilydale 36 defeated Brushy Creek 26

Lilydale 77 defeated Howe Crescent, South Melbourne 12

Lilydale v Mooroolbark 'not played due to inclement weather'.

Lilydale defeated by Richmond Juniors 'as many players did, not appear'.

Lilydale 94 defeated Codrington Yering 16

Lilydale v Wandin. (Results not known.)

Lilydale v Mooroolbark. (Results not known.)

Lilydale frequently had trouble in fielding a full team during the fruit picking and berry picking season. However, this was not the reason which led to a terse exchange of letters in the Lilydale Express over a match which Ringwood thought had been arranged with Lilydale. Let the letters tell the story:

A DISAPPOINTMENT

To the Editor of the Lilydale Express,

Sir:

Having arranged in all good faith with the Secretary of the Lilydale Cricket Club for a match with our club, to be played on Saturday 12 February on the Lilydale ground, we accordingly turned up at Lilydale by the 1 p.m. train from Ringwood, and were informed that they 'did not intend to or could a team together', (sic.) one player had 'gone fishing', and other players were playing for another club which they were engaged to play. In fact several of the members of our team, seeing the streets look so deserted (not a soul in sight), thought that we must(have) alighted at the wrong station. After walking

the town to catch the 2 p.m. train to Ringwood, and we therefore had but two alternatives—to wait in Lilydale until the departure of the 7 p.m. train, or walk to Ringwood.

We adopted the latter preferring to walk back in the hot sun (? hot) to loitering about Lilydale for hours, although we had all provided ourselves with return tickets.

Apologies for trespassing on your valuable space.

Thanking you in anticipation, - I am,

ALICK PATTERSON

Hon. Sec. Ringwood C.C.

Perhaps the thought of a 'quencher' at Hugh O'Rourke's pub at Brushy Creek might have had some influence on the Ringwood boys' decision to walk. This was Lilydale's reply:

AN EXPLANATION

To the Editor of the Lilydale Express,

Sir;

In last week's issue of the Express you publish a letter from the Secretary of the Ringwood C.C. in which he desires to give his disappointment vent in the most public manner possible and which, like most persons who believe themselves ill-used, presents facts based on his own side of the question and ignores those bearing upon the other side altogether. Now Sir, the facts are that at the beginning of the cricket season some three months ago, I received on behalf of the Lilydale C.C. an offer to play the Ringwood on the Lilydale ground on the 12 February which I accepted and informed the club members accordingly. On the Monday previous to the date fixed for the match I wrote the Ringwood, desiring to be informed if they

were going to carry out their part of the arrangement, to which I have not received a reply. Therefore Sir, under the circumstances, I considered that I was perfectly justified in not making any arrangements for a match. And having given the above explanation to the Ringwood cricketers, personally I think it to be unwarrantable arrogance on their part in giving the affair publicity in the Express. Hoping you will in justice publish this.

I am etc.,

S. BOLITHO Hon. Sec.
Lilydale C.C.

'Unwarrantable arrogance'. Phew! That was a bit strong Lilydale. The real culprits might well have been the post office and the railways as there were many complaints at that time of letters being taken all the way to Melbourne and not turning up for several days or even weeks.

So great was the interest in cricket in Lilydale and surrounding areas, that the Secretary of the Lilydale Union Cricket Club was able to announce at the next annual meeting that he had already arranged eight matches for the next season.

Mooroolbark also had a cricket club at this time which was formed in November 1883 with 16 members. The Mooroolbark lads loved their cricket. They never failed to turn up for a match. On occasions they might only have six or seven players but this was not a bar to taking on any team in the district; or even outside the district. This is their record in season 1887—88 as far as it can be collected:

29th Oct. M'bark 34 and 73 d Croydon 12 and 24.
Nov. M'bark 80 d Brushy Creek 56.
3rd Dec. M'bark 50 and 0/13 d Lilydale 16 and 46.
Late Dec. M'bark 67 and 46 d Croydon 16 and 3/3.

	(It's a wonder Croydon came back for a second dose after the thrashing in the first match.)
Jan	Ringwood failed to appear.
Feb	Lilydale failed to appear. (Perhaps they didn't have Croydon's guts.)
11 th Feb	M'bark d Ringwood by twenty-six runs.
25 th Feb	M'bark 48 d Brushy Creek 12 and 26.
Mar	M'bark 41 d Croydon 7 and 33. (Croydon were tigers for punishment.)
	M'bark 72 d Brinds Employees 25 and 43
	M'bark 133 d South Melbourne Trades 86
31 st Mar	M'bark lost to Queensberry Cricketers.
7 th Apr	M'bark d Croydon (What! Again?)
14 th Apr	M'bark d Mitcham.
21 st Apr	M'bark d Brushy Creek.
	(Scores were not published for the last four matches.)

The rash of matches in March and April resulted from an article in the Lilydale Express stating that most of the clubs were refusing to take up Mooroolbark's challenge.

Mooroolbark played 13 matches for the season and lost only one. But in case present day Mooroolbark hearts are starting to swell with pride, let me hasten to say that this Mooroolbark was not situated in the same location as today's Mooroolbark. Mooroolbark was originally the name of a pastoral run of some 15,000 acres (6,070 hectares) covering roughly Croydon North to Lilydale to Montrose to Kilsyth and back to Croydon North.

When an early saw mill was established near York Road it was first called Double Pitts supposedly because of the method of sawing logs.

The spelling of the name Pitts with a double t, might also have had something to do with a family of Pitts who lived there. This area was in the south of the Mooroolbark run, became known as South Mooroolbark and was the home of the Mooroolbark Cricket Club. It is now part of Montrose and Mt Evelyn. The present Mooroolbark was farm land in 1888 and the few farmers from that area played with the Brushy Creek Club.

Here are Mooroolbark's averages for season 1887-88:

BATTING

Name	Inngs	N.O.	H.S.	Total Runs	Ave.
G. Burgi	8	1	45	130	18.4
C. Mummery	13		45	101	7.8
H. Walker	13	3	28	78	7.8
W. Hand	11	2	20	71	7.8
W Lucas	6		18	45	7.3
J. Walker	7		24	50	7.1
R. Walker	14		13	82	6.1
C. Walker	12		22	68	5.8
W. Moore	6		7	26	4.2
R. Bradshaw	2		6	8	4.0
W. Doran	9		7	21	2.3
C. Botsman	5		2	5	1.0

BOWLING

Name	Balls	Runs	M	W	O	Ave.
C. Mummery.	408	82	21	38	70	2.2
R. Walker	328	120	8	41	56	2.38
C. Walker	343	123	10	37	61	3.12

Whilst we might think that these batting performances are not very good, they reflect the standard of the wickets they played on. Cocoa matting had just appeared on the scene in 1887 but only the most financial clubs could afford it. They also played in weather conditions in which we would say that play should be abandoned. On 21 March, 1888 when Mooroolbark played Croydon, the match report said that 'heavy rain fell throughout the day and the pitch was

wet and slippery'. Imagine the shooters! In one later match, play was abandoned only after water started to flow down the pitch!

The result of the Mooroolbark/South Melbourne Trades match on the latter's ground shows what Mooroolbark were capable of when they did get on to a good wicket.

Most of the Mooroolbark players belonged to or were associated with a temperance organisation called the South Mooroolbark Band of Hope. This probably explains why the other clubs called them 'the cold water boys of Mooroolbark'. Their performances didn't do the temperance cause any harm. Meanwhile over at Ferntree Gully and Scoresby, cricket was beginning to be established. Scoresby and Ferntree Gully had been settled in the 1860s but had remained mainly a farming community for the first ten to fifteen years. However, Melbourne was not long in discovering the beauties of the fern gullies in the area and by the late 1870s Ferntree Gully sported two hotels.

The first recorded cricket match was between Scoresby and Mulgrave in March, 1880. Scoresby 14 and 63 lost to Mulgrave 60 and 22. Scoresby's team was: Me Comb, Tainton, A. Dinsdale, Clark, K. Dinsdale, O. Williams, Charman, Thompson, Vaughan, F. Williams and D. Trail. In a return match Scoresby 45 and 3/21 defeated Mulgrave 39 and 26. Dandenong was the centre of competition for this area. It was in a similar situation to Lilydale being the first overnight stopover for those heading for Gippsland. Dandenong's standard of cricket was seen by settlements like Scoresby and Ferntree Gully as the standard to be achieved. There was little or no social interchange with the cricketing settlements at Lilydale, Mooroolbark, Croydon and Ringwood. In effect, cricket developed independently in the Dandenong-Scoresby-Ferntree Gully area. The only common factor was the desire to try out against teams from Melbourne. In 1880, Ferntree Gully could only get a team together

by fielding a combined Scoresby-Ferntree gully team. The roads were not good even in summer and in winter the communities were virtually isolated because the roads were impassable. The settlers complained that they had to burn the timber on their properties because the roads were so bad they could not cart the timber to the nearest railway station for transport to Melbourne.

A buggy belonging to a shire councillor ran into a hole in the road and capsized. The shire engineer's solution was to 'make the place safe by filling up the holes with logs and metal'. Some holes!

Because of its natural scenic attractions, Ferntree Gully began to grow despite the roads. Visitors from Melbourne came in all sorts of conveyances during the holiday periods and camped in what was then known as Fern Tree Park. They also brought their bad habits such as removal of ferns and shooting everything in sight. The latter habit led one correspondent to the Dandenong Advertiser to advise its readers 'to cage up their pet birds as my old woman has done in order to ensure their safety'.

One enterprising gentleman by the name of Bucknell, thought he would like to live nearer to his work (removing tree ferns) and moved into the vacant **ranger's** residence in Fern Tree Park. He stabled his horses in the vacant **ranger's** stables. Unfortunately for him, someone in authority woke up and he was promptly charged with trespass and for removing tree ferns. He was fined £5 10s (\$11.00).

1882 saw a big improvement in the roads. Some residents organised by Tom Grimwood, licensee of the Ferntree Gully hotel, did the work and paid for it themselves in one case. Tom Grimwood was one of those remarkable characters, full of natural ability to tackle any job that needed to be done, a born leader and with tremendous organising ability. He was always on the look-out for something new. In 1881, he secured the seed collection of Her Majesty's gardener

(grass and vegetable seed) which was shown at the Great Exhibition in Melbourne. In 1882, Tom was reported to have a good field of clover (four acres or about 1.5 hectares) from Her Majesty's seed on the rich Scoresby flats. He was also in the throes of setting up a pig and poultry business in Ferntree Gully.

1882 also saw the amalgamation of the Scoresby and Ferntree Gully Cricket Clubs so that the whole of the cricket talent was now in one club.

December 1883 was a busy month in Ferntree Gully. Chicory was proving a profitable speculation. The new State School was opened and the junior members of the cricket club were practising so hard that the older players were advised to look to their laurels.

The amalgamation was also starting to pay off. In October, 1883, Ferntree Gully 56 defeated Dandenong 32 and 7/82. The Ferntree Gully team now had the famous Williams family in it—W, H., G. and T., Williams whose descendants still play for Scoresby. In May, 1884, the Dandenong Advertiser reported that the Ferntree Gully Cricket Club intended winding up its best ever season with a ball and supper.

The local residents saw the railway as the saviour of the district and from 1881 onwards there were many meetings and deputations to the Minister of Railways. Some wanted the train from Dandenong, some wanted it from Oakleigh and some wanted it from Ringwood. The latter proposal probably had fewer supporters than the other two because the settlers had been used to looking towards either Dandenong or Oakleigh. However, the railway was still several years away yet.

Water was always a scarce commodity in these early settlements. Cricketers would not have been able to go home after a match and

clean up with a shower. No doubt there were many odd arrangements which enabled them to keep a reasonable standard of cleanliness. One would have been the old tipping 36 bucket. The bucket was suspended full of water above one's head with a rope attached to the handle. After soaping up, the rope was pulled by the person standing under it and whoosh, if one was lucky, the water ran out of the bucket and washed both soap and dirt off.

Commercial bath houses were also available for those who could afford them. This led to a tragic but amusing event in Dandenong. In May, 1883, The South Bourke and Mornington Journal reported that a man went to Hosies (a bath house in Dandenong) at the beginning of the year and had a Turkish bath-the first he had had for a long time-and as he was going home, he caught cold and died; an enquiry was held and the jury returned the verdict that 'The deceased ought not to have had so much dirt taken off at once'.

At this time, the Secretary of the Ferntree Gully Cricket Club was F. J. Charman who was also the licensee of the Ferntree Gully Club hotel, situated where it is today. It was called the Hunting Tower Hotel and re-named the 'Club' in 1885 when a new building was erected. Consequently, the cricket club held its social functions at Charman's hotel.

In 1884, the cricket club resolved that during the coming season, the playground should be on Mr. Grimwood's property. In this year also, the first recorded match was played between Ferntree Gully and Ringwood. Ferntree Gully won 55 to seventeen runs.

The time had now come for Tom Grimwood to wrest control of the cricket club from Charman and remove the social functions from the Club Hotel to his hotel. In October, 1885, the Dandenong Advertiser reported:

A second cricket club has now formed in Fern Tree Gully under the name of the Glenfern Cricket Club. Mr. W. Williams has been elected captain supported by Mr. F. Stephens as vice-captain, and Mr. T. S. Grimwood as Secretary. Both these clubs appear to receive support from the residents, but one opinion in the district is the district will not carry two clubs of this game and hence we await results.

The latter opinion was correct. Tom Grimwood's coup was complete. He now had Ferntree Gully's captain of the previous year, W. Williams, most of Ferntree Gully's best players, he was Secretary of the new club and its functions were held at Tom's pub. Of course Tom did not rest on his laurels. He went on to form a quoits club, had a hand in forming a racing club and was one of the prime movers in the severance of the Shire of Fern Tree Gully from the Shire of Berwick. But that is another story.

By 1889, Glenfern C.C. had become so strong, it defeated Narre Warren by 321 runs to 18.

Thomas Samuel Grimwood

(1826 - 1895)

THOMAS Grimwood was not a Fern Tree Gully pioneer. He arrived too late on the scene to be one. However, one could put him in the category of an early 'Developer', When we look at his life you will see what we mean.

Thomas Grimwood was born at Tunstall in Suffolk, England, in 1826 where he learned the trade of carpenter and joiner. In 1846, he married Jane Loweth in London. On 12 September, 1853 he and Jane with their three children, Thomas Samuel, Samuel Alfred and Leonard Swindley signed on the Fairlie, a 755 ton barque, paying their own fare for the long voyage to Australia. A fourth child was born aboard ship and named Richard Fairlie, the latter name recognizing the birth on the ship of the same name. There does not appear to be a date for the family's arrival in Melbourne but very late 1853 would be an intelligent guess. Tom and Jane were to have four more children, Elizabeth Jane, Charles Henry, Ann and Amelia Margaret, all born at Collingwood. When the family arrived at Fern Tree Gully, it was complete.

He followed his trade until he came to Victoria where he entered the building trade. He completed several government contracts including building the first battery and mounting the first gun at Emerald Hill (now South Melbourne).

Next he took a lease of the Victoria Hotel, Collingwood, which he kept for some years. Then he became landlord of the Rose, Shamrock and Thistle Hotel in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, during which he carried out some large catering contracts and on the occasion of the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to Melbourne about 1868, he is said

to have catered for 25,000 children. He also catered for the volunteer encampments.

About 1875, he became interested in Fern Tree Gully. In 1857, a paling shack was erected in Fern Tree Gully by a man named Dickson. The old hotel stood on the banks of the creek behind the present middle hostelry and was managed by Dickson's brother George. The building was a slab hut with a shingle roof and was known locally as 'Dickson's Beer Shanty'.

Edmund Ashley purchased the building and two acres (.75 hectares) for £11 10s (\$23) per acre in 1870 and shortly after erected the second Fern Tree Gully Hotel. This building was later found to be erected encroaching onto the main road.

Tom Grimwood leased the hotel in 1875 and from there on this building and the adjoining land figured largely in whatever plans Tom made for the local community and in particular the cricket community. So far as Tom Grimwood was concerned, this hotel was now to be the centre of the Fern Tree Gully social life.

He undoubtedly had, for those days, considerable financial resources. In 1875, he was reported to be the owner of land at Emerald, in 1877 he bought 200 acres (81 hectares) on the corner of Boronia and Dorset Roads (later owned by A. E. Chandler) and in 1878 he and his second wife selected two or more blocks in a release of forest land north of the railway line and near the quarry.

Thomas must have had remarkable connections. In 1881, the South Bourke and Mornington Journal tells that:

Mr. Thomas Grimwood of Fern Tree Gully has secured the large and varied collection of grass and vegetable seeds fare shown by Her Majesty's Gardener at the Exhibition. The seeds are of every conceivable sort, grasses, clovers, mangles, and

other vegetables, and have been entrusted to Mr. Grimwood for trialling in the rich land of Fern Tree Gully district. We understand that samples will be given on application by anyone desirous of growing from any of them.

Later in February, 1882 we are told that 'Grimwood has a good field of clover 4 acres (about 1.5 hectares) from Her Majesty's seed on the rich soil of the Scoresby Flats'.

In 1882, 412 acres (167 hectares) of land at Fern Tree Gully were reserved for the purposes of a National Park. This was the first reservation which has now grown into the Dandenong Ranges National Park of considerable size. A committee of three was appointed to manage this park. They were:

John S. White, President of Berwick Shire,
Robert Trail, Councillor of Berwick Shire, and
Thomas Grimwood, citizen of Fern Tree Gully.

Tom began to promote the fern gullies and the Dandenongs as a tourist destination with one eye on his business. He challenged all comers to a week's ramble in the Dandenongs. He was also reported to be setting up a pig and poultry business.

His hotel was central to anything that happened in Fern Tree Gully. Some better roads should be provided 'especially on the main thoroughfare from Grimwood's towards Melbourne' said one of the local papers. A meeting at Grimwood's hotel formed a deputation to wait on the Minister regarding the need for a railway. Tom was elected chairman of the Committee. Pending the railway, John D. Bevan was running coaches (1884) between Oakleigh railway station and Grimwood's hotel in Fern Tree Gully - three shillings (thirty cents). The opening of the Fern Tree Gully State School Dinner in 1883 was held at Grimwood's hotel.

Tom's pub was not the only one in Fern Tree Gully. In 1866, the Hunting Tower Hotel had been built near where the Club Hotel is today. In fact, it became the Club Hotel when a new building was built in 1885 and after Mr. F Charman became the owner in 1883. At that time Charman also became secretary of the Fern Tree Gully Cricket Club. In effect this was a shrewd move by Charman because it meant that all the club's meetings and functions were held at the Club Hotel. This must have been a challenge to Tom Grimwood and he succeeded in wresting the cricket club from Charman's hotel by the use of a subterfuge i.e. he formed a new cricket club and became the Secretary of that club. Eventually the Fern Tree Gully Cricket Club died because the community could not support two cricket clubs.

By 1886, Tom was in to quoits and donated a gold quoit for competition between the members of the recently formed Quoits Club. Naturally the Quoit Club's dinner was held at Grimwood's hotel.

At the start of the 1886-87 cricket season, 'Mr. Grimwood of the Fern Tree Gully Hotel' donated a cricket bat and a trophy for the best batting and bowling averages in the club for the season.

On 9 December, 1886, a meeting was held at Grimwood's hotel which resulted in the formation of a racing club. Tom Grimwood was elected Treasurer. In January, 1887, Alan Selman offered 'his racecourse' to the Fern Tree Gully racing club and this was obviously accepted and the first meeting was held there on 10 March, 1887. This land was reported as being close to Grimwood's hotel. On 16 December, 1886, Tom was busy again with a meeting being held at his hotel with regard to a proposal to establish a tramway 'from Oakleigh to Grimwood's hotel'.

There was obviously some enthusiasm for the proposal as the Dandenong Advertiser reported in its 23 ⁴² December edition that the Oakleigh and Fern Tree Gully Steam Tramway Co. had been formed and provisional directors appointed. The solicitor to the company had been requested to push on with the launching of the company. However, by August 1887, this company was reported as 'extinct'. Nevertheless by December, a new committee had been elected but by February 1888, the tramway was again reported to be in trouble. Mr. Dobson, a director of the company, could not sell the shares as the residents support was not followed with money. By this time the railway route from Ringwood had been surveyed and this may have had something to do with the faint-hearted support of the local residents.

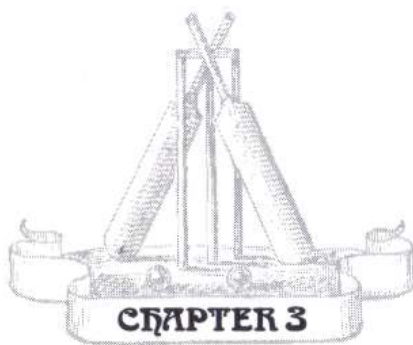
In September 1888, the question of severance of the Scoresby Riding from the Shire of Berwick was raised for the first time, and Tom Grimwood was in this right up to his neck. This was followed by public meetings and Tom was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee to pursue this matter. A petition was presented to the Minister for Public Works and on 23 May, 1889, the Shire of Fern Tree Gully was proclaimed. This was followed by an election of councillors. The main interest was in the three centre riding councillors for which there were six nominations including Tom Grimwood. Unfortunately, support for Tom as chairman of the Severance Executive Committee did not follow him to the council and he was equal last in the election.

Perhaps Tom relied too much on his position in the community and forgot to do the 'hard yards' necessary for any election. But there were compensations for Tom. Before the start of the cricket season for 1889-90, the Fern Tree Gully Cricket Club gave a dinner for their 'President'. 'During the evening, Mr. Grimwood proposed the (toast

to the) Fern Tree Gully Cricket Club and was proud that from it they could pick men who could hold their own against men in any suburban club out of Melbourne in bowling, batting and fielding. He had the pleasure of presenting two gold medals to Messrs George Williams and Stevens for top score and best bowling average in the club during the (previous) season'.

But what of the club that Tom had formed, the Glenfern and the former Fern Tree Gully Cricket Clubs? Well, the former FTGCC had lost most of its members to Glenfern Cricket Club and it folded up. So there was now no reason why the Glenfern Cricket Club should not be called the Fern Tree Gully Cricket Club. Tom's coup d'état was complete. By 1890 it was reported that 'the Fern Tree Gully Cricket Club have (sic) a very picturesque ground behind Grimwood's hotel, also a pavilion and something to eat in it'.

As we said at the beginning, Tom was an early 'developer' because he made development of Fern Tree Gully his business. Certainly, he was in every social activity and assisted in every way to develop Fern Tree Gully and particularly the cricket club. Ferntree Gully (current spelling) and the cricket club can thank Tom Grimwood for a firm foundation. May he and his wife sleep peacefully in Fern Tree Gully cemetery.



Early Competitions

*If lightning-like you send her down,
And yet the batsman scores
With here a One and there a Two
And then a brace of Fours;
If calmly confident he stands,
And makes the leather fly
Past all your slips to dash against
The boundary palings, why—
Toss him down a slow, you see,
He's sure to have a go, you see;
And ten to one the trick is done
By just a bit of brains you see!*

—'Free Advice', Norman Gale.

T

HE first competitions were small affairs. They arose from some local dignitary or businessman donating a trophy for competition between certain teams or from teams originating in a certain area.

The first recorded competition in the Lilydale district was The Woolcott Challenge Cup in season 1887-88. If there were earlier

organised competitions in the district, records of their existence have disappeared in the mists of time. However, at a Reporter District Cricket Competition smoke night in 1911, a Cr. Morton recalled 'the cricket matches played between Templestowe and Warrandyte in the early sixties (1860s), when Surrey Hills, Canterbury, Blackburn and Mitcham were unknown. That early competition, however, had fallen through until the Reporter Association was formed in 1902'. Whether this was an organised competition or some arrangement made by the two clubs to play matches on a regular basis, is open to debate. I think the latter was the most likely.

Lilydale had considered the purchase of a 'challenge cup' in 1883 but this proposal does not appear to have been implemented.

The Woolcott competition proposed matches between a Lilydale Combined Eleven, Yarra Flats (now Yarra Glen) and Healesville. The Lilydale Combined Eleven was to consist of players from the Lilydale and Lilydale Union Clubs. The Lilydale Union had made the running for inclusion in this competition because in December, 1887, they sent an invitation to the Lilydale Club to join them in fielding a combined eleven, in the Woolcott Challenge Cup Competition. Lilydale might have been 'miffed' at not being invited to play in the Cup as a club, and they politely declined Union's invitation and said they would not play in the Cup if Union proposed to do so.

The Lilydale Union Club had only been formed in September that year and perhaps Lilydale was still adjusting to having this fledgling youngster as a competitor.

R. R. Woolcott was a farmer of Tarrowera near Yarra Flats and President of the Eltham Shire council. He was also a J.P and a respected member of the local community. He also happened to be President of the Yarra Flats Cricket Club. Therefore, it was with a great deal of pride and pleasure that in April 1888 at a dinner for

thirty-five at Farrell's Hotel, Yarra Flats, he presented the Captain of the Yarra Flats team 'with a very beautiful silver cup valued at eight guineas (\$16.80). Yarra Flats had played in all six matches for the cup'.

Meanwhile back in Ringwood, competition cricket was not even being considered. Preparations were being made for the big event of the district to be held on the New Year's Day holiday, Monday, 2 January, 1888. Early in December 1887, the Ringwood Cricket Club advertised in the Lilydale Express that on Monday, 2 January, 1888, 'Sports in aid of the above club will be held on New Year's Day at the Club Hotel, Ringwood'. The program was as follows:

1. Maiden Race over 100 yards.
2. Ringwood Handicap 100 yards
3. Quoit Match over a distance of 18 yards
4. 2nd heat of Handicap
5. Handicap Hurdle Race 150 yards
6. Girls Race under 15 years
7. Boys Race under 15 years
8. 3rd heat of Handicap
9. Putting the stone
10. Old Buffers Race
11. Sack Race
12. Throwing the cricket ball—only Ringwood Cricket Club players were eligible to enter.

The sports were to start at 11.00 a.m. and all competitors to be eligible, must have resided for one month within a seven mile radius of the Ringwood Club hotel. In addition, a 'Grand Benefit Performance by Richmond Amateur Dramatic Club included Morton's sparkling comedietta entitled 'Done on Both Sides' and the laughable farce 'Slasher and Crasher'. Arrangements were also made

for the Dramatic Club to play Ringwood at a cricket match during the afternoon.

The day arrived and 'The Richmond Amateur Dramatic Club with their friends arrived shortly before noon and came tearing along the road in four in hand drags, the horses keeping time to the music of the band, which also played selections during the afternoon'.

There were complaints about the ground being rough for the runners; the quoit match took four hours to play because of the number of competitors; nine competitors came bravely to the post in pouring rain for the sack race; there were six entries for putting the stone (must have been a large stone); dancing on the green and other amusements took place during the day; the Dramatic Club entertained all and sundry with the comedietta and the laughable farce; and the 'Ball room was crowded with dancers to the dawn of the day'. There was not much work done in Ringwood on Tuesday, 3 January, 1888.

The formation of the Woolcott Cup Competition spurred ambitions in other parts of the surrounding district. In January, 1888, the Lilydale Express reported:

We recently had the pleasure of inspecting the trophy presented by Major Blannin, to be competed for by the various cricket clubs within 15 miles of the Seville Post Office. The trophy is in the form of a remarkably handsome electroplated cup, the bowl of the cup being supported by bats and wickets, and otherwise appropriately ornamented. It was obtained from the establishment of Messrs. Young and Co. and is valued at nearly £10 (\$20).

The competition began with Lilydale Union, Wandin, Gruyere, Hoddles Creek and Emerald Clubs participating. Lilydale Union

prepared for competitive cricket by authorising its secretary 'To purchase 19 yards (17.3 metres) of matting, cost not to exceed £6 (\$12)'.

Emerald later withdrew because of difficulty of getting teams and Wandin won the trophy but not without controversy. In a letter to the Editor of the Lilydale Express, Hoddles Creek accused Wandin of awarding themselves the trophy.

In these early competitions, controversies were inevitable. The rules, if any, were specifically drawn up for each competition and only governed the conduct of the competition and the eligibility of the clubs and players. There was no permanent association or officials to decide on differences so either the differences were negotiated or someone was appointed to resolve the differences or the argument just went on and on. As cricket held a very high place in the interest of people in local communities, these arguments were a source of diversion to all.

This controversy arose over a decision by an Umpire. The Wandin bowler while pretending to bowl the ball, overstepped the crease, turned and took the bails off with the batsman out of his crease. The Umpire on seeing the bowler overstep the crease, called 'no ball'. On appeal, the Umpire then gave the batsman 'not out' and did not allow a 'no ball'. If the batsman had been given 'out', the match was a win to Wandin and they had won the trophy.

If the 'no ball' were allowed, Hoddles Creek had won the match and the trophy. A letter was written to the top authority at that time on all sport in Victoria, the Sporting Editor of the Leader. His decision was that it was not a 'no ball' and the batsman was out. Consequently, Wandin claimed the win and the trophy. The Blannin Match Committee agreed with them. Hoddles Creek claimed both captains

had agreed after the match, while they were at the ground, that it was a draw and the match should be replayed.

Letters to the Editor of the Lilydale Express came hot and strong. First the Acting Secretary of Hoddles Creek, W. J. Ewart, drew the attention of the public at large as to how Hoddles Creek 'wuz robbed'. It took him a whole column of the Express to do it.

T. L. Bedford, Secretary, Blannin Cup Committee, took a column and a half to tell the public how Hoddles Creek 'wuz not robbed' and how Wandin won the cup fairly. Then another old gentleman calling himself 'Old South Melbourne Player' suggested the real question to be answered was: 'The Umpire having made an error in giving a man not out (the Umpire sticking to his decision), does his decision allow the batsman to continue his innings?' Then another correspondent calling himself 'No Ball' weighed in to the argument, called the OSMP 'a peripatetic Old South Melbourne Player' and declared that 'Whatever he was long, long ago, his present knowledge of cricket doesn't count much judged by his letter. His letter is as clear as mud. The old gentleman knows more about the affair than he cares to own'. The OSMP was also told by the captain of Wandin that if he wrote to the Secretary of the Committee, he would send him a rule book.

Further letters followed in the 7, 11 and 14 July issues of the Express and then everyone tired of it. Wandin had been presented with the Blannin Cup by Major Blannin and intended to hang on to it until next season.

Hoddles Creek 'maintained their rage' until their next annual meeting when they unanimously passed a motion 'that the Hoddles Creek Club do still adhere to their decision disputing the awarding of the Blannin trophy and to amicably settle the dispute hereby state their willingness to meet the Wandin Club in a final match on the Wandin ground and under the trophy rules of last year, each club to abide by

the result of the match'. The only sounds from Wandin in response to this motion, were the singing of the birds and the mooing of the cattle. What Major Blannin thought about all this is not recorded, but he must have regretted at times ever donating the cup.

Land prices in the district had been rising for some time and land traders now realised that subdivision of large estates was a way to print money. Lilydale was a popular train journey from Melbourne and the Ringwood to Ferntree Gully link was under construction.

On 29 September, 1888, the Ringwood Park Estate was auctioned. It consisted of sixty-one business sites in the area bounded by the Ferntree Gully railway line and Bedford Road (then Ferntree Gully Road). Almost simultaneously, the Mt. Olinda Estate and the Lilydale Park Estate were launched at Lilydale. The Mt. Olinda Estate fronted the Main Street and was only five minutes walk from town and consisted of sixty-one business and villa sites and twenty-five country residence blocks of from two to eight acres (3.2 hectares). The latter were stated to be 'ideal for a country seat'.

The continued popularity of Lilydale ensured that it remained the centre of the cricket world in the district for the present. Lilydale Union won the Blannin Cup in 1889 and again in 1890, thereby retaining it for ever.

A Lilydale team competed in the Hart Co. Trophy competition in 1891-92, the E. H. Cameron Trophy competition in 1892-93 and 1893-94, the W. C. Farrell competition in 1895, the Sweetnam trophy competition in 1896 and the Lindsay Russell Trophy competitions of 1897, 1898 and 1899. The trophies for the last named competitions were interesting because in 1897, they consisted of eleven individual silver medals for members of the premierships team and in 1898, they were gold medals. [If any reader knows the

whereabouts of any of these medals, the author would be delighted to receive that information].

However, Lilydale had no success during these years and in season 1899-1900 did not compete in the Knox Trophy Competition. Some of its players played with Seville in the competition. Lilydale, for several reasons was starting to lose its dominant place in the district. But it still had a few years to run before this would happen completely. After all it was still the major community in the Shire of Lilydale which at that time included the areas presently covered by the cities of Ringwood and Croydon.

A Ringwood Cricket Club existed in 1883 but we do not know when it was formed. The Booroondarra Standard in 1883 tells us that Ringwood was to play Anderson's Creek at Easter, that Ringwood defeated Wandin Yallock at Ringwood and that Ringwood played Nunawading in March and again in April.

In 1883, Ringwood was a small village of no great consequence. It probably had two or three general stores, a bakery, a post office and several hotels. It also had three antimony mines which provided employment for up to thirty people when all operating at once (which was not very often) • The village was surrounded by farms and orchards from twenty acres (8 ha) up to 200 acres (81 ha). Therefore, it is likely that there was a sufficiently large population and interest to support a cricket team for several years prior to 1883.

Ringwood Cricket Club had continued to play social matches throughout the 1880s but its name had changed from Ringwood Junction to Central Ringwood to Ringwood Imperials. Central Ringwood Cricket Club was formed in 1889 with the President being T. K. Turnbull. 'The old Ringwood Club had fallen through owing to some slight disagreement.' The names of those appointed to a

working committee were: Miller, West, Quigley, Pratt, O'Keefe, Campbell and Shanks.

The change of name to Ringwood Imperials probably reflected the change in the township as it now tended to develop around the station on the opposite side of Sandy Gully (now Ringwood Lake) to the Club Hotel. It may also have reflected the name of the Football Club which was Ringwood Imperials. The Ringwood team at this time consisted of: Pratt, Pickett, Pearson, Greenwood, Lethbridge, J. Edwards, Porteus, Lindsay, Messenger, W. Edwards and S. Pearson.

Croydon formed a cricket club in 1885 which disbanded some time in the 1890s. This probably resulted from the tough times that everyone in the district was going through when a depression followed the bust of the land boom in the early 1890s. Poverty and unemployment were rife in Victoria and money was very scarce. Those around Croydon, Ringwood, and Lilydale districts were better off than most workers in the cities, because most had a cow, some fowls and were able to grow their own vegetables. In season, there was the fruit that had fallen on the ground. So even though money was scarce, they were able to keep starvation from the door most of the time.

Croydon regrouped again in season 1901-02. Since its rebirth, Croydon was fairly successful, although not outstandingly so.

However, it was sufficient for the club to want to try itself out in a regular competition. In the Lilydale Express of 25 August, 1905, the club placed this notice:

CROYDON

The Croydon Cricket Club have decided to take steps towards forming an association next season and intend calling a meeting for that purpose. Notice will be sent to various clubs requesting the attendance of delegates, and in order that a fair level of feeling may

be obtained, the secretaries of district clubs are invited to interview their members and get their opinion thereon. The meeting will be held at Lilydale as that place is regarded as the most suitable headquarters.

Croydon had overlooked the fact that by this time of the year most clubs had a number of matches already arranged. Lilydale for example, had already received a large number of applications from metropolitan clubs for matches 'and in view of this fact it was deemed inadvisable to enter for any association competitions'.

Without Lilydale, it wasn't a competition. Therefore, the proposal lapsed for another year. However, there must have been general agreement that there would be an association in 1906-07 by the way the clubs prepared for that season. Lilydale approached it in a businesslike way. The two clubs amalgamated and fielded two teams known as Lilydale A and Lilydale B. Lilydale also put down a new pitch during the previous season which was described as a 'permanent wicket'.

On 3 August, 1906, 'at a meeting of delegates from the local and district cricket clubs held at the Olinda (Hotel) it was decided to form an Association this season and compete for a trophy which has been generously donated by C.J.Mitchell. The clubs represented at the meeting and who have joined in the Association are Lilydale (seniors and Juniors), Mooroolbark, Croydon, Wandin, Seville, and Coldstream'.

Ringwood did not join because they were already committed to the Box Hill Reporter Association. Ringwood had been playing in Reporter since 1905 and continued there until the end of the 1907 season. In 1907, the Ringwood team was selected from the following eighteen: Pratt, Greenwood, Knox (2), Dyer, Wilkins (2), Purchase, Lindsay, Pearson (2), Arnfield, Fitzpatrick, Edwards, Smith (2),

Godfrey and Sanders. Fitzpatrick appears to have been the team's stock bowler. In November, he took 5/15, in January, 3/51 against Templestowe and against St. Barnabus, 9/36 and 3/17.

Matches were now two-day affairs because of improved pitches. Matting had become compulsory in some competitions by the 1890s (e.g. Cameron trophy competition) so it is fairly certain that matting would have been used for all matches in this competition. The scores indicate that this was so. Croydon, in the first round, scored 362 against Coldstream and began the season with a burst. Seville made 220 against Mooroolbark (the new Mooroolbark) and got them out for 27 and 35. W. Duck made 110 and took 8/24 for Seville in this match.

W. Duck had a brother C. Duck who also played for Seville and the chance coincidence happened in Seville's match against Coldstream in Round 3. Both Ducks out for a duck each. Result four ducks. Imagine the MCG Scoreboard trying to cope with that!

Croydon's confidence in its team was not misplaced. It won the premiership as the following table shows. Finals were not played.

Club	P	W	L	D	Pts
Croydon	14	11	2	1	46
Seville	14	9	5		36
Mooroolbark	14	9	5		36
Lilydale B	1	4	9	5	36
Coldstream	14	8	5	1	34
Lilydale A	14	6	7	1	26
Wandin	14	2	11	1	10

Mooroolbark won the premiership in 1908 and Lilydale appears to have won it in 1909.

But events were occurring at Box Hill and Warrandyte which were going to ensure that this association never achieved its full potential. In 1905, Warrandyte like Croydon, felt the need for regular competition and decided to field a team in the E.H. Cameron Trophy Competition which consisted of teams from around the Kangaroo Ground/Christmas Hills district. In the following season Warrandyte won the trophy, by defeating Yarra Glen by seven runs in a match which started at the beginning of the season and finished at the end of the season. How did this come about? In round one Warrandyte and Yarra Glen did not complete their first round match. As they were equal on points at the end of the season, the trophy committee ordered them to finish the match to decide the premiership. The result was an exciting finish to the season.

In 1908, clubs in the previous competition were not interested in a further competition so Warrandyte applied to join the Box Hill Reporter Association. At that time, this association was known as the Reporter District Cricket Association or as the local newspaper put it 'the RDCA'.

The Association consisted of clubs such as Blackburn, Box Hill, Koonung, Canterbury Methodists etc., so Warrandyte was a long way for these teams to travel. At the annual meeting in September 1908, 'after a considerable discussion it was decided not to include Warrandyte in the competition on account of the difficulty for clubs to get to Warrandyte'. This decision left a bye in the competition and no doubt this fact as well as some pressure from Warrandyte, helped to reverse the decision. On 9 October, the Box Hill Reporter stated: 'Of the 12 clubs entered this season all but two were hard at work on Saturday; the exceptions, Warrandyte and Canterbury Methodists, will make a start next Saturday, the late inclusion of the Warrandyte making the delay unavoidable'.

Warrandyte finished second last in B Section that season with a score of minus 15 points. In the points system operating in the Association, points were deducted when a team lost a match so with only two wins and eight losses Warrandyte was behind the eight ball in the points table.

Warrandyte's acceptance must have given encouragement to other clubs. In season 1909-10, Mooroolbark and Croydon applied and were accepted. Wonga Park followed in season 1910-11 and Ringwood returned in that year also.

These five clubs were not particularly successful in their early years in the Reporter Association. After season 1910-11 Mooroolbark disappeared from the scene and appeared to descend into cricket oblivion. No reports appear in local papers of Mooroolbark playing in either competition or social matches for several years. And nothing else seemed to have happened in Mooroolbark which rated a mention in the newspapers. For all that the world knew, Mooroolbark like Brigadoon, had gone to sleep for several years to reappear in the cricket world after the Great War.

Meanwhile the Lilydale and District Cricket Association continued on, the participating teams in 1914-15 being Lilydale, Lilydale Rovers, Coldstream, Woori Yallock, Seville and Wandin. Healesville and Mitcham Clubs both applied to join but the Association decided their inclusion would 'prolong the season too late and declined the requests with regret'.

But in a burst of enthusiasm, the LDCA decided 'in view of the patriotic efforts and great interest taken by Madame Melba in this district, she is to be requested to accept the position of President of the Association . . .' *and she did!* She was also offered and accepted the appointment of patron of the Warburton Cricket Club. Whether she

ever attended a meeting of either the Association or the Warburton Club is not recorded.

Ringwood and Croydon slowly improved their standard until in 1915, Ringwood won the A grade premiership and Croydon won the B grade premiership in the Reporter Competition (S. Rae took 85 wickets at an average of 7.09 for Croydon). Ringwood won the premiership again in 1916. This was the last year of official competition for the duration of the war.

Patriotic fervour swept the country. Young men were urged to join the Army and to do their 'bit'. Not so subtle techniques were used to put pressure on them to enlist. Take this example: 'The women must come forward. Every day Victoria loses strength at the front because 150 men hang back. Will women give them a friendly push forward?'

There was such a shortage of men that working bees were organised to plough the orchards and pick the harvest in the orchards which were owned by men away at the war.

Some municipalities were opposed to any sporting activities on the grounds that if the young men were fit enough to play sport, they should be at the front. Nunawading Shire Council passed regulations preventing those eligible for military service from playing on any shire reserve and refused to budge from this stance when Box Hill Cricket Club applied for use of one of those reserves in 1916.

In the three seasons 1916-17 to 1918-19, the Reporter Association played what was called 'a friendly competition'. Of the teams from the outer eastern suburbs only Warrandyte participated in each season. The rest of the competitions such as the Sheffield Shield, District cricket, and Lilydale competition, went into a state of suspension until the end of the war.

Ringwood joined the 'friendly competition' in 1918-19 and lost to Templestowe in the final. This experience was to stand Ringwood in good stead in the next season but we will leave that for the next chapter.



The Croydon and District Cricket Association

*If round the wicket, medium pace,
Won't make the batsman budge,
Take special note of what he likes,
And all his weakness judge.
Suppose he does the leg glance well,
Or drives her hot and high,
Or runs to smother each good ball
And pulls the short one, why—
Sling him in a grub, you see,
A ripping, wicked grub, you see;
And ten to one the trick is done
By just a pinch of wit, you see!*

—'Free Advice', Norman Gale.

A

T the beginning of the twentieth century, the Shire of Lilydale included the areas now occupied by the Cities of Croydon and Ringwood. Lilydale was the largest settlement in the shire and regarded as its social and business centre. When Croydon proposed the formation of a cricket association in

1906, it was natural that it saw Lilydale as the headquarters of the Association.

But in the latter half of the first decade and in the second decade of the century, developments occurred which altered peoples ideas of the relative importance of the districts in which they lived.

In September 1907, surveyors began pegging the ground at Ringwood for the permanent recreation reserve. At this time Ringwood did not have a ground and the Ringwood players played the 1907-08 season with Mitcham and Blackburn. This probably influenced the future cricket outlook of the club as we have seen in the last chapter.

In 1909 a new hall was built at Ringwood at a cost of £635 (\$1,270) and was opened by the Premier. It was sited on White Horse Road, opposite the station and next to the Methodist Church from which 'it is separated by a chain road giving access to the newly acquired recreation reserve of eight acres (3.2 ha) situated conveniently at the rear'. Four days of celebration followed in the form of a carnival which started on Wednesday and kept going until Saturday.

In 1911 the Ringwood Cool Store opened. Ringwood was the centre of an extensive orchard district extending to the north to Wonga Park and easterly to Croydon, Kilsyth and Montrose. Ringwood was now the site for meetings of orchardists, formal and informal. Ringwood was becoming an important centre and consequently its community spirit was developing.

Also in 1907, the Croydon correspondent of the Express announced: 'At last! Croydon will soon be in possession of its long wished-for recreation ground. Council decided to purchase from Mr. W. Gwillam 6 acres (2.4 ha) situated in Oxford Road, (now Mt Dandenong Road) next to Hutchinson's store'. The Ferntree Gully

railway was completed in 1889. This had an effect on Lilydale's importance. Ringwood now had many more trains available to its residents and it was promoted as a pleasant place to live while still being able to work in Melbourne. Week-end excursionists now had a choice. They could go to Lilydale or Ferntree Gully or get off at Ringwood for pleasant walks through the countryside, particularly when the orchards were in blossom.

During the economic depression in 1893, a timber reserve adjoining the Wonga park Cattle Station, had been thrown open for settlement. A number of the new settlers had been members of the Eight Hours Pioneers Memorial Association so that the area became known as the Eight Hours Pioneers Memorial Settlement. Pioneer was the operative word and the early years of the settlers were spent in clearing the timber off the land, grubbing stumps and selling the timber as firewood.

Just when the settlers took time off to form a cricket club is not known but by 1910 it existed and played in the Reporter Association. There is a report of a cricket match between Wonga Park and Croydon in 1903. Wonga Park 36 lost to Croydon 5/89 in a match in which Matthews took 8/14 for Croydon.

At the club's annual meeting in September, 1911 a credit balance of 13s 6d (\$1.35) was reported. The club had also purchased some four or 5 acres (2 ha) for a recreation ground in a very suitable position. This land had cost the club £50 (\$ 100). The Wonga Park ladies gave a concert and ball for the cricket club at its presentation night. The batting trophy was won by S. Stiles and the bowling by E. Collyer. The evening was chaired by a lady named Mrs Bottoms and 'Mrs Bottoms surprised the audience by the way she filled the position'.

The Wonga Park cricketers knocked off work to carry bricks and set about clearing the timber off their new ground. In less than twelve months, they were able to hold an official opening on the 28 September, 1912. After several speeches by Shire councillors, 'the remainder of the afternoon was spent in playing cricket'. The young ladies of Wonga Park challenged the club to a game and were dismissed for four runs. Chivalry was not a strong point with early Wonga Park cricketers.

By 1911, Ringwood, Croydon, Wonga Park and Mooroolbark had all turned their backs on the other clubs in the Shire of Lilydale and together with Warrandyte, competed in the Box Hill Reporter District Cricket Association.

Other clubs were developing their facilities probably with the idea that they would be able to compete with these stronger clubs. Montrose ploughed and sowed down its oval with English grasses, planted trees in the reserve and erected buildings. By 1919 'What was a wilderness of scrub and undergrowth was now quite a show ground. A nice oval, good running tracks, bedecked with flags, a cricket pitch, a fine marquee and rustic seats all waiting for the crowd' coming to the Montrose sports.

The Evelyn Progress Association appointed a committee to enquire 'as to the possibility of acquiring an area of land for recreation purposes'. About this time Evelyn changed its name to Mt. Evelyn as the name 'Evelyn' did not 'convey any of the beauties and natural advantages of this place as a tourist resort'. In 1914 Mt. Evelyn played its first recorded match against Mt. Dandenong on its home ground wherever that might have been.

By 1916 Ringwood had become a very popular place. It had seventeen trains each day compared with five trains to Lilydale. The Annual Ringwood Carnival attracted 2,000 people and at the concert

at night 300 were refused admission. Cup Day was another popular day for visitors to Ringwood. Perhaps the attraction is disclosed in this 1916 report:

Ringwood is one of the most interesting and conveniently situated of all Melbourne's outer suburbs. It is fascinatingly beautiful in scenery, and blessed with an even and bracing atmosphere. It abounds with hillocks, ravines and running creeks, carrying stretches of wildflowers, nooks of maidenhair fern, blossom trees, and shrubs of all varieties relieved with heather and heath growing here, there and everywhere that the eye reaches.

From this beautiful place 139 men had gone to the Great War. sixteen did not return. 100 returned wounded by December 1918. Such was the price of world freedom paid by one country area. The end of the war in November, 1918, was greeted in Lilydale by the ringing of the fire bell. A large bonfire was organised and the effigy of Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany was burnt. Lilydale's brass band paraded the streets and a dance was held at the Athenaeum Hall. As soldiers returned throughout 1919 there were many official 'Welcomes Home'.

The Lilydale Cricket Club having stored their kit since 1915 held their first meeting after the war in September, 1919 and solemnly confirmed the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held in 1914 five years before. Out of a membership of seventeen players, thirteen had seen



Ringwood residents celebrate the end of World War I in Bellby's springcart on Ringwood Reserve.

active service.

The Lilydale and District Cricket Association re-formed and began play on October 18, 1919 with only Lilydale, Seville, Woori Yallock and Wandin as the competing clubs.

Ringwood again joined the Box Hill Reporter District Cricket Association. Ringwood had a specific target to achieve as this news item in the Box Hill Reporter of 3 October, 1919, tells:

CRICKET SHIELD

A feature of interest is this week being displayed in Messrs. Blood Bros' drapery emporium window. It is the coveted 'Reporter' cricket challenge shield presented by Mr. E. F. G. Hodges, J.E, of Box Hill. This was annexed by the Ringwood Club on the two previous seasons during which it was competed for, namely: 1915-16 and 1916- 17¹. It has however to be won three times by any club to become the sole possession, and as play is to be resumed this season for the shield Ringwood intends making a bold bid to secure it as its property. A strong team will therefore be put into the field. Surrey Hills is in the same position as Ringwood having already had its name inscribed twice on the shield.

Under Captain Bill Allen, Ringwood won the shield for the third time and it became Ringwood's property. It now hangs in the Ringwood Civic Centre (or did until the new municipal arrangements came into being. Let us hope the new Commissioners appreciate this bit of history)². Bill Allen was a fast bowler and produced some remarkable figures this season: 4/26, 5/59, 6/9, 5/19, 4/23, and 5/48. He won the Reporter Association bowling trophy that season taking 57 wickets at an average of 5.77 per wicket. One old time cricketer at a cricket reunion remembered Bill Allen thus: 'He used to spit at you as he bowled and his run-up finished almost at the end of your bat. He was fast but a bit erratic. If you could get out of the way, you were alright because the ball would go over the stumps'. There must have

¹ [Author's Note: The seasons were actually 1914-15 and 1915-16.]

² Note (1999). This Shield has now been found along with the RDCA Shield which Ringwood won on three occasions namely, 1922-23, 1924-25, 1926-27 under the name of Ringwood Imperials. Both these shields have been restored and are now in possession of the Ringwood Cricket Club

been a lot of batsmen who could not get out of the way of a Bill Allen ball.

Bill Allen's career spanned about twenty-nine years, from 1908 to about 1937. He played district cricket with East Melbourne and played



Shield won and owned by Ringwood Cricket Club by winning three Premierships in 1914-15, 1915-16 and 1919-20 seasons.

for Victoria in 1915. VGA records show that he made fifty-two runs in 3 innings and took 7 wickets at an average of 20.0. The Ringwood Mail reported that he had been selected to tour England but this seems a little unlikely in view of his short Sheffield Shield career.

Nevertheless, he was certainly a bowler of a very high standard and is reported to have broken eleven stumps during his pennant career. His speed led to one Mooroolbark player exclaiming 'He's not a bowler, he's a bloody tornado' and he refused to face up to Allen after seeing him clean bowl four batsmen who were bruised by his express deliveries. Allen saved the situation and displayed his versatility by changing to slow left arm spinners at which he was equally proficient. However, what of Croydon, Wonga Park, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth and Montrose? They formed what must have been one of the shortest-lived cricket associations in the history of cricket—The Croydon District Cricket Association. In the Ringwood and Croydon Chronicle of 26 September, the Croydon Club reported:

Now that the war is over, cricket has again been resuscitated in Croydon. At a General Meeting of members and others interested in cricket held on Monday night, 15th inst. officers were elected, the President (Mr. A. Koop) presiding. The prospect of an Association being formed in this district by clubs representing Kilsyth, Lilydale, Mooroolbark, Croydon, Ringwood and Bayswater was discussed and delegates elected to attend a meeting for that purpose . . .

Whether Bayswater attended the meeting is not known, but they did not join the Association. Instead they played matches as arranged by their secretary with the following amazing results:

Bayswater 8/88 d Surrey Hills Club IX 32.

Bayswater 121 d Langwell and Davies 45.

Bayswater d Adult Deaf and Dumb.

Bayswater 55 d British Football C.C. 28.

Bayswater 53 d Carlton rambles 42.

Bayswater 47 d Brunswick and Coburg.

Bayswater 4/118 d Richmond Ramblers 67.

Bayswater 2/80 d Bohemians 53.

Bayswater 124 d Langwell and Davies 72 and 24.

Bayswater 144 d Hawthorn Lacrosse.

Bayswater 153 d Clifton Ramblers 30.

Bayswater 6/152 d Erratics 56.

Bayswater 109 d Rising Sun 84.

Bayswater 5/185 d British Football C.C. 78.

Bayswater 109 d Dalgetys 61.

Bayswater 1/136 d Brunswick-Coburg 91.

Lilydale continued with the Lilydale District Cricket Association and as we have read previously Ringwood stayed with the Reporter Association to win the Shield.

We do not know very much about the season's results as the main district interest was in whether Ringwood would win the Reporter Shield. Further, the reporting of results by clubs to the local papers was not the best. However, it became evident that the competition became a battle between Croydon and Mooroolbark. From some sketchy information we believe that Mooroolbark won a match against Croydon which ended in June or July, 1920, and gave them the premiership.

The Mooroolbark team was: M. Rae, L. G. Rae, H. Tomkins, A. Beatty, H. S. Sherlock, H. Blair, S. Priestley, W. Ahern, S. Rae, and M. Doherty.



Ringwood Takes Over A Cricket Association

*But if with equal craft he meets
Your wiles, and does not blench;
If ev'ry bowler in your team
Desires the restful bench,
And there he stands, the unsubdued,
With dauntless front and eye,
Prepared to smack your choicest balls
To realms unheard-of, why—
Don't ask my advice, you see,
No, not at any price, you see;
But ten to one the trick were done
If I were in your team, you see!*

—'Free Advice', Norman Gale, 1862-1942.

WE have seen how the Croydon Cricket Club was the driving force behind the formation of two cricket associations—the Lilydale Cricket Association in 1906 and the Croydon District Cricket Association in 1919. In the latter case, Croydon had tried very hard to get Ringwood to join the Association and we saw the reason why Ringwood had refused.

Now Croydon tried again with some success. In September, 1920, the Ringwood and Croydon Chronicle reported:

NEW ASSOCIATION FORMED

Cr. Miles, the Chairman, said he had much pleasure in presenting a shield if a new association to be called the Ringwood and District *Cricket* Association would be formed for competition by the clubs joining the new Association. He did not think it wise to go further than Mitcham and from what he had heard, Croydon and Bayswater were willing to join them. They would have to decide at once what they were going to do as the delegates would meet at Box Hill on the following night to arrange for the 'Reporter' competition for this year-

The meeting was unanimous in accepting the offer to give a shield for competition and a motion was passed that an association be formed to be called the Ringwood and District Cricket Association- The area comprised in the new Association will be as follows: Shires of Lillydale and Fern Tree Gully and Mitcham, Warrandyte and Vermont.

In order to expedite matters and to organise the new association on a working basis the following were appointed to interview the clubs in the areas above named:- Mr. Miles (Chairman)' R. Goodall (Secretary) and Messrs Howship, Wilkins, and J Goodall.

The shield donated by Councilor A. T. Miles was valued at ten guineas (\$21) which was a considerable amount of money in those days, and probably represented about three weeks wages for a laborer in the 1920s- Cr- Augustus Temple Miles, Tasmanian born, moved to Ringwood about 1910 and ran an orchard specialising in quinces and reputed to be the largest orchard for quinces in Australia-

Although Cr. Miles played only golf and tennis, he also had a strong interest in both football and cricket. He was President of the Shire of Lillydale in 1922-23 and was unanimously elected Mayor of the Municipality of Ringwood when the Borough of Ringwood was created in 1924. Possibly the creation of a cricket association centred on Ringwood was one of many tactics used by Cr. Miles in establishing Ringwood as a centre of importance leading to the creation of a separate municipality. However, Cr. Miles did claim that the only object he had in giving the trophy 'was to foster sport in the district and to get the younger players to take a greater interest in the game, which, hitherto, was confined to senior cricketers'. The Miles Shield had to be won three times before it became the property of any club.



**Cr. A. T. Miles, Shire of Lillydale, Founder and First President of the
Ringwood and District Cricket Association.**

On Wednesday, 29th September, 1920, a further meeting attended by delegates of Montrose, Ringwood, The Diggers (a Ringwood team), Croydon and Mooroolbark elected office bearers as follows: President: Cr. A. T. Miles; Vice-presidents: Presidents of competing clubs; Secretary: M. Howship; Treasurer: Roy Wilkins; Auditor: M. Barrett.

The draft rules were read and adopted and fixtures for five rounds commencing on 23 October and finishing on 8 February were approved. No cricket was played in January 1921 probably because of fruit picking and harvesting.

True to form, Ringwood's October weather turned on the rain for the opening day and prevented play. The heavy rain was also responsible for the bridge over Mullum creek in Warrandyte Road, Ringwood, giving way and falling into the water, completely blocking the road as far as vehicular traffic was concerned'. Ringwood's weather has kept up this tradition ever since for the opening rounds in October.

Play did commence the following Saturday and so began what every-one regarded a very successful season. At the annual meeting in September, 1921, Cr. Miles summarised the season as follows:

The chairman said that he was pleased to find that the association had been a success, which was all the more creditable seeing that it was not started until late in the year, its success was due to the interest taken in the contests by the competing teams. Croydon had been successful in winning the trophy last year, and he had much pleasure in congratulating that club upon its success. He hoped they would have a more successful season this coming year, and that the association would be the means of giving an impetus to cricket in this district.

In season 1921-22 Fern Tree Gully, Bayswater, and Ringwood Churches were admitted to the Association. This led to the competition being split into two grades:

A Grade: Fern Tree Gully, Ringwood Diggers, Ringwood Churches, Bayswater and Ringwood Imperials.

B Grade: Wonga Park, Montrose, Croydon and Mooroolbark.

This would appear to be a split on a locality basis only to reduce the amount of time in travelling.

The Annual Meeting agreed to a points system in which four points were allocated for an outright win, three points for a first innings win and two points for a draw.

It was also agreed to institute that bane of all club secretaries, a fines system. In this case the fine was 2/6d (25c) for failing to send a match report to the Editor of the Ringwood Chronicle by the following Tuesday after the match.

The Association was now gaining strength. It decided 'to arrange a turf match during the season with one of the city or suburban teams', as well as a match with the 'Reporter' competition, the latter to be played if possible on ANA Day on the East Ringwood Ground. In each of the matches, a player was to be chosen from each team in the competition. This was to be the clash of the two RDCAs—the Reporter District Cricket Association and the Ringwood and District Cricket Association.

The team chosen for the match against Reporter was:

W. Allen, Ringwood Imperials; J. Goodall, Ringwood Diggers; R. Webber, Ringwood Churches; Hon. A. E. Chandler, MLC, Bayswater; G. Pickett, Fern Tree Gully; L. Farmer (Capt), Croydon; G. Bladen, Montrose; H. Tompkins, Mooroolbark; L. M. Howship, Ringwood Imperials; H. Burch, Wonga Park; E. M. Rae, Mooroolbark; Emergencies: C. Walden, Ringwood Imperials; J. Cheong, Croydon; S. Johnston, Bayswater.

Both R. Webber and the Hon. A. E. Chandler, MLC, were unavailable and were replaced by J. Cheong and A. Kleinert, Bayswater. Although the Ringwood association was not disgraced, it lost to Reporter 195 runs to 236. W. Allen, opening bat for Ringwood made seventy-one runs and G. Pickett took 3 wickets in a hat trick for thirty-nine runs.

There were two sequels to this match. The Secretary of the Ringwood Association 'stated that he had purchased a new ball for this match, and as they had used the leggings belonging to Imperials, for the match, he had given the ball to that club when the game was finished, and he desired the meeting to endorse his action which was done by motion'. Balls seem to have been almost as valuable in 1921 in Ringwood as they were in Portland in 1848 (See end of Chapter 1). The meeting was also unanimous 'in deciding that Mr. Pickett should be presented with a new hat, at a cost of 30s (\$3), for having gained the hat trick in the most important match of the season'. It was the second time that Pickett, a 19 year old, had taken a hat trick in the season. He should have been very happy with his success.

There was much support for the Association although there was still some heart-burning about the centre being Ringwood. 'One of the pleasing features, and one attended with beneficial results, was to see gentlemen of the standing of the Hon. A. E. Chandler, Dr. Langley (of Ringwood), and Mr. Dates (an old 'has-been') taking part in the matches with as much zeal and energy as young colts. When the leading men in the district take an active part in fostering the game, cricket is sure to advance . . . "

There was some dissent when it was proposed that the premiership trophies be presented at a smoke night on 8 June, 1922 in the Ringwood Mechanics Hall. One writer complained that this excluded the ladies who attended the matches, and provided tea and arranged entertainment for club functions. 'Moreover, no fewer than seven of the actual players in the premier team do not smoke. Also the majority of them are teetotallers' (The 'cold water boys' of Mooroolbark would have been pleased about this) He also opined that the presentation should be held in Croydon and not Ringwood 'which is on the edge of the district'.

The premiership had been won by Mooroolbark after a three-day final against Ringwood Imperials. Mooroolbark had been undefeated during the season, a remarkable record as they only had sufficient players to make a team and no more.

At the presentation night, Cr. Miles, obviously recognising some of the opposition to the siting of the headquarters, said that 'the cricket association had been formed in Ringwood for the special purpose of giving an impetus to the game, and to encourage and develop young players whom they must depend upon in the future, and not for the purpose of interfering or clashing with any other association'.

Kilsyth was admitted in 1922 without a home ground, but one was not far away. On Saturday, 6 January, 1923, the Kilsyth Recreation Reserve was opened on the 'Rosebank' Estate. Sports were held and followed by the opening by Cr. Mackinlay at 3 o'clock. Then there was a cricket match and Captain Billy Fairbank was presented with the ball, used in the first match, mounted on a nice pedestal with two glass domes and inscribed 'To W. Fairbank (Capt) - a memento of the first match played and won on the Kilsyth C.G. 2/12/22'. This was followed by a 'soiree' at 8.00 p.m. with games, dancing, singing and comedy to raise more funds for improvements to the ground. Social events were not common in the 20s, so people made the most of it when one occurred.

In 1923 Boronia and Mt Dandenong were admitted as new clubs at the annual meeting held on 20 September. On 8 October, Olinda applied to join, but were refused. 'It was pointed out that the area of that club was outside the radius, and to bring it within the jurisdiction of the association would necessitate a revision and amendment of the rules ... " Perhaps if Olinda had their application in on time, the delegates might have looked more kindly at it.



Memento of first match played and won on Kilsyth Cricket Ground
2 December, 1922, and now in the possession of Roy Baldwin

In 1924-25, the Association decided to limit the duration of semi-finals to not more than 3 days, but the final was still to be played out. Montrose withdrew from the competition.

The Association now played an A and a B team in two matches against the Reporter Association. Bill Allen was in devastating form this season both with the ball and the bat. In the A team he took 5/29 which gave them a win 161 runs to 9/160. In a later match as captain of Ringwood, Bill Allen scored 158 in a large total of 449 against Ringwood Churches.

The Association was not satisfied that it had fielded its strongest two teams against Reporter. 'Considerable discussion ensued on the absence of several players from the matches with Box Hill on A.N.A. day without acquainting the responsible officer that they would be unable to play. Much inconvenience and doubt was occasioned thereby and necessitated interviewing other players just prior to the match'. Things have not changed much in seventy years!

The Association also introduced a charge of 6d (5 cents) for the semi and final matches and 'few fish escaped the net of Mr. Milner at the gate'.

Snakes were still prevalent in the area . . .

A diversion was caused at Mooroolbark on Saturday by the appearance of a snake on the arena where the match Croydon v Ringwood was in progress. Quite a stir resulted, and Umpire Ingwersen stopped the play during which Mr. Frank Leach who was batting, **Captain of the Croydon • Team, despatched and removed the reptile.**

An innovative Association Executive decided to change the format of the annual presentation night to a concert and dance at the Ringwood Town Hall. There had been some criticism the previous season about the smoke night and W. Baldwin (Kilsyth) had returned the tickets for that club 'on account of all men in the district being teetotallers'. 'It was generally thought that the usual smoke night should give way to a more popular form of gathering where both ladies and gentlemen could assemble in a social way.'

By season 1925-26, practically all clubs had laid concrete pitches and uniform conditions prevailed throughout the Association. Croydon North was admitted to the Association and Bayswater departed. The Lilydale Council was offered six acres (2.4 ha) at Croydon North for £500 (\$1,000) by a Mr. McEvoy or between two to four acres (.8 to 1.6 ha) for between £30 and £40 per acre. The latter was accepted and in the final event the Council bought five acres in August 1926.

The Association applied to be a part of Country Week and was admitted subject to their combining with the Mountain District Cricket Association. Mountain Districts were not having this! They

refused to select RDCA players in their team because they were 'unknown quantities'.

The final this season was played between Croydon and Ringwood Churches. Ben Cheong was keeping for Croydon to G. T. Swindon's googlies. Swindon took 8/35 with Cheong gaining five stumpings and two catches. Swindon unfortunately caught the 'flu by the second innings and Ben did not get a further victim.

On 28 July, 1926, 'At Mr. Klix's residence, Messrs E Klix, ? Neal, C. Howship, P. Howship, Bruce, Cavill, Daley, Greenhouse, and W. Blood Jr met for the purpose of discussing the formation of a cricket club. At the instance of Mr. Cavill, it was resolved to constitute a cricket club to be styled the Ringwood East Cricket Club . . .' Playing membership was fixed at 5 shillings (50 cents) and 2/6 (25 cents) for honorary members.

Also in July 1926, Heathmont made moves to qualify for membership of the Association. A deputation consisting of Messrs H. Pump, G. W. Muller, E. F. Wiesland, A. Washusen, and F. Clota asked the Ringwood Council to acquire land for recreation purposes at Heathmont. They had a definite offer of a piece of land of six acres (2.4 ha) bounded by Canterbury Road, Waterloo, Scott and Morton Streets. At that time, the Heathmont Club had to play on an estate. 'They wished to join the Ringwood Association but were unable to comply with the condition that a ground should be provided.' In the previous season, Heathmont had played matches as arranged by its secretary and had won 17 out of the 20 matches played. Consequently the club was eager to try itself out in the competitive arena.

Working bees were the order of the day in September, 1926. Croydon erected a shelter shed to protect the ladies preparing afternoon tea, erected seats and cleared tree stumps.

For season 1926-27 Bayswater and Montrose were readmitted and Ringwood East joined for the first time. Mt Dandenong withdrew.

The Association was now clearly divided into two distinct geographical divisions. In Croydon division were Croydon North, Mooroolbark, Montrose, Kilsyth, Wonga Park and Croydon. In Ringwood division were Ringwood, Fern Tree Gully, Ringwood Churches, Bayswater, Wantirna, Ringwood East, Boronia and Ringwood Rovers.

To be eligible to play in this competition, players 'must have resided in or have been property owners in the district during the ensuing season for 30 consecutive days previous to commencing play'. To be eligible to play in the finals, a player had to be either a property owner in the district or have played in six matches during the season.

There was also a move afoot for the establishment of a second XI competition as some clubs now had up to 39 registered players and it was obvious that not all would get a regular game throughout the season. It did appear at first that there was not going to be sufficient grounds for this purpose. Nevertheless, a B grade competition began on 30 October, 1926 with five clubs entering a team. This became six on 20 November, when Ringwood entered a team as 'Mr. Pratt had kindly allowed the new eleven to use his paddock opposite the MUIOOF hall.

This season also saw the election of Mr. E. C. Sleeman as Secretary of the Association. Ted Sleeman was the Editor of the Ringwood Mail and Croydon Chronicle. He had arrived in Ringwood in 1923 after farming in Queensland, South Africa and Victoria and working in the timber trade. After reporting local sporting matches and generally assisting in the work of the Ringwood Mail, he graduated step by step to become reporter, Sub-editor, Editor and finally proprietor of the Mail. He was said to be a man of independent outlook. When he was

Secretary of the RDCA, he was offered assistance in the form of a proposed appointment of an assistant secretary. Ted's reply was characteristic of the man, 'I either do the job myself or I resign'. Executive members may have been worried about Ted's 'filing system' which was commonly called 'Ted's piling system'.

The RDCA was accepted as a member of the Country Cricket League and its representative on the League, Mr. Roger Webber, set about mending the bridges between Ringwood and the Mountain District Association. He suggested that visits might be exchanged between the two Associations and matches played on Melbourne Cup day and Boxing Day. This proposal was accepted and two matches were played on Boxing Day, 1926, the 1st XIs at Emerald and the 2nd XIs at Ringwood. In both matches Ringwood was victorious, the 1sts winning 193 to 141 runs, and the 2nds by 245 to 80.

Consequently, when, because of excessive entries, Ringwood was combined with Mountain Districts, Ringwood was asked to submit nine names. They were G. Chandler, C. Hunt, S. Rae, R. Lumsden, F. Bissett, P. James, M. Wheeler, W. Edyvane and H. Tomkins. However, Mountain Districts were not finished with Ringwood yet. In March, 1927, Ringwood was complaining that no RDCA player had two games in the combined team and that in one match incompetent captaincy caused the team to bat first on a wet wicket.

In this season, the Association dealt with its first disciplinary charges laid by an Umpire. G. W. Giles, who was officiating in a match between Bayswater and Fern Tree Gully, charged three players, P. Staig, F. Pickett and T. Daykin with alleged insulting language. No evidence was presented in Daykin's case so that was dismissed; Pickett was indignant about the matter as he claimed he only told the Umpire he 'was too old to act as an Umpire'-case dismissed; Staig did not turn up. Giles said 'Staig used the language referred to, and threatened to

pull my whiskers'. In another match that week, C. Edwards reported E. J. Tew of Fern Tree Gully for using insulting language. What Tew said was not reported but it could not have been very gentlemanly because he was the only player found guilty. He was 'stood down' for the rest of the season.

In an endeavour to attract Umpires, the Association proposed that players be levied 1 shilling (10 cents). This prompted A Delegate' to write to the Mail and suggest that: 'less abuse of Umpires would solve the difficulty more quickly than 1/- levy'. One shilling was a considerable amount of money in 1927 when a boy's suit could be bought for four shillings and six pence (45 cents).

Meanwhile, Heathmont, still without a ground, played 26 matches for the season with 18 wins and 8 losses. Ringwood East did not have a very auspicious beginning for its first season as it did not win a match.

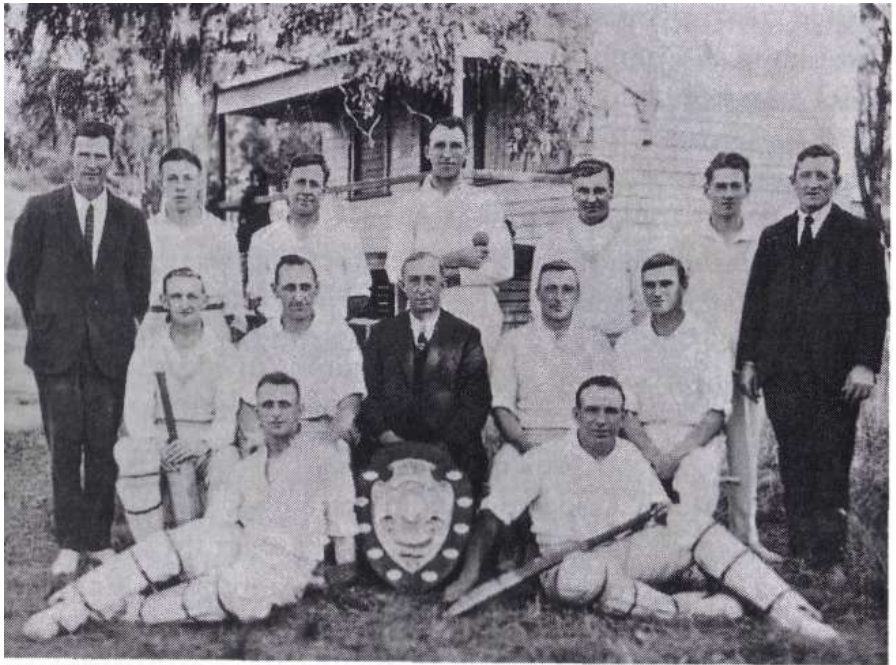
In season 1927-28 Roger Webber suggested that the Council should put down a turf wicket at Ringwood as the Victorian Cricket Association would give financial support. He further suggested that it would cost less than the 25 pounds required for a concrete pitch on the improved Ringwood Recreation Reserve. 'Another aspect of this proposition is that, with a good up-to-date cricket ground with a turf wicket, we could seek admission into sub-district cricket'. Roger was only forty years ahead of his time.

The Hon. A. E. Chandler and Cr. A. T. Miles donated shields for competition in A and B Grades. The division of teams by area was abandoned and the grades were now as follows:

A Grade: Bayswater, Boronia, Ringwood East, Ringwood Central, Croydon North, Ringwood, Croydon, Kilsyth, Wonga Park and Wantirna.

B Grade: Ringwood East, Ringwood Central, Ringwood, Croydon North, Kilsyth, Croydon, Wantirna, Wonga Park and Montrose.

Montrose later withdrew because it could not get enough players as the bad fruit season had caused many young men to leave the district. Bayswater entered another team in B Grade in their place.



Ringwood Cricket Club Premiers and Shield Winners 1927.

Back row: W. Smith (President), W. Bowen, J. Goodall, W. Allen, B. Godfrey, L. Pratt, A. Lindsay (Official Scorer).

Centre row: F. Pollard, A. F. Bissett, A. T. Miles (Mayor), J. Knox (Captain), C. Walden.

Front row: S. Y. Bissett, W. (Bull) Howship.

(Note the Ringwood Pavilion at the background.)

Ringwood Churches had now become Ringwood Central and the Ringwood Rovers had folded up because the club was in debt. The Association decided that, until the amount owing by the Rovers Club

had been paid, the members would be disqualified from playing in the Association. However, Ted Sleeman paid the Rovers account so that ex Rovers players could play with other clubs and he relied 'on their honour to reimburse him later'.

In this season, the RDCA decided to present pennants to the premiership clubs (as well as the shields) so that the clubs had a permanent souvenir of their premierships.

Representative matches were played against other associations and for the first time, Ringwood played a match against the Lilydale District Cricket Association. Lilydale won by 165 runs to 134. Despite this setback, Ringwood still defeated the Reporter Association by 196 runs to 179.

Life memberships were introduced by the Association and R. G. Wilkins, first Secretary of the Association, and C. A. Hochkins were the first recipients. Hochkins was President of the Croydon North Cricket Club and had represented the South West riding on the Shire of Lilydale since 1925. No doubt his influence at Shire Hall had been of some benefit to the Association. He was also President of the Association for season 1925-26.

Season 1928-29 saw the Association extend its area of jurisdiction to include the whole of the Shire of Fern Tree Gully. This allowed Belgrave to enter a team in the RDCA whilst still keeping a team in the Mountain District Cricket Association, which then comprised Belgrave, Silvan, Monbulk and Emerald. It brought into the Association one of the great enthusiasts and identities of the game, Dr E. Jorgensen of Belgrave. He celebrated his entry by making 151 in 70 minutes against Ringwood Centrals.

Once again on Boxing Day, Ringwood pitted its team against the Lilydale Association and was beaten conclusively (or should I say

comprehensively?) 121 to 8/276. Ringwood and Lilydale were also drawn closer together by being grouped together in Country Week.

Ringwood Council purchased ten acres (4 ha) of land at Heathmont so Heathmont were at last able to realise their long held ambition and enter the RDCA. Wantirna withdrew so this left nineteen teams in two grades.

The meritorious feat of the season was the effort of a fifteen year-old lad named Jim Lobb playing for Ringwood Centrals on their home ground on Howship's paddock at East Ringwood against Lilydale. Lobb took 6/35 including a hat trick and top scored with 49.

Two other awards were made this season which do not take place today. A trophy was donated by Mr. Upstill, Linotype Operator on the Ringwood Mail for competition among club secretaries for reports of matches throughout the season. Points were gained for punctuality, accuracy, neatness and conciseness. Mr. W. Hearn of Bayswater won this trophy. Also H. Pratt of Ringwood won a wicket-keeping award.

In season 1929-30, the Association began to tighten up on conduct of matches. The time of start was now to be entered in the scorebook and only fifteen minutes grace was allowed. The Ringwood Council was still refusing to lay down a pitch on the new Heathmont Park. The Council was of the view that past history of such events suggested the club ought to adopt a self-help project with subscriptions and voluntary labour. The Council was prepared if the club was agreeable, to do the ploughing, grading, and rolling at the end of the cricket



Gold Club Medals awarded to D. Paterson of Ringwood Churches Cricket Club between 1922 and 1929. Now in the possession of his daughter-in-law, Mrs. D. Paterson.

season, and to provide up to £18 (\$36) towards the cost of materials.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Association, Cr. A. T. Miles resigned and was made a Life Member of the Association. The Association which he had founded, was now a lusty infant and did not need nurturing any more. The Association decided not to affiliate with the Country Week Association this year in view of the difficulty

of players obtaining the leave necessary for the matches. Instead, the Association affiliated with the Victorian Junior Cricket Union for the first time.

Twenty-four teams were entered in the competition. Montrose re-entered and Upper Fern Tree Gully entered for the first time. Also, for the first time, Ringwood defeated the Lilydale Association on Boxing Day.



The Troubled Thirties

*Scorn not such triumphs—
He who holds the bat,
May conquer yet on other fields.*

—'Carthusian Memories', Dr. Haig-Brown.

THE effect of the economic depression was felt in cricket circles right throughout the 1930s. In 1927, unemployment had begun to rise from six per cent of the work-force to thirty per cent at its peak. Wool and wheat prices had begun tumbling in 1928 and as Australia was highly dependent on these commodities for export income, everybody felt the effect of the lower prices. Australians had enjoyed a rising standard of living for almost three decades and consequently the dramatic economic turn-around produced an emotional effect on people's outlook as well as on their pocket.

In Ringwood, the Council perceived the changed economic circumstances very quickly and established an unemployment register in January, 1928. During the next four to five years unemployment was a problem to which all the people in the Ringwood district gave their attention, time and money. By 1931 there were 178 registered unemployed in the Ringwood district but these people knew they were not alone with their problem. The council made the pavilion in Central Reserve available as a food depot. Receiving depots were set

up in local shops to receive clothes for those who could not afford to buy them. Dances were held and the proceeds were applied to the relief of the unemployed.

Sewing bees were established to make warm clothing for the winter. On one occasion, fifty-five ladies turned up to cut and sew 100 yards of material into 'warm clothing, pillow slips, and wool eider quilts'. The unemployed responded by voluntarily cleaning up the grounds of the bowling club and the local churches. Unemployment was everybody's problem and there was total community involvement in beating it.

The effects on the Ringwood and District Cricket Association were relatively minor. Paid Umpires were dispensed with. In season 1931-32, 'in place of the usual premiership pennant, the cash value was presented to Boronia for the purpose of obtaining caps for the team. The Reporter District requested that the inter-association matches on Australia Day be discontinued 'until brighter times'. No doubt the players had less money in their pockets than they used to have and money remained in short supply in the district for the rest of the thirties.

In an endeavour to help the clubs, the Association reduced entry fees and fines in season 1931-32 which made it very difficult for the Association to manage its finances. The number of teams, however, increased from 24 in 1930 to 33 in 1939 despite the tight times. C Grade was introduced in season 1930-31 to provide more uniform competition between the teams.

In this season Boronia won the premiership for the third time and won the right to retain the A.T. Miles shield.

The C grade final proved to be sensational. Upper Fern Tree Gully and Belgrave played off in the final. At the end of the second day of

play, Upper Gully had three wickets in hand and ten runs to get to win the match. Play was scheduled to start at 2.15 p.m. on the following Saturday, but as Upper Gully had not turned up at 2.19 p.m., the Umpires, at the request of the Belgrave captain, called play, removed the bails and awarded the match to Belgrave. Upper Gully subsequently claimed the match by protest but the Tribunal dismissed the protest.

1930 saw the establishment of a new industry in Ringwood —the manufacture of Godfrey cricket bats. In its first advertisement, the company was not backward in announcing who had made runs with a Godfrey bat.

A feature of the semi-final cricket has been the use for the first time of what promises to be celebrated bats made by B. Godfrey of Heathmont. G. Lindsay made 94 in the Ringwood v Croydon match on a Godfrey bat, and the effect on the blade was hardly noticeable. Lumsden of Boronia and Page of Belgrave were others to make good scores off Godfrey bats, a supply of which will be available next season.

In season 1931-32, the Association, probably as a result of the C grade *final* the previous season, introduced fines for late starts. Clubs not ready to start within 15 minutes of the appointed time were fined 2s 6d (25 cents). Clubs not ready to start within 20 minutes of the appointed time were fined 5 shillings (50 cents) and the opposing side could lodge a protest.

The residents of South Warrandyte formed a cricket club on 24 November 1931 and, as was the usual custom, set about constructing a cricket pitch and levelling a cricket ground with voluntary labour. A dance was held to raise funds to buy the necessary materials.

In November, Belgrave and Ringwood East had the smart idea, by mutual arrangement, of declaring their first innings closed after scoring one run each. The Secretary of the Association reported that as the second innings was not decisive, he had not awarded any points for the match. The Ringwood East delegates tried to salvage something out of the situation by moving that 'the match be credited a tie and 2 points be awarded to each team. The Association delegates were not impressed and the motion was lost. Despite this setback, Ringwood East won the A grade premiership.

Wantirna re-entered the Association after an absence of two years and Warrandyte, South Warrandyte and Upwey joined as new clubs. Warrandyte had continued playing with the Reporter Association after Ringwood left. In 1920-21 they won the B Grade premiership but no more, despite being in the finals several times. They had also had a short sojourn in A Grade with little success. Warrandyte continued to maintain two teams in the Reporter Association after joining the RDCA.

Belgrave and Upper Croydon withdrew from the Association in 1932 and Warrandyte brought in another team. Belgrave's withdrawal threatened the position of Sutton Lennard as President of the RDCA but a way seems to have been found around the problem. He continued as President until 1937, when ill-health forced him to retire from the position.

In 1933, B. Rimmer, formerly of Ringwood East C.C., who played with Richmond, was selected to play in the Victorian Colts team.

In 1933, Ringwood Imperials combined with Ringwood Centrals and henceforth became known as the Ringwood Cricket Club. Upwey left and joined the Mountain District Association in the next season. The Valley Cricket Club was formed with two teams and played on Cave Hill ground near Lilydale. Scoresby also joined for the first time.

Both these clubs performed creditably in B Grade in their first season, Valley coming second and being beaten in the final by Ringwood with Scoresby coming third.

The 1932-33 season in international matches between England and Australia was the most bitter series ever fought between the two countries. It was known as the 'body line series'. When the Marylebone Cricket Club finally realised what had gone on in Australia, it brought in a law to deal with leg theory and intimidatory bowling. In October 1933, the Victorian Cricket Association solemnly informed the RDCA of the existence of Law 48(b) which read:

Any ball delivered which in the opinion of the Umpire at the bowler's end, is bowled at the batsman with intent to intimidate or injure him, shall be considered unfair, and no ball shall be called and the bowler notified of the reason. If the offence be repeated by the same bowler in the same innings he shall be immediately instructed by the Umpire to cease bowling and the over shall be regarded as completed. Such bowler shall not again be permitted to bowl during the course of the innings then in progress. Law 48(a) shall not apply to this law.

Whether this law made any difference to the way cricket was played in the Association is not recorded.

In 1933, the Association adopted the practice of presenting the Association pennants and trophies at the various club functions instead of holding an Association function. This was an economy measure. The Association began the year with a credit balance of £7 9s 7d (\$14.97), spent £44 (\$88) and finished the season with a credit of £7 0s 7d (\$14.07). So in these poor times, it nearly balanced the budget. It received 18 shillings for cricket balls. Compare that with peak sales of cricket balls by the RDCA in 1987-88 of \$58,913.40.

Warrandyte withdrew and Fern Tree Gully returned to the Association in 1934. For some reason which does not appear in the record, the Association settled for six teams in A Grade, 12 teams in B Grade and 8 teams in C Grade. In A Grade, Kilsyth won its third premiership on the trot, a very creditable performance.

Up till now, the Association had not adopted any official colours. As the President of the Association wished to present a blazer to the winner of the all-rounder average in A Grade, he asked that the Association adopt its colours.

The Association opted for dark blue and white, 'the Victorian Eleven colours'. Towards the end of the season, one of the Association's strongest supporters died. The Hon. A. E. Chandler, MLC, had donated a shield for A Grade in 1931, and was a patron of the Association from 1931. He played his first game of cricket in 1890 and in the early years of the Association was still regarded as a good batsman for Bayswater.

Warrandyte returned in season 1935-36 together with Mooroolbark. North Ringwood joined for the first time and the first of the church clubs joined in its own right—the Catholic Young Men's Society of Ringwood.

Bayswater North had joined the previous season and it is obvious from the following story that its facilities were pretty crude. Valley played Bayswater North on their home ground and the state of the ground on the two Saturdays of the match led to a protest by Valley on the grounds that 'the conditions of play during the match were unequal'. On the first day's play, the North Bayswater ground was covered with blackberries. On the second day's play, the North Bayswater team had cleared the blackberries from the ground. The verdict of the Association was that Valley's protest be upheld and that 'in the event of the Valley Club's position in the four rendering it

necessary, the match to be replayed'. Both Valley and Bayswater North made the four and I would like to be able to say that Valley won the premiership but regrettably historical records show that Bayswater North won the C Grade premiership that year.

Economic conditions were improving in the district and the Association reinstated its annual ball with tickets at 5 shillings (50 cents) a double or 2s 6d (25 cents) a single.

Tunstall (now Nunawading/Doncaster) applied to join the Association in season 1936-37. In order to accept them the Association's rules relating to geographic boundaries, were amended to include the Shire of Mitcham and Blackburn.

The appointment of professional Umpires had been suspended early in the depression and although the matter had been raised several times by clubs in the intervening period, it continued to be the general opinion of the Association that neither the Association nor the clubs were financial enough to be able to afford payment to Umpires. But there was always a general feeling that professional Umpires would be desirable when financial circumstances would permit. Twelve professional Umpires were appointed in season 1936-37 but there were many clubs opposed to professional Umpires on the grounds of expense. Consequently, the Umpires' positions were precarious and their appointments were only for each season. Nevertheless, the Umpires had sufficient confidence in their future to form their first Umpires' association in the Ringwood District in October, 1937. They resolved to wear white hats and white coats, to levy each Umpire 2 shillings to cover initial expenses and to request the RDCA to arrange for transport of Umpires to the various grounds by the clubs as an act of courtesy.

At the Association's Annual Meeting in 1937, Mr. Edie (Montrose delegate) and member of the RDCA Executive, said 'in advocating

professional Umpires for both A and B grades matches, it was a progressive step, and the only argument raised against it was that of expense. Cricket was the greatest game being played today. (Hear, Hears from the delegates.) A young fellow would pay 1 shilling for his cigarettes without a murmur, he would take his girl out to the 'flicks' (cinema) and pay for the best seats quite willingly, yet when asked to contribute 1 shilling (10 cents) a Saturday for three hour's clean sport they said it was too expensive.' Mr. Lou Salvana supported Edie.

Messrs H. McAlpin and Mackinlay, in opposing the proposal, said it made too hard a burden for the willing few in the club. Moreover, they contended that they were getting just as many bad decisions from the professionals as from the honorary, and in the appointment of professional Umpires, they were merely turning their honorary Umpires into professional Umpires and they failed to see any improvement in the standard of play in consequence.

The Association delegates had had enough of the economic argument and decided the time was ripe for paid Umpires. Advertisements were placed in the local papers for paid Umpires at the rate of 7s 6d (75 cents) per Saturday. The delegates went further and decided it was time that players in A Grade should appear in correct cricketing attire. If not, a fine of 2 shillings per player would be imposed.

An amusing sequel occurred in the C grade final between Kilsyth and Boronia at which A grade professional Umpires officiated. Rodaughan (Kilsyth) appealed to the Umpires against the light. On crossing over to take up his position at square leg, the Umpire informed him that before a player could appeal against the light, he must have his cap on. The appeal was allowed when the 'capped' batsman at the other end appealed.

This season also saw further development of the pernicious practice of stacking lower grade teams with players from higher grades when the lower grade team appeared to have a chance of making the finals. Valley transferred two A grade players to C grade and North Ringwood transferred Alf Whitehouse from A grade to C grade for one match. Alf made 163 not out and took 3 wickets for 18. North Ringwood claimed that Alf 'sustained a nasty injury to his right arm' during the week previous to the match. (The 'nasty injury' did not prevent Alf from hitting fifteen sixes!)

Since 1931, the RDCA had played an annual match against the Melbourne Cricket Club at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. For the first time Ringwood defeated the MCC team 176 to 99. The RDCA may have been assisted by the inclusion of the renowned cricket writer Neville Cardus in the MCC team:

NEVILLE CARDUS GETS HIS FIRST WICKET IN AUSTRALIA

The famous English Cricket commentator, Neville Cardus, played with the Melbourne Cricket Club team, and this may have contributed to Ringwood's victory for Cardus is a better writer than a cricketer, and his lengthy spell at the bowling crease produced 75 runs for two wickets and when he tricked Fiedler l.b.w. he had secured his first wicket in Australia. Neville Cardus was turning quite a lot and making the ball rise sharply. He bowled with a certain amount of bad luck.

The victorious Ringwood team comprised: G. Chandler, W. Baldwin, A. Whitehouse, B. Rimmer, M. McAlpin, G. Fiedler, F. Hodgkins, P. Chandler, E. Beaumont, F. Neal, H. Mackinlay and A. Maroney. Two members of this team, W. Baldwin and G. Fiedler, had produced a record opening partnership of 283 for Kilsyth in the previous season.

The RDCA had been having trouble with its residential qualifying rule which required players to live in certain areas to qualify to play with member clubs. The result of some lateral thinking was put to the RDCA's Annual Meeting at the Ringwood Town Hall on 1 September 1938:

The meeting was one of the most momentous in the history of the Association, for after being in existence since 1920 as a local district association, providing local sport for local players, the delegates in their wisdom, after a lengthy debate, threw open the boundaries, discarded all residential qualifications, and players now will be able to play in the Ringwood District irrespective of where they reside. The vote on the question was close, 19 being for alteration and 18 against. This far-reaching and momentous decision was carried on the vote of two boys representing North Bayswater and who afterwards confessed that they didn't know what they were voting for. The motion was sponsored by Bayswater and Mooroolbark Clubs and the surprising feature was two vice-presidents, Messrs E. H. Pegler and P. V. Edie, were strong supporters. Of the 19 clubs present, 10 clubs favoured the open boundary and nine opposed it.

What the outcome of this drastic step will be is hard to foresee, but already there are rumours of a new association being formed to cater for local cricketers.

One of those two 'boys' was Laurie Benoit later to become a well known identity in sport in the district.

The outcome has been that in its rapid years of development after World War Two, the RDCA has been able to cope with rapid growth without being restrained by such a restrictive rule.

At this time the Association had about 400 registered players. It was already developing a characteristic which has always been the hallmark of the Association - it was thinking about the future. The Vice-president, Mr. Robert C. Stoney announced at Warrandyte's annual dinner that the Association was 'considering the formation of an inter-school competition under the auspices of the RDCA in order to train the boys'.

Ringwood Council was also looking ahead and bought 'French's property of eight acres (3.2 ha) at £675 (\$1,350). Cr. Frank Parker said 'the district was developing and a recreation reserve was needed. There was a splendid lot of young men resident in the district and the cricket club had won the Ringwood District premiership for the second year in succession'.

January 1939 was a disastrous month for the State of Victoria. In mid-January fire raged through the State for three days claiming seventy-one lives and causing untold destruction of private property and state forests. In the RDCA's district, Warrandyte was the worst affected:

The Secretary reported that through the bush-fires, both the Warrandyte and South Warrandyte Clubs had been put out of action. Their pavilions were destroyed with all the cricket material, and worse still, many players had lost their homes. It was, he stated, doubtful if either club could function any further this year. He did not anticipate any difficulty in finding material for the clubs. Sporting bodies would come to their assistance if required, but if the clubs were not able to place teams in the field, the material would not be required this season.

Various offers had been made and Mr. A. E. Round, one of the Umpires, had offered the fees from one match and had suggested a 1 shilling fund. Following a lengthy discussion it

was decided to give the executive discretionary powers to open a fund to provide cricket material for the two clubs concerned in the event of their being able to function for the season.

Warrandyte was able to scrape together enough material and players to continue the season but South Warrandyte gave it away until next season. Then the Victorian Cricket Association gave both clubs new cricket material to the value of £50 (\$100) each. Sporting goods firms gave new matting, six new bats, two pairs of wicket keeper's gloves, two pairs of wicket keeping pads and six pairs of batting pads with the Association supplying the wickets and the balls.

Towards the end of the season, 12 March, 1939, the opening bat of Ringwood, Hartley McAlpin, made 207 (eleven sixes and twenty-one fours) in a match against Boronia which at that time was a record score for the Association.

During the 1939-40 season there occurred one of those incidents that after it is all over and the dust has settled, one tends to wonder what the fuss was all about:

In January, the Secretary of the RDCA reported that a number of clubs were unfinancial. The delegates passed a motion 'that the defaulting clubs be given until 2 March to pay the current fees for the season, in accordance with Rule 12. Failing payment by that date, that they be debarred from further participation in the competition'. For a motion passed by RDCA delegates, it was simple and easily understood-there could be no misunderstanding.

The Secretary now had all the power he needed and accordingly went about his business telling the clubs to pay up or else (in a very nice way of course). The sequel was a special meeting called by the President on 13 March, 1940 at the request of the Ringwood East Cricket Club.

The President reminded delegates 'that at the previous meeting they had resolved that all unfinancial clubs were to be given until 2 March to pay the current dues for the season. Failing payment clubs were to be debarred from further competition in the Association. Ringwood East had failed to pay their dues. They were given till the following Thursday to pay and when no offer or no attempt had been made to meet their obligation, the Secretary with my concurrence, had notified them that they would not be permitted to take any further part in the competition'.

Mr. Stoney on behalf of Ringwood East said, 'The Ringwood East Club had always carried out their obligations. Other clubs had been given preferential treatment, such as Valley with long standing debit account and South Warrandyte and Warrandyte Clubs in the purchase of new material. We applauded such action. In our case the officials turned a deaf ear to us. We have had a lean year and are in debt. We told the Association we have no money and we were told to stay out— we were undesirable. That attitude does not reflect much credit on the Association. Our President has been called up for war service and our Secretary is in camp. You allowed one club to carry on, but not so us'.

Mr. Stoney further contended that the Association had a £30 (\$60) credit, yet it disqualified a club for debt. 'We offered to pay on the 7th and were told it was too late'. He asked that the club be reinstated or that all clubs who were unfinancial on 2 March be treated the same as Ringwood East. The Secretary reported 'that the only club which had not paid by Wednesday the 6th was Ringwood East.

That club was given till the 7th and when no payment was made, they were notified that they would be debarred from playing. On the morning of the 8th a member of the club saw me and enquired if anything could be done. I replied I couldn't do anything. No money

was offered and nothing has been paid to date. East has been given every opportunity but had never made any offer to pay anything.

The President said East supported the motion at the previous meeting. They had made no application for extension and were well aware of the consequences of not meeting their obligations. They never said, "Give us time and we'll pay by a certain date". In face of the instructions of the delegates, the officials had no option but to carry out their orders. The delegates agreed and endorsed the action of the President and Secretary by fifteen votes to six.

So Ringwood East was the first and only club to be kicked out of the competition. They were not expelled from the Association as the RDCA minute book shows East's delegates as being absent for the rest of the season. Somehow with the aid of the President of the Association, Ringwood East crept into B grade in the next season, which stung the Warrandyte delegate into very strong criticism of the President. However, Ringwood East stayed in to play only nine games and then disappear until after the war.

East returned in the 1945—46 season with nothing being said about bad debts except that 'in view of forfeiture of Ringwood East's deposit in 1941, it was ruled that a guarantee of 10 shillings must be paid with their entry fees'.

Smoking on the field raised itself as an issue at the 1939-40 Annual Meeting: 'The pernicious practice of players smoking on the field was condemned by many of the delegates, but a motion prohibiting the practice was defeated, the voting being 19-20'.

Lilydale joined the Association for the first time and the balance of the Lilydale District Cricket Association became the Yarra Valley District Cricket Association. Fern Tree Gully returned again. Boronia proposed that the C Grade should be limited to players under twenty-

one years of age but several clubs said that they would not be able to field their C Grade team in that case. The idea was defeated.

The Association took the schools' training proposal one step further and the Secretary outlined the proposal to allocate a coach to each school and the Association to provide a shield and supervise the matches. The scheme was referred to the clubs for consideration. Unfortunately, before mature consideration could be applied to the proposal, events were occurring in Europe and Britain which would interrupt cricket planning for some years to come.



War Again!

*There's many a schoolboy's bat and ball
that are gathering dust at home,
For he hears a voice in the future call,
and he trains for the war to come;*

—'Here Died', Henry Lawson.

BRITAIN declared war on Germany in September, 1939. British empire links were still very strong so Australia was automatically at war also. Patriotic fervour was strong in the RDCA:

The President said that no season in the history of the RDCA had opened with better prospects than this year but following their annual meeting, the outbreak of war altered the situation and without being unduly pessimistic he thought this year would be a difficult one for clubs. Members would probably be doing their share for their country's defence and teams would be depleted, but they would carry on the game and keep up the old tradition of playing the game. Success in cricket did not necessarily mean winning the premierships. He was reminded of the words of 'Plum' Warner (Sir Pelham Warner, English cricketer and team manager) who stated that 'if the dictators of the world had played cricket, we would not be in the position we are today'. He agreed that if more time had been spent in sport by the disaffected countries of the world there would be less discontent, unrest and strife. The RDCA this year will face

difficulties which they will face in the same spirit of hope and determination in which they play the game (Applause).

During the following six years of war, the Association kept going only with extreme difficulty. Special rules were made which allowed servicemen to play a match whenever they were home on leave. The Executive was given wide discretion to make whatever arrangements were necessary to keep the game going and the Association functioning. Clothes and foodstuffs were rationed and each person was issued with a set of ration books with coupons which had to be surrendered whenever items of food, or clothing were purchased. Petrol was also rationed and travelling was kept to a minimum, or arrangements were made to travel together. Holiday makers travelled in charabancs (trucks converted to buses) or furniture vans converted for Sunday passenger travel. A small industry sprang up in producing coke to burn in gas producers attached to cars for those who could afford the price of one.

Ringwood and nearby districts were popular holiday destinations. They did not require a great deal of petrol to get there and yet they were still sufficiently rural to attract the city folk. They were also accessible by train. But there were certain disadvantages for the local orchardists as Vice-president of the RDCA, Paul Edie found out when some people from North Fitzroy arrived in their charabancs and furniture vans at Montrose. Paul's customary genial frame of mind disappeared when he found his apple orchard being raided. He promptly nabbed the villain with half a bag of apples and called the police.

One day matches were considered but rejected. Meetings of the Association's delegates were reduced to one—the annual meeting. Clubs were left to find their own Umpires. Hours of play were altered to fit in with railway timetables. Clubs who were forced to withdraw

because of lack of players were made honorary members of the Association with two non-voting delegates.

Through it all, the servicemen always managed to have some cricket gear on hand and cricket was played in many strange countries and in many strange places. In my case, air force units always seemed to have an area which ostensibly was needed for parking of planes but quite often was empty. A piece of concrete would suddenly appear in the middle of this area and matting or carpet of some type would be purloined from somewhere and a game would be on. Inter-unit matches were common or officers would play the other ranks. We always had rabid supporters but our American allies and later Japanese prisoners-of-war, watched with bafflement and wonder.

The best picture of what cricket was like in the RDCA during those war years is in Secretary Ted Sleeman's report to the 1943 Annual Meeting. [Hand written notes not included in web-based e-book]

Worse was to come. Only seven clubs tendered entries in 1943-44. Matting became unobtainable and bats were scarce. Grounds fell into disrepair and were not pleasant places to play cricket on. Malthoid pitches were laid to overcome the shortage of matting. In very hot weather, these tended to play like a sticky turf wicket. However, by 1946-47 things became better. The war was over and everybody wanted to forget it. In this season 36 teams were entered from 20 clubs. New clubs were Cave Hill and Colchester. F. Williams of Scoresby opened the season by taking ten wickets for 13 against East Ringwood and the RDCA was back in business.

In 1945, Edward (Ted) Sleeman, a pioneer in the history of the Association, retired as the Association's Secretary. Ted held the reins of the association in this position for twenty years (1926-1945) at a very trying time for cricket in this area. He had guided its path through the depression years of the early thirties, the fires of 1939, the

war years of 1939 to 1945 and established a firm foundation for its future. He should be regarded as one of the outstanding administrators in the history of the Association.

Wantirna wanted to get more cricket and suggested that matches could now start at 2.45 p.m. instead of 3.00 p.m. Like all good ideas, it had to be planted first until it was approved in season 1947—48.

Some things were still scarce and because the Association could not buy trophies, it gave a cheque for one guinea to each of the premier clubs.

Inter-association matches were revived and the RDCA defeated the Yarra Valley Cricket Association 172 to 63.

In January, 1948, Kilsyth playing at Wonga Park scored 386 runs in three hours. 'A feature of the play was a dashing century scored in twenty-five minutes by T. McPhee. He hit seven sixes and twelve fours. This is the fastest century on record in the Association'. The latter claim was disputed by Ringwood East who claimed that Fred Hodgkins had scored 133 (twelve sixes and eight fours) and a century in twenty-four minutes playing against Mooroolbark in B Grade.

The matter of a junior competition had been raised in 1946 but 'while the clubs favoured the proposal, they could not organise the teams', so the matter lapsed for another year. In 1948, Fred Leach of Croydon North raised the matter again. He said that the D Grade could easily be arranged as a junior competition for players of 16 to 17 years of age, with the provision of two senior players. Such a competition could be held on Saturday mornings which would help to solve difficulties in getting grounds. It was placed on the agenda for discussion at the next annual meeting.

Frustration was beginning to show in at least one club about this inactivity. Three years had elapsed since a junior competition was first

mooted and the Association seemed to be getting no nearer to finalisation. A small group led by the Ringwood Soccer Club decided that there was only one way to achieve a junior competition. A small meeting was set up of those who were known to be in favour, four entries were obtained, and a draw made for the competition to commence. The Association Executive were then told about it and their backing sought. The Executive met and decided to support it. The Ringwood Mail (Ted Sleeman again) donated a trophy for the competition. Other clubs in the Association were then invited to join. Delegates at a general meeting were then told that the first round of matches would start on 16 October. An age limit of 17 had been imposed and a senior player was to act as an Umpire. A committee of three had been formed to run the first round and delegates were told that it was hoped that the RDCA would take the competition over.

Having been presented with a *fait accompli*, the delegates graciously passed a motion for the inclusion of the junior competition in the RDCA. The delegates also decided that for the first year the competition would be open to all youths of any club who play in the Saturday Morning League would not affect a player's status in the afternoon grades and that Messrs G. Collis, G. Holloway and J. Williams be appointed as a subcommittee to control the junior competition under the auspices of the RDCA.

Initially, the junior games commenced at 10.00 a.m. and finished at 12.30 p.m. Croydon had the strongest team, lost only two matches for the year and won the premiership. On 13 November 1948, Bill Allen died at the age of 59. The Ringwood Mail reported:

Bill Allen is a name to be conjured with in sporting circles In the Ringwood District. He was the best all-round cricketer that Ringwood has ever seen. He played with Victoria as a fast bowler and had he been ambitious, could have ranked with the

mighty. Peter Macalister in those days ranked him as a better fast bowler than E. A. McDonald, but Bill was content to come back and carry his home team to victory. He was a remarkable cricketer. As a fast bowler, he would make the balls whiz past you like a streak of lightning, then the next over he could bowl slow leg-breaks and paralyse you with guile. As a batsman, with his tremendous length and reach, he could make the ball any length and it was just too bad the way he used to step across to anything on the off and square cut it to the boundary like a bullet out of a gun.

A great sport and a very loveable fellow, he would send down a ball that would leave you standing and as the wickets crashed, with a big grin on his face, he would say 'Bad luck, old chap*'. On the football field he was equally proficient. For 15 years, he was one of Melbourne's leading players. Then in the old 'Reporter' days, he captained and coached Ringwood to victory on many occasions.

A worthy epitaph for a worthy cricketer.

In 1949, the RDCA formed the under 16 competition under the direct control of the Association. A. Ford of Croydon Cricket Club donated the cup for the competition.

Grounds continued to be in short supply and Cr. Hall (who happened to be an Umpire and Vice-president of the RDCA) told the Ringwood council that there could be three or four more teams in Ringwood alone if pitches were available.

There was a General Meeting of the Association on 25 February, 1949, and according to all accounts it must have been a beauty. Apart from a notation that there was a general meeting on that date,

however, the details of it were never recorded in the minute book. This is how the Ringwood Mail reported it:

The reporter has never been to a more rag-time meeting in his experience. The President, in endeavouring to keep delegates to the business of the meeting adopted a dictatorial attitude which caused considerable resentment and culminated in a motion 'that the President's ruling be disagreed with' which was carried by 24 votes to 1.

At this meeting, Bill Baldwin, (Kilsyth) moved that a recommendation be made to the Annual Meeting that all matches next year be played on matting. During discussion, a statement was made that 'there were 5 malthoid and 5 matting wickets in A grade'. Malthoid wickets were a war-time creation because matting was not available so the effects of the war were still being felt. The motion was carried.

One match in this season had a spectator who just dropped in ... 'Fred appeared in the Ringwood court on a charge of being drunk while in charge of a car. A cricket match was in progress when a car crashed through the fence, broke three concrete posts and carried the top 3-inch galvanised rail with it. The front of the car came to rest on the arena and the rear portion was still on top of the embankment. In that precarious position, the driver remained in his seat and when the constable asked, "Why don't you get out of the car?" he replied "Why should I? I'm enjoying the cricket'." Fined £5 (\$10). He would have been better off playing cricket.



The Quiet Fifties

*The contest o'er, the conquerors and conquered, one and all,
Partake the cup of tea, unmixed with elements of gall;
With merry tale and jocund song, they speed the hours away,
Shake hands at parting, and appoint to try some other day,
Then sing a song to cricket, that fine old English game.*

— The Boys' Own Paper Annual, 1905 Edition.

THE Association began the decade by a burst of reorganisation. It decided that there was a need for better ^L. communication between the Executive and the clubs. Hence two meetings of club secretaries were to be held during the season.

Entry fees were raised to 35 shillings (\$3.50) for the first team, £1 each (\$2) for B and C grades and 10 shillings (\$1) for D Grade. The pitches debate about all matting wickets had still not been resolved and Ringwood was allowed to put down a 'day' wicket with matting on top for C grade. Spikes were banned and a ball hitting the wicket on the concrete between the mats, became a 'no ball'.

St John's reorganised their club and became Croydon United.

The big debate of season 1950-51 was whether 'Aerial' Alf Whitehouse of North Ringwood, Lennie Gibbs of Montrose or Bert Wharton of Croydon was the best all-rounder. Alf had made 74 in twenty-three minutes and taken 6/54 against Heathmont, Lennie had captured 11/74 and made 61 against Lilydale and Bert was said to

have made 51, 47, 128 not out and taken 4/34, 3/30, 3/13 and 4/40. In addition, Bert made 61 in the semi-final the previous year and had taken 6/51 including a hat trick.

The popular Bill Baldwin was made a Life member of the Association. Lou Salvana, President of the Association eulogized Bill thus:

For thirty years he has been playing the game. Years ago he was an opening bowler with a nasty, rising off-break ball that rapped you on the knuckle and had you caught in first slip or fine leg. Then as he got older he read Grimmett's book and began to bowl slow leg-breaks and to Bill's surprise he got wickets. Then he began to take up the role of opening batsman. He never was a bat, but somehow or other after reading Bradman's book, he started to make runs. Then he was appointed captain of Kilsyth and he began to study the tactics of Jardine and Armstrong and became ruthless and his captaincy won Kilsyth the premierships in 1949-50 and 1950-51 . . . He's not only a good cricketer, he's a good sport'.

In his career, Bill Baldwin led Kilsyth to six premierships and won the RDCA bowling averages in 1933-34 and 1939-40. He was an all-round sportsman and won the Croydon/Fern Tree Gully Football League's best and fairest on three occasions.

The state of some grounds was not good. 'It was a disgrace to put two A grade teams on Bedford Park with trees and blackberries on the ground, no indication of any boundary and the sun shining directly up the pitch'. 'To play on a freshly ploughed paddock couldn't be any worse than to play at North Croydon'. 'A grade journeyed to North Ringwood where C. R. McAlpin had been at work with the mower and though he missed a few places he at least made it look like a cricket ground'.

The nature of the district was still largely rural although there were signs that things were beginning to change. Nevertheless, Croydon Cricket Club was still able to secure a 'pair of cockerels' as one of the prizes in its raffle.

Prices were rising as a result of the boom in wool prices and the effect was felt throughout the community. 'The cost of cricket material has risen out of all proportion and clubs, particularly those with 2 or more teams find the matter of finance a serious problem. This matter was ventilated at a recent meeting of the Victorian Junior Cricket Union and it was decided to advise all clubs to write to their Federal member protesting against the high tax on sporting equipment.'

In season 1952-53, the Association found that, after allowing the Valley Club to play the previous season without paying any dues, the club had now disbanded. So the edict went out to all clubs—pay up by 10 October or be kicked out of the RDCA. Valley continued to play social matches and in 1953-54 after 'heated discussion' decided to continue that way of cricket life thus sounding the inevitable death knell of the club. Cricket clubs which existed solely for social purposes did not live very long in the latter half of the twentieth century.

By 1955, the Association had progressed to the stage where it could provide two Umpires for each A grade match. The great pitch debate was finally resolved in this year by the banning of malthoid pitches (ten years after the war ended).

Ringwood club was looking ahead, its President, Mr. C. Beaumont, said, 'With the high standard of cricket in the club, entry into Sub-district cricket has been considered and when Jubilee Park and the turf wicket becomes more than a vision, then the application must be made.'

Warrandyte Club celebrated its centenary in the 1955-56 season. At that stage, there were only about six clubs who had a continuous existence of 100 years. Louis Cranfield, Historian, said The actual date of the foundation is obscure but records show the existence of the club in August, 1856 about 18 months after the commencement of the diggings, Since then, only in one year, 1881, has a cricket match not taken place on the recreation ground. '

During the last century, matches took place on the recreation ground between the Age office, West End Brewery, etc. A Warrandyte cricketer played against W. G. Grace's touring team in the 1870s.'

At the centenary celebrations, Warrandyte played a V.C.A. team led by Clive Fairbairn, which arrived in a Cobb & Co. coach. The V.C.A. team included former first class cricketers Colin McDonald, Bill Ponsford, Barry Stevens, Dick Maddocks, Ian Huntingdon, John Power and Jack Iverson.

The Umpires again revived their defunct association, with Reg Johnston as their Chairman and Reg Evans as their secretary. There were eleven Umpires at this stage and they began to make their own match appointments.

By May, 1956, Ringwood had applied to the Victorian Subdistrict Cricket Association for admission. They were joined by Frankston, Dandenong, Moorabbin, Box Hill, and Bentleigh who also sought admission. V.S.D.C.A. Secretary, Bill Price said that the Association was conscious of the needs of growing outer areas but that 'it would be first necessary for the Victorian Cricket Association to take more clubs into its association'.

The Olympic Games were held in Melbourne in November, 1956 and it was suggested that the Association might omit play on

November 17. However the delegates thought more of their cricket than the Games and voted against the proposal.

In the early 50s, a player had joined Lilydale from the South Melbourne Club. His name was Jack Le Poidevin and he was to make his presence felt as a batsman in the Association over the next decade. He won the Association A Grade batting average on six occasions with the following performances:

Season	Average		Season	Average
51/52	?		57/58	82.14
54/55	?		60/61	52.45
55/56	59.45		61/62	70.3

Total Runs for the season: 1002.

By 1959, the East Ringwood Oval had been regraded and levelled and Jubilee Park had been levelled, top-dressed and re-sown and 'preparation of the turf wickets for the forth-coming cricket season were well in hand'. The Council had also decided to give East Ringwood two practice wickets on the motion of Cr. R. F. Hodgkins.

But things were not so rosy at Heathmont where the Council had erected a 'lean-to on the south side of the pavilion at Heathmont Reserve'. Not only did the Council erect a lean-to but council workmen cut down the trees which hid it from view. Local residents were incensed. This led to a poem being published in the Ringwood Mail which clearly demonstrated how they felt:

THEY'RE A WEIRD MOB
(with apologies to Nino Culotta)
OR
WHY RINGBARK RINGWOOD
(with apologies to Ringwood Borough Council)

Dear Angus –

I came to Aussie, as you know,
To gie my bairns a decent go,
But, as I wrote you late last year,
A home out here is awfu' dear.

The Ringwood Borough Council say
That people building houses may
Not have structures second-rate;
(That's fair for they'll depreciate
The property that stands next door -
The ones they're facing even more)'
Use good timber or fine bricks -
No old iron or oddment sticks;
Observe the standards we've laid down,
To raise the prestige of the town.

Yet Council owns a sports reserve
At Heathmont; here they've had the nerve,
To slap more shacks up, one by one,
And then so proud of what's been done,
Send workmen down to slaughter trees
Which covered these monstrosities.
Now from the main road passing by,
Each tourist's ever-watchful eye,
Observes the standards they've laid down,
To raise the prestige of our town.

Your perplexed pal,
SANDY

No such half measures were taken at East Ringwood. Council agreed to the erection of a pavilion at the East Ringwood Reserve at

an estimated cost of £1,280 (\$2,560). But council was looking to the future at Heathmont and this probably explains the half measures at the Heathmont Reserve. In October, 1959, Council paid £12,500 (\$25,000) for an area in excess of twenty-one acres (8.5 ha) fronting Armstrong Road, Heathmont. This is now the H. E. Parker Reserve which has two cricket ovals.

At the same time, Council decided on a uniform fee of \$10 per team for the use of reserves in the 1959-60 cricket season except for Jubilee Park. Here the fee was \$20.

Throughout the decade the Association had made steady but not spectacular progress. It had opened with 37 teams and closed with 59 teams; a solid foundation for what was to come.



The Surging Sixties

*When a player has bad luck
Muffs a catch or makes a duck,
Does our captain at him growl
Rave and storm with angry scowl?*

—'An Ideal Cricket Captain', Frank Merchant

SOME subdivision of land had taken place in the Ringwood, Boronia, Bayswater, Heathmont, Croydon, Mooroolbark and Lilydale areas in the fifties. In the sixties this increased to a flood of subdivisions continuing well into the seventies and to some extent beyond. In addition, many blocks on old subdivisions of the 1920s were built on for the first time.

Croydon increased its urban population from 14,803 in 1961 to 21,353 in 1966; Knox from 15,697 to 32,394 and Lilydale from 5,329 to 14,066 whilst Ringwood's population continued its steady expansion from 24,136 to 29,141.

The combined effect of these population increases was to place a severe strain on the municipalities as they struggled to provide playing fields for both cricket and football. In addition, the West Indies were in Australia in 1960-61 and their tour stirred up interest in cricket to fever pitch. This interest was maintained during the Australian tour of England in the Australian winter of 1961 and led to the following incident at Ringwood Council as reported in the Ringwood Mail:

TIME: 10.30 p.m. on Thursday, June 8

PLACE: Ringwood Council Chambers

Cr B. Hubbard rises to his feet (he has just taken a telephone call in another room).

Cr. Hubbard: May I make a statement, Mr. Mayor?

The Mayor: You may.

Cr. Hubbard: Two for 55—Oh and about those potholes

The Mayor (crisply): Sit down. You've had your innings.

Cricketers came from everywhere. The Association started the decade with sixty teams and by its end, this figure had doubled to 125. A severe strain was placed on the administrative capacity of the Association to cope with this increase.

The Association began the new decade by making one of those fundamental decisions which it reserved for the beginning of decades. It scrapped the form of the presentation night which had been a smoke night since the war. The stimulus came from the 1958-59 smoke night when a certain entertainer played 'God Save the Queen' on the violin in swingtime in the Croydon Hall. 'There must be a better way' thought a then youthful Bill Dean to himself. Subsequently in collaboration with the then Association Secretary, Frank Bibby, Bill persuaded the Association's Executive that a dinner dance was the most appropriate type of function for the Association's Presentation Night. This was later changed to an Annual Ball and by 1964 over 300 people were attending the presentation night. The Association's Annual report of 30 June, 1961 reports:

New ground was broken by the Association in their presentation of trophies. At the conclusion of the season a presentation Cabaret Dance was held at Mirama Court, Mitcham and was a

great success. However, its success was due to the Heathmont Club taking nearly half the tickets on sale. If this evening is to be an annual event, all clubs must rally behind the Association in the matter of selling the tickets. Some clubs failed to do so this season.

The success was not without controversy. A number of church clubs had joined the Association in the late fifties and they expressed concern at the amount of liquor consumed at such a function. Subsequently the delegates diplomatically smoothed outraged morals by empowering the Executive 'to release any club, that for moral grounds, cannot subscribe to the Presentation Night as held last season'.

The sequel to the success of the function was the creation of a new position of Social Secretary and the election, unopposed, of Bill Dean.

During this season, Miriam Knee of Wonga Park was selected in the Australian Women's Cricket Team. Miriam came from a well-known cricketing family in the RDCA and her brothers played for Wonga Park. Consequently, the Association took more than a passing interest when it was learned that Miriam would have to pay her own expenses to go to England. It began an appeal which with the help of Ted Shingles and the Croydon North cricket club raised an amount of £550 (\$1,100) of which the Association contributed £30 (\$60) from its own coffers.

Norm (Rees) Taylor was appointed Secretary of the Association due to the resignation of Frank Bibby. Norm had a very clear view of his job as Association Secretary. He saw it as implementing the decisions of the Executive of the Association and this he did for many years faithfully and sometimes forcefully so that member clubs of the Association were never allowed to get out of control. He sometimes

did the Executive's 'dirty work', yet throughout it all he held the respect of the clubs and their office bearers.

Norm's devotion to the Association and his attention to detail in partnership with the Association's Presidents, Reg Johnston up to 1967 and Bill Dean from 1968 must be one of the major reasons for the Association staying together despite the stresses of a period of very rapid expansion.

In this year also, Ringwood left the Association to further its plans to get to district status. It had turf wickets at Jubilee Park as a result of the Council's proposal to create the Eastland shopping centre—a proposal not without controversy as the Council came under strong attack from some local residents. Cr. Frank Parker mounted a strong attack on the Council and accused them of 'thieving the land' on which his father had paid a deposit sixty years ago in order to secure it for recreational purposes and for public use. This land had been the home of the Ringwood Cricket Club which must have felt some regrets leaving such an attractive 'village' cricket ground. The ground was sited on the side of the hill with some tree cover and overlooking Mullum creek whilst being overlooked itself by the township of Ringwood—an attractive landscape now replaced by the Eastland shopping centre.

The then Mayor of Ringwood, Cr. Reg Spencer, defended the council by saying that it had provided an alternative of sixty acres (24.2 ha) of land at Jubilee Park on which it had set up turf wickets for the cricketers and four tennis courts for the tennis club. As well, the council had purchased the sixteen acres (6.5 ha) for the H. E. Parker Reserve, another sixteen acres for recreational purposes, the Hunt land and the Hubbard Reserve—in all 234 acres (95 ha) would be bought by the Council for recreational purposes. Perhaps cricketers today have a lot to thank Eastland for, although none of the present

day grounds could match the old Ringwood Reserve for its picturesque scenic and 'village green' quality.

Ringwood Cricket Club now transferred all its teams to the Eastern Suburban Cricket Association but in its place left an Annual Trophy for the most improved player under 21 years, now commonly known as the Ringwood Trophy. In 1964, Ringwood gained part of its objective by being accepted into the Victorian Sub-District Cricket Association. In 1965, Ringwood returned in part to the RDCA with three senior elevens and one junior eleven.

As in 1939, the district once again was devastated by bush fire on 16 January, 1962, which the local newspaper dubbed 'Black Tuesday's Night of Terror'. The fire started in Eltham, and burned through Warrandyte, North Ringwood, North Croydon, Mooroolbark, Montrose and the Dandenongs. Again the Warrandyte area was the hardest hit; 'Alas poor Warrandyte, once beautiful but still indomitable Warrandyte. Khaki hills now and blackened earth and the pitiful ashes of houses cluttered with twisted iron, the rubble of human belongings and standing sentinel chimneys'. However, cricket went on in the Association as though little had happened. Perhaps it was the one certain thing for people to hang onto in this time of uncertainty.

In 1961-62 season, Laurie Bentley of Montrose put together many fine bowling performances such as 6/23, 8/41 and 6/75 to capture a total of 91 wickets for the season in the home and away matches. This was also the season that Jack Le Poidevin of Lilydale scored 1,002 runs (See Chapter 8) making 157 in the last home and away match, 115 in the semifinal and 109 and 79 not out in the final.

On 4 August, 1962, Alexander Temple Miles, the founder and foundation President of the RDCA died. He was born in Hobart in 1880 and settled in Ringwood in 1910. He owned an orchard at

North Ringwood and in 1925 established the real estate business in Main Street, Ringwood. In 1919, he was elected to the Lillydale Council and was the first Mayor of Ringwood when that municipality was established in 1924. He served twenty-one years on the Council including six terms as Mayor. He was also President of the Tennis Club and a life member of the Croydon Golf Club. In his heyday he must have been a very busy man.

In this decade, the Association developed a conscience in the person of Jack Patten, a delegate from the Bedford Cricket Club. Jack was the one person who at a General Meeting, would swim against the tide of popular opinion. On a number of occasions, the delegates did not agree with Jack's view and lived to regret it at some later date. There were always many grains of common sense in what Jack said and history looks kindly on his views despite the obvious irritation caused to delegates at the times they were put.

In 1966, the Association created the Under 14 Competition largely at the urging of Executive Officer Allan Reidy. Allan had tried previously to get an Under 13 Competition established but when this failed he was obviously prepared to settle for an under 14 grade. Mervyn Cooper, a Vice-President of the Association had died that year and he had been interested in promoting cricket amongst the district youth. The Association Executive felt it was appropriate for the new trophy to be called the 'Mervyn Cooper Memorial Trophy'. The foundation teams came from Boronia, Boronia Methodist, Croydon North and Heathmont.

Although the Chandler Shield had been the trophy for the top grade of the Association for some thirty years, that grade had always been named 'A Grade'. The Association had experimented with calling it 'Major A' and the second Grade as 'A Grade' in 1965, but it had never really caught the players' imagination. Consequently, in

1966, the Association opted for 'Chandler Shield' Grade which seemed to satisfy everybody as it has remained that name ever since.

Umpires were still in short supply and the Croydon North correspondent to the Ringwood Mail was moved on one occasion to write, 'We are grateful to the RDCA for providing us with an Umpire'. It is not recorded whether the RDCA Executive appreciated the sarcasm.

The Umpires needed a good sense of humour to do their job. There were many 'try-ons' as the top grades contained many senior players who had come from senior grades from either senior cricket or other competitions. The report of the following exchange between a senior player and an Umpire will give you some idea of what used to go on:

It was late in the day near the close of play when some player said to the Umpire 'I reckon that batsman is wearing studs' (Studs were not permitted on matting wickets). So the Umpire checks and finds that the 'reckoning' is correct in all respects. The batsman is wearing studs. 'Better change them my boy; 'tis not done to wear studs you know, against the rules' says the Umpire with a broad English accent. The batsman, an old hand, with a lot of experience and captain of a Chandler Shield team but also with a lot of love for his boots, tries one on the ump. 'I appeal against the light', says the batsman. The Umpire, also an old hand, retorts, 'Aye 1-a-a-d, if you look after boots, I'll look after light'.

Then occurred the one dark deed in the history of the Association. In 1967, someone pinched the Chandler Shield! The Shield was held by Boronia at the time and custodian Jack Ewison told the RDCA Executive that the Boronia Club rooms had been broken into and the Shield stolen. The members of the Executive were aghast! The Hon. G. L. Chandler, MLC, was told and he said that he would provide a

new shield if the stolen shield was not found. Then Jack Ewison advised the Executive that he had been approached by a certain person and that the Shield was been held for ransom. Jack said he would pay the ransom himself. Then followed reports of clandestine meetings at night and finally the Shield was recovered and restored to its rightful owners. End of story!

However, a good result came out of the incident. Whilst the Shield was missing, Harold Matthews, Vice-president, and his wife donated a shield for a premiership trophy. The RDCA Executive decided that it would be called the 'A. R. Bissett Shield' to honour the Association Treasurer who had served the Association faithfully for over twenty-three years. Perhaps the Executive were thinking that Bob Bissett might be giving the game away soon. If so, they were very wrong, because he completed fifty years and retired from the position in 1991.

In 1968, Bill Dean was elected President of the Association. This was to continue for a record breaking run of 20 years through some of the toughest years that any cricket Association would have to face.

For some time, the Executive of the Association had been concerned at the lack of a professional approach by the clubs to the administration of their affairs. The lackadaisical approach by club officials to their duties could not be tolerated in an association as large as the RDCA had become. No one was exempt. Presidents, secretaries and team managers suddenly found themselves being called before the Executive to give an account of their actions, or more often, their inactions. Sloppy administration was frowned upon and fines were imposed with rigour. Many and varied were the excuses put forward by the club officials. The Executive's interpretation of the rules is wrong'; 'somebody broke into the letter box where I posted the letter'; 'I misplaced my copy of the letter so I didn't attend the hearing'; 'I'm

sure my wife posted the registration cards'; these excuses did not fool the Executive one little bit. Each excuse was ruthlessly dealt with and the clubs brought to account. Clubs who didn't pay their fines within thirty days of receipt of a reminder were threatened with suspension.

In 1967, the Association had decided to hold a separate rules meeting each year so that the Annual meeting did not get bogged down in discussion on amendments. At the third rules meeting in 1969, twenty of the proposed amendments were put forward by the Executive or the Umpires. Of the amendments put forward by the clubs, three were defeated and did not carry the recommendation of the Executive. Despite the tough stand the Executive had taken with the clubs, it was evident that it had the support of the clubs and could plan the future of the Association for the next decade with confidence.

William David Dean, OAM, JP



William David Dean, OAM, JP
President 1968-88 and Patron
Ringwood and District Cricket
Association.

BILL Dean is not your normal cricket administrator. He wasn't a very good cricketer. But cricket is in his blood. And he has a love of the game that transcends almost all other considerations. Bill was a member of the Heathmont Cricket Club where his batting was a source of some comment: 'It was D-day for Heathmont last Saturday . . . when the "Old Gentleman" William Dean saved us from certain disgrace . . . We had lost 8/60 and a hat-trick was in the making when Bill joined John Chambers. It was quite an ordeal for these two and to our amazement, the score soon passed

the century and went on to 135, John scoring 55 not out and "Sir William" 35'. This was the Ringwood Mail report of the C Grade Semi-final in 1963.

In another report, Bill was reported as being third in the Heathmont C Grade averages, with an average of ten. In a further report, Bill is credited with having invented the 'shovel' shot in which he 'shovelled*' the ball over the heads of slips. All this indicates that Bill was one of the triers down in the lower grades and shows why he understood and had an affinity with the many 'triers' in the RDCA.

They were in his thoughts later as President of the Association when he was also striving to provide competitive cricket for those in the higher grades.

Bill attended school in the Heidelberg area and after leaving school at an early age, worked on the Banyule Farm Estate. When war broke out he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force and served in New Guinea. After the war he worked at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital with the Fire Brigade. After drifting through a couple more jobs, he met his future wife, Verna, and joined a concert party entertaining community organisations and was on stage with Jack Perry and Doug McKenzie before they became Zig and Zag.

Verna and Bill married in 1951 and bought the property in Pascoe Avenue Croydon where they still live. There he set up a cement mixing (sorry Bill-concretel) business which he ran until 1974 when he retired and handed over to son David.

Hand-in-hand with his private business, Bill was progressing up the ladder in cricket administration in the RDCA.

He became Social Secretary and instituted the well-known presentation nights in the form of dinner dances at Mirama Court, Mitcham. In 1968, Bill was elected President of the Association and began an unbroken term of twenty years in this position.

During this period the Association trebled in size. Many adjustments had to be made to cope with the enormous influx of both senior and junior players. Many reorganisations of the way the Association was run had to be thought about and put into operation. Chandler Shield was reorganised. Then A grade was reorganised. All the time the objective was to raise the standard of cricket in the RDCA.

In 1973, he built a child care centre on a block adjacent to his home and in conjunction with his wife and three daughters, Kerrin, Jill and Elizabeth ran the business until they sold a few years later. The naming of the centre was a challenge. Bill asked his wife, Verna, what she thought about a name. Her reply was, 'I don't care what you call it as long as it has nothing to do with cricket'. To Bill that was a challenge. So he suggested the 'Jiminy Cricket Child Centre*' and would have us believe that Verna did not see through his ruse. However, we have it on good authority she just could not be bothered with the argument.

But when Saturday came, Bill was able to put all these worries behind him and ventured out on the cricket grounds, sometimes to a Chandler Shield match but sometimes to a C Grade match or an F Grade match. As long as the ladies provided him with a cup of tea and a sandwich or a cake, Bill was ready to visit any grade.

In 1988-89, Bill was invited to be Patron of the RDCA, a position he still holds. In fact these days, he is almost a professional patron—patron of a number of cricket clubs and Life member and Patron of the Melbourne Radio Control Circuit Racers (Model Gas Cars) in which his son David is a leading administrator.

Bill is also Secretary of the Croydon RSL and a member of the Eastwood Golf Club. He also has the distinction of being a member of the Bat and Ball Cricket Club, Hambledon, Hampshire, England which was formed in 1750 (Bill is not that old!) and which is recognised as one of the earliest centres of cricket development in England.

He is a convenor of sportsman's nights and chairman of a sportsman's panel which has entertained many organisations.

In 1991, Bill was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia 'for service to sport', a well-deserved recognition of his dedication to cricket in the Ringwood District and to cricket in general.



Park Cricket

*Flushed with his rays, beneath the noontide sun,
In rival bands, between the wickets run, Drive
o'er the sward, the ball with active force, Or chase
with nimble feet its rapid course.*

—'Childish Recollections'. Lord Byron

THE above is perhaps not one of Byron's better efforts but it shows that cricket caught the attention of even this world-famous poet.

The period from 1970 to the present has been one Of intense activity in all walks of life in the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Many houses have been built, new shopping centres constructed (and in one or two cases, pulled down and rebuilt), kindergartens, schools, streets, highways, hospitals and municipal 'Taj Mahals'—many having been built in the past twenty-five years. The nature of the area covered by the RDCA has changed. Paddocks only exist now on the outskirts of the Association; elsewhere there is a sea of houses interspaced with shopping centres, schools, parks, sporting ovals and many of the centres which community activities rely on.

Cricket has had its rivals for the attentions of youth—Little Athletics, passive recreation and the latest and most vigorous rival, basketball. The passive recreation movement threatened to be a major danger at one stage as suggestions were made for the conversion of sports ovals to passive recreation areas. Fortunately, from cricket's

point of view, sanity prevailed and municipalities maintain a balanced stance on the provision of sports areas and passive parkland.

Year	Senior	Junior	Total	Year	Senior	Junior	Total
70/71	75	48	123	84/85	160	157	317
71/72	84	54	138	85/86	172	171	343
72/73	89	58	147	86/87	180	161	341
73/74	98	63	161	87/88	171	145	316
74/75	100	70	170	88/89	175	146	321
75/76	110	82	192	89/90	171	170	341
76/77	120	91	211	90/91	157	159	316
77/78	128	110	238	91/92	152	136	288
78/79	145	125	270	92/93	163	139	302
79/80	148	134	282	93/94	164	142	306
80/81	146	138	284	94/95	150	131	281
81/82	150	146	296	95/96	154	156	310
82/83	152	156	308	96/97	145	135	280
83/84	154	160	314	97/98	145	147	292
98/99	145	146	291	99/00	132	140	272

In some way, sport is like fashion. An event occurs which focusses the attention of the population on a particular sport like cricket. The arrival of Bradman as a batsman was just such an event. Similarly, the arrival of 'The King of Tweak', Shane Warne, is another event which will focus the attention of the community on cricket. This will present an opportunity to state administrators and cricket associations to

recruit to junior teams. Cricket clubs should be encouraged to put a recruitment program in place now to seize this opportunity.

During this period, the Association took a number of actions which improved the administration of cricket. In 1970, it revised the rules and constitution in order to obliterate a number of confusing rules which had lost their meaning through countless amendments over the years.

In the higher grades, the picturesque village atmosphere no longer exists in the cricket matches. It has been replaced with a more professional attitude by today's cricketers. These elevens no longer consist of two or three stars with the rest being a number of triers. They consist of eleven cricketers who are selected for their places because they have the ability to be there. The triers are down in the lower grades probably enjoying their cricket more because they are playing against players of similar ability.

Matting has been replaced with a variety of synthetic surfaces. This innovation proved so successful that by 1977-78 season, the Umpires Association commented that 'the synthetic pitches are excellent'. By 1986-87, synthetic surfaces were in use generally throughout the Association and a survey conducted by the Association showed that the clubs preferred the superior grass types.

In 1972, the Association lost one of its workers in junior cricket in the person of Des Goodwin, a Croydon North player. Des had been a strong supporter of the Association in all that it had been trying to do for its under 16 cricketers.

After thirteen years as Secretary of the Association, during a period of expansion, Norm Taylor retired from his post in 1974.

In 1975, Steven Pascoe, a member of the Norwood High School Club became Secretary. His youthful exuberance and the assistance of

his wife, Anne, brought to the Association a much needed revamping of many aspects of administration. It resulted in the RDCA becoming one of the most respected associations in Victoria. Steve held the position of Secretary for eleven years.

With one year off, Steve came back as an Executive member. A significant change in the organisation of cricket grades was made in season 1977-78. Chandler Shield grade was reorganised by taking the second elevens of all the clubs in Chandler Shield and forming the Chandler Shield Reserve. As this proved successful, the next step was taken in season 1981-82 when the third and fourth elevens of the clubs in Chandler Shield were taken and formed into Chandler Shield 3 and 4. Chandler Shield Reserve was renamed Chandler Shield 2. Chandler shield 5 was added in season 1989-90.

A Grade was similarly reorganised to A-1, A-2, A-3 and A-4. Likewise, B Grade became B-1, B-2 and B-3. Thus clubs who had aspirations to reach the top grade in cricket in the RDCA knew that as they rose through the ranks they needed a minimum of three senior teams when they reached B Grade, four in A Grade and five senior teams when they reached Chandler Shield. Of course, clubs who made it to Chandler Shield had to have a strong junior section, otherwise they were not likely to be able to compete with clubs already in Chandler Shield.

As the strength of the RDCA grew so did the standard of cricket improve. This statement may be rejected by some of the older players but the evidence cannot be disputed. In 1968, the Association had never reached the final of an Under 21 VGA Inter-Association Competition conducted by the Cricket Union of Victoria. The RDCA won its first final in 1969-70 by defeating the Eastern Suburbs Cricket Association. The Association's Under 21 Eleven won again in seasons 1974-75, 1979-80 and 1983-84, being runners up in season

1987-88, losing only by a narrow margin of two runs. The results of the Grand Final matches were as follows:

- 1969-70 RDCA 6/206 (M. Moore 54) defeated Eastern Suburbs 189;
- 1974-75 RDCA 7/164 (D. Sayer 61 not out) defeated Jika 162;
- 1979-80 RDCA 9/109 defeated Sunshine DCA 108 (five run outs were achieved by the RDCA, a solid testimony to the pressure of Chandler Shield Cricket)
- 1983-84 RDCA 5.164 defeated Western Suburbs C.A. 100;
- 1987-89 RDCA 9/182 lost to CMCA 184.

During this period many RDCA players represented Victoria in the Under 21 Cricket Union team against the other states. After several years in the sub-district Association, Ringwood was elevated to District ranks in 1974. In its 1973-74 Annual Report, the Association's President, Bill Dean, hailed the move as a 'new era'. 'Every player in our Association should see the importance in this elevation and avail themselves of the opportunities that will exist during the coming seasons and at the Ringwood Club.'

With the enormous increase of the number of cricketers in the Association, there seemed to be a body of energy in the Association in the middle seventies which displayed itself in a number of initiatives originating either with the clubs or the Association's Executive.

In season 1974-75, the Association, with the support of the Rapier Bat Company and Maroondah Newspapers, introduced the twilight competition. By the next season, the competition had attracted thirty-two teams. This competition lasted for four years until indoor cricket took its place. Twilight competition premiers were:

	Group A	Group B
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1974-75	?	-
1975-76	Wonga Park	-
1976-77	Norwood	South Warrandyte
1977-78	Mt Evelyn	Wantirna

In season 1977-78, the Association implemented the 'Fairest and Best' medal count and an early venue was the Dorset Gardens Hotel. The Association invited a guest speaker of some distinction to speak after which the fairest and best player was decided on the votes of the Umpires in Chandler Shield and A Grade.

The Executive reached agreement with the Lillydale council on the establishment of Pinks Reserve Oval in Liverpool Road, Kilsyth for the sole use of the Association with a turf wicket on it. This oval was subsequently named the Alan Smith Oval after a Lillydale councillor who had given strong support to the Association. It was used for a number of years for the invaluable experience on turf wickets. It was also used by the Cricket Union on a number of occasions for Inter-Association matches in the under 21 competition. However, a turf pitch requires constant and considerable maintenance during the cricket season.

As the clubs in Chandler Shield indicated that they would rather play all their matches on synthetics, the Association in the middle eighties reluctantly decided to call it a day with this experiment, and Pinks Reserve grounds were used for home and away matches.

Likewise, the Association negotiated with the Lillydale Council for the use of part of the Pinks Reserve indoor sporting complex as an indoor cricket centre. The centre was opened by His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, Sir Henry Winneke, in April 1980. This was

also an experiment as indoor cricket was in its infancy in Australia. Each competing team had seven players; runs were scored by hitting the ball to the back and side walls and running; six runs on the wall behind the bowler on the full and four runs on the bounce, two runs on the side walls plus what the batsmen ran. Each side bowled 16 overs. Initially a hard cricket ball was used so that a considerable area had to be set aside for each match.

The Indoor Centre was used by clubs for practice sessions but unfortunately patronage did not keep pace with the rental that was being charged. The Association then moved to the use of soft balls and divided the centre into two pitches in an endeavour to meet its obligations. Whilst this would have been a profitable venture if the Association had been starting from scratch, it was forced to bail out of the venture in favour of a private operator in order to meet its financial obligations to the Council. From a cricket point of view the experiment had been a success but from a financial point of view it had been a disaster with the Association carrying all the risks.

On 30 January, 1978, Glenn Newey of North Ringwood took 10/41 in an innings in Chandler Shield Reserves against Montrose. This feat had been performed at least three times before, namely: F. Williams took 10/13 in 5.1 overs in the opening round of season 1946-47, Frank Barker of Ringwood took 10/9 in 13 overs, 11 of which were maidens in season 1949-50 and 45 years old A. Whitehouse took 10/30 for North Ringwood against Boronia in C Grade in 1953-54.

Life Member and East Ringwood cricketer, Fred Hodgkins completed fifty years as a player with the RDCA in season 1978-79 and was named player of the year by the Maroondah Associated Newspapers. Dubbed 'sticky fingers Fred' by some of his colleagues, he has always denied carrying any sticky substance in his pockets to

help him with his spin bowling. He was a player of considerable ability and one of his exploits is recounted elsewhere in this history.

By season 1979-80, the strain of administering the Association was starting to tell on the members of the Executive and those people who had been co-opted to do various tasks. Registration Secretaries and Match Results Secretaries were finding that their voluntary tasks were taking at least 50% or more out of their spare time after work. The Association decided it was time to 'get with' modern management methods.

In season 1980-81, the Association introduced computer records.

It was fortunate at that time to have Ken Dunham, computer manager at Victoria Barracks, as a member of the Executive. It was also fortunate to have Stewart Newey as its Records Secretary as Stewart saw this as an opportunity to add to his skills.

Computers were not used then as a tool of management as they are today but the introduction of computer record keeping by these two Executive members, was a relatively painless exercise. Further, it laid the basis for management of the phenomenal growth in the Association which had occurred in the previous ten years and reduced the work of the Executive members in management of the Association.

The RDCA Executive established a Club Championship Award in season 1981-82 to recognize the success of clubs as a whole, and points were awarded according to the positions the teams finished on the grade ladders as well as in respect to the grades in which they played.

A perpetual Trophy named, 'The Phil McCallum Championship Trophy' was awarded on a yearly basis. However, a later Executive decided to withdraw the personal recognition element in this type of award and it is known today simply as 'The Club Championship'.

Sponsors are exempt from this policy eg the 'Clive Fairbairn Trophy' in the Junior competition.

To be eligible a club must field at least four teams. Winners so far are:

Year	Club	Year	Club
81/82	Croydon North	90/91	Ainslie Park
82/83	Croydon North	91/92	Vermont
83/84	Ainslie Park	92/93	Bayswater Park
84/85	Wonga Park	93/94	Kilsyth
85/86	St Andrews	94/95	Wonga Park
86/87	St Andrews	95/96	East Ringwood
87/88	St Andrews	96/97	South Ringwood
88/89	Ainslie Park	97/97	Templeton
89/90	Ainslie Park	98/99	Templeton

After one year off, Steve Pascoe returned to the Executive in 1985. Over the time that Steve had been Secretary, his wife Anne, had continued to make a considerable contribution to running the affairs of the Association. Consequently it was not surprising that in season 1988-89, Anne was the first lady to be elected to the Senior Executive.

Lindsay Trollope, a member of the Mooroolbark Club, was elected Secretary of the Association in 1985 and still holds that position at the time of this history. Like Steve Pascoe, Lindsay has brought new ideas to the administration of the Association that have been a benefit to all clubs and players.

It is interesting to note that in the past thirty-seven years, during the explosion in the growth of the Association, there have only been three General Secretaries, all of whom have contributed so much to the success of the RDCA. These three, together with the contribution

of other past secretaries, particularly Ted Sleeman, from 1926 to 1945, have made the Association what it is today.

Ian Callen

Ex Heathmont C.C.

Australian Fast Bowler



Ian Callen gets his first Test wicket in Adelaide, February, 1978, being congratulated by Wicket Keeper Steve Rixon and Garry Crozier. (Viswanath c. S. Rixon b. I Callen)

IAN played his first game for Heathmont Cricket Club in the 1964-65 season In the Junior 2 team when he was nine years old. In 1965-66 season he played five games again for the Junior 2.

In 1966-67, the RDCA created the under 14 Competition and Heathmont won the Premiership with Ian (now aged 11) as Captain and Chris Healy as Coach. This was Ian's second premiership as a captain, the other being the Croydon State School team.

In 1967—68 season, Ian won the Batting Average in the Under 14s with an average of 33.9 and a highest score of 81.

He won the bowling taking 46 wickets at an average of 5.26. He also won the Ken Beavis Shield.

In 1969-70, Heathmont won the Junior 2 Premiership, Ian having a batting average of 34.6 and a bowling average of 3.7. The latter also won for him the RDCA Junior 2 Bowling award.

By 1970-71, Ian was a regular member of Heathmont's Junior 1 team which finished with a premiership. He won the batting and bowling trophies with a batting average of 67.75 and bowling with 29

wickets at an average of 4.38. He represented the RDCA as Captain of the Junior 1 and both he and his brother Russell won the RDCA Junior Bowling awards for their respective grades.

In 1971-72, Ian was playing A Grade. He won the bowling award with 21 wickets at an average of 10.09. The highlight of the season for the Callen family was Ian, his father Lloyd and brother Russell all representing the RDCA in their respective grades. Ian represented the RDCA in the Under 21 competition played over three days at Christmas. He was 15.

Season 1972-73 was the year of opportunity for Ian. After playing the first half of the season with Heathmont, he was selected by the Victorian Junior Cricket Union to train with a squad from which a Victorian Under 21 team was to be selected.

His father (a past player of the Carlton Cricket Club) sought the permission of Carlton for Ian to train on their turf wicket prior to these trials. He was immediately signed by Carlton and selected to play for the 3rd Eleven in the next Round of the District competition. He went on to represent Victoria in that Under 21 side and as a result of his performances, he received the honour of being named in an Under 21 Australian side.

In his career at Heathmont, Ian finished playing in the same eleven as his father, winning the A Grade bowling average with 15 wickets at 17.07.

District Cricket

At Carlton, Ian finished the 1972-73 season with the 3rds and the following year won the Bowling Trophy with an average of 7.96 which included a nine wicket haul for fifty runs against Waverley.

In 1975-76, Ian made his debut in District Firsts. He went on to play 116 games with Carlton, Northcote, Ringwood and Waverley,

retiring in 1990. He also represented the Victorian Colts in the Victorian Colts competition. He made a total of 1,342 runs during his district career, the highest score being 102 at Northcote. He took 262 wickets at an average of 19.1 with his best figures being 6/11. He was a member of three Premierships teams at Carlton and one at Northcote.

Sheffield Shield

Ian's first class career commenced in 1976, In 1977-78 he took 11 wickets in a match against NSW (6/49 and 5/59).

He was a member of two winning Sheffield Shield sides and represented Victoria thirteen times in Limited Over matches.

He commenced playing English County Cricket in 1977 and continued for the next ten years.

Australia

Ian played in his only test match against India in Adelaide in February 1978 at the age of 23 years. Ian's test selection was greeted with great acclaim by the RDCA. 'It was with a great deal of pleasure and pride that the Association heard of one of its past junior players, Ian Callen, who had through dedication and skill, attained the ultimate in cricket, to represent his country as a player. Ian's first game of cricket was played in this association and he has set the example to all our juniors—he has shown it is not an impossible dream.' said then President Bill Dean.

Jeff Thompson broke down in this match and Ian had to take on extra work performing creditably by taking six wickets for 91 and making 26 not out He represented Australia in the West Indies playing only in international games.

He also represented Australia on the tour of Pakistan in 1982-83 but again only played in minor games.

South Africa

Ian played for the South African Cricket Union for two seasons but continuous back problems forced his retirement in 1986.

Life-member

Ian was made a life member of the RDCA in 1978.



Forty Years On – Veterans' Cricket

*Forty years on, growing older and older,
Shorter in wind and in memory long,
Feeble of foot and rheumatic of shoulder,
What will it help you that once you were strong.*

—'Forty Years On', E. E. Bowen.

QUESTION: How was the Veterans' Association formed in 1988?

Answer: 'Because Bill Dean asked me to do it! In reply I said to Bill that the RDCA survey of a couple of years earlier had shown "not sufficient interest". Bill said "I don't believe the survey and I believe you are the person who can get it going".' (Ken Johnston, Foundation President of the Veterans' Association.)

In Australia most sportsmen retired from their sport in their early thirties. This was the accepted norm. Cricketers probably kept going longer than most but even so it was rare to see a cricketer playing regularly past his middle forties.

Veterans' cricket clubs and associations have been formed in many parts of the world—not just in test playing countries. Some ten to fifteen years ago, mainly in Canada and the UK, Veterans' cricket commenced on a small scale. It was probably initiated by purists who lived and breathed cricket and with their thirst for cricket, they just

would not let go when they reached what was considered the retiring age for cricketers.

In many cases, family pressures in conjunction with 'tired' bodies suggested to our cricketers this was the time to move out of the sport either into inactivity or less demanding pursuits such as gardening, lawn bowls etc.

The Veteran Cricket concept can and has changed that. In the RDCA as a result of Bill Dean's command to Ken Johnson, Ken approached Don Smith of St Andrews CC and Steve Pascoe of the RDCA Executive. Both said they would get teams from their respective clubs, St. Andrews and Warrandyte, and Don set about recruiting other teams in the Ringwood area while Steve promoted the concept to other clubs through the Executive of the Association.



Ken Johnston, Foundation
President, Veterans' Association

After two meetings of these three RDCA stalwarts, a plan had been prepared on what needed to be done to form a Veterans' Association, and rules had been drafted. This also covered the need to be classified as part of the RDCA and thereby have the protection of the regulations of the RDCA Incorporated body.

Initially there were six entries for the competition but two withdrew. This left Ainslie Park, Croydon North, Kilsyth, and Warrandyte as the foundation clubs. There was a lot of publicity through the sporting section of the Post Newspaper as a result of sponsorship by Bowens Timber and Hardware. In fact, it is said that the Veterans got more press coverage than the rest of the RDCA.

In the first four years, there were no Registration or Affiliation Fees and definitely no fines, in order to give the competition a chance to succeed. Teams were allowed to have two players between the ages of 35 and 40 years but this was progressively reduced over a period of six



Veterans' Cricket: Steve Pascoe drives Neil Henderson through to Mid-wicket.

years until all players had to be over 40 years of age. Players are allowed to play with the team of their choice without reference to the RDCA Saturday competition. 36 overs are bowled by either team and the matches conclude when a first innings result is achieved. Bowlers are allowed six overs, eight players must bowl at least one over and batsmen retire after making forty runs. A final is played between the two top teams at the end of the home and away matches. Each team is required to provide a senior person to Umpire.

The initial Rules were adapted from the existing Ferntree Gully Cricket Association's veterans competition rules. Amendments were

made to these after review at the end of each season with Club Coordinators. The RDCA donated the Premiership Pennant and Bill Dean donated the Premiership Shield.

From this modest beginning, the Veterans' Association has gone on from strength to strength and now fields teams in interstate carnivals and in the international Golden Oldies Carnivals.

Season 1989-90 saw the introduction of Inter-Association matches against Ferntree Gully Veterans' Association resulting in a win to the RDCA veterans. Ferntree Gully got their revenge in the following season and this match is now an established feature of the Veterans' Association's season. In season 1993-94, two matches were played against Ferntree Gully, one team composed of the over 40s and the second being the over 50s. On this occasion RDCA won both matches.

The philosophy of the Veterans is worth examining particularly in times of press concentration on the importance of winning in many sporting spheres and in view of the pernicious effects of economic rationalism on many peoples lives. In 1994, the Veterans' Association set out 'to provide a forum for many families to enjoy the game of cricket without undue aggression and for a short time to forget the everyday stresses'. Feedback indicated they achieved this objective. They also stressed the need to provide the ultimate in sportsmanship as an example to young people. To further that aim the 'Vets' made a decision to assist the Junior Administration of the RDCA by providing sponsorships for the future.

By 1996, the Vets had progressed to 24 teams in the previous season and Secretary, Brian Gobbi was able to say in the RDCA Annual Report that 'The executive can now confidently say that veterans is here to stay'.

The Association now has 32 teams (1998-99) in four geographic divisions with clubs from as far away as Eltham.

In world competition, only two Victorian teams have entered so far but there have been about 12 teams from other states, namely NSW and Queensland. In the main these teams are social clubs which do not perform in an organised competition. However, Ringwood has been represented at Golden Oldies Carnivals in England, New Zealand and South Africa and intend to be in the next carnival in New Zealand.

Clubs participating each year in the RDCA Veterans' Association and results records appear in the Appendices.

*'Delightful summer! Then adieu
Till thou shall visit us anew,'*

—'The Departure of Summer',
Thomas Hood. 1799-1845



*And when the Great Scorer comes
To mark against your name,
He will not ask if you lost or won,
But how you played the game,*

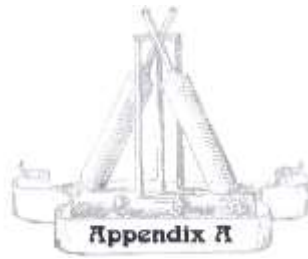
—Grantland Rice.

THE Ringwood and District Cricket Association can be proud of its record over so many years, both on the playing arena and in its administration. It has been the leader in providing cricket to all who wished to 'don the whites', setting up grades for players of differing ability and ages.

This was particularly noticeable in the 1980s when over 7,000 players were members of clubs in the RDCA. Its top grade cricket has also provided with its keen competitive spirit, a stepping stone to higher grades of cricket such as District, Sheffield Shield and even the pinnacle of representing Australia.

In one Sheffield Shield match, Victoria v WA, played at the WACA in 1977, there were four former RDCA players playing for their state. They were Ian Callen, ex Heathmont, Rod McCurdy, ex North Croydon, Warren Whiteside, ex Johnson Park and Geoff Parker, ex Norwood.

Only one player from the RDCA has represented his country at the highest level, Ian Callen of Heathmont. His career has been outlined on previous pages.



Cricket

(From Chambers Information for the People)

THIS is perhaps the best of all out-door sport, for youth. It requires quickness of mind and eye, great agility of A. limb, and, properly conducted, is highly exhilarating and amusing. The game is played on an open, well shaved green, which is level and free from stones or shrubs; it should also be dry, and of sufficient dimensions to allow of a good blow to the ball—a square field of three or four acres is a good size. The apparatus required in the game consists of balls, bats, and wickets. The dress of the players should be light and easy: a white woollen jacket, cap, linen trousers, and shoes provided in the soles with points to prevent slipping in running; in London there are shoes made purposely for cricketing.

Cricket is played in two distinct forms; one is called Single Wicket, and the other Double Wicket. We shall first give an outline of Single Wicket. Single Wicket.

This game is played by any number of persons, but generally five are on each party or side. Three straight rods or stumps, twenty-seven inches high, are stuck in a row in the ground; on the top of the stumps are laid two pieces of wood called the bail, and so placed that they will readily fall off if the stumps be hit by the ball. This apparatus is called the wicket. At the distance of four feet four inches in front of the wicket is a mark on the ground, called the popping crease.

In a straight line with the wicket is a mark on the ground called the bowling-crease, which is parallel to the popping- crease. An individual taken from one party is appointed bowler; his duty is to bowl the ball towards the opposite wicket, which he does by a short run. An individual from the antagonist party is appointed batter; his duty is to stand with his bat placed with its tip on the ground at the popping-crease, and to oppose the progress of the ball, or to prevent it from knocking down his wicket. He must also endeavour to strike the ball smartly, so as to send it to a distance on the field. The field is in charge of the party to which the bowler belongs; these are termed field-men or field-keepers, and each has an appointed place from which he takes a peculiar designation; one is named the leg-hit, or long stop, another the off-hit, a third the long field on. a fourth the long field off. Their duties are to catch the ball when either struck or missed by the batter.

If the ball be missed by the batter, he remains at the wicket, and the ball is returned by the long stop to the bowler. If the ball be struck, and to such a distance that the batter thinks he could run to the bowling-crease, touching it with his bat, and return to his popping-crease, touching it also before the ball is returned and strikes the wicket, he does so; and if he perform this feat successfully, it is called one run, and counts one towards the game. Sometimes he strikes the ball to such a great distance that he can run to and for twice, and this counts two; if three times, it counts three and so on. These are termed runs or notches.

Should a bowler knock down the wicket, the batter retires, and this finishes his inning. His inning is also finished by the wicket being knocked down with the ball by any of the fieldkeepers, if he be off his ground. The inning may likewise be finished if the batter strikes the ball into the air, and it be caught by any of the batter's antagonists

before it reaches the ground, and retained long enough to be thrown up again.

Double wicket, which is considered the true game of cricket, is like two games of single wicket playing at one time, there being two wickets from which to bowl; also two batters but only one ball. This game is played as above, with this difference, that the batter runs only to the opposing end, exchanging places with the other batter, who is of the same party. The number of persons engaged is properly eleven on each side. As in single wicket, the game is determined by the number of runs made in two innings by each player, the party gaining the greater number of runs being victor.

Such is an outline of the two kinds of the game; but there are many minute differences in playing in different parts of England, which it would be tedious to describe. It has been conceded by general consent to follow, in cases of dispute, the laws and regulations of the 'Marylebone Cricket Club', an association in London which has taken a leading part in this truly English sport. The following are the laws of the club:

Laws and Regulations of Single Wicket

1. When there shall be fewer than five players on a side, bounds shall be placed, at twenty-two yards each, in a line from the off and leg stump.
2. The ball must be hit before the bounds to entitle the striker to a run; which run cannot be obtained unless he touch the bowling stump or crease in a line with it with his bat or some part of his person, or go beyond them; returning to the popping crease, as at double wicket, according to the twenty-second law.

3. When the striker shall hit the ball, one of his feet must be on the ground, and behind the popping crease otherwise the Umpire shall call 'no hit'.

4. When there shall be less than five players on a side, neither byes nor overthrows shall be allowed; nor shall the striker be caught out behind the wicket nor stumped out.

5. The fieldsmen must return the ball, so that it shall cross the play between the wicket and the bowling stump, or between the bowling stump and the bounds. The striker may run until the ball be so returned.

6. After the striker has made one run, he must touch the bowling stump and turn, before the ball shall cross the play, to entitle him to another.

7. The striker shall be entitled to 3 runs for lost ball, and the same number for ball stopped with hat, with reference to the twenty ninth and thirty fourth law of double wicket.

8. When there shall be more than four players on a side, there shall be no bounds. All hits, byes, and overthrows, will then be allowed.

9. The bowler is subject to the same laws as at double wicket. 10. Not more than one minute shall be allowed between each ball.

Laws and Regulations of Double Wicket

1. The ball must not weigh less than five ounces and a half, nor more than five ounces and three quarters. It must not measure less than nine inches, nor more than nine inches and one-eighth, in circumference. At the beginning of each innings, either party may call for a new ball. (But in matches, the same ball must go through the game.)

2. The bat must not exceed four inches and a quarter in the widest part; it must not be more than thirty-eight inches in length.

3. The stumps, three to each wicket, must be twenty-seven inches out of the ground, the bails eight in length; the stumps of sufficient thickness to prevent the ball from passing through.

4. The bowling crease must be in a line with the stumps, six feet eight inches in length; the stumps in the centre, with a return crease at each end towards the bowler, at right angles.

5. The popping crease must be four feet four inches from the wicket, and parallel to it; unlimited in length, but not shorter than the bowling-crease.

6. The wickets must be pitched opposite to each other by the Umpires, at a distance of twenty-two yards.

7. It shall not be lawful for either party during a match, without the consent of the other, to alter the ground by rolling, watering, covering, mowing, or beating. This rule is not meant to prevent the striker from beating the ground with his bat near to the spot where he stands during the inning, not to prevent the bowler from filling up holes with sawdust Sec., when the ground shall be wet.

8. After rain, the wickets may be changed, with the consent of both parties.

9. The bowler shall deliver the ball with one foot behind the bowling-crease, and shall bowl four balls before he changes wickets, which he shall be permitted to do once only in the same innings.

10. The ball must be bowled. If it be thrown or jerked, or if the hand be above the shoulder in the delivery, the Umpire must call 'no ball'. (This is not reckoned as one of the four balls).

11. The bowler may require the striker at the wicket from which he is bowling to stand on that side of it which he may direct.

12. If the bowler tosses the ball over the striker's head, or bowl it so wide that it shall be out of distance to be played at, the Umpire (even though he attempts to hit) shall adjudge one run to the parties receiving the innings, either with or without an appeal from them, which shall be put down to the score of wide balls, and such ball shall not be reckoned as any of the four balls. When the Umpire shall have called 'wide ball', one run only shall be reckoned, and the ball shall be considered dead.

13. If the bowler shall deliver a 'no ball', the striker may play at it, and be allowed as many runs as he can get; and he shall not be put out except by running out. In the event of no run being obtained by any other means, then one run shall be scored.

14. In the event of a change of bowling, no more than two balls shall be allowed for the sake of practice.

15. If the bowler bowl one ball, he shall be obliged to bowl four.

16. The striker is out if either of the bails be bowled off, or if a stump be bowled out of the ground.

17. Or if the ball from a stroke of the bat or hand below the wrist, be held before it touches the ground, although it be hugged to the body of the catcher.

18. Or if in striking or at any other time while the ball is in play, both his feet be over the popping-crease and his wicket put down except his bat be grounded within it.

19. Or if in striking at his ball he hit down his wicket.

20. Or if, under pretence of running or otherwise, either of the strikers prevent a ball from being caught the striker of the ball is out.

21. Of if the ball be struck, and he wilfully strike it again.

22. Or if, in running, the wicket be struck down by a throw or by the hand or by the hand or arm (with ball in hand) before his bat (in hand) or some part of his person be grounded over his popping crease. But if the bails be off, a stump must be struck out of the ground.

23. Or if any part of the striker's dress knocks down the wicket, when striking.

24. Or if the striker touch or take up the ball while in play, unless at the request of the opposite party.

25. Or if with any part of his person he stops the ball, which in the opinion of the Umpire at the bowler's wicket shall have been delivered in a straight line to the striker's wicket and would have hit it.

26. If the players have crossed each other, he that runs for the wicket which is put down is out.

27. A ball being caught; no run shall be reckoned.

28. If a 'lost ball' be called, the striker shall be allowed 6 runs; but if more than six shall have been run before 'lost ball' shall have been called then the striker shall have all which shall have been run.

29. After the ball shall have been lodged and definitely settled in the wicket-keeper's or bowler's hand, it shall be considered dead. If, when the bowler is about to deliver the ball the striker at his wicket shall go out-side his popping crease before such actual delivery, the said bowler may put him out.

30. If the striker be hurt, he may retire from his wicket, and return to it at any time during that innings.

31. If a striker be hurt, some other person may stand out for him but not go in.

32. No substitute in the field shall be allowed to bowl, keep wicket, stand at point, cover the point, or stop behind in any case.

33. If any fieldsman stops the ball with his hat, the ball shall be considered dead, and the opposite party shall add five runs to their score. If any be run they shall have five in all.

34. The ball having been hit, the striker may guard his wicket with his bat, or with any part of his body, except his hand; but the twenty-fourth law, by which he is forbidden to touch or take up the ball, may not be disobeyed.

35. The wicket-keeper shall not take the ball for the purpose of stumping, until it has passed the wicket. He shall stand at a reasonable distance behind the wicket, and shall not move till the ball be out of the bowler's hand; he shall not by any noise incommode the striker; and if any part of his person be over or before the wicket, although the ball hit it, the striker shall not be out.

36. The Umpires shall not stand more than six yards from the wicket; they are the sole judges of fair and unfair play, and all disputes shall be determined by them, each at his own wicket; but in case of a catch which the Umpire at the wicket bowled from cannot see sufficiently to decide upon, he may apply to the other Umpire, whose opinion shall be conclusive.

37. The Umpires in all matches shall pitch fair wickets, and the parties shall toss up for the choice of innings.

38. They shall allow two minutes for the striker to come in, and fifteen minutes between each innings. When the Umpire shall call 'play', the party refusing to play shall lose the match.

39. They are not to order a striker out, unless appealed to by the adversaries.

40. But if one of the bowler's feet be not entirely behind the bowling-crease, within the return-crease, when he shall deliver the ball, the Umpire at his wicket, unasked, must call 'no ball'.

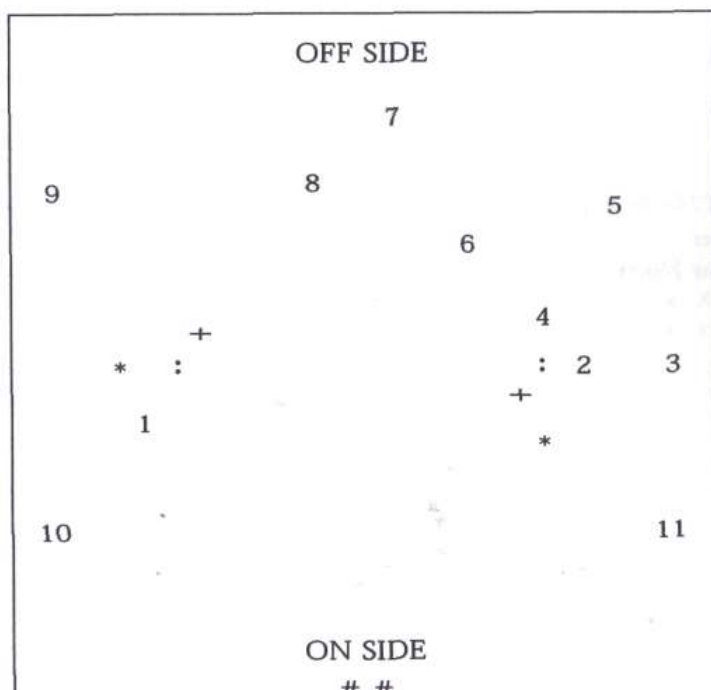
41. If, in running, either of the strikers shall fall to ground his bat (in hand) or some part of his person over the popping crease, the Umpire for every such failure shall deduct two runs, from the number intended to have been run; because such striker not having run home in the first instance, cannot have started in the second from the proper goal.

42. No Umpire shall be allowed to bet. 43.

No Umpire is to be changed during a match, unless with the consent of both parties, except in case of a violation of the forty-second law; then either party may dismiss the transgressor.

44. After the delivery of the four balls the Umpire shall call 'over' but not until the ball shall be lodged and definitely settled in the wicket-keeper's or bowler's hand; the ball shall then be considered dead. Nevertheless, if an idea be entertained that either of the strikers is out, a question must be put previously to, but not after the delivery of the next ball.

45. The Umpire must take special care to call 'no ball' instantly upon delivery; 'wide ball' as soon as ever it shall pass the striker. To these laws and regulations, it may be of use to add the following diagram representing the field during a cricket match, with the proper position of the parties playing; also the technical names of these parties.



Names of the parties indicated by the figures:

+ Strikers; 1, Bowler; 2, Wicket-keeper; 3, Long Stop; 4, Short Stop; 5, Long Slip; 6, Point; 7, Cover; 8, Middle Wicket; 9, Long Field, off side; 10 Long Field, on side; 11, Leg; *, Umpires; ## Scorers.

This is the usual placing of the field-men, but bowlers make such alterations as they deem best to oppose the strikers.

The following Appendices have not been transcribed into this e-book as the most up-to-date information is available via the RDCA website at www.rdca.com.

- Appendix B - RDCA Club Membership
- Appendix C - Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers of the Association
- Appendix D - Life Members of the Association
- Appendix E - Premiership Winners
- Appendix F - Trophy Winners
- Appendix G - Fairest and Best Individual Awards
- Appendix H - Association All Rounder Winners