

The Story of Yeronga Bowls Club

by Jean Dyball



Yeronga Bowls Club

The club started with 44 foundation members and was called the Yeronga Bowling club. The constitution and rules of the Booroodabin Bowling club (formed in 1893) were adopted with the exception that the Annual subscription would be \$100, with 1 shilling payable half yearly. This constitution and Rules were retained until 1955 when a review of the rules were necessary to conform with the liquor Act.



A gathering of the members in front of the building with Mrs Day Denny bowling, 1912

A 180 perch site for the green was purchased for \$120 from J Lang (he became President of the club in 1915-16). A tender for \$130 was accepted on 4th March 1913. The clubhouse was officially opened on 12th July by the President of the Queensland Bowling Association. The building was extensively changed in the interwar period to cater for the growing club membership. This occurred in 1919, 1926 and 1936. A picture of the club pavilion was featured in the Queenslander in 1923.



Old Clubhouse 1914

The 1936 alterations appear to have been the most extensive. By this stage the whole building was resisted on newly acquired land in its present position with a new green constructed where the club pavilion was previously located. The club pavilion was officially opened on 19 October 1936 by the Premier of Queensland Honourable W. Forgan Smith (later to be patron of the club between 1945-53).



The Clubhouse pavilion opened in 1936

A ladies club was also formed in the interwar period. Although ladies were invited to attend the club pavilion from 1917, it was not until 1933 that a ladies club started to function with Mrs E Welch as the first President. A drinking fountain was erected to the memory of H.A. Manahan “a great man who had given so much to the club” and unveiled on 29th August 1942.

The next alterations to the club pavilion occurred in the 1950s following an approval granted for building work costing \$4000. The revamped building was officially opened by the President of the Queensland Bowling Association on 3 September 1955. There were 350 people in attendance. The two greens were named after two long standing members of the club, C.H. (Clyde) Barclays and R.D. (Bob) McGregor.



Yeronga Bowls Club with the renovated pavilion opened on 3 September 1955

In the following decade, the club’s membership peaked in 1965 with 240 members, causing the books to close temporarily to new members. Three years later in May 1968 the club’s name was changed from Yeronga Bowling Club to Yeronga bowls club to distinguish it from other organisations engaged in the new sport of ten pin bowling.

In 1969 decorative gateways were erected over the pedestrian entrances in honour of 2 gentlemen who were staunch pioneers of the club. The school road gate was named in honour of O. Stubbs, club patron for 15 years, and the Querrin street gate in honour of B.C. Gavin who was provedore of the club for 25 years. Plaques on the fence nearby identify these memorial gates.

The club celebrated its 75th Diamond Jubilee on 29th April 1987, the first playing day of its 75th year in existence.

The club was incorporated on 16th April 1991 and when integrated on 1st April 1994 it had a board of management and separate ladies and men’s committees with respective presidents.

We celebrated the club’s 100th birthday with a special dinner and an invitational playing day which was well attended in 2012. The man after whom the drinking fountain was named was president of the club for 2 terms of office, one term from 1928 to 1929 and the second term being from 1946-48.

Achievements of Yeronga club members

Like any sport, there are many avenues for competition in lawn bowls, ranging from local club competitions right up to Australian and World championships, this can include singles, pairs, triples and fours teams.

The Yeronga club since its beginning have had wins in the interclub competitions known as Pennants. To make it easy I have included a photo of the achievements board showing the various winners in both local and pennant competitions, this includes a man named Alan Rafton who with J. Fern won the Qld. Champion pairs. Alan then went on to win the 1958 Metropolitan singles competition and was then selected to represent Australia at the pairs game in Cardiff in Wales.

In 2006 the ladies made the difficult but necessary decision to stop playing on their own due to lack of numbers and join with the men for mixed games on a Saturday, but still played some ladies competitions, one of these being the ladies pennants where we worked our way up to second division which we were able to win on 2 occasions - once in 2012 and then in 2017.



The winning Open Mixed Pennant team in 2018

In 2018 an open mixed pennant game was introduced which Yeronga had the honour of winning in its first year. The Yeronga ladies have also been well represented in District and Masters competitions, with one lady winning a gold in the Masters.

It has not always been serious competition, back when we still had a ladies section, there was 2 or 3 who were excellent at getting a concert organised which we put on once a year including much hilarity among us and great entertainment for all.

Two years ago we elected for the first time a lady president for the management committee. But unfortunately due to lack of numbers and an aging building we have been forced to close as it's no longer viable to continue.