



A History of the Illawarra Master Builders Club

1963-2013

Mike Davis

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The Illawarra Master Builders Club Ltd

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Foreword

On February 17, 1970 I arrived in Wollongong as a brash young journalist from the bush to take up employment as a D-Grade makeup Sub Editor on The Illawarra Mercury.

I was single, and already had booked passage with a mate on an ocean liner to England 12 months down the track – that’s how long I expected to be around these parts!

Some 43 years later, four adult children and seven grandchildren, and I’m still here! It’s funny where life takes you – doors open, opportunities arise, a certain sweet young thing may catch your bachelor’s eye.

Wollongong has its own unique way - its people and its institutions - of snaring those to whom it takes a fancy and not letting them go, not that they would want to after savouring its delights first-hand in any case.

One of these fine and legendary institutions that make up the very fabric of this part of the world today - and over the past 50 years - is the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

When Judy and I were first married we lived in Smith Street and it was fortuitous that our unit block’s rear fence adjoined the Club property. It (the fence) was low enough that even a person of my not-so-finely tuned athletic shape was capable of scaling it to avoid having to walk up around the corner to access the Club.

In those days a legendary figure in Les Hickey was the Secretary/Manager, with my old mate Charlie Goodwin assuming the presidency for the best part of 25 years from 1977.

Today, The Builders Club is a shining light among the more than 80 registered clubs that comprise the ClubsNSW Illawarra and Shoalhaven Zone, the 1500 clubs across NSW, the 6577 across broader Australia and the 11 million-plus memberships they represent.

Importantly, bricks and mortar and outstanding facilities and services aside, The Builders Club also has remained “true

blue” in its reasons-for-being and its attitudes to those who have found recreation, friendship, compassion and enjoyment within its walls and within its general membership.

As noted elsewhere in this fine 50th Anniversary publication, at the time of the club’s official opening by the Mayor of Greater Wollongong, Alderman Albert Squires, in 1963, it was looked upon as a meeting place for people “of all occupations, of all creeds or colours, of all shades of thought; a focal point where they could meet and enjoy each other’s company and so, in the hours of their recreation, gain that full relaxation so much needed.”

Into this new club came something that had not been planned or bought – an atmosphere of friendliness that permeated through the whole place. It was an unwritten law that “Mr”, “Mrs” and titles were left outside; here men met and any social distinctions that might have existed outside were forgotten. This was a tribute to those leaders among the Master Builders who had set the standard right from the start.

People love their clubs – and so they should. After all, despite misconceptions held by some, the members actually own their clubs and they are immensely proud of them, some having contributed enormously in sweat, organisation and freely given funds to see them prosper and serve the greater community to this day. The Illawarra Master Builders Club is a fine and ongoing example.

On behalf of your brother and sister clubs across NSW and Australia, I extend to the Illawarra Master Builders Club, your Board, Staff and Members, sincere congratulations on your half-century and a great building job very well done in all respects. May the next 50 years continue in the same positive vein.

Peter Newell (O.A.M.)

Chairman

ClubsNSW/ClubsAUSTRALIA



Peter Newell (O.A.M.)

Introduction



Mike Davis

Fifty-years are a milestone in any endeavor, business or profession.

What the Illawarra Master Builders Club (known today as The Builders Club) has achieved is a true monument to the countless men and also women who have contributed from 1963 to the present day.

The first Club had a couple of years at Charlotte Street, Wollongong but it was obvious very early that the population growth of Wollongong impacted on it and very soon the cry was; “*We need a bigger Club!*”

Land was purchased in Church Street, money secured by a manner of ways, a building completed and it opened its doors in October 1962 with the Official Opening exactly 50 years ago to the day of this book launch-April 19, 1963.

This is the seventh book I’ve published on major Clubs in Sydney, Coffs Harbour and now Wollongong. These books have been published over the past eight years and six in the last three years. I never cease to be amazed and personally thankful for the opportunity to record the history of Registered Clubs particularly about the men and women who made it all possible to get those Clubs started to where they are today.

The foundation members of all Clubs had a dream, vision, resilience, faith and many other human characteristics to not only make it work but see it succeed beyond all their expectations. They may not have had the imagination to visualize what the Illawarra Master Builders Club would look like in 2013 but remember “*from little acorns mighty oaks grow.*”

The concept for this history book had its start nearly 12 months ago.

The Board of Directors felt that recording the Club’s history and publishing a book would be the centre point of the 50th Anniversary Celebration. We should all thank the Board of Directors for that foresight.

The recording of history, particularly a Club whose heart and soul is its people, is always tinged with sadness as the passage of time has seen so many key people pass away.

My name appears on the front of this book but its publication has been a team effort.

Special thanks are extended to Richard Bone, Assistant Manager, at The Builders Club, the “link man” for me and who played an integral part in the finished product; Club Directors John Carr, John Day, Jerry Nell, Brian Burns and Past President Charlie Goodwin, who all assisted with interviews, photos and archival information; similar assistance was forthcoming from Gail Rawlings, Larry Matthews, Pat Murphy, Wilf Berriman, Les Hickey, Denise Walsh, Frank McGregor, John Smith, Jane Kennedy, Sonny Fairall, Tony Zuzic, Roger Carr, Stu McPherson, Andrew Bolt, Martin Henchion and Phil Mortenson.

Thanks also to Eileen Smith and Rosanne Travers from Wollongong City Library for access to historical photos and information; Carol Herben played a similar role at the Illawarra Historical Society; and Michelle Charles of the Master Builders Association Illawarra Division allowed access to some priceless historic photos.

It is my wish that this book will be a legacy to the memory of all those that played their part over the past 50 years. There will be plenty of reminiscences by reading this book; memories revived and a definite sense of pride of an involvement with the leading Club in Wollongong.

Mike Davis

Author

April 2013

President's Message

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, a group of builders in the Wollongong area formed themselves into a Builders Association. They were holding meetings and dinners in various venues around the town, until they purchased land near the town centre in Charlotte Street in 1951.

In 1952 they commenced building. Our original Club was opened in 1953 as the Illawarra Master Builders Club and a liquor licence was obtained. Even after a second floor was added, it soon became evident that this building was inadequate to service the growing membership and a larger site was purchased in Church Street, Wollongong, which is the current location of the Club.

A building committee was formed in 1960 to plan the new Club premises, which were ultimately completed and occupied in October 1962, and officially opened in April 1963 with a membership of 1461 and a waiting list of 426. Today the Illawarra Master Builders Club membership is around 12,000.

The Club was originally formed by Builders for the benefit of building workers in the Illawarra. The original Club was possible through voluntary labour and material donations by suppliers and financial support by builders. When it was decided to build the new club in Church Street in 1961, 10 builders provided personal guarantees of £10,000 pounds each to enable a bank loan of £100,000 so construction could proceed.

The Illawarra Master Builders Club was originally a meeting and socialising place for workers engaged in the building industry. Monday lunch was a must for any workers in the vicinity of the Club and they would enjoy a meal in their working clothes. Over the years, the Club evolved to accommodate all workers and professions in a pleasant social environment, where many a deal was done and our intra sporting clubs thrived.

Alterations and additions, to accommodate people from all walks of life, have been carried out continually to cater for the needs and enjoyment of our diversified membership. The patronage of our members and their guests has been a driving force behind the success of the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

The Illawarra Master Builders Club, as it is today, is a tribute to all the Builders who had the foresight to build the Club, and is one of only two Master Builders Clubs remaining in N.S.W.

The Illawarra Master Builders Club has grown along with the great City of Wollongong and proudly continues to

support and be involved with the community, educational Institutions, and senior and junior sporting clubs.

The current Board of Directors is the present custodian of the Illawarra Master Builders Club. It will eventually pass the Club onto future Board Members to steer the Club into the ever changing future and take our great Club to even greater heights.

In this our 50th year of celebrations, I am most privileged to be the President of the best Club in the City. I am fortunate to be supported by many enthusiastic fellow Directors who work tirelessly to promote the Builders Club.

It is fitting that I acknowledge all previous Presidents and in particular the most recent Presidents, John Day, Charles Goodwin and the late Ray Browning. All our Presidents have been held in high esteem by the Club industry and their contributions to the Illawarra Master Builders Club are immeasurable. The support from Club Management Teams over the years has been paramount in the success of this Club.

My special thanks are extended to my fellow members of the 50th celebration committee: Chairman, John Day; Roger Carr; Charles Goodwin; the late Ray Browning; and Assistant Manager, Richard Bone, for their dedication in the planning of this special year.

The 50th celebration committee extends its grateful thanks to Mike Davis for his dedication and co-operation in producing this history of the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

To all our Members, Directors, Management and Staff, may we all enjoy the special events during our 50th anniversary celebrations and be very proud of our involvement with such a great Club. May good health and happiness be ours to share during this special year.

John Carr
President
April, 2013



John Carr

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Local History





Captain Cook lands at Botany Bay in 1770. Bad weather prevented him from landing a day earlier near Bulli

Wollongong

The area was originally inhabited by the Dharwal (or Turuwal) Indigenous Australians.

If it hadn't been for heavy surf, Captain Cook would have made his first landing in New South Wales within the Illawarra, though he did note, in his log book, the attractive appearance of the shore and the presence of Aborigines -the Wodi Wodi Tribe-who had been in the area for at least 20,000 years.

It was on Saturday, April 28, 1770 when the ship was off the coast near the present town of Bulli, north of the entrance to Tom Thumb Lagoon and Lake Illawarra that Cook was anxious to make an attempt to land. He took out the pinnace (small boat) but found it leaked badly so he, with George Banks and Dr. Solander, put off in the yawl

(two masted boat) and made for the place where they saw some natives.

The surf proved too strong and they were unable to find a landing place and returned, disappointed, to the ship. The next morning (April 29) they found a sheltered bay further up the coast and in the afternoon, Cook and a party of men landed at what is known today as Kurnell in Botany Bay.

Cook did not neglect the Wollongong area despite an aborted attempt to land. He named Red Point (Port Kembla) and a round hill top, which looked like the crown of a hat (Mount Kembla), was subsequently called Hat Hill by Flinders.

The first Europeans to officially set foot in the vicinity and to meet the Aborigines of the Illawarra (who claimed that there were already several whites, presumably escaped convicts, living amongst them) were



Mr. Charles Throsby Smith & Rhonda Wilmott Smith



Smith Street in centre of picture and Church Street in background around the 1860s to 1870s

explorers George Bass and Matthew Flinders and their servant William Martin in 1796.

Sailing south in the tiny “Tom Thumb” their boat was overturned at Towradgi Point. In search of fresh water and a place to dry their powder and mend a broken oar, they stopped at what is now Port Kembla where they were approached by two Aborigines who led them to Lake Illawarra.

The small islands off Port Kembla they named Martin Islands in honour of William Martin’s bailing efforts, which kept their boat afloat at a crucial moment. However, the name did not stick and Five Islands was the title bestowed not only upon them but upon the entire region in the early colonial days.

In 1803 a Captain Nicholls shipped cattle into the Shellharbour district when the Sydney area was in drought. In 1804 Captain Kent was authorised to explore the South Coast and botanist Robert Brown also visited the region between 1800 and 1805.

In 1805 surveyor James Meehan noted the tremendous stands of huge red cedar trees in the area. The (illegal) pillaging of the South Coast’s timber reserves to feed the demand in Sydney for softwoods appears to have commenced around 1810.

In 1815 Charles Throsby Smith and party hacked a track from Liverpool to the Illawarra escarpment and down

through an area near Bulli Pass to confirm what his Aboriginal guides had told him, that there was excellent pastures. He soon returned with his livestock and set up the first stockman’s hut at what is presently the corner of Smith and Harbour Streets, Wollongong.

Others followed and Governor Macquarie sent John Oxley down to survey the area and negotiate free land grants with the graziers. However, few of the landowners initially took up residence; instead leaving stockmen in charge living in crude makeshift dwellings.

Conflict arose with the local Aborigines and, in 1826, a contingent of soldiers was sent to reinforce the claims of the settlers and perhaps to assert order amongst the unruly timber-getters. They established themselves at Port Kembla (the first land grant being made in that area in 1817) but moved on to Wollongong in 1829. Their presence represented the effective founding of townships at those two sites. Cases were initially heard in the commandant’s tent and in a slab hut from 1830.

In 1830, a military barracks was constructed near the harbour. Further settlers arrived and in 1834 a town was planned; on November 26, 1834 the town was first gazetted and George Brown erected the first court house. The main road down the Escarpment through Bulli Pass was built by convict labor in 1835-1836. Other passes were also built during the 1800s as well, such as O’Brien’s Road



The historic property "Alowrie" is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Wollongong. It is located in Church Street.

and Rixon's Pass. Wollongong by 1856 had a population of 864.

The first regular steamship service to Sydney began that year. Convict labour was used to cut a path down Mount Keira in 1835-36 and to carve a safe harbour out between 1837 and 1844 so that passengers could step rather than wade ashore.

Dairying developed in the region in the 1840s as cedar supplies were trailing off. The first government school opened in 1851 and the "The Illawarra Mercury" newspaper was established in 1855. Henry Kendall, one of Australia's most-noted 19th-century poets, lived in what is now Fairy Meadow or Corrimal in the 1850s and wrote a number of poems about his experience of the area.

In 1856 the population of Wollongong was recorded as 864. The Bulli Pass route, investigated in 1844, was opened to wheeled traffic in 1868 and the railway arrived in 1887.

More importantly, the region's first coal mine commenced operations at Mt Keira in 1849. As steam power developed and was applied to shipping and manufacturers the demand for coal increased and, by 1880, there were 10 mines along the Illawarra escarpment, giving birth to a string of mining villages which now constitute the northern suburbs of the City of Greater Wollongong. As exports accelerated, there was a need for improved transportation, processing and port facilities. Tramways were laid from two of the mines to Wollongong Harbour to transport coal skips which were drawn first by horses and later by locomotives.

In the 1860s, Belmore Basin was constructed at Wollongong Harbour but proved inadequate. By 1885 it

was estimated that about 1600 ships passed through the harbour every year.

In 1871, the old lighthouse was completed; in 1880, steam locomotives were introduced to haul coal loads from Mount Keira mine to the harbour; gas street lighting was introduced in 1883; in 1885, a new court house was erected in Market Street; in 1886 the first town hall was erected; and the Illawarra Railway to Wollongong was completed in 1887.

Work commenced on the establishment of a smelting works on the western shore of Lake Illawarra in 1895 and harbour facilities were developed at Shellharbour. However, the smelting operation ran into financial trouble and in 1906 was transferred to Port Kembla, which soon emerged as the main port. Its shipping history began in 1883 when a jetty was erected to service the output from the Mount Kembla mine, the source of the port's name.

Work on the inner and outer harbours commenced at Port Kembla in 1898. A coke works was followed by copper refining in 1908, metal manufacturing in 1918, fertiliser production in 1921 and, most crucially, in 1928, Hoskins Iron & Steel transferred its operations from Lithgow to Port Kembla. This led to considerable expansion of operations and of the fledgling township of Port Kembla. BHP purchased the venture in 1935 and immigration after World War II fed the labour needs of what became the largest steelworks in Australia and the largest steelworks owned by BHP anywhere in the world.

The former Broken Hill Proprietary Company (now BHP Billiton after merging with Billiton) acquired Australian Iron & Steel in 1935, but spun-out their steel division as a separate company, known as BlueScope Steel Limited. The steelworks has grown to become a world-class flat rolled steel producer, operating as a fully integrated steel plant.



Crown Street in Wollongong

Some of the significant dates over the next 70 years were:

- 1937 The new Wollongong Lighthouse was finished on Flagstaff Point;
- 1942 Wollongong was proclaimed a City;
- 1947 City of Greater Wollongong was formed;
- 1954 The population of Wollongong was 90,852;
- 1956 New Wollongong City Council Chambers were opened;
- 1961 The Wollongong University College was established;
- 1963 The Wollongong Teachers College was established;
- 1965 The Westfield Shopping Centre at Figtree was opened;
- 1985 The railway line was electrified to Wollongong and extended in 1993 to Dapto;
- 1986 The Wollongong Mall was completed;
- 1987 The Council Chambers and Library Building were completed;
- 1988 The current Council administration building was completed;
- 1998 The 6000 seat Wollongong Entertainment Centre was opened;



The Wollongong Hospital about 1960s



The Wollongong City Council Chambers about 1950s

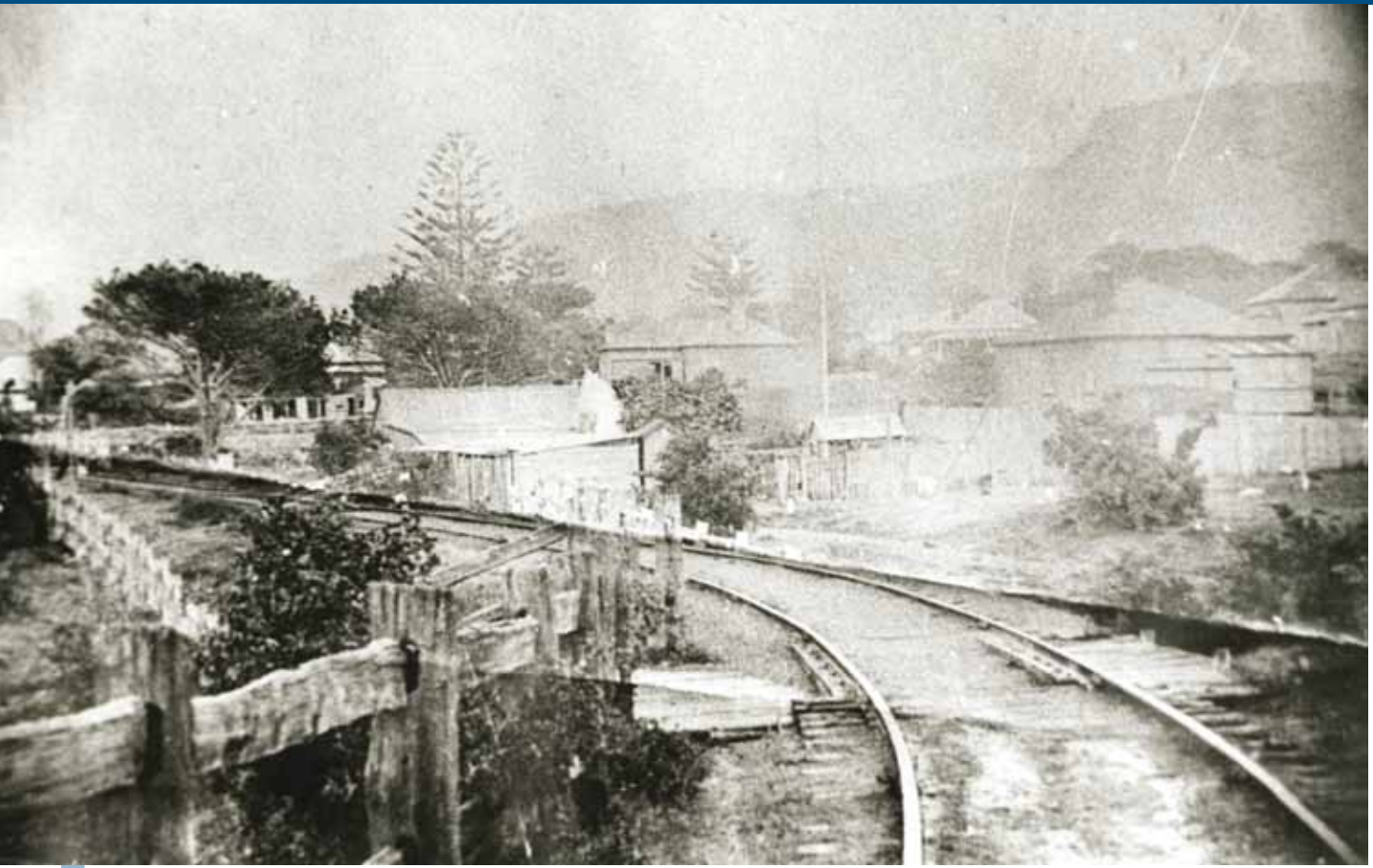
- 1999 The Gateway and Crown Central Mall Buildings were unified as Wollongong Central;
- 2001 The population of Wollongong reached 181,612 people;
- 2005 QANTAS established a daily air service from Wollongong to Melbourne that lasted until 2008.

Despite the decline of traditional manufacturing and blue-collar industries due to the abandonment of protectionist economic policies in the 1980s, many of these industrial installations still exist.

The City's economy has rebounded thanks to diversification of economic activity including higher education, the fine arts, tourism, residential construction and eco-friendly electricity generation.



Smiths Hill High School educated many of the future builders in Wollongong



The Smith Street Bridge of the Mount Keira Tramway

Mount Keira Tramway

Coal was recorded at Mount Keira in 1839 by the Rev. W. B. Clarke, a qualified geologist.

In the early days of its operation the coal from the Osborne Wallsend Colliery was hauled by bullock teams down the steep Mount Keira track and old road. It commenced at the foot of the incline, extending over and through lands of the late Henry Osborne passing under a reserved road near Macquarie Street, leading through the Mount Keira Estate, and through the lands of Andrew Thompson and extending through land known as "Bustle Farm."

Henry Osborne petitioned the Government to be allowed to build a tramway from the mine to the harbour. He was allowed to build part of it and the tramway terminated approximately 240 metres west of the heart of the Princes Highway. A further petition

was made by the Osborne Wallsend Coal Company to extend the tramway to Belmore Basin. The petition was granted and an Act of Parliament cited.

In May 1861 a narrow gauge tramway was constructed from the incline to Belmore Basin (Wollongong Harbour) after the Mount Keira Tramways Act was passed by Parliament.

The tramway terminated at a point approximately 60 metres north-west of the north-west corner of Harbour Street.

In 1878 the tram road was widened to standard gauge and horse teams used for hauling the coal were replaced by steam locomotives. These locomotives-Keira No. 1 and Keira No. 2- were the first locomotives to work on this tramway. These locomotives ceased running in 1954 when the line was closed.

On a modern street map the route of the tramway followed Gooyong Street, Rose Street, Throsby Drive (Tramway Bridge) and then between Campbell Street and Smith Street including the The Builders Club car park to Osborne Park and Belmore Basin. The route can still be traced on a modern aerial or satellite photograph.

The Mount Keira Osborne Wallsend Tramway Bridge is located in the south-east corner of Osborne Park at Cliff Road, Wollongong East. The Tramway Bridge was officially opened in late September 1864; today, the trestles are intact and in fair condition but the bridge decking is missing.

Excavation of the south external wall of the Illawarra Master Builders Club in May 2001 revealed several of the old sleepers as it went down the side of the current building that leads to the car park off Church Street. That same tramway line also passed by the old Club in Charlotte Street.

Mining at Mount Keira finally ceased on September 27, 1991.



Railway sleepers found at The Builders Club during building excavations for extensions



A railway skip that carried coal from Mount Keira to Wollongong harbor



A section of the Mount Keira Tramway that has been preserved at Osborne Park, Wollongong



Top Right The Master Builders Association Illawarra was among the official guests at a civic luncheon that welcomed HRH Queen Elizabeth 11 to Wollongong in 1954

In the Beginning...

The history of the Master Builders Association NSW Illawarra Division and that of the Illawarra Master Builders Club has been closely interwoven.

Prior to the opening of the current Club in April 1963, research was made by two former Club Presidents, Messrs. George Phillips and Jack Sainsbury, of the Minutes going back to the very beginning so that a chronological record could be written for those in future years who may have wondered just how and why the present Club came into existence.

Phillips and Sainsbury in compiling the history mentioned many names but, at the same time, pointed out that the names of a great number of others who gave their time and talents would be missing including those who may have served on Committees or did other work. That is inevitable in any history, but at the same times the thoughts of old

members will go out to those good fellows who are “honored but unsung”.

The following is the transcript prepared for inclusion in a special souvenir booklet that was launched at the Official Opening of the Illawarra Master Builders Club in Church Street, Wollongong, on Friday, April 19, 1963. We are all indebted to Phillips and Sainsbury, both now deceased, for their meticulous care they took compiling this historic article from shortly after the end of World War 2 until 1963. Photographs in the souvenir booklet were supplied by Frank Cornally, Wollongong Soldiers Club, James Studio and Jack Giles.

Giles in the original photo album he supplied wrote on the lead page; “To the Officers and Members in appreciation of the many kindnesses extended to me over the years and in the hope that this record may



Master Builders Association

New South Wales

Illawarra Division

prove of interest to those who will take our place in the years to come. Jack Giles April 19 1963."

In The Beginning...

Prior to World War 2, a Master Builders Association existed in Wollongong but, beyond the fact that its Secretary was Harry Parsons, no record of its activities could be found. At the same time some local builders were members of the M.B.A. of New South Wales, but the greater majority had no affiliations at all.

At the close of World War 2, the building industry like most other industries on the New South Wales South Coast was in a chaotic state. This was caused primarily because of a shortage of materials and the lack of skilled tradesmen, the last-named brought about by the lack of apprenticeship training during the war years. Aggravating this position with the fact that finance was available and the demand for housing was great.

What is generally known as the Illawarra area, which included the fast-growing industrial city of Wollongong and also Port Kembla, suffered badly. Indeed, it can be truly said it suffered as much as any other part of Australia.

It can also be said that the beginning of what we are experiencing today (1963) had its genesis during that period. In 1946 Australian Iron & Steel (AI&S) introduced a scheme under which any builders erecting dwellings of domestic housing in any form were assisted by that company by supply of such materials as lay within their parameters. Following this move by AI&S, Lysaghts also got behind the local builders by supplying them with galvanized iron.

Both AI&S and Lysaghts set up a separate department to handle the scheme. The AI&S Department was run by Mr. Walter Noad, and Lysaghts was under the direction of Mr. Eric Clare. It should be recorded, with particular emphasis, that both these men did a colossal job for the builders and the firms they represented for they were not only courteous, but each had an understanding of the problems involved.

After heading his department for some 12 months, Noad was appointed to the company's New York office and his place was taken by Mr. E. Rose. When the announcement of Noad's transfer was made, a number of the local builders decided it would be a nice gesture of appreciation if they gave him a farewell dinner. This was held at "Cakelands", the future site of the Nock & Kirby's store.

THIS SIGN IS FOR YOUR PROTECTION

Make certain before you commence building that your builder is the proud owner of the above sign.

For your knowledge the following list of Master Builders is supplied:

<p>ANDERSON & GODDEN, 22 Edy's Street, Corralan. 2518. R. H. ARMESSEN, 51 Assala Street, Gwyneth. 2504. F. S. ANTHON, 2 East Street, Moss Vale. 2371. ALAN ARMSTRONG, 26 Duriga Ave., Woomera. 2515. T. D. BLACKMORE, 61 Jarvis Street, Nowra. 2540. K. H. BRIDGE, 174 McKay Street, Nowra. 2540. R. E. & T. BROWNING, 13 Victoria Street, Wollongong. 2500. B. BROOKS, Barnburgh Street, Dapto. 2530. Phone 61-0394. R. A. BAXTER & CO. PTY. LTD., 46 Ashbur Street, Wollongong. 2500. M. BLATCH, 3 Battie Avenue, Bulli. 2516. Phone 67-0223. BIBBY HOMES PTY. LTD., 216 Loran's Ave., St. George's Basin. BURNSHAW CONSTRUCTIONS PTY. LTD., 118 Ashbur Street, Wollongong. 2500. W. L. CARR PTY. LTD., 244 McKean Avenue, Wollongong. 2500. COOMBS & SASSALL (George) PTY. LTD., 118 Ashbur Street, Wollongong. 2500. Rep. R. Sassall. S. J. COOPER, 121 Healdy Street, Margerita. 2506. J. A. CCELTHART & SONS, 3 McDowell Ave., Nowra. 2540. G. CONNELL, 39 Bryson Street, Dapto. 2530. Ph. 61-1350. CLAPHAM CONSTRUCTIONS PTY. LTD., 1 Jesse Avenue, Barrack Point. 2528. CAMARA & CANTRELL PTY. LTD., Box 61, P.O. Warilla. 2528. Phone: 96-3111. COMMODORE HOMES PTY. LTD., 215 Phoenix Highway, Albion Park Rail. 2527. COMACCHIO BROS. PTY. LTD., Suite 8, Lake Market Chambers, Warrington. 2502. CONVAR PTY. LTD., Box 101 Post Office, Wollongong. 2500. Rep. Don Gough. C.D.E. PTY. LTD., 14 Rose Parade, Mt. Pleasant. 2518. R. J. DONOVAN, (Builders) Lot 16, Lyndell Drive, Nowra. DONNELLY & ELLIOTT, 2 Dickson Street, Rosedale. 2533. C. C. DODGHTY & SONS, 43 Gyppa Street, Wollongong. 2500. M. J. DAWSON, 31 Gloucester Cres., Dapto. 2530. I. DEGOSTER PTY. LTD., 1 Smeeth Avenue, Wingham. M. J. DAVIDSON, 7 Dalrymple Street, Nowra. 2540. A. C. DAVSLEY, 48 Ogden Road, Bulli. 2516. T. EDDY, 24 Smith Street, Fairy Meadow. 2519. I. B. ELLMORER, "Stargate" Sanderson. 2578. FRANKS HEARWARD POOL CENTRE, 407 Crown Street, Wollongong. 2500. F. C. FRIPP PTY. LTD., Cr. Innes and Prince Roads, Fairy Meadow. 2519. ALBERT FLORENTINE, 128 Bellevue Road, Figtree. 2500. J. R. & M. L. FORBES, 54 River Road, Nowra. 2540. DIAMOND FLANNERY, 15 Talbot Point Road, Blair View. 2546. A. & J. FITZSIMMONS PTY. LTD., 70 Verner Street, Goulburn. 2580. G. K. N. BUILDING & ENGINEERING, P.O., Box 121, Port Kembla. 2505. J. C. GITTENS PTY. LTD., 35 Balmoral Rd., Burrell Lake. 2528. C. A. GOGGIN, 8 Avon Parade, Mt. Pleasant. 2518. Phone 84-8443. W. S. HARRIS, 17 Meyers Avenue, Dapto. 2530. F. D. HARDING, 8 Llewellyn Avenue, Goulburn. 2580. G. HICKLEY PTY. LTD., "Windrose", Coastal Parade, Fishermans Paradise, Milton. 2538. ERNEST HUNT & SON PTY. LTD., 11 Lindfield Avenue, Lindfield. Phone: 46-3582. HIPPESLEY & SMYTH PTY. LTD., Box 1, P.O., Oak Flats. 2527. Phone: 71-2266. F. SMITH, 17 Colgate Crescent, Mt. Kembla. 2506. H. G. & W. GAYWARD, Campbelltown Road, Bannister. A. C. HERBERT & SONS PTY. LTD., 13 Bernal Street, Bernal. 2576. HOFFMAN CONSTRUCTIONS PTY. LTD., 104 Berridge Street, Bannister. 2546. Phone: 2-5744. B. E. JOHNS, Lot 4 Colton Grove, Margerita. 2500.</p>	<p>J. R. JORDAN (Retired), 84 Keells Street, Wollongong. 2500. K. C. JARMAN, 23 Coyle Avenue, Nowra. 2540. E. J. & E. M. JOHNSON, 10 Kanina Street, Mt. Keira. 2510. KENT BROS. PTY. LTD., 19 Cochrane St., West Wollongong. K. KING, Barragoot Street, Barragoot. 2547. W. T. KNODEL, 7 McKean Avenue, Wollongong. 2500. K. W. KNODEL, 1 William Street, Katoomba. 2500. W. H. M. LEENER PTY. LTD., 8 Albert St., Corralan. 2514. W. J. LONGHURST, 32 Gyppa Road, Gwyneth. 2504. LONGHURST & CUMMINGS, 1 Fairy Avenue, Fairy Meadow. TONY LAKE CONSTRUCTIONS, Lyndell Drive, Nowra. 2540. LUXEN BROS. PTY. LTD., 40 Phoenix Avenue, North Wollongong. 2500. TERRY MAHER, Box 180 Post Office, Nowra. 2540. P. A. MURPHY, 14 Yates Avenue, Mt. Keira. 2500. MAINT & COCHIAN, 98 The Avenue, Mt. St. Thomas. 2500. T. C. MARSHALL PTY. LTD., Box 123, P.O., 1 Olive Cres., Corralan. 2518. Phone: 64-5966, 84-8181. R. L. MORRIS PTY. 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C. WILLIAMS, Jacobs Drive, Jones Inlet. 2540. P. & H. WELKER, 58 Montague Street, Goulburn. 2580.</p>
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The Master Builders Association Illawarra actively promoted their registered members to potential customers in the Illawarra region

The function was not only a success in so far as expressing thanks to Noad but that it also marked a turning point in the attitude of local builders towards one another. Meeting in such an atmosphere they found out that fellow builders were not bad coves after all!

It was during this function that a local contractor, Mr. Matt Daisley, suggested that it was high time that the local builders got together and formed an Association, both for the benefit of individuals and for the trade generally. Daisley's suggestion was well received and within two weeks a meeting was called at the Wollongong Council Chambers.

It was at the second meeting held shortly afterwards that the decision to form a local Builders Association was reached. The date was June 7, 1947, and the Chairman was Mr. T. Donnelly, an AMP representative. The Minutes were taken by Mr. George Coghlan of the Accountants, Coghlan & Allen; the officers elected were: President, Mr. R. J. Rosten; Vice President, Mr. W.L. Vidler; Honorary Secretary, Mr. M. J. Sainsbury; and Honorary Treasurer, Mr. G.W. Phillips. The first meeting of the new Executive and many others was held at Vidler's home on the corner of Elliott's Road and Princes Highway, Fairy Meadow.

During the year that Rosten held office, three memorable events occurred:

- The Association was officially recognized by the Wollongong City Council and was also asked to send a deputation to meet Mr. Matthews, Minister for Building Materials. This deputation was under the leadership of Rosten who stated the builders case very ably;
- The holding of the first Annual Dinner of the Association was at "Brandon House", located on the corner of Crown and Auburn Street, Wollongong. This was attended by 98 builders and their friends, and was the forerunner of the Illawarra Master Builders Association Dinner;
- Affiliation with the M.B.A. of New South Wales whose President at that time was the late Mr. Jim Girwin.

During this first year it was decided to employ a part-time Secretary and Coghlan & Allen were chosen. They deputized Mr. Tom Hooper to do the actual work and he retained this position for 12 months, later succeeded by Mr. Frank Cornally. Cornally retained the post for seven years but resigned when he became Auditor for both the Association and the Club that was formed later.

The Annual Meeting was held on July 16, 1948 when Vidler was elected President; Longhurst, Vice President; Coghlan &

Allen as Secretaries; and Phillips, Honorary Treasurer. Vidler apparently was a master of handling debate and it is noted that no meeting during his term finished later than 10:15pm. The new Association was very pro active and was represented on many deputations, the President or his officers were present at many local social functions representing the I.M.B.A.

The Annual Dinner was held at the R.S.L. Hall with an attendance of 140. At this dinner the first Master of Ceremonies (Phillips) had to call for no less than 13 speakers who were listed on the program. The food was catered for at Five Shilling and Six Pence (55 Cents) per head and Rosten handled the refreshment needs.

It was at this time that fees were increased to £5/05/- for Nomination and £3/12/- for an Annual Subscription; and the first official visit made by the Illawarra Master Builders Association was to the Blue Mountains.

During the year an Honorary Secretary was appointed to help the paid official in handling all business that might require technical building knowledge. Also, the first Associate Members were accepted and a name prominent among them was that of the late Frank Baxter of St. George Lime & Cement, a man who gave both moral and financial support to the new body.



The steelworks at Port Kembla dominated by Australian Iron & Steel and Lysaghts was the employment life-blood of Wollongong



Wollongong's famous Crown Street in the late 1950s. Population growth and an influx of migrant hostels led to a high demand for builders to construct homes

At the third Annual Meeting, Longhurst was elected President, Sainsbury Vice President and Phillips Honorary Treasurer. A supper was served after the Annual Meeting and the idea proved so popular that the President introduced the concept after the regular meetings, which at this period, were held in the Alliance Hall in Market Street.

It was during this year that the practice started of sending delegates to M.B.A. meetings and this was continued until the fusion when the I.M.B.A. became a full member of the M.B.A. of New South Wales. Registration of builders was discussed as was the handling of disputes between a builder and a client and the process of having the Association as an adjudicator was brought in. This proved to be of great assistance in clearing up matters that could have caused considerable embarrassment, to say nothing of the cost.

In 1950 a number of firsts occurred:

- The President and Vice President attended the first of the many annual Suburban Association Dinners, starting with the Western Suburbs M.B.A. held at the Strathfield Town Hall;
- The Illawarra Association's Annual Dinner was held at the Returned Servicemen's Leagues Hall in February and 150 attended. The catering cost was £52/10/-;
- The first picnic was held at Garie Beach on April 10;

- The first allowance for a President was fixed at £5/05/-;
- The first Trustees elected were Messrs. Rosten, Vidler and Longhurst.

At the 4th Annual Meeting, Sainsbury was elected President; Mr. W. Jackson Vice President; and Phillips was again elected Honorary Treasurer. That year was marked by the great difficulty builders had in obtaining progress payments from jobs, and at a meeting held on August 10, 1950 no less than 45 Members were present, together with 22 Non Members, many of whom joined the Association and proved to be amongst its greatest workers.

Practically all Suburban Associations were visited during 1950 including the first visit paid to the St. George Division that established friendship that lasted down the years and, in the course of that time many personal friendships were made. Nobody was held in higher esteem by the Members of the Illawarra Division than their neighboring friends in the North. The 5th Annual Meeting of the Division was held on July 12, 1951 when the officers elected were President, Sainsbury; Vice President, Phillips; Hon. Treasurer, Rosten. The Subscription rate was £2/2/- . At the next meeting held on July 26, 1951, notification was received that Commally had left Coghlan & Allen and was starting up in business for himself. However,



Cornally was prepared to carry on as Association Secretary in his own right and that offer was accepted.

By the meeting of October 25, 1951, it was evident that the drain on the President's private funds through attending builder functions in Sydney and suburbs was becoming excessive; the President's allowance was increased to £21.00. As was the norm during this period, meetings were held at various places and the 6th Annual Meeting was at the Gas Company's rooms in Crown Street. Officers elected were: President, Phillips; Vice President, Mr. V.P. R. Baxter; Honorary Treasurer, Rosten.

The registration of builders was a priority question at this time and at a meeting held on July 24, 1952, Messrs. Phillips and Sainsbury were appointed as Association representatives on a deputation to the Minister regarding this matter.

This was a busy period for the Association and the Management Committee worked hard to advance the welfare of the Association. Deputations were sent to a number of bodies including the Wollongong Council's Engineering Department, Building Department, Timber Merchants Association, and the Master Plumbers Association.

A feature of the 7th Annual Meeting on August 15, 1953, was that it was held in the new Club, called The Exchange, in Charlotte Street. Officers elected were: President, Phillips; Vice President, Mr. T. Eddy; and Honorary Treasurer, Rosten. It was decided at this meeting to apply for a liquor licence and Cornally was appointed Manager.

During 1953 among the deputations made were one to Rex Connor, MLA, re a liquor licence; two to insurance companies re-workers compensation which resulted in members being able to get five times the protection at half the cost; three to the Council regarding a donation for the Queen's visit in 1954; and four to the Forestry Commission about securing timber.

Following the resignation of Cornally, Mr. J. Bird was appointed Manager of The Exchange but he was replaced shortly afterwards by Mr. F. Higson.

The Association in 1954 played its part in the welcome to Wollongong of her Majesty, HRH Queen Elizabeth II, by erecting an arch over Crown Street. At the official lunch the Association was represented by the President Phillips and Mrs. Phillips.

Gradually the Association was making its presence felt and at the 8th Annual Meeting it was reported that, following representations made in conjunction with Connor, the quota of cement was raised from one third to two-thirds. Officers elected were: President, Mr. C. Fraser; Vice President, Eddy; Honorary Treasurer, Rosten.

At a special meeting held on April 4, 1955 Mr. J. Evans was appointed Secretary-Manager of the Club. At the 9th Annual General Meeting the President's allowance was fixed at £100.00 and elected were: President, Fraser; Vice President, Eddy; and Honorary Treasurer, Rosten. It was at this meeting that Rosten announced that the Club's liquor licence had been granted effective from July 25, 1955.

To settle the chopping and changing of the position of Secretary-Manager, it was announced on September 19, 1956 that Mr. Eric Matthews had been appointed to that position in place of Evans. The decision to appoint Matthews proved a sound one; he stayed in the job for the next seven years.

On November 1, 1956 it was decided join the Master Builders Association of New South Wales as a full Division. The 11th Annual meeting marked the first occasion which Members met on a Division basis and it was held on July 7, 1957. The officers elected were: President, Eddy; Vice President, Mr. V.P.E. Felts; and Honorary Treasurer, Mr. K. Whitehorn.

The 2nd Annual Meeting of the M.B.A. of New South Wales, Illawarra Division, was held on July 30, 1958 and elected were: President Mr. J. Palmer; Vice President; Mr. K. Dean; and Honorary Treasurer, Rosten.

On February 27, 1959, after wandering from place to place the Members sat down to the Annual Dinner in their own Club Rooms in Charlotte Street, the attendance was 150.

The 3rd Annual Meeting of the Division was held in the Club Rooms on July 9, 1959. Elected were: President, Palmer; Vice President, Dean; Hon. Treasurer, Rosten. Deputations during the year included one to Wollongong Council re anomalies in registration; and two references to building inspectors.

It was reported at the 5th Annual Meeting on August 14, 1960 that arrangements had been made with the steelworks for the allotment of steel supplies to Members of the Association; and that the Club now had Sports Committees dealing with the sports of Darts, Indoor Bowls, Lawn Bowls, Soccer, Cricket

and Golf. A year later three more sports were available, namely Fishing, Gun and Alpine Ski Club.

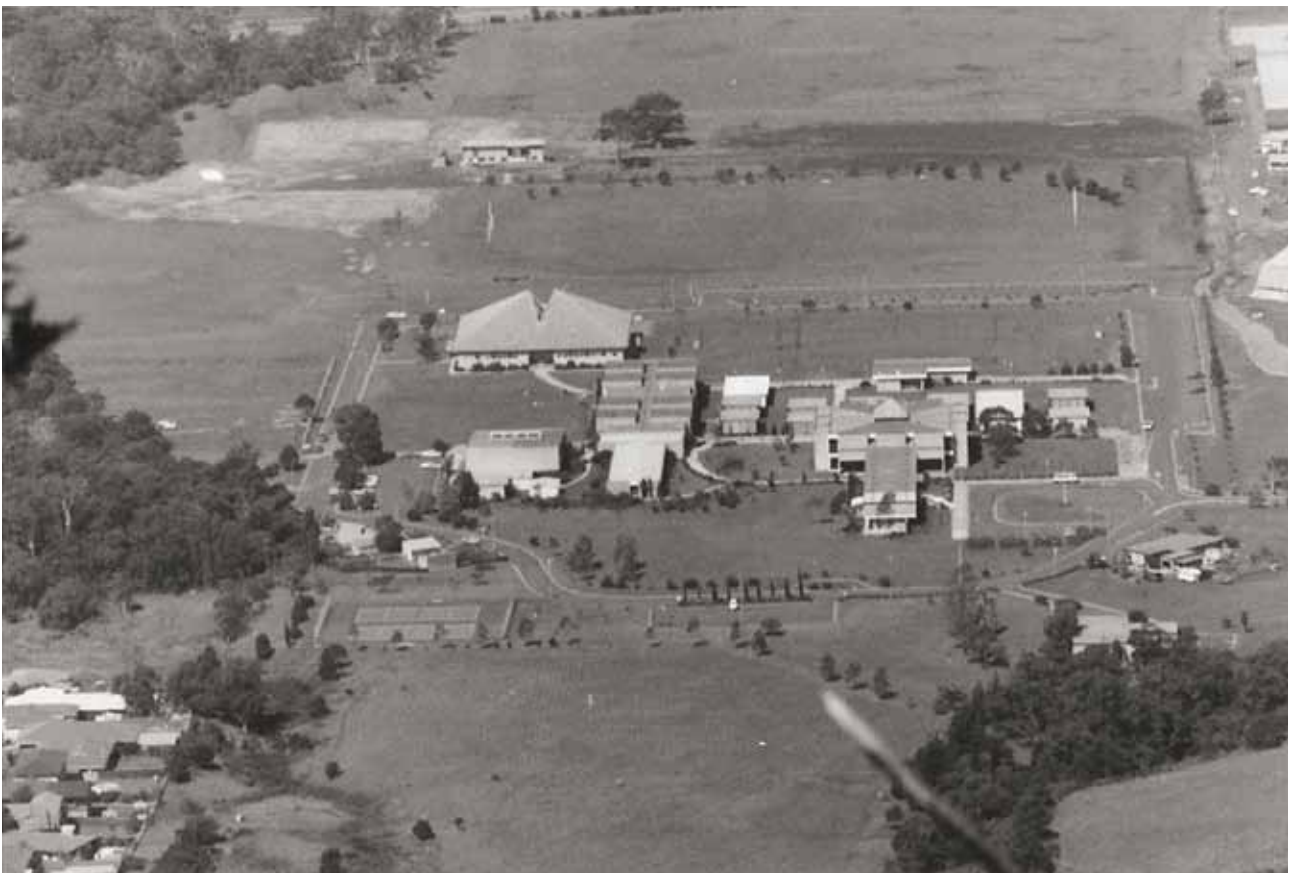
In 1961 it was recorded that the Illawarra Division was pro active by making donations to a range of organizations in the Wollongong area. The beneficiaries of this community support included: City of Greater Wollongong Eisteddfod, Wollongong Legacy, Wollongong Smith Family, Wollongong Sub-Normal Children, Coniston and Fernhill Junior Soccer Clubs, Wollongong Police Boys Club, Amateur Rugby Union Club, National Heart Campaign, Wollongong Amateur Swimming Club, and the North Wollongong Soccer Club.

At the 5th Annual General Meeting of the Illawarra Division, on August 10, 1961 the President (Longhurst) reported that Messrs. Phillips, Dean, Rosten and himself had been appointed

by the Building Committee as the builders of the new Club in Church Street and that work had begun on the foundations. It was estimated that the building would cost £100,000; a month later the Commonwealth Bank notified the Club that it would lend £35,000.

In April 1962, two blocks of land known as the "Old Keira Line" that ran alongside the Church Street property was purchased for £10,000 giving the Club direct access to Kembla Street. The bank granted an extra £10,000 for the purchase.

The licence was changed from the Illawarra Master Builders Association to Illawarra Master Builders Club in 1962 and, in the following year of April 1963, the official opening of the new Club in Church Street was conducted.



The Wollongong University College and Wollongong TAFE is now one of the largest educational campuses in New South Wales. Note the amount of vacant land around the buildings, a far cry to what one can see today.



Pride of Membership

The extraordinary rapid growth of both the Wollongong and Port Kembla districts from the 1960s saw a number of builders, sensing a quick quid, come to the district over the years and, at times, some of their work was not up to the standard set by Members the Master Builders Association NSW Illawarra Division.

Although based in Wollongong, the Illawarra Division is a member of the Master Builders' Association of NSW (MBA) and not only conducted business throughout the South Coast, but also in the Mittagong and Bowral areas.

The "watchdog role" that the Illawarra Division assumed in the 1960s was needed as the sub standard work by outsiders (non MBA members) greatly worried the local Division. Over the years they waged a war against such practices as each Member was not only proud of the high standards set by the MBA but also of his own work.

This is emphasized by the fact that before any builder could join the MBA their work had to

be passed by a special Sub Committee in the locality in which the builder wished to operate. If, in the opinion of the Sub Committee, the work was not up to standard, then that builder was refused admittance.

On the other hand, if the work conformed to the high standards set by the MBA they were welcomed by the Illawarra Division. Members realized that the more good builders they could attract to the district then greater would be the faith that the public had in them.

The public dealing with the Illawarra Division also had the safeguard that, should they not approve of the standard of work done on a job, they could apply to the Division, which investigated the matter thoroughly.

It was this faith in the district as well as in their work as Master Builders that in just over a decade, they constructed a fine building that fast became the social centre of Wollongong, the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

Our History



How It Started



Rex Connor

It all started with an idea but just who mentioned it first is uncertain.

In any case it doesn't matter; the main thing is that someone did mention it and that other people took up the ball and kept it rolling. There are lots of things that happened before the suggestions put forward about a Club and the story and the history of the Association can be traced through the minutes.

Up to 1951 there had, apparently, been a general dissatisfaction about having to meet in odd places and the Association not having a home of its own. This crystallized into a firm idea that the solution lay in the establishment of a Club.

This state of things continued for some time, but the first concrete action seems to have been taken in 1951 when the President, Mr. M. J. Sainsbury, accompanied by Messrs. W. J. Longhurst, R. Baxter, and Associate Member B. Baxter visited the St George & Sutherland Division Club and inspected the premises. After going fully into the matter with officers of this established Builders Club, the delegation came back to Wollongong with a recommendation to their Association's Committee that the Illawarra Master Builders Association purchase land and erect a suitable building.

The next step was the selection of the site and, eventually, at a meeting of the Illawarra Master Builders Association Committee, held on April 26, 1951; it was decided to buy a site in Charlotte Street, Wollongong from the Wollongong Gas Light Company, at a cost of £450.00.

Money for the purchase was found through the issue of debentures of £10.00 each, with the right of any Member of the Association to take more than one. It says much for the spirit of those existing members that sufficient money was forthcoming and the land bought.

Apparently the subsequent negotiations altered the picture slightly because at a meeting held on September 6, 1951, it was decided to purchase the Charlotte Street land for a price of £507.00 plus legal expenses.

The report on plans put before that meeting estimated that the total cost of land, together with legal expenses, would be £550.00. Also that labour and materials would run to a further £950.00. After full discussion, it was decided that the plan be sent to the Department of Building Materials for approval of the necessary materials.

To meet the building costs it was decided to issue £20.00 debentures, which would be interest free. Should a builder wish to take up more than one debenture then such debentures would carry bank interest.

At a Special Meeting held on September 13, 1951, Messrs. W. J. Longhurst and W. Caldwell were appointed Trustees. At a subsequent meeting held on October 25, 1951, the President (Sainsbury) reported that, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Rex Connor, M.L.A., permission had been granted to build the club-or The Builders Exchange-as it was then referred to. He also reported a large number of merchants had intimated that they would be willing to donate materials.

In March 1952, it was decided to obtain a builder under agreement to the Association to supervise the erection of the new Club, and also compile a list of Members who were willing to supply labour, with such Members to be reimbursed for their employees' time plus normal percentage.

At the Annual Meeting held on July 10, 1952 Phillips replaced Sainsbury, who had served his two years as President. Sainsbury reported that the Bank of New South Wales had been approached for a loan of £4000.00 with the local manager not thinking it would go through. It was also reported that



George Phillips



Frank Cornally

the local manager of the Queensland Insurance Company would be able to obtain the money for them. Eventually the necessary finance was obtained from the Bank of New South Wales.

Any possible doubts about finance did not deter the Committee; at a Special Meeting held six days later Messrs. Sainsbury, Longhurst, Phillips and Duff were appointed as a team to peg the new building out on Saturday morning, July 19, 1952.

The question of finance was still uppermost at the meeting held on August 4, 1952, when those present were told that the estimated cost of labor and materials was now £5050.00. Against this, donations had been received for £1000.00 while the sale of debentures had netted £1500.00 but at the meeting on August 28, 1952 the estimated cost had risen to £6684.00!

In the meantime Mr. R. J. Rosten had been appointed to supervise the erection of the building at a fee to be fixed by the Building Committee.

At the Annual Meeting held on August 13, 1953, Phillips was re-elected President and it was decided that all donors to the Club building would be made Honorary Members for the first year. At this meeting it was also decided that an application be made for a Liquor Licence and that Mr. F. J. Cornally be appointed Manager. Eventually Connor took up the matter of a licence with the Chief Secretary's Department and, as result of his efforts, a licence was finally granted.

It was not until September 24, 1953, that a formal decision was recorded that the Club should be formed. A month later the first Social Members were accepted and they were: Messrs. A. Godkin, A. McIntosh, M. Fraser, R. Makin, C. J. Orphin, W. A. Butcher and D. Hay.

The Illawarra Masters Builders Club was officially opened by Rosten at 3:00pm on October 17, 1953. Speeches were made by the President, Phillips; Mr. P. Bottomly (M.B.A. of New South Wales); Mr. W. T. Patterson (St George & Sutherland Division); Connor and Rosten.

The Builders Exchange

The oldest association in the Australian building industry still in existence is The Builders Exchange of NSW Ltd which is made up of suppliers of products and services to the building and construction industry. It promotes the interests of Members of the Builders Exchange to the industry, to government bodies, and to the community at large.

The Builders Exchange was formed in 1864 and, while it was principally a suppliers' organization, a number of builders also joined it. The builders formed their own organization in 1873 (as already described); however, there was still a fair amount of overlapping between the two bodies.

After the Builders & Contractors' Association changed its name in August 1900 to the Master Builders Association of NSW and became registered in March 1902 with the newly formed arbitration Court as the "Master Builders Union – Industrial Union of Employers," a separation between the two Associations became almost automatic.

It is interesting to note, however, that The Builders Exchange continued to work in close co-operation with the MBA, and for some time the President of the MBA was, ipso facto, the President of The Builders Exchange.

Since the mid-1970's the MBA President is Patron of the Builders Exchange, and a virtual merger effected as the Builders Exchange took all its members into membership of the MBA.

The Foundation Members



Tom Hopper, the first paid Secretary, part-time, of the Illawarra Master Builders Association

The following 44 individuals and companies were the Foundation Members of the Illawarra Master Builders Association.

The General Committee comprised Messrs. Clark, Gostellow, Kiernan, Vidler and Zeigler and the Committee that prepared the objects of the Association was Messrs. S. Boyle, J. K. Polkington and S. Vidler.

The first draft of Rules governing the new body was adopted at a meeting held on December 15, 1947. The Membership Fee was £2/2/- (\$4.40).

At the First Annual Meeting on July 16, 1948 Mr. W. L. Vidler was elected President, Mr. W. J. Longhurst as Vice President and Mr. G. W. Phillips as Treasurer. Coghlan & Allen were appointed as the Secretaries.

The meetings were held in the Council of Industrial Management Rooms in the Central Chambers at Crown Street, Wollongong.



Jack Sainsbury a Foundation Member

Foundation Members

W. Jackson
H.T. Kent & Sons
W. Noble
E. Klien
W.J. Longhurst
J.T. Muir
D .Millar
F.H. Norris
C. Nielsen
North Illawarra Home Builders

J.K. Pocklington
J. Parkinson
G.W. Phillips
H. Parsons
R. J. Rosten
K Randall
Stewart Bros
G. Smithers
M.J. Sainsbury
L .Sully
W. Seaward
R. E. Vaughan

H. Zeigler,
W.J. Anderson & Sons
W. S. Badans
Buckland & Sons
S Boyle & Son
Blackburn & Kiernan
E .Callan
W. Caldwell
W.F .Crockford
G.C. Clarke
W. Coulson
J. Corbett & Son

M. Daisley
C. J. Doyle
J. Davies
Distinctive Homes
Ferguson & Ross
F. C. Fripp
W.H. Fraser
A. Gostellow
J. R. Jordan
R. Johns

Reef Rosten

Reefton (Reg) John Rosten was born in the Sydney inner suburb of Newtown but spent his early years on the Richmond River at Alstonville in the Ballina/Lismore area. His father owned a grocery business there but in 1916 Rosten returned to Sydney to complete his education and later trained as an apprentice in the building industry with W. Blundell & Co. at Greenwich.

Rosten specialized in carpentry and joinery and by the 1930s had formed a partnership with Oscar Jeffree and, operating as Jeffree & Rosten, they carried out a number of projects in the Sydney area.

The move to the Wollongong area was the direct result of securing a contract with Streets Ice Cream at Corrimal in 1936. Rosten soon realized the potential of the area for future building work and he never left. The partnership with Jeffree was dissolved in 1938 and Rosten carried on building many fine homes and commercial buildings in the Wollongong district.

Post-war there was a critical shortage of building materials and it was this situation that led to the formation of the Illawarra Master Builders Association of which Rosten was elected Foundation President in 1947-1948. He was Senior Vice President at the Church Street Club from 1963 until 1966.



Reef Rosten

The Foundation Suppliers

In the embryo years of physically building the Illawarra Master Builders Club of the 1950s, a large number of local merchants intimated they would be willing to donate materials.

In post-war Australia after the end of World War 2 in 1945, there was a general shortage of building materials and also skilled tradesmen; there had been no apprenticeship scheme during that troubled period.

At a meeting on August 25, 1952, the 59 donors of materials or services to the original Club in Charlotte Street were admitted as Social Members. At the time the names of the following were inscribed on special panels fastened permanently within the Club.

A. V. Gorrell	Johnston & Phillips
A.R.I.A.	Langco Industries
Allan Cameron	Malleys Ltd
Archtrim Ltd	Maxwell Porter Ltd
Associated Building Supplies	Michael Nairn Ltd
B & W. Steel Ltd	Northern Hardware Ltd
B. J. Dennison	Palco Products
B.A.L.M. Ltd	Pickering & Sobs
Bakewell Bros.	Punchbowl Brick Ltd
Blue Metal & Gravel Ltd	Reg Bodimeade Pty Ltd
Bulli Tile & Brick Company	Reliance Electrics
C. J. May & Company	Rheem Ltd
C. S. R. Building Division	Ron Hayward
Chullora Potteries Ltd	Sorbys Ltd
Commonwealth Moulding	Southern Steel Supplies
Coombs & Sassall	Specified Concrete Ltd
Cura-Crete Concrete	St. George Lime & Cement Company
Diements Ltd	Swan Refrigeration
Don Hardware Company	T. Menton
Eldweld Ltd	T. S. Reily
Expanco Floors	Taffel Shone Ltd
Fernlea Gate Co.	Unique Balances
Frank G. O'Brien	W. F. Campbell & Co.
Fred Ash Ltd	W. G. Watson & Company
Fred Clark Ltd	W. Kelly
Geo. A. Beswick	W. Wadsworth Pty Ltd
Goodall & Company	Wollongong Gas Company
Illawarra Distributors	Wormald Bros. Industries Ltd
Illawarra Wall Board Company	Wunderlich Ltd
J. J. Forsyth	



The original Club in Charlotte Street with the second floor

Charlotte & Church Streets

The Charlotte Street land was purchased from Wollongong Gas Light Company for £450.00 on April 26, 1951.

Following the opening of the original Club building on October 17, 1953, everything ran smoothly for some time, but eventually it could be seen that an extension would be necessary. Two years later, almost to the day, a decision was reached to extend and a Building Committee was appointed to go into ways and means.

This Committee not only explored the question of adding another storey to the existing building but with a view to an even more grandiose scheme, to explore the possibility of leaving the Charlotte Street site and building elsewhere.

After going into all the pros and cons it was decided on October 20, 1955, to extend the club in Charlotte Street so a Building Committee was appointed. Two months later on December 15, 1955, it was decided to purchase a block of land 64 feet (approx. 20 metres) by 130 feet (approx. 40 metres) in Church Street for £1700.00.





The Wollongong Gas Works in Charlotte Street dominated the area and was ugly. Today, most of the land is owned by The Collegians Club.

Five months later on May 9, 1956, it was reported that a further two blocks were available at the Church Street site for £1275.00 and Messrs. Phillips and Rosten were appointed to negotiate the purchase of this land; they reported back that they had secured it for £900.00.

Church Street was created in the early 19th century, and contained a bottle factory and many houses. There are two historic churches on Church Hill, and many houses on the southern part of the street are very old. The old Wollongong Court House sits on the east side of the hill square, and is known for its clock tower. It was renovated in 2006.

Following the Annual Meeting on July 26, 1956, at which Mr. T. Eddy was appointed President, an application was made in August to the City of Greater Wollongong Council for permission to build a club on the Church Street property. However, this was only a provisional move for at the same time, application was also made to Council for a permit to extend the Charlotte Street club.

The next step was taken on April 10, 1957, when Mr. A. Brown was engaged to prepare the plans for the extension of the Club in Charlotte Street. Mr. R. Bodnar was the successful tender.

By this time the Illawarra Association had become a Division of the M.B.A. of New South Wales and this brought bookkeeping problems. On August 14, 1957, it was decided to open separate bank accounts for the Illawarra Master Builders Club and for the Master Builders' Association NSW Illawarra Division.

It soon became evident that, even with the two storeys, the Charlotte Street premises were becoming overcrowded and the question of using the Church Street property was canvassed.

In 1960 prize money totaling £120.00 was offered for plans for an entirely new club to be erected in Church Street. The prize money was eventually divided between Messrs. A. Hodge and R. J. Rosten; their plans were given to the Building Committee with a view to combining them and also suggesting other ideas.

On August 2, 1960, a combined plan was submitted by Phillips and this was approved. This was later submitted to Wollongong Council who gave their approval in principle so that working drawings could be prepared.

A special Building Committee was appointed comprising Messrs. G. W. Phillips, W. Longhurst, R. Rosten, A. Dean, T. Eddy, W. Carr, R. Law, J. Sainsbury, W. Caldwell and J. Palmer. On July 26, 1961, it was reported that work had begun on the foundations of the new Club in Church Street and that Messrs. Phillips, Longhurst, Dean and Rosten had been appointed as the builders. It was also reported at the same meeting that the estimated cost of the new building had risen to £100,000.

On April 12, 1962, it was reported that two blocks of land, known as the Old Keira Line, alongside the Church Street property had been purchased by the Association for



The Charlotte Street Club (far right) with the Albert Memorial Hospital in foreground



Looking down Church Street from the Smith's Hill area around the 1870s. The last building on the left hand side still exists today as Louie's Corner Store. The large vacant area of land further along on the left is now the location of The Builders Club

£10,000. The bank granted the extra money and this purchase provided access to Kembla Street.

It seems that from then everything went according to plan, and in October, 1962, the transfer was made from the old Charlotte Street premises.

The amenities in the new Club amply justified the Committee's expectations as the flood of applications for membership became almost embarrassing!

A month before the official opening ceremony on April 19, 1963 the Membership List was closed at a total of 1641 and there was a waiting list, including Provisional Members, of 426.

Charlotte Street in the past 60 years since the first Illawarra Master Builders Club was opened has undergone a transformation.

The street was once the site of the Wollongong Gas Works and the Albert Memorial Hospital.



The Charlotte Street Club after the former Albert Memorial Hospital was demolished

Carol Herben, President of the Illawarra Historical Society, has provided information of that bygone era; "The Gasworks was at the Western end of Charlotte Street. One of the original buildings was the Albert Memorial Hospital, built in 1864 but closed in 1907. There was also the William Davies Foundry that closed in 1912. It was a short, dead-end street and there was a small cottage owned by Vera and Larry Swan who lived there up until the 1960s. Larry (old Lars) was mentally disadvantaged and was a character; he was always seen by people in the very early hours of the morning picking out glass bottles and cans from garbage bins to earn money. He used to whistle at the girls as they passed him on their way to work. The Collegians Club now dominates the area; the old Gasworks site now has car parks and an auto smash repair business occupying the land."



The current Club in Church Street, Wollongong as it appeared in the early 1960s



The Club of '63

Mayor Albert Squires & Mrs. Squires, Mrs. Law and Club President, Bob Law, at the Official Opening on April 19, 1963

The headlines in 1963 said it all; **“Illawarra Master Builders Open New £100,000 Clubhouse”**

The newspaper article went on to say; *“The Illawarra Master Builders have set the seal of success on a project that is without parallel in the Australian building world. In a single decade, the Master Builders of the South Coast have turned a nebulous idea into a practical reality, and posterity will always pay a tribute to those members who have given so much of their time and thought.”*

The building of the Illawarra Master Builders Club on a vacant block of land in Church Street, Wollongong, was considered in 1963 at its official opening as more than just a building that had arisen.

It was viewed as a meeting place for men of all occupations; of all creeds or colors; of all

shades of thought; a focal point where they could meet and enjoy each other’s company and so, in the hours of their recreation, gain that full relaxation so much needed.

The Illawarra Master Builders Club was a monument also to a small group of men who had faith in their own abilities in the great industrial district in which they lived and existed. It was a monument also that marked the respect in which they are held by their fellow citizens, so much so, that there were more people wanting to join their great fraternity than could be accommodated in 1963!

The Illawarra Master Builders not only lived an ideal but also set a new high in club management and performance. The Club that came to existence was a tribute to the men who dreamed it!



The Illawarra Master Builders Club in Church Street after it opened in 1963 saw it soon established as the entertainment and social hub of Wollongong

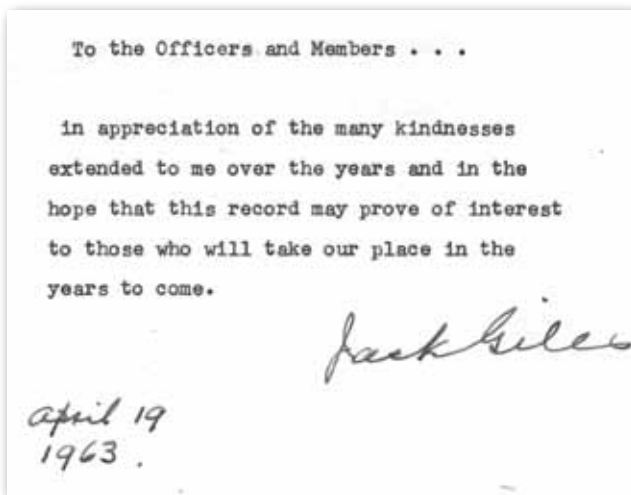


The Club in 1963 offered every modern convenience and comfort, both of which, incidentally, were shared by members and their wives and families. It answered the question of how to provide a place where the lonely men in such a district could find an outlet for a variety of things but, above all, companionship.

When it opened 50 years ago, in a lot of ways, it varied little in what it offered to members compared to the current Club. Back in 1963 with a membership of over 1500 it was only natural that sport should play an important part in the activities of the club, it was a wise move on the part of the Committee to plan so that every branch was catered for.

There were Sub Clubs that catered for an entire range of sports introduced: Bowls (Indoor and Lawn), Cricket, Football, Golf, Fishing, Billiards, Pistol Shooting, Darts, Squash, Alpine Ski and all the rest. At the time, all these were free to members for a nominal annual subscription of 30/- (\$3.00).

Darts and indoor bowls have always been a feature of the Club in Charlotte Street; where at various times amounts of up to £120.00 was allocated as prize money for the open competitions that were a feature of South Coast activities. At lunch time and again at dinner, meals were provided at a fraction of what they would cost outside. Furthermore, they were provided under modern conditions and with full service.



Jack Giles' letter that appeared in the souvenir booklet commemorating the Official Opening of Church Street in 1963



The souvenir booklet of April 1963



The Main Bar Lounge

In the Main Bar just to the left as you entered, there was no place for rush. Men could sit at tables in comfortable chairs and yarn while they enjoyed their drinks. Connected with this but on the other side of the building, was the Recreation Room where families could come and talk with neighbors, or meet and make new friends.

Leading from this area was the Billiards Room with its two full-size tables, and where players were served with whatever refreshments they required. Directly below the Billiard Room there were two Squash Courts, the view into them was through glass walls.

Behind the concertina doors was the Dining Room, so that, when the occasion arose, both rooms could be made into one. Down below the main floors were the Workrooms and Store Rooms.

Upstairs there was a magnificent Ballroom and at one end of it there was a large stage. On social evenings, up to 500 people could dance in comfort on a perfect floor. There was a large Bar on one side from which service was supplied. Outside of the building there was parking room for 250 cars. Into this new Club came something that had not been planned or bought, an atmosphere of friendliness that permeated through the whole place. It was an unwritten



The Main Bar, a different angle. The poker machines of 1963 (far right) are a far cry from the sophisticated electronic machines of 2013



The Main Bar

law that “Mr.”, “Mrs.” and titles were left outside; here men met and any social distinctions that might have existed outside were forgotten. This was a tribute to those leaders among the Master Builders that had set the standard right from the start.

Practical management of the Club in 1963 was in the hands of Mr. Eric Matthews who was first appointed on September 19, 1956. Over the years Matthews had won the esteem and friendship of every member and had the full confidence of the Management Committee.

The opening of the new Illawarra Master Builders Club on Friday, April 19, 1963 marked the beginning, not so much of a new era, but the interrupted continuation of something that was firmly established on that day just over a decade earlier when the idea of forming a Club was first discussed.

The building was officially opened by the Mayor of the City of Greater Wollongong, Alderman Albert Squires. He was rich in his praise and said the following: *“I am pleased to have this opportunity of congratulating the Illawarra Division of the Master Builders Association of NSW on the completion of its new premises in Church Street, Wollongong.*



The Billiards Room

The building maintains the high standard which has been established in the erection of similar buildings in Greater Wollongong over the past decade.

In the years during which the Illawarra Division occupied its premises in Charlotte Street, many changes have taken place in the district, not least in the city's homes and public buildings. The Members of the Master Builders Association Illawarra can take pride in the part they have played in the growth of Greater Wollongong.

These new clubrooms stand as a sign of its Members' faith in the future of the city, a faith which I know will be more than justified, for I am sure that Greater Wollongong is destined to be one of the great cities of the Commonwealth."

The Mayor was probably more pleased than anyone that the Club had finally opened. He jokingly said: "I'm glad to see the Club finished. I say that because it meant that 'Sir William Longhurst' (Bill Longhurst, Club President 1960-1962) would at last be off my back, a place he had occupied from start to finish!"



The Main Foyer

Parking Bonus

One of the outstanding features of the new Illawarra Master Builders Club in Church Street was the fact that it created room for off-street parking of 250 cars, that in itself, a great attraction for intending Members.

It was during the construction period that Members of the Committee were informed that what was known as the "Old Keira Line" was to be sold by Wollongong Council and they immediately took steps to acquire it.

In reality, the "Old Keira Line" was a street that ran on the South side of the Club from Church Street to Kembla Street at the back. The line was a tramway that allowed coal from Mount Keira to be transported by steam engines to near Wollongong Harbour for loading onto ships; it was closed in 1954.

The information of the sale was received at a time when the financial arrangements for the building of the Club had been finalized and the extra amount needed to buy the land-£10,000-presented somewhat of a hurdle.

The Commonwealth Bank was approached, the money was made available and the last of any possible problems disappeared.

Additionally, the roadway gave access to the Club from two streets and substantially decreased traffic congestion on nights when upwards of 1000 people populated the premises for major events or just having a night out.



The Club car park in 1960s



The Club car park in 2013

Official Message 1963

The following is the official message as sent to the new Illawarra Master Builders Club from Mr. W. L. Crew, Past President, St George & Sutherland Division of the Master Builders Association on the occasion of the Official Opening of the Church Street Club on Friday, April 19, 1963.

"Toward the latter end of 1950 the Committee of the St George & Sutherland Master Builders Association received a visit from the Executive of the Illawarra MBA, headed by the President, Mr. Jack Sainsbury, to inspect and to obtain information concerning the newly completed club premises of our Association which, at that time, was the only Builders Club in existence.

The intention of Wollongong builders was to interest their Members in erecting a clubhouse along similar lines, to enable the fraternization of those engaged in the building Industry, which we of St. George have found so advantageous.

A considerable amount of time and thought was given by the Illawarra Committee to the pros and cons of having their own

premises, and in making the decision to go ahead the Committee of that time laid the foundation for the fine structure that is now the headquarters of the building fraternity of the Illawarra District.

Only those Members of an association who have had a hand in organizing, from the beginning, a project such as this, would know the heartaches and frustration that can be encountered, and the bringing to completion of the building such as was recently opened at Wollongong is, I feel, extremely gratifying to those who have borne the brunt of the labor involved.

We, of the St. George & Sutherland Division of the MBA, who have been very closely associated with Illawarra for so many years, heartily congratulate you on achieving your goal and wish you continued success in your future activities."

W. L. Crew

Past President

St. George & Sutherland Division

Jack Palmer

Jack Palmer was the Honorary Treasurer of the Illawarra Master Builders Club when the new building in Church Street was officially opened in April 1963. He served in this position through to 1967, was replaced by Col Stewart in 1968 but served that year and 1969 as a Committeeman.

A product of the Jacaranda City, Grafton, on the NSW North Coast, Palmer completed his education at Grafton High School and trained as an apprentice carpenter. He moved to Brisbane after qualifying as a tradesman, then to Port Macquarie, Canberra and Sydney.

The outbreak of World War 2 saw Palmer seconded into the Tramways Department for six years as a carriage builder. After the war, Palmer sought a new challenge and finished up in Wollongong.

Palmer's association with the building industry of Wollongong started as an employee of A.F. Little at Port Kembla. He brought a mixed business at the same time, operated it with his wife for a couple of years and then started out as a self-employed builder.

Home construction was the principal thrust on a contract basis but later changed to the field of "speculation building" as it was known at that time. Palmer stated that he found complete satisfaction by seeing his ideas materialize to successful fruition.

A Club Member from the very beginning, Palmer apart from Honorary Treasure of the Club was also Honorary Treasurer of the Illawarra Division of the NSW Master Builders Association, a position he held for over four years, and President of the Illawarra Division. He was made a Life Member of the Illawarra Master Builders Association.

In the 1960s apart from his Club involvement, Palmer enjoyed fishing and bowls and had a very active interest in the local Lions Club.



Jack Palmer



Bill Longhurst



Bob Law



Jack Palmer



Tom Eddy



The Mayor of Wollongong, Alderman Albert Squires

Men of Integrity & Standing

The words above were part of a speech that the Mayor of Wollongong, Alderman Albert Squires, made at the new Illawarra Master Builders Club in Church Street on April 19, 1963. This speech of high praise was made in the presence of some 400 Members and their guests.

The Mayor said; *“Illawarra Master Builders have the responsibility of building the Greater City of Wollongong, and we in the Council are very proud of them. As the Mayor, I am proud to be associated with men of integrity and standing such as you are. My Council and I are glad that the builders had been able to take advantage of the opportunity that was there for them and he hoped that Members would always be able to make full use of the Club that is now theirs. The extra land that had been acquired by the Club which gives them access from Church Street to Kembala Street was paid for at a very fair price and the Council was pleased to receive the amount it did.”*

The President of the Illawarra Master Builders Club, Mr. R. (Bob) Law, officially welcomed the Mayor and recounted the path that the Club had taken to build the £100,000 building. He said: *“In the early days, Members of the M.B.A. had to hold their meetings in various places. In the end we got fed up with being kicked around and decided to build our own Club premises. However, we found the premises in Charlotte Street were not big enough so we planned for this new building in which you are in tonight.*

When we decided on this step, the Building Committee comprising Messrs. G. Phillips, W. Longhurst, R. Rosten, K. Dean, T. Eddy, W. Carr, J. Sainsbury, W. Caldwell, J. Palmer and I were appointed. I wish to express the thanks of Members generally for the great work done by these gentlemen. The building which you are in tonight is the result of those plans and we urge all Members to make full use of the Club that is now theirs.”

First Meeting New Club

At the first regular meeting at the new Illawarra Master Builders Club in November 1962, the Members had the pleasure of sitting in comfortable chairs in the Boardroom of their new building.

It was a dinner meeting, one of which was held every three months, and there was a large attendance which included Mr. Frank Smith, immediate Past President of the Main Southern Division, who, at the conclusion of the business, thanked Members for inviting him to join them and congratulated the Illawarra Division for now having such a fine new premises.

Smith also congratulated Mr. Bill Longhurst, immediate Past President of Illawarra on the part he had played in connection with the erection of the new Club.

In the absence of the President, Mr. Bob Law who after an operation was holidaying in Tasmania, the Chair was taken by the Vice President, Mr. Col Stewart, who extended a warm welcome to new Members.

Here is part of the business addressed at that 1962 meeting.

Correspondence

A letter was received from the MBA thanking the Division for the support given to the Convention Ball.

Membership Certificates

It was decided to have certificates printed and presented to all Builders and Associate Members of the Division. These would be similar to those originated by the Central Coast Division but would be larger; details and actual size would be decided by the Executive.

New Secretary

In view of the amount of work that was being done by the Secretary of the Division, Mr. Eric Matthews, it was decided to relieve him of that particular position, although he would still remain as Secretary-Manager of

the Illawarra Master Builders Club. Mr. Col Stewart would act as Secretary for the time being in an honorary capacity.

Progress Payments

A Member brought up what he considered the extraordinary attitude taken up by one of the banks in connection with the payment of a progress payment on a house he was building. He said he had received a note from the bank that the progress payment amount of £1600.00 would be held up until two metal vents had been placed in a laundry.

During the long discussion that followed, Members raised the question as to whether the bank had the right to withhold payments under the circumstances. Eventually, it was decided to write to the headquarters of the bank with a view to having the matter cleared up.

Another Member brought up a case in which he had been left with a sum of £200.00 unsettled, although the major payments had been arranged through a bank. The facts were that in the beginning the client had to find £200.00 which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been paid direct to the builder. However, it was paid by the bank to the client who had then spent it on a television set!

At the final settlement the money was not, therefore, available for the builder, who had attempted to get it from the client in small amounts but is still owed £90.00.

Once again it was decided to write to the bank concerned and ask if some arrangement could be made under which the builder would be protected.



Eric W Matthews,
Secretary-Manager from
1956 to 1964



Ian Reid, former Assistant
Secretary-Manager



The original logo of the Illawarra Master
Builders Club in 1963



Les Hickey



Jerry Nell



Charlie Goodwin



John Carr



Roger Carr



John Bisley



John Day



Brian Burns

Living Life Members

The Illawarra Master Builders Club-now known as The Builders Club-has awarded 27 Life Memberships over the past 59 years. There are 10 of that number still living and five of them are current Directors: John Carr, Brian Burns, John Day, Jerry Nell and David Eddy. The other non-Directors still living are Les Hickey, Charlie Goodwin, Roger Carr, John Bisley and Phil Mortenson.

There is a uniqueness about the Life Members of the Illawarra Master Builders Club in a family-associated way. Bill Carr is the father of John and Roger Carr; and Max Bisley is the father of John Bisley.

- *Jack Sainsbury
- *George Phillips
- *Bill Carr
- *Jack Palmer
- *Reef Rosten
- *Bill Longhurst
- *Col Stewart
- *Max Bisley
- *Alan Hodge
- *Norm Trowbridge

- *Vince Nelson (O.A.M.)
- *Pat Fredericks
- *Bill Kelly
- Les Hickey
- *Ray Browning
- *Jack Cooper
- Jerry Nell
- Charlie Goodwin
- John Carr
- Roger Carr

- *Beatrice Witte
- *Travis Birch
- John Bisley
- John Day
- Brian Burns
- Phil Mortenson
- David Eddy
- *Deceased



Phil Mortenson



David Eddy



Club Caricatures

The name Kerwin Maegraith might not ring a bell but in his old age he drew murals for the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

These murals consisted of dozens of black and white caricatures of Members drawn from real life. Maegraith lived in Sydney for 50 years from 1920 and it is assumed that he visited the Club in the 1960s and among the Members featured are Bill Longhurst, Cec Frazer, Frank Meharg, Keith Hamilton, Fred Kursler, Charles Beresford, Frank Cornally, Jack Sainsbury, Bill Carr and Alan Bates.

Several of these valuable murals are still in the possession of Illawarra Master Builders Club and thanks to Richard Bone (Assistant Manager) were resurrected from “under the building” so that the accompanying photographs could be taken. Those with extra long memories going back to the 1960s can recall these murals located above

the bar at Charlotte Street and later at Church Street on the wall above a bank of four poker machines.

Maegraith was born in Adelaide, South Australia in 1903. His father Alfred Earnest, after a brilliant university career in Adelaide became a Far Eastern correspondent on various newspapers then returned to Adelaide where he founded University College and was its headmaster.

Unexpectedly, Maegraith’s father threw in everything and moved to Coffs Harbour with his wife and five children to manage the British-Australian Timber Mill and its 200 employees that literally dominated the settlement.

Maegraith spent all of his childhood in Coffs Harbour. His eldest brother, Hugh, a tally clerk of the British-Australian Timber Mill located down at The Jetty, from the age of



The Kerwin Maegraith caricatures on the wall of the Main Bar Lounge in Church Street

25 served as a Lieutenant in France with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). He was severely wounded at Bullecourt and later awarded the Military Cross.

Coffs Harbour was the home of Maegraith from 1910 until 1920. He lived in Sydney until the time of his passing at Newtown in 1970.

Maegraith, who was left-handed, did drawings, cartoons and caricatures that were widely published from the 1920s to the 1960s. He was especially interested in cricket and in 1934, while in England, drew sporting caricatures of the Australian XI touring cricket team for London newspapers and magazines. For this, Maegraith was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and was also proud that three British Kings—Edward VIII (the Duke of Windsor), George V and George VI – had stood for him so he could draw them.



The signature of Kerwin Maegraith was as stylish as his caricatures

The words and lyrics of 'It Ain't Cricket', a musical revue performed in Melbourne in 1935 starring Don Bradman were written by Maegraith. He also wrote a memoir of his family's early years in Coffs Harbour entitled 'Timber ... We Were The Pioneers.'

Flotta Final

Back in 1969 the Illawarra Master Builders Club staged an Indoor Sports Competition that on its conclusion was rated "a most successful competition."

The sports competition started on April 27 and players had to show their proficiency at Darts, Table Tennis and Indoor Bowls.

The final was won on June 1 by Roy Woollett. Woollett had known form as a top-line table tennis player but in the competition revealed latent talent as a darts player and indoor bowler.

The Quarter Finalists were: Roy Woollett, Tom Watt, Peter Robinson, Carmen Hennessy, Marion Hickey, John Palmer, Andy McGarvan and Vic Boon. All games were apparently "breath takers", particularly the final in which Woollett had to be on his toes to just defeat Watt.

The first prize was a nine day cruise on the "Achille Lauro" owned by the Italian cruise company, Flotta Lauro.

Woollett was presented with two tickets on "The Magic Cruise" that was scheduled to leave Sydney on August 2. Its ports of call were: Noumea, Lautoka, Suva, Tonga, Wellington, Lyttelton (Christchurch) then back to Sydney on August 9.



Incorporation, A Key Date

The history of the Club under the guise of the Illawarra Master Builders Club and now The Builders Club has seen both witness significant dates. The more significant have been:

- Opening of the Charlotte Street Club in 1953;
- Liquor Licence granted in 1955;
- Licence changed from Illawarra Master Builders Association to Illawarra Master Builders Club Ltd in 1962
- Opening of the Church Street Club in 1963;

In the past 50 years probably the standout date was July 12, 1972 when the Certificate of Incorporation was granted. This legal document took the Club to a professional business level and the registration of the name "The Illawarra Master Builders' Club Limited."

The Certificate (Company No. 149021) was granted by the NSW Corporate Affairs Commission, signed by Commissioner F. J. Ryan and the Club paid Stamp Duty of \$3.00.

There was a raft of objectives, 24 in fact, in the Memorandum of Association that set out the objects for which the Club was established.

The key ones related to:

- Acquisition of the assets and liabilities of the club known as The Illawarra Master Builders Club;
- To purchase or lease any other property to be used in connection with the objects of the Club;
- To promote and conduct such sports games and amusements and entertainment pastimes and recreations indoor and outdoor at the Club;
- To construct, maintain and alter any buildings or works necessary or convenient for the Club's purposes;
- To raise money by entrance fees, subscriptions and other payments payable by Members;
- To purchase and/or apply for a Liquor Licence;
- To hire, employ and dismiss Secretaries, Clerks, Managers, Servants and Workmen and to pay to them Club salaries, wages, gratuities or pensions;
- From time-to-time make donations to such persons as the Club may think directly or indirectly conducive to any of its objectives.

The Subscribers to the Memorandum of Association were;

- Rupert Alan Hodge, Master Builder of Keiraville
- Raymond Errol Browning, Master Builder of Wollongong
- Patrick Aloysius Murphy, Master Builder of Mount Keira
- Lyle Ray Robinson, Master Builder of Mount Ousley
- Colin Turner Stewart, Master Builder of Wollongong
- William Laskey Carr, Master Builder of Gwynneville
- William John Longhurst, Master Builder of Gwynneville
- Reefton John Rosten, Master Builder of Wollongong
- Bernard Henri Armessen, Master Builder of Corrimal
- Alan Ebrill Shaw, Master Builder of Gwynneville
- Jack Arnold Cooper, Master Plumber of Wollongong
- Roy Archibald Durie, Estimator of Fairy Meadow
- William Stephen Kelly, Electrical Contractor of Gwynneville
- Ronald Middleton, Clerk of Wollongong
- Norman Ward Trowbridge, Manager of Wollongong
- Raymond Patrick Fredericks, Sales Representative of Wollongong

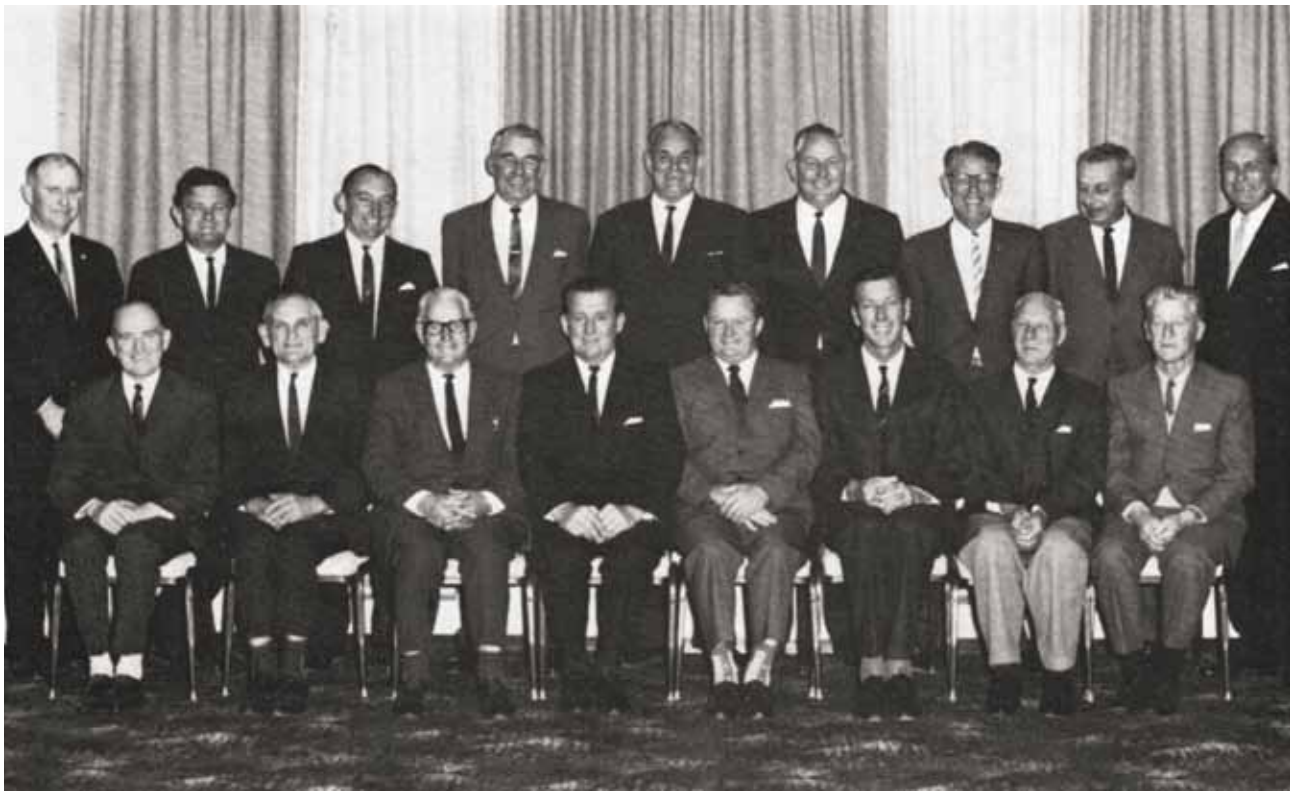
The aforementioned 16 Members signed the Memorandum of Association and the witness to their signatures was the Club's former Secretary/Manager, Mr. L. V. Hickey (J.P.) of 14 Dempster Street, Wollongong. These

Subscribers to the Memorandum of Association also signed the Articles of Association, again witnessed by Hickey.

Forty-one years later in 2013 the passage of time has taken its toll on these 16 iconic Members. Murphy and Shaw are the only Members alive and both still reside in the Wollongong area; Hickey lives at Wauchope, NSW.



The Memorandum & Articles of Association that was granted in 1972



Jack Sainsbury was a proactive Committeeman in the 1960s. In this photo of the 1967-1968 Committee, Sainsbury is third from the right/top row. That year's Committee also featured Messrs. Law, Longhurst, Stewart, Rosten and Carr

Jack's Letter

Back in early 1998 the current President of the Illawarra Master Builders Club, John Carr, wrote to the late M.J. (Jack) Sainsbury asking the latter for his recollections regarding the early history of the Master Builders Association of NSW Illawarra Division.

Sainsbury was living at Nambucca Heads in 1998. He was President of the Association in 1951 when a decision was made to take positive action about forming a builders club in the Illawarra district.

It was Sainsbury-along with Messrs. W. J. Longhurst, R. Baxter and Associate Member B. Baxter-who visited the St. George & Sutherland Division Club and inspected the premises. That meeting was indeed fruitful as the delegation came back to their Association's Committee and recommended that "the Illawarra Master

Builders Association purchase land and erect a suitable building."

Here is the transcript of Sainsbury's letter dated March 23, 1998.

"Dear John

A lot of water has run under the bridge since I attended the first meeting but I will do my best.

About 1946 the New South Wales Housing Commission called a meeting of local builders and informed them that the Commission would be the big stick around the place. This led to a further meeting of builders in the local Council Chambers and our Association was formed.

Reef Rosten was elected President, George Phillips, Treasurer and I, the Secretary. It was later decided to employ a permanent Secretary so Frank Cornally, an employee of the accounting firm of Coghlan & Allen, was appointed



Jack Sainsbury, a Master Builder and a Master Comedian!

We met monthly in different venues; at the Wollongong Gas Company, Council Chambers and in a hall in Campbell Street. After about three years we decided to do something about a building of our own. I think it was about 1952 that we bought land in Charlotte Street from the Gas Company and the following year when George Phillips was President we got the first building up thanks to the help of many merchants and sub- contractors. Our building had a meeting room, bar, kitchen and toilets and we had a couple of poker machines. All that was illegal of course and to enter the building each member had a key. After a while Rex Connor, the local State Member, obtained a licence for us and we were on our way. Two years later we put another storey on the building.

To go back a bit; in our first year we held a dinner. About 90 people attended and this became a very popular annual event in Wollongong. I remember in Tom Eddy's year as President it was held in the R.S.L. Hall. About 250 attended including local business people, representatives of some other divisions and so on, and it gave the building business no end of good PR.

Now to carry on. We were doing quite well and it was decided to buy the land in Church Street where the Club now stands. We were sticking our necks out but with the help of the

Commonwealth Bank and after selling the Charlotte Street building to the 'Collegians', the first part of the present building was erected. At that time the Council offered us the old Mount Keira railway line in an area which is now the car park, so we bought it.

To build in Church Street we were short some £70,000 so 10 of us went guarantors for £7000 each. Seven thousand pounds was a lot of money in those days and to top it off, the Club for the first few months was losing money, and this didn't make us guarantors any too happy. However, under the management of Eric Matthews and with good Presidents and Committees, the Club started to make a dollar and when I look at some of the balance sheets, the profits amaze me!

The business of the Club's takeover of the Association and the negotiations that went on can be better explained by Ray Browning or maybe Col Stewart.

Trusting that all this is some help and a 50 year celebration for the Club and the Division can be arranged and is successful."

Regards

M. J. (Jack) Sainsbury.

Copper Cooper

The late Jack Cooper is well remembered as one of those Members that always had the Master Builders Association NSW Illawarra Division and Illawarra Master Builders Club foremost in his mind. Made a Life Member of the Illawarra Master Builders Club, Cooper helped all that asked for a favor and the legacy that he left the Club can be seen by every person that enters the Front Foyer. Dominant above the Reception Counter is the emblem of the Illawarra Master Builders Club Wollongong that that was painstakingly hand-crafted from copper by Cooper.



Jack Cooper and his beloved Kenworth truck



The emblem of the Illawarra Master Builders Club Wollongong hand-crafted from copper by Jack Cooper.



The Illawarra Master Builders Club in 1987, a distinct different look to that of 2013

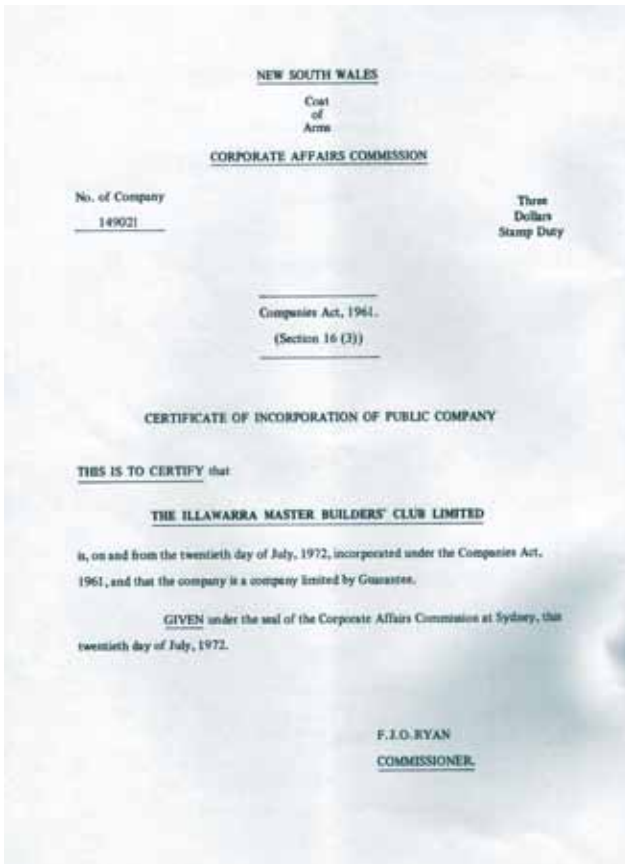
Club Timeline



Jack Sainsbury

The following dates are probably the most significant of the 25 year period from 1947 until 1972.

1947	June 7	Committee formed to establish a Builders Association
	December 15	Draft of Rules governing new body adopted
1948	July 16	First Annual General Meeting held
1950	April 10	First picnic at Garie Beach held
1951	April 26	Charlotte Street land purchased from Wollongong Gas Company for £450.00
	September 13	Messrs. Bill Longhurst and Bill Caldwell appointed Club Trustees
	October	President Jack Sainsbury reported building approval granted
1952	June 24	Donors of materials or services to Charlotte Street club made Social Members
	July 19	Site for new building "pegged out" by Messrs. Sainsbury, Longhurst, Phillips and Duff
1953	August 13	Annual General Meeting held for first time in Charlotte Street (The Exchange) Club
		Decision made to apply for a Liquor Licence
	October 17	First Club officially opened
1955	April 4	Mr. J. Evans appointed Secretary-Manager of the Club



The Certificate of Corporation of July 20, 1972



A rare photograph of the original Illawarra Master Builders Club in Charlotte Street at its opening in October 1953



Bill Longhurst



George Phillips

	July 25	Club's liquor licence granted
	December	Land brought in Church Street for £1700.00
1956	May	Two more blocks of land in Church Street purchased for £900.00
	November 1	Club joins Master Builders Association of NSW as a Full Division
1957	April	Extensions to Charlotte Street Club commenced
	August	Accountancy simplified by establishing two accounts: IMB Association Club and MBA NSW Illawarra Division
1959	February 27	First Annual Dinner held in the Club's own rooms in Charlotte Street
1960		Messrs. Cooper, Carr, Longhurst, Eddy, Stewart, Phillips, Law, Sainsbury, Rosten and Palmer went guarantors to secure a bank loan
	August 10	Club Members Messrs. Phillips, Longhurst, Dean and Rosten appointed as Building Committee
	September	Commonwealth Bank notified Club of a loan of £35,000
1961	July 26	Work on footing excavations commenced at Church Street
1962	April	Two blocks of land known as the Old Keira Line purchased for £10,000 Commonwealth Bank grants a further £10,000 Pounds for that purchase
	August	Licence changed from the Illawarra Master Builders Association to Illawarra Master Builders Club
	October	Club moves from Charlotte Street to Church Street
1963	April 19	Church Street Club officially opened with Mr. R. (Bob) Law as President
1972	July 20	Club granted a Certificate of Incorporation as a Public Company, the IMB Club Ltd

In the modern era of change at The Builders Club, the following are significant dates:

- 1992 Campbell Street Restaurant opened
- 1995 Church Street Gaming Entry
- 2002 Southern Extension
- 2005 Function Room Opened
- 2007 Smokers' Deck Opened
- 2010 Outdoor East Deck
- 2013 50th Anniversary of the opening of Church Street celebrated



Bob Law



Col Stewart



The completed Campbell Street Restaurant in 1993



Jack Palmer



Tom Eddy



A humorous depiction by Mr. W.J. Goodman in 1971 of the proposed Club Extensions. The "Danish" reference is about Jorn Utson the architect responsible for the iconic Sydney Opera House

Our People





General Manager Andrew Bolt showing his prowess as a sailor on the Club-sponsored dinghy as part of the Sailability program for special needs persons

Stayer



Andrew Bolt

General Manager, Andrew Bolt, may not have the sprinting prowess of the world's greatest athlete, Usain Bolt, but he has displayed comparable staying power after 27 years at the Illawarra Master Builders Club. Bolt left high school in 1983 and went to Wollongong University to study, then thought about travelling but the turning point that eventually gave him long-term direction came from a high school mate, Tony Hickey, son of the Club's Secretary/Manager at the time, Les Hickey.

Hickey suggested that Bolt make an approach to the Club for a job. He made an application and shortly after got a telephone call about 2:00pm one Saturday afternoon and told there was work at the Club moving furniture, turn up in old clothes. That's how it started for Bolt, shifting furniture in the

auditorium, setting up rooms for functions and the like.

Eventually a half-day a week increased to more hours and Bolt 'graduated' to picking up glasses, worked in the bar, cellar, on the pokies etc; skills learned that would all play a significant part in his future.

Reflecting on those embryo years, Bolt said; *"The Club grew on me, I liked mixing with all the different sorts of people and the bosses were good. Les Hickey retired and it was Ken McCarthy that gave me my first permanent job. It was fate in a sense; I had planned to travel, got the permanent job and never looked back."*

In 1995 Bolt was made the Club's first Poker Machine Supervisor and started learning gaming machine analysis helped by consultant Bruce Colbey. He (Bolt) knew that gaming machines were the determining factor for the success or failure of the Club.



Andrew Bolt (far left) Richard Bone (third left), Charlie Goodwin (far right) with some of the current Club Directors. As General Manager, Bolt has worked with Board of Directors form 2007 and has formed a firm opinion that “their hearts in the right place.”

Bolt graduated to Sub Assistant Manager in 1998 and in 2000 was excited to be appointed to the new position of Gaming Manager. In 2007 Bolt was made General Manager replacing Garry Ryan.

An issue that Bolt had to face as the new General Manager was the No Smoking in Clubs that was introduced progressively in 2005 and was a fait accompli by 2007. He said; *“We were half-way through building a deck and it was a mess. There were delays and we only opened it two days prior to the total ban coming into place in July 2007. Surprisingly, that month our income was up nearly 20% on the previous year’s trading but I had the foresight to have a few innovations for gaming players already in place like Cash Express, the Wheel of Fortune and multi terminals such as Roulette and Blackjack. Mind you I had no money to buy these machines; they were secured on hire purchase!”*

Another key factor that helped the Club increase its gaming revenue by nearly 20%-when many others in the local area and throughout Sydney had dropped by nearly as much-was the extension of trading hours. He said: *“The Club’s late trading hours were a bit behind the general trend, we closed no later than 1:00am on Saturday and Sunday mornings and 11:00pm most other nights. We changed that to 3:30am every day of the week.”*

The Club needed momentum so Bolt looked around at what other clubs were doing, attended industry courses and made sure that he was aware of the potential and likely challenges. He said; *“I decided to ‘bite the bullet’ and step up to those challenges.”*

The Bon Appétit Restaurant had been in the Club for about 15 years and it was looking tired. It was put out for tendering and there was a lot of interest; Star Buffet was

granted the franchise and they refurbished this popular dining venue.

A lot of renovations and refurbishments have been completed under Bolt’s watch as General Manager: Gaming Deck, Eastern Deck, TAB Layout Changes, Gaming Room layout, renovations to the Basement and Sports Bar and re-carpeting the entire Ground Floor. He said: *“We had one of the worst TAB setups in Wollongong but it was revitalized by bringing it closer to the bar and adding some big wide screen TVs and an emphasis on Sports Betting. These changes were ALL POSITIVES.”*

Bolt believes the most important reason for the success of the Club has been the Staff. *“They’ve been outstanding; every one of them stepped up and worked harder with many becoming Supervisors and Duty Managers”.*

Looking at the future, Bolt rates the Club in great shape. *“The stability of the Board has been a benefit. They’re a good Board and their hearts are in the right place. The Club has been loyal to long-term Members and the long-term Sub Clubs. I’d like to consolidate the Club’s position and bring it up to a first class standard. Builders like to build and this has ensured that all our extensions and renovations are built to the highest quality. We have so much potential with our extensive land holdings and these will be developed and better utilized over the coming years.*

The final thoughts from Bolt: *“It’s been a great trip, I’ve loved it! I’m 47 years of age now and hopefully I’ll stay here. I love Wollongong and I’m very proud to be working at the best Club in Wollongong.”*



Richard Bone is always on hand to help others at the Club and is a team player. This photo shows him with Roger and John Carr, John Day displaying some old sleepers from the Mount Keira Tramway

Right Career Change



Richard Bone

Richard Bone, Assistant Manager, has links to the Illawarra Master Builders Club that go further back than his 20 plus years of employment.

As a younger man, Bone used to frequent the Club often. He had been working locally as an electrician for 10 years when was asked to go to Sydney to work on the Westfield Hurstville extensions. When this job was completed, the crew was supposed to go to Miranda Fair to work on the proposed extensions of this massive retail outlet.

There was a three month delay to the start of work at Miranda Fair, so, living in Keira Street and having plenty of free time, Bone visited the Club on a more regular basis. He said: "I got to know a few of the staff very well including Sub Assistant Managers Frank

McGregor, Fred Fleuren and Bill Gallagher. I remember approaching McGregor and asking him if there was any casual work to tide me over until Miranda got off the ground. He told me he would speak to the Assistant Manager Garry Ryan."

Ryan approached Bone and told him that he would need to have some bar training or have done a bar course before he could be employed at the Club.

Bone, the next day enrolled in a three day bar course. The following week, upon showing Ryan the certificate of the completed course, Bone was employed.

It proved the right career change for Bone. After approximately three weeks, Bone was offered and accepted a permanent Doorman's position.

About the same time, the Club employed a new Office Assistant Lisa Matthews. Lisa couldn't keep her eyes off Bone (Richard's opinion!) and after a short period they began to go out. They later married and Lisa is still employed at the Club.

Progressively, Bone was taught about all other areas within the Club, and in 2001 was promoted to Sub Assistant Manager. After a few years and thinking there was not much prospect of advancing further, Bone applied for an advertised Manager's position at Kiama Golf Club.

After four exhausting interviews, Bone was offered and accepted the position; he later declined the opportunity. Reflecting, Bone said; *"I must thank Fred Fleuren for convincing me to change my mind and stay at The Builders. In 2006 with the Club's support and after many years attending*

training courses I was awarded my ACCM (Active Certified Club Managers) Award. My advancement throughout the Club continued, and, in 2007 I was appointed the Assistant General Manager to the General Manager, Andrew Bolt."

Bone was a most enthusiastic Club co-ordinator in the production of this book. He was "the gopher" for the Author that chased up information, photos, proofreading and the like.

Disappointed that the project came a to close in late February with the text and photos moved on for design, printing and binding of the finished book, and showing signs of withdrawal symptoms, Bone was promised work on the 75th Anniversary edition of the book.

Our fondest hopes are that all of us will be still around in 2038 for its launch!

Getting Noticed!

There was one way to get you noticed with other Clubs in New South Wales many years ago and that was to establish Reciprocal Rights with each other. This allowed members of one club to access other clubs on their business or leisure travels and enjoy most of the same benefits as a regular member but at no membership cost! In the early years of the new Illawarra Master Builders Club in Church Street, the Board established reciprocal rights with over 20 Clubs in Sydney, New South Wales country areas and even interstate. Others were progressively added through the 1960s and 1970s. The Clubs that endorsed Reciprocal Rights with the Illawarra Master Builders Club were:

SYDNEY

- The Catholic Club
- NSW Leagues Club
- Cumberland Builders Bowling & Recreation Club

NSW

- Ballina RSL Club
- Bomaderry RSL Club
- Broken Hill Musicians Club
- Dubbo RSL Memorial Club
- Eden Fishermen's Recreation Club
- Goulburn Workers' Club
- Griffith Leagues Club
- Lismore RSL Club
- Lockhart Ex-Servicemen's Club

- Moss Vale Services Club
- Newcastle Tattersall's Club
- Nyngan RSL Civic Club
- Oxley Club (Bourke)
- Queanbeyan Leagues Club
- South Grafton District Ex-Servicemen's Club
- Twin Towns Services Club
- Wagga Leagues Club
- Wallsend RSL Sub Branch Club
- Yass Soldiers' Club
- Young Services & Citizens Club

INTERSTATE

- Alice Springs Memorial Club

In the modern era of the Club Industry, generally it is only a question of a visitor producing proof of their residential address and/or proof of age plus satisfying the dress code and the doors of the majority of venues are thrown open to visitors.

Back in 1960s and 1970s, clubs that engaged in Reciprocal Rights with the Illawarra Master Builders Club were certainly widespread and would have played a part in the new Wollongong club "Getting Noticed!"





ABOVE Ray Browning
 ABOVE RIGHT Ray Browning was a highly respected and well liked Director of the Club. His thoughtfulness for members was a trademark of his character

Dedicated, Hard Worker, Loyal

Charlie Goodwin, one the true historic icons of the Illawarra Master Builders Club, has a 'pet saying' that he lives by and it goes something like this; *"If you haven't got something good to say about someone, don't say anything."*

In an article that appeared in the Club Life magazine a few years ago, the late Ray Browning was featured in a profile called "The 25 Plus Club" about Club people that had dedicated a quarter of a century or more to serving their Club.

Browning had racked-up 28 years at the time of the article, and Goodwin, Club President, was asked for a quote and, true to his pet saying, said; *"Mr. Browning had played an important role in seeing the Club grow from something small to something large and prosperous. He is a very dedicated, hard working and loyal member of our Committee. In the early days the Illawarra Division (MBA) was very close to the Club and in 1968 Ray was 'volunteered or shanghaied' as a Committee person but I'm not sure."*

Till the end of his life, Browning was dedicated to the interests of The Illawarra Master Builders Club. Even in his last days, he quizzed the Directors who were visiting him, about what was happening, what decisions had been made, and expressed opinions, for and against. That's the type of dedication that Goodwin stated and put on public record.

Browning was born in Lithgow, NSW and his father had hopes that his son would pursue a work career of a mechanical and engineering nature. Browning (Ray) hated the feel of grease and prior to going into the building trade actually trained as barber.

Riding a pushbike around to people's homes, Browning would cut their hair and when payment was made could buy food for dinner. Good contacts were made by Browning, and many of them resulted in building jobs in later years.

An apprenticeship as a carpenter/joiner was what appealed to Browning and he was indentured to local builder, John Burns,

father of current Club Director Brian Burns, grandfather of another Club Director, Paul Burns.

While living in Corrimal, Browning branched out on his own, trading under the name of Ray Browning and then later as R. E. & F. J. Browning based at Virginia Street, Wollongong. A lot of the work in those early years was building 'butter box styled homes' that were easy to build and quick to put up. He then progressed to building blocks of flats and finally homes with designs that challenged him.

The well known H. Parson Funeral Directors contracted Browning to build funeral chapels for them in Wollongong and Warilla. As the workload increased, Browning had the foresight to employ his sons as apprentices and later the family company was known as Browning & Associates.

Browning had joined the Master Builders Association NSW Illawarra Division in 1963 and he was President of the latter from 1972-1974. He was elected a Life Member of the Illawarra Division in 1985 and was very proud when his son, Peter, was President of the same organization in 1995-1996.

It was another Club icon, Colin Stewart that approached Browning to join the Illawarra Master Builders Club. He came on in 1968 as Junior Vice President, learned the ropes and in 1971 was elected Senior Vice President. He had three years in this position and was made President for 1974-1976.

Goodwin succeeded Browning as President in 1977 but Browning took over the key role of Treasurer from that year until 2001. He is rated by many as "the best Treasurer the Club ever had."

The fact that he was unchallenged for 25 years as Treasurer is testimony of the confidence that the Board and Members had in him over a period of time that the Club invested heavily in infrastructure additions and changes.

Browning saw the long-term value in acquiring land and it was his aim for the Club to have a strong portfolio of real estate for the future. He was not one to take risks with the Club Members' money by unwise and emotional investments.

At one stage there was an opportunity to develop part of the Club's land into a motel complex operated by Best Western. He argued successfully that Best Western should build a motel on the Club's land and pay an annual lease fee. He was adamant that it was too risky for the Club to build the motel; he knew from first-hand experiences that the investment returns would not favor the Club.

Browning stayed on the Board until 2006 and retired after 32 years as a Director. He said: "I would not have been able

to offer years of service to the Club without my wife's support."

Devoted wife Joy clearly remembers when her husband joined the Club's Board of Directors. She said; "He went on at a time when it was a very strong Board and there was plenty of backup support from ex-Directors. Names that come to mind are Lyle Robinson, Bill Carr, Bill Longhurst, Pat Murphy, Alan Hodge, Jack Cooper, Pat Fredericks, Bernie Armessen, Reef Rosten and Bill Kelly.

I was not surprised that he took on key roles as a Director; he was that type of person. Ray was very cluey about building and was often asked by local architects about the feasibility of building designs they were working on. The catch-cry was, 'Ask Ray Browning'."

Joy was also country born-and-bred in Cessnock, in the Hunter Valley. Her family moved to Port Kembla and it was here that she first came into contact with her future husband. She provided strong backup for him to be a successful builder and devote the many extra hours required as a Director at the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

In a tongue in cheek comment, Joy said; "We had a very good relationship providing I did as I was told! I had a very wonderful life with Ray; he stood up for what he considered important; was always family orientated and a great provider; and people were always impressed by his thoughtfulness and manner. He was a person who encouraged people all the time. I remember that he pushed Brian Burns to get on the Board of Directors and later pushed for Paul Burns, Brian's son, to step up. He always thought it was long-overdue that women should be on the Board of Directors. Ray would be pleased that in 2012 Charlie (Goodwin) stood down and the first woman Director, Heather Pickering, was elected."

Ray Browning was an original member of the 50th Anniversary Committee that organized the April 2013 activities to celebrate 50 years at Church Street. Sadly, the cancer that he had fought bravely against for several years recurred for the third time in early 2012 and took his life.



Joy Browning



John Burns



Brian Burns



Paul Burns

Third Generation

The Burns family's association with the Illawarra Master Builders Association and the Illawarra Master Builders Club has embraced most of the past 50 years in their capacity as Members and Directors.

The late John Burns was a Board Director pre-1963 when the Church Street building was opened; his son Brian Burns went on the Board in 1976 and is still there today; and grandson Paul Burns, joined his father as a Director in 2007 and was immediately made Junior Vice President.

There's no prouder father than Brian Burns that his son Paul is one of the younger Directors at The Builders Club as he (Brian) believes that the "Senior Directors" –himself included–need to seriously consider stepping down. He said: *"It's necessary as long as there is a succession plan. We (Board) should be looking for the emerging talent in our Membership to stand as Directors; we definitely need more 'new builders' on the Executive and some non-builders on the Committee."*

Brian was born just down the road from the Club in Smith Street, Wollongong in 1941. His father was a Member of the first Builders Club in Charlotte Street and Brian joined in 1962; he was at the official opening of Church Street in 1963 and the function that was staged upstairs on the Mezzanine Level.

There are still fond memories by Brian about celebrating his 21st birthday at Charlotte Street in 1962. He recalled; *"It was a practical building for the time; two levels that offered a bar downstairs and a hall upstairs. However, there was no future to expand at that location, there was a Gas Works opposite so it was not the ideal location."*

Brian worked with his father in the building trade and they had a broad portfolio working on homes, renovations, industrial sites, and Housing Commission complexes etc. from the ground up to the finished building.

After the death of his father, Brian continued in the building trade as Burns & Shaw, in partnership with another Director of the Club, Alan Shaw. It was "compulsory" in a sense, as Brian's sister is Alan Shaw's wife.

Brian was not a novice in relation to how a Board operated as he had been Honorary Treasurer and President of the North Wollongong Surf Club since 1963 so he could "get his head around a set of figures." His appointment was the result of Lyle Robinson, a long-term Director and President from 1968-1970, passing away and that created a vacancy.

The involvement on the Board of Directors was an easy transition as Brian had known

many of them for a number of years. He said: "My father was a good friend of one of the Club's icons, Bill Carr, and I had gone through my apprenticeship years at about the same time as his son, John Carr. We've been similarly good friends for many years. I also knew Gail Rawlings for a number of years prior to her joining the Club in the office so I was really amongst friends. I might add that the bond between builders is very strong, no better evidenced than at the Club."

For 30 years of his tenure, Brian has filled senior positions on the Board. He was Junior Vice President from 1983 until 2005 and in 2006 was made Honorary Treasurer, a position that is still his in 2013. He cannot answer the question regarding his longevity on the Board, only to suggest that maybe he's a creature of habit!

Brian is proud of the impact that the Illawarra Master Builders Club has made on the Wollongong region over the past 50 years and is glad that he played a role. He said: "For many years we were the No.1 social venue in Wollongong, so popular in fact that there were several times when the

membership was closed. The Club had everything-functions, shows, balls and an atmosphere that was thoroughly enjoyed by all our patrons."

He continued; "As builders we weren't hospitality people so we employed experts for that. The Board's stability has been a major factor and, as successful builders, there is no question that we didn't bring a wealth of business experience to the Boardroom. We've had to make a lot of critical and crucial decisions; we've experienced a lot of angst at times about those big decisions."

Mention was made early in this story about Paul Burns, the 46 year-old son of Brian. The latter went on the Board in 2007 after the late Ray Browning, who had been on the Board uninterrupted from 1968, stepped down to create a vacancy.

In the unbiased opinion of Brian Burns, his son Paul and others of his age are the future of the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

The Builders

They say 'that behind every good man there's a better woman.'

Former long-term Club President and Life Member Charlie Goodwin would dare not refute this statement as his wife Bette has been that woman.

The following is a poem by Bette reflecting on how lucky she was to be Charlie's wife during his time as President of the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

"How do we say thank you for all those wonderful years?

Sharing each other's laughter, sharing each other's tears;

Watching Committeemen changing, the people who come and go.

Looking back over all those years, little did we know?

*That The Builders would become The Pride of Wollongong
And that so many tourist buses, would come along.*

For what we have at The Builders isn't very often found;

It's not just making money, which we certainly hope we do,

It's the friendships, the handshakes, and the welcome that is given out to you.

For rarely do you walk into the foyer that someone does not come and say,

It's great to see you here, trust you're feeling well today."



Bette Goodwin & Les Hickey



The Master Builders Association Illawarra Division represented by President, Pat Murphy (far right), in company with Roger and John Carr (centre) presented Prince Henry Hospital with medical equipment in memory of the late Bill Carr.

Family Dynasty

It will be a strange occurrence in the future when a Board of Directors meeting at Illawarra Master Builders Club will not have someone from the Carr family in attendance. For the past 50 years from 1963 until 2013, there has been a Carr on the Committee-later called the Board of Directors- every year.

The late Bill Carr served from 1963-1973 and sons Roger, 1974-1998, and John 1974-1984 and 1987-2013 have maintained an unbroken dynasty, certainly rare in any type of business at a Board level. All are Life Members of the Club.

The Carr family had their origins at Mascot and Bill was a builder literally from the time he could pick up a hammer. The family split up in the 1940s so Bill and sons moved up to Kurmond, near North Richmond, NSW to live for a period.

The historic move to the Wollongong district happened in the 1950s, and Bill set up business as W.L. Carr Pty Ltd and his sons attended local schools. Roger, the eldest, went into his first year of high school and the younger John had about three more years of primary school to complete.

Roger Carr

Roger was apprenticed to his father, something he had always wanted to achieve, and at that time the company had plenty of work building flats and houses in the area. He said; *"I always wanted to be a builder and work with my father. The credit squeeze of 1961 affected everyone and I worked a couple of years with Australian Iron & Steel then did my compulsory National Service training. It was about this time that I decided to see the world, went off to Europe to study (girls!) and actually met my wife Dorit (Doris) in Berlin. It*



Roger Carr



The late Bill Carr in 1963 started a family dynasty on the Club Board of Directors

was a unique time to be in Berlin; the wall had gone up in 1963 and I was there in 1964. It was an ordinary and pretty hectic situation as the Cold War had started; it was John F. Kennedy versus Nikita Khrushchev! I was still listed as an Australian Army Reservist and got a job in the British Sector of West Berlin looking after tennis courts during the winter months and getting them ready for summer play. I decided to marry Dorit so we went to England, married, and we came back to Australia later in 1964.”

Roger had joined the Illawarra Master Builders Club in 1957 as a 21 year-old but doesn't remember much about the first Club in Charlotte Street. Bill Carr died suddenly on the job in 1974 and Roger, along with his brother John,



Roger Carr

was invited to join the Board of Directors in 1974 and John is still involved nearly 40 years later.

After 25 years on the Board including 15 years as Senior Vice President, Roger decided to stand-down and pursue other interests. He left the Board in 1998 and retired as a builder in 2000.

Looking back on his time with the Master Builders



A study in concentration. Charlie Goodwin and Roger Carr debating if they have the Club's building plans the right way up!

Association NSW Illawarra Division and the Illawarra Master Builders Club, Roger said; “The local builders needed a place to meet, materials such as bricks and tiles were hard to get and there was a lot of under-hand deals. It was a question of whom you knew and not a level playing field. The builders needed a professional body to set standards. The formation of the MBA Illawarra Division was a progressive move for local builders; it created great fellowship, we'd have a few beers, pay the brickies, it generated new future business, and builders had professional negotiators to fight our issues. Most of us survived the recessions as a down in business are always followed by good times.

He added; “I rate the social aspects of those meetings very important. It helped our wives get to know each other and we organized entertainment such as Christmas Parties for our children. My father, John and I have all been on the Building Committee. John has been involved with it for 20 years. The Board had vision to buy properties for future expansion; we did club tours to Smithfield RSL and Rooty Hill RSL to get ideas particularly for a modern design for the front of our Club. We used to say that one day we'd be as big as St. George Leagues Club!”

Roger's path as a builder and a Club Director saw him come into contact with hundreds of people. He said; “We were all very competitive as local builders working in the same market place but we got on well. Who got a job was not always based on price, a lot of the times it was based on character,

work reputation and ethics. I did a lot of work for the Presbyterian Churches in the area.

We had some great men on the Board and here I'd mention Colin Stewart, who was our dynamic President for many years, ran the Club well and was a top builder; Ray Browning, our best-ever Treasurer, a fearsome debater in the Boardroom; Rex Connor, who helped to get the Club started, he opened doors and was a personal friend to many of us. He (Connor) and Frank Arkell were icons for the Wollongong region; the University and Port Kembla Harbor are their legacies that will last forever."

Roger's lasting legacy away from the Club is probably the number of apprentices he put through his business. One of his former apprentices, Eddie Stockard, graduated to be the NSW Manager for A.V. Jennings Australia; and another, Jim Baker, started a local business that employs 12 people. His own sons trained in the building industry but Lee now runs a gymnasium and Corey is the Club's painter.

John Carr

John Carr's story has similarities with Roger in the early years but in 1980 he took a change of direction in the building industry. He completed an apprenticeship with his father, was in partnership with Roger for a number of years but in 1980 changed to full-time property valuation.

He said: "As a sideline in 1969 I started doing part-time work as a Clerk of Works and Real Estate Valuer. I turned it into full-time employment valuing properties to be erected so people could secure loans from banks, building societies and doing progress inspections for builders. It took away the physical aspects of the building trade but it was more stressful making sure that deadlines were met."

Born in 1942, John Carr remembers those days at Mascot and has fond memories of his father. He said; "Dad loved the building industry and anything to do with it. He had a high reputation in the Wollongong area, honest as the day was long. I loved my Dad and enjoyed working with him; he was a good boss and he brought out the best in Roger and me.

I joined the Club in 1963 as a 21 year-old and helped with the move from Charlotte Street to Church Street. In hindsight we could have stayed at the first club site. No-one was aware that the Gas Company land would be put up for sale but the Committee had made the decision by then to buy land in Church Street. The Collegians Club now occupies that profile site on the main entry road into Wollongong on the Sydney-side.

After the death of my father in 1974, I was invited to be a Board Director as was Roger. It was a big step to go on the Board but it was an easy transition as I knew everyone on the Board through Dad's association with the building trade. I'd been on the Executive of the Master Builders Association NSW Illawarra Division so that helped and over the years I had great



John & Margaret Carr

mentors like Jack Cooper and Pat Fredericks. I put in 11 years straight until I spent two years overseas living in Canada. I went back on the Board in 1987 and was made Building Chairman that year, a role I still covet in 2013. I was Senior Vice President to John Day for six years when he was President and I've been President for the past five years.

It has been the role as Chairman of the Building Committee that John has made his mark.

John oversaw the construction of extensions, the buffet restaurant, front entry and gaming room, three level southern extension plus full internal renovation, function room and external deck.

The contributions and extensive voluntary work by John as Chairman of the Building Committee is seen by him as one of his most satisfying personal achievements. He recalled; "It's been stressful at times, the spending of \$6.5 million a few years ago was a nervous time, the costs blew out and new legislation meant that many old building issues in the Club had to be fixed. That meant additional loans from the bank on top of the original loan had to be negotiated; we literally walked the bank officials through the building to show why the money was needed.

The Wollongong City Council required early fire warning systems for the existing Club and extensions, so one section of the extensions (now Wollongong's best function rooms) had to stay closed until cash was available to complete the project. Banks are naturally tough but we owe much thanks to the Commonwealth Bank who has shown great faith in our business. We still have plans to utilize our land assets but at no risk to the Club."



Team Player

Looking back at his 28 years as a Director of the Illawarra Builders Club and a 50 years involvement in the Wollongong building industry, John Day summed up that time by saying; *“I’d like to think that I’ve been a good team player!”*

Day’s looks belie his 78 years and he certainly has weathered the storm of 50 years as a builder and nearly three decades as a Board Director! His apprenticeship was done locally with the small partnership of George Carpenter & Jack Stewart that had a heap of work with contracts from the Department of Housing.

About half-way through his apprenticeship Day had to do compulsory National Service but by the time he returned to work, the partnership had been dissolved. Day completed his indentures with Col Stewart, an icon identity of the Illawarra Master

Builders Club, stayed with the latter for a few years and sub contracted, prior to setting up his own business.

Day’s introduction to the Master Builders Association NSW Illawarra Division commenced with regular attendance at their meetings held during the 1970s at the Illawarra Master Builders Club. He then served as a Committee of Management Member during the 1980’s; was elected as President in 1986; and represented the Illawarra Division as Councilor at the MBA of NSW for 16 years.

Similarly, Day’s association with the Illawarra Master Builders Club started in the 1970s and he was appointed to the Board of Directors in 1985. He said; *“I found the time involved representing the MBA Illawarra Division as a Councilor and later as a Member of the NSW Board of Management extremely*

ABOVE LEFT John Day as President of the Master Builders Association Illawarra

ABOVE RIGHT John Carr (left) and John Day, Presidents of the Illawarra Master Builders Club for the years from 2002 to 2013



John Day

instructive and provided extra skills for my decision-making at the Club. I felt a need to put something back into my industry; it (building industry) was healthy but I wanted to make sure that the MBA Illawarra had continuity of representation, and took the opportunity to keep local builders informed of State issues. It broadened my horizons re business structure and I was confident of serving as a Board Director of the Club. I served alongside John Carr on the Building Committee and also on the Sports Committee. I progressed to Senior Vice President in 1999 under Charlie Goodwin and was made President in 2002, a role filled until the end of 2007. I had great role models on the Board and I pay tribute to Charlie Goodwin and the late Ray Browning."

Day experienced the excitement and challenges of a busy Club during his six years as President, enjoying the interaction with Members, Staff and fellow Directors. The completion of major building additions during his term was very satisfying. The appointment of Andrew Bolt as General Manager and Richard Bone as Assistant General manager was a major decision, and has been a smooth transition going forward.

Why has The Builders Club been successful?

Day has a solid opinion. He said: *"We have a very good balance of Directors, experienced Directors with good business practice. The relationship between the Directors has been pretty good, we're business competitors but that's not an issue at the Club level. It's good to see Paul Burns and Chris Calderbank-Park on the Board, but we need more of their kind (young) as Directors. I think Presidents should do no more than five years; rotation is refreshing as it brings leadership with a different perspective. We're travelling well, and as good if not better than many other clubs in the region. The Club is an attraction to the older patrons as it's safe, close."*

Day is a Life Member of the Illawarra Master Builders Club; a Master Builders Association Illawarra Division Honorary Member; and a recipient of the Master Builders Association Illawarra Division Gold Medal.

The highlight of John Day's long involvement with the Illawarra Master Builders Club has been to see it expand and develop from a basic Club to what it is today. He said; *"It's something to be proud of for sure."*

Quietly Bill

The sudden passing of Bill Carr did not bring a close to the influence of the Carr name at the Illawarra Master Builders Club. His sons Roger and John impacted for years after their father's demise; John Carr has the honour of being the Club President in the 50th Anniversary Year at Church Street.

There would be no-one that could argue about the truth and accuracy of Bill's eulogy.

"Not only Club Members but the whole of the community were shocked and deeply distressed by the sudden passing of that fine gentleman, Bill Carr.

Bill was not a forceful man but proved what can be achieved by a humble man.

Quietly his first consideration was love and dedication to his family and ensuring their future security.

Quietly he continually served for the beautification of our foreshores and the recognition of Wollongong as a Coastal Panorama.

Quietly he was a Master Builder whose ability, honesty and unfailing generosity and loyalty to clients and employees was beyond reproach.

Quietly he loved the Club, the Members and was proud of the progress in which he played such a major part.

Quietly his wit and dry sense of humour was a joy to all and one could guarantee that at each Committee Meeting when the President said for the third and last time, 'Any further General Business?', Bill often spoke up and none of the Committee got a beer for at least another hour.

Quietly he received the ultimate of Honorary Life Membership for long and meritorious service to the Club.

Quietly he was injured in the industry he loved and quietly he died.

Quietly in heaven where he now rest, he will ensure that parts will be rebuilt in timber.

We will always remember Bill and words cannot express our true feeling so we must simply say; 'All who knew him gained something.'

Thank You

William Laskey Carr"



John & Roger Carr

ILLAWARRA MASTER BUILDERS CLUB NEWS

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tues. 24th August, 1971 at 8 p.m.

All Members are Requested to Attend




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Gala Presentation Night

CHILDREN'S SPECTACULAR

17th & 18th DECEMBER, 1974

MEMBER'S CHILDREN ONLY — ADMISSION FREE

SESSIONS	ARTISTS
Tuesday 17th 10.30 a.m.	Marty & Enn
Tuesday 17th 2.30 p.m.	Bobby Kwan & Rajja
Wednesday 18th 2.30 p.m.	The Allison

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT OFFICE




The Scribe

Issues of the popular Club magazine "Club News" that was a vital source of club news prior to the era of websites, emails and the like

In its broadest sense the word scribe means; "Book copier, transcriber, copyist or illuminator" and in ancient times it was a position of high esteem in royal and religious circles.

Long-term Club Member Albert Edward Samuel Fairall, or just plain Sonny to his friends, has never been pretentious enough to be a member of the highest royal or religious circles.

If you meet Sonny, it's a case of what you see is what you get. Having joined the Illawarra Master Builders Club in 1963, he was the person who did much to get the message out about Club happenings to patrons and there was credibility in his writings.

Fairall never started out in life to be a writer, sales representative or the like. He did his compulsory National Service stint in

the RAAF, went to work on night shift at Wollongong Hospital for £13.00, a drop after getting £18.00 in the air force.

He recalled; "I'd been in the Sea Cadets as a teenager so knew about ropes, knots etc. and I was offered a job with a local steel fabrication firm called McKenzie Steel. I worked there as a crane driver/rigger and was earning good money. Unfortunately a motor cycle accident on Easter Saturday in 1957 at Unanderra saw me finish up with severe leg injuries and, after rehabilitation, I needed a career change. I took some good advice from an old fellow who suggested a career in advertising sales and/or journalism and fortunately got a position with W.C. Penfold & Sons, a large stationery company in NSW."

Fairall subsequently worked about 20 years in advertising sales, completed some technical college training and then had a



Sonny Fairall



Sonny Fairall; winners are grinners!

great job fall into his lap. He said; "I'd been in Sydney and came back to Wollongong but things were a bit quiet. I got a letter from Pat Hogan, the Manager of the 'South Coast Express', outlining a job offer to be a sales representative. It was a Cumberland Newspaper, published weekly but was new to the Wollongong area so Hogan needed paid advertising in it. He (Hogan) offered me twice the money to change jobs, sell advertising space and if I wanted write sections about real estate, entertainment, motor vehicles and so on."

It was a challenge but Fairall was confident that it was well within his abilities. "I knew a lot of the business people in the Wollongong region as friends or associates but at that time they were not 'advertising savvy.' Professionals like doctors, dentists, solicitors etc. were not allowed to advertise to the general public. The freely distributed 'South Coast Express' was innovative in that era and we upset the more established paid newspapers such as the 'South Coast Times' and the 'Illawarra Mercury.' I started writing up entertainment about a couple of the local Clubs but mainly the Illawarra Master Builders Club."

The role as a "scribe" for the Club started in the early 1960s a few years after Fairall had joined. At that time Fairall was no longer in the newspaper trade; he worked as a used car salesman for Catalina Motors in Wollongong.

The Club's magazine was simply known as the "Illawarra Master Builders Club News" or simply "Club News" and the person that helped develop the concept was former Club President and Life Member, Bill Longhurst. There was a perceived need to have Members informed in a hard

copy form of what was happening at the Club about entertainment, dining, promotions etc. and sub club news.

Fairall said: "There were about 2000 Members at that time and we printed copies on a letterpress at the Illawarra Mercury and mailed them out. The magazine averaged about 20 pages, had plenty of information and photos, plus a double page spread of advertising mainly from individuals or companies in the building profession and ancillary services.

It was titled 'The Builders Guide.' A sample of the regular advertisers were Barry Weston Flooring, Dowell Aluminium, Bulli Tile & Brick Pty Ltd, Farley & Lewers, John Simensen TV Repairs, Clive Bissell, South Coast Home Supplies, Clark Brick Limited, Wollongong Plan Printing and Illawarra Brake Station. There was also an official list of financial Members of the Illawarra Master Builders Association as a guide for anyone seeking a qualified building tradesman.

It was well supported by a lot of Members and proved a good source of extra income for the Club. I had a free rein but had to use absolute discretion and not embarrass anyone. The Club's 'Table of Knowledge' was a great source of information for the magazine; people like Col Stewart, Reef Rosten, Bill Longhurst, Trevor Beswick, Roger Carr etc. were always good for a bit of news. I loved the entertainment news, writing up music icons that appeared at the Club such as Johnny Ray, Johnny O'Keefe, Col Joye and the Joye Boys, and our own local entertainer Fred Radloff. I was involved for about 20 years."

Former Staff Member, Gail Rawlings, who worked at the Club for 27 years, was a great fan of "Club News". She said; "I always enjoyed the monthly magazine put out by the Club for patrons in the initial stages of my employment. It featured stories about the Club, did a feature on an individual Club Member each time and also contained fun stories, gave updates on the up-and-coming social calendar and was just enjoyed by everyone. I was absolutely thrilled and honored when in my first year at the Club, Vic Kuschert asked me to write an article about the Staff Christmas Party. I did this report with gusto but times do change, back then the privacy factor was nowhere as stringent as it is today!"

Asked about some of the personalities that he remembers best, Fairall didn't rattle off the more popular names but spoke about Norm McKnight of the Fishing Club, a local school teacher and heavily involved in the administration of physical education in the region; Jack Clayton, a painter; and Laurie Jordon, a television technician. He said; "They were all good, solid family men who liked a drink but never spoiled themselves."

What is Sonny Fairall's opinion of the Club?

"The Club to me has been my second home. The Club has been stable and has set standards; people recognize these standards; that is why it has survived and grown over the past 50 years at Church Street."



Record Setter

The North Wollongong Little Nippers of 1958-1960. Charlie Goodwin has devoted 60 years to this organization

The day that Charlie Goodwin came home from the Illawarra Master Builders Club and told his wife Bette that he'd been asked to stand as a Board Director, there were moments of high drama in the kitchen.

Goodwin had been approached by his close friend and Secretary/Manager, Les Hickey, to consider standing for the Board, and he'd probably get on. He (Goodwin) had been a Club Member for over 50 years and actually joined at the old Charlotte Street premises, but hadn't given any thoughts to an "executive position."

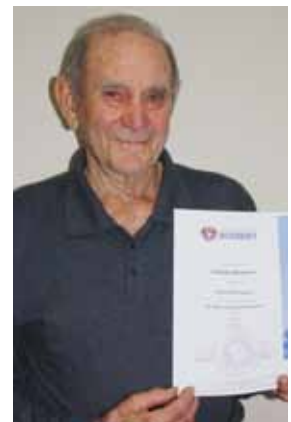
Bette exclaimed that night; *"That's the finish; you'll be into the beer, poker machines, women; my marriage is gone."* That reaction by Bette troubled Goodwin, so on the night of the Board Election, he feigned illness and phoned Hickey to say he would not be at the meeting. Imagine the shock when

Hickey phoned Goodwin at 11:00pm that night and said; *"Congratulations, you've topped the poll."*

That election in 1974 lasted 38 years and for 25 years of that period, 1977-2001, Goodwin reigned supreme as President, a record ranked among the longest of any Club in New South Wales.

That is the longest that anyone has held the President's position and you can write your own ticket about anyone eclipsing it. Goodwin later served as Honorary Treasurer (2002-2005) and resigned from the Board in 2012.

The Goodwin story started in 1926. He was born at Temora in the south-west NSW, the youngest of 10 children (6 boys/4 girls). Goodwin said; *"My mother said I weighed 16*



Charlie Goodwin



Charlie Goodwin with the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir, after receipt of his "Centennial Community Volunteer Award" for dedicated service to the Wollongong community

pounds (about 7 kilos) at birth, but it was six months before she went into town to weigh me."

Goodwin's father deserted the family and in those days there were little or no social service benefits, so four of his siblings ended up in Salvation Army Homes. Today, the only living family members are Goodwin (87 years) and his Melbourne-based sister (90 years); his mother died at 86 years of age.

The move to Wollongong and the start of a relationship by Goodwin with a region that he has called home for over 70 years, occurred in 1939, the start of World War 2. He was keen to join the Australian Army, put his age up but the recruiting officer told him to come back when his voice had broken!

Goodwin still served his country in World War 2, he joined the Royal Australian Coastal Patrol and part of his duties was towing targets for others to have gunnery practice.

The family lived at Acton Court in Crown Street and later Cliff Road. Goodwin left school at 15 years of age by financial necessity to help the family income, but even prior had a great work ethic. He said; *"I used to sing Davy Crocket songs at the pubs; collected cuttlefish shells and sold them to monumental masons for one penny each; picked black berries, got paid for each punnet so I increased the weight by putting in a couple of cups of water; worked at local butcher shop for a couple of hours in the morning prior to school; and still remembers helping to clear a jungle of lantana at a site that became a major camping area for the Boy Scouts."*

Goodwin never did a formal apprenticeship around any building trade. He started out as an offsider to a painter, did a lot of contract work, but had to give painting away due to illness caused by lead poisoning.

That meant a change of vocation. Goodwin got a job on the Wollongong wharves as a laborer, studied the rules and regulations of stevedoring, and became a Foreman Stevedore. He said; *"I found the fellowship great, there was*

plenty of work for casuals and I had no trouble working up to seven days a week."

The Menzies Credit Squeeze of 1961, that nearly saw the Liberals flicked by voters, was tough for everyone, but to maintain an income Goodwin rented out his house and lived /worked at the North Beach Kiosk for nine years. He even brought a couple of caravans for renting out to people in the holiday seasons, and at one stage had the hot chips stand at soccer grounds and Kembla Grange races.

Goodwin remembers the old Club in Charlotte Street , how everyone had a key, you could go in, take a drink out of the fridge or a pie out of the oven, and leave your money. That building was soon too small for the growing membership, and in Goodwin's opinion, was not a great spot with the gasworks, a creek etc. so the move to Church Street was a sound one in the early 1960s.

Asked what he considered a major decision in his time, he was particularly proud of the financial benefit to the Club and Members by the introduction of Restaurant '83 known as Bon Appétit at The Builders.

Let Goodwin tell the story; *"I should preface of how Restaurant '83 came about by saying I was a great believer in acquiring land around the Club when it was on the market. There were others that got a bit nervous about acquiring homes close to the Club, but if we hadn't acted then, our Club would not have had the room for the buffet restaurant. I met Con Chan and his interpreter in the Club one day and learned that they were looking for a venue in Wollongong to launch Restaurant '83. They told me they wanted to open a 400 seat restaurant but I didn't see this as a smart move as Sizzler had just opened a steakhouse down the road. Chan's reply through his interpreter was that Restaurant 83 would send it (Sizzler) broke in a week!"*

Goodwin continued; *"I had no concept of Restaurant '83, so a few of us were invited to a couple of Chan's established outlets on the Central Coast and Newcastle. I was impressed, and couldn't get back to Wollongong quick enough to sign a deal. I knew that the daily turnover of Restaurant '83 would be better than 10 other Wollongong venues. Our patrons love the buffet format and we get a high number of coach groups in weekly for lunch."*

The list of credits for Goodwin's community service is impressive:

- Member of Wollongong Lions Club-10 years
- Member of North Wollongong Surf Club-received a 60 year long service award from the Australian Lifesaving Academy
- Started North Wollongong Sandpipers with Ron Middleton

- Foundation Member of Wollongong Whales & Wollongong Aerial Patrol
- Chairman of ClubsNSW Southern Region-16 years
- Member of Wollongong Senior Citizens Committee-12 years
- Life Member of Saturday Morning Bowls Club

For his dedicated community service Goodwin was awarded a “Centennial Community Volunteer Award” that was presented to him by the Governor of NSW, Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir.

The final question I posed for this story to Charlie Goodwin, was to capture his thoughts as to what the Club means to him. He said; *“I think you become part of it; I always enjoy what I do, but there have been plenty of times that I’d still be awake at 4:00am in the morning questioning some of the decisions we made at a Board Meeting. I’ve questioned myself what the hell I’m doing here but you push on. I reckon I know 90% of the Members and I’m pleased that a lot of the*



The Bon Appétit Management & Staff. The introduction of this buffet restaurant proved a financial goldmine for the Club.

decisions made in my 25 years as President have worked for our loyal Members. My thanks go to the Management, Staff, Directors and Members of the Club for their support and friendship over the years.”

Just Like Mother Cooked!

Many years ago and it was probably the year he was made a Director in the 1970s, the Club put on a ‘special dinner’ for Charlie Goodwin.

It seems that Goodwin had complained about the quality of Club meals and often made the comment; *“Why don’t you cook like my Mother used to?”*

Goodwin was also outspoken about the millions of dollars being spent on extensions. He expressed his thoughts that it might be time to cut costs and serve basic meals!

So one night to satisfy that comment by Goodwin, the Club Restaurant was decked-out with kerosene lamps, half-empty tomato sauce bottles (Rosella of course), old beer bottles of about 50 years vintage, rabbit traps, wool hooks and old newspapers as table cloths.

Goodwin, his wife Bette and invited guests, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Baker and Mr. & Mrs. Ian Whiteoak, were kept outside the restaurant and then officially invited in.

The opening comments to Goodwin went something like this; *“You wanted a meal just like your Mother cooked so here it is.”*

At a genuine candlelit or was it a kerosene lit dinner, Goodwin and friends enjoyed:

- Pea & Ham Soup
- Baked Rabbit
- Roast Lamb & Mint Sauce
- Freshly-baked Damper
- Bread & Butter Custard





Les Hickey (far right) and members of the Club's renowned band, The Hollywood Quartet

Stature Small, Big Heart



Les Hickey the iconic Secretary/Manager of the Illawarra Master Builders Club for 20 years

The iconic Secretary/Manager of the Illawarra Master Builders Club over the past 50 years is indisputably Leslie Vincent Hickey who was in charge for an unequalled period of 20 years in the top management position from 1966 until 1985.

Hickey is a legend in the NSW club industry particularly in the Wollongong region. He retired then made a comeback to a management role at the Illawarra Leagues Club that was in financial trouble. In the space of two years, Hickey resurrected and saved it from closing.

Still alive and in good health, Hickey now lives a quiet life at the Bundaleer Gardens Hostel in Wauchope, on the Mid North Coast of NSW. The retirement village is a

well-appointed facility and the now 87 year-old Hickey's only complaint is "a fading memory."

Hickey was born at Lithgow on January 21 1926, the eldest of three boys; his siblings were Jim and Maurie. Their father came from Hartley Vale, near Lithgow, and worked in the mines and later at the Lithgow Small Arms Factory.

A student at St. Patrick's Convent, Hickey played cricket and rugby league. He even tried out for a Lithgow rugby league team but a lack of weight always was a problem.

Success did come at cricket as Hickey was picked for a Lithgow team to play an annual match at Mudgee. However, that selection was not based on Hickey's cricket ability,



Nerida Day (left), Marion Hickey (centre) and Marcia Harris (right) at the farewell function to Les Hickey

but his ability to play the piano (a Hickey forte) at the after-match celebrations.

The musical talent was in the family. Hickey's mother was a music teacher and his father could play the violin. Able to play the piano by the age of six years, Hickey played in various musical groups around Lithgow, firstly at the Scottish Social Club and at outlying places such as Lidsdale and Lowther.

Hickey's father suffered a heart attack and couldn't work. As there was no such thing as social services sickness benefit, Hickey had no choice but to leave school and work to help put food on the table.

He said; *"It was bloody hard! I worked as a labourer at the Small Arms Factory but only weighed four stone 10 pounds (29.7 kilograms)! I had to leave early and walk two miles and the same deal in the afternoon. I didn't have the money for the bus fare but the bus driver took sympathy on me and I travelled for free. I luckily got a job as an office boy, studied mathematics at night and improved my education. I was a good piano player and eventually formed a band called "The Les Hickey Band" We played at the big hotels in the Blue Mountains such as The Carrington, played dance music, music for weddings and the like. The band performed on weekends, weekdays and we even did three night gigs at the Raffles Cabaret in Bathurst and weekend gigs at the Kurrajong Hotel. I had enough money to buy a car and brought an "A" Model Ford to get around in those days. Famous people that heard our music as a band included the Hollywood actress Jean Simmons, the Duke of Gloucester and the Prince of Wales."*

Hickey's work aptitude was soon evident at the Lithgow Small Arms Factory and he progressed after several years to the position of Assistant Paymaster. He took a better job as Paymaster at the NSW Joint Coal Board and was later made Personnel Officer.

The Joint Coal Board sold many mines to private enterprise and hundreds were put out of work. Hickey



Les Hickey (seated) was a great host and always made everyone feel at ease.

fortunately was transferred to a company known as J. Clinton & Son that was based in Camden, near Sydney.

The recession in the mining industry at Lithgow resulted in Hickey moving to Camden, near Sydney, where he was Personnel and Industrial Officer for J. Clinton & Son, a company that had 22 businesses but a major focus on mining.

Hickey returned home to Lithgow on the weekends but not for long, as it was at J. Clinton & Son that he met his future wife, Marion Tuckfield. They married at Five Dock in 1958 and in 1959 moved to Wollongong where they produced two sons, Michael and Tony.

The administrative and management skills accrued by Hickey at Lithgow and Camden were put to good use in the Wollongong area. He was interested in real estate and initially worked as a manager for Statewide Developments and later Strata Developments.

Hickey finally tried his hand at real estate. He was confident of success as Marion was an accountant but on reflection said; *"I couldn't sell water in the desert. I was pathetic at it. We went broke after three months because of me."*

Fate, luck or whatever you want to call it then stepped in. The manager of the Camden Brickworks "tipped off" Hickey that the Illawarra Master Builders Club needed help and he should make an enquiry.

Les Jenkins was Secretary/Manager at the time. Hickey was appointed Assistant Secretary/Manager and within 12 months was in charge. He said; *"I got the lucky break; I was at the right place at the right time. I always wanted a challenge in life and this job was just that for me."*

That was in 1966 and by that stage the club in Church Street had been operating for about four years. The late Bill Kelly said this about Hickey in an article titled "Personality of the Month" in the October 1978 issue of 'The Illawarra Master Builders Club News'; *"During his period as Manager, he (Hickey) has introduced many new*



The first band that Les Hickey (on piano) put together was very popular in the Blue Mountain region of NSW

ideas within the Club, including the purchase of a computer which has not only saved money but has greatly increased our efficiency. He also introduced the Christmas Spectacular Concerts which are very popular within the Club. His ability to handle and get on with staff has, in no small way, been largely responsible for keeping the excellent staff which is a feature of our Club."

There are many stories about Hickey that accrued over the 20 years of his devoted service to the Illawarra Master Builders Club. Kelly, in that same article related some of them; "He (Hickey) was for many years involved in the Lions Club and assisted in doing many fine things for the community. He, in company with Joe Anderson, who was quite a good singer, used to go to aged persons homes and entertain them during the Christmas period. At one stage during a beer drought, Hickey together with the late Ron Turnbull went to Melbourne looking for supplies. He asked a steward if he could buy some bottled beer, and was referred to the manager who firstly asked him if he was a house guest. On reply in the affirmative, the manager asked Hickey how much he wanted; he was surprised when he received the reply of '1080 dozen'-a semi-trailer load. They were successful in gaining the full amount together with 60 x 18 gallon kegs!"

Former Club President, Charlie Goodwin, a life-long friend of Hickey, at the latter's retirement dinner/show in 1985 attended by over 200 people said; "You have sent numerous Presidents to Ward 20 (mental breakdown ward) and now you are retiring to do all those things you always wanted to do, like mowing your lawn (arthritis permitting), washing your car, sun baking, swimming, beachcombing, listening to Jade Hurley records, playing country and western music on the piano, bingo and bowls."

Retiring in 1985 at nearly 60 years of age certainly was not the end of Hickey's career in the Club industry.

The circumstances how Hickey came out of retirement to help "a former opposition club" in Wollongong were one of mate ship with the ex-President of the Illawarra Leagues Club, the late Mr. Les Wilson. Wilson in 2001 recalled the circumstances about how Hickey in the latter 1980s, rang him and advised that; "If you ever need any help or advice please give me a call."

Nearly a decade later the Illawarra Leagues Club was in deep financial trouble, and was on the verge of closure. Wilson took the retired Hickey up on his offer, and the latter got the Club back into the 'black' in just over two years! At the Annual General Meeting of the Illawarra Leagues Club in November 2001, Hickey was honored with the naming of "The Les Hickey Gaming Room."

Finally retired, Hickey and his wife moved up to the Gold Coast as his grown-up sons were living in Queensland. The move promised much, but it proved a sad situation; Hickey and wife Marion parted after over 40 years of marriage.

Hickey decided that living in Western Australia near his daughter-in-law might be fresh start. He stopped at Wauchope to see his deceased brother's wife, stayed a few days and made the decision to live out his life at the local retirement village.



Second Home

The old Club Bar was one of several areas where Jane Kennedy worked and enjoyed meeting patrons

For the great majority of the past 40 years, Jane Kennedy the current Office Manager at the Illawarra Master Builders Club has called the latter home or at least her second home!

A local Woonona girl, Kennedy left school, went to TAFE and started work in a real estate office. She said bluntly; *“I hated it but fortunately my aunty knew the Club’s Accountant and there was a position for a junior office assistant. I was about 16 years of age at that time, took the opportunity in late 1973 and 40 years on I’m still here. Funny as it might sound, I’d never heard of the Illawarra Master Builders Club until I got the job.”*

Kennedy has not worked every one of the last near-40 years as in that time due to her important role as a domestic engineer (housewife) and mother she had a break of six months and later three years. She loved

going back to work at Illawarra Master Builders Club and the Club was always happy to have her back, evidenced by the Club eventually promoting Kennedy to the role of Office Manager.

The early years for Kennedy working at the Club was only a decade after the Church Street premises had officially opened in April 1963. She counted the money into plastic tubes for banking and general office duties, menial tasks, but after all, Kennedy was on a learning curve. She said: *“As I was under age I wasn’t allowed to go anywhere near the bar areas; sometimes it was a long walk from one side of the Club to the other so as to avoid a licenced area.”*

After one of her voluntary breaks from the Club, Kennedy returned and progressively gained new skills and experience working in the Change Box, Bars and the Strong Room



Jane Kennedy



Bingo is still a strong activity at the Club and is now an attraction to younger women

(Safe). She did the latter six days a week on morning shifts, a convenient situation as her husband worked afternoon shifts and looked after the kids. The alternate shifts in the Strong Room were done by the late Frederick (John) Constable, a local Commonwealth Bank employee who passed away in April 2010 and was much respected at The Builders Club.

As time went by, Kennedy progressed back into a full-time position at the Club in the office, completed a TAFE course and was promoted to Office Manager. She now only works three days; her focus is on the Club's accounts and running the office.

Over the 40 years that Kennedy has been involved at the Club she has seen a lot of changes in the building, management and patrons. However, Kennedy had no hesitation in stating that it (the Club) has been a very good place to work, was very structured in the old days, but runs in a more relaxed mode these days.

Asked about her best memories of four decades at the Club Kennedy said; "My best memories have come from the



The Change Box of 2002

people I've worked with over the years. Les Hickey was my first boss and others like Larry Matthews, Frank McGregor and Bill Gallagher were great to work for at the Club. In more recent years the friendships formed with Gail (Rawlings), Lisa (Bone), Richard (Bone) and Andrew (Bolt) have been an important part of my life .I remember the nights when people used to form long queues to get into the Club, they were called 'grab a granny nights.' The Club was up market and the dress code had to be strictly adhered to if you wanted to enter. It was often hard to get seats to shows and most of the stars of the Mike Walsh's television show in Sydney appeared here. The Club had limited opposition and was a social Mecca."

Kennedy added; "Our Membership has changed a lot over the years and it is a significant 'ageing' one. Some of the ladies that were playing bingo about the time I started here in the 1970s are still here but now they're using walkers or are in wheelchairs! Bingo is still a strong social activity, there's a defined Wollongong circuit and younger people are coming here to play during the week. But, they're not really poker machine players and that's our life-blood."



The late Bev Lawson

Life Cut Short

Without fear or favour, the late Beverly Ann Lawson was an extremely popular Member of the Illawarra Master Builders Club until her life was cut short suddenly at the age of 57 years on January 22, 1998. She died in Wollongong Hospital after a massive heart attack a day earlier.

Lawson for 34 years had been one of the NSW Police Force's most dedicated and loyal officers. She was popular, respected, competent, effective and destined for greater success as a police officer.

The only woman in a class of 11 that graduated from the Sydney Police Academy in 1964, Lawson started in the Traffic Branch, moved to Criminal Investigation from 1970 and reached the rank of Sergeant in 1980. She was promoted to Sergeant Supervisor of the Wollongong Criminal Investigation Bureau and in 1986 became the first female Licensing Sergeant.

Further promotions followed and by 1996 she was Acting Deputy Commissioner, the

first woman that had acted in that role, and soon after was made Deputy Commissioner. Many felt that she was odds-on to be the next NSW Commissioner of Police.

Wollongong born and bred, Lawson contributed greatly to local sporting, education and charity circles. She was President of the Board of Directors of the House With No Steps (Illawarra Chapter), President of the Management Committee of the Wollongong Police Citizens Youth Club, a Member of the Wollongong University Council, Associate Fellow of the Institute of Management, Life Member of the Illawarra Softball Association and Golf Captain of the Illawarra Master Builders Golf Club, one of the five original Foundation Members of the latter.

Lawson was a highly competent sportswoman and not only at golf. She represented New South Wales in softball and hockey.



Larry Mathews after nearly 40 years working in the club industry has made his mark as a hospitality guru

I've Been Everywhere Man!

It is often a meandering route that sees some individuals finally settle in a city or town, make their mark and never leave.

The Illawarra Master Builders Club's former Assistant Manager, Larry Mathews, is the man that has been everywhere. He was born in Peak Hill, a town situated on the Newell Highway about halfway between Dubbo and Parkes, but left home in 1958 and it took him another 16 years before he called the Wollongong region home.

Job choices were limited in Peak Hill in the 1950s, so Mathews worked for the local Post Office (PMG-Post Masters' General Department) delivering telegrams, learned Morse Code etc. The Postmaster had high hopes that Mathews would make a career

in the PMG but the latter wanted out of Peak Hill sooner rather than later!

Hoping to be transferred, Mathews was asked where he would like to transfer to and he jokingly said; "How about Bondi Beach?" He soon found himself at Bondi Beach, and what a plus with the sun, surf and a string of banks along the main street facing the beach that employed a bevy of young female tellers.

The PMG was soon given up, and Mathews worked for a printing and paper converting company at Rosebery that produced the wrapping paper for major Sydney retailers such as Myer and David Jones. He then worked for a printer at St. Leonard's,

progressed his way up to shop foreman, but then decided to buy a truck and contracted to Brambles.

Mathews said: "I was lost and had no direction. I saw a job advertised for a Sub Assistant Manager at the North Ryde RSL Club. My family had a hotel involvement and my father had been Secretary/Manager of a golf club so there was a bit in my bloodlines for the hospitality industry. I applied back in 1969 was interviewed on a Friday afternoon and started the next Sunday morning. I was five years as Sub Assistant Manager but over a period all those above me in seniority left for better jobs. I was made Assistant Manager and was 'caretaker' Manager for nearly two years. I heard about the job of Assistant Secretary/ Manager at the Illawarra Master Builders Club on the grapevine, the first time that this position had been created to assist the Secretary/Manager Les Hickey."

The application by Matthews was received and a trio from the Illawarra Master Builders Club-Alan Hodge, President; Col Stewart, Vice President; and Hickey-called in to the North Ryde RSL Club to check out Matthews. They were impressed and invited Matthews down for a weekend at their expense to get a feel for the Club, patrons, staff and the local area.

The last thing that Hickey said to Matthews as they left the North Ryde RSL was; "What religion are you?" I told him Church of England, asked why, and was taken aback by Hickey's reply; "Catholics are all bloody thieves so you wouldn't get a job if you were one. I'm a Catholic but I'm an exception!"

Matthews and his wife Jan, a girl he married from Bondi, spent a weekend in Wollongong from Friday to Sunday. They were shown the Club facilities and the local sights, met the Board, attended a dinner and show, stayed overnight and went home favorably impressed.

He said; "From the time I walked in the door I was very impressed and could see it was professionally run. The décor was very up-market. I had no hesitation accepting the job, started on October 2, 1974, but as the first Assistant Secretary/Manager had to create a job for myself. Hickey told me that for the first three months shake hands, meet people, get to know the Club, but straight away I got involved with the portfolios of catering, entertainment and the office. The Board was absolutely fantastic, there were very few Board changes, and we're still friends today."

Matthews spent nearly seven years at the Illawarra Master Builders Club and has fond memories. He recalled: "It was the entertainment hub of Wollongong in the 1970s. The dinner dances, coat and tie dress code, were booked out weeks ahead and the in-house catering was spot-on. I used to roster six Tray Stewards to serve drinks for 300 to 350 patrons every Saturday night who were entertained by a seven piece band. The downside was that on Sunday the Club was a void like all

other clubs. I introduced Sunday afternoon movies (an idea from North Ryde RSL) at 3:00pm, a smorgasbord at about 5:00pm after the movie finished and a disco at 7:30pm. Village Roadshow supplied the movies and the first one we showed was 'Ryan's Daughter' starring Robert Mitchum, Trevor Howard and John Mills.

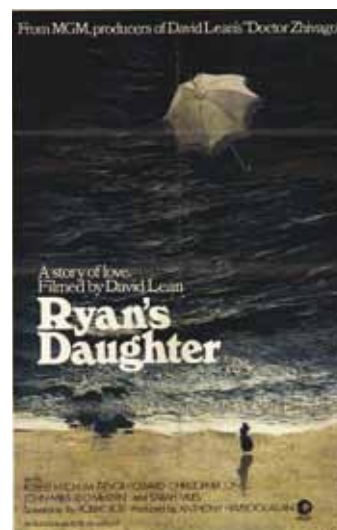
I also introduced a rewards system that was open to all patrons. Points earned were redeemed for good prizes that I regularly purchased from a reputable wholesaler. I always remember a patron that wanted an electric fry pan and spent another \$300.00 to get another \$50.00 in reward points so he could go home and say to his wife; 'Look what I won at the Club!'

The Club had about 3000 Members in the 1970s and I had up to 40 on the roster. Wollongong was a working town and Friday night was 'drink night'. We catered for all age groups with our booked music; a three piece band for the 25 to 40 year-olds and a disco for those 25 to 30 years. We were known as 'The Parachute Club' but I'll defer an explanation of that dubious title.

It was through shows such as the Christmas Spectacular, the Ice Follies and the Ladies' Days that saw us steal a march on our competitors in the region. I remember one Ladies' Day when the The Hallett Twins failed to show up. All was not lost, as Les Hickey played a bit of Honky-tonk on the piano; I called an impromptu game of bingo, and Hickey performed a Soft-shoe Shuffle. The Hallett Twins weren't missed as far as the crowd was concerned."

In late June 1981 Matthews left the Illawarra Master Builders Club to take up the position of Secretary/Manager at the Figtree Bowling Club. It was uncertain how long Hickey would stay at the Builders so Matthews made a career change and stayed nearly 27 years at Figtree!

Matthews said; "When I went to the Figtree Bowling Club in 1981 they had debts of about \$380,000 but when I left they had a surplus of \$4 million. It was the right move for me even though Les (Hickey) retired four years after I had left. I retired at 68 years of age in 2007 after nearly 40 years in the New South Wales club industry. I had been everywhere to some degree after leaving Peak Hill 50 years ago but I'm highly satisfied that I've made my mark in Wollongong."



'Ryan's Daughter, the first movie shown at the Club.'



Frank McGregor, Gail Rawlings and Jean McGregor

Member No. 37

Frank McGregor worked 37 years at the Illawarra Master Builders Club and is one of the longest serving employees in the Club's history.

McGregor started at Charlotte Street and worked there for about 18 months until the new Club in Church Street was unofficially opened in late 1962. As a thank you gesture for 37 years of loyal and dedicated service, the Board gave McGregor Membership No. 37.

The now 78 year-old McGregor was born at Maitland in 1935, the son of a coal miner (Joe) and one of four children of his mother (Katherine). He went to Primary and High School in Muswellbrook, was a very competent rugby league player but really had no defined career path.

McGregor's first job was working for a local furniture store; Campbell's, then tried his

hand in a general hardware and grocery store and worked with Bill Gallagher, a man who was destined to be a life-long friend of McGregor and eventually his brother-in-law.

Three months of National Service in 1955 was a break from the norm and, on his return to Muswellbrook, McGregor worked as a Bar Steward at the Shamrock Hotel, a laborer for Thiess Bros at Brown Mountains on the South Coast of NSW and on the Snowy Mountains Scheme, a total of two and a half years loading trucks from a concrete mixer.

Living full-time on the South Coast did not enter McGregor's life cycle until after he had returned from the Snowy Mountains and Muswellbrook. He married a local girl, Jean Anne Gallagher, sister to the aforementioned Bill Gallagher.

The newly-weds had their honeymoon in Wollongong, returned to Muswellbrook for about six months and McGregor worked at the Hunter Hotel in that town. The newly-weds returned to Wollongong in the latter part of 1961 and McGregor worked as a dogman at B. W. Steel, but after four months decided to leave.

Waiting for a mate to pick him up for work one morning, McGregor was reading the local paper and saw a job for bar staff at the Illawarra Master Builders Club in Charlotte Street. It was still early so he went home as the Club in those days didn't open until 10:00am. His wife was wondering what was going on.

McGregor went around to the Club and waited for it to open. He was approached by the Secretary/Manager at that time, Eric Matthews, who asked him what he wanted and after a brief discussion, McGregor was offered the job of a steward. He said; *"I'd made up my mind that I'd never go back into the club or hotel industry after doing that work in Muswellbrook. I reversed my earlier decision and put in the next 37 years at The Builders!"*

The Charlotte Street Club in those years consisted of one level but patron demand for more space saw a second story added. The Club was located near a section of the Old Mt. Keira Tramway and the Gas Works so was not in the most salubrious part of Wollongong.

McGregor recalled; *"My brother-in-law Bill Gallagher, Vic Kuschert and myself formed a great team of stewards in Church Street. I was promoted to Head Steward, then Supervisor and some years later to Sub-Assistant Manager. It was such a good place to work at, everyone loved the Club, and it was the 'social club' of Wollongong as we ran some wonderful functions. The loyalty was unbelievable; I even had ex-Staff Members who came back on occasions to work casually for me and fill-in for late absences for regular staff. It seemed that the Directors, Managers and Patrons all gelled."*

He added; *"The Christmas Spectaculars were just that, spectacular! They were held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays nights and up to 400 people sat down for dinner and a show with up to six guest artists. The Tray Stewards in those days had round silver trays and I had six working the room. The trays could carry up to 18 drinks and I used to get RSI just watching them (Stewards) carrying the trays held high above their head to the thirsty patrons. At the old Club in Charlotte Street one steward dropped a whole tray one night and his confidence was shattered. However, we sent him back to the patrons with an umbrella so that the latter would act as shelter just in case there was another accident."*

McGregor had career aspirations and in 1993 Assistant Manager, Bruce Lizotte resigned, and that vacancy was offered to him by the Secretary/Manager, Garry Ryan.



Bill Gallagher

McGregor surprisingly declined and looking back said; *"I had regrets about that decision."*

Every Club has its characters and the Illawarra Master Builders in McGregor's tenure of 37 years was no exception. He said: *"I remember well the likes of Bill Longhurst, Jack Sainsbury, Cec Frazer, Eric Matthews, Bob Law, Mike Hunsell and many others sadly now deceased. There was Keith Hamilton that stood at the end of the bar drinking sevens and taking money for lottery tickets. Committeeman Bill Kelly used to write personality profiles of Club people in the monthly magazine and I was featured in the 1980s. Rugby league was hotly debated by the long-term Members in the winter season and I was a real stirrer. I used to casually go around the tables provoking arguments about the merits and demerits of the teams that had played. It wasn't long before the room was heavily involved in verbal disputes as a result of my stirring."*

On a personal note, McGregor will always be indebted to the Illawarra Master Builders Club for giving his daughter Joanne McGregor (now Pieper) a job about 30 years ago. She was just over 15 years of age, struggling to get an office job in Wollongong but McGregor's boss at that time, Secretary/Manager Les Hickey gave her a trial for three weeks. Joanne impressed enough to be given a full-time job and, over the next 20 years or so, added more skills to her repertoire.

The Illawarra Leagues Club was in financial trouble about 1990 and had debts of over \$800,000. Hickey had retired in 1985 but came out of retirement to save the Club from closure. A key person by his side that he "pinched" from The Builders to help him, was Joanne McGregor, now General Manager of the Illawarra Leagues Club.

Footnote: Frank McGregor's wife Jean worked at the Collegian Club for 27 years mainly in the bar. Add those years to Frank's 37 years at the Illawarra Master Builders and Joanne's 30 years at the latter and the Illawarra Leagues Club, you're getting close to 100 years of dedicated family service to the Wollongong hospitality industry.



Frank McGregor

Minimum of Fuss

The way that Life Member Phil Mortenson goes about his voluntary work at the Illawarra Master Builders Club is done with “a minimum of fuss.”

Mortenson first got involved with the special needs indoor bowlers (disability) about 1976, and was introduced to this great aspect of the Club by Messrs. Ron Gillespie and Vince Nelson. Gillespie was a Club Director and an air-conditioning installer by trade; Nelson worked for the grocery firm of Moran & Cato in Crown Street, Wollongong.

Gillespie and Nelson are now deceased, but they did a massive amount of voluntary work particularly around Little Athletics and Indoor Bowlers with special needs in the Wollongong region.

A licenced plumber/gasfitter Mortenson came down to Wollongong from Sydney in 1966 and actually joined the Woonona-Bulli RSL Club before any association with the Master Builders Association NSW Illawarra Division and Illawarra Master Builders Club. He said; “It was in early 1968 and I was installing a sewer at Mount Keira. The client

asked me about joining the Builders, nominated me and in July that year I was accepted as a Member.”

Mortenson for a number of years couldn't devote much time to the Club in a voluntary capacity. He raised two boys from the age of four years until they turned 18 years, an age that he was confident they could look after themselves.

This achieved Mortenson stepped up to the position of Secretary of the special needs bowlers but said; *“I still don't know how Ron (Gillespie) got me into it. I was never a bowler but a passionate supporter. I make sure that the paperwork is all done so that our competitions and functions run smoothly over the year. The parents of the bowlers provide the support and they have built up the numbers.*

Since the 1980s the numbers have fluctuated but once the Inter-Club competition was started the numbers have grown. There are about six clubs involved in the annual circuit of events; at its peak there were up to 15 clubs involved. There are 18 trophies awarded annually for competitions staged from February to October. There's no pressure on anyone who plays, points are awarded liberally and we try to make sure that everyone gets a trophy.

The people at other Clubs we visit love them. Win lose or draw they're all winners; most are so keen for the week to pass, the next Saturday cannot come quickly enough. The age group is wide from 20 to over 65 years of age. The Committee acts more as facilitators for the players rather than full-on organizers; it works well this way.

Mortenson turns 75 years of age in 2013. He had intended to retire about 20 years ago from his trade but still does some casual work on demand. However, he is definitely looking for a successor for his role as Secretary of the special needs indoor bowlers.

Phil Mortenson (right) and the late Vince Nelson (O.A.M.) have been champions of Wollongong area people with “special needs”





Pat Murphy (left) & John Carr

Survivor

One of the standout dates in the history of the Illawarra Master Builders Club located at Church Street was July 12, 1972 when the Certificate of Incorporation was granted. This legal document took the Club to a professional business level and the registration of the name “The Illawarra Master Builders’ Club Limited.”

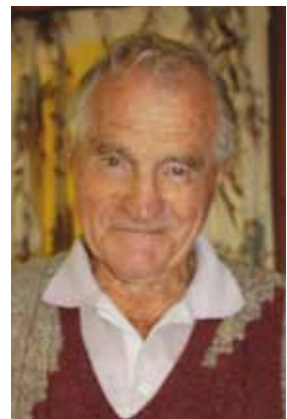
The 16 Members of the Illawarra Master Builders Club that signed the official documents were: Rupert Alan Hodge, Raymond Errol Browning, Patrick Aloysius Murphy, Lyle Ray Robinson, Colin Turner Stewart, William Laskey Carr, William John Longhurst, Reefton John Rosten, Bernard Henri Armessen, Alan Ebrill Shaw, Jack Arnold Cooper, Roy Archibald Durie, William Stephen Kelly, Ronald Middleton, Norman Ward Trowbridge and Raymond

Patrick Fredericks. Only Murphy and Shaw are still alive today.

Pat Murphy was involved with the Illawarra Master Builders Association and the Illawarra Master Builders Club collectively for over 20 years plus 40 years associated with the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the Wollongong region.

Murphy was born in Clovelly in Sydney’s Eastern Suburbs in 1938 and had an interesting life long before he and wife Joan moved to Wollongong in 1954. A boat builder that had learnt his trade at the Garden Island Naval Base in Sydney, Murphy played a bit of lower grade rugby league for the old Eastern Suburbs Club and in that era was befriended by Noel Mulligan.

Mulligan played for a couple of Sydney clubs including St. George and Newtown;



Pat Murphy



Alan Shaw, rated highly by Pat Murphy

he was an original Port Kembla junior player and was known as "The Count". A Lock Forward who represented New South Wales from 1947-1951 and Australia in 1946, 1948-1949 and 1951, Mulligan was named Lock in the Newtown Rugby League Club's "Team of the Century 1908-2008."

In 1958 Mulligan was back in the Wollongong region and captained Port Kembla to a local premiership that year.

Mulligan finished his playing career at the Collegian Club in 1961 but later coached Southern Division to defeat the powerful Great Britain touring side of 1962.

The association by Murphy with Mulligan came about in the 1950s when both were contracted to play for the Captains Flat rugby league team in the Southern Division competition.

The township of Captains Flat is located about 60 kilometres from Canberra and over the period from 1881 to 1962 had a disjointed history in the mining industry. It had boom periods for gold, silver, lead, zinc, copper etc. several closures but was ranked at its peak as one of the most productive mines in Australia.

Murphy said; *"When Mulligan and I went there to play rugby league it was a boom town. There was a hotel, hospital, Catholic school, public school etc. and there was a lot of status in fielding a successful rugby league team to represent the town. I worked there as a carpenter in the actual mines, was later maintenance carpenter for the town; I built a house there but had no intention of staying long-term. In 1954 Joan and I plus our young baby, moved to Wollongong and how lucky was that, seven weeks later there was a lockout at the mine that lasted for several months."*

The move to Wollongong in 1954 had Murphy working for Australian Iron & Steel but he later went out on his own as a sub contractor. However, chasing money with a young family to feed was no good so Murphy switched to building homes where the money was always up front.

There was plenty of work for good tradesman in that era. He said: *"It was a different world then; it was handshake job not like the contracts of today. I had no need to advertise as word of mouth got me plenty of work; I was a great believer in that approach."*

Murphy was asked to join the Illawarra Division of the Master Builders Association but wasn't confident whether he had the capabilities to help. He need not have worried

as Murphy was involved with the local Master Builders Association for 20 years including President for 1975-1976. In regard to the Illawarra Master Builders Club, Murphy was on the Board of Directors for three years from 1971 to 1973. He was Junior Vice President in 1971 and in 1972 was present when the Certificate of Incorporation was signed.

Murphy didn't have an extended period on the Committee of the Builders Club. He needed to prioritize his time, found that he couldn't wear two hats so opted to focus on the local Master Builders Association. However, his spare time took a different road for 40 years and it was the St. Vincent de Paul Society of the Wollongong region that benefited.

The Society had a lot of outlets in the region and there was a high demand from local people for assistance. Murphy built warehouses and the like for this long established charity organization and saved them hundreds of thousands of dollars; a few years ago he received a special certificate from the Pope for his service to charity. The most respected club people in Murphy's mind are former Secretary/Manager, Les Hickey, and former Director, Alan Shaw. He said: *"I have a lot of respect for Les. He had a wonderful memory and was such a likeable man. Everyone that came into the Club he knew; if he didn't Les made the effort to introduce himself. I remember when we used to count the coins from the poker machines by using adding machines; Les could add up the coins quicker without using an adding machine. He could play the piano with a sheet of paper over his hands, couldn't read music but was able to play anything. He was incredible!"*

Murphy added; *"I always rated Alan Shaw highly. He was on the Board at the same time as me in the 1970s and was Junior Vice President in 1972. He missed a couple of years on the Board but came back on in 1974 to replace Bernie Armessen and served from that year unbroken until 1983, 11 years out of a total of 13 years. He (Alan) did a lot for the Builders Club and had a key role on the Club's Building Committee at a time of major construction changes and renovations. Alan was in partnership with current Club Director, Brian Burns, trading as Burns & Shaw, when both served as Club Directors."*

It's a long-distance relationship that Pat Murphy has these days with the Illawarra Master Builders Club. He said: *"I have a small caravan and a property on the Shoalhaven River near Nowra. I'm not a social butterfly; I like my own company and that of my wife Joan. We've been married 60 years; life's good."*



Bowled Over

Historically, the majority of people that have been a Director of the Illawarra Master Builders Club and in its current guise as The Builders Club, had a common connection, they were highly active in a building industry occupation.

Jerry Nell, a current Director of the Club had no association with the building industry yet he has been a Director for 39 years. If that's not enough dedicated service at a community club level, Nell for over 57 years has supported all of The Builders Club's sports, particularly the special needs bowlers.

Nell was born at Crow's Nest in Sydney in 1924 and his family moved to Wollongong in 1930, he was six years old at the time. Unlike the majority of his fellow Directors of the past 25 years, Nell didn't seek an apprenticeship in the building trades; one of his early jobs was working at Metal Manufacturing at Port Kembla.

It was not his cup of tea so Nell took to driving a taxi around the Wollongong region for about 25 years. The taxi was sold in 1963 and Nell had another change of vocation and one I guess you could say brought him into the "inner sanctum" of the building industry.

Nell worked for the late Benny Westwood and eventually managed a paint shop in Wollongong for him, a shop that was an exclusive outlet for Dulux Paints. He (Nell) stayed at the paint shop until 1980, retired and has probably put in the majority of those past 33 years since "working" in a voluntary capacity for the Club.

Not qualified as a tradesman, Nell had joined the Illawarra Master Builders Club in 1956 as a Social Member when it was located in Charlotte Street. He knew Bill Longhurst, a true icon of the Club, very

Jerry Nell (right) at the Illawarra Master Builders Club's Sports Award function in 2010. Nell has been the "Sports Chair Person" for over a quarter of a century,



Jerry Nell

well, as the latter had built Nell's home in Gwynneville, in 1954.

Nell recalled; *"I loved the Club in Charlotte Street and I was able to socialize a lot as I had the taxi, meaning I could pick and choose when I was working. The books were thrown open to Social Members to boost the numbers and I joined in 1956. The early Members that joined in Charlotte Street each had a key to the Club and I remember there were very large Committees running the business, often up to 16. I was nominated for the Committee by Master Builders Bill Longhurst and Col Stewart. In my first year (1973) there were 16 Committeemen but today it's much more practical with a Board of 10 Directors and six of that total must be Master Builders."*

Pro-active at the Club from the start at Charlotte Street and later at Church Street, Nell, 50 years ago got interested in outdoor and indoor bowls, found no-one was running either effectively and then one day, he was in charge! As the years went by Nell took a keener interest in indoor bowls, was made the Sports Chair Person 26 years ago and in 2007 was presented with the annual "Sports Person Award".

Nell took over as Sports Chair Person in 1987 after the late Bill Kelly, former President of the Master Builders Club's Outdoor Bowls retired. Nell was quick to praise. *"He (Kelly), was an excellent Sports Director at a time when we had 16 Sub Clubs and provided direct financial support to several others. We've been very supportive of sport over the years but are not recognized as a 'Sporting Club.' The Builders has good branding but maybe we should be called 'The Builders Sporting Club'."*

It's not only sport for normal people that the Club has supported and Nell will explain; *"I, along with Life Member Phil Mortenson and the late Vince Nelson, took a keen interest*

in special needs bowlers, that is, people with a physical and/or mental handicap that wanted to have a go. The Saturday Morning Bowlers are well organized and self-sufficient; there are up to 30 in regular attendance; some are wheelchair bound and it's amazing what they can do. We've also been pro-active with Sailability Illawarra, a water sport that gives special needs persons an opportunity to try dinghy sailing. This unique sport has a world-wide profile and in the local area was started at the Illawarra Yacht Club in 1997 after the latter promoted a 'Come & Try Day.' The Builders Club provided Sailability Illawarra with funding for a sailing dinghy and a boat trailer."

Nell has strong thoughts on why the Club has been a success. He said; *"The Builders Club was the biggest Club in Wollongong. There was a waiting list to join until other clubs developed their profiles. Despite much competition we've grown due to good Management and good Members. I'm always interested in visiting other Clubs and getting an insight how they're running their business. My wife Roslyn and I go club visiting for an outing and a 'fact finding' mission. I've always made myself available to the Members. I lend them an ear and they know that valid comments and criticisms will be reported back to the Board by me."*

I asked Nell what decision made in his time on the Board was the most important for the Club. He replied; *"A decision was made to borrow millions of dollars for the extensions upstairs. It was a 'big decision' but the Commonwealth Bank had the confidence to back us as we had other properties to more than cover the debt. You have to build for the future and keep changing all the time to retain and grow your membership."*

The Builders Club is the second home for Jerry Nell and he has no qualms about saying so. However, he will also preface that statement by saying; *"Thanks to my wife Roslyn."*

Community Devotion

The late Vince Nelson was presented with The Order of Australia Award in 2005.

Across the Illawarra Region all those that knew of Nelson's unselfish and continuous devotion to the community-particularly supporting people with disabilities-it was an award that was more than justified.

Born in Wollongong, Nelson in 1968 founded the Saturday Morning Indoor Bowling Group at the Illawarra Master Builders Club for persons with disabilities. He nurtured this group activity with a deep understanding and compassion; coached participants; and taught those with severe disabilities even how to hold a bowl.

The success of The Builders bowling group enthusiastically encouraged by Nelson, led to the formation of other bowling groups in the area to the point that there are now six Club-sponsored groups. They compete on Saturday mornings in a home-and-away competition.

Nelson was the founding President of special needs bowlers at The Builders Club; he remained as President for 34 years only stepping down in 2002. A decade later the Saturday Morning Bowlers are still going strong!



Vince Nelson (O.A.M.)



Wonderful Time

“In my many years at the Club I met some wonderful people-Club Patrons, Staff, Management and Board of Directors alike. It was indeed a wonderful time. It was always my thought that once you became an employee of the Illawarra Master Builders Club you stayed pretty much forever; a point to which the Clubs records will verify I believe.”

These comments are from the longest standing serving and highly respected former Staff Member, Gail Rawlings, who devoted 27 years of her life to the Club from 1980 until 2007. She started in the bar, worked most floor positions, spent time in the administration office and her crowning glory, Functions Manager, the first female to hold this position at the Club.

Rawlings had a strong work ethic and experience long before she came to the Illawarra Master Builders Club in 1980. Her office background after leaving high school

in Wollongong at the old Intermediate Certificate level, embraced 10 years at a public accountant’s office and 10 years at Tubemakers Australia. She said; *“It was an era of loyalty for people working; long stays like 10 years were common.”*

Keen to make every post a winner for the future, Rawlings decided to look for part-time night work to supplement her regular weekly wage at Tubemakers Australia. She thought bar work was an obvious choice but it wasn’t a walk-up start; Rawlings recalled: *“Back 30 years or so ago even casual staff had to have experience and people really valued their jobs. I had no experience but undaunted canvassed every hotel from Shellharbour to Scarborough without success. I saw an advertisement in the newspaper for a casual bar person with experience for the Wollongong Hotel. The boss was a very professional man, knew what he*

The Serenade Function Centre ranks as one of the best in the Illawarra region. Gail Rawlings coveted her role as Functions Manger and her hands-on approach generated a lot of function business for the Club



Gail Rawlings



The Dining Room of the 1960s pales in comparison to the modern dining and function facilities at The Builders Club today.

wanted and there had been a high turnover at the hotel. We got on well and I got a start. I later worked at another hotel part-time but got retrenched; the owner brought in family members to work, I was last on and first out!

She continued; "Unemployed I had a stroke of luck when Tom Hooper, President of the Hoteliers Association and a member of The Builders Club, heard of my plight and put a word in for me at the latter. In those days working for The Builders Club was a status position, it was hard to get into and most people stayed seemingly forever. There was a long list of persons wanting to gain employment; in those years bar work was a real art! People were so good at their trade and so professional; Tray Stewards for example; this Club had an amazing group of guys headed by John Bullivant, so skilled in every way.

I got an interview with the Assistant Manager, Larry Matthews, and was offered a job. I had another job in the pipeline but it was the reputation of The Builders Club that influenced my final decision. In the 1980s when I was doing bar work, this was the place to be especially on weekends, the place rocked. I remember having to line up outside the main door and try to push my way past the crowd just so I could start work. The whole three floors of the Club would be packed and the teamwork of the Staff was unbelievable. Not one person sat down to relax at the end of the night until every one of the floors was spick and span. Frank McGregor, Vic Kusichert, Bill Gallagher and later on Fred Fleuren were the Sub Assistant Managers. They ran a tight ship and it was great; definitely good overall work ethics and great times were had along with the hard work and customer satisfaction.

I got plenty of hours as a casual and worked on the bars initially and then was a permanent in the Change Box. I always remember that a plum job for bar staff, in my opinion, was working on the bar upstairs on Friday and Saturday nights that was within 'earshot' of the show auditorium. I filled in one night and it was fantastic, meeting so many patrons, the atmosphere of the show and the like."

The turning point in Rawling's career occurred in 1990 with the offer from General Manager, Ken McCarthy, to be

his Secretary. With the departure of the McCarthy, and the appointment of his Assistant, Garry Ryan, as General Manager Rawlings kept her position that she secretly had always aspired to make her own at the Club.

A 'budding writer', here's Rawlings recap of the years from 1990 to 2007 plus some personal asides in her 27 years at The Builders Club.

"In February 1990 I commenced in Administration as Secretary to Ken McCarthy. I also continued as overtime shifts in the poker machine Change Box Attendant on weekends for several years. When I initially commenced at the Club in 1980, Les Hickey was the Secretary/Manager and May Malone was his Secretary. I always admired the way that Malone carried out her position and although there had been several other secretaries since the departure of Hickey and Malone, I always remembered her work ethics and decided that I would like to follow as closely in her footsteps as possible. That is what I set out to achieve.

After McCarthy's departure I continued as Secretary to the new General Manager, Garry Ryan, and part of my job was to book very small, straight forward meetings in the function rooms. The General Manager and Assistant General Manager (Bruce Lizotte) took care of the other Club functions. I was unsure when I commenced as Secretary as to how far I should proceed with the smaller bookings as the G.M. was in the office right next to me, would hear about it and I'd be pulled up if over-stepping the mark. This didn't happen but I was called in to Ken McCarthy and Garry Ryan and was told they had realized I had been dealing with more than required so they let me continue for a period of time to see my potential. Over the years I assumed a much larger role in the area of functions and eventually my secretarial duties were placed elsewhere. I now had the role of Functions Manager and was the Club's very first female person to hold this position. Management positions for women at the Club were few and far between and, up to my appointment, the only ones I can remember were Pat Wicks and Yvonne Marsh"

The final thoughts from Gail Rawlings no doubt are felt by many: "I remember so many wonderful happenings and occasions all coupled together with great Workmates, Managers, Board Members and Patrons a like. I remember so many funny stories and situations all of which were mostly good. I remember seeing and realizing how important a Club is to its Members and Guests and to the people of the Community and to the Community in general. I remember many Club renovations and how much we hated those dreaded jackhammers! I remember so many wonderful people who walked through the doors of our Club, some every day! We smiled, laughed, talked and sometimes cried with them or about them!"



Honest, Reliable

The statement; “Your local, honest & reliable Gaming machine service company” relates to the webpage of the Wollongong-based Illawarra Gaming Machine Service that for the past 17 years has made sure that poker machines players at the Illawarra Master Builders Club keep on playing with minimum delays.

Owner Tony Zuzic is the epitome of his web page statement-local, honest, reliable. Zuzic is highly respected by the Club’s Directors, Management, Staff and Patrons.

Zuzic is really a case of local boy makes good. He left high school in 5th Form and completed a four year apprenticeship as an electrician at Australian Iron & Steel at Port Kembla. Qualified as a tradesman, Zuzic stayed in his trade for another two years but then made a major career decision.

Working casually at the old Shellharbour Workers’ Club, Zuzic was somewhat fascinated by the service mechanics fixing the poker machines and getting them back in action for the patrons. He liked the idea of that work as a change from the heavy industry work, so he ‘cold canvassed’ the local Aristocrat agent, the late Don Baker. He said; “*Baker had been in business for about five or six years and I was lucky that someone had resigned about a week prior to my approach. Don was a wonderful fellow to work for; very well respected. The Wollongong Ex-Services Club (now City Diggers) honored Baker by naming their gaming room “The Don Baker Aristocrat Gaming Room.”*”

Nutt & Muddle were the dominant player at that time in 1978, but Baker was gradually growing the Aristocrat business. Zuzic said; “*Aristocrat had a good product and*



Tony Zuzic

within 10 years made significant growth to the point that they became a market leader. Baker had a foot in the door with Aristocrat and I ended up working with him and-after Don's death-continued with his brother. I spent about 18 years as an employee but formed my own company, Illawarra Gaming, about 17 years ago."

Zuzic's relationship with the Illawarra Master Builders Club had a business change for the better in late 2011. He sold Illawarra Gaming to IGT (International Game Technology) who are undisputed as the world's biggest gaming company.

IGT Australia is a wholly owned subsidiary of International Game Technology which is, without doubt, the global leader in the design, manufacture and marketing of computerized gaming equipment, network systems, licensing and services.

Since launching in Australia in 1986, IGT has focused on providing customers with the latest in gaming innovation, expert service and gaming systems management. The opportunity to be a sub contractor for IGT has given Zuzic a solid footing for the next three years and work on the new IGT products for the Illawarra region.

Zuzic said; *"Aristocrat had been dominant at the Illawarra Master Builder Club but the last five years has seen other companies catch up. I think it was a question of being in the right place at the right time for me, regarding the IGT service contract. I still service all other type of poker machines and its great work as every manufacturer is represented down here (Wollongong). Apart from The Builders Club, my other clients include Corrimal RSL, Wollongong RSL Bowling Club, Wollongong Tennis Club, Gerringong Bowling Club and the Gerroa Fisherman's Club plus a number of local hotels."*

With 30 plus years around gaming machines and a time dominated by the Illawarra Master Builders Club, I asked Zuzic to reflect on the changes, advancement etc. in the gaming industry. This is what he said:

"The transition from mechanical to computerized machines was a gradual one for players and servicemen. It was a bonus to put in replacement sections instead of sending a machine away for major service. It took a considerable time for players to adjust, but a 'transition handle' with a switch on it was a good idea. The fact that the machines went from a single line to up to 254 lines must have amazed many players.

In my time, I'd rate the three most popular/successful machines as Queen of the Nile, Inca Sun and Enchanted Forest. I rate Queen of the Nile my No.1 choice as the best machine ever developed and produced. It's still going strong today, you can put it anywhere on your floor layout and it will succeed; players loved it based on returns to players. The Enchanted Forest was a sleeper for 12 months but then just took off once players adjusted to the new game concept

Machine positioning is critical for any Club. It's done for a range of reasons but exposing 'poorer' machines to players rated very high. There have been a lot of machines produced over the years but only a few have survived; reference again, Queen of the Nile.

In the old days repairs were done with a pair of pliers and a screwdriver; there was always high maintenance on mechanical machine with the metal on metal moving parts; the machines played slower as a result, today you can play 16 to 20 games per minute on a electronic machine.

The mechanical machines were easier to manipulate and Zuzic related first-hand some of his experiences. He said; *"One machine in particular had a defect and depending on how the buttons were played it was a consistent winner. It wasn't illegal but players took advantage of that defect so most Clubs got rid of these machines.*

I remember instances where players illegally could actually stop the reels. It was called 'walking the reels' and by breaking a latch they got the control of where the reels stopped."

The years at the Illawarra Master Builders Club has seen Zuzic befriend some of the Club's icons. Names that came quickly to mind were Les Hickey, the first Secretary/ Manager that Zuzic reported to; Sub Assistant Manager Frank McGregor, Assistant Manager Larry Matthews and long-term President, Charlie Goodwin.

He said; *"Hickey was ahead of his time! I remember when he and Baker trialed a conveyor belt that ran under 10 to 15 machines, collected the coins and deposited them in a box at the end of the bank. The money was then collected and conveyed to a secure cash box. The theory and practice had issues as the coins wouldn't always go into the box! Hickey once introduced a gaming analysis system that was unheard of at the time but is vital these days. His strong accountancy background helped him a lot in working out a recording system that tracked the value of a machine's worth on the floor. For a long time there were no meters on machines; the accuracy level of what a machine took and the amount of the actual payouts was an educated guess!"*

The final words from Tony Zuzic, reflecting on his long-term relationship at the Illawarra Master Builders Club; *"It has been fantastic the changes that have taken part at the Club in my tenure. I liken the advancement in poker machine technology to going from the Holden EH era to the most modern computerized car on the road today."*



Our Sport



Decades of Sport



The opportunity as a Club Member to participate in a range of indoor and outdoor sports at the Illawarra Master Builders Club has been an integral part of the Club's 50 plus years. Some sports have been maintained for many, many years whilst others for various reasons have failed to survive.

In the early years of the Club a handful of sports were offered but as the membership grew, Members approached the Club's Sports Committee about the introduction and possible funding of more sports.

Back in 1971 there was broad range on offer that catered for Members regardless of age, skill level and the like, played in the morning, afternoon or night.

On a weekly basis the Club offered:

- Monday: Bridge (Men & Women), Snooker (Men Only)
- Tuesday: Carpet Bowls (Mixed)
- Wednesday: Carpet Bowls (Ladies)
- Friday: Carpet Bowls (Mixed)
- Saturday: Darts (Mixed Doubles)
- Sunday: Carpet Bowls (Men), Carpet Bowls (Mixed) Lawn Bowls (Alternate Sundays at Wollongong Bowling Club)

The other sports also offered pre-1971 and still available at that time included:

- Hockey (Juniors & Seniors)
- Rugby Union (Waratahs Juniors & Seniors)
- Fishing (Men Only)
- Golf (Men Only)
- Pistol Club (Men & Women)
- Alpine Ski Club
- Squash

In the modern era of 2013, the Illawarra Master Builders Club offers:

- Bowls
- Bridge
- Snooker and Billiards
- Golf

The Illawarra Master Builders Club also sponsors the sports of Illawarra Junior Hockey, Illawarra Rugby, University Football, American Football and Illawarra Women's Football.



Snooker players of the 1970s Wayne Wicks & Lee Gottaas



Lawn Bowls players in the 1960s. Observing the style of a fellow bowler are Les Hickey (far left) and Norm Throwbridge (white shirt)



The Pistol Club for men and women had strong support in the 1970s. Marion Russell and Club President, Jack Cooper



Top Left: Hilton Learmonth (left) and Harry Lynas

Top Right: Players at Moss Vale in 1969

Golf

Golf has a history actually longer than the current Illawarra Master Builders Club that was opened in 1963!

The meeting to inaugurate the Illawarra Master Builders Association Social Golf Club was held in the original Club in Charlotte Street on October 6, 1959. The meeting started at 7:30pm and finished at 8:25pm.

In attendance were interested sportsmen that played a variety of sports including soccer, rugby league, tennis etc. They were: Messrs. W. Kelly, T. Linton, J. Bracewell, K. Reilly, J. Domsala, W. Thorn, D. Bray and P. Fredericks. W Kelly was the first Chairman and P. Fredericks the first Secretary.

Among the items on General Business were:

- Manager's Trophy. To consist of a nett aggregate of three cards in the next four competitions. Members must have at least one card on record to be eligible;
- Secretary was asked to contact Wollongong Golf Club re twilight games and a reduction in fees;
- IMBA President Trophy. Moved to be held over; to the next Meeting;
- Port Kembla Open Day. Trophy not to be in excess of 1st £2.0.0 and 2nd £1.0.0;



Wilf Berriman & Charlie Goodwin

- Next Competition. To be decided by Match Committee;
- Club Social President Trophy. Date to be decided.
- Chairman instructed Secretary to purchase a suitable Minutes Book for Club. Carried unanimously

At the next meeting accounts showed a balance of £12/15/11. The competition entry fee was £1.00 and the Illawarra Master Builders Club allocated £1/10/- per week to the Social Club. Among those present at the first meeting was Tom Linton who played regularly with the group until 2004, a total of 45 years.

Games in the beginning were arranged fortnightly (Sundays) on local courses including Wollongong, Port Kembla, Nowra and away to the likes of Mittagong, Antill Park, Bowral and Moss Vale. The first annual weekend away was held in 1969 when games were played at Blackheath, Leura and Wentworth Falls and it continued for a many years at these golf courses.

The W.E.D.G.E. Shield was introduced early in the Golf Club's history but the word wedge is not a golf term in this instance. It stands for Week End Drinking Golf Excursion and later was renamed the "Charles Young WEDGE Shield" in remembrance of former Club President, the late Charles Young.

Long-term former President Wilf Berriman supplied a lot of information for this snapshot of the Illawarra Master Builders Golf Club. He took over as President in about 1988 from Duncan Mc Dougal Russell better known as Don Russell or DMR!

Berriman was President for about 12 years at a time of growth and success for the Golf Club. He said; *"It has been a successful Golf Club and I remember those years when we had at least 50 Members and 40 was normal attendance on golf days. I had a tremendous Committee for my 12 years and I think I had the same Committeemen for the whole period. We started in 1959 after that meeting in Charlotte Street and would have to be the 'oldest sub club' at the Illawarra Master Builders Club. I coined the phrase 'we play the fait way' and will always remember those years as one of great friendships."*

Less than 20 years after the Men's Golf Club hit off, the ladies in late 1977 made an approach to the Illawarra Master Builders Club President, Charlie Goodwin, and Secretary/Manger, Les Hickey, about forming a Ladies Golf Club.

The ladies that made that approach included Bev Lawson, Marie Hickey, Jeannie Brown and Denise Walsh. They were all experienced golfers and all were prepared to coach any ladies interested in taking up this sport.

Approval was given to form the Illawarra Master Builders Ladies Golf Club and October 26, 1977 the first meeting was held and the following ladies were in attendance: Margaret Spencer, Betty Baker, Trudy Parkinson, Jo Cummins, Marie Kelly, Lorna Heyne, Delor Epps, Joan Rogan, Jean Whiteoak, Lorraine Farmer, Edna Morris,



The golf ladies at play. From left: Denise Walsh, Bev Lawson & Jeannie Brown



Denise Walsh & Charlie Goodwin have been the driving force behind ladies golf for over 30 years

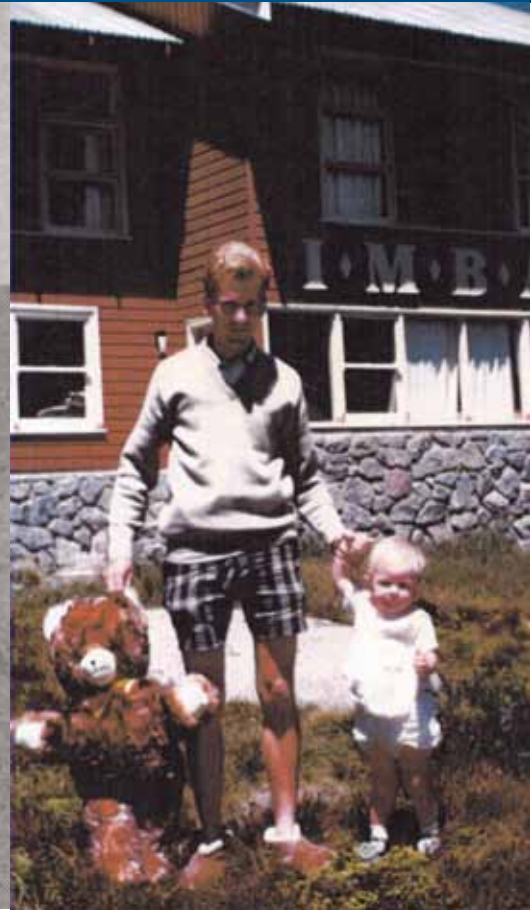
Rita Collins, Win Maguire, Joan Paynting, Marion Heape, Jeannie Brown, Bev Lawson, Ruth Styles, Bette Goodwin, S. Carliss and Denise Walsh. All of the aforementioned could be termed the "Foundation Members."

The passage of time has seen many of these ladies pass away. However, one of the Foundation Members still going strong and who put her heart and soul into the expansion and success of the Ladies Golf Club is Denise Walsh.

Thirty-six years may have passed since getting approval for a Ladies Golf Club but the memories are still strong. Denise said; *"The Golf Club was great for women in the district as it allowed 'ordinary housewives' to get out of the house, learn and play a sport that offered great companionship. It changed the life of so many, we taught them how to play, golf etiquette and some are still around today but they're now in their 80's! We (the Golf Club) have been highly successful, our meetings are run professionally, the books are spot on and we've taken golf etiquette into our meetings."*

She added; *"I can remember the days when green fees were about \$2.00 or \$2.50 and today we pay \$25.00. There were those golf days when we made it a fun day and dress up in a particular theme and actually played golf in our costumes such as convicts and early settlers. The male golfers thought it was great fun but didn't really comprehend the reasoning."*

Charlie Goodwin had the faith back in 1977 to approve Ladies Golf and has not been disappointed. He said; *"They are still going well, the numbers are good and there is annual replenishment. Their annual presentations are well run and great fun with plenty of singing in the latter part of the evening. Denise has been one of the best lady golfers of the Wollongong region for over three decades. I think she's been the Ladies Champion here for about 30 years out of 36 years; has won numerous single and foursomes titles against all comers in the Wollongong region. Denise doesn't have a Committee role these days but still plays out of Port Kembla where she was made a Life Member."*



Alpine Ski Club

The Alpine Ski Club has proved to be a great attraction to a range of age groups

Photo above far right: John Carr and his son Brendan at the Alpine Ski Club in 1968

Wollongong is a long way from the snow country of New South Wales or Victoria but since the 1960's; the Alpine Ski Club has been an integral part of the Illawarra Master Builders Club's history.

Although the lodge at Smiggins Holes was not ready for use until 1966, its beginnings date back to the early 1960's. The years from 1961 until 1969 were related in the following by one of the Alpine Ski Club's Founders, the late Bernie Armessen, to his grand-daughter Michelle Knight.

"In February 1961, after a meeting of Illawarra Master Builders at the Club in Charlotte Street, George Phillips, an old builder and cross-country skier, approached me and said, 'Bernie, why do we have to join another club whilst we are in a better position to build our own? We have good contacts with suppliers, sub-contractors, labour and we have the

experience.' He made sense and I agreed to give it a go. At that, George went to the office, got two blank receipt books and we proceeded to charge every drinker at the bar Five Bob (50 Cents) to join our new ski club. That night by 11:00pm, the Illawarra Master Builders Alpine Ski Club was born.

The name was a bit long to say and write so, a year later, we used the initials as an acronym I.M.B.A.C. Most of 1961 was spent studying the feasibility of the project. George (President) and I (Treasurer) had many trips to Caltex House in Sydney where the National Parks & Wildlife Service was situated. Three lodge sites were purchased from James Wallace Holdings for £4900.00. While I occupied myself with technical points, George was busy drafting a constitution and share allowance.

We came to the conclusion that the lodge would cost £13,000 to build and furnish so we needed

135 senior members to pay for it and patronize it. This being done, George went back to golf (he had been a NSW champion), and I became President. Our Secretary had died so a new Member, skier, Margaret Feneley, was elected Secretary and a Social Member, John Domsala, was elected Treasurer and Social Organizer.

Until then our membership had been mainly social so we had to create new skiers because Illawarra and Snow Country Clubs had enlisted the few skiers that existed in the Illawarra region.

John, Margaret and I set out to do just that. We had bus trips to the snow, sand skiing on Windang Dunes and water skiing in Nowra. I gave countless talks to service clubs showing films; that occupied the best part of 1963.

Our big break came with John's idea that we should start Sunday night barbecues and dances. In those days Sunday was for church: no sport, no races and, perish the thought, no dancing. Sunday nights the town was dead but we changed all that! John and his daughter Kay organized the show in the ballroom of the new Illawarra Master Builders Club in Church Street.

The first night we had 60 people, it soon passed 200. The dance craze was the stomp and the racket was infernal. One night we had 600 and had to close the Club doors to the queues outside but not before we had to let in a squad of licensing police who had no problem in finding a few underage little darlings who were washing down their steak sandwiches, in between stomps, with the demon drink. That was the end of our gold mine but it had left us with a healthy bank account, supplemented by the subscriptions of new members attracted by all the publicity.

By the end of 1965 we were still short 50 Members and the Illawarra Master Builders Club, who had forgiven us for the troubles they had had with the Licensing Board, agreed to go guarantor for us with the Commercial Bank of Australia to make up the shortfall. By March 1966 we were ready to roll only to find that no work was permitted to start on the snow field until after March 1 and we had to show proof that we had £22,000 available.



Tom Lewis NSW State Minister for Lands

It was back to Caltex House for George and me with our costings to show why we could do it cheaper. It took us two days of talks with their architects to convince them that we could do the job. They agreed to let us start as long as we paid the building fee.

When we started work, news came around the hotel that Utah Constructions had finished



The Illawarra Master Builders Alpine Club has been in existence for nearly 50 years

Guthega Dam and were about to start Jindabyne Dam under another company. For that they had to liquidate their assets at Island Bend. Quick phone calls that night to Margaret and John gave me permission to go and investigate. I arranged to see the engineer in charge who took me to Island Bend to see their staff quarter's furniture. It was new or near new in perfect condition. I gave him an order for mattresses, blankets, wardrobes, chairs, tables, lounge chairs, kitchen and laundry equipment etc. all going for a song, so I gave him a cheque, it was so cheap!

The carpet was the last hurdle. No ski lodge had carpet so we had made no provision for it but the ladies thought it would be a nice finishing touch. So Margaret said, 'If we haven't got the money, let's run a 200 club with a new Holden car as first prize'.

Such was the euphoria of the time that it was a sellout. Dwyer's gave us a good price on a new car and an acquaintance of Margaret's, after a quick look at the plan, said he'd lay the carpet for the profit we were to make, £800.00!

The lodge was booked out for the Official Opening that was conducted by Mr. Tom Lewis, the NSW State Minister for Lands.

The rest over the past 40 years or so is history!

Special Sports Awards

The Special Sports Awards are presented to Club Members for long and dedicated service to sport.

Current Club Director, Jerry Nell, in 2007 was given the award for his dedicated service as Chairman of the Sports Committee.

- 1986 P. Isdale: Darts
- W. Copely: Hockey
- D. Russell: Golf
- 1987 M. Wilkins: Rugby Union
- 1988 J. Russell: Pistol Shooting
- 1989 R. Styles: Ladies Hockey
- 1990 M. Ross: Fishing
- 1991 K. Learmonth: Men's Golf
- 1992 G. Czubala: Bridge
- 1993 No Award Presented
- 1994 G. Owen: Men's Lawn Bowls
- 1995 P. Mortenson: Saturday Morning Bowls
- 1996 K. Rix: Ladies Lawn Bowls
- 1997 R. Gehrke: Indoor Bowls
- 1998 D. Schenkel: Darts
- 1999 A. Morrison: Snooker
- 2000 W. Berriman: Men's Golf
- 2001 R. Carr: Snooker
- 2002 T. Linton: Men's Golf
- 2003 B. Westbrook: Saturday Morning Bowls
- 2004 E. Mercer: Men's Golf
- 2005 & 2006 No Award Presented
- 2007 J. Nell: Sports Chairman
- 2008 G. James: Saturday Morning Bowls
- 2009 G. Schoer: Snooker
- 2010 Hippos University Ladies Football Club
- 2011 D. Estell: Men's Golf
- 2012 J. Saliba: Snooker



Top/Middle// Above: The Special Sports Awards have recognised Club Members active in a range of sports since 1986

Our Entertainment





That's Entertainment!

If there's something that the Illawarra Master Builders Club has excelled at over the past 50 years then it has been ENTERTAINMENT.

The new Club that opened in 1963 made provision for a large entertainment area as 50 years ago the opportunity was there for one club to be the social Mecca of Wollongong.

The Illawarra Mercury in an editorial coverage about the new Club published in November 1962 said this about the Ballroom; *"An outstanding feature of the Club is the 84 feet by 84 feet (28 x 28 metres) ballroom on the top floor, which also includes a stage. As an indication of the popularity of the new Club, the regular monthly dance social was held in October and catering was for 400. Consternation reigned when a total of 750 filled the Ballroom and some 250 had to be turned away."*

The Dinner Dance was highly popular after the Church Street Club was officially opened in April 1963, there was one held every Saturday night with guest artists and special theme nights nearly on a monthly basis.

The "Illawarra Club News" magazine in March 1964 listed the following artists as providing entertainment for the dinner dance including Johnny Holmes, Ted McDonald, Lorraine Bransgrove, Chris Martin, George Raymond and Danny Rose. Many of the aforementioned are probably not that well known but it was a start in the right direction. There were also regular theme nights each year; March featured an Hawaiian Night.

Over the years the Illawarra Master Builders Club built on their introduction into club entertainment and set a high bench mark for all other clubs in the Wollongong region

Xmas Spectacular
MON. 1st, TUES. 2nd, WED. 3rd, DECEMBER
 3 COURSE DINNER FROM \$2.20 PER PERSON FROM 6.30 P.M.
 SHOW COMMENCES AT 8 P.M.

Features
 The World Class American Entertainer

YES!
FREDDY
PARIS



The Dynamic
Freddy
Paris

together with
YE OLD CLUB
MUSIC HALL
 A DAVID WILLIAMS PRODUCTION

STARRING

DONALD CAMERON — a Dastardly Villain	DREW FORSYTHE — a Splendid Gent
CHIN YU — an Exotic Oriental Dancer	MEGAN WILLIAMS — a Sweet Young Thing
ROSS FITZGERALD — a Common Office Boy	VALMAI JOHNSTON — a Prima Donna

with **DAVID WILLIAMS** as Your Chairman

SACH MEMBER ONLY ALLOWED TO BOOK A TABLE FOR 12 PERSONS BOOKING LIM

Entertainment For December ...

<p>Saturday 7th</p>  <p>The Frank Crisafi Group</p>	<p>Saturday 21st</p>  <p>PEGGY MORTIMER ENZO TOPPANO</p>
<p>Saturday 14th</p>  <p>Roy Ramsden</p>	<p>Saturday 28th</p> 

to emulate. There is regular comment made by people interviewed for this book about how the Illawarra Master Builders Club was the market leader for entertainment, how it was necessary to book weeks ahead and how playing at the Club was a status symbol for an artist.

Long-term Club President Charlie Goodwin probably saw most of the artists that played the Club in the past 30 years or so and quickly rattled off names including The Bee Gees, Reg Varney, Jon English, Andy Stewart, The Searchers, Burl Ives, Johnny Ray, Johnny O'Keefe, Bobby Limb, Dawn Lake, Don Lane, Kamahl, Little Pattie, Julie Anthony, Slim Dusty, John Williamson, James Pegler, Slim De Grey, Peggy Mortimer, Enzo Toppano, Rolf Harris, Paul Martell, James Pegler, Warren Williams, Frank Ifield and hundreds of others.

Goodwin added; "I'd say that nearly everyone that appeared on Sydney television shows such 'Bobby Limb's Sound of Music' and 'Bandstand' eventually appeared at our Club. Apart from the regular entertainment the best Australian and overseas artists, the Ladies Day Luncheon and Concert was held every month for 30 years. It was always booked out and we still hold a few even now but numbers are down. I remember those early days when we'd raise funds by raffling off six meat trays. The winning butts were drawn out of a brown paper bag! Today, we sell thousands of tickets and offer 120 trays. The Children's Spectacular in December each year were sensational for the kids, Marty & Emu was always popular. I

MASTER BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION of N.S.W.
 Illawarra Division



Annual BALL

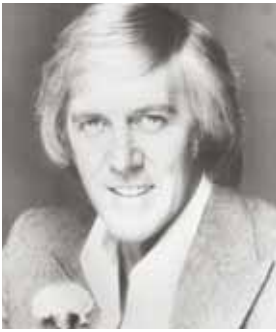
on FRIDAY, 18th JULY, 1969

Dancing 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Dress- Formal or Dark Suit Tickets \$3 each

also remember we put in a show called Ice Follies for four nights.' The dance floor was completely frozen for skating but one day late in the afternoon the ice making machine broke down but luckily was fixed in time. We tried everything at some stage and our patrons supported all and everything."

What the Illawarra Master Builders Club did so successfully for many years brought out the best in the region's other Clubs but over time the opposition invested heavily and stole the Club's dominance. The change in demographics of the patrons at the Illawarra Master



Barry Crocker



Bobby Limb



Don Lane



Johnny Farnham



John Williamson



Julie Anthony



Kamahl



Little Pattie



Marty & Emu



Rolf Harris



Warren Williams



Slim Dusty



The Four Kinsmen

Builders Club also impacted and their entertainment format was changed by necessity and practicality.

It is tribute shows such as Petula Clarke & Friends, On The Road Again, ABBA Girls & Friends, Neil Diamond, Patsy Cline, Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Divinals, Bruce Springsteen and clone bands presenting INXS, U2 and Cold Play they are now the Club's entertainment format.

In addition the Club more recently has introduced Friday Night Live In The Basement, Big Band Dance on Thursday Nights Jazz In The Basement on Sunday afternoons-all are free entry. Comedy is also staged on two Saturdays each month in The Basement and rates highly; it is the only regular comedy venue in Wollongong.

John Smith, who orchestrates the entertainment format at The Builders Club, is a realist in his role. He firmly

believes that entertainment will stay at a comfortable level at the Club, not get any bigger but sees a definite future for tribute shows as they take people on a musical journey to the bygone eras they grew up in.

THE BASEMENT



FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

LIVE

IN THE BASEMENT

STARTS AT 8PM

- Aug 10 = Blues Brothers Tribute
- Aug 24 = Rolling Stones Revival
- Sep 14 = Women in Rock Tribute
- Sep 28 = "Brothers in Arms" a tribute to Dire Straits
- Oct 12 = "Hotel California" a tribute to The Eagles
- Oct 26 = "Van - The Man" The Best of Van Morrison

A GREAT NIGHT OF ENTERTAINMENT, AND BEST OF ALL ENTRY IS FREE!

Kenny & DOLLY

TRIBUTE

The music of Kenny & Dolly performed by Johnny Vee and Dot Cooper

SAT 20 OCT @ 8PM
Tickets \$10

Available online
www.thebuildersclub.com.au
or at reception



John Smith in a familiar role at The Builders Club

Thank You Mr. Music

John Smith, who orchestrates the entertainment format at the Illawarra Master Builders Club, is a realist in his role. He firmly believes that entertainment will stay at a comfortable level at the Club, not get any bigger but sees a definite future for tribute shows as they take people on a musical journey to the bygone eras they grew up in.

Wollongong born and bred, Smith is a man of many talents and not all of those relate to music. He started playing in high school bands as a 14 and 15 year-old in the early 1960s; his first paid job was playing songs by Australian rock 'n' roll icons Col Joye and Lonnie Lee.

Years later, Smith was a music teacher at Wollongong University, taught at the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music, has played in bands on guitar for more years

than he would like to remember, and diversified into successful businesses dealing with workforce recruitment and solutions for the medical profession in Sydney and further afield.

There was a time when the music industry was the obsession of Smith, but it wasn't a bad thing as he loved the buzz of playing in bands, backing famous entertainers such as Johnny Farnham, The Bee Gees and Don Lane among hundreds. He reflected; "At around 50 years of age I felt I was getting a bit old to keep playing five nights a week, carting and setting up big p.a. systems, travelling and so on.

The change was a good thing as it forced me to look at other options. I purchased a coffee shop, moved to a chicken franchise, then bought into a courier franchise. We owned three franchises before my wife and I purchased a small



John Smith

recruiting business that we now operate in four states. We now own A B Dental Employment Agency and supply staff to more than 900 dentists in NSW as well as Victoria, Queensland and ACT, major health funds, hospitals, TAFE and even the Federal Government. Another arm of recruiting we have more recently developed is JSS Recruiting, specializing in recruitment for the corporate market.

Financial security now allows Smith to enjoy a good life style and he doesn't play music just for the money; music balances and acts as stress relief and pure enjoyment playing at six to eight gigs per month. Disenchanted with entertainment agents and agencies that were not doing the right thing with their clients and knowing that he could do it better, Smith took out a Venue Consultant Licence."

Smith said; "The Illawarra Master Builders Club was the most popular entertainment venue in Wollongong for many years. There was every form of entertainment –singers, comedians, jugglers, variety shows and we always had the big names here such as The Bee Gees in the late 1960s, The Searchers, Jon English, Andy Stewart, Reg Varney and all the stars of 'Bandstand', Warren Williams, Little Pattie etc. The Christmas shows were sensational, playing five nights per week and booked out. In the 1970s this was the Club that everyone wanted to play at, it gave you entertainment status. It's different today as other Clubs have introduced entertainment, the demographics of this Club have changed, and patrons are now highly discerning with what type of entertainment they want, even away from Clubs."

High praise is directed at the Illawarra Master Builders Club by Smith. He said; "I book entertainment that suits the Club and not just to fill a time slot. It's a good setup here, the sound guy is terrific and they are good promoters with a reasonable budget. The 'baby boomers' shows work here and I book acts such as Petula Clarke & Friends, On The Road

Again, ABBA
Girls & Friends,
Neil Diamond,
Patsy Cline.
Creadence
Clearwater
Revival, The
Divinals, Bruce
Springsteen and
clone bands
presenting INXS,
U2 and Cold Play,
play regularly in
The Basement at
Friday Night Live.
About seven years
ago entertainment
at The Builders
was dormant but
I've built it up to



A youthful John Smith

the present stage but only if I thought a show would work here and at the right price. You have to be a great negotiator when it comes to booking club entertainment; both parties have to be prepared to give and take."

Richard Bone, Assistant Manager, has been very supportive. We've introduced "Friday Night Live In The Basement", "Big Band Dance" on Thursday Nights, "Jazz In The Basement" on Sunday afternoons-all free entry."

John Smith rates himself a listener, and learns by listening to others. He looks at the right and left side of aspects; he believes that social media for example is probably the future at the Club for getting the entertainment message out to potential patrons. He said: "Blessed are the flexible as they don't break."



Entertainment at the Club was not always the domain of professionals! Master Builders were versatile as shown by this photo. Left-Right Top: Bob Law, Bill Toulmin, Bill Longhurst & Jack Sainsbury; Bottom : John Palmer, Stant Sperring, Tom Eddy & Reef Rostan.



Stu McPherson (left)
& Martin Henchion

Life's A Laugh!



Martin Henchion

Martin Henchion, after 10 years as a comedian in his home country of Ireland, ventured to Australia to “suss us out.” Henchion liked what he saw, but returned home to Cork, and opened a comedy club known as “The Craichouse.”

After 18 months in Ireland, Henchion packed up again and returned to Australia, but was not keen on living in Sydney. He wanted to be close enough to the Sydney comedy scene but the Wollongong environment appealed, so he made it his new home.

There was no regular comedy club or shows in Wollongong so he saw an opportunity to be the first. However, it wasn't easy to get the concept off the ground, and over two days Henchion “cold canvassed” all the local clubs and was knocked back by

everyone, except the Illawarra Master Builders Club.

Henchion recalled; “Richard (Bone) met me at the front door and we had a chat about the concept. He expressed interest but the Club was not in the position at that time to make a decision, there were protocols about what acts were booked and by whom. I bided my time and in early 2006 I put on a comedy show as part of a Wine Dinner attended by the President and some of the Directors at The Club. They were convinced of the merit of opening The Craichouse at the Club, and it debuted in the Piano Bar on August 24, 2006. I brought in a few local comedians, including Stu MacPherson with whom I later formed a successful partnership. Stu now runs the ‘Wollongong Comedy’ in The Basement at the Club.”

The Craichouse took off instantly and proved the point that comedy was sadly



Matt Okine



Fiona O'Loughlin

lacking in Wollongong, until the innovative decision by the Illawarra Master Builders Club. Henchion continued; *“We had crowds of up to 100 and 150 on some of the first nights, the last Thursday of the month, at a ticket price of \$5.00. The atmosphere in the Piano Bar was great, small room, big crowd, it was awesome! The bigger crowds saw us opt for larger venues in the Club but it was too hard to generate the same sort of atmosphere. The numbers dropped down to around 60/70 but they’re now more stable.”*

The current room, The Basement, is ideal for comedy with its level of intimacy, and the attendance is around the 100 mark. Comedy is staged on the second and last Saturday nights of the month, the ticket price has gone from \$5.00 to \$15.00 (\$11.00 online) and this increase weeded out the drunken and obnoxious element that no Club wants.

Marty Henchion, Alice Henchion, Stu MacPherson and Shane Moon ran the room as a partnership from 2009. Stu and Shane bought out Marty and Alice in 2012.

MacPherson managed the business solo for a period and had no qualms about taking it over in the absence of Henchion. Henchion wanted to take a different direction by performing more and not spend all his time promoting comedy.

In 2008, he teamed up with Stu McPherson, Alice Henchion and Shaun Flagge and staged the first Wollongong International Comedy Festival, a three day event held at the Illawarra Master Builders Club. The Club supplied financial, administrative and promotional support and it was successful; it was also held in 2009 and 2010.

Asked about the “comedy demographics” of the people who regularly come to “The Basement”, the reply was that they mainly fall into the 40 years age group as they get the



The Builders Club has been the sole promoter of comedy in Wollongong since 2006

comedy references about politics, relationships, pop culture of the ‘80s etc.

A comedian, who performed as an unknown at the Illawarra Master Builders Club and has gone on to fame and fortune, is Matt Okine who regularly appeared on the Sydney television show “Can of Worms.” Among the profile comedians at “The Basement” is the popular Fiona O’Loughlin.

Surprisingly despite more than seven years of regular comedy shows at the Illawarra Master Builders Club, Henchion and McPherson agree that 95% of Wollongong people still don’t know comedy at the Club exists, despite the consistent marketing and promotion done by the Club! They know that comedy in Wollongong is still untapped as an entertainment forum, and it’s essential that the Club maintain two nights a month and hopefully, in the future, provide comedy on a weekly basis.

Our Community





Local Partnerships

One of the many community projects sponsored by The Builders Club over the years, "Breakfast On The Beach"

A special advertising supplement in the Illawarra Mercury newspaper in the 200th decade had this heading on as its lead story: **"Club grows with the community."**

The writer said; *"Supporting the community The Illawarra Master Builders Club has grown as the local region grows. It prides itself on being a community-minded Club and demonstrates this by supporting many local sporting teams, charities, fundraising groups and theatrical organizations.*

It provides a meeting venue for a wide range of community groups including the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol, Lions Club, Apex Clubs, Toastmasters and the Illawarra Cricket Association, just to mention a few. The Club runs many promotions to raise money for local appeals. It is proud to support the Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward in conjunction with

the Lions Club and their Christmas Club Raffle.

The Builders are currently supporting about 15 sporting clubs ranging from darts teams to golfers."

One of the first recorded examples of the Club forming a "community partnership" was in 1961. The Minutes of that year reveal that donations were made to a range of organizations in the Wollongong area.

The beneficiaries of this community support included: City of Great Wollongong Eisteddfod (£70.00), Wollongong Legacy (£42/7/6), Wollongong Smith Family (£42/7/6), Wollongong Sub-Normal Children (£42/7/6), Coniston and Fernhill Junior Soccer Clubs (£10/12/- each), Wollongong Police Boys Club & Amateur Rugby Union Club, National Heart Campaign, Wollongong Amateur

Swimming Club, and the North Wollongong Soccer Club (£10/11/9 each), National Heart Campaign (£230.00), Wollongong Amateur Swimming Club (£5.00) and North Wollongong Soccer Club (£10/10/-).

This may seem a modest start to support the community compared to the amounts now allocated under Club Grants (formerly known as the Community Development Support Expenditure Scheme/C. D.S.E.). However, in that era of 50 years ago the Illawarra Master Builders Club in conjunction with the other long-term Clubs in the Wollongong region, were unequivocal saviors of multiple numbers of community groups.

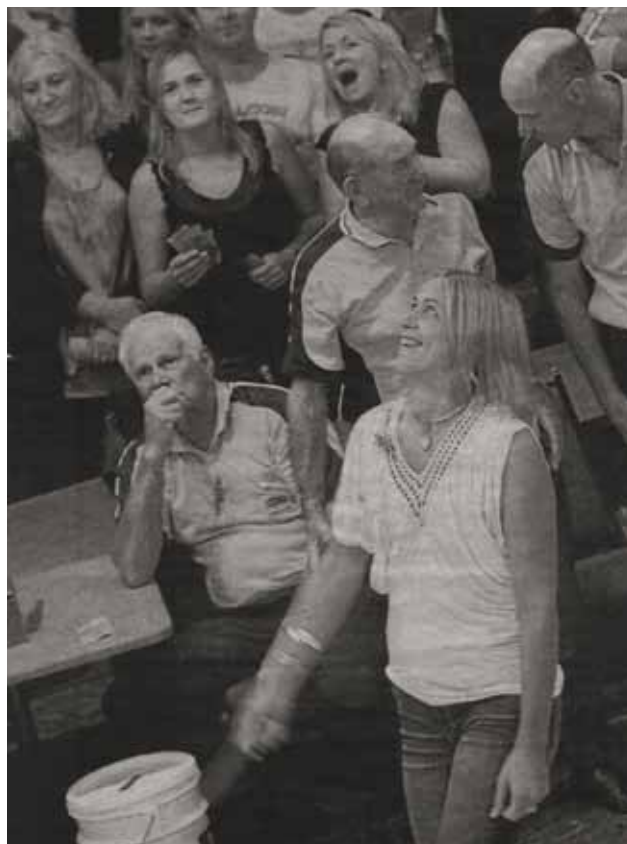
Fast forward to the 2000s and the community partnership formed in 1961 is much stronger; the requests from the community have multiplied many times over and the dollars required are rarely below the \$100,000 mark each year. The range of the requests in itself is extraordinary!

Over the years requests have come from a diversified group, predominately local, that included: Illawarra Jazz Club, SCARF, Wollongong Wesley Mission, Lifeline South Coast, Storm Junior AFL, Wollongong RSL Women's Auxiliary, North Wollongong Surf Club, Wollongong Horticultural Society, University Cricket Club, Wollongong Lions Club, South Coast Youth & Family Services, Illawarra Association Freemasons Schizophrenia Appeal, Angels of Hope, Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol, Life Education Wollongong, Wadi Wadi Dance Tribe, Illawarra Hockey, South Coast Equestrian Club, The Shepherd Centre, Camp Quality, Illawarra Ethnic Communities Council, Tom Thumb RSL Day Care, Youth Off The Street, Rotary Club North Wollongong/ Fairy Meadow, National Breast Cancer Foundation, The Cancer Council, Camp Quality, Rural Fire Service, Guardian Helicopter Service and scores more, we haven't the space to list them all in this history book!

In recent years the amounts distributed under ClubGrants have been:

2010	2011	2012
\$91,128	\$95,035	\$126,801

Included among the recipients in that three year period were: Camp Quality, Greenacres, Cancer Council, Kidswish, North Wollongong Surf Club, Life Line Illawarra, Shepherd Centre, Wollongong Aerial Patrol, UOW Southern Children's Care and Life Education.



Two-Up at The Builders Club on ANZAC Day each year raises much-needed funding for Wollongong & South Coast Legacy



Charlie Goodwin (left) and Wollongong City Mayor, Gordon Bradbery at Seniors Week in 2012



No Way Handicapped!

The Saturday Morning Bowlers at the Illawarra Master Builders Club are a unique group and have been part of the “Club furniture” for well over 40 years. In the old days they were called “*Handicapped Bowlers*” but that terminology was thankfully deleted years ago and today they are affectionately known as “*Special Needs Bowlers*.”

A photo in the November 1974 issue of “Club News” in a pictorial coverage of the Sub Clubs Gala Presentation Night had a photo and the caption said; “The I.M.B.C. does a lot to help these folk (handicapped bowlers) make life a little more pleasant by their sporting activities and help.”

That heart-warming philosophy of the Club has not changed and really has strengthened over the past four decades.

The Saturday Morning Bowlers are a pro-active group and the Club hosts a yearly

program plus many additional activities. There are two hours of bowls from 10:00am until 12:00pm most Saturday mornings and on selected dates there are Meat Raffles and an Easter Raffle.

The main events in 2013 on a home and away basis are:

- April-Illawarra Yacht Club/Lunch
- May-Senior Citizen’s Day/The Builders
- August-Shellharbour Workers/Lunch
- September-Helensburgh Workers/Lunch
- September-Woonona Bulli RSL/Lunch
- October-Illawarra Yacht Club/Lunch
- November-Directors & Saturday Afternoon Bowlers/The Builders
- December-Christmas Party & Trophy Presentation/The Builders



The late Ron Gillespie, a great advocate in the Wollongong region for persons with special needs



Phil Mortenson, Vince Nelson (O.A.M.) and Jerry Nell of the Illawarra Master Builders Club have devoted a massive amount of personal time over the years ensuring the sustainability and growth of the Saturday Morning Bowlers group.

By direct contrast to the indoor format of Saturday Morning Bowls, the Illawarra Master Builders Club has been a strong supporter of Sailability Illawarra that provides boating access for disabled sailors.

After a “Come & Try Day” in 1997, it was decided that a Sailability Branch should be started in the Illawarra region.

At a specially-convened meeting, Graham Rayner from Sailability Liverpool organized an election of a Committee consisting of Peter Knox (President), Jane Dora (Secretary), Roy Parker (Treasurer) and a small number of ordinary members. The new Committee immediately began a funding drive, contacting local companies, service organizations and fundraising groups to pay for their own Access 2.3 Dinghies.

For the first sailing days, dinghies were hired from Sailability Dobroyd and to ensure safety aspects, some of the volunteers were sent for Rescue Boat Training.

Sailability Illawarra have six Access 2.3 Sailing Dinghies, donated by Rotary Club of Fairy Meadow, Illawarra Master Builders Club, Dapto Leagues Club, The Tom Thumb Club and the Fraternity Club. The Illawarra Master Builders Club also funded a much needed boat trailer.

Sailability Illawarra is for everyone, those with intellectual and physical disabilities and the able-bodied; there is no discrimination. There are about 45 financial members but Sailability Illawarra is always open to new memberships.

A notable participant was Len Snowden of Windang who lost his right arm and leg in an accident. Snowden at one stage was ranked eighth in the world in singles after a successful campaign in the 2000 Access Dinghy US International Championship.

The concept is world-wide and there are kindred organizations in the USA, France, Greece, Italy, Japan, China, the Netherlands, Singapore, Malaysia, Portugal, United Kingdom, Hungary, Philippines, Switzerland, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

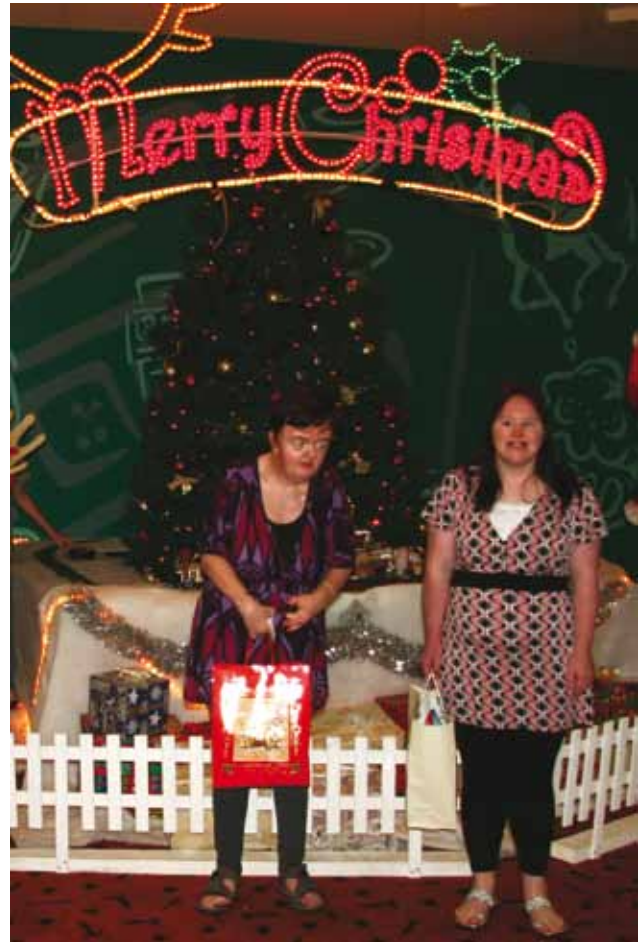


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Club Directors 2013



*President:
John Carr*



*Snr. Vice President:
George Starkey*



*Jnr. Vice President
Paul Burns*



*Treasurer
Brian Burns*



John Day



Jerry Nell



Chris Calderbank-Park



Ian Hart



David Eddy



Heather Pickering

Club Presidents 1947-2013

1947-1948	R. J. Rosten	1956-1958	T. W. Eddy	1971-1973	A. Hodge
1948-1949	W. L. Vidler	1958-1960	J. Palmer	1974-1976	R. Browning
1949-1950	W. J. Longhurst	1960-1962	W. J. Longhurst	1977-2001	C. Goodwin
1950-1952	M. J. Sainsbury	1963	R. Law	2002-2007	J. Day
1952-1954	G. W. Phillips	1964-1967	C. Stewart	2008-2013	J. Carr
1954-1956	C. J. Fraser	1968-1970	L. Robinson		

Club Committees/ Management 1963-2013

1963

Committee

Bob Law (President)
Jack Palmer (Treasurer)
Reef Rosten (Senior Vice President)
Bill Carr

Management

Eric Matthews (Secretary-Manager)

1964

Committee

Col Stewart (President)
Ken Dean (Treasurer)
Reef Rosten (Senior Vice President)
Bob Law (Junior Vice President)
Jack Palmer
Bill Carr

Management

Eric Matthews (Secretary-Manager)

1965

Committee

Col Stewart (President)
Ken Dean (Treasurer)
Reef Rosten (Senior Vice President)
Bob Law (Junior Vice President)
Wilf Brighton
Bill Carr
Eric Chapman
Jack Domsalla

Bill Longhurst

Reg Morris

Jack Palmer

Cec Pepper

George Phillips

Lyle Robinson

Jack Sainsbury

Frank Seawood

Management

Les Jenkins (Secretary-Manager)

Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant
Manager)

1966

Committee

Col Stewart (President)
Ken Dean (Treasurer)
Reef Rosten (Senior Vice President)
Sidney Cooper (Junior Vice
President)
Bill Longhurst
Jack Sainsbury
Jack Palmer
Bob Law
Bill Carr
Lyle Robinson
Dennis Martin
Wilf Brighton
Cec Pepper
Roy Durie

Pat Fredericks

Ron Gillespie

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary- Manager)

Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant
Manager)

1967

Committee

Col Stewart (President)
Jack Palmer (Treasurer)
Lyle Robinson (Senior Vice President)
Grant Hickey (Junior Vice President)
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Horrie Mant
Bob Law
Bill Longhurst
Alan Hodge
Jack Sainsbury
Norm Trowbridge
Roy Durie
Cec Pepper
Reef Rosten
Bill Carr

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant
Manager)

1968

Committee

Lyle Robinson (President)
Col Stewart (Treasurer)
Grant Hickey (Senior Vice President)
Ray Browning (Junior Vice President)
Jack Palmer
Bill Carr
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst
Norm Trowbridge
Cec Pepper
Alan Hodge

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)

1969

Committee

Lyle Robinson (President)
Col Stewart (Treasurer)
Bill Carr (Senior Vice President)
Ray Browning (Junior Vice President)
Jack Palmer
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst
Norm Trowbridge
Cec Pepper
Alan Hodge

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)

1970

Committee

Lyle Robinson (President)
Col Stewart (Treasurer)
Alan Hodge (Senior Vice President)
Ray Browning (Junior Vice President)
Bernie Armessen
Bill Carr
Jack Cooper
Roy Durie
Pat Fredericks

Bill Longhurst
Ron Middleton
Pat Murphy
Cec Pepper
Alan Shaw
Frank Smith
Norm Trowbridge

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)

1971

Committee

Alan Hodge (President)
Lyle Robinson (Treasurer)
Ray Browning (Senior Vice President)
Pat Murphy (Junior Vice President)
Bernie Armessen
Bill Carr
Jack Cooper
Roy Durie
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst
Ron Middleton
Reef Rosten
Col Stewart
Alan Shaw
Bill Kelly
Norm Trowbridge

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Ron Turnbull (Supervisor)

1972

Committee

Alan Hodge (President)
Lyle Robinson (Treasurer)
Ray Browning (Senior Vice President)
Alan Shaw (Junior Vice President)
Bernie Armessen
Bill Carr
Jack Cooper
Roy Durie
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst

Reef Rosten
Col Stewart
Pat Murphy
Bill Kelly
Norm Trowbridge
Ron Middleton

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)

1973

Committee

Alan Hodge (President)
Lyle Robinson (Treasurer)
Ray Browning (Senior Vice President)
Bernie Armessen (Junior Vice President)
Keith Sassall
Charlie Goodwin
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst
Barry Sullivan
Col Stewart
Pat Murphy
Bill Kelly
Norm Trowbridge
Bill Carr
Roy Durie

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1974

Committee

Ray Browning (President)
Alan Hodge (Treasurer)
Col Stewart (Senior Vice President)
Bernie Armessen (Junior Vice President)
Keith Sassall
Charlie Goodwin
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst

Barry Sullivan
Bill Kelly
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jerry Nell
Danny Fleming
Lyle Robinson

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Larry Matthews (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Ken Russell (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1975

Committee

Ray Browning (President)
Alan Hodge (Treasurer)
Charlie Goodwin (Senior Vice President)
Col Stewart (Junior Vice President)
Keith Sassall
Alan Shaw (Replaced Bernie Armessen)
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst
Barry Sullivan
Bill Kelly
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jerry Nell
Alan Cooper
Lyle Robinson
Bernie Armessen (Retired)

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Larry Matthews (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Ken Russell (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1976

Committee

Ray Browning (President)
Alan Hodge (Treasurer)
Charlie Goodwin (Senior Vice President)
Alan Shaw (Junior Vice President)
Keith Sassall
Col Stewart
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Bill Longhurst
Barry Sullivan
Bill Kelly
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jerry Nell
Alan Cooper
Brian Burns

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Larry Matthews (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Ken Russell (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1977

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Col Stewart (Senior Vice President)
Keith Sassall (Junior Vice President)
Alan Hodge
Alan Shaw
Jack Cooper
Alan Cooper
Bill Longhurst
Brian Burns
Bill Kelly
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jerry Nell
Pat Fredericks
Barry Sullivan

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Larry Matthews (Assistant Secretary-Manager)

Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1978

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Col Stewart (Senior Vice President)
Keith Sassall (Junior Vice President)
Alan Hodge
Alan Shaw
Jack Cooper
Alan Cooper
Bill Longhurst
Brian Burns
Bill Kelly
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jerry Nell
Pat Fredericks
Barry Sullivan

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Larry Matthews (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1979

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Col Stewart (Senior Vice President)
Keith Sassall (Junior Vice President)
Alan Green
Alan Shaw
Jack Cooper
Alan Cooper
Pat Murphy
Brian Burns
Bill Kelly
John Carr

Roger Carr
Jerry Nell
Pat Fredericks
Barry Sullivan
Management
Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Larry Matthews (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1980

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Col Stewart (Senior Vice President)
Keith Sassall (Junior Vice President)
Alan Green
Alan Shaw
Jack Cooper
Alan Cooper
Pat Murphy
Brian Burns
Bill Kelly
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jerry Nell
Pat Fredericks
Barry Sullivan

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Larry Matthews (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1981

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Col Stewart (Senior Vice President)
Keith Sassall (Junior Vice President)

Jim Burney
Brian Burns
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Alan Green
Bill Kelly
Pat Murphy
Jerry Nell
Alan Shaw
Barry Sullivan
Management
Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Lance Brettle (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)
Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)

1982

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Col Stewart (Senior Vice President)
Keith Sassall (Junior Vice President)
Jim Burney
Brian Burns
John Carr
Roger Carr
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Alan Green
Bill Kelly
Pat Murphy
Jerry Nell
Alan Shaw
Barry Sullivan

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Lance Brettle (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)

Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1983

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Jim Burney
John Carr
Jack Cooper
Pat Fredericks
Alan Green
Bill Kelly
Pat Murphy
Jerry Nell
Keith Sassall
Alan Shaw
Col Stewart
Barry Sullivan

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
Lance Brettle (Assistant Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1984

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Alan Green
Bill Harris
Keith Sassall
Jack Cooper
Pat Murphy
Col Stewart
Bill Kelly
Jim Burney
Jerry Nell
Pat Fredericks
Barry Sullivan
John Carr

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
 Lance Brettle (Assistant Manager)
 Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Vic Kuschert (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1985**Committee**

Charlie Goodwin (President)
 Ray Browning (Treasurer)
 Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
 Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
 Jim Burney
 John Day
 Vince Nelson
 Pat Fredericks
 Alan Green
 Bill Kelly
 Pat Murphy
 Jerry Nell
 Keith Sassall
 Bill Harris
 Col Stewart
 Barry Sullivan

Management

Les Hickey (Secretary-Manager)
 Ken McCarthy (Assistant Secretary-Manager)
 Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Des Wilson (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1986**Committee**

Charlie Goodwin (President)
 Ray Browning (Treasurer)
 Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
 Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
 Alan Green
 Bill Harris
 Keith Sassall
 Vince Nelson
 Pat Murphy
 Col Stewart

Bill Kelly
 John Day
 Jim Burney
 Jerry Nell
 Pat Fredericks
 Barry Sullivan

Management

Ken McCarthy (Secretary-Manager)
 Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Des Wilson (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1987**Committee**

Charlie Goodwin (President)
 Ray Browning (Treasurer)
 Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
 Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
 Alan Green
 Bill Harris
 John Carr
 Vince Nelson
 Pat Murphy
 Bruce McDiarmid

John Fox
 John Day

Jim Burney

Jerry Nell
 Pat Fredericks
 Barry Sullivan

Management

Ken McCarthy (Secretary-Manager)
 Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Des Wilson (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1988**Committee**

Charlie Goodwin (President)
 Ray Browning (Treasurer)
 Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
 Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
 Alan Green
 Bill Harris
 John Carr
 Vince Nelson

Pat Murphy
 Bruce McDiarmid
 John Fox
 John Day
 Jim Burney
 Jerry Nell

Pat Fredericks

Barry Sullivan

Management

Ken McCarthy (Secretary-Manager)
 Garry Ryan (Assistant Manager)
 Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Fred Fleuren (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1989**Committee**

Charlie Goodwin (President)
 Ray Browning (Treasurer)
 Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
 Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
 Alan Green
 Bill Harris
 John Carr
 Vince Nelson
 Pat Murphy
 Bruce McDiarmid
 John Fox
 John Day
 Jim Burney
 Jerry Nell
 Pat Fredericks
 Barry Sullivan

Management

Ken McCarthy (Secretary-Manager)
 Garry Ryan (Assistant Manager)
 Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Fred Fleuren (Sub Assistant Manager)
 Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1990

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
John Carr
Vince Nelson
John Fox
John Day
Jim Burney
Jerry Nell
Pat Fredericks

Management

Ken McCarthy (Secretary-Manager)
Garry Ryan (Assistant Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1991

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
John Carr
Vince Nelson
Ken Fairbairn
John Day
Barry Sullivan
Jerry Nell
Pat Fredericks

Management

Garry Ryan (Secretary-Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1992

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
John Carr
Vince Nelson
Eric Douglas
John Day
Barry Sullivan
Jerry Nell
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (Secretary-Manager)
Bruce Lizotte (Assistant Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Sub Assistant Manager)
Pat Wicks (Catering Manager)

1993

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
John Carr
Vince Nelson
Eric Douglas
John Day
Frank Belcher
Jerry Nell
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (Secretary-Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Bill Gallagher (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)

1994

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
John Carr
Vince Nelson
Eric Douglas
John Day
Frank Belcher
Jerry Nell
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)
Leigh Tait (Sub Assistant Manager)

1995

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
John Carr
Vince Nelson
Eric Douglas
John Day
Frank Belcher
Jerry Nell
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)
Leigh Tait (Sub Assistant Manager)

1996

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
John Carr
Vince Nelson
John Day
Cyril Howe
Frank Belcher
Jerry Nell
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)
Leigh Tait (Sub Assistant Manager)

1997

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Carr
John Day
Bill Harris
Jerry Nell
Vince Nelson
Cyril Howe
Frank Belcher
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Frank McGregor (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)
Leigh Tait (Sub Assistant Manager)

1998

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
Roger Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Carr
John Day
Bill Harris
Jerry Nell
Vince Nelson
Cyril Howe
Eric Douglas
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)
Leigh Tait (Sub Assistant Manager)

1999

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
John Day (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Carr
George Starkey
Bill Harris
Jerry Nell
Vince Nelson
Cyril Howe
Eric Douglas
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)
Leigh Tait (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)

2000

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
John Day (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Carr
George Starkey
Bill Harris
Jerry Nell
David Eddy
Cyril Howe
Frank Lizzo
John Schenkel

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Sub Assistant Manager)
Yvonne Marsh (Sub Assistant Manager)
Leigh Tait (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)

2001

Committee

Charlie Goodwin (President)
Ray Browning (Treasurer)
John Day (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Bill Harris
George Starkey
David Eddy
Cyril Howe
Jerry Nell
John Carr

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Richard Bone (Sub Assistant Manager)

2002

Committee

John Day (President)
Charlie Goodwin (Treasurer)
John Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
David Eddy
Cyril Howe
Jerry Nell
Ray Browning
Bill Harris
George Starkey

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Richard Bone (Sub Assistant Manager)

2003

Committee

John Day (President)
Charlie Goodwin (Treasurer)
John Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Jerry Nell
Ray Browning
Bill Harris
George Starkey
David Eddy

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Gaming Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Kristine Bowen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Richard Bone (Sub Assistant Manager)

2004

Committee

John Day (President)
Charlie Goodwin (Treasurer)
John Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Jerry Nell
Ray Browning
Bill Harris
George Starkey
Ian Hart
David Eddy

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Gaming Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Richard Bone (Sub Assistant Manager)

2005

Committee

John Day (President)
Charlie Goodwin (Treasurer)
John Carr (Senior Vice President)
Brian Burns (Junior Vice President)
Jerry Nell
Ray Browning
Grant Jacobs
George Starkey
Ian Hart
David Eddy

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Gaming Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)
Richard Bone (Sub Assistant Manager)

2006

Committee

John Day (President)
Brian Burns (Treasurer)
John Carr (Senior Vice President)
George Starkey (Junior Vice President)
Charlie Goodwin
Ray Browning
Grant Jacobs
Ian Hart
David Eddy
Jerry Nell

Management

Garry Ryan (General Manager)
Fred Fleuren (Assistant General Manager)
Andrew Bolt (Gaming Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)
Richard Bone (Sub Assistant Manager)

2007

Committee

John Day (President)
Brian Burns (Treasurer)
John Carr (Senior Vice President)
George Starkey (Junior Vice President)
Jerry Nell
Charlie Goodwin
David Eddy
Ian Hart
Paul Burns
Rick McCann

Management

Andrew Bolt (General Manager)
Richard Bone (Assistant General Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)

2008

Committee

John Carr (President)
Brian Burns (Treasurer)
George Starkey (Senior Vice President)
Paul Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Day
David Eddy
Charlie Goodwin
Ian Hart
Rick McCann
Jerry Nell

Management

Andrew Bolt (General Manager)
Richard Bone (Assistant General Manager)
Peter Harding (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)

2009

Committee

John Carr (President)
Brian Burns (Treasurer)
George Starkey (Senior Vice President)
Paul Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Day
David Eddy
Charlie Goodwin
Ian Hart
Rick McCann
Jerry Nell

Management

Andrew Bolt (General Manager)
Richard Bone (Assistant General Manager)
Peter Harding (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)

2010

Committee

John Carr (President)
Brian Burns (Treasurer)
George Starkey (Senior Vice President)
Paul Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Day
Charlie Goodwin
David Eddy
Ian Hart
Jerry Nell
Rick McCann

Management

Andrew Bolt (General Manager)
Richard Bone (Assistant General Manager)
Peter Harding (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)

2011

Committee

John Carr (President)
Brian Burns (Treasurer)
George Starkey (Senior Vice President)
Paul Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Day
Charlie Goodwin
David Eddy
Ian Hart
Jerry Nell
Chris Calderbank-Park

Management

Andrew Bolt (General Manager)
Richard Bone (Assistant General Manager)
Peter Harding (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)

2012

Committee

John Carr (President)
Brian Burns (Treasurer)
George Starkey (Senior Vice President)
Paul Burns (Junior Vice President)
John Day
Heather Pickering
David Eddy
Ian Hart
Jerry Nell
Chris Calderbank-Park

Management

Andrew Bolt (General Manager)
Richard Bone (Assistant General Manager)
Peter Harding (Sub Assistant Manager)
Tony Gillen (Sub Assistant Manager)
Andrew Dunstan (Sub Assistant Manager)

Editor's Note: The **Committees** were of large numbers, up to 16, for the period from 1963 until 1990. The **Committee** was reduced to 12 in 1990 and then 10 in 2002. There must be at least six Master Builders on the **Committee**; the balance of four **Committeemen** can be voted in from Social Members.

Secretary/Managers 1963-1993

1963	E. Matthews	1966-1985	L. Hickey
1964	E. Matthews	1986-1990	K. McCarthy
1965	L. Jenkins	1991-1993	G. Ryan



Eric W Matthews



Les Hickey



Ken McCarthy

General Managers 1994-2013

1994-2007	Garry Ryan	2007-2013	Andrew Bolt
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Garry Ryan



Andrew Bolt

Presidents MBA Illawarra Division 1947-2013

1947-1948	R. Rosten
1948-1949	W. Vidler
1949-1950	W. Longhurst
1950-1952	J. Sainsbury
1952-1954	G. Phillips
1954-1955	C. Frazer
1956-1958	T. Eddy
1958-1960	J. Palmer
1960-1962	W. Longhurst
1962-1964	R. Law
1964-1966	C. Stewart
1966-1967	S. Cooper
1967-1968	W. Longhurst
1969-1970	G. Hickey
1970-1972	R. Browning
1972-1974	B. Armessen
1975-1976	P. Murphy
1976-1978	E. Clapham
1978-1980	R. Morris
1980-1982	G. Gibson
1982-1984	B. McDiarmid
1984-1986	W. Harris
1986-1988	J. Day
1988-1990	G. Doughty
1990-1992	B. Johns
1992-1994	G. Starkey
1994-1995	P. Browning
1995-1996	P. Browning/J. Day
1996-1998	J. Dowling
1998-2001	C. Camarda
2001-2004	E. Morelli
2004-2005	J. Dowling
2005-2009	C. Calderbank-Park
2009-2011	P. Denaro
2011-2013	R. Starcic



Bill Harris



Colleen Camarda



Grant Hickey



Chris Calderbank-Park



John Dowling



Pat Murphy

The Author



Mike Davis

Mike Davis had a childhood passion to be a sports journalist specialising in cricket and rugby league. He started his career in journalism as a Copy Boy at the Daily Telegraph in Castlereagh Street, Sydney and ended up working in the Racing Department.

It was not cricket or rugby league but it later opened a career in writing about Thoroughbred racing and breeding, greyhound racing etc. for publications such as Turf Monthly, The Referee, Greyhound Recorder, Country Life Newspaper, Land Newspaper, Bloodhorse and The Bloodhorse Review. For seven years Davis was Editor/Publisher of a national Thoroughbred breeding magazine titled Australian Thoroughbreds.

Seventeen years ago Davis changed his career path and went into the NSW club industry. He had over two years as the Marketing/Promotions Manager at Mounties (Mt Pritchard Community Club), nearly 12 years as the General Manager (Marketing & Entertainment) at Rooty Hill RSL Club and a short stint as Marketing Manager for Wentworthville Leagues Club.

Semi-retired these days, Davis has turned to writing historical books and has focused on the Club Industry in New South Wales. He published his first book on Rooty Hill RSL Club in 2005 and that created a niche market for him, five more books published since 2005 and three in 2012!

Books that Davis has written prior to publication of The Builders Club have been:

- 2005 Rooty Hill RSL Club-Heart of The West
- 2010 The Little House On The Prairie-Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club
- 2010 Cabra-Vale Diggers-85th Anniversary
- 2012 Wentworthville Leagues-The Cradle of Rugby
- 2012 Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club
- 2012 Coffs Ex-Services Memorial & Sporting Club

Books on Ex-Service and RSL Clubs have made up the majority of Davis's books over the past eight years. There have been diversions to books about Wentworthville Leagues and Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club.

This book on the history of the Illawarra Master Builders Club/The Builders recording their 50 years at Church Street, Wollongong is different again from the aspect of why this Club was founded and developed. However, the process of its formation, development, trials, tribulations and on-going success has been under-pinned in a way common to the majority of NSW Clubs-the resolve and vision of the Foundation Members coupled with the loyal support of Staff and Members.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Throughout this book reference is made to people more so by their SURNAME rather than CHRISTIAN NAME. The first mention of a person in a story will see their name appear as Mike Davis but after that they are referred to as Davis. The only difference to this format is in a story when people from the same family are mentioned, for example, Bill, Roger and John Carr; Ray and Joy Browning; John, Brian and Paul Burns etc.

This is not being discourteous, impersonal etc. to people referred to in the book; either living or dead, but is an accepted style format in books. Most people might prefer the use of their Christian Name throughout but this book will have a larger readership than just The Builders Club. It should be noted that a larger readership is not on a first name basis with all the people in the book.

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