

CRICKET IN LYNDOKH HISTORY – c. 1859 – 1970

Prepared by the Lyndoch Historical Society

The first known written reference to the game of cricket appeared in The SA Register dated 21st February 1859 during the Lyndoch Valley Agricultural and Horticultural Society's annual show. *The annual show took place on Wednesday in a store adjoining Mr Rayner's mill which was obligingly lent by that gentleman for the purpose... A well-contested game of cricket, in a field adjoining the Lord Lyndoch Hotel [now the Coffee Palace], gave additional interest to the scene.*

It was unfortunate that during this period gold was discovered and many of the men of Lyndoch went to the Barossa Goldfields to try their luck. The following report from the Loyal Lyndoch Lodge, IOOF MU, regarding its anniversary on 15th October 1869 makes reference to this fact. *In the afternoon a number of brothers and friends met at the Glebe [land adjoining the Anglican Church] and engaged in a game of cricket. When the diggings broke out our Cricket Club came to grief on account of such large numbers of its members taking an innings at that place, and a year's spell has not had the effect of improving the play of the Valley men as their awkward play on this occasion fully testifies.*

The following year, 1870, the same Lodge group organised a picnic at which *'a pleasant afternoon was spent by engaging in various sports usual on such occasions such as racing, jumping, cricket, football etc.'* The Bunyip of 5th August 1871 records another Lodge sports programme when *'both [Lodge] brothers entered heartily into various sports, such as cricket, quoits, running, jumping etc.'*

In 1875 the first recording of cricket matches played against other towns took place. There was no organised body to set up these matches. These were prearranged between nearby localities as sports groups were formed and there was usually a return match at the opposition's town. The Bunyip contained the following reports.

On Sunday last (16 February) a match was played at Pewsey Vale between Lyndoch and Pewsey Vale, resulting in a victory for the former with nine wickets to spare. Our Correspondent was furnished with a list of scores made, but they were too undecipherable to be printed with any degree of accuracy.

On Easter Monday (9th April) a cricket match was played at Lyndoch between the Lyndoch and Williamstown Clubs. Lyndoch's Captain was William Hawke and the umpire was John Springbett while the captain for Williamstown was C. Snellgrove and the umpire H. King. Lyndoch who was all out in both innings made 31 and 73 producing a grand total of 104. Williamstown players, who were victorious, made 72 and 36 resulting in a total score of 108 with four wickets in hand. Lyndoch's team in batting order was William Rushall, J. Smith, Samuel Potter, William Hawke, Henry Button, William McIntyre, C. Lock, Edward Springbett, Frederick Randall, Jesse Button, and R. Springbett.

The following year The Bunyip recorded a match between the two elevens of Lyndoch and Humbug Scrub on 19th April 1976. *The holidays have passed off quietly, the only amusement being a cricket match on Good Friday, between Lyndoch and Humbug Scrub Clubs, in which the former gained a somewhat easy*

victory, having six wickets to fall when the necessary majority was obtained. Scores were as follows: – Humbug Scrub made 66 and 45 in each innings giving them an overall total of 111 runs. Lyndoch replied with 95 and 19 to produce a combined total of 114 runs with six wickets in hand. Lyndoch players in batting order were:– George Haines, Edward Springbett, J. Smith, C. Lock Henry Button, William Hawke, William Rushall, Frederick Randall, Jesse Button, William Wilkinson, and C. Fry. On the same holiday weekend on Easter Monday the juvenile clubs of Lyndoch and Williamstown met on the Glebe and played a match which resulted in another victory for Lyndoch, with three wickets to go down.

CRICKET: Humbug Scrub v. Lyndoch Valley

The return match between the above named clubs was played on the grounds of the former on April 24 when Dame Fortune, after frowning all season on the efforts of the local team gave them an easy victory over their opponents in fact the fielding all round was creditable to both clubs as they are as yet in their infancy and a deal of practice is required ere they become proficient. Humbug Scrub made a total of 155 runs in their first innings winning by an innings and 65 runs. The following indicates Lyndoch's results with no one reaching double figures.

The following year on New Year's Day 1877 a cricket match between Humbug Scrub and Lyndoch Cricket Clubs was played at Lyndoch, which resulted in an easy victory for the former. The weather was all that could be desired for cricket. The Humbug team were [sic] the first to the wickets, when after a long stand, they retired with 93 runs. Of these A. Hicks contributed 20 and G. Kennewell 17. The bowling of A. Curtis and W. Lloyd was really good, as also the fielding throughout the match by the whole team. The Lyndochs were the next to the wickets, but owing to the little practice they have had and the good bowling they had to contend with, they soon retired with 41 runs. They were again sent to the wickets but were soon disposed of for the same number of runs, 41, making a total of 82; thus leaving their opponents the victory in one innings and 9 runs.

Unable to overcome the Humbug Scrub team, Lyndoch turned its sights to Sandy Creek. The Bunyip reported that the cricket match was played at Lyndoch on Saturday 10th between Lyndoch and Sandy Creek. Sandy Creek made 36 runs in the first innings followed by 20 in the second giving them a total of 58. This time Lyndoch had an easy win by an innings, after making a total of 66 runs. The captain was Mr William Hawke and the umpire Mr Jesse Button.

The return match between Lyndoch and Sandy Creek took place shortly afterwards on Easter Monday at Sandy Creek. The result is unclear as Lyndoch only had one innings and made 31 runs while Sandy Creek had two innings making 27 in the first and 13 in the second. William Hawke captained Lyndoch and the umpire was John Springbett.

Later in the year the junior members of the Lyndoch Club had their turn with a home match played on 9th November and the return game on 1st December played in Gawler. The Bunyip provided a report of both matches.

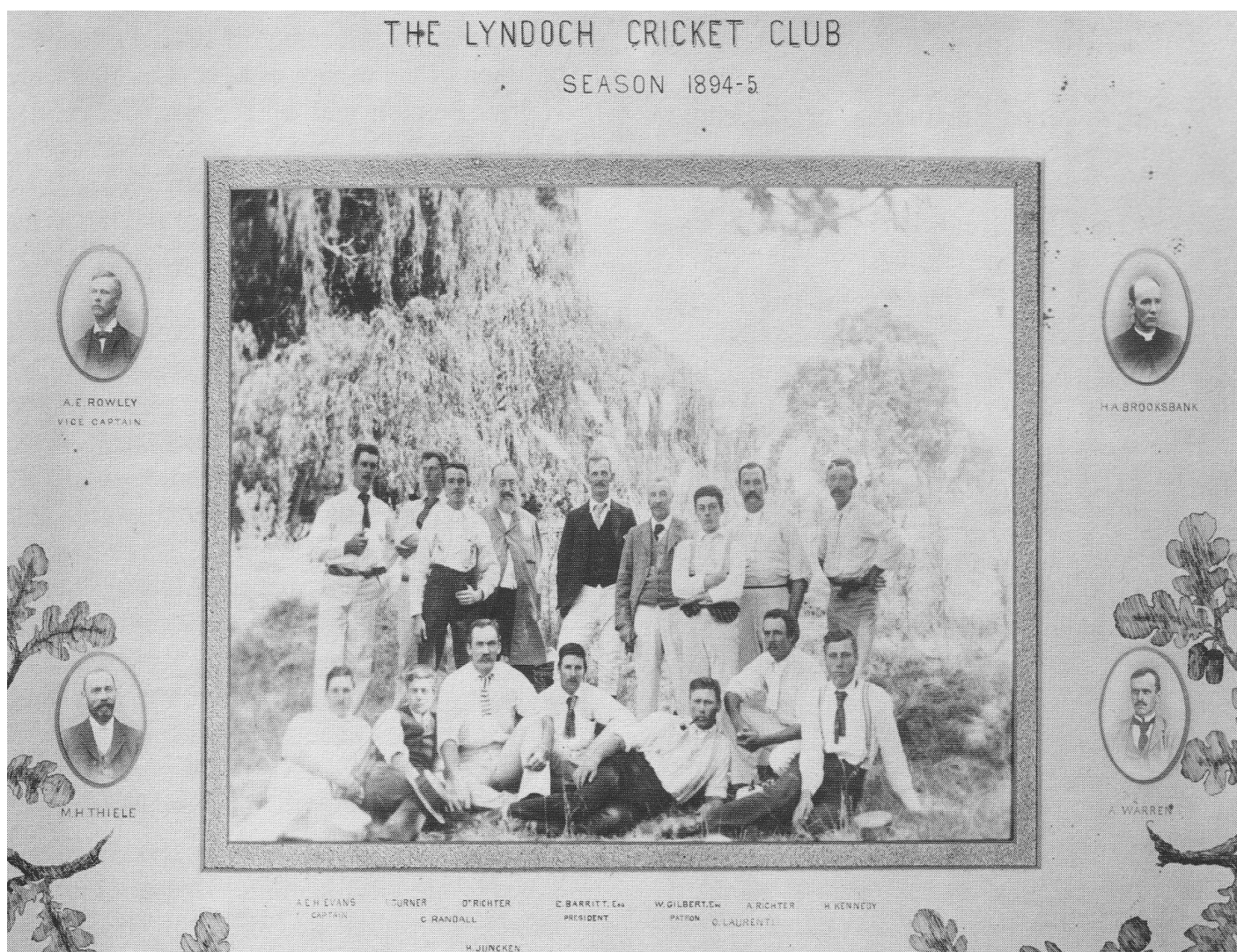
On Saturday an unusual activity was noticeable among certain of our school boys, and the inhabitants of Murray Street were puzzled to know the meaning of a number of them leaving the town in one of Mr

Mortimer's busses, but it soon transpired that a cricket trip to Lyndoch was the cause of all the bustle among them. ... Lyndoch was reached about 10 o'clock, and play commenced shortly after, and resulted in our Gawler boys [St George] winning the day after a very close and exciting match.

Scores showed Lyndoch juveniles making 20 and 19 in each of their innings while St George lads made 26 and 31 runs, a winning total of 57.

The return cricket match between Lyndoch and St George *was played on the Gawler Parklands on Saturday December 1st, and resulted in a runaway victory for the visitors.* St George scored 40 and 43 in each innings to be defeated by Lyndoch with 71 and 14 with seven wickets in hand. Players from Lyndoch were Henry Wilkinson, Robert Haines, William Fry, Charles Richter, Albert Long (Captain), Louis Haines, Friedrich Bevilaqua, Frank Wilkinson, Walter Rogers, Friedrich Koop, Louis Juncken, with George Haines the Lyndoch umpire.

A photograph of the Cricket Club during the 1894 – 1895 season was taken at Pewsey Vale during a game played there. A meeting of the Club was held to organise three framed copies of the photograph – one for William Gilbert, one for the Secretary and one for the Club.



The members of the Lyndoch Cricket Club at the time were:

Back Row: A.E.H. Evans (Captain), I. Turner, G. Randall, Dr. Richter, C. Barritt (President), W. Gilbert (Patron), C. Laurent, A. Richter, H. Kennedy.

Front Row: H. Springbett, C. Nicholas, H. Juncken (Secretary), A. Springbett, C. Belham, W. Springbett, A. Milgate.

Those not present for the photograph were:

Left side: A.E. Rowley (Vice Captain), M.H. Thiele

Right side: H.A. Brooksbank, A. Warren.

The following year, 1895, a match was played on 23rd March at Lyndoch against St George's team from Gawler. Lyndoch won easily scoring 125 runs to the visitors 43. The low score for the opposition was caused by A.E.H. (Arthur Ernest Herbert) Evans who took 7 wickets for 16 runs.

In the latter part of the year the Agricultural College cricket team played Lyndoch on Saturday November 2nd. Lyndoch in two innings made a total of 88 runs, 60 in the 1st innings and collapsing in the 2nd innings to be all out for 28. College, however, was the winner making 64 in the 1st innings and 1 for 31 in the 2nd innings giving them an overall total of 95 runs.

In spite of the Boer War being in progress games of cricket were played but reports of the outcomes were not published as frequently. The following is the only report found between 1901 and 1910 even though football and tennis matches were reported with scores and players.

On November 1st 1902 a game was played against Williamstown who won making 89 runs to 60 by Lyndoch. Best batting scores and those who reached double figures were made by W. Tucker (17 runs), A. Schluter (13 runs) and H. Springbett (10 runs). W. Tucker took 3 wickets for 8 and W. Springbett 4 wickets for 36. Although references to tennis and football have been found during 1914 no cricket match details are available. Later in the year the Great War commenced and over the following four years a number of Lyndoch men joined the services. In spite of this cricket matches were organised. During January 1915 Lyndoch played Bonnie Flat both at Lyndoch and then journeyed to Bonnie Flat for the return visit. Both games were won by Lyndoch who was a much stronger team. The local eleven won the first encounter 117 to 61. The second match played when *the sun was exceptionally hot, but notwithstanding this, much vigor [sic] was put into the game*. The final scores were Lyndoch 156 to Bonnie Flat 84. The Lyndoch team in batting order were Andy Bennett (5), Ted Bitter (20), Arch Wellman (10), Harry Bitter (28), Richard Kauffmann (4), Hermann Ludewig (18), Albert Geue (32), Fred Barnes (11), Herbert Jarman (3), Carl Lange (5), Tom Wilson (8), Bill Haese (not out 5). Bowling figures – E. Bitter 7 for 22, H. Bitter 2 for 10, A. Wellman 1 for 12, A. Bennett 1 for 34, and H. Ludewig 0 for 1.

With the war in progress fund raising by various groups in the town was undertaken to enable "comforts" to be sent to those serving "King and Country". One such occasion involved the cricketers. *A collection was taken up at the Ladies v Gents cricket match, in connection with the Red Cross, when 18/6 (\$1.85) was collected towards that fund.*

No cricket results featured from 1917 to 1919 in fact no sporting results of any genre have been located. The reasons are not clear for this – possibly more men enlisted leaving fewer to make up the team and travelling would have been difficult with austerity measures in place during wartime. However at the start of the 1920 – 1921 season, a revival of cricket took place. The Barossa News of the 10th October contained an account of the second game played by Lyndoch.

A cricket match was played on the Lyndoch oval on Saturday last between the Greenock and Lyndoch teams. The Greenock's won the toss and elected to bat, but were only able to make 38 against the bowling of the home team. The Lyndoch's replied with 90, thus recording their second win for the season. The principal scores were Greenock – O. Handtke 9, P. Edwards 7, R. Radford 7, T. O'Brien 5. Bowling – E. Bitter 8 for 19, R. Northey 2 for 17. Lyndoch – W. J. Glasson 43, E. Crambrook 18, R. King 7, T. Wilson 5. Bowling – O. Handtke 4 for 15, W.E. Lunn 3 for 10, M.W. Ellis 1 for 15, G. Schluter 2 for 3.

That there was a cricket revival is supported by a correspondent's report for The Bunyip on 26th November 1920. *After a lapse cricket has been revived in Lyndoch. A club has been formed, and a keen interest is taken in the national game. At a meeting held recently the following officers were elected – Captain, Mr E. Crambrook; Vice Captain, Mr A. Bennett; Secretary, Mr F. Nicholas; Selection committee, Captain, Vice Captain and Secretary. Frequent practice has been indulged in and the first match against Williamstown took place on Saturday, November 13th, and resulted in a win for Lyndoch. Williamstown made 55 following the excellent bowling of E. Bitter who took 6 for 8 and A. Bennett 3 for 4. Best batting figures showed E. Crambrook 28 and E. Bitter 17 making half the total of Lyndoch's 81 runs.*

The 1920 season continued into 1921 when on 19th February *the local cricket club organised a very enjoyable trip ... A match had been arranged to be played at Greenock, and occasion was taken to pay a visit to Seppeltsfield en route. The tourists were conveyed in a motor lorry under the charge of Mr J. Kluge. An early start was made, and Seppeltsfield was reached in good time. Here the visitors were courteously received, and a thorough inspection of the various processes in the wine making industry was made. The journey was resumed and Greenock was reached in time for lunch, an event which was duly appreciated by all. In the afternoon the match between the visiting and local teams was played and resulted in a win for Lyndoch. The principal scores were – Lyndoch – H. Bitter 35, W. Glasson 12, E. Bitter 9, F. Nicholas 8, and R. Kauffmann 7; total 81. ... Bowling – E. Bitter 3 for 29, W. Glasson 4 for 27, E. Crambrook 2 for 8. The return journey was safely negotiated and the homeward drive in the cool evening made a pleasant finale to a very enjoyable trip.*

The following report featured in The Bunyip 20th September 1928. *The annual meeting of the Lyndoch Cricket Club was held on Thursday 12 September 1929. It was decided to again reform the club for the ensuing season. Election of officers: – Mr J.K. Barritt, President (re-elected); Patron Mr J. Rushall (re-elected); Mr Ken Appleton, secretary and treasurer (re-elected); Vice Presidents Rev C. Noon, P.N. Collins; Auditor Mr A.T. Wiener. It was unanimously decided not to affiliate with the Gawler B Grade Association for the ensuing season. The team was very successful last season in the Gawler Association, but failed to hold the title of being the superior team of the season, being defeated by the Essex team in the final by four wickets, this being the only match the team was defeated in. Mr Les Harper (captain) was again successful*

in having the highest batting average 55.8 and Mr H. Springbett the bowling 6.5. Two trophies were awarded, one for the most catches and the other for the most improved junior. Mr Collin Higgins being the successful player for the former and Mr Max Fiebig for the latter. The club will be pleased to arrange matches with any club team on off Saturdays or otherwise during the forth coming season. At the close of the season 1928-29 the club showed a credit balance of £8/12/9.

The period known as the Great Depression occurred at this time but did not seem to have much influence on the locals as they were still able to field a cricket team and play some cricket matches travelling to various locations. On 23rd November 1929 the Tanunda cricket club journeyed to Lyndoch and was defeated by 49 runs. Lyndoch made a total of 132 runs with Colin Higgins run out for 55 and Harry Bitter 23 and Les Harper 22 having the next best batting figures. Tanunda was only able to make 83 runs due to the magnificent bowling of Les Harper who took 8 for 32 supported by Ted Crambrook 1 for 11 and Allan Rushall 1 for 16. Early in December another devastating headline for Lyndoch appeared in the Barossa News stating **Lyndoch Defeated by Centrals in Association Match.** *In the second day of play in their match versus Gawler Centrals at Lyndoch on Saturday, the home team scored 91 in reply to the visitors' total 289 (for 5 wickets). Only two batsmen reached double figures, K. Klauber scoring 34 and M. Fiebig 29. Centrals put on 55 for the loss of one wicket in their second visit to the crease.*

A fortnight later the headline read **Lyndoch Cricket Club Withdraw From Association.** *In view of the international situation and also an endeavour to assist in the very necessary conservation of petrol – now more imperative than ever – the Lyndoch Cricket Club has decided to withdraw from the Gawler and District Association for the duration. The match in progress against Riverside has therefore been forfeited, and the Lyndoch club's share in the balance of the 1941-42 programme abandoned.*

With World War II coming to an end in August 1945 it was not long before cricket in Lyndoch was taken up and in March 1946 the local team played a couple of games against Tanunda. In the first one Tanunda defeated Lyndoch by 99 runs, the scores being Lyndoch 33 – Tanunda 132. Lyndoch's team consisted of Harold Bennett, Max Fiebig, Max Bitter, Allan Bitter, Kelvin, Klauber, George Daly, Crad Jones, John Fuss, Graham Fuss, Cliff Kalms, and Roly Haese. A week later *Lyndoch returned Tanunda's visit on Sunday when they won the match by a single run, final scores being 113 to 112. Tanunda batted first.*

The club reformed for the 1946/47 season and had a great nucleus of players to draw from in both batting and bowling. Players travelled to matches initially on Fiebig's Fargo truck and later Pinson's Reo utility at a cost of £1 per day. The team usually stopped for a pre match drink as in those days the return journey would have been too late for the hotel's required six o'clock closing time. An A-grade team was entered in the Gawler & District Association that season and of the eleven matches played, Lyndoch won eight. Players who took part in the matches were Max Fiebig (Captain), Harold Bennett, Graham Fuss, Max Down, Kelvin Klauber, Louis Bitter, Allan Bitter, Max Bitter, Angus Kalms, William Walker, Arthur Engel, Norman Menzel, and Otto Semmler.

In September 1946 the Lyndoch Cricket Club was ready to return to competition matches. Prior to the start of the Association draw, Lyndoch played a couple of social games. *The Clarence Park Turf Cricket Club met Lyndoch at the latter's oval on Sunday and after a most interesting match, the Lyndoch Club won by 68 runs.*

Clarence Park made a total of 118 runs curtailed by the bowling of A. Bitter 4/24, and M. Down and G. Fuss both taking 3/23. Lyndoch finished with a total of 186 runs with M. Fiebig top scoring with 49 runs, supported by L. Bitter not out 35 and H. Bennett on 25. the same month another game was played against Tanunda. *The outstanding feat in Tanunda's first win in the 1946-47 cricket season when they played at Lyndoch on Sunday was Claude Schultz's 112 runs, including 16 "fours" and two "sixes". This performance assuredly won the day for the visitors, as three of their staunchest players by some miscalculation, failed to register any score. Lyndoch batted first and reached 145 runs in the hour and three quarters allotted for each innings.*

By October the District Cricket season had opened and Lyndoch had chosen once again to join the Gawler Association. *The Gawler District Cricket Association opened its 1946 season on Saturday, when Lyndoch made an auspicious start by compiling 339 for the loss of nine wickets in their match against Gawler Central. The highlight of the match was the partnership of M. Fiebig and H. Bennett, which yielded 163 runs in 84 minutes.*



1946/47 Premiership team

Back Row: Max Fiebig (Captain), Harrold Bennett, Graham Fuss, Bill Walker, Allan Bitter.

Front Row: Jasper Down, Max Bitter, Angus Kalms, Kelvin Klauber, Max Down, Louis Bitter.

The **Premiership** was won in the Club's first year back following the five-year recess that occurred because of World War II. This was destined to happen again with history repeating itself for the reformed team in the 1968/69 season.

During this period the Club had its own umpire and scorer who attended each match. Mr Ross King would umpire while his wife, Mrs May King would undertake the scoring. The couple would arrive at the grounds on their motor cycle and side-car. To raise finances the Club held a fortnightly dance in the local Institute, an event that was so well patronised that the club finished the year with a surplus of some £100.

In January 1957 the Barossa News reported a victory for the Lyndoch cricketers. *Lyndoch cricketers scored a meritorious victory in the match played at Sandy Creek and completed on Saturday last (12th January) when they defeated Gawler & Districts top team in the Gawler & district Association. Lyndoch captain (Lou Jenzen) was most enthusiastic about the performance of 14-year-old High School boy N. Down, who was responsible for a fine bowling effort in taking six wickets for 27 runs. Lyndoch dismissed their opponents for the moderate total of 116. Their own total was 9 for 150, largely contributed to by the solid batting of C. Fechner, A. Engel and N. Down, aided by a few dropped catches.*

On the Sunday a social match was played. *An interesting cricket match was played at Lyndoch on Sunday, when the local Tennis Club defeated the Cricket Club, the scores being: Tennis 5/137; Cricket 7/101. Each team batted for 1½ hours. For the winners R. Goddard scored 62 not out, and A. Bitter 26, whilst J. Filsell took 4/27 and Goddard 2/0. The Cricket club was represented by R. Warner (22 n.o.) and D. Hausler (21 n.o.); K. Engel took 2 wickets for 1 run. A return match will take place in the near future.*

The last match played by the Lyndoch Cricket Club was in 1957 against Gawler South who thrashed them by almost 300 runs. Due to poor performances taking place together with the unavailability of players, the Club was again disbanded.

In 1968 a number of local ex-Williamstown players as well as newcomers to the town discussed the possibility of a revival for the Lyndoch Cricket Club. On 14th August 1968, seventeen interested people met at the Lyndoch pavilion and formed the Lyndoch Cricket Club. The committee elected at the meeting comprised Hedley Zerk, President, Bill Gregory, Vice President, Tony Johnson, Secretary, Michael Koch, Assistant Secretary, and Herman Thumm the Club Patron. One senior team was fielded in the Para District's Cricket Association that season. Subscriptions were \$4 with a ball levy of 20 cents a week. As with the 1948 revival the new team went on to win the 1968/69 A Grade Premiership as well as completing the back-to-back effort of adding the 1969/70 A Grade premiership to its achievements.