

Oatley Heritage Group Projects.

<i>Month & Year of Topic</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Written & Spoken Presenters</i>
February 1996	Tennis Courts of Oatley	Jim Nicholson George Kendall Owen O'Brien Jack Elliot John Seccombe Jane Crane

THE OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP MEETING ON THE 23RD FEBRUARY, 1996 WAS AN OCCASION WHEREBY MEMBERS PRESENTED PAPERS AND DISCUSION ON THE TENNIS COURTS OF OATLEY PAST AND PRESENT.

THE PRESIDENT, RUSSELL GIBBS DREW ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THE HERITAGE OF A COMMUNITY DID NOT NECESSARILY RELY ON BRICKS AND MORTAR, BUT INSTEAD CONSISTED OF THOSE THINGS WHICH WERE OF INTEREST TO THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY.

IN THE EARLY DAYS OF OATLEY AS A COMMUNITY CIRCA 1900, IT WAS COMMON FOR THE FULL TIME RESIDENTS AS WELL AS THOSE WHO USED OATLEY AS A WEEK END RETREAT, TO ENGAGE IN SUCH PURSUITS AS WERE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY SUCH AS SWIMMING, BOATING, FISHING AND ALSO THE GAME OF TENNIS. THE PRICE OF LAND IN OATLEY WAS SUCH THAT THE COST OF CONVERTING A LEVEL BLOCK INTO A TENNIS COURT WAS NOT VERY GREAT, AND A NUMBER OF PERMANENT CITIZENS WERE EMPLOYED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF TENNIS COURTS. DURING THE DEPRESSION DAYS OF THE 1920'S IT WAS AN INTERESTING OCCUPATION, EITHER TO BUILD A TENNIS AND TO PLAY ON YOUR OWN COURT.

THE PAPERS AND THE COMMENTS PRESENTED TO THE HERITAGE MEETING ARE MOST INTERESTING AND ALTHOUGH IN SOME CASES THEY TEND TO REPEAT 5HIS ADDS INTEREST TO THE POINTS OF VIEW PRESENTED.

AS A RESULT OF GENERAL OPINIONS EXPRESSED , A LIST OF ALL KNOWN TENNIS COURTS IN OATLEY IS INCLUDED. DUE TO THE EXPANSION OF HOUSING AND THE GROWTH OF UNITS IN OATLEY, IT IS NOT ALWAYS TO ACCURATELY DEFINE THE LOCATION OF SOME OF THE COURTS. HOWEVER, IN MOST CASES, MEMBERS OF THE HERITAGE GROUP ARE SATISFIED THAT THE COURTS DID EXIST IN THE GENERAL AREA OF THOSE NAMED.

OATLEY PARADE	West Side opposite Neville Street
"	Corner of Oatley Parade and Mimosa Street
MIMOSA STREET	West Side on Corner of Llewellyn St.
LETITIA STREET	Rear of Edwards Bakery South of Masonic Hall
"	Next to Masonic Hall on North Side
"	ROBBS Court opp. Masonic Hall
"	Methodist Church Cnr Frederick and Letitia S t.
"	Residence of Judge Neild
"	Residence of Stenhouse Family Nr. Nevile st st
"	Res. Elliot Family 66 Letitia St
"	Res Schofield Family opp. no. 66 Letitia
ROSA STREET	Two Courts on either side of road a few doors from the present St. Pauls Church
"	One court at rear of St. Pauls Church of England
"	Cnr, Rosa & Herbert Sts. (?Mrs Young)
"	Residence of Dalyell Family
ANNETTE STREET	Cnr Herbert and Annette St (? Straney)
HERBERT STREET	Cnr Herbert and Clifton St - Dalgleish
ADA STREET	CNR Ada & Woonona Pde East -Fred Ludwig/ Sam Shaw.
WONOONA PARADE EAST	Near Ada St Nth side
"	Residence of Minnie Cole
ASQUITH STREET	No. 32 Home of Mr & Mrs Secombe
KITCHENER STREET	Home of Mr. & Mrs Bates
RIVER ROAD. formerly Yarran Rd.	Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Yorke
WARATAH STREET	No. 36 Home of Mr. & Mrs. Desmond
WORONORA PDE WEST	Woonona Pde West opp All Saints CE -Colebournes
"	Diagonal Cnr Bradfords Court
MI MI STREET	Keating Residence Court
MYALL STREET	Near Woonona Pde West- Choppings Court
"	Near Griffiths St - Chapmans Court
RAYMOND STREET	Stewarts Court
LLOYD STREET	Home of W. Stevens
DOUGLAS HAIG STREET	1. Beavans Court
	2. Taylors "

SITUATION OF EARRY TENNIS COURTS

OATLEY PARADE	Oposite Neville st. ANDREWS
OATLEY PARADE	Cnr of Mimosa st.
MIMOSA st.	Cnr Lilewellyn St
LETITIA ST.	Edwards Bakery next to Masonic Hall
LETITIA St	NEH SIDE of Msonoc Hall
LETITIA	ROBDS 8 Oposite Msonic Hall
"	Methodist Church Cnr. Letitia and Frederick St
"	STEN HOUSE FAMILY : NEAR NEVILLE : EAST SIDE
"	Residence of Judge Neild
"	Residence of Mr and Mrs Elloit 66 LETITIA ST
ROSA ST.	RESIDENCE OF SCHOFIELD FAMILY : OPP 66
"	Diagonal from St. Pauls owned by Mr Peisley WEST SIDE
"	ROSA ST WEST EAST SIDE OPP PEISLEYS
"	Rear of St. Pauls CofE.
"	Cnr Rosa st. and Herbert St .(? Mrs Young)
"	Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Dalyell
ANNETTE ST.	Cnr Herbert St Residence Of Mr and Mrs Straney
HERBERT & ALB NO 1	DALGLAIG { SAM SHAW
ADA ST	two courts Fred Ludwig / Near Wonoona Pde
WONOONA PDE EAST	Two or Three doors from Ada St. STEWARTS
ASQUITH ST 32	No. 32 Residence of Mr. and Mrs Seccombe
KITCHENER ST	Residence of Mr. and Mrs Bates
WONOONA PDE WEST EAST	RESIDENCE OF MINNIE COLE
RIVER ROAD (formerly Yarran)	Residence of mr. & Mrs Yorke
WARATAH ST 36	① Desmonds (W. DESMOND : WAR MEMORIAL Com. 1918)
WORONORA PDE WONOONA PDE	② ALBOYS
WONOONA PDE WONOONA PDE	to All Saints Church COLEBORNE
	Opp. ALL Saints (? BRADFORD) BRADFORD.
MYALL ST	① Residence of Mr. & Mrs P. Chopping
LLOYD ST	② SWIMMING CLUB
LLOYD ST DOUGLAS HAIG ST	W. STEVENS, PRES. OF SWIMMING CLUB
MIMI ST OR MYALL	① COURTS
"	② 36 BEAVANS
	① SMITHS KEATINGES: 99 MIMI S.
	② OPPOSITE SMITHS

33 ADA ST

MYALL ST Near GRAFT : CHAPMAN
STEWART : RAYMOND S

Tennis Courts in Oatley.

The game of tennis was apparently quite popular in pre war Oatley judging by the number of courts available in the early 1930's, and to early post war years. My recollection is set out here, not necessarily in date order of building or formation, but perhaps a reminder to others who may have a closer memory and knowledge of the subject.

The only personal experiences had was as a schoolboy about 1935 I played on Robb's Court in Letitia St almost opposite the Masonic Hall. I recall this was the home of the Oatley Gum Nuts Club.

My father, Matt O'Brien and Uncle, Dillon O'Brien built this tennis court and several others mentioned here, in which I have indicated as the builders. Their expertise was used where sandstone retaining walls were required for court retention on uneven sites. The stones prepared in a quarry in Wyong St and transported to the site where required. The clay for the playing surfaces was brought from their sandpit also in Wyong St, now long since built on.

Letitia St had three other tennis courts in addition to Robb's Court, with the land now occupied by the Oatley Service Station and previously portion of Mr Chas Edwards bakery property. Next door to the Masonic Hall, had one and possibly two courts, certainly one.

The Methodist (Uniting) Church on the corner of Letitia and Frederick Sts had a very popular Court. The new brick Church and Hall are now there. Mr Bayley, a fine stalwart had much to do with its inception.

A private court was built for Mr Judge Neild in Letitia St along from the R.S.L by O'Brien Bros. This site is now home units.

The same builders built a court for a family by the name of Court in Douglas Haig St, Oatley West.

Mr and Mrs York had a tennis court at the rear of their home, "Gumboogie" in River Rd Oatley.

Many young players received tennis coaching and practice on Fred Ludwig's Courts in Ada St near Woonoona Pde, while many early post war players enjoyed their game on Dalyell's Court in Rosa St.

Here my memory fails me, but someone in our group my recall if Mr Elliot in Letitia St opposite the school had a court, and also Mr and Mrs Bates in Kitchener St?

No doubt others will be able to fill in much more detail of these Tennis Courts and any associated clubs.

Owen O'Brien.
23/1/96.

Old Tennis Courts in Oatley.

Not used after about
1930. Used to have
bonfires there as kids.

Schofields. - directly opposite 66 Letitia St.. Schofields Family and a Miss Schofield had adjoining blocks and the tennis court was partly across the back of each block. This court was old in 1928.

Elliotts at 66 Letitia St. was built by my father in the 30's - it had the added attraction that in the south eastern corner one could pick up pieces of opal ! Previous to our building there an old opal miner had a shed on the property and a fair bit of his collection had been scattered around. I believe this court would be the only one of the early courts still in use today, of course it has now been upgraded from loam to I think all weather.

Stenhouse court. -also in Letitia St. a few doors past Neville St. on eastern side. Home units there now.

Judge Nields - opposite side of Letitia St. a little further down - only recently destroyed to make room for units.

Both the Church of England and the Methodist Church had a tennis court each.

The Red Cross had a court but probably owned by Mrs. Cole -in Rosa St. eastern side half way between Frederick and Neville Sts. - now houses

Opposite side but a little nearer Neville St. was a court at Dodds/ Peasleys now Home units.

There was a court either on the corner or next door at Rosa and Herbert St. south east position and another a bit later at corner Herbert and Clifton St.

I think there was a court at Dalyells in Rosa St. western side near Algernon St. but I'm not sure of this.

Bates court would be known to everyone and was in Kitchener St.

There may also have been a court in River Rd. near the station..

Jack Elliott

Shaws Court in Ada St.



TENNIS COURTS IN OATLEY.

THE COURT AT 99 MI MI STREET (CORNER OF MYRTLE STREET).

Frank and Hilda Keating moved into their new home in 1923 and soon after arranged for a tennis court and surrounds to be built at the rear, having a side boundary to Myrtle Street and a rear boundary to the property belonging to the Hodge family at 114 Woronora Parade, Oatley.

The court was maintained by Mr. Keating and used up until the mid-late 1940's, when his age and declining interest by players during and following the Second World War caused him to change it to gardens and lawns.

During the time that the court was used by the Keating family, their friends and visitors, it became a social centre for mixed tennis at weekends and on public holidays, and for ladies during mid-week.

The court was also often used by the Keating children and their friends after school and on school holidays.

Some of the Oatley residents remembered as playing on the court are as follows:-

Sid, Lily, Dora and Win Hollis - when married, Dora played with her husband, John Harris.

Phillip and Doris Cosgrave

Fred and Elsie Palmer

Reg and Violet King

George and Ruth Adlide

Lil Leach

Tom and Jessie Booth

Members of the Rushworth, Hand, Morrison and Bradford families also played at various times.

Some of the players mentioned are shown in the accompanying photograph. However others cannot be identified. The children in the photo are Betty Palmer and Barbara Keating (standing) and Patricia Cosgrave and Jim Keating in the arms of their respective mothers. The photo would have been taken in approximately 1925.

In 1951 the Keatings subdivided their property and transferred the rear portion, comprising the former tennis court and surrounds, and having a frontage to Myrtle Street, to their second son, Frank.

In 1952 Frank married Ida Harris, whose parents used to play on the court, and, in 1954, built the home in which they still reside at 7 Myrtle Street, Oatley.

TENNIS COURT IN OATLEY

INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY MR. JOHN SECCOMBE, ALGERNON ST OATLEY

A tennis court was situated at 32 Asquith St. Oatley and was owned by Josiah and Agnes Seccombe. Grandparents of John Seccombe. *BUILT BY WHITE 1920*

This court was built approx. 1920 on land which was at the corner of Asquith and Frederick Sts, Oatley. and extended to the waterfront which at that time was the upper reaches of Oatley, ^{/Bay} before the reclamation took place. It was quite common to hear the sound "Fresh Fish for Sale" whilst tennis was in progress, and very often play was curtailed whilst the fish was purchased.

Apparently in those days tennis was a dignified affair and players were referred to as Mr or Mrs as the case might be. An announcement board indicating the next set of players is seen to contain names as mr. and mrs.. this board is in the possession of Mr. Seccombe and many well known names of Oatley residents are displayed for example, Ludwig, Kerr, Stibbs, Thorburn, Wenman, Seccombe and many more. *M'DOWELL : GREIBS : ROOTES : GILLESPIE*

Many of the players of course lived in the area, and for those who had to travel it was common to see the horse and sulky nearby.

John Seccombe memory is of players arriving in tennis creams and carrying their racquets enclosed in the wooden racquet press. Also mr. Josiah Seccombe must have been a keen gardener as the court surrounds were always a mass of coloured flowers.

23.2.96

Oatley Heritage Group.Tennis Courts in Oatley.

- a) Mr and Mrs Young, 126 Rosa Street Oatley, had a tennis court on a corner of their property bounded by Herbert and Rosa Streets and in my lifetime I never saw it used.
 Mrs Gwen Fryett (nee Field) and 85 years on 22nd February has provided a photograph of some of the people that played there in the 1920's.
 Some well known names are listed. These are (from left to right) Gretta Derwent, Flora McRae, Rose Peasley, Dick Joyce, Gwen Fryett, Sylvia Clifton and 'unknown'.
 Mrs Fryett is currently living in the 'Whisper' units in Oatley Parade.
- Other tennis courts that I knew well were
- b) Swaney, situate on the corner of Annette Street^{No 18} and Herbert Street — where I used to play (and learned) the game.
- c) Judge Neil, 33 Letitia Street
- d) Elliotts on Stationmaster, Oatley, almost opposite Oatley Public School in 4 Letitia Street.
- e) There was one other that I infrequently played and that was somewhere in Oatley West, possibly Mi Mi Street

George Kendall

Herbert St. Tennis Court near Annette St. corner.
(Garage, centre back, still standing 1997).

1953.



Mid-week Tennis Club

Standing L.to R.- Edna Timm, , Betty Sanchez,
Peg Peir, Muriel Saunders, , Ally Shipway,
Seated L.to R.- Mary Bryant, Connie Retallack,
Children- , Carl Bryant, Dawn Retallack,

Bates Tennis Court - 31 Kitchener St.



*Jim and Peg, 1954
Tennis lessons from Jim Bates for Peg Peir.*



*Wynn, Sandy, Betty, Mary, Anne,
Peg, June, 1963*

*Standing; Wynn Butler & Sandy Bates.
Seated; Anne Zumbrun (from England), Betty
Hicks, Peg Peir, Mary Bryant, June Kegg.*

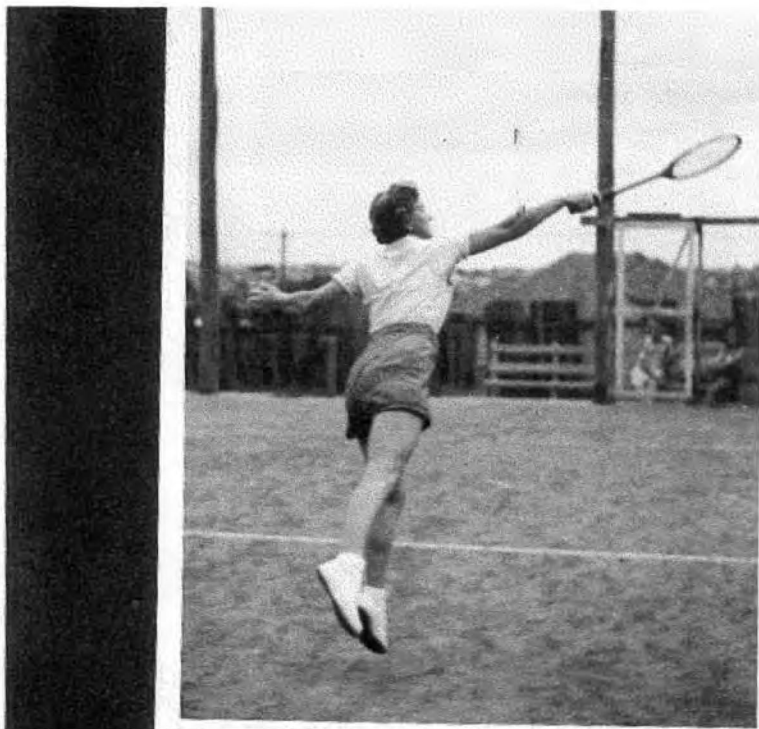
Fred Ludwig's Tennis Courts.
(high corner of Ada St & Wonoona Pde E.)



*Standing: Jill Donnison, Edna Timm,
Peg Peir, Phoebe Coates, Ron Maybury;
Elizabeth Coates, Bernhart Timm, Harold
Coates. in front.*



Peg , 1954



Peg , 1954

Peg Peir

Information supplied by
J. Crane, Cathey. 1997

TENNIS COURTS IN OATLEY

PAPER SUBMITTED BY MR. GEORGE KENDALL

1. Mr. and Mrs Young, 126 Rosa Street Oatley had a tennis court on a corner block of their property bounded by Herbert St. and Rosa St. and in my lifetime I never saw it used.

Mrs Gwen Fryett nee Field aged 85 years of age on the 22nd Feb. 1996 has provided a photograph of some of the people that played on the court in the 1920's. Some well known names are listed. These are, from Left to Right:

GRETta DERWENT, FLORA McRAE, ROSE PEASLEY, DICK JOYCE, GWEN FRYETT, SYLVIA CLIFTON, the last person name unknown now.

Mrs Fryett is currently living in the "Nulgara" units in Oatley Parade.

Other tennis courts that I knew well were:

2. Straneys, situated on the corner of Annette St and now 18 Herbert St. - this was where I used to play (and learned) the game.

3. Judge Neild 's court at 33 Letitia Street Oatley.

4. Mr. Elliot, ex stationmaster Oatley, 66 Letitia St almost opposite the Oatley Public School.

5. I also played rather infrequently on a tennis court in West Oatley, Possibly in Mi Mi Street.

OATLEY METHODIST CHURCH TENNIS COURT

The Oatley Methodist Church Tennis Club was formed in February 1921 and used Mrs Griffith's court in Rosa Street until the court in the Church grounds was constructed.

The Court was actively used during the twenties and thirties and whilst under the control of the Ladies Church Aid in the forties tennis was played three times a week.

The court continued to be used until the construction of the new Church in 1958, by which time it was used for other games and eventually car parking