

<i>Month & Year of Topic</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Written & Spoken Presenters</i>
February 1997	Sporting Clubs in Oatley Past and Present Oatley Swimming Club Oatley Bowling Club	. Ray Stevens, Spoke. Ern Stanhope. Russell Gibbs Alec Leach

MEETING OF THE OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP

HELD ON THE 27th February, 1997
IN THE UNITING CHURCH HALL

TOPIC "SPORTING CLUBS IN OATLEY_ PAST AND PRESENT"

Subjects THE OATLEY BOWLING CLUB
OATLEY SWIMMING CLUB
A CHILD VIEW OF UNOFFICIAL SWIMMING CLUBS

This paper was presented at the February 1997 meeting of the Heritage Groups. It was read by the Pres. RUSSELL GIBBS, as members of the Bowling Club Attended their A.G.M.

OATLEY BOWLING and RECREATION CLUB LTD.

OUR BEGINNING.

As a result of a notice in the local press by E. Stanhope the inauguration of the Oatley Bowling and Recreation Club took place in Oatley Park on the 20th December 1959 at 10-15 a.m. (hence the Club badge). Arising from this meeting of local residents a committee of eight (8) was formed.

Chairman: R A Stuck
Secretary: E A Stanhope

Committee:

R J Hand	A J Walker
P J Hand	R J Dendle
K C Wackett	H Tattersall

Progress was so rapid that the Committee was able to call a public meeting on 24th February 1960 in the local Swimming Club Hall of those desirous of becoming members of the Club.

FOUNDATION COMMITTEE

President	R J Hand
Senior Vice President	R A Stuck
Junior Vice President	K C Wackett
" " "	E A Stanhope
Secretary	S N P Stephenson
Treasurer	W A Paull
] Bowls' Secretary	A J Walker
Committee	P J Hand
"	H Tattersall
"	R J Dendle

Application had been made to the Hurstville Municipal Council, and to the Mayor (Alderman Hedley Mallard) and Aldermen of the Council, the sincere thanks of the members for making available the site on which our Club house and greens now occupy.

A herculean task faced the Committee. The site required to be cleared and levelled but this work had progressed to a stage in May 1960, that it was possible to complete plans for the layout of the first green and its surrounds. In the meantime finance had been arranged through the Mortdale Branch of the Commonwealth Trading Bank and by debentures taken out by the members.

PAGE 2.

In July 1960 the Club was incorporated and became the Oatley Bowling and Recreation Club Limited, comprising 200 Ordinary Members and 100 Associated Lady Members.

By September 1960, the retaining wall for No. 1 green had been completed and the green itself laid in, the progress had been astonishing, Water was laid on and a sprinkler system provided. Fencing of the whole of the area followed and so the work progressed.

Meanwhile plans had gone steadily ahead for the erection of further stone retaining walls and the laying in of the second green. Large quantities of filling had been procured but each obstacle was met and overcome.

In December 1960 the plans were completed for the Club House by Messrs, Loder and Dunphy, Architects, and February 1961, saw stage one of the Club House under construction, the work being completed by the end of July 1961.

During the progress of the work on the greens, club house etc. meetings were held by the Committee on the site to enable members to inspect the progress. These were well attended and interest was keen as the greens and then the club house took shape.

A shed was purchased and erected for the purpose of storing material and equipment. This was pressed into service as a kitchen when members commenced playing on No 1 green in May 1961. At this juncture due thanks must be paid to the Associate Lady Members for their effort in organising afternoon tea under trying conditions.

In August 1961, the Club was successful through the untiring efforts of the Committee in obtaining a provisional liquor licence.

On Sunday 27th May 1962 was the Official Opening of Club House and Greens by Dr. Neil F. Benjamin Deputy President Royal New South Wales Bowling Club.

PAGE 3.

For the Official Opening on 27th May 1962 the officers were as follows.

President	R J Hand
Senior Vice President	K C Wackett
Junior Vice Presidents	H Tattersall
" " "	J R L Davidson
Hon. Treasurer	O B Bartlett
Hon. Secretary	S De Meur
Hon. Bowls Secretary	R H Lord
Hon. Publicity Officer	A J Walker
Hon. Asst. Treasurer	E A Stanhope
Committee	R J Dendle
"	E L Dever
"	P J Hand
"	A F Jeboult
"	G Meier

Our thanks to the various sub-committees operating throughout the Club for their efforts so unstintingly given.

In conclusion we trust that the "bowling spirit" and good fellowship encountered in the "Game of Bowls" will permeate throughout all the activities of the Club, and the Club will go forward to a bright and happy future to the benefit of all Club Members.

Comment from thr floor: The Oatley Club participated in, and was the venue for the 150th Clock celebrations in the year 1983.

- SPORTING CLUBS IN OATLEY PAST AND PRESENT

THE EARLY SETTLERS IN OATLEY WOULD NO DOUBT HAVE DECIDED TO LIVE IN THE AREA BECAUSE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THEM TO PURSUE SOME FORM OF OUT DOOR ACTIVITY.

ONE CAN IMAGINE THE DELIGHT IN BEING ABLE TO FISH , TO SWIM, TO RELAX ON THE GEORGES RIVER, AND PERHAPS TO ENJOY PLEASANT WALKS IN THE SURROUNDING BUSHLAND.

THIS WAS, AND I BELIEVE STILL IS ONE OF THE MANY ATTRACTIONS TO LIVE IN OATLEY.

SOME OF OUR PAST TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION HAVE OUTLINED THE MANY SPORTING VENUES AND THE SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE. THE NUMBER OF TENNIS COURTS AND THE MEMBERS WHO FORMED THEMSELVES INTO CLUBS , SOME PURELY SOCIAL AND OTHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ILLAWARRA AND ST. GEORGE COMPETITIONS.

THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF CRICKET CLUBS IN THE OATLEY DISTRICT. AND MANY PRESENT TONIGHT BELONGED TO THEM AS WELL AS FOOTBALL ; GOLF ; ROWING; SWIMMING AND OTHER SPORTS.

WHO CAN GIVE US SOME INFORMATION ON THE CONCRETE CRICKET PITCH WHICH WAS AND STILL IS SITUATED IN THE BACKYARD OF A HOME IN BORRARA AVE. IN EARLY DAYS THIS WAS JUST A GRASSY OPEN SPACE.

MANY CAN RECALL THE BOXING TRAINING CAMP AND GYMNASIUM IN ANNETTE WHICH WAS RUN BY 'SLAM' SULLIVAN. EDGAR BRITT A FAMOUS JOCKEY LEARNED TO RIDE WHEN HE WAS YOUNG LAD IN OATLEY.

THESE ARE JUST A FEW OPENING REMARKS----- PERHAPS THEY WILL PROMPT YOU GIVE US YOUR RECOLLECTIONS. REMEMBER!!! THIS TOPIC DOES NOT CEASE WHEN WE CLOSE THE MEETING, IF YOU WILL PUT ON YOUR THINK CAPS AND MAKE A FEW NOTES WE CAN INCLUDE THEM IN THE FINAL PAPER.

R.S.L. SPORTING CLUBS.

OATLEY BOWLING CLUB; OATLEY SWIMMING CLUB.

OATLEY BAY'S UNOFFICIAL SWIMMING CLUB

BY
ALEC LEACH.

Membership to Oatley Bay's Swimming Club was open to any kid who would care to venture down to Oatley Pleasure Grounds and usually without their parents in attendance.

I couldn't become a fully fledged member until I could swim, so my brother who is four and a half years older than me was given the task of minding me when we went for a swim down to the Bay. I would be told in a loving elder brother's way to stay over by the rocks on the northern side of the baths, or else. I never questioned or else with him.

He would join the mob diving off the diving board at the end of the wharf, bombing the girls and occasionally would raise the energy to swim the width of the baths which was accepted to be sixty three yards.

Mysteriously in the late fifties or early sixties the baths were re aligned further inshore and the wharf was removed, this allowed another block of land in the north west corner to appear, this was our old territory, a house was built and so began the diminishing size of the once beautiful Oatley Pleasure Grounds baths

At the ripe old age of eight I began to dog paddle. Soon after it was overarm and then after a throw in off the end of the wharf and a general acceptance by big brother, I was allowed to do my thing, as long as I kept out of his way.

This was all happening to us in the mid nineteen forties, the same as had been happening to kids of Oatley for generations. To know when the club was assembled was to hear the continuous scream of a hundred or more kids having fun in the water. This could be heard from our house in Rosa Street just down the hill from the now Charles Street Reserve.

My brother and I had to give our resignation to the Club in mid 1946 to accompany our parents to Broken Hill whilst Dad did a stint of country service as a Tech Teacher. During our stay I managed to polish my skills of diving off the diving board, bombing the girls and put a few laps under my belt of the Olympic pool. The pool was less than a block from our home and during the summer we nearly lived in it.

On our return to Oatley in the early fifties my brother had found other interests in skirts, they would not swim in as they called our beloved baths "a mud hole". He migrated to Cronulla with his women and the arm wrenching Mullard portable radio. We didn't want their types in our club anyway.

The diving board had been removed in our absence however the wharf was still intact. A favourite pastime on a king tide when the water was about a foot over the wharf would be to run along it and do belly busters in this shallow water.

Low tide at times would see us gather for a traditional mud fight and if there happened to be a half moon clear jelly substance lying about for which we had a polite name for it, that would improve the fight.

By the time I had reached the end of high school, interest in the club had dwindled. The last time I remember swimming there in earnest was on the completion of my Intermediate Certificate. I would go down of a morning and swim with "Pop" Stevens and Mr Dickeson, Rosie's husband. They would swim a mile each morning and eventually so did I. Once. Wonderful childhood memories.