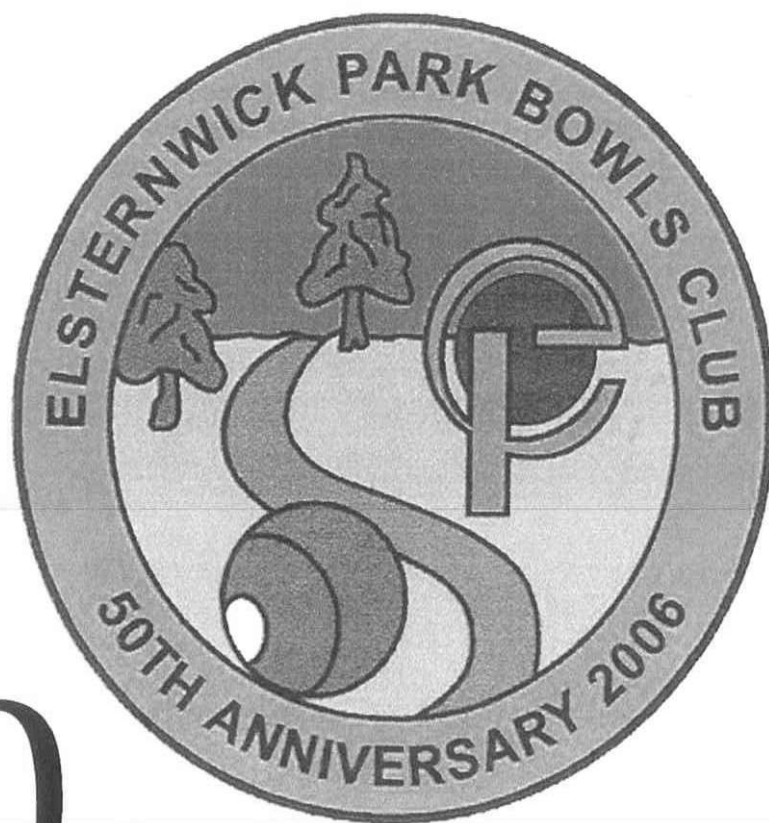


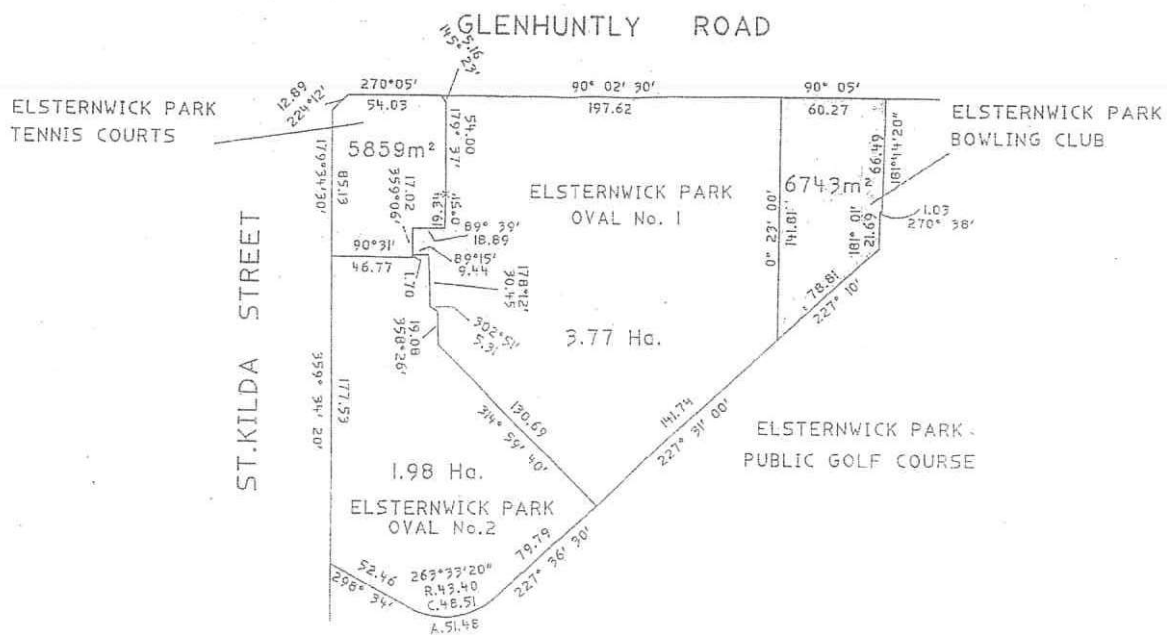
**History of
Elsternwick Park
Bowls Club
1956 - 2006**



50th Anniversary

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The Earliest Years – 1956/57

At a time when the first Olympic Games of the Southern hemisphere were preparing to be held in Melbourne – a group of bowlers got together to discuss the formation of a new bowls club.

Motivated by the ever growing interest in lawn bowls and the shortage of playing fields, discussions took place, at the home of Mr. David Bacon (*the club's first secretary*), to evaluate the possibilities. This meeting took place on the 8th August 1956 and saw the formation of a committee charged with the task of moving forward.

At subsequent meetings, at various committee member's homes, with one on 23rd November 1956 declaring 33 male and 10 female members as foundation members. This meeting took place one day after the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games.

The first elected president, Mr. Bill Rule, and his committee made application to the minister of lands through Mr. Baron Snider MLA for an area of crown land on Elsternwick Park. The lease duly granted by the trustees of the park enabled our founders to lay down two seven-rink greens with room for a large clubhouse.

Excerpts from 1st Annual Meeting held at Holy Trinity Hall, St.Kilda, Wednesday 22nd May 1957 Meeting chaired by President Mr. W. Rule. 25 members attended.

The President outlined the objectives of the Club and referred to the fact that a site large enough to lay down 2 seven rink greens and to provide space for off street parking and a large clubhouse, might be obtained in the Elsternwick Park. The site in question could be reached by public transport from all directions and was surrounded by beautiful parkland. Approaches were then made to the Trustees and to the Minister of Lands through Mr. Baron Snider MLA. For the purpose of these investigations it was necessary that the club be represented by a properly constituted committee able to assure the Trustees and others concerned of the continuity of the club's policy.

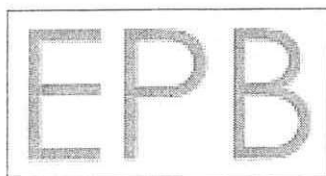
On the 19th October 1956 the trustees of Elsternwick Park granted us occupancy of the area sought in Glenhuntly Rd at an annual rental of 60 pounds. The first rent being due to commence September 1957.

The committee was then able to proceed immediately with the task of laying down greens. Cost of the greens 4300 pounds. To meet this initial cost, each member joining the club to take up at least 25 pound debenture at this date 141 debentures have been taken up.

The Secretary, Mr. Dave Bacon stated that on Thursday afternoon, the 23rd inst. The ladies would hold a meeting to inaugurate a Ladies Associates Club for the purpose of affiliation with the VLBA.

The colours of the club chosen by the committee were to be bottle green and gold.

Mr. Dave Bacon moved that as Mr. Baron Snider MLA had done good service to the club, that we honour him with the position of Patron. This was seconded by Mr. E. Smith, and carried with acclamation. After minor club business, meeting declared closed 11pm.



Original club flag

The club colours chosen by the original committee were bottle green and gold. These colours were displayed on the Club flag & then later (*when erected*) on the facia of the club itself.

Foundation Committee

Men

President W.J.Rule
 Vice Presidents: G.Copeman
 S.Symons
 Secretary: D.Bacon
 resigned 1.10.57
 S.L.Rouvray
 Treasurer: O.Loorham
 resigned 1.9.57
 J.G.Taylor
 Committee: J.Barton
 E.C.Hollow
 R.Harmer
 D.Hyman

Ladies

President Mrs V.G.McBriar
 Vice Presidents: Mrs V.M.Peck
 Mrs S.Robertson
 Secretary: Mrs A.Copeman
 Mrs L.E.Todd
 Treasurer: Mrs E.Rule
 Committee: Mrs M.Crosbie
 Mrs M.A.Horsley
 Mrs F.Harmer
 Mrs A.Hamilton

Other foundation members are:

Males:	C.Dunn J.Harcourt E.Smith	J.Gronow E.Livock
Females:	R.Beckett E.Clark S.Dunn N.Hackett C.Nolan D.Smith	D.Buzzard M.Carter D.Gronow L.Harcourt P.Skene M.Thomson

At the opening of the greens in September 1957 the Mayor of Brighton and officials of the Royal Victorian Bowls Association were served afternoon tea from a marquee erected for the purpose. Afternoon tea was served on a trestle table and a wood fired copper was used to heat the water.

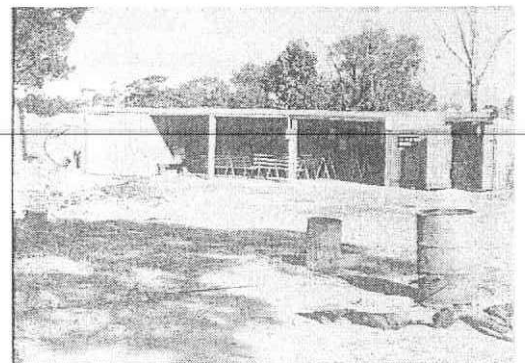
During these simple beginnings, a call of nature meant a hike to the golf club next door to use their toilets. Visitors had to be escorted to the toilets by members and no doubt this marked the beginning of many a friendship.

A young lady was overheard to quip that on opening days, the ladies were there to look good, provide the teas and watch the men play. Haven't things changed!!

In the early days, lady members were only allowed to join if they were married ! It is of interest to note that Elsternwick Park was the first club to break with tradition and allow single women to join.

Many of the ladies toiled in the kitchen for hours – making what was at the time supposed to be lunch for the men who played Saturday pennant – sandwiches for afternoon tea. Many of the men might have worked in the morning and not had time to have a mid day meal.

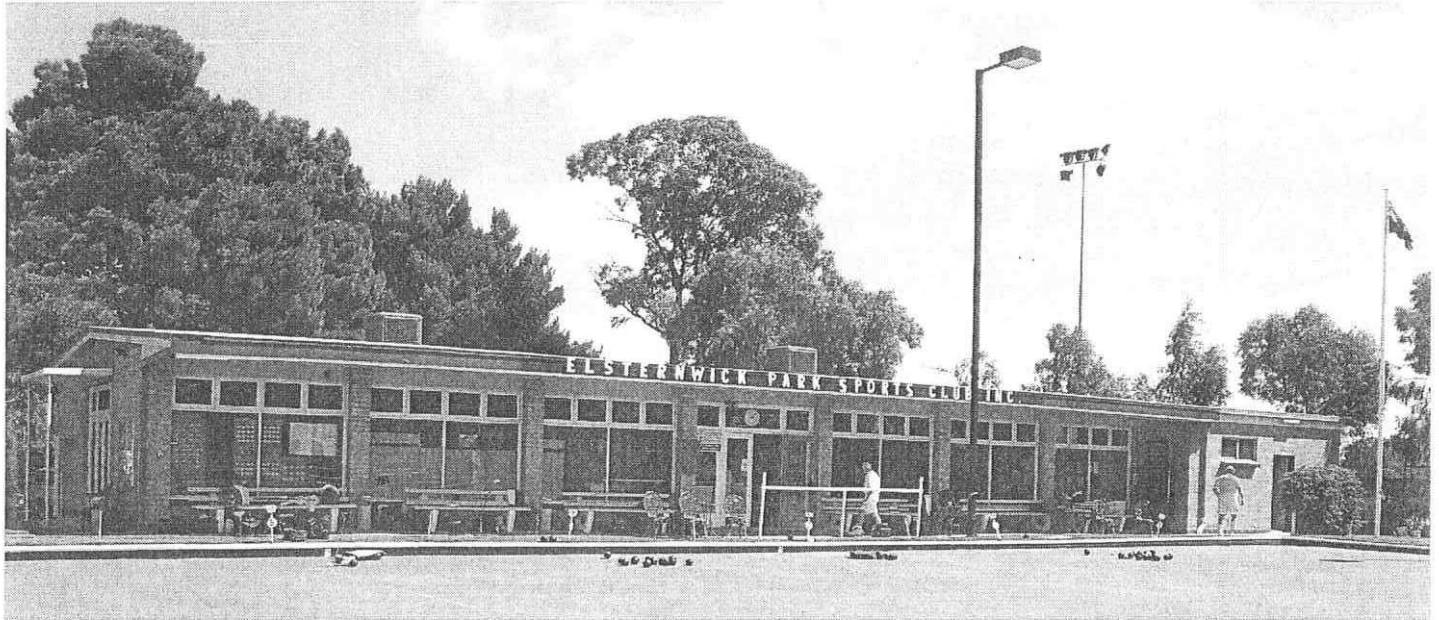
The initial building was a tin shed where members shivered on cool days and sweltered on warm ones.



Original clubhouse

The current building was completed in December 1958, having the funds raised by conducting social evenings in people's homes and picture nights at the St. Kilda Town Hall.

The pioneers of the club worked extremely hard, having the courage of their convictions and the will to succeed.



Current clubhouse.

Vera McBride, elected as the first President of the Ladies Section served for three years, holding her initial meeting at the All Saints Hall in Chapel Street, Windsor on the 23rd May 1957.

Having 14 experienced bowlers, a decision was taken to field two teams of 8 players in the VLBA Pennant series.

In their first year, to our great joy, our number one side won the pennant flag.

Over the formative years the club had many generous donors who helped the club buy furniture and establish the gardens.

It is interesting to note that Council records show that Hector Gall (*Hon Secretary of the time*) wrote to the Brighton Council in August of 1981 asking the Town Clerk if

*'the Council would decorate our clubhouse with the usual floral display.
Should the council agree to our request we would like the clubhouse to be done by 4th September 1981.
This year is very special occasion as will be celebrating our Silver anniversary'*

A similar request was written in 1982 explaining that

'Each year the Brighton City Council has been generous in the fact, that they have lent us some flowers and ferns in pots as a display in our hall on the event of opening night of our bowls season.'

How things change ! No such request is put through now.



Winning Team, Labour Day 1984

Cec Hayes, clubhouse maintenance; Don Gifford, horticulturist; Arthur Pike, Treasurer/shovelhand; Beryl Hayes, painting expert; Alf Murphy, greens director/chief toiler; Frank Reade, selector/weed poisoner; Rae Rasmussen, lawn edger/rake; Ev. Dickins, Vice President/barrowhand.

Photo Jack Crute, rake, shovel, camera.

Wedding on the green - 7th December 1991

As late as 1970 Pam Bryan decided that she wanted to take up our game of lawn bowls but found it difficult to join a bowling club as she didn't have a father who bowled, brother or husband. In desperation in the 1980s she made enquiries at the Southern Indoor bowling club in Hawthorn Rd. Caulfield where Cec. Hayes heard of her predicament. He suggested that our club would welcome her as a member and put her on to the club coach – Frank Bleasby (*also green keeper at the time*).

It didn't take Pam long before she was performing well in pennant and rose to be club champion several times. Pam Bryan had introduced John Bryant to the club and felt it appropriate to be married on the green.

How many bowling clubs have a wedding on their green ?

Pam looked radiant as she walked down the green to marry John.

Club member Shirley Breheny made the 2-tiered wedding cake decorated with ribbon in the club colours – green & gold. Connie Nolan made the floral bouquet. The bride & groom wore their bowling clothes – as did most guests.

The attendants were Alf Murphy and Pat Hawkins.

Wedding bells at the Park



A happy event took place at Elsternwick Park recently when members Pam Bryan and John Bryant were married on the green. They wore their bowling clothes (as did many of those who attended) as a tribute to the many happy

hours they had spent at the club. Their attendants were members Alf Murphy and Pat Hawkins and Pam carried a bouquet made by Connie Nolan. Shirley Breheny made the wedding cake and members provided a

smorgasbord tea which was enjoyed by the many members and friends who attended. The celebrations continued for several hours and all agreed that it was a most delightful occasion. Pictured: The wedding party.

Quote from newspaper

The wedding will be the first at Elsternwick Park, according to committee member Dot King. "Our members are very excited about it," she said. "Everyone has been invited to the wedding and we expect a big roll up."

The Amalgamation

After a number of failed attempts to merge the Bowls Club with the Golf Club next door, a successful outcome was achieved in 1999. Bill Lock, Herb Kyriakos and Bill Menahem were key players in making this possible. The constitutions of both clubs were merged into one and the name of the name changed to **Elsternwick Park Sports Club Inc.**

It was at this point that the club colours were changed to black and red, reflecting the predominant colours of most sporting clubs in the park

With the bowlers and golfers having their own badges, the time was right to adopt a new look. A graphic artist, Jackie Starr, was engaged and the current logo developed.