

## NAMBOUR BOWLS CLUB – A FLASHBACK THROUGH THE YEARS

### In the Beginning

An article in the Nambour Chronicle dated 22 August 1924 indicates that there was community support for a bowling green in town at that time. Suitable land in the vicinity of Maud Street and Reilly Road had been identified and a deposit paid but no further reference to this initiative can be found.

Some eight years later, a meeting of nine men was held in the Maroochy Shire Council Chambers on 3 August 1932 during which a motion “That it is desirable to form a Bowling Club” was moved, seconded and carried. A Site Committee subsequently provided a short list of ten sites from which the first General Meeting of the Nambour Bowling Club on 22 August 1932 elected to negotiate acquisition of the present site and adopt the rules and constitution of the New Farm Bowling Club.

The following principal officers were elected at this meeting.

President	Mr J T Lowe
Patron	Mr W McD Whalley
Vice President	Mr S J Hobson
Secretary	Mr N C Owens
Treasurer	Mr V Charker

Messrs Lowe, Whalley and Hobson were elected as Trustees for the new club.

In a little over one month, rapid progress with the construction of the green had been made under the direction of Mr J T Lowe who was responsible for locating all the necessary materials for filling and drainage and any timber required. It was decided to build four 20ft rinks, a makeshift soil shed and tool room. By 1 November, the first two rinks were almost ready for planting of grass and it was resolved to proceed with the preparation of a further two rinks. Shortly afterwards, the first clubhouse was built by Bill Lanham at a cost of £128 and another milestone was achieved with the completion of the first green in 1934.

The need for and desirability of extending the opportunity for ladies to play lawn bowls soon became apparent and a meeting of interested parties on 19 November 1937 resolved to form a ladies bowling club.



Official Opening of Clubhouse in 1933



The Arrival of the Ladies' Club

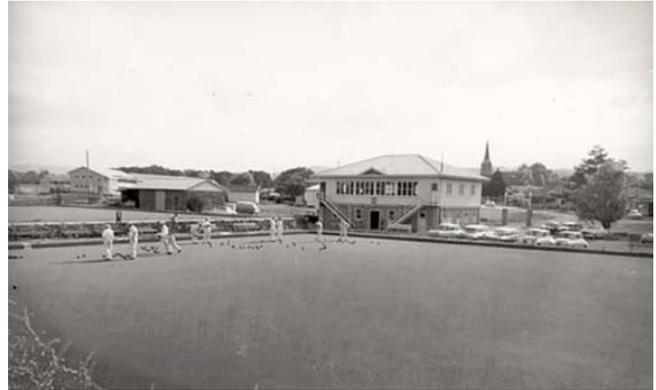
By 1945, thoughts of a second green dominated discussions as members quite often could not get a game. On some occasions, members would play until afternoon tea and then withdraw to allow the overflow to have a game after the break.

Membership had reached the maximum of 80 in the following year and it became necessary to draw up a “stand down” roster on Saturdays to cater for the demand. The second green became a reality with its official opening on 17 April 1948.

With increasing numbers of male and female members, the modest clubhouse which had been constructed near the creek bank (Showgrounds side of bottom green) had become inadequate. On 31 October 1953, a new highset clubhouse (present location) was officially opened and the old building dismantled and sold for its quality timber. A full width balcony was later added followed by an enclosure below to accommodate an extension of the bar.



1934 - View from Gympie Road (Coronation Ave) towards Showgrounds



1959 - View of new clubhouse and greens



1967 - View of clubhouse following extensions and upper viewing area

Since the very beginning, Nambour’s bowling greens have been regarded among the best in southeast Queensland. Over the years, greenkeepers and club officials have struggled against many odds to protect this image with droughts and floods dropping in from time to time. The Wet Wednesday flood of 22 June 1983 ranks highest with the 250mm of rain falling within 3 hours inundating the greens and flushing dirty water to a depth of 162cm throughout the clubhouse.

“The Depths of Despair”



The year of 1989 signalled the installation of night lighting and the beginning of another chapter in lawn bowls at Nambour. Night bowls has allowed working families to enjoy the sport while school children also have opportunities to participate through their sporting curriculum. The Men’s and Ladies’ Clubs have since been amalgamated into one, ensuring equality for all. From a club principally operating on Saturdays for the benefit of working men, today the Nambour Bowls Club caters for everyone in the community offering opportunities to play day and night throughout the week.

# Nambour Bowlers Create History



*Nambour players assembled in readiness for the inaugural Pennant competition in 1937*

Formed in 1932, the Nambour Bowls Club was one of four bowling clubs which pioneered the game on what was formerly known as the North Coast.

Just five years later, a suggested interclub competition became a reality. The generous donation by a Nambour member of a pennant for presentation to the winning club assured subsequent reference to the annual event as "Pennant", which still continues some 77 years later in a similar format.

From obscurity during the Club's formative years rose a small man with a big heart and a passion for lawn bowls. Foundation member George Jarrett returned from overseas service in World War 1 battle scarred and suffering the effects of mustard gas poisoning. Self educated and eager to learn, George began selling motor cars and radios in the 1930s to support his growing family.



*George Jarrett in action coaching a blind bowler*

His initiatives led to the establishment of the town's first radio station and many other improvements to community services.

George Jarrett quickly became accomplished at lawn bowls and won the Club Singles in 1938 before the family moved to Brisbane where he captured a swag of club champion-

ships at Kedron, Hamilton and Balmoral. Winning the State Singles Championship in 1948 and playing for Queensland were among the highlights of an amazing career which commenced in Nambour. George is also credited with the formation of the Queensland Blinded Ex-Servicemen's Bowling Club and was awarded Life Membership for his important contributions.



*Helen Levitt proudly displays her 100 Year Medallion watched by Club members Graham Morton and Don Angus.*

Helen Levitt is a spritely little lady who has also achieved many great things in her lifetime. Not only has she left an indelible mark on lawn bowls and her beloved Nambour Bowls Club but Mrs Levitt capped it all off recently by celebrating her 100th birthday.

Helen, as she prefers to be called by her many friends, commenced her bowling career in 1964 with the Nambour Ladies Bowling Club

at the age of 50. Four years later she was elected as Treasurer and performed this role with a passion for an astonishing 32 years. Her prowess on the greens was equally impressive. Among her greatest achievements was winning the Club Championship Triples with Nada O'Donnell and Flo Achurch six times and ending runners-up on two other occasions. Helen was a member of winning Fours and Pairs teams and also finished runner-up in the Club Singles.

Helen shared her love of bowls with late husband and Life Member Bill Levitt who was also a Club stalwart for many years. It was fitting that Helen's achievements and contributions also be recognised with Life Membership and this honour was duly bestowed upon her as well as the role of Club Patroness. At a special 100th Birthday Afternoon Tea held in her honour at the Nambour Bowls Club recently, Helen was thrilled to meet and engage with many old acquaintances including an impressive gathering of Life Members. At this function a special 100 Year Medallion was presented on behalf of Bowls Queensland.

Mrs Helen Levitt is truly a remarkable lady who has provided inspiration for many throughout her life. She may no longer play bowls but she still remembers that the "little ring goes on the inside" and insists that the books must always balance. Congratulations and well done Helen from the Queensland lawn bowls community.

*Life Members: (left to right) Standing: Ray Capper, Jack Lake, Joan Ormes, Rex Thorogood, Margaret Thorogood Seated: Jim Britten, Helen Levitt, Mavis Balkin.*



## The Town, The Club and The Agricultural Connections

The name "Nambour" is derived from the Aboriginal word "naamba", referring to the red-flowering tea-tree (*Callistemon Viminalis*). The town was originally called Petrie's Creek. The first settler at Petrie's Creek was Mathew Carroll who in January 1870 selected 100 acres which included the present showgrounds. The family lived in a bark hut where the Nambour Bowls Club is located before moving to a house on what became known as Carroll's Hill and later as Showground Hill. In 1884 Carroll opened the area's first business, the Tullababa Hotel, on Showground Hill and a Post Office Receiving Office in the following year.

In March 1870, William Samwell selected 1625 acres in the area of Crescent Drive and called his cattle run "Nambour". The town of Nambour takes its name from his large selection. In the same year, a third selection of 80 acres on the south bank of Petrie's Creek was taken up by Henry Hootan before ownership passed to Thomas Howard in 1877.

In 1878 William Perren selected 338 acres of land along Petrie's Creek. Daniel Currie took up land on Lamington Terrace in the vicinity of the present Catholic Church in 1881 with the remainder of the Petrie Creek valley being selected by the early 1880s. In 1886, the Sylvania (Rosemount) School was opened and children from around Petrie Creek attended this school. The Maroochy Divisional Board was established in 1890 with its headquarters at Nambour and the railway connection from Brisbane was completed. When the railway was officially opened in January 1891, the settlement of Petrie's Creek was renamed Nambour and the town began to prosper. Blocks were subdivided and new settlers commenced clearing the land to grow fruit, sugarcane and farm produce.

After the railway opened, Mathew Carroll built a new hotel where the Commercial Hotel now stands. The hotel name was later changed from Carroll's Petrie Creek Hotel to Currie's Nambour Hotel. The Currie family, who also gave their name to the main street, were Commission Agents, owned the first general store in town, a butcher shop and later the hotel. In the 10 year period from 1890, the St Joseph's Catholic Church, Methodist Church, Nambour State School, St John's Anglican Church, Salvation Army Centre, Moreton Mill, Police Station and Court House were established.

The Moreton Central Sugar Mill Company was formed in Nambour in 1894. The mill was built in 1895-96 and commenced operations in 1897. It drew an increasing number of mill and cane workers to Nambour, thereby establishing the town as a centre of industry and business and bringing about the introduction of services such as a doctor, chemist and solicitor.



### The Club Badge

The influence of sugar cane and the humble pineapple on the development of Nambour and the local district is graphically reflected in the Club Badge which can be traced back to 1968 when the former name Nambour Bowling Club was changed to Nambour Bowls Club.

Sadly, with the passing of the Moreton Sugar Mill after more than 100 years and the decline of farming generally, the local landscape has changed quite dramatically in recent years. Less than 10 local pineapple farms remain today compared with more than 200 during peak production. Similarly a handful of sugar cane farms are proactively involved in sugar cane production today with some transporting cane to Maryborough and others reliant on supplying cane material for the production of "cow candy" and garden mulch.

## "Sweet Reflections"



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Despite the changing landscape, the Club remains proud of its heritage and that of the town in which it is located. The images portrayed in the Club Badge are therefore not only important reminders of the past but also of the contributions of members in the establishment, development and maintenance of the Club over almost 90 years.

Furthermore, the Club's vibrant colours (Jade and Gold) together with the splash of sugar cane on club uniforms reinforce the importance of those golden years and the prospects of a bright future ahead. The boomerang could easily represent the bowling greens which have always been of the highest quality and provided reason enough for bowlers to "keep coming back" to Nambour Bowls Club.