

# Albury Croquet Club Inc

President: Elwyn Ried

Secretary: Sarina Cevaal-Hewitt



*Albury Croquet Club 2013*

## **HISTORY OF ALBURY CROQUET CLUB**

The initial meeting of the Albury Croquet Club Inc was held in 1930, in a private residence. The first President was Mrs Everett and as the Club did not have its own lawns she generously allowed play on her private lawn at her residence in Banff Avenue, Albury.

A Croquet Club was already in existence in Albury, namely 'Gleny' in North Albury. 'Gleny' reformed in 1952 as Greenfield Croquet Club. This Club was abandoned in 1987 which left Albury Croquet Club as the only Croquet Club in Albury.

The sport was mainly played by females but husbands assisted with the administrative, financial and physical situations.

The land where our Club stands today in Mitchell Street Albury, is crown land and formerly used as police paddocks. In 1931 the Council granted the land for use as a croquet lawn, at a nominal rental of £11/5/0 per annum. Council erected a small iron building which served as the Clubhouse for twenty five years. It was a great day after seventeen years when the dirt floor was concreted.

The greens were officially opened by the then Mayoress, Mrs AIF Waugh in 1931 and lights were installed in 1932 and croquet was played at night until the late 1960's. Today we don't have the luxury of lights and only play during daylight hours.

The initial membership fee was £2/2/0 and the first bank balance was £9. On suggestion from the Men's Advisory Committee it was decided that to help establish the lawns and to purchase equipment, debentures be offered at £5/0/0 each. The Club is fortunate to have the debenture book in its archives. The main source of income, apart from debentures and playing fees, came from holding card parties in member's homes in CWA Rooms or in Mates Lounge. Street stalls were also held.

In 1936 the Albury Club became official and in 1938 the Albury Croquet Club affiliated with the Victorian Croquet Association. Members were now entitled to enter Open Tournaments.



In 1953 Albury conducted its first official tournament approved by the Victorian Croquet Association.

In 1955 £5/0/0 debentures were again offered in order to have our present Clubhouse built. The building was ready for occupation in 1956. Later an attached verandah with concrete floor was built, also a room was added to the eastern end of the Clubhouse to store playing equipment. The building was completed in the 1980's with the addition of a toilet on the western end. This was made possible by a grant from the Albury City Council Sport and Recreation Committee.

In 1960 the North Eastern District Croquet Association was formed, Albury being a foundation member. We competed with other Clubs in Pennant Matches with varying success and were the host Club for the first Regional Championships in 1962.

Tremendous help has been given over the years by members, their husbands and friends in performing jobs in and around the Clubhouse, such as maintenance to buildings, treatment and marking of greens, garden work and by taking office. Today the Albury City Council mows, waters and cares for our lawns.

Early in the 1990's the Albury City Council installed an automatic watering system and replaced the front fence. Membership had dropped to twenty-two.

In 1992, when the Albury-Wodonga Festival of Sport was inaugurated, our Croquet Club was there holding a competitive carnival that attracted players from all over the Region and State. The Club's involvement in the Festival of Sport continued for some years.

Association Croquet was the only mallet sport played in Albury until the 1990's. Golf Croquet was introduced to the members in the early 2000's and membership numbers increased to fifty plus by 2010.



*Barbara Hawley, Secretary, Max Eyers, President, Ida Beard, the Club's oldest member, and Elwyn Ried, Treasurer, celebrated the 80th anniversary of the Albury Croquet Club in May 2010. We believe there was a sing-along as part of the celebrations.*

In 2011 finishing touches were made to the equipment shed and attached men's toilet with shelving planned for the interior of the equipment shed. Members demonstrated croquet in July 2011 at Queen Elizabeth II Square at the request of the Albury City Council as part of Art Deco Celebrations and the wish for another court led to a request for the use of part of the adjacent tennis courts (this did not proceed) and the Club decided to proceed with the construction of a new fence on the Mitchell Street boundary.

In 2013 it was noticed that the equipment room attached to the Clubhouse was sinking. This room was restumped by Albury City Council along with new concrete drains put in place.



*Mary McAllister and Dee Villarroya as Card Soldiers playing croquet.  
Sunday 10 November 2013*

Also in 2013 members transformed into 'Card Soldiers' for an Alive in Wonderland themed Picnic in the Gardens hosted by the Albury City Council.

2013/2015 was also the two year rostered term that Albury provides personnel to fill the Executive positions for the North Eastern District Croquet Association Inc.

Today members play Association and Golf Croquet every week. Membership is stable in the mid-fifties, this includes fifteen males. Golf Croquet members compete annually in interclub competitions against Wodonga, Walla Walla, Wagga Wagga and Young as well as entering Regional Championships and a Golf Croquet Pennant. Members play at regular Social days held throughout the North Eastern District Croquet Association Inc and beyond.

Internally the Club holds both Singles and Doubles Championships and a Charity event annually.

Albury Croquet Club Inc is a vibrant Club with both a strong social culture as well as members keen to play competitively.