

The creation of anything worthwhile from the idea stage to establishment on a sound basis is fraught with difficulties and birthpangs, and the establishment of this complex was no exception. However, through the dedication and continuous efforts of the croquet stalwarts involved, a rather unique asset to croquet in the Auckland area has resulted - the first of its kind within New Zealand.

As time goes by and memories dim it is easy for facts to become unwittingly distorted and for erroneous conclusions to be drawn or inferred, and for this reason I agreed in discussion with Ngaire Christie (current President of the A.C.A.) and Zoe Hayward (whom I have come to know and respect as "Madame Croquet" in Auckland) to set down the history to date of the complex.

In order to do so, I perused all the minutes and records of the A.C.A. as far back as 1977 to ascertain why the idea arose in the first place and worked forward to the present including perusal of all minutes of the P.C.C. since its formation. These documents were made available to me by courtesy of the Secretaries of the respective organisations. When I needed other surrounding information, it was willingly provided through discussions with individuals whose knowledge stemmed from their direct personal involvement, and I am grateful for all this assistance.

I have chosen to illustrate the history by setting out facts in chronological sequence, all of which can be verified by reference to the respective documents, and have been careful not to draw any conclusions or inferences from them. Also, as so many dedicated people were, and still are, involved with the ongoing success of the complex, I deliberately have not specifically named any, except for one or two where it was pertinent to do so.

It helps to understand the situation if it is remembered that the complex is the A.C.A. Headquarters and their responsibility and that a thriving Club operating on the complex is necessary for economic and practical viability. The current situation proves that, with willing co-operation between the A.C.A. and the Club, this can be a reality.

Alf Nadin.

February 1992.



In 1977 the Auckland City Council (A.C.C.) distributed a circular to its residents regarding the proposed development of sporting and community facilities on Madill's Farm Reserve, Kohimarama, and in early 1978 the Auckland Croquet Association (A.C.A.) submitted an application for some of the land for the establishment of a new Croquet Club. There appeared to be a strong possibility of obtaining sufficient land to provide six standard size lawns.

Although the St. Heliers Bay Croquet Club were interested in expanding their complex if they could acquire additional land adjacent to their Club, they made it clear that they were not interested in land at Madill's Farm Reserve, but would support the A.C.A. in the establishment of a new Club to further croquet in the Eastern district, which covered a number of possibilities, only one of which involved land at Madill's Farm Reserve.

Interest in the establishment of a new Club at this time appears to have stemmed from the fact that A.C.A. membership was at the highest for 22 years, the increase over 8 years being almost 46%, with the majority increase occurring in the last 3 years. About this time too, both Henderson and Point Chevalier Croquet Clubs were seeking land, but found it to be very expensive.

In addition to the Madill's Farm Reserve development the A.C.C. offered the A.C.A. land at Churchill Park, Glendowie, and this was examined in detail but rejected due to the high cost of development, coupled with the fact that the A.C.C. did not offer any financial assistance. Therefore, as involvement in the Madill's Farm Reserve development was also found to be too costly, it was decided to enquire into a new "Shared Responsibility Scheme" for the provision of Cultural, Social Recreational and Sporting Facilities being offered by the Manukau City Council (M.C.C.) in conjunction with its development of Lloyd Elsmore Park (L.E. Park), Pakuranga, even though it was not considered to be near enough to the Eastern suburbs where Croquet lawns were desperately needed. The basis of the M.C.C. Shared Responsibility Scheme for projects on Council owned land was for them to be financed by:-

- 1 - A Council grant of up to 25% of the cost
- 2 - The Club to pay 25% of the cost
- 3 - A Council 15 year interest free loan to cover 50% of the cost, with a proviso that the Club's 25% be paid to the Council before commencement of the project.

Following receipt of details of the scheme from the M.C.C. in August, 1979, a delegation from the A.C.A. Executive met the head of the M.C.C. Parks Department, on site at L.E. Park, when it was stated that the M.C.C. would offer financial assistance in 1984/85, if meantime the A.C.A. would raise their funds as part of their commitment and, of course, prepare plans,



estimates of cost, etc., for the proposed complex.

At this time the total membership of the A.C.A. was 795 - slightly higher than the previous year, 1978, and further consideration of the offer by the A.C.A. resulted in them making a formal application in October, 1979, for land in L.E.Park and a Shared Responsibility Scheme was entered into with the M.C.C. on 13th December, 1979. At the A.C.A. Annual General Meeting on 10th July, 1980, total membership was given as 766, and a new fund was established for the L.E.Park project. It was started with a raffle for a Jackson mallet, donated for the purpose by Bob. and Mary Jackson. The slow rate of fund accumulation led to a proposal at the A.C.C. October meeting that all Club members be asked to donate \$5.00 per year for four years for the L.E.Park Fund

It was reported at the A.C.A. meeting in May, 1981, by Mount Hobson Croquet Club that their tenancy was to be terminated on 31st October, 1981, and that they would go into recess with a view to re-opening in two years time. Apparently there were two possibilities of land - near Remuera Golf Course and at Mt. Eden. Questions were asked at the meeting about the L.E.Park scheme and delegates were told that it should provide six full size standard lawns, that it would be the A.C.A. Headquarters, and that it would be leased to a Club. So far the A.C.A. had operated from an office at the Mount Hobson Croquet Club.

By the A.C.A. Annual Meeting on the 9th July, 1981, the L.E. Park Fund, standing at \$1319.00, was reported as "not growing as fast as we had hoped - \$15,000.00 is needed by 1984" and five members made personal donations totalling \$130.00. Total membership was reported as 738.

The A.C.A. received a letter in September, 1981, from the Mt. Eden Borough Council saying that the Mt. Hobson Croquet Club did not wish to avail themselves of an offer of land "eminently suitable for croquet" at Nicholson Park, Mt. Eden, and wondering whether the A.C.A. would be interested. Although this matter was followed up by the A.C.A. the land was eventually (May 1982) allocated to a ladies Hockey Club.

Mt. Hobson Croquet Club was wound up voluntarily at a Special General Meeting held on the 26th September, 1981, and they gave two sets of new balls, trophies, etc., to the A.C.A. Their members also resolved to make a cash donation to the A.C.A. L.E.Park Fund and urged the A.C.A. to assiduously pursue its fund raising for this purpose as the new lawns would mean much to croquet in Auckland.

Discussions on fund raising in February and March, 1982, led to the formation of a Sub-committee for the L.E.Park project.



Four people were elected to it with powers to co-opt assistance as necessary. At this point a levy was favoured to raise money in spite of seven Clubs not being in favour of it. A plan of the proposed complex was produced at the A.C.A. March, 1982, meeting and it was decided to send a copy to each Club. The Sub-committee produced a guide to show how much each Club would be expected to give and this was given to delegates at the A.C.A. March, 1982, meeting. The opinion at that time being: "the sooner the Pakuranga Club is formed, the better".

Fund raising for the project continued and in February, 1983, it was estimated that the total cost would be approximately \$120,000.00. At the meeting of 8th September, 1983, delegates were notified that an architect, Graeme Smith of Howick, had been appointed to draw up club-house plans for submission to the M.C.C. The plans were submitted in October, 1983.

On the 13th November, 1983, a meeting was held at the St. Heliers Bay Croquet Club to discuss details for Foundation Membership of the proposed Pakuranga Croquet Club and it was further proposed that such Membership be offered at a fee of \$100.00. Twenty-six people attended the meeting.

The Headquarters Sub-committee was given approval, in January 1984, to go ahead with scheme. By this time almost \$30,000.00 had been raised which included donations of \$2,000.00 from the ASB and \$150.00 from Davie Motors Ltd. Work on the lawns got under way at the beginning of March, 1984, utilising workers obtained through the Labour Department's Project Employment Scheme (P.E.P. Scheme), supervised and controlled by members of the A.C.A. Headquarters Sub-committee. Following this, notices and application forms for Foundation Membership of the Pakuranga Croquet Club (at a fee of \$100.) were distributed to A.C.A. members. They were also invited to attend the inaugural meeting of the Club which was held at the Howick/Pakuranga Netball Association hall in L.E.Park on Sunday, 29th April, 1984. Sixty people attended the meeting and the Pakuranga Croquet Club (P.C.C.) was formed. A list of 44 Founder Members (see appendix 1) was published on the 12th of July 1984.

At the May, 1984, A.C.A. meeting the question of payment by the P.C.C. to the A.C.A. was raised and it was stated that no reason could be seen to subsidise the P.C.C. indefinitely. Proposed payments were :- \$500.00 in the first year, followed by three years at \$1500.00 per year then full repayment. At the August, 1984, A.C.A. meeting it was reported that a contract was needed between the A.C.A. and the P.C.C. The Headquarters Sub-committee were to meet with the P.C.C.'s Committee to discuss the matter. It was not until August, 1985 that it was reported that an interim agreement, for a sub-lease, had been drawn up and signed with



the P.C.C. pending the preparation of one that was fully acceptable to both parties.

The P.C.C. was incorporated on the 19th of July, 1985, and designs in green and gold were decided upon by Mrs. J. Rishworth and John Boyd for both the Founders and the Club badges. They were approved by the P.C.C. Committee and subsequently ordered in September 1985. Meanwhile, the new Club-house had been completed by Welcome Homes Ltd and furnished by the P.C.C. except for the management room which was furnished by the A.C.A. The Headquarters were officially opened on the 7th of September 1985 (see appendix 2).

In March, 1986, it was agreed that an observer from the P.C.C. could attend the monthly A.C.A. meetings. In April 1986 the first A.C.A. Annual Prizegivings were held in the new Headquarters.

Following on from their agreement in June 1986 with the M.C.C., that the total cost of the complex was \$113,844 the A.C.A. signed a Loan Lease with the M.C.C. on the 28th of July 1986. This called for annual repayments by the A.C.A. of \$3794.80 to pay off the 50% loan. A sub-lease was subsequently drawn up by the A.C.A.'s solicitor, Mr. Charles Hutchinson Q.C., and submitted to the P.C.C. in November 1986.

The A.C.A. Headquarters Sub-committee recommended that the P.C.C. pay \$500.00 in the first year, \$1500.00 in the second year, then \$2000.00 each year thereafter until the loan was repaid. This meant that the A.C.A. would pay \$1794.80 per annum after the second year. Following the repayment of the loan, rent payable by the P.C.C. was to accumulate as repayment to the A.C.A. for providing funds for the Headquarters complex. Therefore after the year 2000, the rent was to go into the A.C.A. coffers. The Headquarters Sub-committee also recommended that the A.C.A. pay 10% of the cost of the lawn maintenance. These recommendations were embodied in the proposed sub-lease which was submitted to the P.C.C.

At this time, relationships between the A.C.A. and the P.C.C. were strained to the point that the P.C.C. Committee agreed unanimously that it could not continue in office unless the constant criticism by A.C.A. officers ceased and relationships improved.

A Yates watering system was installed in late November 1986 at a cost of \$2,300.00 plus an installation charge of \$600.00.



The P.C.C. convened a special meeting on the 6th December 1986 to consider the conditions of the proposed A.C.A. sub-lease at which, it was agreed that the Club needed lease conditions which they could live with for the next fifteen years. To permit this, alterations were needed to fourteen of the proposed clauses. A letter to this effect was sent to the A.C.A.

This led to further discussions between the A.C.A. and the P.C.C. in an attempt to reach agreement on the sub-lease terms and to get Mr. C. Hutchinson Q.C. (A.C.A. solicitor) and Mr. B. Gallagher (P.C.C. solicitor and Club President) to consult on the matter, but nothing was resolved and at another P.C.C. Special Meeting on the 3rd of October 1987 Mr. Gallagher expressed disfavour with a Sub-lease and favoured a Licence to Occupy the premises. It was considered that the A.C.A. were attempting to make the P.C.C. financially liable to a far too great extent and it was agreed not to proceed with the Sub-lease submitted by the A.C.A.

In November 1987, Mr. B. Gallagher presented a detailed proposal to the A.C.A. indicating that the A.C.A. should licence the P.C.C. to use and occupy the A.C.A. Pakuranga Headquarters leased premises. The A.C.A. Headquarters Sub-committee found the terms to be unacceptable. They considered that there did not appear to be any reason why the P.C.C. was unable to proceed on the lines which had been negotiated since November 1986. They gave the P.C.C. two options:-

- 1/ To negotiate a Sub-lease.
- 2/ To take out a Licence to Use and Occupy at \$40.00 per head according to agreed conditions.

The next meeting between the P.C.C. Committee and the A.C.A. Headquarters Sub-committee on the 2nd of December 1987 was marred by the death of Mr. John Boyd (P.C.C.) at the meeting and it was not until March 1988 that Mr. B. Gallagher presented new proposals to the A.C.A. which were again rejected. The unsatisfactory outcome was reported to the P.C.C. members by Mr. B. Gallagher at a meeting held on the 23rd of March 1988 at which he resigned as Club President. Consequently, a Special General Meeting was convened for the 16th of April 1988, at which the Club's Vice President and two other Officers also resigned from the Committee. The position to date with the A.C.A. was reviewed and it was proposed that the P.C.C. be dissolved and a new A.C.A. / Pakuranga Head-quarters be formed and run by the A.C.A. This proposal was to be discussed at the P.C.C. Annual General Meeting on the 7th of May 1988. At this Annual General Meeting the P.C.C. were unable to form a committee due to members' reluctance to become involved with any of the differences with the A.C.A. It was suggested that the Club be wound up and the A.C.A. be asked to form a new Head-quarters Club under their sponsorship and management.



The A.C.A. were notified accordingly, also that everyone was anxious to continue playing croquet at Pakuranga. They were requested to find a firm proposal regarding the running of the project, both financially and physically, and to this end Mr.D.Bains was prepared to act as Secretary and Mrs.E.Horrocks as Treasurer in the meantime.

For guidance in resolving this impasse, the A.C.C. circularised all clubs with the following points for discussion and for their delegates to report on at a Special Management Committee meeting to be held on the 9th of June 1988;

(a) Pakuranga membership as at the 7th of May was 43 - of which, 35 are "C" and "B" grade players-players; and (b) Pakuranga Club's subscriptions for the period 1987- 1988 were \$110.00 (including levies).

1/ Do Clubs accept that the A.C.A. should pay part of lawn maintenance and mowing costs, and part of the \$3,794.00 annual loan repayment?

2/ Pakuranga suggest that they wind up the Club and ask that the A.C.A. form and manage a new Headquarters Club - do you think that this is a good idea? (Note - the A.C.A.'s Constitution does not provide for running a club - who would do the work?)

3/ Pakuranga say they need both financial and physical help. We have offered financial help - how can the A.C.A. offer physical help? Help with the watering? Lawn marking? Hoop replacement after winter work? Should a caretaker committee be appointed to help the Club get on it's feet?

4/ To keep expenses down, should we recommend cutting down maintenance on the lower lawns (two large and one small lawn e.g mow only occasionally) but do full maintenance on the top lawns (four large and one small)? Remember that the N.Z. North Island Championships are to be played at Pakuranga, in January 1989.

5/ Do you have any other concrete suggestions to make to help resolve the impasse that has developed?

On the 26th of June 1988, a Special Meeting, chaired by the A.C.A. President, was held between six A.C.A. members and twenty-nine P.C.C. members plus one St Heliers Bay member being present. It was decided to form an Interim Committee composed of six A.C.A. members and six



P.C.C. members to draft a workable agreement based upon an outline for payments to be met jointly on a percentage basis.

The revised agreement drafted by this combined Interim Committee was approved by the P.C.C. at a Special General Meeting of thirty-one members held on the 20th of August 1988. A new Committee was elected which included one A.C.A. nominee. The new agreement was to remain in force until the 31st of August 1990, by which time it had to be renewed or re-negotiated. It cancelled all previous agreements and gave the A.C.A. control of all P.C.C. finances and assets. The agreement was signed by both parties on the 27th of August 1988. (see Appendix 3)

Although not directly connected to matters surrounding progress with the A.C.A. Headquarters Complex, it is worthy of note that in September 1988, the Avondale Croquet Club resigned from the A.C.A.

Preparation for, and the holding of the North Island Championships at the complex in January 1989, led to the recognition that an automatic watering system would be essential if the lawns were to be considered as a Test venue for the MacRobertson Shield contest in January 1990. Several quotations were obtained for the installation of a suitable system and the figure of \$11,491.43 from Water Dynamics Ltd plus an extra modification costing \$320.00 was accepted. The system was installed in June 1989. The A.C.A. donated \$2,000.00 and \$9,491.43 was financed by an interest-free loan, for a five year term, from the John Boyd Legacy Trust.

At this time, the A.C.A. and the P.C.C. were working well together, with the P.C.C. members striving very hard and successfully at fund raising. For example, from September 1988 to July 1989, they raised \$3,200.00 mainly from two garage sales and were commended by the A.C.A. for their sterling achievement.

The MacRobertson Shield Test games between England and Australia were hosted successfully in January 1990, and favourable comments, from the teams, were passed about the complex. The automatic watering system proved its worth, but due to strong winds which are prevalent on the site, it was considered prudent to modify the water coverage pattern by the addition of more sprinkler heads. These were installed in April 1990 at a component cost of \$1,994.00, with the installation being done, free of charge, by Water Dynamics Ltd.



P.C.C. were congratulated by the A.C.A., at the Annual General Meeting held on the 12th of July 1990, for their successes in raising \$5000.00 towards the funds. In spite of these efforts, however, the P.C.C. requested the A.C.A. to continue to administer the Club for another year as they considered that a membership of between 50 and 60 was needed to assure independent viability. As a result, the agreement which was to terminate on the 31st of August 1990, was renewed for another year.

During this year co-operation between the A.C.A. and the P.C.C. continued to good effect. The N.Z.C.C. National Championships were held at the complex in January 1991; concrete paths to both the upper and lower lawns were laid; seats donated by Founder, and other members of the P.C.C., were installed and a surround drain, on the upper level, was significantly improved, at modest cost, due to this co-operation.

Subsequent to the receipt of a letter from the A.C.A. in April 1991 regarding the possibility of the P.C.C. taking over control of their Club later in the year, the P.C.C. agreed that they were now in a stronger financial position and worked with the A.C.A. to draft a suitable new agreement which would be acceptable to both parties.

This new agreement was approved by the P.C.C. members at a Special Meeting held on the 9th of November 1991 and it was ratified with the A.C.A. on the 14th of November 1991. It is to stay in force until the 1st of March in the year 2000, with a review to take place on the 1st of March 1994. (see Appendix 4)



The Pakuranga Croquet Club is situated in Lloyd Elsmore Park at Pakuranga. The complex was originally the ACA Headquarters, and a thriving club was necessary for economic and practical viability. The Pakuranga Croquet Club was incorporated on 19 July 1985. In 1991 it took over control of its club from the ACA.

In 2003 Golf Croquet was introduced at our club, and both Association and Golf were played for a few years.

Now the Pakuranga Croquet Club plays Golf Croquet *only* and we have a very happy growing club with an enthusiastic membership. Golf Croquet players turn up to play at most sessions and our lawns are often full. We have had to extend our playing days!

Our Association players were dwindling and the new game of Golf Croquet saved and resurrected the club. Golf Croquet is recommended for clubs wanting to increase membership.

### **Pakuranga Croquet Club**

1999  
With the closure of the Mt Hobson Croquet Club in 1982, the Auckland Croquet Association was seeking new headquarters. The Association entered into a 'Shared Responsibility Scheme' with the Manukau City Council, which was developing recreation and sporting facilities at Lloyd Elsmore Park, Pakuranga. The basis of this scheme was to be a Council Grant of up to 25% of the cost; the Auckland Croquet Association to pay 25% of the cost; and an interest free Council loan for 15 years to cover 50% of the cost. Financial assistance would be available in 1984/85 if in the meantime the ACA could raise funds as part of their commitment. Formal application was made in 1979 and fund raising started. With a target of \$30,000 an all-out effort was encouraged with a suggested \$20 per player as a guideline.

During a visit to Melbourne for an international test, Mrs. J. Corry learned that the venue for the test belonged to the Victorian Croquet Association, and they let the lawns to a club. This suggestion for a similar arrangement was put forward and the idea favourably received.

In March 1984, a Headquarters Sub Committee was given approval and work got underway utilising the Labour Department's Project Employment Scheme (PEP). Workers were supervised and controlled by members of the ACA Sub-Committee. It was now decided to promote a new club to be known as the Pakuranga Croquet Club.

The inaugural meeting was held in April 1984. Then followed discussions as to the conditions under which the new club should operate. Unfortunately the death and resignation of several club officers marred a satisfactory outcome and the whole project seemed on the brink of foundering. It was suggested that the club be wound up and the ACA be asked to form a new club under their sponsorship and management.

Other clubs in the association were anxious to continue playing at Pakuranga and eventually a workable solution was found. This was just great, a new club with 6 lawns and a new clubhouse, and prospects for forthcoming national and international tournaments.

Unfortunately the dream didn't quite come true. With the unfavourable economic climate and the downturn in membership it no longer became a viable proposition to continue with this joint agreement. In 1998 the ACA withdrew and the Pakuranga Club signed a separate agreement with the Manukau City Council to become a separate entity. At the same time, the two lower lawns were vacated and the club maintains four lawns. Who knows, hopefully one day those other two lawns will be brought back into play.

The Pakuranga Croquet Club is continuing with great enthusiasm. We are persevering in our endeavors to increase membership to make full use of an excellent facility. The Manukau City Council provides us with tremendous support and we enter the millenium with high hopes.



