

Probable location of 3t Hellers Croquet Club 1915 -Petangue ground on left former Bowling Club Winter green'



Bowling Club and Tennis Club in foreground (St Helies Centermial)



St Heliers Bay Croquet Club 1920



SA Itelies Bay closing day 1977 (note present day clubhouse at right)

# **PAPERSPAST**

Papers Past Home

Introduction

Search

Papers Past > New Zealand Herald > 5 August 1919 > Page 3 > CROQUET.

Papers Past > Auckland Star > 11 August 1916 > Page 2 > CRC

CROQUET.

Auckland Star, Volume XLVII, Issue 191, 11 Augu About this newspaper

About this newspaper

View computer-generated

# CROQUET.

### HELIER'S CROQUET CLUB

An enthusiastic meeting of the West Tamaki Croquet Club was held in the Balmoral Tea Rooms, St. Helier's, On Saturday, the 5th mer when the attendance was Twenty-eight .111 expectations. ladies and gentlemen handed in their names definitely to become nembers, while there were ten others who were in sympathy with the club, and could be looked upon as future member-

The meeting then proceeded with election of officer for the ensuing year. Sir Frederick Lung was elected patron, Mrs. Biggs president Mestames Hutchinson and Chamber a sce-presidents, Mrs. Groome bon. secretary, and Mr. F. Chambers hon, trea-The various committees were elected as follows -General, Mrs Scott, Miss Forter, and Mrs Hargood. Match: Miss Stimp-Miss Appleyard, and Mrs. Working committee: All gentlemen members

It was decided that the opening take place on the reserve lawne on the same day as the opening of the Bowling and Tennis Clube

## CROQUET.

Newspapers > New Zealand Herald > 16 November 1916 > Pag

### ST. HELIERS CLUB.

The St. Heliers Croquet Club will open its new lawns officially on Saturday. This will be the fourth year of the club, but the first year on its own freehold courts. One new court is ready for play, measuring 90% by 42ft; the other court will be laid down in due course, and with this completed the club will be in possession of a very fine property, due largely to the venerosity of the presented and his wife. Mr. and Mrs. Campbell. The play next Saturday will take the form of a break competition, for which two trophies have been presented—one for the highest break and the other for a secret average break.

## CROQUET.

New Zealand Herald, Volume LVI, Issue 17230, 5 August 1919,

View computer-generated

## CROQUET.

## HELIERS BAY CLUB.

The annual meeting of the St. Heliers Bay requet Club was held on Thursday. The annual report stated that the ciub esful year, had had a very succe

et showing a surplus of £11 The following officers were elected: Liss Appleyant and Miss Stimpeon and Boott: delegates sop and Scott: delegates to the centre. Mr. Mellsop and the hou. representative on board of custral,

The name of the club was altered from Tamaki West to St. Heliers Bay. Mrs. Chambers's trophy for A grade was won by Mrs. Mallaup, with Mrs. Keys Francis's trophies Mrs. Lowe and owe and Miss I by Mrs. Land and Mr. Mellson.

Several progressive afternoons break competition were held during on. Seats were donated by a and Land, and a set of inted by Mrs. Mellaop. was decided to enter two tes of hoops was

ruter two teams for the interclub matches

This article has been automatically clipped from the New Zealand Herald, or your computer screen. As a result, it may not look exactly as it did on the o

This newspaper was digitised in partnership with Auckland Libraries an

NATIONAL LIBRARY About this site | Site map | Accessibility | Co OF NEW ZEALAND

http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&c

## St Heliers Bay Croquet Club

1990

The present St Heliers Bay Croquet Club was opened on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1916, but croquet had actually been played there prior to that. The open land known as the Vellenoweth Green was secured by the Vellenoweth family and others in 1904. The West Tamaki Road Board was appointed as trustee of the property in the interests of the St. Heliers residents.

By 1913 the West Tamaki Road Board initiated proposals to lay down sports fields including bowling greens, croquet lawns and tennis courts and the three clubs have occupied this area since that time. About this time a Croquet Club was formed and the game was played near where the present winter bowling green is. Mr and Mrs Campbell and Mr Lawrence were chiefly responsible and the club was called the St Heliers Croquet Club. However a disagreement arose when Mr Lawrence and Mrs Campbell were to play off for the club championship. The match was won by Mrs Campbell, but was played without an umpire and the Club President of the time refused to present the trophy. The club divided and a new club, the West Tamaki Croquet Club was formed and played on an area adjacent to the St Heliers Club. The new club thrived but when Inter Club started no one knew where West Tamaki was, so the name was changed of St Heliers Bay Croquet Club - the only club in the district to include the word "Bay" as part of it's name.

After the demise of the West Tamaki Road Board, the Auckland City Council took over and it was not until 1978 that the Croquet Club sought to extend the playing area. This raised the question of the 1904 caveat on the land and the legality of the occupation by the three clubs. By the mid 1990's a group of local residents agitating to clear the matter petitioned the local M.P. (now the Hon.) Clem Simich. He introduced a private member's bill "The Auckland City Council 'St Heliers Bay Reserve Bill". In 1998 after endless negotiations, involving legal costs and hours of time, a satisfactory lease was drawn up between the Auckland City Council and the three clubs. This means that the Croquet Club now has certain tenure of the land but it will never be able to increase the playing area.

### Looking north east from Auckland Road across St Heliers...1931



No known Copyright
Please acknowledge 'Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, 4-5366' when re-using this image.

#### Description

Looking north east from the vicinity of Auckland Road across St Heliers showing the Parade (left to right foreground), Goldie Street, (left to right across centre), Polygon Street, (diagonal centre), St Heliers Bay Road, (left to right across upper centre), Devore Street (diagonal right of centre), Benbow Street (diagonal extreme right) and Vellenoweth Green with St Heliers Bay Bowling Club and tennis courts (foreground)

# REMINISCENCES OF A CROQUET CLUB MEMBERS

Lorna Jarrett looks lack over her years at St Heliers Bay Croquet Club

The present St Heliers Bay Croquet Club was opened on 23 September 1916 but croquet had actually commenced prior to that date. When the Bowling Club was formed in 1915 a croquet club was formed and played near to where the present winter bowling green is. A Mr & Mrs Campbell and a Mr Lawrence were chiefly responsible and the club was named the St Heliers Croquet Club. A disagreement arose. Mr Lawrence and Mrs Campbell had to play off in the final of the club championships and it was supposed to be played before an umpire. The match was duly played with Mrs Campbell winning, but Mrs Biggs refused to give the trophy. The upshot was that the club divided and a new club called the West Tamaki Club was formed and played adjacent to the St Heliers Club. Messrs Lawrence and Campbell put down a lawn at the Campbell's place and the St Heliers Croquet Club went out of existence. The infant club thrived and when inter-club matches started nobody knew where the West Tamaki Club was so the name was changed to the St Heliers Bay Croquet Club. It is noticeable that Croquet is the only club with "Bay" added to St Heliers.

Mrs L J Keys, whose husband started the buses in 1915, was a beginner at this time and was living next door to the Campbells and in one of their houses so naturally she remained with them. Thus by a twist of fate she was not a foundation member. At the Golden Jubilee celebrations, Mrs Keys who had been an active croquet player for more than 50 years was asked to play the first ball. Mrs Hendl from Avondale who was at the original opening was also present. The new club was formed with the following officers:

Patron:

Sir Frederick Lang

President

Mrs Biggs

Vice-President

Mrs Chambers, Mrs Hutchinson

Hon Secretary Hon Treasurer Mrs Groome

Committee

Miss Appleyard

Match Committee

Mesdames Scott, Hargood, Miss Foster Mesdames Biggs, Stempson, Miss Appleyard

Green Superintendent Mr Simpson

Auditor

Mr J W Carr

12/10 per Alison Moss

This is just a brief history of the Croquet Club as I remember it during the years I have been a member. I cannot recall dates of when things happened, just memories, some of which were fun and some very difficult at the time. To begin with, I wandered down with my friend Isobel Thornton who now plays at Papakura. We were interested in having a look "over the hedge" and we watched players and decided we were definitely interested. We met Trix Grupen and Ev Darrow and they offered to nominate us. We were subsequently accepted as members, little realizing that we had "jumped the queue" on the waiting list. We turned up to play and thought that was all there was to it. In the same group that year was Joan McAvenue, Ngaire Liversedge, Margaret Griffiths – altogether 10 of us. Some fell by the wayside as they found it difficult to understand the game. I believe that St Heliers received the award from the ACA for the largest intake of the season which I think was 1976.

I didn't play very much until the end of 1977 as my husband was very ill at the time. He subsequently died and I was then free and able to throw myself into competition play. Joan, Ngaire and myself were good friends and played a lot in competitions, trailing around the various clubs to watch the top players complete with lunches and deck chairs. It was a great learning curve working out the tactics. Matches were played out, some taking as long as eight hours. Now, of course, we have time limit games. Seniors who gave us coaching and help were Triss Montgomery, Gretchen Beaney and June Winkel. June was my first partner in the Club handicap doubles and subsequently became my friend and mentor. Eunice Taylor taught me pivot ball and took me out to play in tournaments and we subsequently teamed up to play senior interclub. Eunice was a very good player as were Triss and Gretchen.

We were not allowed to play on Saturday afternoons until we had passed a test. We were then "invited" to join in the mixed draws. We had to sit with our seniors and we did as we were told! Not much was discussed other than what we thought would be the best tactic. Altogether it was a tough

introduction to the game. Many a time I went home with the thought of "giving it all away". On the other hand I decided I'd play the game if it killed me – such was the challenge.

Membership was very healthy – around 80 with a waiting list of up to 20 at times. We were always able to field Senior and Junior teams with reasonable success. Until players reached Intermediate grade they were not permitted to play on what was then the so called medium or intermediate lawns. Play was restricted to special days for each grade, with the exception of Saturday afternoons classified as Club Days. Double banking was the norm, sometimes lawns numbered from 1 to 8. If two games happened to be playing on the same day during interclub, at morning tea and lunch breaks each grade sat at separate tables and never mixed together – a sort of class distinction. As hosts we had to provide food for ourselves and our visitors.

We were at a disadvantage at Intermediate and Senior level as we didn't have a full size lawn until eventually the two small upper lawns were measured to as near as possible to a standard lawn. Some time later when I retired as President I recommended to the incoming committee that the lower medium size lawn be measured to provide a second standard lawn. Now having the two standard lawns we were able to run tournaments, the first of which I suggested we start with is now the Meatrenz for Intermediate and Junior combined doubles. This proved a very popular tournament. Originally it was only held on two days. Now because it has been successful, we are able to have two separate two day tournaments. It is pleasing that we can now host other tournaments which have proved reasonably successful. St Heliershosted Championship and Handicap tournaments which were part of the ACA programme. Mostly we were allocated the B Grade-two life system in those days and it was common for the Championships and Handicaps to be played at the same time. It was very confusing having to switch from one to the other trying to remember whether one was playing "lifts" or not. No time limit of course. All games were played on small lawns – no double banking. It was a great sight seeing so many competitive players filling the lawns, plus spectators – almost a carnival atmosphere, especially with the sun umbrellas spread around the hedge edges. Now, of course, the tournaments are normally section play with one or two exceptions.

Apart from having a contractor mow the lawns and cut the hedges, members worked hard with working bees organized to prepare for the beginning of each season on renovating the lawns. Top soil was dumped on the grass verge of The Parade. We then shoveled it into wheelbarrows, wheeled it inside the grounds and piled it along the hedge by the Bowling Club gate. We hand raked the lawns before spreading the soil by hand. To get them as level as possible we then dragged a board which had ropes attached. We threaded these through our arms and shoulders and away we went – back and forth. It was time-consuming and tiring, especially as we had few, if any, male members to help. Treasurer, Betty Barrett, was the Green Supervisor and worked as hard as any member. After the lawns were cut the grass clippings were dumped in holding bins by the clubhouse. We then had to dispose of them ourselves. We shoveled them into sacks or buckets and disposed of them by taking them home. Betty used to tip her lot down a bank. I carted several bags in the boot of my car over to Pakuranga where I lived. At the back of our large garden we had empty paddocks and when I arrived home I put the sacks into a wheelbarrow and took them up to the paddock and emptied the clippings out, taking the empty bags back to be used for the next time. I did this twice a week when growth was strong.

During working bees we were allocated an area to hand weed the lawns and used a small paint brush for painting on the weed killer on problem areas – a back breaking and tiring job. Christine Allart was the Green Superintendent by this time and she hand watered the lawns sometimes twice daily. Before Christine took over, Mary and Stan Francis who lived in the flats across the road used to look after the watering and donated a second-hand spraying system which they had discarded from their market garden. This was OK except that the water didn't reach very far and consequently the sprayer had to be continually moved around. We then invested in a moving watering

5

system which crawled from one end of the top area to the bottom, similar to what was then used to water cricket pitches. It was very heavy to handle. To add to the expense we had to install an underground drain to enable the machine to operate on the lower lawns. It was a great day when, through a grant from the ASB, we were able to have the luxury of the automatic sprinkler system.

In the mid-80's we experienced a particularly bad storm which blew down the two flame trees which grew behind the clubhouse. They landed on the roof and across The Parade blocking traffic and entry to the club. A lot of damage was caused, of course – spouting on the clubhouse had to be replaced, a new front fence, a new gate, letterbox etc and a replanting programme was established at the back of the building. Once again, plants and shrubs were donated by members and husbands once all the repair work was completed. All this damage could have been avoided if our pleas to the City Council had been heeded and the Parks & Reserves Department had topped or removed the offending trees which were rotten and just waiting for a storm to cause big problems. All this was pointed out to the powers that be with little or no response. Christine was a tireless worker. Her husband, Hans, was the repairer of seats, gates, fences etc and the hibiscus shrubs were donated by Christine and Hans. She and I had a lot of laughs and could always see the funny side of what was at times a rather difficult situation, especially when sewage spilled out from the toilet block, flooding down as far as the clubhouse. We donned gumboots and rubber gloves and got busy and hosed down and dug out trenches to get rid of the spillage which was caused by tree roots blocking the sewer pipes at the top of the end of The Parade. Fortunately, men from the Council came out pretty quickly and sorted out where the fault lay. One of the men emerged from the depths of the iron cover in the toilet block not exactly smelling of roses so he was given a good hosing down amidst plenty of laughs – a jolly fellow.

#### **CLUBHOUSE**

In 1975/76 when Myra Cassells-Brown was President it was decided to demolish the old clubhouse and begin a building programme, firstly to erect

half of the new clubhouse, then to later demolish the other half and rebuild again. According to the requirement of the City Council this had to be carried out within five years. Myra worked tirelessly to get all the plans and permits approved and Stage 1 was commenced. This was the area which we now know as the kitchen, dining and entertaining section. Myra's husband, Cass, was the mainstay of the husbands and volunteers who worked on the site. During this time the club celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a luncheon at the St Heliers Bowling Club pavilion. The building of the extension – Stage 2 – was begun within five years and is the area where we now store mallets. notice boards, chairs and the inside toilet. It replaced part of the original clubhouse which had deteriorated into a structure of leaking windows and rotting floor boards. Parts of the floors had to be covered with chairs for the safety of members. At this time I was Pavilion Supervisor and it was my job to replace towels near the old wash basin. I remember doing this at one time and heard a lot of scratching in the basin, looked down and saw a huge rat slithering around trying to get out of the basin. I sure beat a hasty retreat.

Judith Rishworth was our President in 1980/82 and she was another tireless worker, once again having to get plans and permits approved. This entailed going in to the Council and seeking help from the building inspector – all to save time as we were keen to get started. The matching up of furnishings and floor coverings with the Stage 1 area proved quite difficult after five years. Thanks again to a band of husbands and volunteers who worked under the guidance of John Liversedge (whose wife Ngaire was a member) and plumber Ted Taylor (husband of Eunice). Jean Thomson was our President when the inside toilet was installed.

Over the years we have enjoyed the modern labour saving appliances in our kitchen. Judith Rishworth donated our dishwasher and her husband, Harry, installed it. Benches and cupboards were donated by members. June Winkel gave us our first Zip heater and refrigerator. The Honours boards added to our list of donations. All the cork and notice boards in the mallet room were donated and so, over the last 25 plus years, members have been extremely generous. When we have our cups of tea we think of Ruth Browning who

gave us the pretty cups, saucers and matching plates. Coffee cups have been another donation – and so the list goes on. The addition of our large storage cabinet in the mallet room is thanks to the help of Neville Salisbury – who built and installed it. We must not forget the contributions from the Mah Jong and Scrabblers who gathered each Wednesday afternoon during the winter. Profits from their activities enabled them to donate and help with the purchase of various necessities including the green chairs and umbrellas, material for our tablecloths, the clock, kitchen tidy and so on. How fortunate and lucky to have such a facility free of debt. We older members now pass the responsibility of caring for this wonderful asset on to others. All we can do is support fund raising activities and hope that with the enjoyment of croquet you will find time to repay your past members for the effort and work they have contributed.

Since this was written, the Club celebrated it's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2006).

# Out & About



Members of the St Heliers Croquet Club.



Simon O'Connor runs the first hoop to open the club.



MP Simon O'Connor was the special guest at the 100th celebrations.

# Club marks 100th year

The St Heliers Bay Croquet Club marked its 100th birthday celebrations last weekend. The club, with a membership of over 70 people, celebrated with a 1916 theme and members and guests wore colourful costumes and hats. MP Simon O'Connor rolled the first ball to kick start the celebrations.



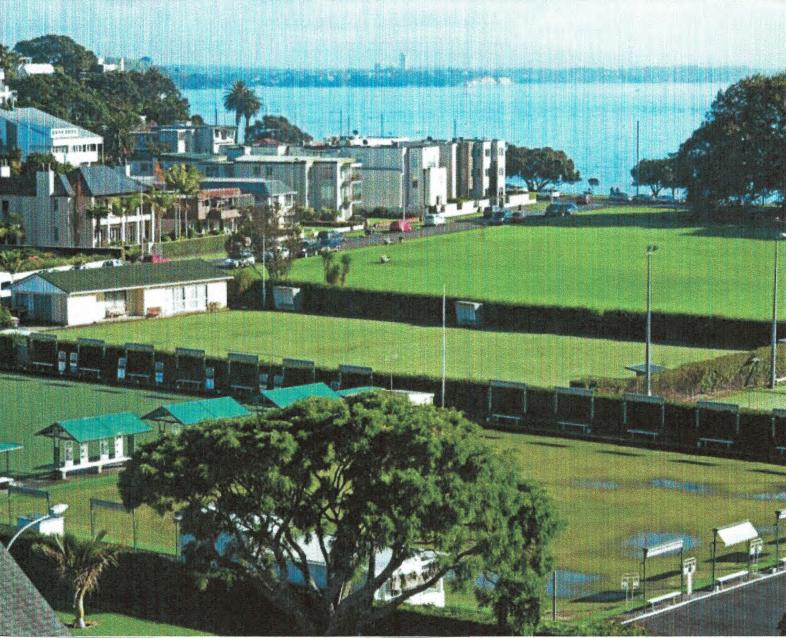
Members were encouraged to come dressed up for the event.



Members and guests listen as MP Simon O'Connor delivers his speech.



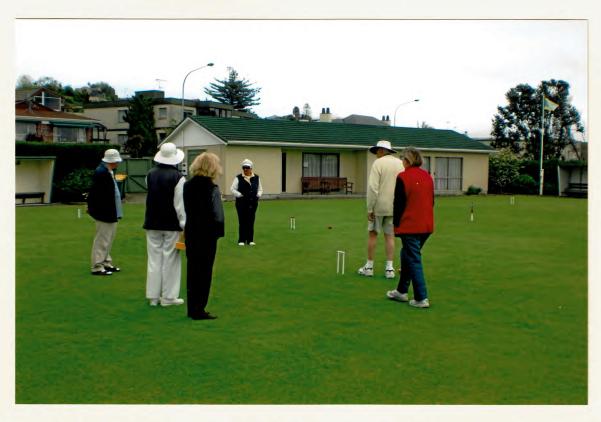
Members of the club came out in numbers to celebrate the prestigious occasion.



View over the bowling & croquet greens from Brookfield St May 2015

Stiteliers Ce 1915 -?





Umpires course, 5+ Heliers Bay 2010

Discussion with Con Cambie 528 5478 23 May 2011 of St Heliers Bowling Unb

Anck Museum has early photos

Not aware of early club, but " winter

green" 15 where she current petangue

grand 18.

Remembers area next to it was City Council yard, later to become tennis club

When convert croquet elso wanted to expand in 1978 it was found all eposts clubs on Vellenoweth Green were there illegally. Required Act of Partrament in 1995 to rectify situation.

PP Observer 13/10/1917

of St Itelliers (sic) and Tamaki west were efficially opened on Set Sept 29

The Goldie St houses overlook Vellenoweth Green, named after Anna Vellenoweth who, in the early 1880s, led opposition to the River Plate Company's plans to reclaim it. It had previously been set aside by law as a public amenity. Mrs Vellenoweth saved the reserve's water frontage and secured land for a bowling green, tennis court and croquet lawn.

The Aucklander 19 May 2011