

## THE 1990s

In 1990, in the book "Great Australian Golf Courses" by Tom Ramsey (photography by John Knight), the Ocean Shores Country Club and the golf course was featured among 48 golf courses around Australia. The following few pages of text and images have been extracted from that book.

### OCEAN SHORES COUNTRY CLUB

BRUNSWICK HEADS, NEW SOUTH WALES

Ocean Shores, on the northern coast of New South Wales, has had a chequered career since it began as a real-estate development at Brunswick Heads in the late 1960s. In those days, one of the world's largest development companies, Wendell West Co, of Seattle, had paid the equivalent of \$1 million for the land and planned to spend a further \$100 million on the project. American singer, Pat Boone, became involved in the project and when he ran into financial difficulties blamed 'lousy investments in land development'. One of his investments was in Ocean Shores ('the Little Miami of the Pacific'). 'Some guys have a Midas touch. Everything I touch turns to zilch,' said Boone, disclosing that his 'lousy' investments cost him \$4 million.

It was in November 1968, while on a singing tour of Australia, that Boone

*The opening hole at Ocean Shores is a par five. It takes a brave golfer to go across water with his second shot here.*





announced his 'Little Miami' scheme. But it ran into trouble and almost three years later the development was bought by Princess Properties Pty Ltd, a company owned by the coal and shipping magnate, Daniel Ludwig. A young Californian, Danny W. Ski, was hired by the new company to continue development. His job was to make the 1483-hectare property into a 'community resort' city with 22 000 inhabitants by 1980.

Meanwhile, Bruce Devlin and Bob Hagge had built an 18-hole championship course in the heart of the development and Danny Ski proclaimed it to be the best in Australia. That, of course, was sales talk, although I visited the site at the time and thought it an exciting project in its uncompleted stage. Needless to say, the resort suffered from the general economic downturn of the 1970s and the Devlin-Hagge golf course became paddocks of weeds and lakes of reeds.

However, an enthusiastic band of members took over the course in the 1980s and at the time of writing the superb layout had almost been restored into a venue capable of hosting championship golf. I do take exception to the insensitive souls who erected the bowling green in front of the clubhouse. Whoever was responsible totally blocked the view of the course and lovely valley from those who sit in the clubhouse. Hopefully one day a committee will have the courage to remove and relocate it.

A sizeable hill separates the golf course and part of the real-estate development from the broad splendour of the Pacific Ocean coastline. The only ocean views visible are those driving to the clubhouse. Even so, the 6960-yard (6361-metre) layout is scenically majestic, with many spectacular golf holes that require careful plotting. You certainly won't find any pitch and putt golf scramblers winning here.

The course opens with a 533-yard (487-metre) par five from an elevated tee to

*The third hole is deceptive: club selection is particularly important.*



the valley below and water beyond. It takes a brave man to go for the green over water with his second shot. The fairway also slopes towards the lake. So the best advice is to play around the water and hope you can pitch close enough to begin with a birdie.

The next is 402 yards (367 metres) and only the long hitter should attempt the water carry to the fairway that bends to the right. Barry Burgess, a former Australian amateur representative and now the club professional, advises everyone to keep left of the water and take an extra shot for the second to the green. Somehow this green is further away than it appears. The third, 156 yards (143 metres), is also deceptive. Once again, care must be taken with club selection. Avoid the bunkers surrounding the green.

By the time you complete the fourth, 554 yards (506 metres), you might be wishing you had brought a ball retriever. This is a tough five for the long handicapper. The second shot must carry a lake that cuts into the fairway from the right. The fairway also slopes towards a lake on the left. A hidden bunker just short of the green stops the longer hitters from reaching it with two shots.

The fifth, 377 yards (345 metres), is a bobby-dazzler. The first shot is across water to an island. Sometimes it is wise to use an iron from the tee. Again, the second shot is further than it might appear to the eye. The next is a straightforward three, 174 yards (159 metres), to a very long and narrow green. Then comes a drive and a pitch, 381 yards (348 metres), but care must be taken with the tee shot. There are hazards on both sides. The pitch is to a green that slopes towards you. Be positive with your second shot and a birdie may be the reward.

The eighth, 176 yards (161 metres), will have you cursing if you underclub. A water hazard runs parallel to the fairway which, near the green, will kick a short

Opposite top: You will curse if you underclub at the short eighth — the ball will kick into water.

Opposite bottom: The third shot to the 'monster' 11th has to fly over a lake cutting into the fairway.

Below: With its water hazard the fifth is a tough par five for the high handicapper.







shot into the water. The green is also well trapped at the left and back. The ninth is another long five, 600 yards (548 metres), and uphill to add to its difficulty. Try to keep the ball on the fairway all the way. There is a water hazard on the right, then out-of-bounds en route to the green. The putting surface has a very steep slope from the back to the front, so place the third shot short of the flagstick.

Don't throw away your water-wings. The second nine opens with a 430-yard (393-metre) four, with a blind shot from the tee. This must be kept well to the left or the sharp slope on the fairway below will deflect the ball towards the water hazard on the right. The fairway angles right and to a green well guarded by bunkers. Once again, careful club selection is necessary with the shot to the green.

The 11th is another of those monsters — almost 600 yards (548 metres). It is not reachable in two strokes because a bunker right in the middle of the fairway acts as a formidable barrier. Apart from that, the third shot must be pitched over a lake that cuts severely into the fairway. Again, the green is well bunkered and slopes dramatically to the front.

The 12th, 204 yards (186 metres), is a longish three and dangerous because the first 170 yards (155 metres) has to carry over water. If you can't manage that, aim left, then chip and hope for a par. The 13th, 402 yards (367 metres), is a tight driving hole that turns sharply to the left, with a hidden lake on the corner of the dog-leg. There are hazards and sand on the right, and the green is very narrow and bunkered across the front. It's rather like negotiating a minefield.

Next is a 608-yard (556-metre) par five. The tee shot is not so difficult but the second needs to be placed between three large fairway bunkers. The third shot is deceptive — this time it may not be as far as you think. The 15th, 203 yards (186 metres), is another longish three. If you think you can reach it with a 3-iron,

*The 14th is another par five. The second shot has to be placed between three fairway bunkers.*





take a two. The 16th, 443 yards (405 metres), is the most difficult par four on Ocean Shores. The water catches any shot hit left and a bunker near the green will prevent a long low second shot bounding along the fairway from reaching its target.

The 17th, 186 yards (170 metres), is often affected by wind, and water hazard and sand add to this problem. The sheltered tee does not give any indication of the strength of the sea breeze or its direction. Water guards the left of the elevated green, which is so long that there is a four-club difference in selection from a pin placed on the front of the putting surface to one at the back.

Finally, a 540-yard (494-metre) par five, uphill — and even here we cannot escape water from the tee. Hit over the water with the tee shot and stay left with the second to keep away from the lake. Make sure you give the third a hefty smack to ensure that the ball plops on to the middle of the green. If it doesn't it will disappear into one of two hidden bunkers in front of the green.

*Above: Take an extra club at the 15th — it is longer than it looks.*

*Overleaf: The 18th is a par five, uphill, with plenty of trouble all along the way.*





On April 24, 1990 the AGM for the year ending December 31, 1989 was held with ordinary membership reaching 1007. Arthur Todd was chairman, Brian Curtis vice chairman, Bert de Luca treasurer Mervyn Ryman golf rep, John Oliver bowls rep, and directors: Vaughan Wallace, Michael Kelly, Tony Cornell, Frank Hynes and Col Loomes. Ted Forster remained the secretary manager, and Barry Cox the golf course manager.

On April 23, 1991, the AGM was held for the year ending December 31, 1990. Ordinary membership reached 1115 and while Ted Forster and Barry Cox retained their position as secretary manager and golf course manager respectively, there were several changes at board level.

Arthur Todd was chairman, Col Loomes vice chairman, Bert De Luca treasurer, Ken Hansen golf rep, John Oliver bowls rep, and directors: Michael Kelly, Jim Mangleson, Graham Sharpe, A. Fraser and Barry Larracy.

Sometime in mid-1991, the Capital Works Committee (Stuart Pratt, Mark Parsons and Ron Lawrence) distributed a questionnaire to members (The Clubhouse Redevelopment and Capital Works Program Study) soliciting their comments on immediate and proposed future changes and improvements to Club facilities.

Members were asked to rank as either urgent, important or not important, the following suggestions:

- Relocation of the Pro Shop and buggy bay to an area between the 1st and 10th tees
- Relocation of the office and expansion of the lounge area
- The addition of a first floor lounge and auditorium
- All weather tennis courts behind the 10th tee
- Expansion of the car park
- Establishment of an indoor sports room
- Establishment of a junior members room
- Construction of outside toilet facilities
- Establishment of an area for a gymnasium, sauna and aerobics
- Relocation of the restaurant

- Establishment of accommodation facilities

The responses and suggestions covered many other areas, but can be categorised as follows:

- A final decision be made on whether to not add an additional floor on top of the clubhouse
- Attention to sealing the leaking clubhouse roof
- Modification be made to the swimming pool area (then comprising three pools)
- An elevated third bowling be considered
- Expansion of the car parking area
- Relocation of the office and expansion of the lounge area
- Consideration be given the establishing a smoke free, restaurant, lounge and pokies areas
- Additional litter bins be established around the golf course
- Any major capital expenditure be contingent on the Club's ability to cover repayments

The AGM on April 28, 1992 for the year ending December 31, 1991, saw ordinary membership rise to 1197, with a new secretary manager appointed, G. Heaton and Barry Cox remaining the golf course manager. Arthur Todd as chairman, Graham Sharpe vice chairman, Treasurer K. Hapgood, Golf rep R. Lawrence, bowls rep John Oliver, and directors Stuart Pratt, Jean Sorsby, Hilton Stephenson and Mark Parsons.

The AGM on March 16, 1993 for the year ending December 31, 1992, noted that the Club had purchased land in the middle of the golf course from the Bond Corporation for \$175,000. While Barry Cox retained his position as golf course manager, a new secretary manager was appointed, Sam Ridgewell. Ordinary membership was steady at 1157.

Merv Brady took over as chairman, Eric Simons vice chairman, Arthur Haywood treasurer, B. Kelly golf rep, John Oliver bowls rep, and directors Stuart Pratt, Jean Sorsby, Keith Tidey, Ken Hansen Allan Thompson and John Bird.

In mid-1993, the chairman of the House committee, John Bird, prepared paper on Strategic Policies and Objectives (SPOs) designed to guide the Club's development over the following 5-15 year period. Edited extracts from that document follow.

*"A prerequisite for good management of the Club is a set of Strategic Policies and Objectives. Qualitative policies are needed to define the type of Club we desire, to promote consistent and coherent management decisions to that end.*

*"Quantitative objectives are essential for efficient planning of the development of the Club's membership and physical assets. Together' the policies and objectives will enhance continuity between boards. The Club's Memorandum and Articles of Association are too general for these purposes.*

*"The Board should formally adopt the SPOs and strongly recommend to subsequent boards that they make a similar commitment. While not having legal status, in terms of importance and permanence the SPOs could be seen to lie between our Articles and our By-Laws. Where appropriate, the Board should seek to have these documents amended to reflect the SPOs.*

*"The OSCC is located on a rural coastal area remote from major population centres. It is a holiday resort are with modest growth. The character of the Club will reflect this environment.*

*"It will not be exclusive or 'high class' with a high fee structure. Conversely, it will not complete at the lowest level for everyone's patronage in food, drink and gaming. It should be casual, conservative, and of median standard in terms of dress and conduct codes, in facilities and in pricing.*



*"In the longer term, the Club's role is in the niche of filling part of the sporting-social scene. This position does not preclude to Club from activity assisting other organizations to meet community needs. Indeed, the Club would wish to always be a good corporate citizen. However, the Club will not accept responsibility for, or be the primary agent in, general community endeavours.*

*"The Board is convinced that the Club's efforts must be focused to preserve funds, to facilitate long term planning and to achieve member harmony."*

In June 1993, Arthur Todd prepared a short history of the Ocean Shores Estate, the Community centre, the Golf Club, Bowls Club and Country Club to that date. It is reprinted verbatim below.

#### **THE HISTORY OF OCEAN SHORES**

*Some dreams are fulfilled in the short term, others evolve over time and take longer. Ocean Shores certainly falls into the latter category and now, having a quarter century history, the development appears poised to attain recognition.*

*With only a handful of pioneers remaining, the majority of current residents, having migrated from all parts of Australia, and beyond, often have many questions about earlier times. How did the largest single subdivision in NSW become established on the Far North Coast?*

*Who were the principals, who envisaged a Resort Town with a population of more than twenty two thousand, and eventually injected over five million dollars into the project. This, then, is how it came about.*

*Sometime during 1968, representatives of an American Company undertook an inspection of the area now known as Ocean Shores. They were greatly impressed with the lush countryside, beautiful undisturbed beaches and also the climate. They became convinced that they would return.*

*The company they represented was Wendell West, America's second largest resort community developer. Paul Stocker was the Australian President and he was particularly excited about the potential of this land near Brunswick Heads.*

*Wendell West had almost twenty projects under way in the United States, and had recently moved to Hawaii, however they resolved to favour Australia, and so the project was set in motion. Wendell West quietly purchased 3000 acres of coastline.*

*In March 1969, the Hon. S.T. Stephens (NSW Minister for Housing) opened the administration centre we now know as The Roundhouse. A month later, the headquarters of Wendell West moved into Australia Square Sydney.*

*With staff members now numbering seventy, everything was set to implement a whole new set of rules (which had been drawn up with the NSW Planners) for the future development of Ocean Shores.*

*In November 1968, Pat Boone who was a partner in the company, came to Australia to have a look at this vast new development, and promptly took it to his heart. To many people, the project became known as "Pat Boon's Ocean Shores."*

*To be able to focus on the magnitude of the development, it is essential to have some statistical information before you. The whole area was surveyed by a Brisbane company Jones Hint & Pike, and in the area now known as South Ocean Shores, 1552 residential lots were created.*

*Sizes ranged from 7500sq.ft to 32,000sq.ft. Small pockets of medium density blocks were also provided, plus a commercial section which eventually became the Ocean Village Shopping Centre.*

*Water was reticulated 26 miles from Rocky Creek dam, and a 200,000 gallon reservoir built. Divided into 17 divisions, it cost \$1.1 million to reticulate water to divisions five and six alone. 1 50 miles of underground cable was laid at a cost of \$1 .6 million, and in the first two stages, ten miles of kerb & guttering was poured.*

*This was only the beginning, Wendell West provided a \$475,000 bond to the State Government to guarantee water, electricity, and paved roads. It had by this time, a staff and workforce of 116 people, and a payroll of \$600,000 per annum.*

*Huge machinery and equipment valued at half a million, was to be seen working the area. To create the golf course alone, over one million cubic yards of soil was moved.*

*So much for the statistics, what of the human involvement? With development activity accelerating, company senior staff purchased land and commenced building homes. They not only became residents, but also became subscribing members to the Memorandum of Association, with Fred Ludke the Company Manager, being the first Community Centre President.*

*With the golf course as yet not completed and the population still mainly comprising company staff, it became essentially a do it yourself socialising scene. The terrain at that time resembled a lunar landscape, with most roads unsealed, and construction work seemingly never ending.*

*Picnics, B.B.Q's and beach were the only forms of recreation available other than the establishment of homes and gardens.*

*By mid 1969, 329 blocks had been sold, with a large percentage being sold for speculation, and a significant number purchased by overseas buyers. On the 16th April 1969, a principal deed was made between Wendell West and the various government & local government authorities.*

*This deed provided for the overall proposed development of the subdivision and many innovative concepts were build into it, one of which was the Memorandum of Encumbrance, with which every lot in Ocean Shores was burdened.*

*The memorandum was attached to part of every certificate of title to all allotments in Ocean Shores, and required each owner to subscribe up to \$48 per annum, for a minimum of ten years from date of purchase.*

*With the original intent of the community controlling its own destiny, The Ocean Shores Community Centre was incorporated as a public company in NSW on the 14th October 1969.*

*Wendell West decided to move its operation from Sydney to Ocean Shores in 1971 . To facilitate sales, they built a sales office at the main gate of Ocean Shores, which is now the current Ocean Palms Motel. It had a Spanish influence, and when completed and landscaped it became a very attractive and prominent building which was to play a significant part in the social activities of the community in the years to follow.*

*The Company found it expedient to be located close to the Pacific Highway, and the resulting exposure brought in many land and property sale enquiries.*

*About this time we had a name change. Wendell West adopted the name of its parent company Princess Properties Pty Ltd, which in turn was part of an enormous organisation known as Princess Properties International, owned at that time, by the richest man in the world Daniel Ludwig.*

*This company in 1971, was engaged in construction of Hotels & Resorts with total values of more than one hundred million US dollars. All this activity was centred mainly in the Caribbean.*

*Ludwig also had massive interests in world shipping, specialising in the movement of oil, and it*



*was he, who pioneered the emergence of what we know now as the "super tanker."*

*It can be seen then, that the development at Ocean Shores was big in local terms, but only a very minor venture when focussing on the whole operation of The Company.*

*Meanwhile work on the site continued at a fairly fast rate. As services and areas were completed, sales promotion was intensified. Teams in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and The Gold Coast were hosting groups of people who had responded to advertisements about the new development.*

*After providing labour and machinery to upgrade the 3500 foot airstrip at Tyagrah, Princess Properties began flying in prospective buyers from Orange and other places out west.*

*A number of interesting personalities had decided to purchase lots. Among them were Ray Lindwall, the famous Aussie cricketer, Hazel Phillips the entertainer, Major General Fraser (Aust. forces commander in Vietnam) and many others.*

*Sales incentives were on offer, and the tour of the development in a four wheel drive wagon, would be rewarded with either a small radio and a Pat Boone record, or a tankfull of petrol from the Salad Bowl service station.*

*The price range of land at this time was between \$5,000 to \$10,000 with an ocean view, and a large percentage were either speculator, or impulse buyers, who had future retirement thoughts in mind.*

*1972 was a significant year for Ocean Shores. In May the first nine holes of the golf course was brought into play, followed in July by the second nine holes. The 6960 par 72 course was given an official standard scratch rating of 72, thus endorsing the claim of a Championship Course.*

*The constant upgrading and fine tuning over the years, has been a credit to those involved. The course is currently rated 7th in NSW and 34th in Australia. Again in 1972, furnishings, fittings and carpeting for the Clubhouse, costing \$1.2 million, were installed.*

*At the end of May 1972, two hundred guests attended the foundation meeting of the golf club. They appointed a steering committee to finalise the Articles of Association, negotiate the terms of occupancy of the course and clubhouse with Princess Properties and arrange for the incorporation of the club.*

*Yet another significant contribution by the developer, was the building and dedication of the Orana Bridge. At a cost of \$200,000 the 215 ft bridge was a godsend for the residents of Ocean Shores, New Brighton and Golden Beach.*

*It would be hard to comprehend, the total value of assets, in the form of roads, water and power reticulation, street lighting and a major bridge, which were dropped into the lap of the Byron Shire Council, not to mention the ongoing annual rates which reached extremely significant proportions before the council became involved in maintenance expenditures.*

*It has been estimated that in excess of five million was invested by the Company in those early days, and 46.7% of the general rates of the shire came from Ocean Shores.*

*To refresh your memory, we now have, (1) a very busy development company, (2) a committee called The Ocean Shores Community Centre, (which in the initial stages, was totally comprised of company employees, but as the local resident population grew, they eventually outnumbered the employees) and (3) a Golf Committee operating from a clubhouse owned by The Company.*

*Keeping in mind that the population was very small indeed, The Company played a dominant role, and inevitably problems and situations arose where the Community Committee and the Princess Properties management were at loggerheads.*

*Pioneer residents and especially those who represented them, learned the "hard way" and later had to play roles which had never previously been envisaged.*

*Three years after formation the Golf Club was still suffering growing pains. At the beginning it had a membership of 182, but of these, only 31 resided in Ocean Shores, and of the 31, many were not golfers, but joined for the advantages of the club and the swimming pool. The Company maintained the course and clubhouse. Nevertheless the Golf Club had no funds other than membership subscriptions.*

*To assist the golfers, The Community Centre gave a \$10,000 gift. To attract some publicity, the golfers held a public ceremony where The Gift was presented to the golf president on the clubhouse steps.*

*For the benefit of the press photographer it was done with some flourish in the presence of the "entire population of the clubhouse" (14 people). Amongst which were some visiting ladies who missed the point of the presentation, one of whom was heard to say - "Don't they give good trophies here!!"*

*Returning to the general Ocean Shores scene. Princess Properties were attempting to combat the effects of a recession and the slow growth in population. They no longer wanted the burden of maintaining the golf course and clubhouse and eventually sold it to the golf club for \$625,000 (with interest free terms).*

*Meanwhile, the Community Centre Committee was progressively becoming involved in voluntary tasks which had never previously been envisaged. Apart from administering the income from encumbrances, in the mid seventies, the committee was also maintaining the appearance of the estate by slashing over 1200 lots, three time per year.*

*It was at this time that Princess Properties decided to put development on "hold". The canal section at North Ocean Shores was well under way, roads laid down & canals formed.*

*Then came yet another major problem for the community - sewerage!! To this point The Company had provided a free pump-out service to each home built. One Friday afternoon, Princess Properties advised by letterbox drop, that they intended the following week, to discontinue the free service, but it would still be available at the cost of \$20 per week.*

*The Community Centre sprang into action, purchasing a second hand six ton truck. Designed and had fitted a large tank, together with the necessary pumping gear. Within a short space of time, they were pumping out ninety tanks on a weekly basis. (for myself - so much for retirement aspirations!)*

*The slow population growth in Ocean Shores was having a dramatic effect on the golf club financially and it was having difficulty in funding the loan repayments to The Company.*

*As Princess Properties wound down its activity it pressed the golf club for payment, threatening to sell the course and clubhouse to overseas buyers. Being fearful the residents would be deprived of these assets, the Community Centre negotiated to purchase the club for \$265,000, which in reality, was a major gesture on the part of Princess Properties.*

*The final effect of this transaction was, in May 1978, the Community Centre changed its name to the Ocean Shores Country Club as we now know it today. Under this name, the club has continued to grow and has been the centre of community leisure activity for a large percentage of local residents.*

*The original concept for the development of our "resort town" was brilliant and given more economic stability and a greater population demand, the development would have had greater*



*momentum. The Beach Club, the marina and many other opportunities were missed, not to mention the Roundhouse, which could have been purchased for around \$220,000 in the early eighties.*

*Considering the numerous technical problems, parochial prejudice and the magnitude of the development, credit must be given to those who pioneered the project and to the fact that they were still around and expending funds, fifteen years after commencing operations.*

*Their efforts are reflected in the opinions of many residents who consider themselves fortunate to live in such a delightful environment, and would not seek change of their situation. There is however, and has been for some time, a recognition that we as a community have been neglected in relation to the provision of basic services which are accepted as being the norm in other areas and generally provided by the three tiers of government.*

*Ocean Shores now (1993) has a population of around 3000, a 34% increase in the three years to December 1991, (the greatest growth factor within the shire.) Being only numerically second to Byron Bay, postal, banking and a local government presence would be reasonable to assume.*

*The recently formed Township Committee have spent the past few months preparing a submission to the Geographical Names Board, requesting Ocean Shores be declared a township. The proposed boundaries extend from the Tweed Shire boundary, south to the Brunswick river, (excluding New Brighton and Golden Beach), extending west to Synotts Lane on the Tunnel road, following the railway north back to the shire boundary.*

*This area is on average approximately six kilometres by three kilometres and was considered to have the size, density and potential to become a significant growth area. The new school is under construction and a number of new development proposals are in the pipeline.*

*The Township Committee has been delighted by the attendances at the two public meetings held to date and as well, the interest shown by locals. Soon, residents will be invited to join the association and be asked to attend bi monthly meetings, where opinion and support for our community can be expressed and conveyed to government and commercial agencies.*

*It is hoped that this brief historical background has been helpful in bringing about a better understanding of the early days of the "Shores" and perhaps also through the medium of this new publication, create a bonding with long lasting benefits to us all.*

*A.Todd (Chairman) June 1993*

The AGM on April 21 1994 for the year ending December 31, 1993 reported that competition from the newly opened Ocean Shores Tavern had reduced Club revenue from the bar, poker machines and Keno. Membership declined slightly to 1111, and there was a new bowls greenkeeper, Phil Clarke. Barry Cox remained the golf course manager and Sam Ridgewell the secretary manager.

Merv Brady continued as chairman, Eric Simons as vice chairman, Arthur Haywood treasurer, Eric Simons filled in as golf rep and John Oliver remained bowls rep on the Board. Directors were: Stuart Pratt, Jean Sorsby, John Bird, and ? Harris.

In the picture below (circa 1994) former Club director Arthur Todd (left) is pictured with former Wendell-West Company of California representative, Paul Stocker, who presented the initial plans for the Ocean Shores estate to the Byron Shire Council in July 1968.



**In 1994**, an inquiry was held into the eventual sale of the Roundhouse, ending a long saga of disputes, starting in 1980. The inquiry was the result of the then owners, real estate agents Jim Mangleson and Mark Cochrane, disputing subsequent obstructive actions by the Byron Shire Council towards the disposal of the site.

This culminated in the Council signing a Deed of Release with the former owners, under which the parties agreed to a final price of just over \$1.4 million, based on the undertaking that no further legal action in relation to the Roundhouse would be initiated.

The background to the dispute, and how it came to be resolved, is outlined in extracts from the report issued as a result of that inquiry. For the full 60-page report, see:

<http://oceanshorescommunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Byron-Shire-Council-1994-Roundhouse-Report-Part-1-of-3.pdf>

**BYRON COUNCIL: REPORT OF AN INVESTIGATION UNDER  
SECTION 430 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1993 - ROUNDHOUSE**

---

**1     EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1     This Report sets out the findings of my investigation of the Council, commenced under s.212 of the Local Government Act 1919 and completed under s.430 of the Local Government Act 1993, in respect of item 1(ii) of the Terms of Reference of the inspection, which required me to examine Council's conduct in its dealings with a property in Ocean Shores known as "the Roundhouse" and with the owners of that property. The investigation examined a broad range of relevant matters over a period of some 13 years, from 1980 to the present.
- 1.2     The investigation was undertaken as part of a more general investigation of the Council's performance of its planning functions. It arose from a complaint made by two of the former owners that Council had abused its planning powers and was engaged in a conspiracy to deceive the then Minister for Local Government and Planning by attempting to remove its obligation to acquire the property under the provisions of its Local Environmental Plan (LEP). Because of the complexity of the issues raised and the conflicts in evidence apparent at an early stage, evidence from the principal witnesses on this matter was taken under oath. It was dealt with independently of the other matters and made the subject of a separate report.
- 1.3     The report prepared for Council by Peter McClellan QC in February 1991, following his inquiry into some of these matters, was a very useful adjunct to this investigation. I have attempted not to re-examine those matters on which I agreed with him. Other matters which I believe he did not formally address or did not adequately deal with because of the nature and scope of his enquiry, are examined in this report, as are a number of issues which have arisen since his inquiry.
- 1.4     The central issue in this investigation was the Council's attempts, initially to obtain the Roundhouse site, preferably at no cost to itself, for the alleged purpose of providing a community facility on the site, and subsequently to avoid its acquisition obligation. Those attempts began during the preparation of a shire-wide LEP in the early 1980s when there was a strong community expectation that the Roundhouse would be dedicated to the Council, probably as an aboriginal art gallery, through the provisions of a Deed of Agreement entered into with the original developers of the Ocean Shores Estate. That expectation resulted in the site being zoned for community purposes, in spite of the strong objections of the then owners who had been attempting to have it zoned for medium density residential development. More importantly, from the Council's point of view, the zoning had attached to it an obligation on the Council to acquire the property on the request of the owners. Council's response to their request is what has led ultimately to this investigation.



---

## 2.2 BACKGROUND TO THIS INVESTIGATION

- 2.2 Over a period of some 12 months from late 1990, both the Minister for Local Government and Co-operatives and his Department received a significant number of complaints about the conduct of the Council, particularly in relation to planning matters. One of the major complaints was the way in which it was dealing with its acquisition of a property known as the "Roundhouse" in Ocean Shores. The substance of that complaint was that Council had acted improperly in attempting, by delays and other strategies, to avoid an obligation it had imposed on itself, to acquire the Roundhouse site and to pay the owners fair compensation, and that in the process Council had deliberately attempted to publicly denigrate the owners.
- 2.3 The complainants in this matter were two of the owners of the Roundhouse, Mr Jim Mangleson and Mr Mark Cochrane. In October 1990, they met with the then Minister for Local Government and Minister for Planning, the Hon David Hay MP, and presented him with a detailed complaint alleging the improper actions of the then Byron Shire Council, over a number of years, in attempting to avoid its obligation, pursuant to a provision in the Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 1988, to acquire their property. This action followed a complaint to the then Minister on the same issue from one of the owners, Mr Jim Mangleson, in November of 1989.
- 2.4 The Minister agreed to the subsequent meeting to pursue the matter further, following the Council's resolution to appeal the decision of Cripps CJ in the Land and Environment Court, in July 1990, declaring that the Council was compelled to acquire the Roundhouse site under the 1988 Byron LEP.
- 2.5 A comprehensive submission detailing the owners' complaint was referred initially to the Department of Planning and later to the then Department of Local Government, which wrote to the Council asking a series of questions arising from the complaint. The Council referred the questions to Peter McClellan QC who, at that time, was undertaking detailed enquiries into a number of matters relating to the Roundhouse. He had been engaged by Council's solicitors, following its decision to appeal the Land and Environment Court decision, to determine whether a full enquiry or any other action was required.
- 2.6 The report of Mr McClellan's enquiry and a supplementary report in response to the Department of Local Government queries were provided to the Department in March 1991. A detailed assessment of both reports was undertaken by the Department. That assessment led to the conclusion that although some matters had been clarified by Mr McClellan's inquiry, a number of questions remained unanswered. In addition, there were concerns about Council's conduct at the time in dealing with this matter. An assessment of other complaints about Council's performance of its planning functions raised further issues of concerns. Consequently, a recommendation was made that a special investigation of the Council be undertaken.

### 3.3 BACKGROUND FACTS

#### **The Roundhouse site**

- 3.3.1 The Roundhouse site is a prominent parcel of land covering 1.388 hectares and with 360 degree views from a prominent hill-top which rolls gently to the north with steeper slopes to the western boundary. The eastern aspect affords magnificent seascapes from Cape Byron to the Tweed Coast and to the west and north, the lakes and fairways of the Ocean Shores Golf course can be seen, with Mount Chincogan and other mountains in the distance.
- 3.3.2 On the site is a large timber and glass circular building (hence "the Roundhouse") with car parking to the curtilage. The building contains a spacious central vestibule area surrounded by a number of cellular offices. It was originally built as temporary accommodation for an administration centre and sales office, for which building approval was granted in October 1968. It is currently in a relatively dilapidated condition.

#### **History**

#### The Roundhouse in context

- 3.3.3 The Ocean Shores Estate, of which the Roundhouse is a part, was the "brain-child" of a development company from the United States, Wendell West Company, which wanted to locate in Australia a large fully serviced residential project, close to the coast, with a mild climate and within easy reach of a major city. This attractive stretch of land just north of the Brunswick River had all the features they were looking for and development began in the late 1960s. The project was expected to be a major boost to the New South Wales North Coast and was heavily promoted by the company in which a number of high profile American personalities were involved, including Pat Boone.

The AGM on April 20, 1995 for the year ending December 31, 1994, saw membership jump to 1344, Merv Brady remained chairman, Eric Simons vice chairman, Arthur Haywood and Glen Henry shared the treasurer's duties, Tony Cornell took over as golf rep and Laurie Ward as bowls rep. Directors were Stuart Pratt, Jean Sorsby, Colin Coghill, and Helmut Luedicke.

The AGM on April 23, 1996 for the year ending December 31, 1995 saw membership again rise reaching 1403. Eric Symons was in the chair, Perc Fisher vice chairman, treasurer Glen Henry, golf rep Tony Cornell, Bowls rep Laurie Ward, and directors Jean Sorsby, Helmut Luedicke, Tony Skelton, Peter Lundie, and Alex Jones.

On April 28, 1996, three Club members were among the 35 victims massacred at Port Arthur in Tasmania. They were Jim Pollard and Robert and Helene Salzmann, who resided close to the Club in Wirree Drive.

The AGM on March 7, 1997 for the year ending December 31, 1996, saw Eric Simons in the chair, Perc Fisher as vice chair, Glen Henry treasurer, Tony Cornell as the golf rep, Laurie Ward as bowls rep, and directors: Jean Sorsby, Michael Kelly, Tony Skelton, Peter Lundie and Alex Jones.

Membership was listed as 1444. The chairman expressed concern that the State Government's decision to allow up to 15 poker machines in hotels from April 1, 1997 "could seriously effect our future, as gaming represents 53 percent (of revenue)." It was estimated that a 10 percent decline in poker machine revenue would reduce club profit by \$70,000.

The AGM on March 6, 1998 for the year ending December 31, 1997 listed Eric Simon in the chair, Perc Fisher as vice chair, Glen Henry as treasurer, Michael Kelly as the golf rep, Maurie Murphy as the bowls rep, and directors: Jean Sorsby, Tony Skelton, Peter Lundie, and Laurie Ward.

Ordinary members numbered 1555.

June 16, 1998 saw the Ocean Shores Ladies Golf celebrate its 25th anniversary with a special luncheon and publication of its history to that date. While it repeats many segments of the Club's overall history, it represents an accurate and valuable record of events to that date.





25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon 16th June, 1998.

Compiled by Joy Slater with the assistance and information provided by:

Jim and Judy Anning, Stella Towle, Jan Larracy, Jane Fry, Vicki Loomes, Betty Abbott, Hazel and Maurie Sorrell and the many others who have provided their thoughts.



Today we are celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ocean Shores Lady Golfers and to understand the evolution of our Club, we really should understand the evolution and growth of the area known as The Ocean Shores Estate and the community who established it.

An article in the The Sunday Mail paper of 10<sup>th</sup> October 1968 tells that millionaire singer, Pat Boone, who was to be the PR man, and an associate, Mr Moke Smith of Wendell West and Co. of Seattle, had for over 2 years investigated a lot of the Queensland coastline looking for an area that would attract Americans. The land to be acquired had to be out of cyclone areas but on the coast and a river mouth. The site had to be close to mountains and in a rural setting, on a national highway and national rail link, within 100 miles of an international airport and within 5 miles of an existing and well established town.

They went 300 miles north of Brisbane and worked back toward Noosa. In their opinion it was good land but just a little too far away from Brisbane for the tourist trade. Finally they found Moreton Island, which seemed an ideal situation. However the Queensland Government did not want to upset the rutile-mining people operating on the island.

The NSW Government was eager to help the developers and their eventual choice was Brunswick Heads. Wendall West was keen to give their assurances that their project would not spoil the natural beauty of the area. Their concept was for a planned resort community, providing country club, golf course, beach club, marina, a gallery for Aboriginal art and residential land sales.

In the sleepy hollows of the Brunswick Valley it began to dawn on them, this American company wanting to spend \$100 million dollars on developing thousands of acres into Australia's Miami, was for real. The farmers and shopkeepers did not take it too seriously when the Company moved in. Wendell West's representatives moved swiftly over the land, soaking up properties like a giant sponge. Their buying was not limited to the 5 mile beach foreshore north of Brunswick Heads to Jones' Road and stretching two-and-a-half miles back to the Pacific Highway. They acquired a number of dairy farms around Mullumbimby, reaching almost to Byron Bay. These saw the establishment of the Billinudgel Pastoral Company, specialising in Brahman and Charolais cattle and the Tyagarah Air Strip.

The speed and magnitude of the operation staggered even the Byron Council, which had grand – but not grandiose – hopes for its coastal strip. The acting shire clerk, Mr WH Flowers advised that the Company intended to spend \$20m on the first stage, which would take from seven to ten years to develop. Byron Council had, at that stage, approved a large part of the subdivision in principle. It had also approved an \$110,000 building application for an 18 sided glass walled land sales office on a high point overlooking the golf course land to the sea.

The development was to prove a boom to the area, many of the farming properties were not viable propositions and the owners were quick to sell. It also meant employment, with 150 people on the staff of Wendall West at the peak time.

The sales office/administration centre was officially opened by the Minister for Decentralisation, Mr Fuller, on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1969 and until its recent removal was known to locals as "The Roundhouse". It took 3 months to build, using local sub-contractors, at a final cost of \$150,000. Sales were ready to commence for stages of the residential subdivision.

A newspaper advertisement of the time shows a photograph of Pat Boone, golf club in hand saying:

Come 'swing with me.....  
At beautiful  
OCEAN SHORES  
Everything to do – under the sun



"We are in the business of creating the most complete tactical examination in order to test the abilities of the widest range of golfers. We are also in the business of creating an atmosphere, attitude and frame of mind", the words of Robert Von Hagge, the golf course architect. Boots Berckemeyer was in charge of construction. Course specifications provided for greens of 12,000 to 15,000 square feet and tees up to 100 yards long. The course would measure 6700 yards from the championship tees, 6550 yards from the member's tees and 6200 yards from the associate's tees. Distances could be amended due to the length of the tee formations. Hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of material would be moved to create hills and fill in swamp, most of this was sand moved from the 25 acres of lakes created. As motorised golf-buggies were widely used in the USA, the design of the course made provision for them. The company announced that they were experimenting with Tiff-Bermuda grass as it was tougher and better growing all year round than bent or couch and that it would hold pitch shots and putts better. Course Manager was Mr Cliff Meredith, who would supervise the project.

Eventually the construction of the clubhouse got under way in June, 1970 and it was anticipated that it would be completed in January, 1971 to coincide with the opening of the golf course. The clubhouse had an enclosed area of some 11,540 square feet and contained a restaurant, member's lounge, golf pro shop and as well members' and associates' locker rooms. This was to be the scene of many parties and get-togethers of the early residents and the Princess Properties staff.

In February, 1971 the developers announced the completion of stage 1 and the change in their name to Princess Properties Pty Limited. The developers had experienced cashflow problems with their international developments, causing the slow down in Ocean Shores. Mr Daniel Ludwig, reputed to be one of the wealthiest men in the world at that time, owner of hotels, shipping companies, loan companies, mining interests, had purchased the project from Wendall West.

In June, 1971 the building of the Orana townhouse apartment complex, 33 self-contained units, commenced adjacent to the clubhouse.

Also during that June, Bruce Devlin arrived to check the progress of the golf course and brought with him the then Australian Women's Amateur Golf Champion, Jan Stephenson.

Finally in May, 1972, 9 holes of the golf course were available for play after set backs from droughts, cyclones and the wettest year for 79 years, with the additional 9 holes available 2 months later. Furnishings, fittings and carpeting for the Club House were arranged. An attendance of 200 guests at the inaugural meeting of the Golf Club appointed a steering committee to finalise the Articles of Association, negotiate the terms of occupation of the Course and Club House with Princess Properties and arrange for the Incorporation of the Club. The Club became incorporated on 10<sup>th</sup> October and arrangements were to proceed to obtain a liquor licence.

The opening of the full 18 holes took place in October, 1972. Although marred by rain, the opening day was successful. 60 members attended luncheon at the clubhouse. Ladies with LGU handicaps played in the opening day with the men. Marie Turner won the first Associates trophy, with Gwen Acton one point behind.

A snack service was available from the clubhouse between 12 noon and 2pm and soft drinks, cigarettes and golfing needs were provided at the Bar. Support was needed to keep it at a satisfactory economical level. John Dawson, the then Pro at Murwillumbah, gave lessons each Monday morning.

It took some 2 years to obtain the liquor licence. In the interim it was necessary to have day licences, when The Golf Club had to nominate the days it required the restricted licence. It was hard to justify a liquor licence with such a small population, the area was already serviced by the Brunswick Hotel and Bowling

Club and the north by the Billinudgel Hotel. The developers had allowed Unit 4 in the Orana Townhouse complex to be the unofficial bar, golfers took their own liquor to the unit prior to teeing off and after handing in their cards, the men moved back to Unit 4 to socialise. Locals used to meet at the clubhouse 2/3 nights during the week and on the weekends to indicate the need for the licence, it was B.Y.O and Phil Govett recalls how boring the conversations became after everybody ran out of news and gossip. The numbers increased when the group would get wind of the prospect of a "random" check by the Licencing Court. The sessions in Unit 4 had to stop when Maurie and Hazel Sorrell purchased the unit. They went on to establish the first golf shop and were later joined by Barry Burgess as the Club professional.

Jane Fry can remember the day that the full application was to be heard at the Murwillunbah Court House. It was a requirement that local residents appear in support of the application. For those who have not taken too much notice of the Murwillunbah Court House, it is in a central position in the main street. As you walk past you tend to look up to see people sitting and standing on the front verandah and the first thought is I wonder what they are doing there. Jane said that she and the others were concerned that those passing by would think straight away are these were the criminal element of Ocean Shores, after all, in those days of a smaller population, you tended to know a lot more people from neighbouring towns!

From the first sale of land on the Estate, the Ocean Shores Community Centre Limited commenced. This was a group of which every lot owner at Ocean Shores became a member. For a fee of \$24 a year (referred to as encumbrances), the lot owner was entitled to his or her say in the building of the Ocean Shores community, and shared the social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities that the Community Centre promoted. It also maintained open spaces, recreation centres and other common facilities within the residential subdivision. It was designed to improve the value and marketability of homes and would lead to the establishment of amenities beyond the scope of the local council. Membership was obligatory for 10 years after the date of the initial sale and passed to successive owners. Committees were formed to ensure that building covenants were observed and that every building application conformed with the general standard required.

A milestone of 1973 for the Estate saw the construction of the Orana Bridge. Built at a cost of \$180,000 it was a five-span bridge and 215 feet long. Other milestones were that all available lots produced had been sold and lot values rose between \$7,000 and \$20,000. Ninety-two dwellings were complete or under construction.

This also became the year of the Lady Associates. Jan Rowley (Larracy) tells how the then Secretary Manager of the Golf Club approached her with \$10 in hand and requested that she form a Lady Associates Club. Jan was amazed as they only had 5 ladies with a handicap but was assured that they would be given every assistance. On 21<sup>st</sup> March, 73 the Associates held their first meeting to form their own golf group. It was certainly a matter of the locals needing to be involved, of the 27 people who attended, 11 were elected to office. Many of these were first time golfers and the staff and/or spouses of the developers.

The foundation president was Jan Rowley, Inger Odner and Gwen Acton Vice Presidents, Captain Jane Fry, Secretary Mary McMahon, Treasurer Suzie Arkel, Committee Joan Corben, Joan Meredith, Colleen Mudge, Eileen Wood and Lisen Miller.

Competition day was set for Wednesday at 9.30, with a chicken run on Fridays.

The first competition was played on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 1973. As the Associates' course had not been rated, it was agreed that these competition days would be a 9 hole event. The day was won by Jan Rowley and Vera Gola won the beginners trophy, which was provided to encourage the influx of new players on maximum handicaps. The next Wednesday event was won by Jane Fry.



Jan is proud to say that the Associates organized their first function, a fashion parade with a delightful array of fashions from Mrs. Newman of Murwillumbah, and the proceeds of the day allowed the committee to repay the original \$10 to the Country Club. Other fundraising activities included art shows and progressive dinners.

Early in July 1973 the course rating was set at 70 by Irene Fuller and Beverley Johnson and the first 18-hole competition on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1973 was won by Inger Odner, who on a 36 handicap, won with a net 76.

The Byron Bay and Mullumbimby Clubs sponsored the affiliation with the NRGDA. Creditability at that time was a concern for the fledgling club, the experienced players attended the Open Days of all of the Northern Rivers, Tweed and some Gold Coast Clubs to show that the members were capable golfers. The committee had received feedback that many of the lady golfers would not come and play Ocean Shores because of the amount of water hazards and the prospect of losing golf balls. This had to be addressed as the Club's first Open Day was set down for 19<sup>th</sup> September 1973.

Jan Rowley and Stella Towle took this in hand. They donned their swimmers, an overshirt and ball scoops and entered the lake at the first fairway. Stella was very cunning, she took a tomato stake with her, which she used to test her footing but Jan did not have the same result and disappeared regularly. They then moved onto the second fairway and when some men started to play figured that they would continue at the 17<sup>th</sup>. They finished up with approximately 50 balls, which Stella took home and washed. The Open Day was a successful day with a field of 128 players. The cost was \$1.80, which included morning and afternoon tea and the ladies catered for it themselves. The golf balls were later given away.

Some of the ladies who were those beginners share the following stories with us:

Judy Anning – she remembers the small creek that crossed from the back of the 6<sup>th</sup> tee, in front of the 2<sup>nd</sup> green and into the small lake. Judy took 21 shots to carry that water and is proud to say that she did not lose a ball, as it was hit in it was retrieved and hit again until she finally carried onto the green. What persistence for a novice. Fortunately that water hazard was later covered in.

Vicki Loomes – when playing her first game was absolutely disgusted that her marker had the hide to count all of her airswings as shots, after all she did not hit the ball – she did not return to playing for another 15 years.

When the first AGM was held on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1973 Stella Towle remembers that they did not have enough attending for a quorum. A quick call to Wendall West saw their staff released for enough time to allow the voting to take place.

The first championships played in August, 74 saw Jan Rowley winning by 2 strokes over 36 holes from Bessie Royle. That year also saw the formation of the first Pennant team, playing in C grade.

The year 1975 saw Margaret "Ma" Ring and Nan Boyd become the Club's first patrons and Nan joins us today.

Princess Properties were not prepared to continue maintaining the golf course indefinitely and in 1975 offered the Golf Club the assets of the course and clubhouse for \$625,000 on interest free terms, repayable over 20 years.

The Club had a small but active membership but was not generating the funds to be viable. In 1977 Princess Properties provided their staff, machinery and materials to meet half of the cost of the first

bowling green and the Ocean Shores Community Centre provided \$12,000. The Ocean Shores Bowling Club was formed and it was hoped that this would assist the financial position.

1978 saw the rerating of the course at LGU 71 and the introduction of the Chincogan Roller, an annual match play competition between Mullumbimby and Ocean Shores.

Also in 1978 the Golf Club appealed to the Ocean Shores Community Centre for help so that the asset would not be sold to overseas interests. The members of the Community Centre had to agree and a loan was negotiated with Princess Properties. By this time the Community Centre had amassed assets such as the developer's second sales office (now the Pacific Palms Motel) and a farm behind the Salad Bowl Caravan Park. These were sold off and with cash and income from the lot holder encumbrances, the loan was fully repaid in 1979.

The Ocean Shores Country Club Limited was formed, it was granted a Liquor Licence on 4<sup>th</sup> October, 79 and members of the licenced club had the opportunity to be part of the associated clubs of Golf, Bowls, Garden etc.

Also in 1979 the Associates Day was changed to Tuesday, with a ball competition on Thursday. This was also the year for the beginning of the Os-Mur Sheild between Murwillumbah and Ocean Shores.

Over some time a hospitality buggy had been used, complete with esky, providing drinks for the golfers on Special days. It was then decided to borrow a tent, which was pitched on the area of the current halfway house. The counter was a card table and a few chairs were provided. Large containers were filled with ice and volunteers served. This proved to be very successful and in 1985, when extensions were made to the Clubhouse members took it on to construct the halfway house. Volunteer working bees cleaned the bricks removed from the Clubhouse and the building was also constructed using volunteer labour. The Lady Golfers provided \$1,000 to allow for materials and a small fit-out. Since then the halfway house has been operated by the Lady Golfers and staffed with volunteers. It has proven to be a most successful venture, extensions were required as it grew and the proceeds are returned to the golf course in purchase of equipment, road construction etc. Members should feel proud of the achievement as it would not have happened but for the initial work of the volunteer labour force.

The mid 1980's also saw the return of some of the original beginners, who had taken time off to have their families. Barry Burgess provided a ball competition for these players, who could not obtain their handicaps and play in competitions until they could gross 135 shots for the 18 holes. Judy Andrews remembers handing in a card to Barry marked "LC", when Barry questioned her card she advised that "LC" stood for 'lost count'. The restriction of 135 was reduced to 125 and the beginners gradually joined the regular competition. Those ladies have gone on to become committee members and pennant players.

This year Stella Towle, Bessie Royle and Joan Mills are welcomed as Club Patrons.

Our Club enjoys a good reputation, continuing with strong leadership in our Committees and a very loyal and competitive spirit. We currently have 90 members with LGU handicaps and this year have a pennant team in each division representing the Club. This augurs well for the future.

We have joined here today to look back on the Lady Golfers first 25 years. For many it would be an opportunity to learn something of the community spirit of the early Ocean Shores Estate and our Club. For longtime residents and members, it rekindles fond memories of good times, hard work, long-term friendships that have been forged over that time and to think of those not with us today.

If "Ma" Ring was here with us today she would be the first to raise her glass in a toast and I invite you to charge your glasses as we salute the first 25 years and look forward to the success of the next 25 years.

**On June 26, 1998, a short history of the Ocean Shores Women's Bowling Club was recorded in a presentation by a founding member, Jean Sorsby.**

### **A Brief History Of OCEAN SHORES WOMENS BOWLING CLUB**

*In mid 1977 it was decided to form Ocean Shores Womens Bowling Club after a number of men had established themselves as the Ocean Shores Mens Bowling Club.*

*A group of interested ladies gathered at a house on the estate, two of the ladies present were members of Brunswick Heads WBC and both wanted to be the inaugural President of OSWBC, one lady lived in Ocean Shores and the other in Brunswick Heads. This state of affairs reached the ears of the Executive of NRDWBA and our first application to join the NSWWBA through the NRDWBA was turned down. A few chosen words were spoken to the ladies and they were told to find an early solution to the matter.*

*In the meantime another lady, a bowler from Sydney now residing on the estate, also had ideas of becoming the President.*

*The ladies wanting to form the Womens Bowling Club met at the Clubhouse one evening with Mr Hugh Gregory the then President of the Mens Club (now living in Lansdowne, Queensland) who was in the chair for a meeting to vote for a Committee.*

*A secret ballot was taken for the office of President and the lady from Sydney won, one lady from BHWBC became Vice President, the other got the huff! The new VP had to resign from BHWBC in a hurry. On the same evening Gladys Todd and myself were appointed as Selectors our reaction to that was 'what are Selectors and what do they do'? We soon found out!*

*Gladys and I played in all Gala Days, Medleys, the Three Day Carnival in Lismore and many events just to learn all about the job of selectors, we were helped by many bowlers.*

*The club was officially affiliated to NSWWBA in March 1978 and the club was opened by Mrs D Atkinson the then President of NSWWBA, Mrs R Levy President of OSWBC and Mr Bruce Padman President of the Golf Club, Bruce still is a life member of the Country Club.*

*The membership was twenty-eight and Foundation Members still registered with NSWWBA are J Sorsby, G Todd, J Radley, J Mills and L Marshall.*

*No help was given to the ladies to help finance the club so monies were raised by raffles, weekly bring and buy, 50c green fees, 20c tea and coffee and the odd donation.*

*Our first Gala Day was held in 1978 and as we had only one green the event had to be held over two days! We made many mistakes.*

*On the second day it was so cold, the afternoon game was called off. The members provided the morning & afternoon teas and lunches for the two days. There were too many Chiefs and not enough Indians in the kitchen but over the years we have improved.*



*Our biggest fund raising efforts began when the bottom green collapsed after days of very heavy rain, now known as the Mothers Day Flood.*

*For the very first lunch held I supplied the pumpkin soup for forty at the time we had heavy rains. The creeks and wash ways overflowed, water covered the main road but Bill and I did a round trip to Ocean Shores via Main Arm and Mullumbimby.*

*We left the soup somewhere in Ocean Shores and turned for home. We spent the next five days cut off from the world (when it rains heavily you must have plenty of grog, bread and toilet rolls in the house). That was the first of many 'Progressive Lunches'.*

*We also held Fashion Parades around the Club Pool, raffled many donations of \$50 bills, held Bring and Buy Sales (in the days when it was bring and buy), had trophy donations and many offers of assistance, none from the Royal or NSWWB.*

*The monies raised helped to restore seats, plants, pay for shades, corner flags, soil, fences, hire of machinery and so on. While the bottom green had a large slice broken away at the back we continued to play on that green, one way north south and only used five rinks. Peter Mills was the greenkeeper and did a wonderful job of keeping the green in such great condition*

*The Golf Club had now become the Country Club Ltd and a court case against the Byron Shire Council was heard in Sydney. The club won and was awarded a sum of money for 'inadequate inspections of the green when being built'. The amount settled out of court did not cover all the restorations so the money raised by the ladies was a great help.*

*I cannot remember what year a flag was presented to the Club by the then State Member for Murwillumbah but as he was late arriving fourteen lady bowlers played the Link Poker Machine. We won the jackpot of about \$6000 the noise we made was deafening and the win was three weeks before Christmas, what a thrill.*

*There must be many more stories to tell. If you have any about the club please let me know and I will put them on record.*

**Jean Sorsby.**  
**26th June 1998**

**The AGM on March 4, 1999** for the year ending December 31, 1998, listed Eric Simon in the chair, Peter Lundie as vice chair, Glen Henry as treasurer, Michael Kelly as golf rep, Maurice Murphy as bowls rep, and directors: Tony Skelton, Colin McMenamin, Jim Sullivan, Denise Devir, Les Wyatt, and Ray Bartlett. Membership totalled 1653 including juniors and cadets.

.....