

of the

The Franklin Club Inc

1922 - 1997



Foreword

In compiling this history, the Franklin Club gratefully thanks the
late H.B. Hood whose efforts in producing the
Golden Jubilee book containing the first 50 years,
are basically reproduced here.

My thanks also to Matthew Brady for his valuable contribution
in the preparation of this 75th Jubilee Booklet.

G. F. Butcher



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Past & Present Members

Welcome to this the **75th Jubilee** Celebration of our Franklin Club. Records show that the first meeting of the Club was held on the 18th August 1922.

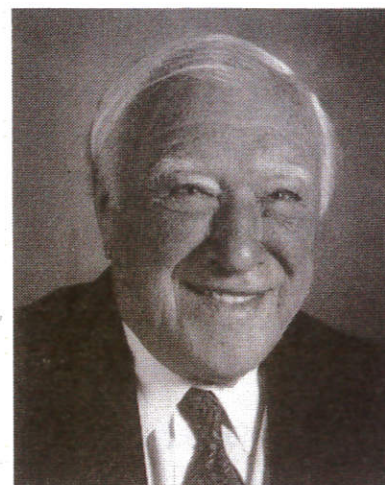
The Club has come a long way in it's 75 years, with improvements having been ongoing during this time.

Our present situation is a pleasant mixture of very firm stability and excellent progress.

The town is on the move in a very big way and those of us placed in charge of the administration of the Club must be, - and are, very aware of keeping with the pace.

Please enjoy the weekend of celebrations and drive with care on your return home.

Don Smith
President



MESSAGE FROM THE PATRON

Dear Members

Our Franklin Club originated to serve the local area with social amenities, comforts and good fellowship. A Club where members can meet and enjoy each others company.

I feel, over the 75 years of operation, this has been the prime objective of the Presidents and Committees, with wonderful success.

We have a great Club, and I feel proud and happy to serve as it's Patron.

LN. Sheppard
Patron

MESSAGE FROM LARRY BELL

It is indeed a special time to be Manager of The Franklin Club as they celebrate their 75th Jubilee.

Congratulations must go to previous Presidents, Committees, Managers and Members who have guided the Club through the past 75 years.

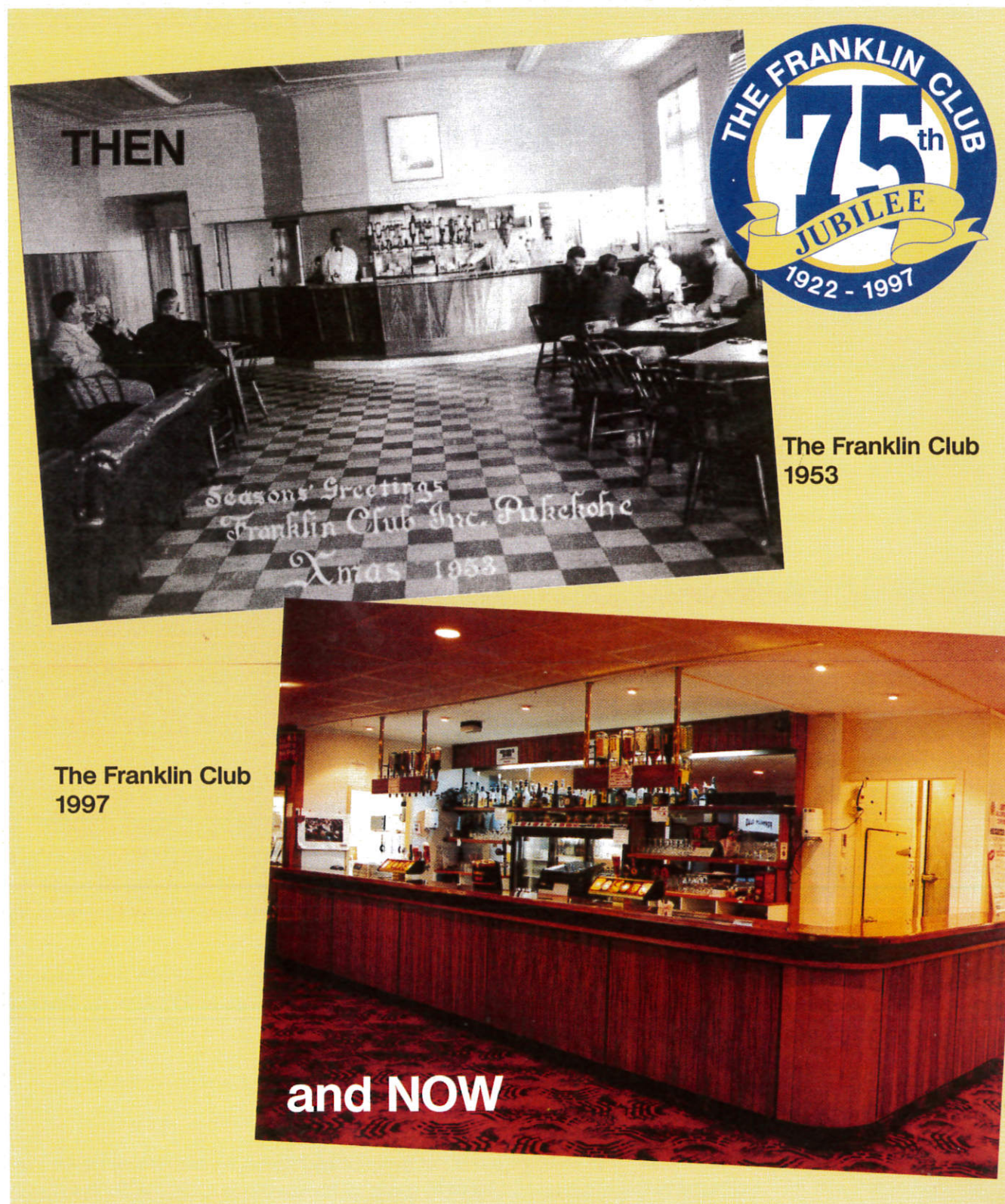
It is very pleasing to see over 200 new Members join in the past two years. The Club maintains a nice warm and friendly atmosphere where Members can relax with friends, play our modern gambling machines, place a bet at our popular TAB or partake in darts, snooker or indoor bowls.

The Club's restaurant is also a very popular place for our Members and visitors to dine. Darryl and Debbie, our restaurant Managers, together with their staff are always there to make you welcome. The rebuilding, approximately 18 months ago, of the main bar area, has been very well received by the Members and the staff. The Committee are currently considering a similar type of reconstruction of the restaurant/bar area.

The future of the Club looks very bright providing we continue to always be finding ways and means to encourage our Members to use the Club on a regular basis.

From myself, my wife Allison, son Richard Assistant Manager and all our loyal and friendly staff, we congratulate the Club on its fine achievement and thank the Executive Committee and Members for giving us the opportunity to serve in the Franklin Club.





THEN



The Franklin Club
1953

The Franklin Club
1997

and NOW



A Short History of The Franklin Club (Inc)

1922 - 1997

1922 - 1930

To recall, accurately, times and places of seventy-five years ago is an almost impossible feat, but what does appear certain is that the first organised meeting with a view to forming the Club, was held in August 1922 in Mr Percy George's tearooms in Lower King Street, in premises now used as a Tattoo Parlour. The meeting was convened by Charles McCullough and late member, Bill Short, who was present at this inaugural meeting, recalled that a large crowd attended and many were unable to get in. Mr James Roulston, Snr., was in the chair, and among those who are known to have been present were C.K. Lawrie, Percy Boyd, Alex Gill, Walter Wright, H.G.R. Mason, Fred Hosking, Bill Grandison, Harry Burrows and many others.

At this meeting the Club was formed with James Roulston, Snr., as the first President Charles McCullough as the first Secretary. All those present duly became members, legally nominated and seconded, and it was at this meeting that the Franklin Club officially came into existence. The exact date of the meeting is not now known but from various references made in later Club records, it appears almost certainly to have been August 18th, 1922.

Initially some difficulty was experienced locating suitable premises to serve as clubrooms and during this period the activities of the Club consisted almost entirely of monthly meetings followed by supper, and usually held in Mr

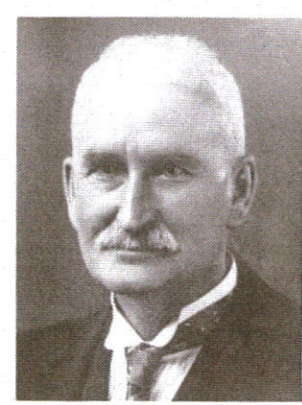
George's tearooms. However, a general meeting of Club members was held in May, 1924, the chief spokesman being James Roulston, Snr., and Fred Hosking, and it was at this meeting that the Club really got off the ground.

In the period since the inaugural meeting in 1922 the Club had barely functioned as such, but shortly after the 1924 meeting, moved into its first premises, Clarke's Buildings, at the corner of King and Hall Streets. This building was built by Mr Chas. Clarke, publican of the Pukekohe Hotel, and at the time of the Club settling in, was owned by Mr Jeffries, father of late member Albert Jeffries. The upper floor of the building was taken over by the Club and consisted of a billiards room, a card room, a reading room, and a locker room at one end. Two billiard tables were purchased from Mr Bill Short, payment for these tables been made by the rather novel method of handing over the proceeds from the tables each week until full payment had been made.

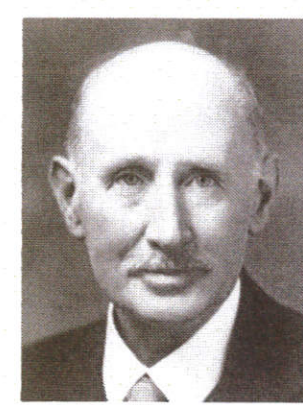
Liquor supplies were organised on the locker system, hours of service being from 5pm to midnight on Friday nights only in the early stages, and at a later date until 11pm on week nights. Evening control was in the care of a Committeeman, based on a roster system. Initially, the Club engaged the services of a custodian cum cleaner casual steward, the first of these being Mr George Adcock who lived on the premises and occupied a small, rather dismal room at



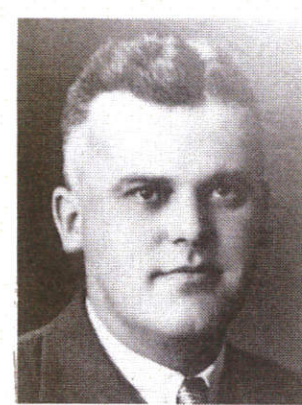
JAS. ROULSTON, Snr.
President 1923-24



C. K. LAWRIE
President 1925-26



A. C. GILL
President 1927-28



F. A. HOSKING
President 1929-30

the top of the stairs.

Such were the beginnings of the Franklin Club. In the early years it proved to be a great haven for businessmen and particularly bachelors of whom there were a good many in the banks and other offices, and in the law practises. Cards were played extensively, billiards was very popular with the members and the standard of play generally was very high. There was a well-stocked reading room with books and magazines to cater for reader enthusiasts among the members.

The Club tried various methods to control the sale and consumption of liquor, all quite illegal but nevertheless having the stamp of respectability which seemed to satisfy most of the members. The locker system was, in the view of many, a particular iniquitous system. the generous were penalised and there seemed to be something of an unwritten law that corks were intended to be extracted but never to be replaced.

The Club graduated, if that is the correct word, to a system of sales which was quite unlawful but because of the undoubtedly high standing of the Club's administrators in the community, other members might have been encouraged to believe that it must have been all legal and in order. It certainly was not and most members were relieved when years later a charter was granted including, as was then the vogue, off sales. It was a great relief to all to be able to enjoy the fraternity of the Club without the guilt complex which had to be swallowed with every ounce of ale or spirits consumed.



E. J. MORRISON
President 1933-34



S. P. DAY
President 1935



M. S. CAMPBELL
President 1936



H. BURROWS
President 1937-38

1930 - 1940

During the years leading up to the Depression of the early thirties, membership and activities remained almost static.

With the coming of the Depression the Club just barely functioned. Subscriptions were reduced to one pound and annual turnover was in the low hundreds. The minutes of the meeting of February 1933 speak of a large number of members being in arrears with subscriptions and Club life generally was at a low ebb. In June 1933 the steward's wages were reduced by 10 shillings per week and the lessors of the building agreed to a reduction in rental of 7 shillings per week for a period of six months. These were hard times indeed and the effects were being felt in the Franklin Club as in all walks of life. The total membership of the Club at this time is not known but the Annual General Meeting of 1934 was attended by the President and eighteen members of whom fourteen were elected to the Management Committee.

An average Friday night attendance at the Club during this period would be about twenty members. In November 1934, the Club's first steward, Mr George Adcock, died and his place was taken by Mr George Butcher, Grandfather of Past President George and present member Gavin, as the first permanent steward of the Club at a wage of 2 pounds per week.

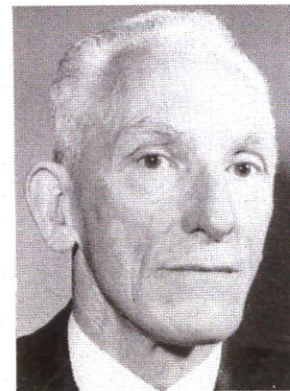
As prosperity returned to the land, subscriptions were increased but only to the point of making ends meet, no thought being given to providing for future expansion. A sure sign of the improving times was the considerable increase in

nominations coming forward for membership.

During this pre-war period the Annual Ladies' Night was quite an event in the town's social calendar. The Committee felt that these functions should be self-supporting and set a price of 3 shillings per double ticket for the occasion! Unbelievable in this day and age. The hour set for the official conclusion of festivities on Ladies Night was 3am and one has only to have listened to members of these times reminiscing to realise that these were indeed truly heroic occasions.

The members room was cleared for dancing, a good orchestra was engaged and in addition to almost non-stop, dancing the ladies were also entertained at table bowls with prizes for the winning pairs. Usually, very good cocktails were provided to "break the ice" and the President made the speech of welcome, responded to by his lady. It was customary for the President to pay a "fee of honour" of 5 pound or so for the occasion, quite a considerable sum for those days. All in all, the Ladies Night was truly a night to be remembered.

In 1936, with definite signs of a returning prosperity, it was felt that the Club should set its sights on securing land and buildings of its own. In March 1937 a building fund was set up, a sum of 1 hundred pounds being transferred from accumulated funds and, together with the addition of the recently instituted nomination fee, this formed the nucleus of the fund. Various methods were used to augment this fund, from the hiring of two-poker machines to the introduction of the notorious "punch boards". These proved to be real money



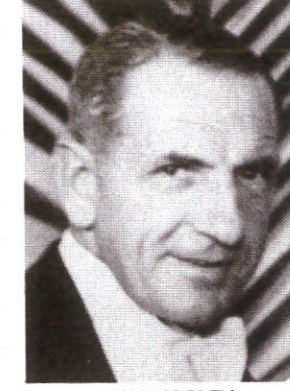
D. J. GORDON
President 1940-41



A.F. BROWN
President 1942-43



W. J. SHORT M.B.E.
President 1944



V. W. MORLEY
President 1945-46

spinners but were, alas, eventually banned by the Customs. With the coming of war in 1939, all thoughts of building or purchasing new premises had to be abandoned.

1940 - 1950

The Club and its members entered wholeheartedly into the war effort. Funds were invested in war loans, donations were made to patriotic causes and members of the services of many countries stationed in the area were invited to partake of the Club's hospitality. Numerous members of the Club served with distinction in the armed forces both in New Zealand and overseas and altogether the Club was most conscious of its duty and appreciative of the opportunity and pleasure of entertaining and helping servicemen.

In 1944, with the obvious swing of the war in favour of the Allies, members' thoughts again turned to the question of establishing a permanent home for the Club. In June of that year, a building section in Massey Avenue adjacent to the fire station was purchased at a cost of 475 pounds. At last the Club could plan for the future and renewed efforts were made to augment the building fund. A select committee was set up to advise the committee regarding club management and building prospects, and discussions were held as to the desirability or otherwise of applying for a charter for the Club.

There were some members, strange to say, who were opposed to a charter and preferred the illegal method of

under the counter sales of liquor, something which continually gave a good many club members the jitters.

However, the moderate view prevailed and at a meeting held on 22nd March, 1950, two decisions of far-reaching importance to the Club were taken. Firstly, the Secretary was authorised to apply for a Club Charter and, secondly, it was proposed that a special general meeting of members be held to authorise the Committee to exercise the option to purchase, given by Mr J.M.Stevenson, the property at the corner of East Street and Station Road at a price of 4200 pounds.

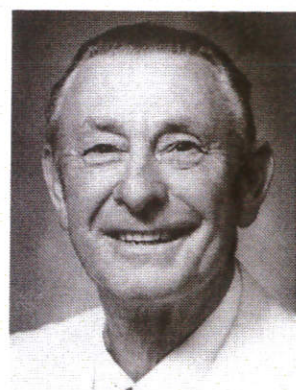
On this section stood a large old house which had, during its lifetime, been occupied by no less than three doctors, Drs Wake, McWhirter and Lumsden. At this same meeting it was proposed that the Secretary advertise the Club's section in Massey Avenue for sale by tender. The section was eventually sold and is now occupied by Super Liquor.

1950 - 1960

Initially, the new premises in East Street were let, but towards the end of the year, steps were taken to alter and renovate the house with a view to moving in early in the New Year. However, due to delays in carrying out the necessary alterations, together with some delay in the granting of the charter, the move to the new site did not take place until July 1952.



G. R. BASHAM
President 1947-51



W. J. WRIGHT
President 1952-53



J. D. ROULSTON, Jr.
President 1954-55



M. J. COOPER
President 1956-57

The first committee meeting in the Club's own building was held on 21st August, 1952 with the President, Mr W.J.Wright, in the chair, and on 13th September, 1952, with the renovations complete, the building was officially opened by the late Mr M.R.Grierson, Patron and Past President of the Club.

Members quickly settled into the new premises and with the newly granted charter operating, the Club went from strength to strength. Membership increased by leaps and bounds, so much so that it was felt by many that a limit should be applied. During the first fifteen months in the new premises three attempts were made to limit the membership, all being defeated. During this period, membership increased by about one hundred, or roughly one-third.

Then followed a period of consolidation with many improvements being made to the main building and new equipment purchased. In March 1954 the section adjoining the Club on the South side was purchased at a cost of 1250 pounds. Considerable work was done on this section for use as a car-park and this proved to be a tremendous asset to the Club. Membership had by this time grown to almost 450 with a staff of two permanent stewards and one casual. The head steward lived in a flat on the premises but with the increase in membership, it was decided that a house be built on the Club's new section for the head steward, together with a separate storeroom and garage adjacent to the Club's premises.

This work was carried out in 1956 at a cost of slightly over 4000 pound.

Through the late fifties, the Club continued to make progress with membership and facilities increasing side by side. However, by the end of the decade, it was apparent that the Club was outgrowing its rather dilapidated old building. In 1959 the annual Ladies Night, due to lack of space, was held in the Town Hall for the first time, and at the same time the building committee were asked to bring forward proposals on a new building project. As a result of these proposals, alterations and additions were made to the billiards room and kitchen, and at a later date, a substantial bulk store was added to the south-west corner of the building. This store was later incorporated in the new building which replaced the old house in 1965.

1960 - 1970

During this period in the life of the Club social activities kept pace with the building additions. Every opportunity was taken to entertain visiting sports teams and celebrities and on at least two occasions, All Black teams were entertained to lunch at the Club. Exchange visits with kindred clubs were conducted on a regular basis and were, for the most part, very well attended. The billiard tables were always very popular with members. Numerous exhibitions were given by visiting celebrities such as Horace Lindrum and Clark McConachy and on more than one occasion, the South Auckland Billiards and Snooker Championships were held in the Club.



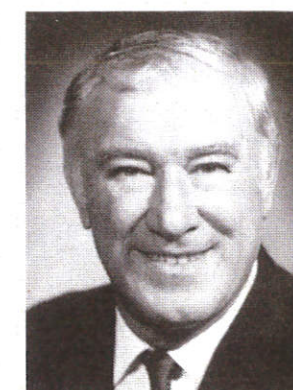
T. PATERSON
President 1958-59



C. MASSEY
President 1960-61



A. G. PERRY
President 1962-63



LN. SHEPPARD
President 1964-65

The annual Ladies' Night, now held in the Town Hall, continued to be the major social event of the year, while Ladies' Nights were held regularly on the Club premises and were well attended by members and their ladies.

In March 1965 the management committee approved a plan for building additions and alterations brought forward by the building committee. This approval was ratified at the Annual General Meeting in May and the Club embarked on an extensive building programme which was to erase completely the old building except for the recently completed bulk storeroom. A tender from Cronin & Escott Ltd. for 15,000 pounds was accepted and the work commenced in February 1966. During the tremendous upheaval caused by this work, the Club remained open and was able to maintain a service to members, albeit on a limited basis due largely to the wonderful effort of the management committee of the day under the leadership of L.N.Sheppard.

November 12th, 1966 was to be a red-letter day in the history of the Club as it marked the official opening of the new building and the fulfilment of the dreams of members from as far back as 1922. The official opening ceremony was held at 5pm on that day and was followed by a social function in the evening which was attended by about 200 people. The new building was well and truly opened and a new era in the life of the Franklin Club commenced.

Since that momentous day, a steady expansion of

membership and amenities continued. An event of far-reaching importance to the Club during these years was the introduction of 10 o'clock closing in October 1967. This had a tremendous effect on the operations, and indeed on the very nature of the Club. Another milestone was the admission of twenty-year olds to Club membership in May 1970, thus continuing a general trend towards a younger membership.

1970 - 1980

In the 70's the Club continued to improve on its successes of the previous years. Membership grew steadily from 583 in 1972 to a point when it was decided to have a waiting list once membership reached 700. This point was reached in February 1975.

In July 1972 a notice of motion was received by the Committee, from members requesting that a Special General Meeting be held for the purpose of amending the rules to permit Lady visitors. At a Special General Meeting held 17th August 1972 for that reason, the rules were amended to allow Lady visitors "on such occasions and times as decided by Committee but not exceeding one specified night each week"

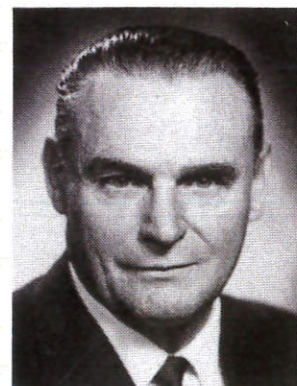
In spite of what now seems "prehistoric" rules, the Club still continued to prosper. It quickly became apparent that the alterations carried out in 1966 would not be sufficient for the future years ahead. It was time to start thinking and

planning the next round of additions and/or alterations. In 1972 a Development Committee was formed to look at various options regarding the future of the Club. Whilst these included the obvious alterations and additions, the possibility of resiting the Club was also an option.

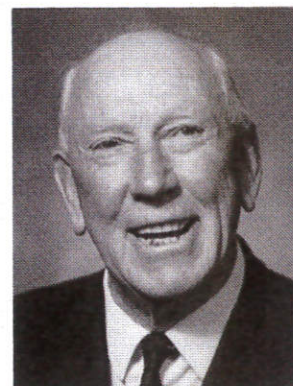
July 1975 saw the report back from the Development Committee. At a Special General Meeting the Committee recommended that \$94,000 be raised for alterations to the Club. This motion was heavily defeated by the members present.

Whilst this was a set-back to the Clubs Committee, the subject of alterations never went away. As time proceeded it became more and more obvious to all that something had to be done eventually. In June 1977 the Committee tried again and recommended that investigations be carried out in conjunction with NZ Breweries, into upgrading the Wholesale department and the addition of a new West Wing.

In May 1980, at the Annual General Meeting, the members passed a motion giving the Committee the power to raise the necessary finance to proceed with the proposed alterations. These alterations were to cost approximately \$240,000, a large increase on the defeated figure of 1975.



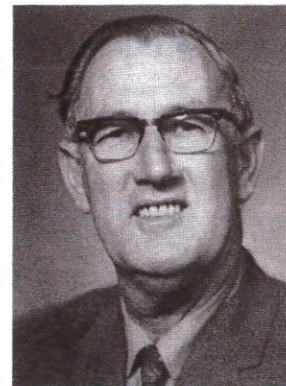
G. H. WILLIAMS
President 1966-67



F. HOLZ
President 1968-69



W. REIDY
President 1970-71



H.B. HOOD
President 1972-73

1980 - 1990

The plans for the alterations were drawn up and tenders called for in March 1981. On April 30th the tender was let to Max Doull Builders and work commenced once all the necessary permits were received. The alterations were officially opened on December 5th and Ladies were admitted after 1pm. These alterations created the snooker area and Committee room as we now know them. The old snooker area became the kitchen. This was a major change and increased the size of the Club dramatically.

1983 saw a major change in the attitudes of the Club. It was no longer just to be the domain of males. The rules were again amended, this time to allow Lady visitors into the club at any time.

The mid 80's also saw a change in the financial state of the Club. The mortgage repayments started to hurt as patronage began a reversal over the previous several years. As mortgage rates climbed various Committees got caught in the spiral of refinancing to eliminate the overdraft, overdraft exceeded the limit again, another round of refinancing.

Membership subscriptions increased as another source of revenue. This only slowed the number joining and did not really assist in the problem.

1986 saw the introduction of Gaming machines which contributed a small, but always welcome, amount to the annual income.

At a Special General Meeting held in May 1988, a

motion to amend the rules to allow Lady members was defeated.

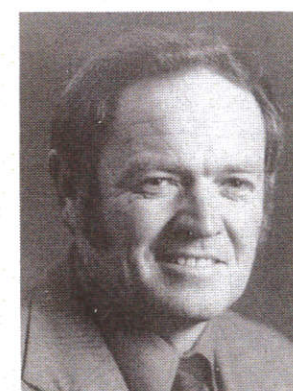
In 1989 minor alterations were carried out to the Dining and Bar area. This was necessary due to the increasing number of Members using the Dining facilities. User pay caught up with Members in 1989 when "light meters" were installed on the Billiard tables. This caused some dismay to Members but eventually most came to accept it.

1990 - 1997

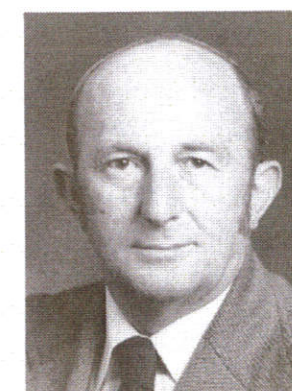
These years began as the previous decade ended. The Club was still in a critical financial situation. The only way that the Club could still exist was to keep increasing the mortgage each time the overdraft limit was exceeded. An example of how we had really got nowhere over several years, is in 1980 we borrowed \$240,000 for the alterations. In May 1993 a refinancing exercise increased our term loan to \$150,000 plus an overdraft of \$20,000. Only \$70,000 less 13 years later.

At a Special General Meeting held 27th May 1992, the Club rule book was changed dramatically. This paved the way for Lady membership which this time was adopted by the members.

At the Annual General Meetings of the early 1990's, the subject of how we could encourage younger members



J. D. WORTHINGTON
President 1974-75



F. A. FRY
President 1976-77



K. N. McLEOD
President 1978-79



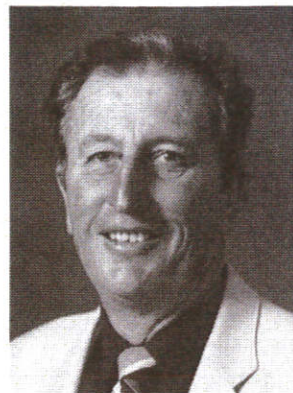
J. R. RUSSEK
President 1980-81



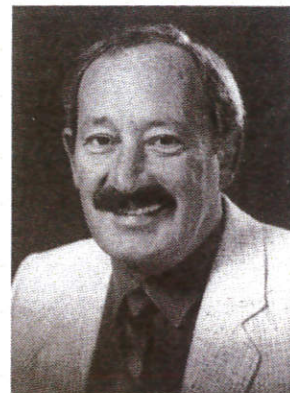
L. J. SHEPPARD
President 1982-83



J. A. MIDDLETON
President 1984



W. P. ANSELM
President 1985-86



G. W. MORRISON
President 1987-89

was always discussed. The Committee of 1993 introduced Family membership as a way of trying to achieve this goal. It was hoped that with younger members we may be able to trade our way out of the position that the Club found itself in. In September 1994 the TAB was introduced to the Club. This proved to be a popular move, so much so that further alterations were carried out in September 1995 to the Bar, TAB and entrance areas.

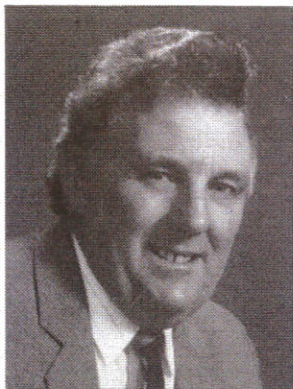
1994 marked the death of Mr M.R.Grierson, our Patron for some 46 years. He was replaced as Patron by Mr LN Sheppard.

Whilst patronage appeared to be on the increase during 1994, the overall financial situation failed to improve. A sub-committee was set up to explore all possible scenarios. In November 1994 a Special General Meeting was held

where the Club's financial dilemma was fully discussed. As a result of this meeting, Larry and Allison Bell were appointed as the new Managers. With their knowledge and involvement in rugby and racing, their experience in the hospitality industry, the Club has had a complete turn around. At that same meeting it was also agreed that the necessary surveying and sub-dividing, to allow the sale of the house, should commence.

More recently, Larry and Allison's son Richard has joined the Management team, and with his enthusiasm and new ideas has proved to be a valuable addition.

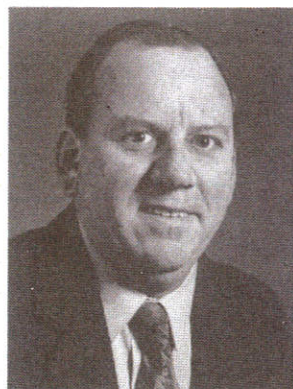
With this Team, a solid Committee, and continued growing support by Members the Club should be able to look forward to the 21st century with confidence.



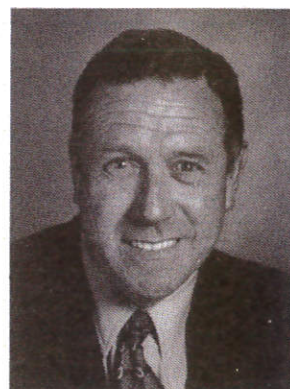
G. F. BUTCHER
President 1989-90



I. H. PURVIS
President 1991-92



K. J. SUTTON
President 1993-96



D. SMITH
President 1997

