

## **Eaton Bowline: Club**

### **Early History and Formation of Club**

Eaton is situated 8 kilometres north of Bunbury in the Dardanup Shire on the east side of the Old Coast Road. It was named after Foster Eaton, who was the first fisheries inspector of the area. The suburb of Eaton was established in the mid 1950's. Of the people living there at the time, four belonged to the Bunbury Bowling Club. They were Tim Kreftling and his wife Maeve; Helen Cowin and Maisie Frost. Because they felt that Eaton should have its own bowling club, they asked Doug Frost, an Eaton resident, to convene a meeting. They felt that Eaton's growth and locality made the project highly desirable. The first meeting was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 1966, in the kitchen of the Eaton Hall and attended by 28 foundation members, including 11 associates. Two decisions were made: 1: a \$2 membership fee; 2: An instruction to search for a suitable site.

Tim Kreitling became the first President, and Doug Frost the first Secretary Treasurer

A tin shed was used for a clubhouse until the present clubrooms were built in 1972. Members had applied for a site for the bowling club, firstly in the reserve in Charterhouse Street, and secondly for a site east of the Eaton Primary School. It looked as if it would be years before either site was approved, until on a visit by Mr Stewart Bovell, the then Minister for Lands, suggested the swamp area (reserve 27516). This was classed as public open space, and was vested in the shire.

On September 20 1968, the Club received permission from the Dardanup Shire to lease the area, bound by Pratt Road, Eagle Crescent, Foster Street and Bobin Street.

In his annual report in 1968, President Tim Kreitling said that "Much unseen effort had at last began to show results. Since 1966 it had been a period of frustration, involving much correspondence, deputations to Ministers, and consultations with the Shire. Always behind these efforts, helping and arranging, was Mr Ivan Manning, MLA, whilst the Shire of Dardanup stood squarely in support. The club now has 70 members.

A busy bee helped clear the dam site, defined the green and put down the first section of level pegs. Further efforts will soon be organised for hand levelling and planting grass. The following year saw the development of the second green established at the Foster Street end of Pratt Road. In between the two greens will be ample space for a building. It is felt that judicious landscaping could include many of the healthy paper bark trees of the area, and in this the Shire were a great help.

Construction of the first green {A}, fell mainly to the over 60 age group, with Eldin Cowin one of the main ones in charge. A dam was sunk in late 1968, and solved the problem of a satisfactory water supply, and bulldozing began with the fill for the green being soil dredged from the Collie River.

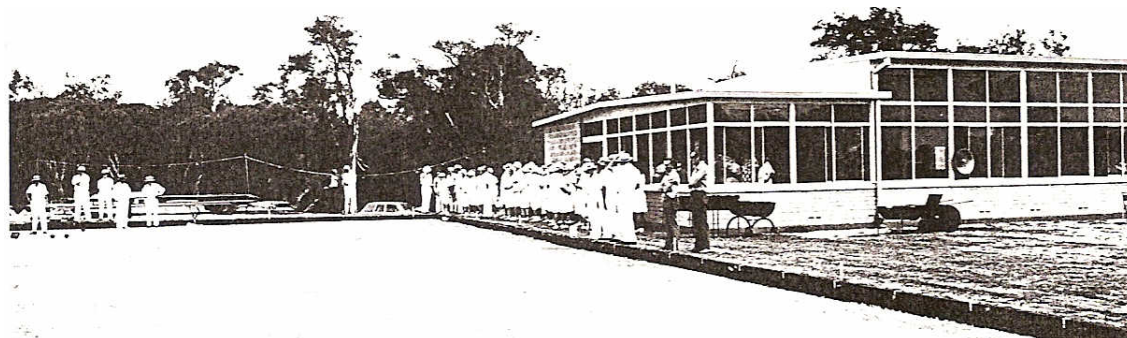
Committee meetings in these early days were held in a cottage at the back of a Mr Andrew Ford's home in Pratt Road. Two delegates from the associates attended monthly meetings right through to November 1974, when they changed to attending quarterly up until 1977.

February 1969 saw the planting of couch runners begin on 'A' green. A small band of ladies assisted in planting and weeding, and that group, with many member and non-member mends, raised thousands of dollars through street stalls, raffles, card afternoons, and dart nights (at the Foord's cottage).

Financial records reveal that \$20 was paid to 3 young boys who helped with the planting. Stories told by some of the older members reveal how ladies shone their car headlights onto the green, whilst the men kept on planting and working in the dark. One particular night it is believed that a dozen bottles of beer were purchased from the nearby Picton Hotel, consumed by the workers on the green, and then the empties buried 6 feet below the bowling surface of the green.

The first actual associates' meeting was on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1969, when a ladies' committee was formed. The first President was Mrs Maisie Frost (1969-70), the Secretary Mrs Ivy Humphreyson (for three years), the Treasurer Mrs Helen Cowin (1969- 70), and the Club Captain Mrs Maeve Kreitling (1970-71).

From a total of 28 members (ladies and men) in 1966, a total of 83 had been reached by 30<sup>th</sup> July 1969. The position where Tim Kreitling had been the only male bowler in the workforce began to change, and the latter part of 1970 saw regular rollups on Saturday afternoons. A picnic atmosphere prevailed, and members rejoiced in their first big achievement. Des Couper (Senior), a very active member at this stage, fabricated a shed which often not only provided safety for tools, but for shelter for members until the opening of the clubhouse on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 1972.



Incorporation of the bowling club was completed on 20.7.69 and rules lodged on 1.8.69.

The problem of a satisfactory water supply had been solved. Dredging spoils from the Collie River raised the salinity in the swamp to 500 grains per gallon. Sand dredged from the river provided fill for the swamp as well as future greens.

Late in 1970, members rolled their first bowls on the new bent green.

On 5.5.71 the lease was signed with the Shire for a period of 21 years. A provisional liquor license was applied for, 14 mats and 7 jacks purchased. The fees at this time were \$10 for ordinary members, and \$6 for associates, with green fees being 20c.

In April 1972, Sir David and Lady Brand called in to the old tin shed where the ladies were sitting on fold-a-chairs having afternoon tea, around a makeshift wooden table. The milestone of the clubhouse was not reached without a wonderful amount of voluntary work, some of it coming from people who were not members. The first Vice President, Reg Fishwick (1972-71) was designer, honorary building inspector, and hard working tradesman as well.

August 1972 saw the club apply to the R WBA for affiliation. This was granted in September, with the membership at 129 members. The ladies had previously affiliated with the WALBA in 1970. Their official opening day was held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1972, with about 70 ladies attending from clubs all around the area. The first social was held in the clubhouse late in December

1972, with about 120 people attending.

Work commenced on the third green in early 1973. Much of the voluntary work was done by quite a few non bowlers - Jack and Charlie Barbetti and Sam Catalano.

Eaton affiliated with the men's South West Bowling League in September 1972, and fielded one second division team in pennants. First captain of the club was Tim Kreitling, who also won the first Club Singles and Pairs Championships. The first novice Champion was Griff Turner (who later became one of the club's top bowlers, Life Member and green keeper); Veterans - Ron Pendlebury; Triples - Reg Hall, Ted Bailey and Ray Smith; Fours - Percy Jones, Griff Turner, Eldin Cowin and John Cowin.

A shield was donated in 1973 by Norm Gray, for the Club Singles Champion.

The first major competition to be held in the club was the Wesfarmers Open Fours in 1972. The first Eaton carnival was in 1974, with 716 players competing during all the events.

At the official opening on 2.12.1972 by Mr Ivan Manning, M.L.A., 56 bowlers played in a fours competition. Also in December 1972, the first scrangers' competition was played on a Sunday morning, using rules based on the Bedford Bowling Club's scrangers' rules.

In 1973, there was a motion at the AGM to have a ceiling of 350 members. This was increased to 400 in 1976, when there were 205 ordinary members and 138 associates. 1979 saw club membership reach the 400 mark. It also saw the official opening of extensions and alterations to the clubhouse on 7.4.79. It was fitting that Eaton's male bowlers celebrated this important year by winning the 1<sup>st</sup> Division pennants in both Saturday and Midweek competitions. They also won the Sumpton Shield (a trophy within the SW League) for the second year running, and the Bignell Shield (fought out between the SW and Blackwood League).

3 Life Membership has been bestowed on 14 members since the club's formation, mainly for their untiring efforts in the early days, which laid the foundation for the wonderful fellowship and competitive spirit that exists in the club. Life members are:

Alec Dixon 1973; Doug Frost 1973; Eldin Cowin 1973; Ivy Humphreyson 1976; Maise Frost 1976; Doug Mills 1976; Helen Cowin 1976; George Tournay 1979; Maeve Kreitling 1979; Ron Pendlebury 1979 (also his dog Tippy); Phil Edwards 1981; Glad Codd 1981; Griff Turner 1988; Ted Denton 1993.

Some prominent office bearers over the years were: Tim Kreitling (Club President 1966-72 and first Captain 1972-73); Doug Frost (Secretary Treasurer 1966-70; President 1972-72); AJec Dixon (Secretary 1970-73); Maisie Frost (foundation President 1969-70 and 1973-75); Helen Cowin (foundation Treasurer 1967-70 and President 1970-73); Ivy Humphreyson (foundation Secretary from 1969-72; club coach in 1973, and club captain from 1972-75); Ron Pendlebury (Secretary Treasurer 1976-84); Maeve Kreitling (Treasurer and Captain 1970-72; Captain 1978-81); Glad Codd (foundation member and on committee from 1973-77 and Patroness 1978-86); Dom Garbelini (president 1975-78); John Butterfield (President 1986-90; Secretary 1984-88); May Denton (Committee 12 years; Captain 1984-87; President 1987-90; SW League President 1993-94); Bob Lee (Committee member 1982-1997; Captain 1987-94; Scrangers Secretary 1983-86; Men's Darts President 1982-88; Club President 1995-97); Arthur Tate (Treasurer 1984-90); Ron Mathews (Treasurer 1990-97); Sylvia Garbelini (SW League President 1980-81; Club Captain 1981-84; President 1986-87; Secretary 1994-77; flower lady for many years); Carol Lee (Committee 1982-93; Secretary 1982-87; SW Country Zone Secretary 1996-98); Bonnie Griffin (Club Captain 1987-90; SW League Secretary 1980-81; Secretary 1991-94; SW Country Zone President 1990-92); Joan Montgomery (Secretary 1988-91; Treasurer 1992-94, 1997-98; committee 10 years); Bob McGuckin (Men's Scrangers Treasurer

1980-94). "

Greens: 'A' green was named the Eldin Cowin green in 1988 as a tribute to the hard work and organization put in by him. In 1989 the fourth green was planted and officially opened by long term Patron Charlie Barbetti.

Patrons: The first ladies Patroness the club had was Mrs Glad Codd, a foundation member and committee person in the early 1970's. She was appointed in 1978 and carried on until she passed away in 1986. In 1987 Mrs Bess Shepherd and Mrs Stella Jones were appointed as joint Patronesses until Mrs Shepherd moved to Collie in 1988. Mrs Jones was Patroness until her death in September 1991. Mrs Pat Martinson and Mrs Audrey Gooding were Patronesses from 1991 until 1997 when Mrs Bonnie Griffin and Mrs Audrey Gooding took over.

Ladies Club Rules: In 1984 a committee was set up to compile the associates own set of rules. This was completed and printed in 1985 when Mrs Audrey Gooding was President, and Mrs Carol Lee the Secretary.

In 1997 a special men's committee was formed to re-write the club constitution.

This committee consisted of Ted Fraser, John Coote and Ted Denton. This was approved at the Annual General Meeting in 1997 when the club changed its name to the Eaton Bowling and Social Club.

Ladies Delegates to WALBA: The first ladies delegate to W ALBA was Eileen Dalton, from 1972-80. Next Elsie Carroll 1980-81; Pauline Gadsden 1981-81; Sybil Greenway 1982-84; Queenie Walsh 1985-97; Doreen Brace 1997-98.

The Eaton Bowling & Social club was formed in 1972 due to the growing needs of seniors moving into the Eaton area. The club provided activities for those wishing to

partake in the games of lawn bowls, pool, darts & carpet bowls and also to be a venue for socializing. The club has been very active since being formed and has produced many players that have gone on and played at state level. Membership has always been strong and a lot of effort goes into increasing the membership.

The grass greens were replaced with synthetic surfaces 4 years ago at considerable expense. The reason this was done was to provide a better bowling surface for members and to drastically reduce the amount of water consumed. The

. new surfaces do not require any water. Due to the fact that the synthetic surfaces cost the club in the vicinity of \$460,000.00 and the loan arranged through the Dardanup Shire is being repaid at just over \$6,000.00 per month the club now finds itself in the position of being unable to carry out maintenance to the building and surrounds and is in desperate need of financial support.

Four years ago a club TAB was introduced. This does not create a lot of income but provides another service for members in an effort to keep them coming to the club.

Unfortunately membership has decreased slightly in the past two years and members are not spending the time at the club that they used to due to rising costs and the stringent liquor laws that have been recently introduced.