A humble beginning

Photos of the original clubhouse of The Nowra Bowling Club, established in 1914.

THIS year marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Nowra Bowling and Recreation Club.

In that time the club has been through numerous changes, from its building to its members.

It is commonly acknowledged that Mr Daniel 'Dad' Davis was the original inspiration behind the Nowra Bowling and Recreation Club.

An excerpt from The Telegraph at that time reveals the club's earnest and humble beginnings:

"Mr D. Davis, of Nowra, who is an enthusiastic bowler, is anxious to have a Bowling Club established in town. He thinks that as the sport has been taken up with such éclat in Berry, there should be equally as good, if not a better chance of success in Nowra.

"'Why', said the old veteran, in answer to a remark expressing doubt of getting a sufficient number in Nowra to take on membership of such a club, 'The very same doubt was expressed at Berry. People said it would not be possible to get more than a dozen members, and already they have got between 50 and 60 members. I can tell you too', continued Mr Davis, 'that they have a fine green at Berry'.

"'There's nothing better anywhere that I know of – it's simply perfect. And how the members have improved in their play, McNamee and Schofield were old bowlers – and both good – but the other bowlers were all novices, but they are all improving wonderfully. If they can get that many members at Berry, surely we can get a good club in Nowra.'

"'Why, at Berry they have several clubs booked for the opening and holidays. It's a good thing for the town and a good pastime for our business men. Put something in the paper about it, will you, and try and rouse the people to take it up.' We promised to say a word or two about bowls. That's how it is we've written this interview. If anyone is anxious to see a Bowling Club started in Nowra, let him communicate with Mr Davis. With a few more enthusiasts such as he a Bowling Club should soon materialise."

Four of the founding members clockwise from top left C. Woodhill, F. Morton, M. Morton and J. Fraser.

Founding members

NOWRA Bowling Club was formed in 1914 shortly before the outbreak of World War I.

The four founding members were C. Woodhill (foundation president) and committee men F. Morton, M. Morton and J. Fraser.

The site was a natural water course and early residents use to swim in a water hole located near the bottom green.

Under the current clubhouse, there is a spring that feeds a well which has been cemented in.

During the early days of the club this was the only source of water for the green, and the bottom green was built over the natural water course which accounts for the excellent drainage on both greens.

The South Coast Register would like to congratulate Nowra Bowling Club on its centenary.
We look forward to another highly successful 100 years as a centrepiece of the local community.
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