



LADIES COMMITTEE

There can surely be few clubs or societies such as ours which owe such a debt of gratitude to a small dedicated body of voluntary lady members as owe owed to our Ladies Committee.

The original committee was formed when we opened the clubhouse in 1930, with the Presidents wife as Chairlady. The members were never elected, they held no meetings, but whoever was prepared to do a job of work, could join. Initially they handled such simple catering as there was, like cold chicken lunches for the cricketers and teas for members and tennis players plus the occasional wedding. The standard fare in those days was sandwiches, fancy cakes, sweets and nuts. They arranged flowers for the weekends and occasionally had a cake sale or jumble sale to raise money which would be used for decorating the clubhouse, buying fabrics for curtains or general improvements.

Their first major involvement was in connection with the great Teddy Bear Fair held at the school in December 1934 when the school and the Society combined to organize a large fete. The school used their share of the profit towards the building of the new pavilion which contained a tuck shop and changing rooms, while we used are share to assist finance our running expenses as we were still getting over the terrible 1931/33 Depression.

During the Second World War the committee was expanded considerably with many wives, mothers and sisters of members on active service lending a much needed hand. They raised considerable amounts of money out of which they sent gift parcels to every Old Boy of the school who was on active service. This was irrespective of whether they were members of the Society or not.

After the War they handed over almost four thousand Pounds to what became known as The Old Edwardian Benevolent Fund. This Fund was used to help any member or family of a member in need of assistance. There were , in fact, few calls and later the balance of the Fund was handed over to the Society's General Funds

During the War they organized Saturday evening dances which soon became extremely popular as it provided entertainment to servicemen and their friends over

the weekends. They continued after the War, but were discontinued a few years later. The committee still continued to organize the Annual Ladies Committee fancy dress dance with a different theme each year. The decorating of the clubhouse for those dances was done by Noni Lewin, wife of "Splot" Lewin, a leading cricketer at that time.

In later years the Ladies Committee was involved in a major way when it came to fetes, notably in 1951 when they raised enough money to furnish the new Memorial Hall as a lounge.

It was about the time of the War that they organized their hugely popular annual Christmas Tree parties for children of the members, and for many years they invited a large number of orphans from various orphanages with each child receiving a small gift. This was usually clothing, as well as a more traditional Christmas gift.



Scene at the Ladies' Committee morning market. For nearly fifty years this committee has worked hard, raising funds for clubhouse improvements and in the early days also running the catering.

They continued to hold regular Jumble and Cake Sales and utilized the funds for the benefit of the Society, but above all they were responsible for all the flower arrangements throughout the week and for special occasions. This was an enormous undertaking and the brunt fell on Edna Hagley, before she left and moved to Benoni, and Heather Gardner who had been associated with this Committee since the War

years, and were subsequently made Honorary Life Members in appreciation for their work.

The committee was depended upon helpers and sadly over the years these became fewer and fewer with the brunt falling on the same few. The numbers at the Christmas Tree function dwindled and with fewer members coming forward with offers of help, it became impossible for the remaining few to handle the jumble sales and other fund raising efforts.

The amount of work that this committee did for the Society must never be forgotten and we owe them all a huge debt of gratitude for the tireless amount of hours that they devoted to ensuring the monies were raised to help with the decorating and furnishing of the club house.

Sadly, it was decided at the committee meeting of 7 May 1990 to disband the committee due to the lack of members, and without new people coming forward to assist, it became impossible to carry out their duties efficiently.

It was a sad day in the history of the Society when they saw fit to disband.