



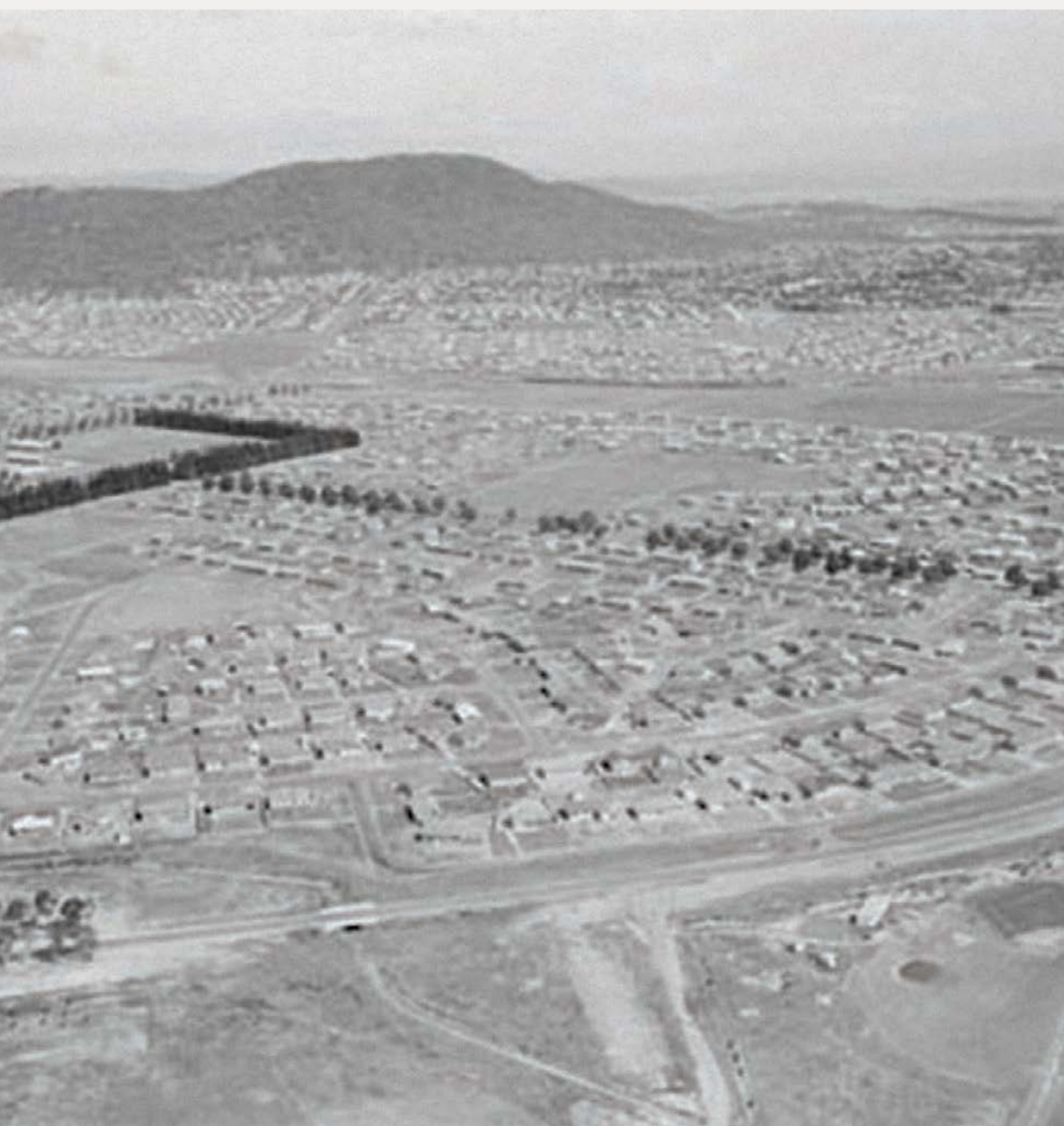
THE FIRST 50 YEARS

The Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club
1964-2014

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*Canberra Tradesmen's Union
Club under construction 1964*

01. FOREWORD

The fifty year point in the proud history of the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club is not only a cause for celebration, it is an opportunity for all of us to stop and reflect upon the foresight of a group of construction union members who took a very bold step in 1964 and laid the foundations of The Tradies Group which has become integral to the very fabric of today's Canberra.

Their journey can be likened to some of the early explorers who, driven by similar passion and bravado, set off beyond the horizons with little knowledge of what lay before them. None had any experience in the operation of a licensed club, none had ever operated a business venture, but they knew what they wanted to achieve – to establish a meeting place for union members and provide food and beverages at affordable prices for workers.

What they created can now be proudly described as the longest continuously operating trade union based licensed club in Australia. The kudos for such a claim can be shared by many.

Like most businesses of this type and history, fifty years of operation has been characterised by evolution. A glance through the Time Line contained in this book chronicles the changes in attitudes and direction of the various boards of management through the years. Reactions to a growing Canberra, the demography of the Inner North, the demands and entertainment tastes of the membership along with ever moving government regulation have all combined to shape The Tradies of today. We have been most fortunate to have had some very talented people navigate the organisation through an often difficult path and each deserves congratulations on their efforts in delivering The Tradies Group this important milestone.

Those same challenges face the team of the future in determining the shape of The Tradies beyond the first 50 years. There can be little doubt that, just as the 2014 model bears little resemblance to the original, the business of tomorrow must evolve to meet the demands of another era.

That can happen if we embrace the enthusiasm of our forefathers, the instincts of those who followed, the business acumen that drives us today, technology of the future and the hard work and sense of social justice we all desire.



Dean Hall
Chairman

02.

**ORIGINAL
BOARD**



Back row: Roy Hudson, Jock McMahon, Ron Mackenzie
Middle row: Alby Thomson, Dave Jones, Fred McCauley, Ronnie Baldwin, Bill Hogg
Front row: Ernie Meadowcroft, Jack Ayres

ORIGINAL BOARD

The first board of the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club comprised five members each of the unions who built the Dickson premises, the Building Workers Industrial Union and The Operative Painters and Decorators Union. They are pictured:

Fred McCauley (BWIU)
President
Alby Thompson (OPDU)
Ronnie Baldwin (OPDU)
Secretary Manager
Jock McMahon (BWIU)
Dave Jones (BWIU)

Roy Hudson(BWIU)
Bill Hogg (OPDU)
Ernie Meadowcroft (OPDU)
Ron McKenzie (BWIU)
Jack Ayres (OPDU)



*Dickson 1963, future Tradies site
looking towards Antill Street*



03.
SIXTIES
CANBERRA

SIXTIES CANBERRA

Established in 1964, the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club was born out of necessity.

The Sixties was a decade when the national capital experienced perhaps its greatest growth spurt. Prime Minister Robert Menzies became less than satisfied with his public servants progress in moving to the national capital and ordered reluctant them to pack up their Melbourne offices and relocate or else. It was an edict that saw Australia's newest city begin to bulge beyond the banks of the Molonglo River and commence an urban spread along its northern artery.

'64 was the year Scrivener Dam was completed and the long awaited Lake Burley Griffin finally filled the city's basin following a prolonged drought, creating a north – south cultural divide that prevails today.

ABC radio moved from its transmitter site at Gungahlin to purpose built studios in Dickson and Canberra awoke to Peter Leonard's breakfast show from 2CA's Mort Street premises. Kids watched the Mickey Mouse Club on CTC 7 at 5.25 on cold winter afternoons while mums and dads settled in front of twenty minutes of news read by David Brice at 6.40.

It was a time when residents first became aware of four young lads from Liverpool who changed their name from The Quarrymen to The Beatles. "I Want To Hold Your Hand" blasted through the wound down windows of pre air-conditioned FB Holdens, Falcons, Valiants and Volkswagen Beetles on hot February afternoons as public servants and construction workers spilled from the car parks in Civic and headed for the nearest watering holes.

A beer after work was a weekday ritual for most, in fact the favoured waterholes of drinkers became their de facto address. "You know Jimmy Robertson?" someone would enquire. "He drinks at the Kingo." It was a common descriptor. "Bruce McLean? He'll be at the Civic Pub." It was a rarity for regulars to alter daily habits.

Blokes stood in regular groups. (women rarely seen) Others sat on the same stool at the bar every day. Few needed to specify a beer order, good barmen knew exactly what they drank and the glass size. He even had the next one poured and ready the moment an empty hit the bar. "Whose shout is it?" someone would ask. "Yours!" came the chorus and nobody dared to leave before they had bought a full round. If you were in a shout of four, you stayed until you drank, four maybe eight, twelve was not unusual. Random breath testing was 18 years away.

Every club had a couple of snooker tables. Darts and indoor bowls were played non-stop – until the floor was needed for dancing.

Times and club habits were very different then. Pubs were closed on Sunday.

Even so it was a somewhat radical move when a group of forward thinking officials from the Building Workers Industrial Union and the Operative Painters and Decorators Union recognised a need to establish their own premises to meet the administrative and social requirements of members. As the new lake rose above the banks of the Molonglo River and the old Trades Hall at Acton became no longer suitable as a meeting place, a site was chosen at Dickson. It was the "nappy valley" of the sixties where building workers resided with young families amongst the city's northern urban sprawl. The venture proved an immediate success and in 1969 a second Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club opened in the south at Woden.

The Tradies, as patrons called it, was already becoming a Canberra icon.

1960s Christmas party



The members, construction workers, were the people who built Canberra – literally. Amongst the big projects of the time were the Russell Offices, administration buildings in Barton, Bendoora Dam and the tracking stations at Honeysuckle Creek and Tidbinbilla.

“The place was very well organised and we had over award payments applying to nearly all the builders, Civil and Civic, Tommy O’Connor, Jennings. They were all parties to the over award payments” Ronnie Baldwin recalls. An official of the painters union, he was the very first secretary manager of the new club in Badham Street Dickson.

Discussion on the need for premises commenced following plans to expand the Canberra Hospital on its then site at Acton, a move that impacted on the old Trades Hall building

which had long been home to offices and a meeting place for the fledgling city’s numerous unions. The Workers Club in Civic came under consideration as a possible home for the builders and painters but a cultural shift from blue to white collar in the make-up of the membership of the day saw them viewed as incompatible tenants. So after brief occupation of an ex-army hut at Riverside (now Barton) a number of unions were canvassed to join a venture to build new premises but in the end only the building workers and painters were prepared to move.

Led by a Queanbeyan bricklayer, Fred McCauley, the two unions set about the task of identifying a site and raising the necessary capital.

Few needed to specify a beer order, good barmen knew exactly what they drank and the glass size.

Early Dickson

The commercial hub Canberrans have come to know as Dickson dates back to the early 1960's, however the land on which it stands served a very different purpose during the formative years of the new national capital.

Bounded by Cowper Street, Antill Street and Majura Avenue, in 1924 the Northbourne Aviation Ground was established on an area now known as the Dickson playing fields. Distinguished by four white mounds and a wind sock, it was to become an emergency airfield on the Sydney-Adelaide route and served as an airport of sorts for the new national capital. Tragically it was also the site of Canberra's first aviation fatality when in February 1926, an RAAF DH9 crashed on approach resulting in the deaths of two crew, Flying Officer Pitt and Flight Sgt Callinder.

Following selection of a new site at Fairbairn the Northbourne facility closed in 1928. Dickson shoppers today can view a plaque fixed into a wall of the Dickson Library commemorating the Northbourne Aviation Ground.

Interestingly, the site also included plans for Canberra's first railway station with plans indicating a track running almost parallel to Antill St between Northbourne and Phillip Avenues.

Long after the sound of turbo props departed, the flight path gave way to Canberra's urban sprawl along Northbourne Avenue from Ainslie and the young city's blue collar workers and their families began to occupy government housing in the new suburbs, Dickson, Downer, Watson and Hackett. It coincided with the search, in 1964, by the then Building Workers Industrial Union and the Operative Painters and Decorators Union for a site for a licensed club and union offices to cater for their members' needs.

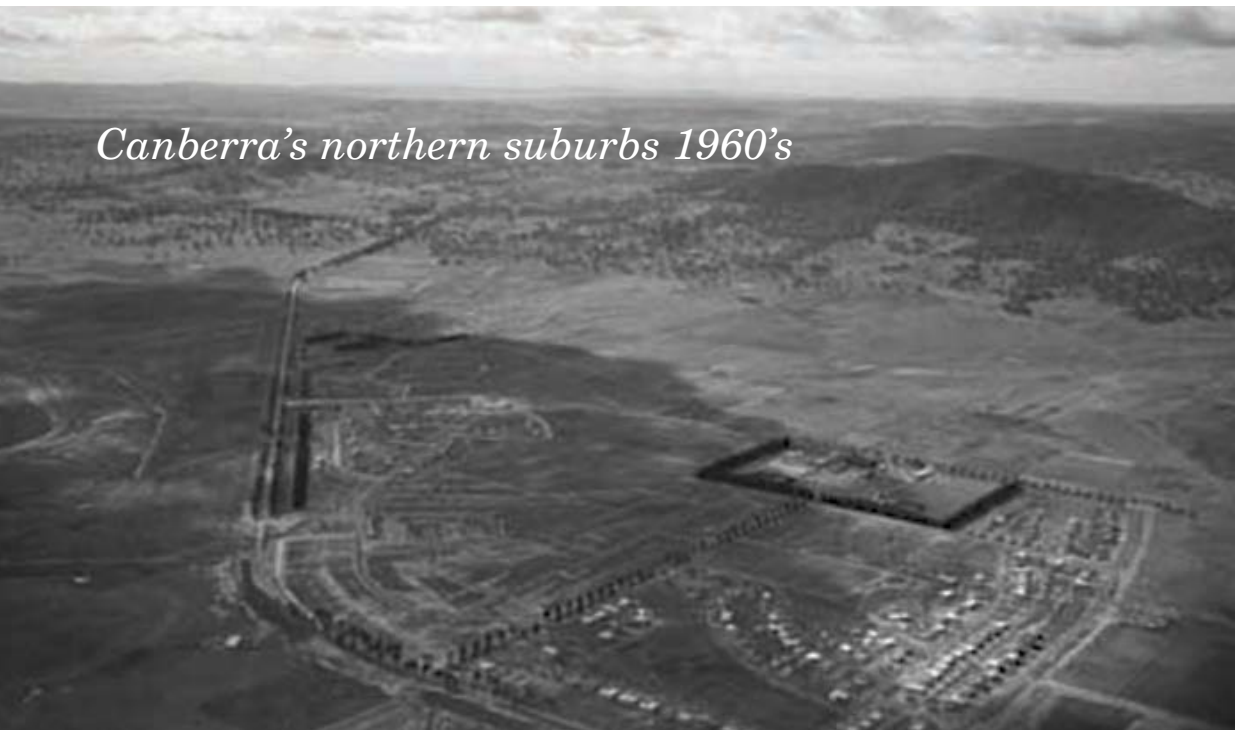
The Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club was built when the only infrastructure in Dickson itself was a Telecom depot and a weighbridge in Cape St but the new building was soon to become a social centre for workers. Starting out as little more than a bar and hall with office accommodation for the unions, the Canberra Times in 1964 reported:

"Members are also able to take their wives to the club for the many social events that are organised there and proper facilities are included for them."

Built at a cost of 75,000 pounds the club has seen numerous incarnations, earning a reputation as a much loved tram and bicycle museum before growing and spreading into today's modern facility with its magnificent lounges, excellent restaurant and café, four star hotel and fitness centre. Recently renovated at a cost of more than 8 million dollars, is now home to 45,000 members and sits proudly in the heart of a thriving Dickson precinct.

Dubbed The Tradies, it is quintessentially Canberra.

Canberra's northern suburbs 1960's



So after spending 33 pounds on the first year's lease payment on a block of land in Dickson, the venture was left with just 17 pounds in capital.

A Brave Venture

Brave or naïve? It matters little because, despite an absence of licensed club knowledge or business acumen, the pioneers behind the Tradies Group as it is known today can claim tremendous pride in their creation.

The BWIU and the OPDU got together to commence the venture "Because we were the only two autonomous unions in the ACT. We asked the Plumbers to be in but they wouldn't be in because they were state registered in NSW and they didn't have an organiser here." Ronnie Baldwin explains. Similar circumstances applied to the Builders Labourers Federation and the Plasterers Union.

"Each union put in 25 pounds," he adds. "We became The Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club Incorporated because we didn't have enough money to apply for company status at that stage."

Being unfamiliar with the process of securing large loan funding, Baldwin sought advice from a research officer at the ACTU, Bob Hawke, a man who would later become Labor's longest serving Prime Minister (1983-1991). Hawke provided ample evidence of a propensity to engage in commercial dealings when, as ACTU President, he took on the retail giants in a price discounting war in a union joint venture with Bourke's store in Melbourne and a similar joust with petrol retailers with ACTU-Solo.

He pointed Ronnie Baldwin to ACTU records showing 30 million dollars in union funds deposited with the Commonwealth Bank nationally and suggested the holding represented a strong bargaining position for the Canberra construction unions.

So after spending 33 pounds on the first year's lease payment on a block of land in Dickson, the venture was left with just 17 pounds in capital. Nevertheless, Baldwin sought an appointment with the manager of the Commonwealth Bank in Civic, a Mr Johnson, and presented his prospectus which included an estimate that the new club would have 1000 members paying one pound each.

"I told him we wanted to borrow 75,000 pounds." Ronnie Baldwin recalls.

Plans had been drawn and costed by friends within the construction company, Civil and Civic to build a hall and offices which would serve as an administrative headquarters, a meeting place and entertainment venue capable of generating income.

"Because we had no money", Baldwin explains, "the price included the furniture, the tables and chairs for the hall, curtains for the windows, the big curtain in the mega-hall so we could divide it in two, the cellar and so on, including the refrigeration."

Virtually everything had to be purchased with borrowed money and little in the way of collateral.

"We thought, we'll supply the glasses for the beer, that was it," he adds with a grin.

After thumbing through the prospectus and gaining an understanding of the audacity of the loan request, the bank manager's response was quick and to the point. "You don't really think we're going to lend you 75,000 pounds on a venture where you have 17 pounds and a lease on a block of land with nothing in sight?" Johnson replied dismissively.

But Baldwin was prepared. "I said are you a gambling man? And he said no. I said because I'll bet you'll be prepared to lend us the money," he beamed, proudly recalling the fifty year old encounter, word for word, as though it was yesterday. "He said what makes you think that? And I said have you read the last page of the prospectus? I said because this is a union thing and you have 31 million pounds of ours held in savings accounts and bonds and long term investments and its time you lent us some of our own money!"

Four days later approval was granted by the bank's Sydney headquarters.

The original building structure is proudly described as two halls, one much larger than the other serviced by an island bar with three sets of taps, two of which served the main bar area and the other the dance hall. The main or mega hall had a stage at one end, a Stramit ceiling (straw insulated), two timber lined offices, as was the foyer (finished in teak oil), a downstairs cellar and a cold room.

Ronnie Baldwin was appointed the club's first secretary-manager as CEOs of the day were known and recounts early trading.

"We started off ordering about ten kegs a week". Twelve years later at the end of his tenure, the number had risen to forty.

"In the big hall we used to play carpet bowls. In the bar, at one end we played darts." At the other end was an area known as the Ladies Lounge with a capacity for twenty. The club was an immediate success. "We never had a losing year financially from the time I started to the time I finished" adds Baldwin proudly.

In that mid-sixties period, turnover was almost entirely dependent upon alcohol sales. "We had a few raffles and then we started the punchboards," the former club manager explains. Poker machines were yet to be legalised in the ACT despite their popularity in nearby NSW with Canberra patrons offered alternate games of chance as clubs sought other revenue streams.

Punchboards were a very popular gaming device, a 300mm square board, approximately 10mm thick with several hundred holes drilled into it. Each hole contained a paper cylinder printed with a prize value. Punters paid 20c for the opportunity to punch out a single cylinder for the opportunity to win anything from \$2 to \$10.

Interclub activity was strong and the Dickson Tradesmen's Union Club immediately became a regular competitor in carpet bowls, darts and table tennis and later in cue sports when a snooker room was added.

When business commenced in 1964, the only nearby competition for alcohol trading came from a Dickson motel with a licensed bar and the Ainslie Football Club. Licensing restrictions at the time meant that hotels could not open on Sundays but the same rules did not apply to clubs.

"Sunday was the biggest day" Baldwin recalls. "We'd be full here. We'd have three barmen on Sunday most of the time. Then in the afternoon we started to put on concerts and entertainment in the hall. Sunday night was a dance and that became very popular."

"In those days they had to dance, you know, waltzes and that." Ronnie's wife Shirley adds.

As the popularity of indoor sports grew so did a demand for food, a need initially met through the purchase of sandwiches and subsequently led to the employment of a caterer, a retired army cook. Facilities could best be described as limited, consisting of a stove, a refrigerator and a small kitchen.

"We went to Sydney and purchased crockery and cups and various things and we started to serve lunch and he used to make hamburgers and stuff of a night. Within three years we had saved up enough money to build and spend another twenty thousand pounds of our own money to build an extension," added the former club manager proudly. The additional structure housed a new cool room opening onto a bottle sales area, a billiards room, darts area and store room.

It was quite an infrastructure addition to 1960's Dickson. Before the club arrived the only building in the precinct was a small post office occupying the block where the Quality Hotel stands today and a Telecom (later Telstra) depot next door. A government weigh bridge stood at the bottom of Cape St.

The club building doubled as the office of the Building Workers Industrial Union (later the CFMEU) while the Printing and Kindred Industries Union paid rent for space as did a local real estate agent until advice was received that such an arrangement was in contravention of the lease purpose clause and the agent was forced to leave.

But the real advantage in having the unions housed at the licensed club was the focal point it provided for workers. And the location was ideal. A block or so away from main road into town, new arrivals to the ACT made it their first stop for directions to building projects in and around the city and others like the dams, Tidbinbilla and the Snowy Mountains Scheme.

And they all knew where to return to at the end of the day.



A MOMENTOUS OCCASION: Officers of the Tradesmen's Union Club signing the Contract with representatives of Civil & Civic for the construction of the Club in Badham Street, Dickson. L. to R.: J. McMahon, J. Hardie (foreman on project), N. Bergin and R. Baldwin. Seated: F. McCauley and C. Moore, Manager of Civil & Civic.



04.

FRED

M^CGAULEY

FRED MCCAULEY

More Than a Union Official

No history of the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club could be complete without recognition of the role played by Fred McCauley. Amongst an extraordinary number of positions held in a lifetime of achievements by the bricklayer from Queanbeyan, one that has never been listed, but nevertheless fitting, would be "Godfather of the Tradies".

Born in 1906, he began work as an apprentice on the old Parliament House site and caught the 4.30am goods train on Saturdays to attend Goulburn Technical College. "I used to get home just before bedtime" he told a newspaper in 1971. He worked on many of Canberra's early buildings including St Christopher's Cathedral Manuka, St Paul's Church and the US Embassy.

Fred worked in engineering in Sydney during the Second World War and returned to Queanbeyan in 1946 as construction of the national capital began to gather pace. He was appointed secretary of the BWIU and as membership grew, the position became full time in 1951. Union business was conducted from the McCauley home until space was made available in the Trades Hall building at Acton in 1952.

Always the political activist he joined the ALP in the early 1920s and was nominated as a member of the NSW Legislative Assembly in 1932 but fell from favour during the downfall of Premier Jack Lang. In fact Fred McCauley's life went within an inch of taking a different tack in 1950 when federal pre selection beckoned. But the NSW executive of the party intervened and appointed Jim Fraser as

As one of the nation's most highly respected unionists Fred represented his country in Geneva for the International Labour Organisation conference



It had been many years since Fred laid a brick but this one was placed for ceremonial purposes during construction of the new building in 1964.

the candidate. Fraser went on to represent the ACT for the next 20 years in the House of Representatives.

McCauley was elected to the ACT Advisory Council as an ALP member (1970-74) and served as an independent member of the territory's first Legislative Assembly (1974-78)

In a lifetime of community involvement Fred was a member of the Queanbeyan Hospital board for 25 years including many as chairman and served on the Queanbeyan Municipal Council from 1956 to 1962. He was also a member of the National Capital Development Commission's Planning Committee, the Apprenticeship Week Committee for 18 years, and the ACT Apprenticeship Board for 26 years. He was awarded an MBE in 1972.

As one of the nation's most highly respected unionists Fred represented his country in Geneva for the International Labour Organisation conference, led a delegation of Australian trade unionists to Rome, Prague, Zurich and Moscow and travelled to Papua New Guinea to look at conditions in the building industry. Perhaps the most everlasting legacy of his overseas travel is the role he played in recruiting 150 German tradesmen to Canberra in 1951. McCauley was part of a panel sent to Germany in response to a shortage of construction workers, later known as the Jennings Germans, employed by the contractor AV Jennings. Many of those men raised families, remained in Canberra and formed the backbone of construction for decades after.

As a member of the Building Workers Industrial Union he held the position of Secretary ACT Branch, Federal Deputy Secretary and Federal Senior Vice President.

While credit for the vision to establish a licensed club would appear to belong to a number of individuals, Fred McCauley was a leader whose DNA permeates the establishment of both the Dickson and Woden Tradesmen's Union clubs where he served variously as President, board member and secretary manager during the first two embryonic decades.





05.

THE TRADIES TIMELINE

THE TRADIES TIMELINE

1940 - 2014

1940

Fred McCauley, a Queanbeyan brickie, becomes secretary of the newly formed ACT Bricklayers Union

1948

McCauley commences as a part time organiser with the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU) in Canberra, a union headquartered in Sydney but deregistered in the same year for its links to the communist party. He later became Secretary of the union and was heavily involved in recruitment of tradespeople for the Snowy Mountains Scheme.

1950

Fred McCauley is part of a delegation to visit Germany when construction workers were required to fill a labour shortage for AV Jennings. These workers, many of whom continue to live in the ACT today became known as the Jennings Germans.

An anti-communist faction of the BWIU established a new Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners which eventually became part of the Australian Workers' Union.

The BWIU held monthly meetings at the Trades Hall at Acton, a building leased by the ACT Trades & Labour Council to provide a meeting place for all union groups in Canberra. It was an ex-army hut, (weatherboard and iron roof) situated on top of the hill near to where the National Museum is today. During this time the BWIU added a two room extension to be used as offices, being the only ACT union with full time staff, Fred McCauley and Jock McMahon. They were paid officials, but only if enough money remained after collection of dues

1957

The Operative Painters and Decorators Union (OPDU) engaged a full time official, Ron Baldwin.

A 16yo apprentice carpenter and joiner, Rod Driver, joined the BWIU and began taking an active part in trade union affairs before being enlisted as Minute Secretary.

1961

Following a vote of no confidence, Fred McCauley, loses the presidency of the ACT Trades and Labour Council, following a clash with the Carpenters and Joiners Union over direction of the TLC.

1962

The BWIU is reregistered. The BWIU and OPDU reveal plans to merge into one Building Trades Association. The two unions also approve draft plans to build a £40,000 Tradesmen's Club and offices. A sub-committee comprising Fred McCauley, Jock McMahan and Ron Baldwin is appointed. A site in Ainslie is rejected by the National Capital Development Commission as "too close to a residential area" but after being offered a choice of three sites in Dickson, a corner block in Badham St is chosen and Civil and Civic selected as the builder.

First plans are provided for a building which will be partly double-storey and partly single-storey. The clubhouse will include a bar, kitchen facilities and a 75 by 35ft. hall. Provision has been made for extensions. Mr. McCauley said "The hall will be a great benefit to Dickson, which has not got a hall. He went on to add "We intend to make the hall available for hire. It will be provided with separate toilet facilities."

Fred McCauley becomes federal deputy secretary of the BWIU.



LEAVING TRADES HALL FOR THE LAST TIME

Recently the BWIU and the Painters Union moved from the "Old Trades Hall" for the last time and moved to premises at Riverside until the planned Club is completed. Seen above are (l. to r.) Jock McMahan, Organiser; Roy Hudson, Vice-President; Fred McCauley, Secretary of the BWIU and Ronnie Baldwin, Secretary of the Painters Union, closing the door for the last time at the Trades Hall.

1963

Lease arrangements on the Trades Hall at Acton are terminated and the BWIU and OPDU move to temporary accommodation in Block 21 of the Riverside Hostel at Barton, an ex-army hut. An approach is made to other Trades and Labour Council Unions to take part in the new club venture but they decline leaving the two building unions to go it alone.

OLD TRADES HALL IS FINISHED

31/8/63

The old dilapidated hall at the back of the Community Hospital at Acton has served the people for about half a century. Now it soon must go.

The hall has been used as a church, a dance hall, a workman's club and union headquarters. It was a union hall the longest.

The unions first moved into the hall more than 20 years ago and have occupied it continuously since then. Unionists made it their base for sorties on the "bosses" of Canberra.

Expired

They won battles, and they lost battles, but each time they could return to the hall to discuss their next campaign.

Yesterday the final lease expired. The sign, Trades and Labour Hall, was taken

down. The building will be demolished. With it, perhaps, will end an era; a stormy and sometimes violent era in the struggle for better working conditions.

In those torrid years the 40-hour working week became a reality. Higher wages, paid sick leave, extra holidays and improved working conditions were achieved. Unionism grew to adulthood.

The hall, however, in those years was more than "just a place to organise campaigns for conditions."

It has served as a home for the homeless, pensioners with no place to go; the unemployed with no money;

old people on deputations to the Government who could not afford to stay at hotels. A sleeping place when times were bad.

The history of the hall ranges back to the years following World War I, when it was first used as a church by several denominations.

Later, before the unions moved in it became the Acton Recreation Hall, the venue for dances and base for a library.

Club

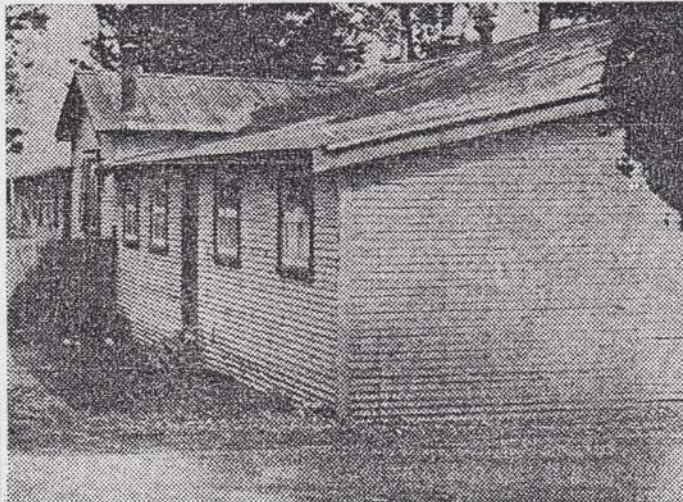
The unions took over the hall in the following decade and it soon became the meeting place for Trades and Labour Council members, workers seeking jobs, and strikers.

The Trades and Labour Council trustees took over the lease in 1943. Later the council sponsored the Canberra Workmen's Club, and it initially occupied half the hall.

The unions to occupy the hall longest were the Building Workers' Industrial Union (an amalgamation in 1941 of the Bricklayers and Carpenters' Unions) and the Painters' Union.

These two unions, among the first to use the hall, were the last to leave.

They have moved to new offices at Block 21, Riverside, where they hope to remain until permanent offices can be built.



The old Trades Hall which is marked for demolishing.



Day 1 of trading. Secretary manager Ronnie Baldwin being served by bar manager Harry Brown.

1964

Fred McCauley leads a delegation of Australian trade unionists to Rome, Prague, Zurich and Moscow.

During construction of the club, evidence of differences between the Building Trades Group of Unions appear with claims by some they were not included in plans for the venture.

After being barred from membership of the TLC since 1952, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners is re-admitted.

The new Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club is officially opened in Dickson by ACTU President Albert Monk. By agreement the first board of directors comprised five members from each of the unions. They were:

Roy Hudson (BWIU), Jock McMahon, (BWIU) (Club Treasurer), Ron MacKenzie (BWIU), Alby Thompson (OPDU), Dave Jones (BWIU), Fred McCauley (BWIU), (Club President) Ronnie Baldwin (OPDU) (Club Secretary/Manager), Bill Hogg (OPDU) Ernie Meadowcroft (OPDU), Jack Ayres (OPDU)

Membership was one pound for tradesmen, one shilling for apprentices. The final cost of the building was £74,522. One thousand applications for membership are received in the first week.

The TLC refuses an offer of office space in the new club amidst claims that it is too remote, the proximity of liquor on the premises and it is not a trades hall.

Two weeks prior to the official opening the club had its first overnight break in when thieves stole eight steel framed chairs valued at £56.

Northern Suburbs cricket club is the first sporting club to hold a meeting at the new club (October 9)

'Breakaway' Alliance Seen

The decision by three Canberra trade unions yesterday to form a separate alliance, is seen by some industrial circles as a move to form a breakaway group from the Trades and Labour Council.

According to the unions, however, the alliance is to permit the appointment of a full time organiser for the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association.

The three unions which have decided to form the alliance are the Building Workers' Industrial Union, the Painters' Union and the F.E.D. and F.A.

Observers believe the Builders Labourers' Federation also will join the alliance.

construction for the B.W.I.U. and the painters, and would share office staff and maintain a close liaison between outdoor staff and continually exchange information on industrial matters.

An inter-union arbitration committee had been formed to settle any differences.

A draft set of proposals would be sent to the headquarters of each union and to the Builders Labourers' Federation.

Builders, painters to unite

The branches of two of Canberra's biggest building unions will unite on January 1.

The secretary of the Building Workers' Industrial Union, Mr. F. McCauley, said yesterday final plans for the unification of his union with the Painters' Union were almost completed. The deal would be completed on January 1.

£450,000 contract signed

The National Capital Development Commission has let a £450,458 contract for the construction of a second electronic data processing building at Russell Hill.

It will make the combined unions the strongest single industrial unit in the A.C.T., especially as both these unions have previously worked in close liaison with the Builders Labourers' Federation. This is considered certain to continue.

The B.W.I.U. claims more than 1,000 bricklayers and carpenters as members while the Painters' Union claims about 400 members. Mr. McCauley said the

Tradesmen's club handed over

The new £75,000 Tradesmen's Union Club — the first club building built for a trade union in Canberra — was officially handed over yesterday.

The club was built for the Building Workers' Industrial Union and the Painters' Union by Civil and Civic Pty. Ltd.

In handing over the club the Canberra manager of Civil and Civic, Mr. C. Moore, said the project was an example of tremendous co-operation between unions and employers.

The secretary of the Building Workers' Industrial Union, Mr. F. J. McCauley, said the club was the "realisation of an ideal."

"We hope it is the forerunner of one big union in the building industry," he said.

Among official guests at the handing over ceremony was the chairman of Lend Lease Limited, Mr. R. Dusseldorp.

Union Farewell For McCauley

The A.C.T. Trades and Labour Council decided last night to hold a farewell function for Mr. Fred McCauley before he leaves on his trip abroad next week.

Mr. McCauley, the secretary of the Building Workers' Industrial Union, will lead a delegation of Australian trade unionists to Rome, Prague, Zurich and Moscow. He will leave on April 23.

The secretary of the Electrical Trades Union, Mr. L. F. Francis, who moved a motion proposing the function, said "it will prove there is no conflict in the trade

others who have given such great service to the trade union movement," Mr. Andrews said.

Mr. McCauley was the only dissenter to the motion.

"A suitable send-off as far as I am concerned would be a demonstration on the basic wage issue," he said.

"I would not like to think that any union used its funds for my benefit."

A special sub-committee was appointed to arrange the



Mr. McCauley

Sussan

1965

Building workers and painters unite under the BWIU banner. The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners gains control of the ACT Trades and Labour Council and a large rift develops between the BWIU and the TLC. The BWIU and the ASCJ are in direct competition for members.

A second tradesmen's club is planned for the Woden Valley.

Unions offered Woden site for club

A second tradesmen's club, probably in a western suburb, is being planned by the Building Workers Industrial Union and the Painters and Decorators Union.

The National Capital Development Commission is believed to have offered the unions a choice of sites in the Woden Valley.

Tomorrow, the secretary of the BWIU, Mr E. J. McCauley, will have talks with the assistant Federal secretary of the union, Mr Ron Hancock, and the junior vice-president, Mr Pat Clancy.

Mr McCauley said yes-

terday, "We will discuss our building programme in Canberra for the next 25 years and the building of a second club."

The first club, in Dickson, opened less than two years ago. In its first 10 months of operation it had a turnover of £75,000.

This year the turnover was expected to be more than £100,000.

"Its success has been

Tradesmen to have club in Curtin

The building trade unions group has informed the National Capital Development Commission that it will build a second tradesmen's club on a site allocated opposite the new Curtin shopping block.

The decision had been prompted by the success of the first tradesmen's club, built at Dickson about 15 months ago, the president of the club and secretary of the Building Workers Industrial Union, Mr F. McCauley, said yesterday.

The new club would be of one storey. Mr McCauley did not expect building to start for about two or three months.

It was "a bit early" to talk about costs but they would probably be about £65,000 on present plans. These plans, however, had yet to be completed and accepted by the commission.

The club in Dickson also would be extended this

1966

The National Capital Development Commission is informed of plans to build a new club in Curtin opposite the new shopping block. Extensions are planned for Dickson to include more billiard room space, a new cool room and storerooms, a women's lounge and more kitchen and bar space.

Ten months later the Woden location is changed to Phillip with a new club in an area of about 25,600 sq ft, costing \$175,000 to construct and featuring an inner courtyard furnished with tables and chairs catering for about 1500 members.

The secretary of the Canberra Tradesmen's Club, Mr R. Baldwin, said the new club would offer better facilities in the way of services. "It will overcome some of the mistakes and inconveniences that exist in the present club".

Rod Driver is appointed as the BWIU's first Youth Officer. Fred McCauley visits New Guinea to look at conditions in the building industry.





1970'S

*Snooker and darts formed
the backbone of interclub
sports competition.*

1967

Fred McCauley becomes BWIU federal senior vice-president. Rod Driver joins the board of the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club.

1968

The Trades and Labour Council agrees to hold future meetings at the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club in Dickson instead of the Methodist National Memorial Hall in Forrest.

1969

The Woden Tradesmen's Union Club is built by the BWIU after the OPDU declined to become part of the venture. The building is opened by Bob Hawke, the new ACTU President. Fred McCauley is appointed secretary-manager. The first board of directors comprised:

Fred McCauley, Rod Driver, Brian Harber, Claude Pike, Bill Thurbon, Jock McMahon, Vic Gregory, Paddy Sheehy, Ted O'Brien.

1972

The ACT Licensed Clubs Association resolves to seek poker-machine legislation and to have membership age reduced from 21 to 18. Representatives of 28 of the ACT's 37 licensed clubs unanimously agree.



1976

The BWIU and the Builders Labourers Federation merge in the ACT

Poker Machine Control Ordinance is approved by the Minister of State for the Capital Territory, Eric L Robinson. After considerable discussion, including some opposition from board members to their installation, club directors Jock McMahon (Dickson) and Brian Harber (Woden) go to the Office of Gaming to select twelve machines. Under the legislation they are bound to choose six from Ainsworth and six from Nutt and Muddle and equal numbers of three and four reelers.

Ronnie Baldwin resigns and Jock McMahon is appointed secretary- manager of the Dickson club.

Fred McCauley is elected to the ACT Legislative Assembly as an independent.

1978

Rod Driver, a BWIU organiser, is appointed secretary- manager of the Dickson club replacing Jock McMahon.

1979

Rod Driver replaces Fred McCauley as ACT Branch Secretary of the BWIU. A Melbourne tram is installed in the Dickson club.

An annual snooker tournament commences, The Canberra Top 50, open to ACT and NSW players.



1980

The first accommodation property is purchased in Corrimal under a scheme to provide budget holidays for club members.

A Melbourne tram, No 447, is installed at Dickson as part of a plan to redecorate the club in the style of Australian buildings between 1850 and 1930 with intentions to construct an “old-fashioned” station in the courtyard.

The Women’s Electoral Lobby discusses discrimination by some licensed clubs who only allow women to become associate members. Working women can become full members of the Tradesmen’s Union Club but not the Canberra Workmen’s Club in the city.

1981

First Housie games commence at Dickson.

The Hungarian Club situated next door in Dickson is destroyed by fire. Members and staff are temporarily housed at The Tradies before they secure alternative premises in Narrabundah.

A BMX track is constructed beside the Dickson Club but a new transportable clubhouse is gutted by fire a day after being installed. The track opens two weeks later.

Four site offices used during construction of the National Gallery are procured and donated as scout halls for Weston Creek and Tuggeranong, a station for the Railway Historical society and clubroom for the Dickson BMX Track.

1982

A bike, with 4inch wheels, is purchased in Miami Queensland with plans to start a collection of ten or twelve unusual cycles.

The Dickson squash courts are purchased and renamed the Dickson Squash and Fitness Centre



BMX track grew out of birthday outing

TREVOR DRIVER, who was 10, wanted to be taken to a BMX track for his birthday, but the only one then existing in Canberra, at Fairbairn Park, was comparatively isolated and not widely known.

It was not until his family was on holiday at Nowra that he finally got his birthday wish. The experience, and some family persuasion from Trevor, his two brothers and sister, led to the development, by the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club, Dickson, of the Dickson BMX track.

His father, Rod Driver, is the secretary-manager of the club, his mother, Annemarie, the promotions officer.

The BMX track is one of the many



1984

Rod Driver presents a proposal for a tram to run down the centre of Northbourne Avenue from Gungahlin to the City. The plan, estimated to cost ACT taxpayers around \$8m is distributed to all homes in the Canberra region.

Five trams including a dining car are now housed at Dickson as part of the Old Canberra Tram Company with the building doubling in size. The club boasts the largest bicycle museum in Australia including the world's longest bike, seating 40 on its 22.86m frame.

Snooker facilities are doubled at Dickson and prizemoney for the Top 50 tournament increased to \$2000.

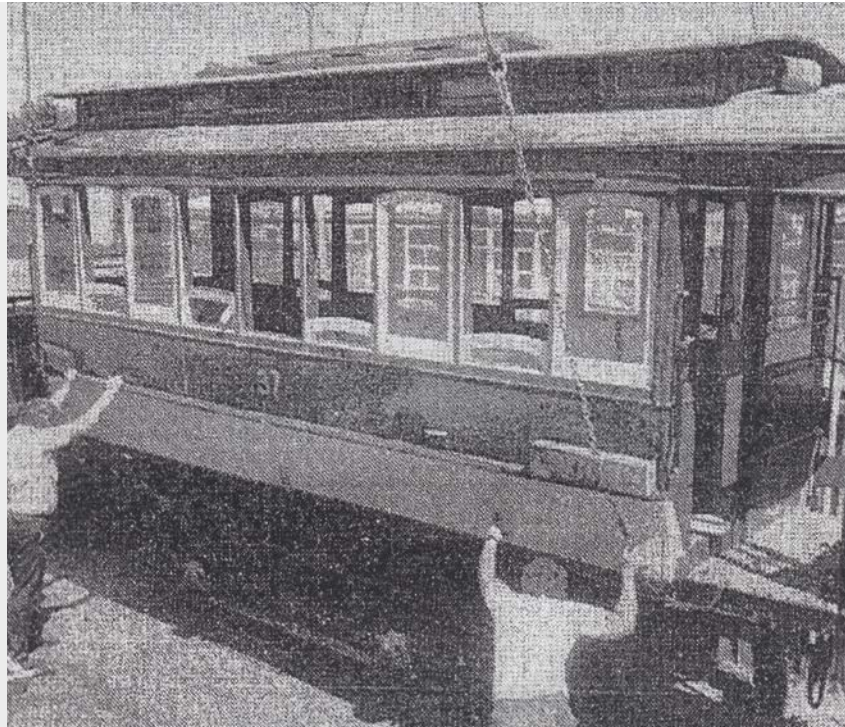
Fred McCauley resigns and Brian Harber is appointed Secretary Manager of the Woden Club.

1985

Rod Driver becomes President of the BWIU ACT Branch.

An 1897 Sydney tram is purchased for \$10,000 to be installed on the second floor of the club as part of a new sports bar.

In anticipation of the 1986 arrival of Halley's Comet, The Stargazers' Observatory is built at Dickson.



1986

Kate Lundy becomes a BWIU ACT branch official.

A railway carriage is installed in the Woden Club. Six more trams are being sought for Dickson. The BMX Track and building is moved to Melba and the vacant Dickson land purchased for extensions to the Housie Hall where 18 sessions per week are being held. 4 snooker tables are being used with another to come. 8 squash courts are in play with 40 aerobics classes and 25 circuit training sessions being held each week in the fitness centre.

The bicycle collection numbers 276 with about 60 on display.

The property portfolio grows to 41 two –bedroom holiday accommodation units stretching along Australia’s east coast.

1987

19yo Kate Lundy is elected BWIU Vice President. Peter Berry becomes Secretary. Nationally talks commence to amalgamate unions in the construction, mining and timber industries.

A review by the National Capital Development Commission invites comment on a Tradies plan to run trams down the Northbourne Avenue median strip between Civic and the National Exhibition Centre in Mitchell.

1988

The Bicentennial Bluebell snooker tournament is contested at Dickson with prizemoney of \$8888.

10 two-bedroom Gold Coast accommodation units are purchased for \$750,000 bringing the total holiday property portfolio to 56. A sixth tram is installed as part of dining room extensions at Dickson.

A \$30m development is announced for Dickson to transform the car park into a retail, accommodation and union centre. The plan includes 60 shops, an office block and apartment complex. Another \$3m is to be spent at Phillip.

George Wason becomes BWIU assistant secretary. Parliament House is completed and an ensuing downturn in construction sees BWIU membership drop from 11,500 to 2,500.

\$30m union development for Dickson

By **STEPHEN GUEST**,
Industrial Reporter

If the ACT branch of the Building Workers' Industrial Union were a corporation, it would be in the running for a business-achievement award.

Yesterday it made two announcements, and both involved big money.

First, its two clubs — the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club at Dickson and the Philip Community Club — netted a cool \$1,850,000 profit for the financial year. Second, plans are afoot for a \$30 million development that will transform the carpark beside the Dickson club into a thriving retail, accommodation, and union centre.

Another \$3 million will be spent on the Woden club, after the union did a deal with the Smith Family, which owns an adjacent block of land.

Work is expected to begin at both sites within six months, and is to be completed over two years. Two of Australia's largest building companies — Civil and Civic, and Concrete Constructions — have won the contracts.

The Dickson complex involves several buildings, including a six-level short-term accommodation block, a four-level union centre, a three-level carpark, and two two-level retail centres.

While plans have not been finalised, the carpark and the retail centres will probably front Badham Street, and will include Westpac's new

1989

Self-government commences in the ACT and the Dickson \$30m development proposal stalls following intervention by the Residents Rally party led by MLA Bernard Collaery.

The bicycle museum is described as the second largest in the world and the bike collection is estimated to be valued at \$300,000.

The Downer Olympic Soccer Club in Hawdon St Dickson falls into receivership and is purchased by The Tradies for \$1.8m and renamed the Downer Club. Julie Evans is appointed site manager. Plans are announced for a \$200,000 extension to include a coffee shop, bistro and an area for snooker and darts.

Extensions to the Dickson club (\$2m) and Woden (\$3m) are completed. The building at Phillip involves a land transfer with the Smith Family and the extensions are opened by Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

The BWIU enters negotiations to buy the Tuggeranong Churches Centre at a cost of \$15m where construction has stalled. The deal is contingent on a Commonwealth government tenant.

Downer Club's new owners to hear proposals

By GRAHAM COOKE

Sporting organisations connected with the former Downer Olympic Soccer Club should present a case for continuing support to the new owner, the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club, the Tradies' secretary-manager, Rod Driver, said yesterday (Wed).

While stressing there was a clear understanding in the \$1.8 million deal that the Tradies had bought licensed premises, "not a soccer club", he said the directors were prepared to listen to proposals.

"I would ask the sporting bodies to write to our directors giving full details of the support they have received in the past and what they would like to see happen in the future," he said.

The Downer Olympic club, which has been in receivership, closed abruptly last month. It is understood it had been trading at a loss over recent weeks and the decision to close had been made by the receivers.

Driver said he was disappointed the club had not been maintained as a going concern during the period of changeover. "It will take us that much longer to pick it up again," he said.

month would see little in the way of change, although some upgrading work was taking place with Downer's permission. "Our plan is for a coffee shop, a bistro and an area for snooker and darts," Driver said.

"We will probably call it simply the Downer Club in order to preserve its identity and prevent confusion between it and the Tradies."

The Downer Olympic Club supported three men's and two women's soccer teams in ACT competition, was heavily involved in basketball and also had a link with the Majura junior soccer club. For several years it was the owner of Canberra's entry in the National Soccer League — a financial commitment which is generally believed to have been the main factor in the club's eventual insolvency.

A spokesman for Downer's soccer operations, Don Rushan, said that whatever happened the club would be fielding teams in the ACT League next season.

"The question is whether we can do it with the support of the Tradies or whether we have to go alone as a soccer club without a clubhouse," he said.

Downer, which owes its origins to the

Hawke opens new premises for charity

The Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, officially opened yesterday the permanent premises of the Smith Family along with an adjacent building which extends the Woden Tradesmen's Union Club.

The Smith Family and the tradesmen's club appear to be compatible bedfellows who helped each other to get their respective buildings completed.

"We had land but no money for the building, the Woden Tradies had money but no land," the promotions manager for the Smith Family, Pauline Freebody, explained yesterday.

In his speech Mr Hawke referred to the deal as a "sensible exchange".

The Smith Family received \$400,000 from the club for its building and in return gave up a section of land in Launceston Street for the club's extension.

With additional donations from the Canberra and Queanbeyan communities, the Smith Family was able to completely outfit its building and move in earlier in the year.

The secretary of the Building Workers' Industrial Union, Peter Berry, said he was delighted with club's new facilities. The BWIU owns both the Dickson and Woden tradesmen's union clubs.

Mr Hawke had been able to open the two buildings after opening the Woden





1990

George Wason is elected BWIU branch secretary

The BWIU fails to secure finance to continue the Tuggeranong Churches Centre purchase. The site is purchased by a Melbourne consortium for \$9m.

Three small domes are built on the site of the Downer Club to become known as the Canberra Observatory, with professional staff and research grade telescopes, with school children and the general public being given guided tours.



The Dickson club is the first in Canberra to commence 24 hour trading.

Anzac Day two-up is legalised provided profits are donated to charity with the Moreshead Veterans Home at Lyneham the beneficiary.

\$1m plans are approved for the Downer Planetarium including the addition of a flying saucer. The distinctive dome to be used as a waiting room had previously been used by the Canberra Building Society and the Macquarie Pool at Jamieson.

The Tradies is successful in a challenge against the Australian Taxation Office. A \$925,000 assessment is reduced to \$65,000 on appeal.

The BWIU amalgamates nationally with the timber unions.

Flying saucer finds home

Canberra's flying saucer which, in the past few years, has crossed the barriers of suburban travel in the territory, now has a permanent home — at Dickson.

The object, once used to help the former Canberra Building Society persuade people to borrow to buy homes and, lately, to attract patrons to the Macquarie Pool, Jamieson, has been bought by the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club.

The club is usually associated with trams and bikes, but since its acquisition of the Downer Olympic Soccer Club

it will make Downer its home for space and stellar pursuits.

The secretary-manager of the "Tradies", Rod Driver, said yesterday that \$1 million would be spent at Downer improving and refurbishing the club for its space role. The flying saucer would be used as a waiting room for people visiting the club's observatory.

The club would work closely with the National Science and Technology Centre and pay professional astronomers to explain stellar mysteries.

The observatory is open seven nights a week, 7pm to midnight. Admission is free.

Tradies takes on tax office — and wins

By PHILIP HOBBS,
City Reporter

The Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club has had one of those wins with which all punters can identify: it took on the Australian Taxation Office and won.

As a result of a tax-office audit, the club received an assessment for \$680,000 for three years' tax for its Dickson club and an assessment for \$245,000 for its Woden club.

"We argued with them for seven months," the club secretary, Rod Driver, said yesterday. "But it was worth it."

"We hired a barrister. That cost us \$35,000. But we only had to pay the tax office \$65,000 in back taxes for the Woden club."

Mr Driver's is among a number of ACT licensed clubs which have been the subject of tax audits. He said the Australian Taxation Office had been seeking to tax the club on profits derived from non-members.

It was the sort of win that has spurred the club into its next stage of development — 24-hour trading.

From tomorrow, the Dickson club,

known as the Tradies, will open its doors 24 hours a day.

"We've been building up to it," Mr Driver said. "We've been opening until 3am for a year. It has been a good result. People are using it."

"But when it came to closing time there'd be about 70 or 80 people in the club, mostly shift workers, who didn't want to go home. The staff said we should do something about it."

"We'll specialise in breakfasts. We've noticed that McDonalds [across the road from the Tradies] have been very busy in the mornings."

Mr Driver said the club was trading spectacularly well with no hint of the recession biting into its activities.

Tradies was turning over \$175,000 a week from poker machines, after the payment of jackpots, compared with \$135,000 a week at the corresponding time last year.

"We've been working harder because we expected things to be tighter," he said. "And we've spoken to staff. But by increasing our trading time we'll keep the number of shifts up. For some of our casuals this is their only job."

1992

An IK6 computer driven telescope with 41cm lens and weighing over one tonne is installed at the Planetarium. Donated by the Japanese government and a Japanese manufacturer, it is destined for Questacon but due to insufficient space it is relocated to Hawdon St. Dickson.

The Daramalan Rugby Club that closed its doors in December 1991 is purchased at auction for \$810,000 with plans to spend \$250,000 converting it to a fitness centre.

Tasman House, a six storey office block in Marcus Clarke St, Civic is purchased for \$6.1m. Plans are also revealed to buy a radio telescope for the Planetarium and build a new multi-storey car park, bar facilities and kitchen at Dickson along with the establishment of a sports injury clinic staffed by doctors and physiotherapists in the Daramalan Club building.

1993

Kate Lundy becomes the first female president of the ACT Trades and Labour Council.

Brian Harber retires as Secretary Manager of the Woden Club, to be replaced by Julie Evans, who is in turn replaced at Downer by Robert Carters.

Bans on smoking in ACT clubs under consideration.

The Dickson and Woden clubs jointly purchase the head lease of the ANZ Bank building on London Circuit for 1.425m. The lease has 67 years to run.

A block next door on Cape St Dickson is purchased from Telecom.

Daramalan club shuts its doors

By CHARLES MIRANDA

After months of speculation and talks between the board of directors and financiers, the courts officially closed the doors of the Daramalan Rugby and Social Club yesterday afternoon.

A spokesman for the club, who asked not to be identified, said the directors of the Daramalan club had been in consultation with its major lenders, the Canberra Advance Bank and Esanda, for some time and had failed to agree on a "work-out situation".

The courts stepped in, asked directors to appoint liquidators, in this case Jones Sistrum and Co, and closed the club at 3pm yesterday.

The spokesman said the club had fallen \$1.7 million in debt. He said the club had faced "tough economic times", the lenders had control, and the club was "disappointed" at the decision.

He said the licensed club's champion rugby club "was a separate organisation" and would not be affected but for the fact it would have no clubhouse.

The spokesman said the rugby organisation had a strong membership and supporters and would continue to operate.

The Daramalan club had been propped up by bank guarantees provided by the financially se-

cure Tuggeranong Valley Rugby Union and Amateur Sports Club Inc for some time.

The Tuggeranong Rugby Club lent Daramalan a figure understood to be in the vicinity of \$30,000.

The Daramalan club undertook major extensions after years of continued loss in a "boom-or-bust" effort. Unfortunately for it, the efforts resulted in a bust.

Asked whether the Tuggeranong Valley Rugby Union Club would take over the closed club, a spokeswoman for its acting general manager, Barry Masters, said he had "no comment to make at this time".

The spokesman for the Daramalan club could also not confirm any move Tuggeranong might make.

He said he could not say whether the court's decision to close the club had been sudden despite the club's placement of an advertisement in *The Canberra Times* for the "Dara Bistro lunchtime Special" on the same day it was closed.

The spokesman said an official statement by Daramalan would be issued "in the next few days" after consultation with the board of directors.

1994

Smoking is banned in bars and dining areas.

1995

Fred McCauley dies aged 90.

1996

Senator Kate Lundy becomes the youngest ever ALP member of the Australian parliament.

1997

Legislation is introduced by the ACT Government ensuring all Canberra clubs disclose annual poker machine earnings and donations to charities.

1999

Sarah Schoonwater replaces Rod Driver as CFMEU President.

Stage 1 (40 rooms) of the Dickson Quality Hotel is built

The ACT Government introduces legislation for licensed clubs to donate at least 5% of poker machine profits annually to community organisations with the ACT total expected to hit \$4m. The percentage will rise to 7.5% over 3 years.

2001

The Woden Quality Hotel opens.

Stage 2 of the Dickson Quality Hotel (42 rooms) is completed along with two levels of underground parking.

1998

The Dickson Tradies annual allocation to charities reaches \$3.9m. 1997/98 taxation paid is \$5.3m and wages and salaries \$5.5m.

Dickson club gave charities \$3.9m

By FRANK CASSIDY

Canberra charities are \$3.9 million better off because a licensed club's generosity.

The Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club gave the record amount to charity groups in the 12 months to June as part of its policy of supporting the community.

The secretary-manager of the club, Rod Driver, said he did not believe it when the club's auditors identified the total amount of cash and community benefits the club had given.

"This is the first year we've presented the information in this way," he said. He was proud of the club's achievements.

As well as the \$3.9 million given away, the club had paid \$5.3 million in taxes and \$5.5 million in wages and salaries.

"What this does is show in figures what the club does for the community," he said.

The community benefits provided included an 81-space car park, surplus to requirements when the club built its Dickson motel complex.

"Dickson is extremely short of car spaces," he said. "We could have done away with one level and still satisfied requirements but decided we would not have the opportunity to build a car park again."

While the extent of support given by his club was of major benefit to the community, all clubs did the same, limited only by their resources.

"Quite a lot effort and time, as well as money, is invested in the community by clubs," he said.

Included in the Tradesmen's club's donations are \$30,000 for

the ACT Brumbies under-19 team, \$26,000 for the ACT Rams, \$25,000 for the national folk festival, \$15,000 for the ACT Fire Brigade, \$10,000 for Lifeline, the Gambling and Financial Counselling Service and Belconnen Swimming Club. It gave smaller amounts to other organisations, including the ACT Cancer Society, the Canberra Blind Society, the Red Cross, St Vincent de Paul, Marymead, the National Brain Injury Association, the Salvation Army, the Sea Scouts, the Civic soup kitchen, Camp Quality, CanTeen, the Canberra Doll Club, ACT playgroups and many more.

The club's auditors, Cuthel and Bigg, said if the club was operated on purely commercial terms it would reduce staff numbers significantly.

2003

The Downer Club closes and the Observatory and Planetarium remain open.

2005

Rod Driver resigns as Dickson secretary manager and Julie Evans becomes Group CEO.

10 of the club's 15 trams are to be removed.

Greta Evans is appointed manager of the Woden Club.

2006

Smoking is banned in all enclosed areas of clubs in Canberra.

2007

A \$62m building plan is announced to include expansion of the Dickson and Woden clubs and a nine storey office block on London Circuit.

George Wason resigns as secretary of the CFMEU.

2008

Julie Evans resigns as CEO of Tradies Group to be succeeded by Nina Churchward. John Holt is appointed Woden manager.

85% of the holiday accommodation properties are sold for \$12.5m.

Brian Harber resigns from the Board of Directors at the Woden Club.

The bicycle museum closes and cycles are moved to Daramalan Club which becomes the bicycle resource centre.

2009

Nina Churchward resigns and Rob Docker becomes CEO of the Tradies Group and Stephen Brennan Chief Financial Officer.

The Tradies make and later withdraw a \$25m bid for the Canberra Labor Club

Alison Percival is appointed Site Manager Dickson.

Plans are presented to construct a \$200 million complex in Woden on the car park to include two residential towers, a 700-seat convention centre, a hotel, a gym, and a new Tradies club.

2010

Sarah Schoonwater resigns as Secretary of CFMEU and Chairman of the Tradies Group and is replaced by Dean Hall

Fire destroys the Downer Club, Observatory and Planetarium.

2011

A major refurbishment of the Dickson Tradies Club is undertaken at a cost of \$8m

The bike collection is auctioned off with the remainder sold through an Australia wide catalogue.

2012

The Woden second floor space is converted to become an auditorium - The Stromlo Room.

2013

Plans for the Woden development are scaled back to a 185-apartment residential tower and 10-storey commercial block to sit on top of a podium that will include three levels of hidden car parking and street level retail space.

The Tradies enter a joint venture to construct a 228 apartment complex on Northbourne Avenue Braddon – the IQ Apartments.

2014

Alison Percival is appointed General Manager Clubs.





WYTHDOWNE, LYCON & SWANSTON STS & ST KILDA R^o

299

NORTH CARLTON & ST KILDA



06.

**THE CLUB
WITH A
DIFFERENCE**



Rod Driver (far right) conducts a meeting in the first tram to be installed at The Tradies - Melbourne 447.

THE CLUB WITH A DIFFERENCE

The Tradies has always been different. In fifty years it remains the only trade union based licensed club in Canberra. But there is much more to the story than that. Successive boards of directors can claim an enormous amount of credit for their courage and foresight in making some bold decisions to shape an organisation that *dared to be different*.

Rod Driver has never drank, smoked or gambled, nor had he any commercial experience when he was pitchforked in 1978 into the position of secretary-manager of the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club. "I thought I'm not a club person," he said on acceptance of what was to be a stop gap appointment.

They were heady days. Poker machines had been legalised in the ACT only two years prior and the rivers of dollars that had been flooding over the border to the Queanbeyan Leagues Club for years were now washing through Canberra clubland and The Tradies became a willing beneficiary. Many of the taxes and rules shackling licensed clubs today had yet to be dreamed of and money was for spending.

"I thought why would people want to come to our club instead of Ainslie Footy or The Workers or Southern Cross or whatever? So I thought we've got to make it different."







At the same time he was looking at a valuable strip of land separating the club building from the carpark which had been planted as a garden – a perfect site for something different!

“I’d been to some places overseas where they had railway carriages as part of a restaurant and I was impressed with that.” However an approach to NSW Railways proved fruitless. There was no rolling stock for sale and when his attention turned to trams he was directed to the Melbourne Metropolitan Tramways Board.

Armed with a bottle of scotch as a sweetener, Rod Driver ventured to Melbourne and was soon offered a 1927 tram for \$300.

“Three hundred dollars? I said. Done!” the delight on his face as he tells the story is an absolute reflection of the moment when he sealed the deal 35 years ago.” Even he could not have known where that purchase would lead The Tradies over almost the next three decades.

But the whole exercise could easily have ended in tears. Driver had not sought any advice or indeed permission from ACT planning authorities to site a tram at the Dickson premises. “They said you can’t have a tram, it’s not allowed,” he says taking up the story. But a week later he was back pleading his case. “I checked the legislation and nowhere does it say I can’t have a tram on our property.”

Armed with a bottle of scotch as a sweetener, Rod Driver ventured to Melbourne and was soon offered a 1927 tram for \$300

A decade of union-honed negotiating skills came in handy and the authority ended up agreeing, on condition the tram was enclosed and air-conditioned within five years. That request was met within twelve months, opening the way to a whole fleet of Tradies trams and an identifying feature to a generation of Canberrans.

And with encouragement from an enthusiastic board, within a very short space of time, the club had 10 of the old restored rattlers set up as dining rooms and families began arriving in droves to try this novelty eat-out option.

A genuine point of difference with an unintended bonus.

“These tram seats were as uncomfortable as hell!” Driver recounts, rising just a touch from his chair and grinning broadly as he tells the story. “And what was happening, people would come into the bistro and have a meal and they would get out fairly quickly because they were uncomfortable and we used to be able to get three sittings in an evening.” A cycle most restaurateurs could only hope for.

One tram remains on display at the Dickson club today. The others are in the hands of collectors.

“These tram seats were as uncomfortable as hell!”





Acquired	Tram Type
1979	Melbourne W2 1927
1980	Sydney P Class 1929
1981	Cable Car 120
1982	Adelaide D Class 1920
1983	Brisbane FM 1949
1983	Adelaide H Class 1929
1985	Sydney C Class 1897
1986	Sydney R Class 1934
1986	Sydney R Class 1934
1986	Hobart 1936
1986	Launceston No 1 1910
1986	Melbourne L Class 1921
1987	Victorian Railways Tram
1987	Victorian Railways Tram





Lou Seminara

Tradies members enjoy the service of a barber in residence. Lou Seminara commenced at Dickson in 1988 with Joe Schirripa taking over the scissors in 2000. His brother Paul operates the Woden shop.



Joe Schirripa

ENTER HERE

AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST
MUSEUM
OF UNUSUAL BICYCLES
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
Free Admission

TRAM STOP
Coffee Shop
NOW OPEN 7 DAYS
A WEEK

ESPRESSO COFFEE, CAKES



07.

THE BIKE MUSEUM



ENTER HERE

AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST
MUSEUM
OF UNUSUAL BICYCLES
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
Free Admission

TRAM STOP
Coffee Shop
NOW OPEN 7 DAYS
A WEEK



ESPRESSO COFFEE CAKES
and SNACKS... ENTER HERE

Billed as “the second largest bicycle museum in the world”, a 1989 report valued the collection at \$300,000.

THE BIKE MUSEUM

It has to be said that the Driver family had a bike fetish. Still has.

When Rod complained to his wife Annemarie that the walls of the club needed decorating, she reacted by setting up a display of old Canberra photographs in the foyer, but the result was not to his liking. “If we had a penny-farthing bike, that’d be big and we could hang that on the wall in the foyer? People would notice that,” she recalls him saying.

So began the search for a penny-farthing. However the first bike to appear in the club was of even tinier currency. “We were on a holiday in Queensland buying property and we went into a bike shop and they had a tiny little bike. Really a circus bike, the type clowns used to ride in the circus. He said there’s the bike. Why don’t we get that?”

And it became the start of a 600 piece collection.

“The next bike we saw was a two seater, side by side, with a big canopy over the top of it and you could have advertising on the back. We had to load it up on top of the car to get it home. So there were lots of different bikes we bought and it was known as the Museum of Unusual Bikes to start with because we had about ten bikes by then. They were all strange ones because he kept finding these strange things.” Annemarie Driver recalls with visible pride, her mind racing back to the heady days. “He wanted it to be different.”

Later to be named the Canberra Bicycle Museum, around 60 were on display at any one time. Some were custom built from photos of nineteenth century machines, replicas, one-offs and, unsurprisingly, numerous penny-farthings. Billed as “the second largest bicycle museum in the world”, a 1989 report valued the collection at \$300,000 and in 2008 it was housed at the Daramalan Club.





Lifestyle television programs recorded features on the tram and bike displays as did national magazines



There can be no doubt that Rod Driver was able to find his point of difference. Lifestyle television programs recorded features on the tram and bike displays as did national magazines and an Australia-wide audience was informed of this unusual club in Canberra. It was a business strategy like no other.

“It was really difficult to measure,” according to Annemarie “because it was always free admission. We thought it was successful because we had a lot of repeat business. But we couldn’t really measure it in financial terms.”

The bicycles were later sold through an on line catalogue.

The Tradies association with cycling extended well beyond the museum. A BMX track was built beside the Dickson premises following a fire that destroyed the Hungarian Club in 1981. Coincidentally this venture also suffered fire damage when a portable building was destroyed immediately before the Christmas opening. It was home to BMX racing on the north side for a number of years prior to the sport re locating to its current site in Melba.






Rod Driver Sec-Mgr 1978 - 2005 at the wheel of a replica fire engine, just one of many club displays.

FREE ADMISSION
OPEN 24 HOURS - 7 DAYS


THE CANBERRA BICYCLE MUSEUM

Over 60 old and unusual bicycles on display

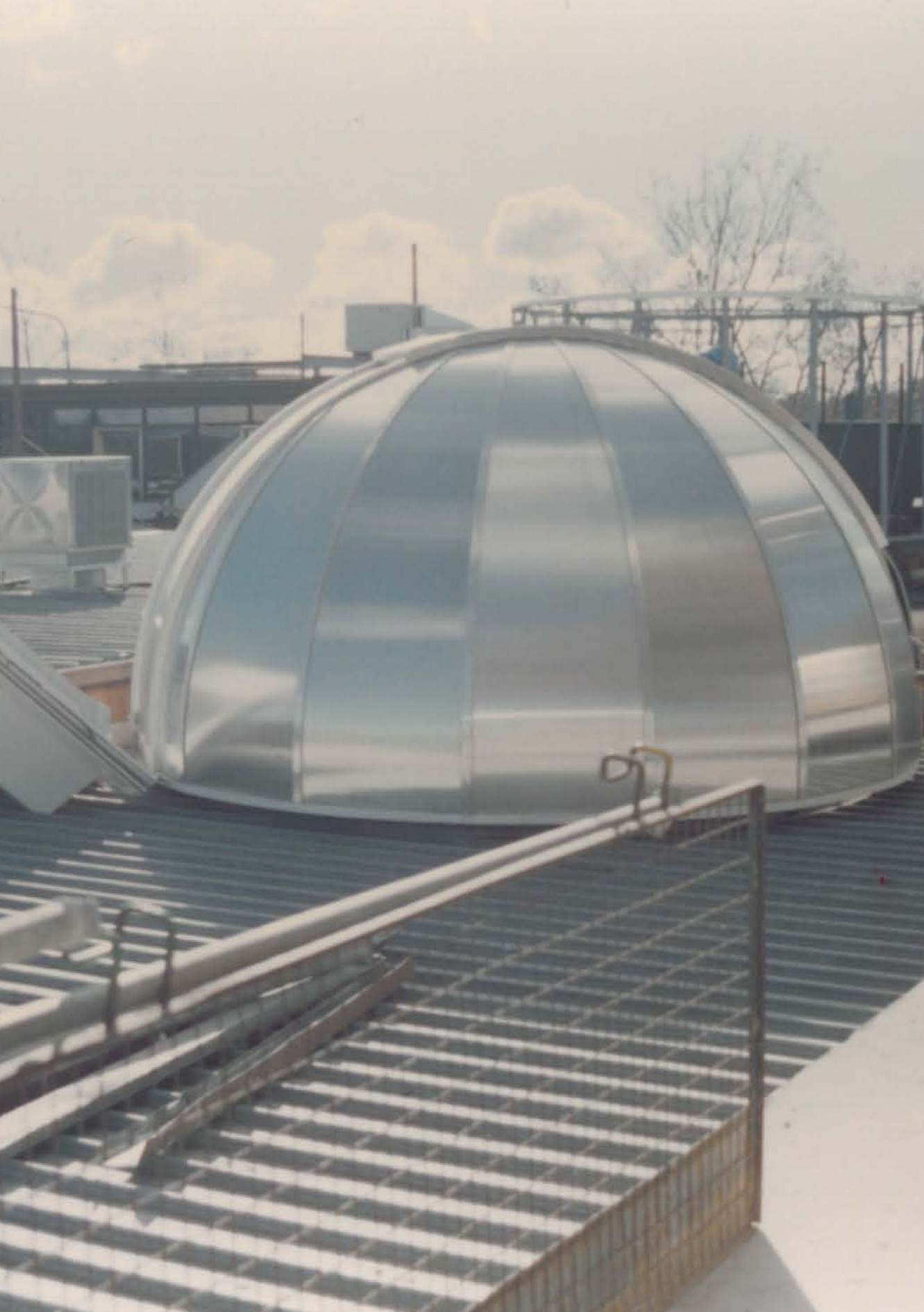


Bring your camera and take a photo of you and your friends on our ...

PENNYFARTHING
Enjoy a meal at our BISTRO or a light snack at our COFFEE SHOP



Dress rules apply after 7 p.m.
Members, Invited Guests and Visitors welcome. Children are welcome in the Club until 8 p.m. but must be accompanied by an adult.



08.

THE PLANETARIUM

Two large telescopes were mounted above the coffee shop and Canberrans were provided with an opportunity like no other to become overnight astronomers.

THE PLANETARIUM

If a club with trams and bikes was not enough to create a point of difference then how about a Planetarium?

All it took for the 1985 board of directors to provide a window into space was the imminent arrival of Halley's Comet, a naked-eye comet that appears in the inner solar system once every 75 years. Depending on year of birth, some people will get one chance to see it in their lifetime, some twice, others, never at all.

To provide an opportunity to view this phenomenon, a platform was constructed on the roof of the Dickson club with access to those seeking an enhanced view. Two large telescopes were mounted above the coffee shop and Canberrans were provided with an opportunity like no other to become overnight astronomers.

Unfortunately Halley's in February 1986 was the least favourable apparition in the past 2000 years. Very few could see it as the comet and Earth were on opposite sides of the sun. Increased light pollution from urbanisation added to the frustration of the large crowds who turned out hopeful of a glimpse of history.

Still their presence demonstrated an appetite for star gazing and the enterprising directors decided to invest in three small domes on the site of the Downer Club. This became known as the Canberra Observatory, with professional staff and research grade telescopes. School children from across Australia made it a stop on their mandatory Canberra visit, along with a tour of the War Memorial, en route to a cup of tea with their parliamentary representative.



In 1991 the Planetarium with its distinctive dome was built to include an auditorium with projector and special lay back seating. It became an integral feature of the tour of Canberra.

However, like the trams and bikes, it had a shelf life. Newer, more modern and interactive 21st century attractions like Questacon appeared and in January 2008, the Tradies decided to close the Canberra Space Dome and Observatory as it had become known and offered to give the equipment to any organisation that would relocate the equipment to another site and operate it for public use.

A group of Canberra citizens formed the Planetarium and Observatory Association of Canberra who operated the facility. It lay idle for two years but the group had plans to relocate the domes and equipment to Mount Stromlo, a first step in a phased plan for the centre to have a world leading public outreach facility.

But it was not to be. An early morning fire on September 28 2010 destroyed the domes and equipment to close the book on a chapter of Canberra astronomy lasting almost 25 years.

Canberra Space Dome & Observatory

Are you ready for an out of this world cosmic adventure?

The Space Dome

It is a unique domed theatre that uses special effects to simulate a perfect night sky, featuring over 7000 brilliant stars, day or night, rain or shine.

The Canberra Space Dome offers a range of unique shows tailored to educate and entertain children and adults alike.

Experience interplanetary space flights, discover the mysteries of the night sky and learn about the planets in our solar system.

Booking details:

- Open 5 nights, Tues - Sat (closed public holidays)
- Planetarium day sessions available for groups by special arrangement.
- Bookings are required as places are limited.
- Please ring for session times and prices. (Family and concession tickets available.)
- Large groups welcome.

Where the universe comes to life

It was an idea that also fitted with the socialist principle of providing a benefit for workers in the form of cheap holiday accommodation.

09.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

By the time the eighties rolled around The Tradies was trading exceptionally well, but terms like consolidation, diversification or future proofing were rarely heard around the board room table. Recollecting the period Rod Driver explained his desire at the time to invest surplus funds as a means of hedging against a possible future downturn. "Some of the directors were quite correctly thinking about what we can spend the money on but I was thinking rainy day. So I went to the board one day and suggested we buy some units."

It was an idea that also fitted with the socialist principle of providing a benefit for workers in the form of cheap holiday accommodation.

The first was a four unit block in Corrimal, just north of Wollongong, close to the beach. "We charged fifty dollars a week and of course we had to do it by ballot because there were so many people wanted it. We were still making good money so I said how about we buy some more?" Driver explains. A four bedroom fishermen's shack in Sussex Inlet was soon to follow

but in a very short space of time The Tradies property portfolio grew to 76 units (mostly 2 bedrooms) stretching along the eastern seaboard from the Gold Coast around to Adelaide.

While the original \$50 weekly tariff increased with inflation, most working class Canberrans in the eighties became aware of the great value of a "Tradies holiday" and this popularity led to the introduction of several sets of rules. Long term members had been complaining about the sudden appearance of "holiday accommodation members", those who joined purely to take advantage of cheap rates. So a twelve months membership qualification period was introduced. Additionally, bookings could not be made more than a year in advance but it still failed to deter those desperate to book budget Christmas holidays at the coast.

"They'd line up on the first of January," explained Annemarie Driver who managed bookings for the two hundred or so hopeful holiday makers queued in the car park each New Year's Day. "We'd give them a ticket when the office

opened at nine o'clock and sometimes there would be people who hadn't got in when we closed the office at five," she explained. "We took bookings on the first of every month but January was the big one."

And so it was for almost three decades until maintenance and other costs of providing cheap workers' holidays became prohibitive and another chapter in the organisation's history ended.

Chairman Dean Hall explains.

"We had building inspections done on all of them and they came up with massive issues around the safety of the properties which would require a lot of capital investment to try to bring them up to scratch. A lot of them were in good locations but the cost of maintaining versus the revenue we were getting out of them forced the decision to sell them."

Tradies members of the period will harbour fond memories of family holidays in a range of locations.



15 Huth St Labrador Qld	10 Units	46 Golf Links Drive Batemans Bay NSW	6 Units
22 Alfred St Mermaid Beach Qld	1 Unit	220 Beach Rd Batehaven NSW	7 Units
Marine Parade Nobby's Beach Qld	1 Unit	25 Bogong St Jindabyne NSW	3 Units
7 Sir Thomas Mitchell Rd Bondi Beach NSW	4 Units	54 Ebden Ave Black Rock Vic	7 Units
28 Thurston Crescent Corrimal NSW	2 Units	18 Buller St Port Macquarie NSW	4 Units
1 Murrnar Rd Towradgi NSW	4 Units	27 Townsend St Forster NSW	8 Units
28 Hume Rd Cronulla NSW	3 Units	136 Bay Rd Toowoon Bay NSW	5 Units
4 Nielsen Lane Sussex Inlet NSW	5 Units	74 Broadway Glenelg SA	6 Units



It provided yet another unusual dining option for club patrons.



10.

FARM HOUSE

MUSEUM

The idea for this unusual addition to the club came when two Sydney R class trams were sourced from Braidwood where a family had used them as a residence during the 1940s. The four bedroom layout had a kitchen, dining room, bathroom and a lounge room.

This “house” was rebuilt at Dickson using the trams in the layout of the Braidwood house and furnished in the farmhouse style of the early 20th century. They included

a tin bath, fuel stove, chip heater, hand washing machine and other interesting pieces including a working pianola.

It provided yet another unusual dining option for club patrons.

But like so many of the club’s “collections” of the period it almost developed its own blood supply and grew to include outdoor items like an old tractor, a fire engine, petrol pump and a Furphy’s farm water cart.

A photograph of the Quality Hotel Dickson building. The building is a multi-story structure with a tan brick facade and a green roofline. A large green sign with a yellow logo and the text "QUALITY HOTEL DICKSON" is mounted on the brick wall. The ground floor features a glass-enclosed entrance area with a covered walkway. In the foreground, there are wooden planters with various plants and a blue signpost with a "CHECKING ONLY" sign. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

QUALITY
HOTEL
DICKSON

16
CHECKING ONLY

17
CHECKING ONLY



|| .
**QUALITY
HOTELS**



QUALITY HOTELS

The Tradies Group has always prided itself on being an industry leader, further evidenced by being the only licensed club in Canberra with hotel accommodation on site. The addition of 40 hotel rooms at Dickson in 1999 was a bold initiative which has proven so successful that, within two years, capacity on the north side was doubled and a new 57 room hotel constructed at the Woden site.

Operating under the Quality Hotel banner, both properties have earned accolades at the Australian Hotels Association awards for best four star accommodation in Canberra. Popular with corporate and government clients, the

properties cater to a broadening leisure market and fit perfectly into The Tradies relationship with sporting teams.

“We’re certainly playing much more in the group space than we have in previous years”, said Olenka Nota, Group Hotel Manager.

Ideally situated on the edge of commercial precincts in Dickson and Woden the hotels offer ACT visitors a dining and leisure opportunity which differs markedly from other accommodation providers. Dickson hotel guests also enjoy the luxury of free access to the superbly equipped Northside Fitness Centre.

“The two properties are unique. We’re the only hotels in Canberra that are part of a club. It’s a one stop shop so all of our guests have accommodation, access to our restaurants, our bars and our gaming floor.” Olenka adds, pointing to The Tradies Group successful continuation of a tradition of providing something different.



The Tradies Group has always prided itself on being an industry leader, further evidenced by being the only licensed club in Canberra with hotel accommodation on site.





12. CHANGING TIMES

CHANGING TIMES

The 1990s and early 2000s proved to be a very turbulent era for Canberra licensed clubs, one that changed the face of the industry in Canberra. It was a period when, for varying reasons, many small clubs were forced to close their doors resulting in a consolidation of the landscape that saw the emergence of much larger club groupings.

The Vikings, Raiders, Southern Cross, Ainslie, Labor Club and The Tradies attained the greatest market share while many small clubs assumed niche roles. Closures and acquisitions became common place.

George Wason, who served as branch secretary of the BWIU and later the CFMEU was a board member of The Tradies during the period.

“The demographics of the area were changing. The people who originally lived in Dickson, Downer, Watson and Hackett were retiring and moving down the coast.” Land values in North Canberra increased markedly. “The ones who moved in after them were coming in at a different price point and we had to move with the times.” Wason explained.

Unfortunately the neighbouring Daramalan and Downer Olympic clubs were not geared



“It was a club for workers so they had to get a cheap beer, a big feed and go home happy.”

to make the same moves and when they were forced to close, both were acquired by The Tradies. “Rather than have them bought by our large competitors” George Wason describes their purchase as strategic.

Consolidation became necessary in the union movement too. New Parliament House was, and still is, the largest construction project ever undertaken in Canberra with 3,500 building workers on site at its peak. It was a boom period in the industry with several other concurrent projects, but when completion came so too did the jobs of many thousands of workers. “When Parliament House finished in 1988, BWIU membership (in Canberra) dropped from 11,500 to 2,500,” according to Wason.

The Dickson club was constructed in 1964 with a plan to provide a licensed premises and provide office space for the BWIU and the Painters Union. But along the way others became headquartered at the same location. The Federated Engine Drivers and Fireman’s Association (FEDFA), The National Union of Workers, Plumbers, Electrical and Storemen and Packers were all shoe horned into the less than spacious upstairs office with them. How did they all fit? “It was the original hot desk” says Wason laughing.



The housie hall at Dickson

He also describes the philosophy that drove the club. “It was a club for workers so they had to get a cheap beer, a big feed and go home happy.” The “big feed” gave birth to the traditional Tradies Schnitzel that remains a staple of the menu today.

“For the time and era it was successful. We were a no frills club. We said we didn’t want the big auditoriums of the Ainslie and Southern Cross clubs. It was for families.” Wason adds describing the rabbit-warren type building it had become through countless additions and renovations. “It was quirky”.

And so were many of the attempts to be different. He recalls a day when secretary-manager Rod Driver told him he was going to commence

Midnight Bingo. “You’re mad” Wason shouted. “Midnight bingo in the middle of winter!” before adding that Driver couldn’t wait to run up the stairs on the following Monday morning laughing and giggling to tell him that they had 300 people playing bingo at 1am on Saturday night.

But he also recalls the decision being taken to remove the club’s iconic trams, Driver’s pride and joy, to make way for a new round of renovations. “We almost had to get a grief counsellor in for him,” explained Wason with a huge grin.

The trams did depart (except for one too difficult to remove) and so did the bikes, the farmyard museum and other “quirky” features as The Tradies took aim at the 21st century.

The Tradies offered full membership to women whereas other clubs would only offer associate status.

13. WOMEN AND THE TRADIES

When the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club opened its doors in Dickson in 1964 the initial membership intake was almost totally devoid of women. There was no intention to provide a barrier to the female sex, the situation was circumstantial.

Firstly the club had been built by two unions for the use of members, the majority of whom were men. Secondly, membership of most licensed clubs in the sixties was culturally male dominated and The Tradies developed a reputation, certainly on weekdays, as a working man's club where women were invited to attend when dances or other social functions were held on weekends.

Annemarie Driver recalls her early outings with Rod when he was a young unionist attending meetings at Dickson. "He told me to wait in the car because he didn't want me to go inside. But I said I'm not doing that, "she insisted." So he took me into the little ladies' lounge where I could have a lemon squash while I waited for the meeting to finish. It wasn't really a nice place for women."

And it was a tag that lasted many years, but, ever so slowly, the wheel has turned and the organisation became something of a trailblazer. A 1980 report by the Women's Electoral Lobby noted that The Tradies offered full membership to women whereas other clubs would only offer associate status.

Perhaps the most tangible evidence of gender equity came in 1985 with the employment of an 18yo builder's labourer, Kate Lundy as a branch official. Within twelve months she was to become vice president of the BWIU and a board member of the Woden Tradesmen's Union Club. History shows the appointment as a direct link to her subsequent election in 1996 to the federal parliament where Senator Kate Lundy serves today.

In 1999 Sarah Schoonwater was elected President of the CFMEU and the first female chair of the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club and in 2003 Julie Evans was appointed manager of the Downer Club. This move was followed in 2005 with her elevation to CEO of The Tradies Group, the first woman to hold

such a post in ACT licensed club history. She was succeeded in the position by another woman, Nina Churchward. In 2014 Alison Percival became General Manager Clubs in The Tradies Group following a period of service as manager of the Dickson site.

The current board and management team has campaigned vigorously to present an organisation that has successfully become "female friendly" driven by very deliberate cultural change which includes vastly improved infrastructure, décor, design, staffing, services and attitudes. Today's Tradies is a major supporter of women's sport in Canberra and boasts a 40% female membership, a continually increasing number.



Senator Kate Lundy



Julie Evans



Alison Percival

Kate building a new place for women

By BRAD TURNER

The building industry's reputation as a bastion of male dominance took a battering this week when 19-year-old Ms Kate Lundy was elected unopposed as vice-president of the ACT branch of the Building Workers' Industrial Union.

It is believed to be the first time a woman has been elected as an official of any building union in Australia, an achievement not lost on Ms Lundy, who aims to use her position to encourage more women to become involved in the industry.

Ms Lundy, a former student of Ginninderra High School and Copland College, has lived in Canberra for 15 years. She entered the industry at 16 when she worked as a labourer removing asbestos from the National Library.

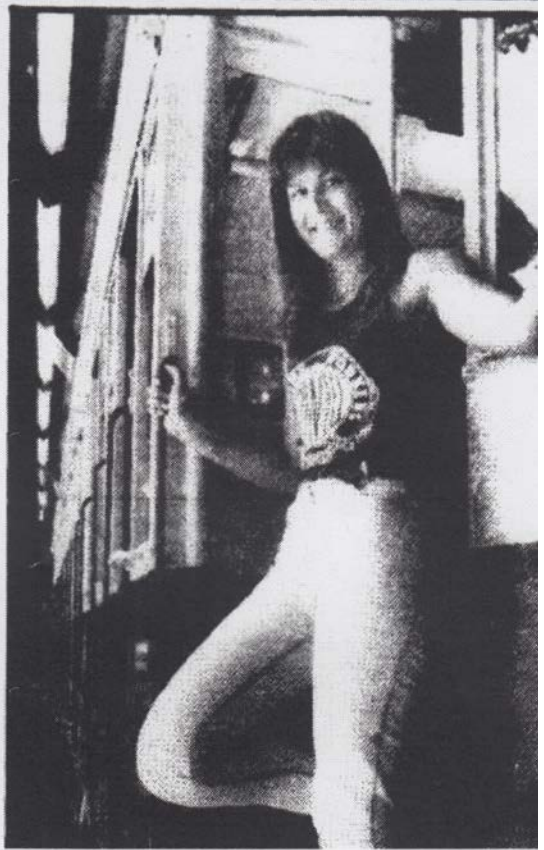
Unimpressed with the Builders' Labourers' Federation of

lot" when she visited construction sites. But she has become more confident in recent months and now says there are few problems and no harassment.

She enjoys the 10-hour working days the job involves and eventually hopes to gain higher office in the BWIU. The secretary of the ACT BWIU, Mr Peter Berry, has no doubts Ms Lundy will achieve her ambition.

"She has enormous ability and a great future ahead of her," Mr Berry said. "We are delighted the ACT branch of the BWIU has led the way in electing a woman to the executive."

The president-elect of the ACT branch of the BWIU, Mr Rod Driver, said yesterday that his group had won 15 positions on the union's committee of management and the executive



14. BEYOND 2010.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE

Infrequent visitors to The Tradies in Dickson can be easily identified. They enter the lounge and restaurant areas making comments like “Wow, this is nothing like The Tradies that I can remember” or “What a difference.” In fact the “What a difference” phrase was heard so often that it became an obvious marketing tag line - a reference to major refurbishments of the club interior completed in 2011 and still receiving the same reaction three years later.

An \$8m makeover in that year produced a very attractive veneer which has continued to draw plenty of favourable public attention but the real changes go deeper, much deeper.

“The direction needed to change to secure what was going on and also to change direction, and that’s when we made the decision to change management, which was tough” explains Dean Hall who became club chairman soon after the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer, Rob Docker.

Docker had built and conducted a well-respected licensed clubs consultancy business, acting as a trouble-shooter and adviser to the industry nationally for many years, and it was in this role that his initial engagement with The Tradies board commenced. The new broom approach to management included Chief Financial Officer, Stephen Brennan and both recognised the need for cultural change.

“We had to change the whole nature of this organisation and how it might appeal or not appeal to our membership base,” says Docker outlining the background to plans to overhaul the business. “The gender issue was a big one and we had to change it. In the 70’s, 80s and 90s the place had a certain reputation and it was one that was not female friendly.”

Reconnecting with the community was highest on the agenda as he set about revitalisation of The Tradies brand. “We took a long hard look at our product, our infrastructure and our customer service and saw a lot that needed fixing,” Docker explains. But he also recognised the need to embrace all that had previously made The Tradies into a Canberra institution and to build upon that base. “We needed to be reverent to our history but always have a vision for the future.”

To reposition The Tradies as an industry leader, new revenue generation avenues were sought which in turn required more advanced management methodology. Docker nurtured and mentored a new, young management team including General Manager Clubs Alison Percival, General Manager Gaming Matt Stuart and Group Accountant Lochani Wickramaratna to carry the organisation forward.

Dean Hall acknowledges the vital role of the club as the lifeblood of the CFMEU but future development of both entities required geographical separation. “The first thing we needed to do was to remove the offices of the union from the club. (to Rosevear Place, Dickson). The union’s focus is industrial representation of its members and we needed to be mindful of the direction of the club but not get involved in its management,” he explains, nodding in the direction of the club’s forefathers for their vision and at the same time pointing to changes in the relationship. “The union’s gone from a position where it probably got 75% of its money from the club, now to 25% in a pretty short time frame. We can’t rely upon each other but we are dependent upon each other.”

“We needed to be reverent to our history but always have a vision for the future.”



Dean Hall
Chairman



Rob Docker
Chief Executive Officer



Stephen Brennan
Chief Financial Officer

Not so much dependent on one another but certainly complementary are Hall and Docker. Originally tossed together by circumstance rather than design, they are the “yin and yang” of The Tradies. A chairman and CEO whose career pathways and personalities differ markedly but their ability to tag team on major business decisions and ventures is a key factor to the organisation’s success. With Chief Financial Officer Stephen Brennan providing a steady hand on the purse strings the Group has become an industry leader in many areas.

“One thing we are certain of is that the CFMEU and The Tradies brand in the past four years has been enhanced in the community.” Docker adds.

Both describe the decision to refurbish the Dickson premises in 2011 as vital.

“The place was clearly out dated and wasn’t keeping pace with the expectations of the general community, let alone our membership. We were losing money,” said Docker. Hall, the chairman, has a more blunt assessment. “If we hadn’t done something, the whole thing was going down the toilet. We were no longer adding to our balance sheet. We were burning assets.”

A very detailed study of the club’s properties and other assets was conducted by Docker, Brennan and the board to determine the way forward.

“There was quite a strategic aspect to all of that” Docker explains. “We’ve taken the balance sheet from mid-forties to over seventy in that time” he adds referring to the net asset value of the club expressed in millions of dollars over a four year period. This quite remarkable growth has come despite increased taxation and regulation of the industry in a period which has seen many Canberra clubs experience financial difficulties.

“We’ve bucked the trend” Docker explains.

“We’re proud of it but let’s not get too carried away. This is great geography” a reference to The Tradies prime location in the Dickson shopping and restaurant precinct. Describing the club’s first fifty years, Dean Hall sums it up with a chuckle. “A lot of it has been good luck and some of it good management,” adding “I think it’s like every business.”



15.

THE TRADIES,
CFMEU, CSI
AND CCW



THE TRADIES, CFMEU, CSI AND CCW

Dean Hall was a Canberra schoolteacher who, in 1998, saw a job advertised for a drug and alcohol education officer with the building trades group of unions. Originally funded by grants, the program was soon to become reliant upon self-funding and as its co-ordinator, he was required to seek the monetary backing necessary for continuation.

“I went out and got training opportunities and got sponsorship and fund raising opportunities,” he explains. “It was a drug and alcohol and welfare program educating workers about the dangers of drugs and alcohol in the workplace relating to safety issues and their need to treat it because they were not only endangering themselves but other workers,” he explains.

Hall’s introduction to the construction industry welfare sector coincided with a spate of on-site accidents. “Cranes started collapsing on things and it was the first time I had come across post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and workers being affected by fatalities.” These incidents led to a broadening of the program to include trauma response and the effects upon families, aspects that led the industrial safety aspirant to question his own ability to handle an ever increasing need for worker welfare.

“I was way out of my depth. I didn’t know what I was doing so I went to the assistant secretary at the time and asked if they could put me through some qualifications.” Six years of part time study at the University of Canberra resulted in a Bachelor of Social and Community Studies to add to his earlier Bachelor of Education and the development of a “master’s degree” in confidence.

“Part of the program was drug and alcohol rehab, extending it to their families. The club (The Tradies) was involved in that so then we started doing the effect of gambling on people and their families. We started getting people into rehab, their kids, partners, wives.” It was to lead to the birth of Creative Safety Initiatives (CSI) and Construction Charitable Works (CCW).

As a crusader for social justice, he describes the Tradies/CFMEU alliance as one that drives the sort of change necessary to assist workers to achieve better pay and conditions.

But the real catalyst for CSI's progression was the infamous Work Choices policy of the Howard Government. "They were attacking the right of unions to train their members," Hall recalls. "And they were attacking the right of unions to provide welfare services for their members. So the club put up the money at that time and I put up the concept of CSI." It was an initiative that foreshadowed his nomination and election to the position of assistant branch secretary of the CFMEU with Sarah Schoonwater replacing George Wason as secretary.

Today Creative Safety Initiatives is an ACT based Registered Training Organisation (RTO), committed to a continuing focus on improving safety standards in the building and construction industry through training and industry consultation. CSI is committed to reducing the number and severity of accidents in the workplace, offering a wide range of courses to clients and employers including:

- Asbestos Awareness Training
- National Construction Induction Training (White Card)
- High Risk Licence Training (Scaffolding, Dogging and Hoist and many more)
- General Occupational Health and Safety Training
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness Training
- Suicide Awareness Training
- Manual Handling
- Height Safety Training

Construction Charitable Works is a charitable organisation determined to improve the lives of building and construction workers and their families during their time of need. CCW continuously supports the community through multiple avenues including detoxification and rehabilitation, trauma response, mental health services, health promotion/training and welfare and support services.

At the heart of The Tradies is the need to provide support for the CFMEU membership and for the community at large, or as Tradies CEO Rob Docker explains, "The Tradies has got to become the vehicle for asset growth, diversification and business interests which provide financial strength for the CFMEU long term in Canberra."

But while the members built the original Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club to house the union and provide financial support for its operation, the focus of that support has altered through the years to now point firmly in the direction of safety and welfare. "If the CFMEU didn't exist, can you imagine the social consequences, safety situation etc?" Docker asks, referring to the CSI and CCW programs.

Dean Hall sums up the role of the club this way. "A social outlet for our members, their families and the community and it provides the opportunity to fund particular social justice issues and assist charities."

As a crusader for social justice, he describes the Tradies/CFMEU alliance as one that drives the sort of change necessary to assist workers to achieve better pay and conditions. "Of all the interventions you can make in a community the most measured and effective, tried and true, proven way is to get a decent job. Then they make decisions about a proper diet. They can make decisions about exercise. They can make decisions about schooling and education because you've empowered them. And over the years we've probably given tens of thousands of families the opportunity to do that and that's why Canberra has some of the highest wages in the construction industry in Australia."





The Tradies



16.

**THE NEXT
50 YEARS**



THE NEXT 50 YEARS

A scan of the timeline to date provides a snapshot of the first half century along with a brief insight into the dynamism of The Tradies organisation. Predicting a future direction is much more complex and best done through an examination of current plans combined with a healthy dose of imagination.

“I think there’ll always be a commitment to having a club for the members, what that will look like in the future is probably the next big decision the directors of the club have got to make,” the chairman advises. “There’ll always be a clubhouse and there will always be a presence in Dickson.”

The Tradies landholding is now bounded by Badham St, Dickson Place, Cowper St and the stormwater drain separating the property from Daramalan College. Recent considerations have included a multi storey building with a mix of retail, commercial office space and residential. However, the 2020 Tradies will bear little resemblance to its earlier versions.

Rob Docker also emphasises the importance of his management team in taking the business forward. “If I was a football coach I could use the old cliché about having just the right mix of youth and experience. But the fact of the matter is that we do,” he quips. “Having the right infrastructure and product is one thing but we need the right people in key positions”, Docker adds in direct reference to Group Managers Alison Percival, Olenka Nota, Matt Stuart and Lochani Wickramaratna.

“The next move we make, in the next 5-10 years, will be to deliver what people love about clubs in an exciting, different fashion.”

Dean Hall sounds as though he is providing a teaser to the future of the Dickson site but no firm decision has been made on the ideal model for a building that produces all the requirements the organisation is planning. “It will be an entirely different package that appeals to a whole group of people who never contemplated walking into a club and that’s the challenge.”

Decisions around the type of architecture, the business mix and the level of investment are amongst the next biggest facing the organisation in its fifty year history. The demography and socio economics of Dickson and the northern suburbs of Canberra have altered dramatically since The Tradies inception. So too has their geographic relationship with the rest of Canberra. The introduction of light rail from Gungahlin, increasing high rise living on Northbourne Avenue and major redevelopment of the Dickson shopping and restaurant precinct are transforming the former working class area into an extension of inner city Canberra.

More broad is the need to react to a changing Australia. 1964 Canberra was largely Anglo Saxon in population with some influence coming from European migration. Since then the influx of people from Asia, the former Yugoslavia, South America, the Pacific and the Middle East have transformed the city into an increasingly multicultural mix. Most recent statistics indicate close to a quarter of the current population was born overseas, a percentile for whom Australian licensed club land can represent a significant shift in culture.

The profile of today’s club goer is changing. So too is the mix of food, beverage and entertainment expectation of contemporary generations.

“A good deal of research is being undertaken at present into the expectations of future patrons and much of that revolves around revenue streams,” Rob Docker adds. “Gaming will always exist in some form but the new generation doesn’t think about gaming machines in the same way as the older generation”

“You’ve got to take the 10% of people who have been loyal to you and enjoy your facilities and create something that opens it up to the other 90%.” Hall adds while explaining the need for informed decision making over expediency. “When we do it, the idea is that The Tradies will be around for another 50 years.”



Alison Percival
General Manager — Clubs



Lochani Wickramaratna
Group Accountant

“Having the right infrastructure and product is one thing but we need the right people in key positions.”



Matt Stuart
General Manager — Gaming



Olenka Nota
Group Hotel Manager



“The next move we make, in the next 5-10 years, will be to deliver what people love about clubs in an exciting, different fashion.”





CANBERRA REGION COOL-CLIMATE WINES

WHITE

SHAW VINEYARD CIELO SPARKLING CUVÉE NV ~~\$65~~/\$28
GALLAGHER SPARKLING DUET PINOT CHARDONNAY NV ~~\$37~~

GALLAGHER SAUVIGNON BLANC 2011 ~~\$6~~/\$28
SHAW VINEYARD SEMILLON SAUVIGNON BLANC 2011 ~~\$5~~/\$20
CLONAKILLA SEMILLON SAUVIGNON BLANC 2012 ~~\$37~~

JIRRA AT JEIR STATION FRESCO RIESLING 2008 ~~\$5~~/\$20
LONG RAIL GULLY RIESLING 2012 ~~\$65~~/\$30
NICK O'LEARY RIESLING 2012 ~~\$40~~
HELM WINES HELM CLASSIC RIESLING 2011/12 ~~\$50~~

GALLAGHER CHARDONNAY 2010 ~~\$6~~/\$27
BOURKE STREET CHARDONNAY 2010 ~~\$75~~/\$35
EDEN ROAD WINES THE LONG ROAD CHARDONNAY 2011 ~~\$40~~

MT MAJURA

LONG RAIL ~~\$7~~/\$40

RED

SHAW VINEYARD RISCATO NV ~~\$5~~
SHAW VINEYARD BOTRYTIS SEMILLON
BEAGLE'S RUIN LATE HARVEST VIOGNIER
LERIDA ZENZI ROSATO FRIZZANTE -

SHAW VINEYARD MERLOT 2008
CAPITAL WINES THE BACKBENCHER

SHAW VINEYARD'S CABERNET SAUVIGNON
HELM WINES CABERNET SAUVIGNON

JIRRA AT JEIR STATION SHIRAZ 20
BOURKE STREET SHIRAZ 2011
COLLECTOR MARKED TREE SHIRAZ
NICK O'LEARY SHIRAZ 2011
CLONAKILLA SHIRAZ VIOGNIER 2

MT MAJURA TEMPRANILLO 2011



This book was researched and written by Canberra journalist Phil Lynch and is based upon a series of interviews with key Tradies personnel, archive material from the Canberra Times, the National Library and the National Archives. Special thanks must go to Ronnie and Shirley Baldwin and Rod and Annemarie Driver whose devotion to duty as an archivist for the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club has ensured the preservation of some valuable historical information and images.

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The Tradies

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