

THE HISTORY OF THE GARLAND McHARG CUP

After the visit of the Canadian Lacrosse team in 1907, the sterling silver cup was presented to the Victorian Lacrosse Association for competition between the states, the donors being Mr Richard Garland, formerly a Canadian lacrosse champion and President of the Toronto Lacrosse Association, and Mr Andrew McHarg, both residents of Melbourne.

The Carnival matches were then originated, the first taking place in 1910 in Adelaide, usually taking place every three years (war years excluded) until 1968, and then every two years until 1981, after which they became annual carnivals, with each of the three states taking turns to organise and conduct the carnival.

In 1941, as a consequence of World War 2, the Victorian association decided to review its insurance policies, and in doing so discovered that the Garland-McHarg trophy would be uninsurable under war damage policies. It decided to place the Cup in the E.S. & A. Bank's (which later became the ANZ Banking Group) safe deposit, and to inform the Australian Lacrosse Council of the step.

The Cup comprises a base with a silver cup and a lacrosse figure on the top. The Cup is transported in two very secure boxes, which in total weigh approximately 46 kg. The Cup can be seen on the Lambton Mount Lacrosse Club website in full rotation (https://youtu.be/_8vpP XK6UWU).

It is noted that in the 1959 carnival souvenir programme (the carnival preceded the Australia vs combined Washington & Lee/University of Virginia team) that "The Cup is on view at the Melbourne Sports Depot, Elizabeth Street, Melbourne". The MSD was a sporting goods store icon at that time and a supporter of lacrosse.

Unfortunately because of its value the trophy is presented to the winning team at each senior carnival, perhaps a glass or two of beer is drunk from it, and then it goes back into storage for another year! Attempts have been made to have it displayed permanently at the National Sports Museum at the MCG, but unfortunately the museum requires the cup to be transferred in perpetuity without a guarantee that it will be shown. It is truly a remarkable trophy.