

A BRIEF HISTORY OF GLENELG LACROSSE CLUB FROM HOLDFAST BAY AND ST PETERS CHURCH

Holdfast Bay was named by Colonel William Light, South Australian surveyor general, in 1836. In his journal he expressed his pleasure at the quality of the anchorage after riding out a storm. Holdfast Bay was the site of the landings in 1836 and 1837 by pioneers who were to set up the colony of South Australia.

The Holdfast Bay Lacrosse Club was formed in 1895 and we believe they played in the suburb of Glenelg. Lacrosse and other sports had been played in Glenelg up until the 1930's under the sponsorship of the Glenelg Sailing Club. It had one team in B Grade in 1935 and was struggling for players when the Rev. V.F. (Jerry) Meyer, who had been an active lacrosse player before joining the service, together with four members of the Church of England Boys Society (CEBS), joined the club to help out.

Colin Teague, who had been a well-known lacrosse player in Port Pirie (Which city had a successful lacrosse association) had come to Glenelg to work and live and it was not long before he and Jerry Meyer became active in lacrosse at Holdfast Bay, who then recruited Don Hobbs, Bill Robinson and Cec Westwood to play lacrosse for season 1935. Matches at that time were played on Wigley Reserve.

At the close of the 1935 season it was clear that a substantial number of the Glenelg Sailing Club players would be retiring and this could lead to the disintegration of the Holdfast Bay team. At the end of the season Rev. Meyer, along with Colin Teague decided to organize a completely new club by drawing on the members of the CEBS and teaching them the rudiments of the game during the summer months.

Unfortunately at the end of 1935 Rev. Meyer was transferred to Loxton but that did not stop Teague along with the help of Hobbs, Robinson and Westwood from launching the new club with a C Grade team in 1936 and so St Peters Church Lacrosse Club (Glenelg) was born. Instrumental in the formation of St Peters, which emanated from the Anglican church in Glenelg, was Rev W.R. Ray, who was then assistant minister at the church and subsequently was appointed Headmaster of Pulteney Grammar School.

Another fine player who got his start at St Peters was Max Kindermann, who represented Victoria as a goalkeeper after WW2 and was a member of the Caulfield Team of the Century. Max's younger brother Ray also went on to play lacrosse for St Peters. Ray was also an artist and sculptured the wooden trophy that was awarded to the MVP at each world championship from 1982 (Jeff Kennedy) until circa 2014.

Teague was a strict disciplinarian and an excellent organizer. By the start of season 1936 a group of mostly inexperienced young men had been moulded into an excellent team, extremely fit and keen to the last degree. Their uniform was a royal blue jumper with a white St Andrews cross on both sides, numbers in blue on the top back of the sorts and blue socks with white tops.

St. Peter's Church, Glenelg, Lacrosse Club
PREMIERS B GRADE, 1937



L. to R.—W. J. Lamerton, M. J. Kindermann, J. R. Thompson, J. D. Gitsam, M. D. Sutherland, W. G. Hobbs, F. H. Lewis, R. Barnes, F. V. Thompson, R. L. Wilson, C. A. Teague (Captain), L. W. Robinson.

Note the captain and vice-captain (Don Hobbs) have a crest on their uniform

St Peters drew its first match of 1936 against East Torrens and went on to win every game thereafter, including the C Grade grand final. The club was duly promoted to B Grade in 1937 and again took out the premiership, and promoted to A grade in 1938, "And everyone in A grade was now after their blood". In 1938 they again made the final but were defeated by Brighton 13-10, and in 1939 were defeated in the semi-finals. By 1939 the club had 3 teams and had 3 representatives in the senior state team. By this time WW2 had begun and thoughts turned to more serious matters.

The Club remained St Peters Church Glenelg up until & including 1939. There were no competitions during the war years, 1940-45. The first team to be called Glenelg was in 1946. "Because the new Rector of St Peters Church Glenelg preferred that the church not be directly associated with an organised competitive team sport, the club name was changed to the Glenelg Lacrosse Club."

Glenelg did not appear in another A Grade grand final until 1976 where they won their first premiership in that grade and have since won a further 11 grand finals, the last being in 2021, and runners-up in 2022.

Women's lacrosse at Glenelg started in 1969 with the club fielding 2 teams in B grade in their first two years, the coaches being Peter Hobbs in 1969 and John Campbell in 1970. They were promoted to A grade in 1971 and coached by Rod Greaves, Ray Kohler and Wayne Sutton and have remained in A grade ever since.

Former Memorial Medal winner Don Gorman, father of Anne became coach in 1972 and coached for 3 years. Glenelg became a very successful women's club in terms of premierships and national representation. Anne Newbery(Gorman) was the first national representative. In the early 90's no fewer than 7 club members were on the

national team, and many club members have continued to represent the state and nation with honour ever since.

While the club owned the building at Wigley Reserve, which they had built and added to over many years, they did not own the land. There were discussions circa 1998 initiated by the local council and state government with the lacrosse club and the sailing club, where there was a desire to develop that area and build a marina and shopping and restaurant precinct. Both clubs had little choice given they did not own the land at Wigley Reserve, thus the land used by the lacrosse club and the sailing club was compulsorily acquired for the proposed development.

Given the club had been there since the 1930's the developer, at the behest of the state government and council, found a new home for the lacrosse club at Barratt Reserve, West Beach, where they built a new clubhouse and developed 3 new lacrosse grounds.

Glenelg Lacrosse Club took possession of the new facilities in 2002, finishing up with new and much larger club rooms and facilities, along with 3 quality lacrosse grounds to play on instead of one. While traumatic and disruptive at the time it was a good move for the club in the long term. Throughout the construction phase in 1999 the club played all of their games as away matches.

The club owns the new building but leases the land from West Beach Parks, with virtually sole use of the clubrooms during the lacrosse season, but share the clubrooms with a non-playing social club. LSA currently leases several offices from the club.