

### Robert Bruce (Bob) Clark



The Briars Sporting Club's co-founder, Robert Bruce (Bob) Clark died September 24, 1994. Bob and a group of 13-15 year old mates formed The Briars Sporting Club in 1918, and so founded an amateur sporting club unique in the Southern Hemisphere. From this humble beginning, meeting in a backyard chook shed in the Appian Way, Burwood, with not even enough members to form a cricket team, the club has grown to what it is today. The history of Bob's life and that of the club are indistinguishable from one another.

Those principles adopted by Bob and his mates, and guided by their parents, have been the backbone of the club for 100 years.

Although born in Mosman, his mother moved the young Bob and sister, Edna, to a property on part of the Appian Way Estate, Burwood, following his father's death.

Bob was educated firstly at Edgecliff Prep and then Sydney Grammar School. He then commenced work at Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Limited where he remained until his retirement as Personnel Officer.

Bob was secretary of the club for thirty-two years; a trustee before its incorporation.; a director for some fifteen years our Patron since incorporation.

He was awarded the B.E.M. Order of the British Empire medal (Civil)/British empire Medal (Civil) in 1972 in recognition of his service to the community.

The club's main sports were originally focussed on Rugby and Cricket, and it was not long after his return from service that Bob, together with Dave Higgins (Colleagues), Marc Leay (Epping) and Frank Butterfield (Hunter's Hill) re-established the Sub District Rugby Competition.

Bob undertook to be the Competition's first secretary and was recognised as a Life Member of the NSW Suburban Rugby Union for his endeavours. He made a similar contribution to the post-war return of the Municipal and Shire Cricket Association.

Combining a number of roles as Club secretary, organiser, disciplinarian transport driver, team manager, player and father figure to its members, no decision was made without Bob's approval during those first forty years. All tiers of management were conscious of Bob's interest and assessment, even over his last thirty years after retirement from sports positions.

In many ways Bob was a stubborn, difficult man who was intolerant of fools; particularly those who did not place Briars first in their priority list. It was said by his peers, that he was also intolerant of those whose playing form on the day was not up to his expectations.

However, he looked back with pride on the growth and strength of the Briars but was never complacent about the contribution and unselfish dedication required of members.

He was very quietly a generous man. Over the last ten years of his life Bob sponsored nominated club members to undertake the Outward-Bound course. Bob has left the club a legacy to allow this

scholarship to be funded indefinitely. He also donated money for an additional cricket turf wicket in Concord for the Club's use. Bob Clark was a true Briar.