

## THE BRIARS SPORTING CLUB...EST 1918

### THE ORIGINAL BRIARS 1918



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In August 1918, eleven Burwood boys', aged between 9 and 13 years met in an Appian Way backyard chook pen to start a club. This was the humble beginning of a club that this year, celebrates its Centenary.

The name of the Club is "**The Briars**", the name taken from its first President's house.

In the early years, like most boys of the era, sport was everything, and they organized and took part in Athletics and Swimming carnivals and played cricket and rugby amongst themselves. The Briars has always been a family club, as parents and friends helped organise and guide the boys. In 1922 the Briars played in their first competitive Cricket competition, followed in 1923 by entering a local Rugby competition. The club's original premises in George St, Burwood were leased in 1929 and following the clubs' incorporation, finally purchased in 1950, gaining a liquor license in 1954.

A steady growth in sporting club membership continued throughout the ensuing years. The nature of the club and its social activities closely reflected the social mores of the day. In the early years a library, debating, lectures and plays were put on by members, always under the guidance of parents. Things became difficult during the 1930's depression years and the club's sporting activities remained restricted to Cricket and Rugby.

No less than 157 out of a total membership of 187 members served in the armed forces during WWII, with 16 making the supreme sacrifice.

In the post war years, the clubs' membership, activities and major sports expanded. Hockey was introduced as a major sport in 1946 and Squash in 1956.

Throughout its history, promoting the benefits of amateur team sport was paramount and up until 2005, it was completely run on an honorary basis. It is also unique, in that to become a full member of the Briars club, it was a pre-requisite for a prospective member to complete playing two years consecutively of a major sport.

Although individual club sports have won many premierships, and some members even represented their country, with Wallabies in Rugby and Olympians in Hockey, successive Briars administrators have always emphasized the importance of **participation in sport in a sporting manner**.

The later years of the last century and its rapidly changing social and economic environment, presented the Briars with its own challenges and it had to adapt to accommodate these. Womens' and Junior sports were embraced, with hockey leading the way.

In 2005, The Briars club amalgamated with Greenlees Park Bowling Club, initially to become Briars@Greenlees, now called Briars Sports. This combined club has seen a rapid expansion of sporting membership. Now an expanded sport's offering, including Mens' and Womens' Lawn Bowls and both Senior and Junior Netball.

The club now, not only boasts extensive licensed club facilities, which cater for the whole family, but also sporting opportunities in six major sports for all ages from under 8 to 88+years.

Today, as the Briars club celebrates its Centenary, it has traversed a full circle, it again has more young people than adults playing sport under the Briars banner, just as it did in 1918.. It boasts a total of 1950 active sporting members, 750 of them senior and a staggering 1200 juniors.

Congratulations to the Briars Club on achieving a magnificent milestone of 100 sporting seasons, not forgetting its outstanding contribution in the promotion that great Australian pastime of sports participation.