

Centenary Celebrations

The Centenary Committee has recently held its first meeting to commence planning for Northern's Centenary Year 1912-2012 and has nominated the first week of December 2012 as a week for Centenary Celebrations to recognise 100 years of golf at Northern.

Members are no doubt aware that there also a number of other important events which have led to the formation of our great club and these too will celebrated throughout the Centenary Year.

Our Story:

Northern began as a proposal at a Special Meeting on **20th March 1912** which was held to consider a "permanent links" after the Essendon members had played their golf on rented paddocks on the Aberfeldie and Buckley Park estates for 18 years since the formation of Essendon Golf Club in 1896. The meeting involved members from Essendon and members from Moreland and Royal Park who also sought a permanent home. The proposal that the members combine in the Northern Golf Land Pty Ltd was supported and the new company purchased 141 acres in two lots for 3000 pounds. The meeting formed a committee to handle matters and appointed Sampson Bennetts, the Essendon Professional, to design the course.

Northern Golf Club was inaugurated at a meeting of interested parties from Essendon, Moreland and Royal Park held at St. Johns Presbyterian Church Hall in Essendon on the **12th September 1912**. However the Essendon Club continued playing until 1913.

In the weeks and months following the land purchase considerable activity was noted on the new links under the superintendence of Mr. Bennetts. The Essendon Gazette reported on the development of the new club and the membership interest it generated. By November of 1912 greens had been prepared, fairways scarified and levelled, building of the cart and implement shed and stables had commenced and tenders had been called for an up to date clubhouse. The course was sufficiently prepared, although somewhat rough, for the members to play their first game over nine holes on **Saturday 7th December 2012** and while some members continued to play during the summer the opening day was reserved for a later date.

Essendon Golf Club played its farewell event on the old links on **April 12th 1913** and this was followed by a meeting of members of Essendon, Moreland and Royal Park at St. Johns Church Hall to elect office-bearers and committee members of the new club. The Hon. W.A. Watt, then Premier of Victoria, was elected the Foundation President, the club commenced with a membership of 99 men and 31 women and the annual subscription was set at three pounds three shillings.

Northern's Opening Day was held on **Saturday 26th April 1913** with 40 pairs playing in a mixed doubles event and stroke for those who had not drawn partners but without the President who was visiting Hull and Newcastle in England on behalf of the state. The official opening was postponed until Mr. Watt's return. The prizes for the opening day events were drivers made from Australian wood donated by the maker, Mr. C.W. Chapman, a well-known Melbourne golfer.

The Centenary Committee will seek to involve members in the planning process and it is anticipated that a proposed outline of our Centenary Celebrations for 2012 will be advised in due course.

Members are again asked to search for any Northern memorabilia that might loaned or perhaps donated to the Club for our Centenary Year.