

The Newcastle District Women's Hockey Association

The above Association had its beginnings at a meeting on 15th March 1932. Hockey had been played for several years previously under the auspices of the Y.W.C.A. Sports Association. Dissatisfaction had been expressed by some players at the games being controlled by the Y.W.C.A. and they wished to affiliate direct with the New South Wales Women's Hockey Association. Therefore a meeting was held, and the Chairman, Miss Hedley stated that hockey players were grateful to the Y.W.C.A. for starting hockey in the district. Mrs Rae Gardiner was elected President and Miss Hedley as honorary Secretary of the Newcastle District Women's Hockey Association. The first Committee meeting was held on 14th April 1932 when it was moved that the Newcastle District Women's Hockey Association affiliate with the New South Wales Women's Hockey Association, fees being £1.5.0 for an Association of 5 teams, with 5/- for every extra team. Club affiliations were then set at 5/- for the first team and 2/6d for every extra team. Four Clubs affiliated, namely Y.W.C.A., Novocastrians, Central and Stockton Nurses.

Competition commenced on 7th May, matches being played at the No. 4 Sportsground (now known as National Park) and at Stockton Oval. At the next meeting in May 1932, the New South Wales Women's Hockey Association had sent a list of country centres and notified that affiliation fees had been reduced to 10/- for five clubs and 2/6d every extra club. At this meeting it was decided that the Newcastle District Women's Hockey Association's colours would be orange and brown — orange flannel tunics with white shirts, and brown ties, girdles, shoes and stockings. Many players have now worn the orange and brown of Newcastle with pride.

By the end of May 1932, 7 clubs had affiliated with 9 teams playing. This year also was the first time the Association was represented at Country Week. Finances were very tight but the Association gave each player 9/- towards the fare to Sydney.

At a meeting held at the end of the season "The Chairman spoke of the danger of accidents in the game, and that girls should not let themselves be carried away with play and so tend to roughness. Umpires should warn players who tended to roughness".

At the General Meeting that year a Constitution based on the New South Wales Women's Hockey Association Constitution was formally adopted.

On 19th August 1933 a new pavillion at National Park was officially opened. Erected by the Newcastle City Council it is still being used by present day players. Teams from Nereids Club Sydney and Taree played Newcastle teams during the afternoon's entertainment. Eleven girls from Newcastle were congratulated on passing the Umpires examination.

1934 was the first year there were enough teams for two divisions, with 6 teams in the 1st division and 8 in the 2nd, and it was reported that the representative uniform sleeves must be 6 inches from the bended elbow and the tunics 4½ inches from the ground when kneeling. In 1935 Newcastle district entered two teams in the Country Week tournament, and for the first time a Newcastle player Mrs Lorna Watkins (nee Brown) was selected in the State team in 1935.

A touring team from the United States of America visited Newcastle during 1938 and a most successful tour was reported. The following year, 1939 Miss Nancye Haynes was selected in the State team, the first time of many for this talented player who later became Mrs Nancye Fennell.

Mrs Lorna Watkins became the first Life Member of the Association, being followed in 1942 by Edna Buckton (West).

In 1943 Mrs Amy Smith (formerly of the Goulburn Women's Hockey Association) commenced a very long and valuable association with the Newcastle Women's Hockey Association, first as treasurer, then in 1944 being elected to the position of Secretary which she held for 27 years. This was followed by 7 years as President before her retirement in 1977. Mrs Smith still continues her interest in the Association as a Patroness, and is also a life member of the State body.

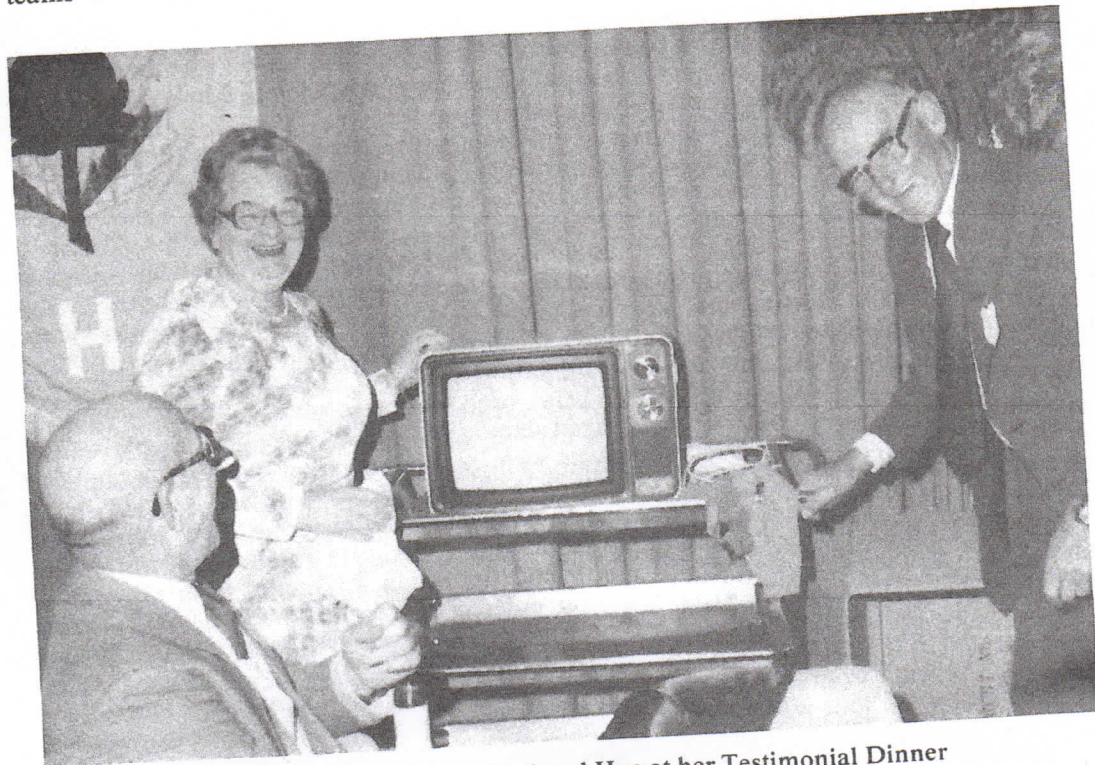
After the war years, Newcastle started a long series of State and Australian representation, with players of the calibre of Joan Walter (Noble), Nancye Haynes (Fennell), Olga Corrigan, Audrey Adamthwaite, Isabel Markwell (Heath), Colleen Quinn, Beverly Dyet, Robyn Hern, Chris Jefferson (Fernance), Coralie Calvert (Cooper), Debra Beckett (Lowe), Lyn Matthews, Judy Laing and recently Robyn Fernley (Leggatt) an International player of great ability, and now Captain of the Australian team and Sportswoman of the year, 1983 for New South Wales.

These are just a few — there are many more who represented New South Wales Women's Hockey Association over the years.

Newcastle Women's Hockey Association has a very illustrious record, firstly at Country Week level and latterly at the State Championships. At Country Week Newcastle held an unbeaten record for many years. Since the introduction of the modern State Championships in 1969 Newcastle has been successful eight times.

Over the years the Association has grown at a steady pace. In 1956 there were 40 teams competing and by 1975 there were 82 Senior teams playing in 11 grades, and 43 schoolgirls teams playing in 6 grades.

On many occasions over the years Newcastle has entertained visiting International teams with 1956 being outstanding in this regard. The Netherlands, Scotland, South



Mrs Amy Smith with her husband Hoc at her Testimonial Dinner

Africa, Ireland and England all played in Newcastle and against local teams, prior to the International Federation of Women's Hockey Associations Tournament in Sydney. In later years there have been visits from Wales, The Pacific South-West of USA and New Zealand. In 1969 Newcastle hosted the first State Tournament held outside Sydney and was so successful that although the tournament was held in Sydney the following year Country Centres have held it since. This is due mainly to the availability of fields. During 1982, the 50th year of the Association, the State Championships were again held in Newcastle, but with increasing numbers of teams, Newcastle too is finding it difficult to have sufficient fields for the number of teams now entered.

In 1979 alterations and additions were carried out to the Pavilion at National Park. Over the past 17 years, due to the number of teams, games have had to be played at several different venues making fixtures and umpiring commitments rather difficult. The Fixtures Secretaries find it no mean task to place 70 teams at three different venues and make sure that each match has adequate umpiring.

Many people have contributed to the success of the Newcastle District Women's Hockey Association in many ways and some of these have been rewarded with Life Membership of the Association, namely:

- 1939 — L. Brown Watkins
- 1942 — E. West (Buckton)
- 1947 — H. Carpenter
- 1948 — E. Bestwick (Sutherland)
- 1953 — B. Rae
- 1953 — A. Smith
- 1963 — H. Bell (Wilson) — 1967 Nancye Fennell
- 1968 — L. Young
- 1970 — D. Chant
- 1970 — J. Gray
- 1973 — M. Lewis
- 1977 — B. Dyet
- 1979 — G. Cashman
- 1979 — B. Marsden
- 1979 — E. Rogers
- 1979 — P. Wilson
- 1980 — O. Corrigan
- 1980 — C. Quinn
- 1981 — S. Pankhurst
- 1982 — M. Randle

Information supplied by Mrs S. Pankhurst

Recent Outstanding Achievements of Players From Newcastle Women's Hockey Association

Newcastle Women's Hockey Association started to prove their dominance soon after the second World War, when Mrs Amy Smith brought exceptionally strong teams to Sydney to take part in the Annual Country Week tournament. For some years they dominated the tournament with such players as Nancye Fennell, Olga Corrigan, Joan Noble, Colleen Quinn, soon followed by Isabel Markwell all of whom maintained their positions in the Country Week and State teams for many years.

With Mrs Smith quietly leading them the Newcastle team were indomitable, and as their play improved, so did their ability at umpiring so that many Australian and State A badges were awarded. All of those players mentioned attained Australian

representation, as did the younger players who followed them. Robyn Fernley (Mrs Leggatt), Christine Jefferson (Mrs Fernance), and Barbara Mathieson.

Robyn Hern was another of the Newcastle players who played in State teams from 1970 to 1977, and was a member of the touring team to visit Northern Territory, when that State became an independent State, instead of a territory.

In recent years many promising young players are coming from the ranks of the Newcastle teams, Marion Hills who has now taken her place as a member of the New South Wales Women's Hockey Association Council, Judy Laing, Lisa Naughton, Kerrie Smith, all promising and hopeful. Mrs Lynn Matthews was another fine Newcastle player, being a representative of the State in four tournaments, and one touring team to the Northern Territory. Lynn also became a State selector for New South Wales after she finished playing.

Two other outstanding players for Newcastle and New South Wales were Debra Beckett (Lowe) who represented the State from 1974 to 1982 as Vice Captain from 1980 to 1982, and was a member of the All Australian touring team in 1979, and Beverley Dyett, Goalkeeper for New South Wales from 1967 to 1979, and was Australian Goalkeeper 1976, 1977 and 1978.

Mrs Amy Smith must be credited with the excellent performance of the teams she brought to Sydney for Country Week, and also for the behaviour and appearance of the New South Wales Women's Hockey team, when year after year she took them to the various State capitals, for the interstate tournaments, sometimes to win, sometimes not, but always to behave in a manner beyond reproach. The Newcastle Women's Hockey Association has earned its place in the history of hockey in New South Wales.

To Colleen Quinn must go credit for much of the success of the Newcastle teams. She represented the State from 1953 till 1971 as a player (with only an occasional break) and was chosen in the Australian honour team 8 times between 1959 and 1971, and was a member of the Australian Touring Team six times being Captain of the All Australian Team in 1970 and the All Australian Touring Team in 1971.

In 1963 she was a member of the Australian team to the International Federation of Women's Hockey Associations tournament in Baltimore, and was named in the unofficial World XI. In 1970 she was Captain of the Australian Touring Team to England, Scotland, Wales, Holland and South Africa. The following year Colleen was again Captain of the Australian team to the International Federation of Women's Hockey Associations Tournament in New Zealand.

When she finished playing at such a high level, Colleen turned her attention to selecting and coaching. For three years she was a State selector, and then continued her career as an Australian selector, and in 1978-79 she was appointed the National Coach. Unfortunately this latter position had to be relinquished due to family illness.

During her career Colleen played firstly right half, then centre half and in the latter couple of years right back, a very versatile player.