



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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CRICKET ADMINISTRATION IN NEW SOUTH WALES

The administration of cricket in Colonial New South Wales was very much a local affair until 1856 when a Melbourne group challenged N.S.W. to a match.

A Sydney group calling themselves the 'Intercolonial Committee' organised by Bro. William Tunks accepted the challenge and the first NSW - Victoria match was played on the newly established Melbourne Cricket Ground on 26 - 27 March 1856.

By using a combination of pleading, sarcasm and straight-out admonition including his own contribution, Tunks had managed to raise the money for the trip.

Tunks was an enthusiastic cricketer but a stodgy batsman and poor fieldsman. He once scored 60 singles in an innings of 62 after being forced to run the two by his batting partner who wanted a share of the strike. Nevertheless, he had scored 112 not out for the Currency Club on 1st January 1845 to record the first century scored in Sydney.

In Melbourne he opened the batting and scored 1 and 0.

He was a far better administrator. Another outstanding administrator for NSW for over a quarter of a century was the Solicitor, Bro. Richard Driver. He was also a keen cricketer and played for the Australian Club in Sydney. He had travelled to Melbourne to umpire but finally played scoring 18 and 0.

In spite of the ducks scored by Tunks and Driver in the second innings, NSW won the match by three wickets. The following year, 1857, a return match was played in Sydney which was also won by NSW.

The organisers, spearheaded by Tunks and Driver as joint Secretaries decided to form the NSW Cricket Association with the Governor Sir William Denison KCB as President and Tunks as Honorary Treasurer. The other colonies followed the NSW lead. Cricket Associations were formed by Southern Tasmania in 1866, South Australia in 1871, Victoria in 1875, Queensland in 1876 and Western Australia in 1885.

William Tunks was the driving force behind the NSW Cricket Association. He was born in the Nepean district in 1816 and became apprenticed to James Byrne, a carpenter, at Parramatta. He then became licensee of the Currier Arms Hotel on the corner of Bathurst and Castlereagh Streets, Sydney.

The hotel and other business interests made him a wealthy man and he then became a contractor undertaking various works including the supply of blue metal to the Sydney Municipal Council. The blue metal had been mined at Dundas Valley.

He was also involved in the erection of the overland telegraph lines in country areas which included the first line from Sydney to Albury which then allowed a connection to Melbourne.

Tunks, who retired from business while still in his forties, lived at Walker Street, North Sydney.

On 7th December 1864, he was elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly where he represented St. Leonards until he was succeeded by Most Wor. Bro. James Squire Farnell on 21st December 1874.

In 1867, William Tunks was elected the first Mayor of St. Leonards (later North Sydney). He served for the next 15 years and Tunks Ward perpetuates his name in the district.

He was chairman of the district School Board and chairman of the North Sydney School of Arts.

Wor. Bro. William Tunks died aged 67 on 12th April 1883 and was buried with Masonic Honours in Gore Hill cemetery. His wife and son, Bro. Arthur Frederick Tunks are also buried there.

Whilst Mayor of St. Leonards, he arranged to reserve 16ha of land which became St. Leonards Park where, by public subscription, a fountain was erected in his memory. Tunks Park in Cammeray is also named after him.

Wor. Bro. William Tunks was made a Mason on 16th November 1853 in Sydney in the Australian Lodge of Harmony No. 814 English Constitution (from 1863, No.556 E.C.) and, from 1888, No. 5 United Grand Lodge of New South Wales.



William Tunks



Richard Driver

He was a foundation Warden of Lodge No. 290 warranted without name by the Grand Lodge of Ireland on 18th July 1867. The lodge did not survive.

Wor. Bro. William Tunks was foundation master of Lodge St. Leonards Samaritan No. 1654 English Constitution at its consecration on 4th July 1876. This lodge became Samaritan No. 50 United Grand Lodge of New South Wales in 1888.

Bro. Richard Driver who was also directly involved with Tunks in the establishment on the NSW Cricket Association was Secretary of the Association in 1866 - 67 and President from 1871 to 1880. Driver Avenue, Moore Park, which runs outside the Sydney Cricket Ground that he did so much to establish, was named in his honour.

Wor. Bro. Richard Driver was the leader of the Young Australian Party, a member of the NSW Parliament and a Minister of the Crown. He was made a Mason on 5th February 1856 at Sydney in the Lodge of Australia No. 548 English Constitution (in 1863, No. 390) and No. 3 United Grand Lodge of New South Wales in 1888. He was installed as Master of the lodge in 1859-60.

There have been other Presidents and Vice-Presidents who have also been Freemasons. Some of them were :

* Bro. Sir George Reid PC, GCB, GCMG, QC. (1845 -1918) was President from 1891 to 1903. He was Premier of NSW from 1894 to 1899 and Prime Minister of Australia from 1904 to 1905. He had also been Honorary Treasurer of the Association in 1875. Bro. George Reid was a member of Lodge Centennial No. 169.

* Bro. Sir Edmund Barton PC, GCMG, QC, MA, LL.D, DCL. (1849 - 1920) was Vice-President from 1882 to 1885. He was Australia's first Prime Minister from 1901 to 1903. He was a member of The Australian Lodge of Harmony No. 5.

* Bro. Sir Joseph Carruthers KCMG, BA, MA, LL.B. (1857-1932) was Vice-President from 1895 to 1907 and President from 1907 to 1914. He was a member of The Empress of India Lodge No. 57 and, later Lodge Carrington No. 151 and Lodge Illawarra St. George No. 219.

* Bro. Sydney Smith OBE was probably the most famous of all of Australia's cricket administrators. He was President of the Association in the 1930's and Honorary Secretary of the Australian Cricket Board of Control from 1911 to 1926. He was a member of the NSW Cricket Association for over 50 years. He was a member of Lodge Kuring-gai No. 230.

* Bro. Alan K. Davidson AM, MBE, has also been involved with the Association, He was made a Mason in Lodge Empire Temperance No. 432 in 1957. He was a foundation member of Lodge Cricket No. 931.

* Bro. Harold Heydon was Secretary of the NSW Association in the 1930's. He was a member of Lodge Birkenhead No 332.

In 1936, in association with Bro. Syd Smith, he invited fifteen senior boys from the William Thompson Masonic School to the Sydney Cricket Ground to watch the touring English team play New South Wales.

* Another old-time honorary Secretary of the Association early in the 20th century was Right Wor. Bro. Richard Teece (1847-1928). He was a member of Lodges Sydney Tarbolton No. 11 and Athenaeum No. 195. He served as Deputy Grand Master in 1897 and 1898.

* Bro. Aubrey Oxlade CBE was a member of the NSW Association and Chairman of the Australian Cricket Board of Control in the 1930's during the bodyline controversy. He was a member of Lodge Boree No. 335.

These then were some of the Freemasons who were involved with NSW cricket administration during the turbulent years between the two world wars when a Catholics versus Masons sentiment was present in the community.

Some strong anti-Masonic remarks by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Archbishop Michael Kelly in 1913 and an equally pointed response from the Grand Master, Most Wor. Bro. Dr. Charles Carruthers, O St. J, had not been helpful. Within the cricket world it seems that the Catholics believed that there was too strong a Masonic influence and even some sort of conspiracy. The Catholic players, Jack Fingleton, Stan McCabe and Bill O'Rielly were the most vocal even though they were first to be selected to play both for NSW and Australia.

Sydney Smith



Billy Mc Elone, a Catholic, had been Association President before Syd Smith and E.A. (Chappie) Dwyer who owned a chain of Catholic bookshops and Ted Adams who was Vice-President were also Catholics.

Bro. Don Bradman who had not moved to South Australia until 1935 was also, no doubt, aware of the situation.

Perhaps the old saying that the masons shopped at Anthony Hordern's and the Catholics went to Mark Foy's had some truth in it.

I think we can say with some certainty that those days will never return.

G.H. Cumming.

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