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## PICTORIAL HISTORY OF PARK ORCHARDS

Park Orchards Community House  
September 2007

A unique collection of early photographs, press clippings and original maps telling the story of Park Orchards from the time of the first Crown Allotments in 1854 to the eventual subdivision and settlement of the village we know today.

**Presented by Mr. Graeme Tamme**



**Park Orchards Golf Course 8<sup>th</sup> Green in 1951**  
(Ennismore Crescent)

If you have any enquiries or any information you would like to add to this collection please call 9876 1924

## **A BRIEF OUTLINE OF EARLY DATES AND EVENTS**

**Prior to 1850** this district was known 'The Park' It was a native bushland of wattles eucalypts and wildflowers, inhabited by Kangaroos, Echidnin's, Wombats, Bandicoots native birds and Possums.

The first **Crown Allotments** here were purchased by **Charles Heape & Francis McDonnell** in **1854**

In **1902 Tom Petty** and his wife **Eliza** purchased 500 acres of this land and established **eighty orchard blocks** with rows of pine trees as wind breaks and **with 10 dams**.

**Eva & Minnie Gibb** later acquired this property (**1914**) with **William Sell** as caretaker.

By **1920** more orchards had been established and a small community resided in the locality. Some of the families living here were: **Mitchell, Domeney, Brown, Milne, Zoch, Tortice, Sell, Coleman, Johansen, Brownlie, Grant, Morrow and Porter**.

The '**Park Orchards Country Club Estate**' was launched in **1926** by **Timber Merchants Sharp & Taylor**. They purchased all of the Gibb & Sell land. **Tuxon & Miller** who had worked with **Walter Burley Griffin** surveyed the estate and subdivided most of it into half-acre blocks following the contours of the land - similar to Canberra. This subdivision eventually became the village of Park Orchards. '**The Estate**' consisted of a **Cricket Ground, Croquet Lawn, Tennis Courts, Swimming Pool and a Club Hall (Chalet)**. A **nine hole golf course** was added in **1931**. **Gates** were positioned at the entrance to the estate and a covenant was placed on all lots to preserve residential status. At this time **Sharp and Taylor** cleared sections of the estate surrounding the Golf Course to plant **Pine Plantations**. These trees eventually self-seeded to produce the pines we see today.

In 1940 **The Australian Army Signals** acquired the Chalet and adjacent property for a **Wireless Communications Centre**. Power and water mains were brought in and **four hundred army personnel were accommodated here in tents and huts**. Large rhombic antennas were erected pointing to the pacific. The Chalet and Golf Course became temporary recreational facilities.

After the war the Army moved out and in 1947 Sharp & Taylor sold the estate land to a jewellery store in Bourke St.- **Edments** as a staff provident fund and recreation facility.

The Army sold the Chalet and six acres to **V.R. Jones** who opened it as a **Cabaret**. **The Edwards family** later purchased it and established the **Chalet Restaurant** we know today.

Over the next ten years the population of Park Orchards grew slowly. Some significant events were:

- 1958 **Milk Bar** was opened.
- Post Office** was opened
- 1961 Park Orchards Primary School (**P.O.P.S**) was opened
- 1962 **Bushfires** came through Warrandyte and swept through Park Orchards to Mitcham.
- 1965 Council purchased **Domeney Reserve** and constructed a pavilion.
- 1966 **Tennis Club** was formed
- 1967 **Park Orchards Ratepayers Association** was formed
- 1968 Council purchased '**100 Acres**' from Julius Grant.
- 1969 The **private street scheme** was approved and constructed.
- 1978 Community Leisure Time Activities (**P.O.L.T.A**) established.
- 1980 **St Anne's Primary** School opened.
- 1982 Council purchased the property for the Community House.
- 1986 The Community House was Incorporated – **POCHI**

Errors and Omissions Accepted

**We have much to thank our far sighted early settlers for the unique environment of Park Orchards.**

1926 Advertisement (copy) for the Proposed 'Park Orchards Country Club'

# "Park Orchards"

DONCASTER

To be created a Family Playground. To make life Healthy, Pleasurable and Worth Living

*Designed and Laid Out by Messrs. Tuxen & Miller, Surveyors*

## PROPOSED CLUB ACTIVITIES

*TO BE CONTROLLED BY "PARK ORCHARDS" CLUB (To be registered under Companies Act 1915)*

*Club Hall, Cricket Ground, Tennis Courts*

*Children's Playgrounds, Golf Course*

*Parks & Gardens, Bowling Greens*

*Swimming Pool, Croquet*

*Lawns*

*Agents*

Wm. ADDEY & CO. PTY. LTD

NATIONAL MUTUAL BUILDINGS, 295 COLLINS ST. MELBOURNE

TITLE CERTIFICATE

Messrs. John W. McComas & Co, Solicitors 450 Collins Street, Melbourne Phone F 3906