

# Sport

Campdrafting, parachuting and the 'sport of kings' have brought the Brisbane Valley to the attention of the world. The Third World Parachuting Cup was held at the Toogoolawah Drop Zone on 7 – 12 October 1984. Seventy years earlier E.F. Lord established campdrafting as a sport in Queensland, to raise funds for returned soldiers. Horseracing was the favoured sport of the aristocrat pastoralists and Colin Mackenzie and Francis Bigge entered their horses in the Ipswich turf events in the 1840s. The Bigges and Bowmans bred fine horses at Mt Brisbane and Mt Esk, for decades winning at race meetings and Exhibitions and selling their progeny to the pastoral industry. 'Westminster' and 'Touchstone' were William Bowman's pride and took out prizes at the Brisbane Exhibition in 1877.

The popularity of racing, campdrafting, polo, ploughing matches and riding has ebbed and flowed in the Valley. Pastoralists raced their turf horses in the city or vied at polo. The struggling selectors found their entertainment in ploughing matches. Campdrafting has now become the universal sporting attraction for families and young people in the Brisbane Valley and the Esk Picnic Race Meeting now attracts owners, trainers, and punters from the city and Sunshine Coast.

Since the 1930s women's sports, like vigoro and basketball, have been popularized at Toogoolawah but tennis, football, and cricket teams were the universal participation sport for the young social sets. Regular competitive sport was more possible with the advent in the 1920s of the motor lorry able to convey a team of players seated on boards lashed to the tray. Previously riverside picnics, fishing, and dancing were more popular.<sup>1</sup>

The first Upper Brisbane River Races were held at Wivenhoe on 8 July 1873 sponsored by the local publican, with an eye for business. Subsequently an Esk Race Club was formed at a meeting at Percy's Glenrock Hotel on 3 March 1877. The committee formed at the meeting on 20 October 1877 to plan the Mt Esk races on Easter Monday 1878 included Thomas Peters (Chairman), Captain Vernor, S. Watson, W. Thorn, D. Smith, R and W.R. North, McLean and Hugh Conroy. Race meetings were held annually, a public holiday being declared for the day. A grandstand was built in 1893 on the grounds near Redbank Creek. H.P. Somerset was a judge and prizemoney was usually

about £60 for the day, with nine events. By 1909 the grandstand was upgraded and the Esk Jockey Club were offering £95 in prizes. Prominent residents were office bearers of the committee. J.H. McConnel was patron, F.W. McConnel, president, M.J. Kelly the secretary, G. Graham the judge. The club went into recess during the war and resumed under Queensland Turf Club rules in 1919.<sup>2</sup>

The Esk Jockey Club erected barrier stall starts and furlong posts in 1947, with a new stewards' stand near the four furlong post. By 1949 the committee of Cr J. Barbour (patron), P.W. Hill (president), T.J. O'Brien and P. Copely (vice presidents), R.J. Irwin (secretary), D. Harris (treasurer) and Miss E. McCarthy (auditor) had a strong Esk Shire Council contingent. Photo-finish equipment was installed in 1953. Currently there are six programmes each year with seven events half an hour apart. When the state government provided financial support for country race clubs from Totalizator Agency Board profits in the 1960s, improvements for patrons were made.<sup>3</sup>

The Lowood race club, formed in 1892, raced over a six furlong course on Flewell-Smith's paddock. The club was reformed in 1897 and held a highly successful race day, including a donkey race, on 23 October 1897 on Twidel's paddock, followed by a ball in the evening. The Clarendon course still had 'obstacles on the main track' and lacked a judge's box. Races were not held after the 1920s. Lowood produced a champion trotter in 'Errol's Pick' which raced in Ipswich and Brisbane, running a mile in 2 minutes 8.2 seconds in 1957.<sup>4</sup>

Toogoolawah established a race club in 1910. They held eight races, took £9 on the gate, and held a dance in the evening in 1912 and continued meetings during wartime. J.E. Moore was president, R.M. Bell, W. Francis and W.H. Kirk vice presidents, and E.F. Moore and J. Weaver the joint secretaries in 1919. Interest in trotting conflicted and racing went into recess, to be revived by the Show Society in 1935. A scattered line of horsemen, pedestrians, and cars presented a picturesque scene as all three hundred wended their way to the showground in January 1935. 'Flying Fox' had a great-hearted win in clean and keen racing. Interest in racing declined because of the depression and War and there was no further enthusiasm for two decades.

### *History of the Shire of Esk*

The Brisbane Valley Rodeo and Horseman's Club was formed on 21 March 1973 with seventy-seven members led by President, N. Fullarton of Eskdale, vice presidents, Sergeant Fawkes and Buddy McLaughlin, and Tom and Pat Haskins of Kilcoy, treasurer and secretary respectively. Their enthusiasm stimulated Pony and Hack Club sports in the 1970s, with visitors from as far away as Goodna, Woodford and the Lockyer Valley.<sup>5</sup>

The Upper Brisbane River **Camp Drafting** Association was inaugurated by E.F. Lord in 1918 to organize camp drafting entertainment in honour of the district soldiers who enlisted and to raise funds for Esk and Toogoolawah branches of the Red Cross Society. The Mount Stanley carnival was opened by the Queensland Commandant, Brigadier-General Irving and a banquet was held in Olympic Hall for forty returned soldiers. The two days of entertainment raised £650. The main event of the day in later years was the competition for the Stanley Dallas Memorial cup, a silver trophy valued at fifteen guineas and presented every year in honour of Robert Stanley Dallas Commissioned Officer of No 40 Squadron Royal Flying Squadron

from Mt Stanley who died on 1 June 1918 in France in the first World War. The first winner was A.R. Atthow, a farmer of Mt Stanley.

In the 1920s the committee attracted prominent citizens for the campdraft's organization — E.F. Lord (patron), E.W. McConnel (president), R.M. Bell and T.H. Moore (vice presidents), F. Rutkin (secretary), W.H. Blank (treasurer) and Alex Smith (auditor). Many were also members of the Esk Polo Club which played on the showground and held committee meetings in the Empire Cafe in the 1920s; the Andersen sawmillers and Dr Wilson also supported the club. Campdrafts have continued in association with the Esk show and other Valley functions, called since the 1960s the Mt Stanley Muster. A barbecue is held afterwards by lamplight followed by a ball at Linville. There was also a race club at Linville intermittently from 1912, supported by the Ryan, Leo, Devantier, Baillie, Thompson, and Starkey families.<sup>6</sup>

In recent years rodeo associations have been formed at Moore, Coominya, and Fernvale, replacing shows and catering for the public's

Committee of the Brisbane River Campdrafting Association. 1918.

*Back Row (L to R):* Charles Francis, Tom Pryde, Jim Hurford, Ivan Sinnamon.

*Middle Row (L to R):* Roy Bell, Mr Seib, Jim Barbour, Tom H. Moore.

*Front Row (L to R):* Jack Barr, Lewis Langton and Harold Chaille.

*Stan Lord, Toogoolawah*





Horses parading at Esk Races. 1987.

*Terry Conway*

interest in campdrafting and horse sports. Oscar Thornton and Alan Beutel organized the first rodeo in May 1971.<sup>7</sup>

Last century **ploughing** matches attracted the crowds. The aim was to plough up land in furrows in the quickest time and testing the qualities of a good horse. The first ploughing match held on the Upper Brisbane River was on H.M. Aldham's farm at the Brisbane River crossing near Fernvale in 1896. The unbroken ground was extremely hard and only three bullock teams (Poole's, John Hunter's, and E. Denman's) and two horse teams competed. Samuel Dickens retired his horse team after two furrows. The competition was decided by the rate at which the contestants gave up — John Donald's horse gave up first then the Fluck team.<sup>8</sup>

Station properties fostered rugby **football** in the last century and Union was played until the first World War. Distance made it difficult to arrange many games but the running game attracted family groups of fans. It was a much slower game then played in modest attire and on rough grounds. The social occasion of the picnic under the willow trees was often of more significance. Players learnt the tackling and ball skills at boarding school but it was difficult to obtain umpires and local rules were often adopted.

Football clubs were started in the late 1880s as there were plenty of men working on railway

construction. Frederick Lord of Eskdale was patron of the Esk team in 1887 and Lowood also had a team. The Forresters' Football team was formed at Mt Brisbane in 1892 and Fernvale had a team in 1893 sponsored by Robert North. The management team of J.J. Schureck, R. Roulston, F.C.A. and G.H.E.Heers, H. Jensen, E. McGregor, C. Cronan, W. Suchting and J.J. Gulliver, mostly young businessmen and successful farmers, ensured that it operated like a gentlemen's club. The flood and economic depression ruined further sporting chances in the Brisbane Valley until a new breed of railway navvies arrived at Esk to build the line through McConnel's Cressbrook and up to Blackbutt. The timbergetting mountain men provided the backbone of football teams until the first World War; the matches were spectacular social occasions when war waged during the afternoon and dinner was spread at the local hotel with toasts and songs to accompany the wine afterwards.

The nearest club to Esk in 1900 was Ipswich whose competition winners were 'The Bells'. Esk players included Ernest and Stuart Lord of Eskdale, J.J. Noonan of Well station, Eddie Clifford, Corrie Webb, Ron Thorn, the three McLeans, Dick McDonald, Tot Lewis, Dick and Shadow McGrory, and George Spencer. Hopetoun (Kilcoy) ventured over in August 1901 to go down 8-0. Local man, Jim Clifford, refereed and dinner was at the

### *History of the Shire of Esk*

Commercial Hotel. Fernvale defeated Esk 29-0 in Cronan's Fernvale paddock with James Shine as referee a week earlier and the spread at the Oddfellows' Hall was exceptional.<sup>9</sup>

The Lowood team introduced League rules in the Brisbane Valley when they played on the Booval Creamery Company's ground in 1912 and it became the popular code thereafter. The Lowood team played in maroon guernseys and Esk in navy blue. Esk played as the St Agnes's Gordon Club team in 1912 and changed to the Seekers in 1915. The sawmills and dairy factories provided the bulk of the players for all three town teams. In June 1913 the Brisbane Valley nominated a team of E. Williams, C. Agnew, C.A. Brown, G. McInnes, J. Allen, G. Porter, P. Miller, and forwards J. Taylor, A. Menzies, A. Shambrook, A. Wirth, F. Williams and W. Porter, as the Stanley team which lost, 3-4, against Fassifern in the curtain raiser at Ipswich when New Zealand visited. Lars Andersen's sawmill club formed the basis of the Esk Seeker's club when the new committee of W. Wratten (President), L. Andersen, T.C. Moxley, August Blank, T.C. Pryde, E. Fearson, M. Callaghan and A. McNevin (Vice Presidents) and T. Lennon (Secretary and Treasurer) was formed in April 1915. Their aim was to challenge Lowood but the war caused the stagnation of the clubs.<sup>10</sup>

In the 1930s the Upper Brisbane River Football Association organized the Fox Cup competition named after the chairman of the Toogoolawah committee, T. Fox. Esk did not field a team. William Wells, Linville school teacher, storekeeper and later Esk Shire Councillor and Chairman, donated the Wells cup for competition between Linville and Toogoolawah. The Brisbane River Representative Football team to play at Ipswich in 1933 comprised W. Gillies (Captain, Kilcoy), N. Hobart (Kilcoy), T. Bourke (Linville), N. Gerhart (Moore), A. Handlin (Toogoolawah), P. Quinn (Linville), E. Coleman (Toogoolawah), E. Baillie (Linville), J. Craig (Kilcoy), H. Lee (Kilcoy), W. Woulfe (Toogoolawah), W. Watson (Kilcoy). A benefit dance raising £9 was held for Pat Quinn who was injured. A club was also formed at Biarra by D. Perse of Eskdale station in 1935.<sup>11</sup>

In 1946 clubs reformed. Esk affiliated with the Upper Brisbane Valley Association until 1957 when it joined the Lockyer Football League. Brisbane Valley teams disbanded in the 1960s as road improvements and population drift attracted footballers to the Ipswich competition. By the 1970s touch football had taken over in Esk.<sup>12</sup>

The Mount Esk cricketers organized a **cricket** match at Esk on Easter Monday 1877. They retired to Mrs Moore's Glenrock hotel for refreshments

Biarra Cricket Club.

*John Oxley Library*



and an all night ball. The next month Edward McDonald of the Royal Hotel sponsored a game between Esk and All-comers. Fernvale was also keen on cricket in the 1880s. On the Queen's Birthday in 1887 Harrisborough (Fernvale) defeated Wivenhoe State School. W. Michel was the coach and the Fernvale players formed most of the country team which defeated Ipswich in March 1889. Two teams of Fernvale players, smokers and non-smokers, played on Good Friday 1890. J.A. Ferguson took fifteen wickets for six runs for the smokers, who won by three runs.<sup>13</sup>

Cricket prospered in the 1890s. Esk, the Northern Star Club at Fernvale, and Lowood joined the Ipswich and West Moreton Cricket Association. Locally Wivenhoe also played Deep Creek and Mount Beppo. The Esk team played on the Eskdale reserve. E. and A. Nunn played for Wivenhoe in 1896 but the team folded in 1897 when the Boldens, Donalds and others left. In October 1898 E.F. Lord of the Esk Cricket Club offered a silver cup for competition between clubs in the Upper Brisbane River Senior Cricket Association — Lowood, Esk, Moombra, Biarra, Coal Creek, Colinton and Moore. James, Andrew, and John J. Conroy played for Moombra in 1899 taking a total of eleven wickets for sixty-eight runs against Biarra.<sup>14</sup>

After 1900 timbergetters, sawmillers and farmers formed cricket teams including Monsildale, Linville, Colinton, Moore, Brightview, Coominya, Forest Hill, Lowood, Esk, and Toogoolawah. Caesar Brothers, tailors at Esk, presented the silver cup for the Stanley District Cricket Association in 1910. The Esk club used the mill traction engine to roll their ground. When Ipswich St Paul's team visited Esk by the 10.30am train on Saturday 30 November 1912, Esk won the cricket and their hospitality was exceptional; on Sunday they took the Ipswich players out to Salsburg orchard for mandarins and oranges, followed by dinner at the Commercial Hotel where they had stayed.<sup>15</sup>

In 1928 a new team at Coal Creek had their pitch on H.W. Jaenke's farm. A working bee cleared the ground and erected a shed. The Fernvale club was reformed in 1930 after a lapse of many years and an ant-bed pitch was put down. At Biarra Noonans and N. Flaskas sponsored cricket and raised funds by running dances. At Lowood Cr J.C. Fitzpatrick was patron, E.C. Nunn, senior vice president and H. McNally, secretary and treasurer for the 1931-32 season. At the end of that season the combined district and town ladies played the Moombra men and won by fifty-seven runs! Mrs W. Gray of Esk made fifty-nine runs and took eight wickets for fifteen runs and Nellie Lee took three

wickets for thirteen runs off three overs. Tom, the son of John J. Conroy, was captain of the Northbrook team in the mid 1930s.<sup>16</sup>

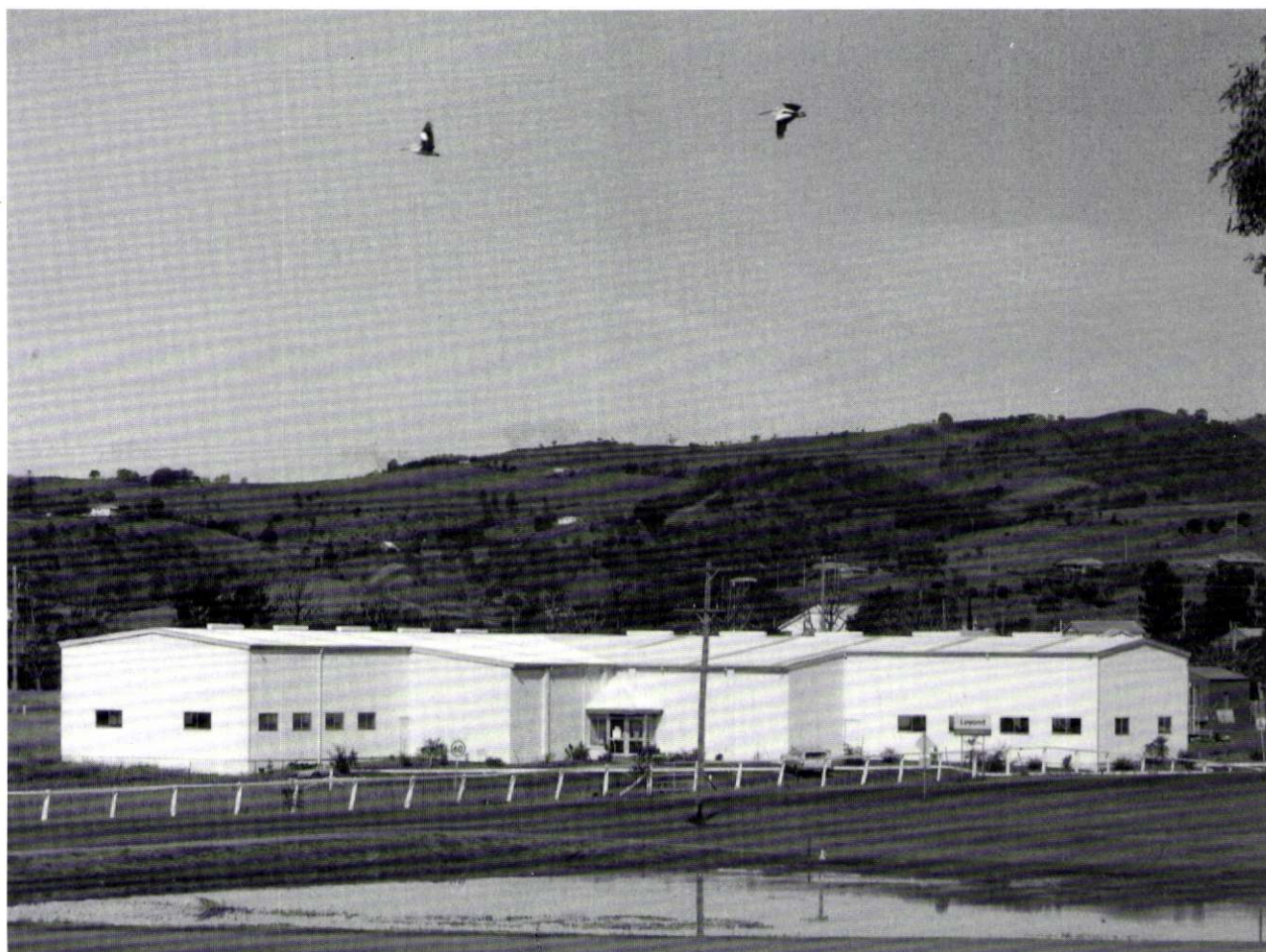
Concrete cricket wickets were put down in 1937 for most teams. Many of these were on private farms and can still be seen in the Northbrook, Dundas, and Crossdale areas. Cricket lapsed during the war and in 1946 eight teams were formed — Toogoolawah (2), Esk, Mount Beppo, Moore, Linville, Murrumba, and Cooeimbardie. Cr Wells, Cr James Barbour, W. Hornberg, and N.W. Brienke presented cups. Lowood and District Cricket Association had six teams — Lowood, Prenzlau, Brightview, Lockrose, Moreton Vale, and Forest Hill. Local rules and feats of runs prevailed. In eight hours on one weekend in 1951 at Tarampa 900 runs were made. 'Butch' Walther, captain of Mount Tarampa, scored 279 not out in the second innings (five sixes and thirty-eight fours) without wearing pads; but his team lost. Lowood district cricket prospered in the 1950s but the Upper Brisbane River cricket competition petered out.<sup>17</sup>

In 1961 the Atlantic Oil Company and the Esk Co-operative Dairy Association sponsored a cricket coaching school at Toogoolawah by the popular and successful West Indian fast bowler, Wesley Hall. However local teams languished in the 1960s and cricket has declined in the Brisbane Valley.<sup>18</sup>

**Bowls** took over as the tennis players grew older. Toogoolawah was the first club in 1947. Esk and Lowood clubs both began in 1948 and played on greens financed and constructed by the Esk Shire Council so that the fledgling clubs could commence playing.

Toogoolawah residents met in W.M. Gorrie's office on 8 August 1939 and proposed a club on land to be transferred by the Council. The proposal did not proceed. The committee of Cr E.J. Cannell (chairman), N.G. Foxton (treasurer) and L.W. Borserini and Les Williams (joint secretaries) revived the project in 1945 and decided to purchase freehold land at the northern end of the town near Bernhagen's. The club opened in August 1947 with a green ready and a club house under construction. Ernie Cannell was the foundation president, green director, and a keen supporter of the Stanley District Bowling Association. In 1981 extensions to the club house costing \$11,000 and including a kitchen and enlarged dining hall were opened.<sup>19</sup>

The Esk Shire Council provided the land and financial backing for both the Esk and Lowood bowls clubs because it was so difficult for townspeople in such small towns to finance the construction of buildings and a ground for their sport. Council decided in October 1948 to apply for



Lowood Indoor Sports Centre, operated by Cr and Mrs E.R. Nunn. 1987.

Terry Conway

a lease of two acres of the Police Reserve at Lowood for bowls. The club repaid the loan of £2,000 at a rental equivalent to repayment of the loan over thirty years. Council day-labour constructed the club house and green in 1949. Twenty foundation members met on Tuesday 22 March 1949 to form the club with Dr Rimmer as president. They agreed to a request from the Lowood Returned Services League to rename the club the Lowood and District Memorial Bowling Club. From 1954 the council paid for the greenkeeper for three days per week and the club the two days. The club house was added to in 1974 and the club continued to pay rent for the green and building until 1 July 1985 when the council phased out its support for bowls clubs.<sup>20</sup>

W.H. Horne constructed the Esk bowls club and green on Hampton Road near the Shire Council headquarters in 1949. Club house extensions were opened in October 1955 by A.J. Skinner, MLA. F.E. Long, who had donated the cost of the alterations, was honoured with the first Life Membership of the club. He was president from 1956 and there was a strong shire council contingent among office

bearers, William Wells (patron), W. Laurie and P.W. Hill (vice presidents), J. Burden (secretary) and R.J. Irwin (treasurer). The club house is a low set, timber building at one end of the green; hardwood seats were placed around the green in 1958 and a kitchen was added in 1959. Liquor licenses were obtained in 1960 for the council owned bowls clubs and Council continued to support the club with paint and equipment until the 1986-87 financial year.<sup>21</sup>

While bowls has attracted both farmers and townsmen **golf** has traditionally been a townsmen's game. Golfing began in the shire at Toogoolawah in November 1928 when the first committee of E.J. Gillies (president), W.A. Munro and H.W. Searl (vice presidents), W.H. Henry (secretary) and J.C. McWaters (assistant secretary) was formed. The course was situated on Coleman's farm. There were thirty-three members and twenty-eight associates. All greens were fenced and lengthened in 1929. The course was officially opened on 1 March 1930 by the president of the Queensland Golf Council with office bearers, Dr L.A. Forbes (patron), E.J. Gillies (president), W.A. Munro and

H.W. Searl (vice presidents) G.S. Wilson (secretary) and C.V. Ranson (treasurer). The club suffered severely in the 1931 flood when the club house was washed away and the mower embedded under sand. The club recovered through working bees. H.W. Searl of Nestle's factory was club champion during the 1930s. In 1939 the club moved to part of D.C. Pryce's land in Annette Street and spent £90 on leased land, widening the fairways to forty-four yards, felling 280 trees and removing the stumps and logs. A kerosene tractor was used for this as well as for cutting the grass. In the 1970s the clubhouse, a remodelled house, was extended and the \$20,000 extensions were opened by Evan Adermann, (Member for Fisher) and William Gunn (Member for Somerset) in April 1979.<sup>23</sup>

Esk Golf Club commenced in February 1931 and adopted the Toogoolawah Golf Club constitution. The committee of L.N. Tait (president), P.M. Staines (secretary), and B. Black, H.M. Chaille, W. Andersen, A.M. Gorrie, A. Jones, and A.J. Heap commenced with £12 in credit. The nine hole course is inside the Esk race track. The club has always had willing working bees to save outlays of money on building bridges over the creek and keeping the fairways in trim. During the Second World War it invested in war bonds. Since the construction of the Wivenhoe Dam the club has sought picturesque land near the dam for a new golf course.

Lowood has a most beautiful golf course on the northern edge of town and an average of forty-four members and twenty-three associates per year. Dr Alistair Thompson was the first President of the club in 1962 and Phil Scot was the first Captain. Land was obtained from Mrs Bick and working bees formed the course which was designed by Tom Southcombe, an ex-professional golfer. The course was officially opened on 10 November 1963 and the Lowood club is now the leading club in the Valley.

S.A. Robertson initiated the idea of a golf course for Somerset Dam. A club was formed and selected a course in a small valley half a mile from the township on the main Esk-Kilcoy road. In August 1937 they held a 'burr cutters' ball attended by Somerset Dam employees to raise money for the nine hole course; £300 was raised but the course was difficult to prepare because of the undulating land and the long grass. The office bearers in 1938, comprising G. Sheil as president, L.E. George as secretary and E. Parker as treasurer, persevered.<sup>24</sup>

The rivers and fast flowing streams of the Brisbane Valley have always been attractive fishing and swimming spots. Boating, fishing, and

picnics were sporting past-times in the Brisbane Valley at the turn of the century. The fishing was exceptional after freshes and huge floods so fishermen in carts and lorries used to go out for the cod, jewfish, and mullet. Linville and Northbrook were popular fishing spots especially at Easter, and the Toogoolawah ambulance centre used to raise funds in the early 1930s from fishing trips. The Cressbrook lagoons also contained the Burnett *Ceratodus* salmon liberated there by J.H. McConnel in about 1892. After the fish ladder was installed at Mt Crosby in 1945 mullet were seen again in Lockyer Creek. The Esk Amateur Fishing Club was formed in May 1947 with D. Harris, the new Shire Health Inspector, as president. The Lowood club was formed three years later. Both clubs enjoyed fishing trips to the coast as well as south to the Tweed River.<sup>24</sup>

In the 1870s to 1890s the rivers and creeks were used for bathing and domestic water; however, **Swimming** spots in the rivers became popular for sport and recreation from the 1930s. As early as 1936 there was a deputation to the council requesting provision of swimming baths at Esk to teach children to swim. They required a pool 100 by 30 feet with water pumped from the creek. P.W. Hill, engineer, proposed a concrete tank weighing 423 tons and containing 94,875 gallons of water, costing £1,805, for the pool and £285 for a shed, pump, and fence. In May 1937 council dismissed the idea as too expensive. Another idea of a centenary town swimming pool was suggested in 1958 but not proceeded with.<sup>25</sup>

Lowood Shire Council provided a public bathing place in the Brisbane River near Lowood in 1914 and there was a town swimming club in 1919. The council continued to basically maintain the facility over many years. A shelter shed was erected by the Lowood Chamber of Commerce in 1945 at the spot known locally as 'Little Bondi'. A diving board was erected in 1963. In the 1970s the Lowood Swimming Pool Association actively raised money for a public swimming pool. Finally in July 1980 a contract was let to Somer and Staff Pty Ltd for \$113,873 for a pool and to R. Telfer and Co. Pty Ltd. for \$88,000 for dressing sheds and landscaping. Council had to borrow \$50,000 for the swimming pool complex in 1980. The twenty-five metre pool was opened in February 1981 with Ken Gallagher as pool manager and is used by 20,000 people per year including the Lowood and District Swimming Club.<sup>26</sup>

At Toogoolawah a Cressbrook Creek water hole was used by employees of the Condensery in 1913 for bathing. The Nestle and Anglo Swiss Condensed Milk Company wanted the practice

stopped because there was a public bathroom with shower erected in the town. The idea of a town pool was not raised again until 1957 when Crs Gorrie and Cannell proposed that council investigate the matter. In 1959 the concrete tank at the old Nestle's factory was used as a swimming pool by students of the Toogoolawah Rural School. In July 1960 Nestle Pty Ltd offered to sell land for £750 for a public swimming pool project and council placed £10,000 on the 1961-1962 loan programme for the pool. Meanwhile townspeople continued to use the pool at Nestle's factory with a chlorinator and filtration plant installed by council in 1963. In March 1975 a commemorative plaque honouring Percival Lawrence, president of the Swimming Pool Committee for many years, was unveiled by Cr K. Haslingden at the filtration plant. The new twenty-five metre pool was opened in 1976 and is patronized by 12,500 people per year, including the Toogoolawah Amateur Swimming Club. New dressing sheds were added in 1977 and the Percival Lawrence plaque was relocated at the swimming pool in 1979.<sup>27</sup>

**Tennis and athletics** created enormous interest on the social and sporting scene before motor transport changed the style of recreation. Athletics were often associated with race days, school break-up picnics and town sports days. Some young people rode about two hundred miles per month to compete. The railway often ran special trains to these occasions which began round 1890; some developed into town shows. Public holidays were granted in parts of the shire for major sports days which compared with today's campdrafts and rodeos in scale. Up until the late 1920s there were sports days at Esk, Fernvale, Lowood, Harlin, Ottaba, Deep Creek (Bryden) since 10 May 1889, Hopetoun (Kilcoy), Toogoolawah, Atkinson's Dam, Mount Beppo, Coominya, and Biarra. There was always a publican's booth and a refreshment stall and usually a ball in the evening. The types of events highlighted local sporting prowess and traditional athletic activities brought to Australia by the immigrants. Horse jumping, tilting the ring, processions of decorated lorries, pillow fights, melloon races and bullock riding were in vogue by 1923. The Somersets organized sports at Caboonbah late last century in aid of the Brisbane Children's Hospital, of which the McConnel women were key supporters.

Deep Creek held its own annual sports from 1889 to the end of the First World War. Ottaba had its own sports reserve used from 1910 — a racing track cleared on the fenced reserve. Dancing until 3am followed in Biffin's building. There were two sports clubs at Coominya in 1916 — the Norman

Vineyard Sports Club and the Athletic Sports Club and they amalgamated in 1916. Sports meetings were also held at John Newman's racecourse paddock with refreshments provided from J.C. Fitzpatrick's hotel.<sup>28</sup>

After the Second World War the legacy of the Americans at Lowood enlivened local sports. A National Fitness Club was formed in September 1946. Dr Betty Rimmer, the prominent tennis player and newspaper correspondent Grace Nunn, Dr W.J. Walters, F.J. Gould, T.H. Kidd and A.G. Josey were committee members. They invited the Commanding Officer of the RAAF, Lowood, to participate. Gymnasium mats were purchased and they also planned to play American basketball and promote boxing among the younger set. They were called 'The Vikings' with blue and gold colours. Esk also had a National Fitness Club with R.M. Bell as patron. Their enthusiasm included annual balls in the Lyceum Hall as well. In recent years the young people have popularized indoor sports like squash, indoor cricket, gymnasium work, and aerobics for which special sports centres have been constructed such as Cr and Mrs Rod Nunn's Lowood Sports Centre opened in 1986. These sports and the fitness conscious ladies have revitalized and 'set to music' the district's public halls.

Some of the largest sports days ever organized in the Esk Shire were in connection with the Commonwealth Jubilee celebrations. Over one thousand people attended the Lowood and District Commonwealth Jubilee celebration at the showground with children's sports, a procession and floats. Division 4 of the shire celebrated the Commonwealth Jubilee at the Moore recreation grounds. There was a large attendance from Colinton, Linville, Mount Stanley and Moore, including pupils and teachers from the schools. A jubilee pageant at Toogoolawah drew a crowd of three thousand. The celebrations of empire development and pioneers' achievements commenced with a combined service in Victoria Chapel at Cressbrook and was followed by a procession along Ivory's Creek Road and Cressbrook Street to McConnel Park. The procession featured a half century of progress in transport and services.<sup>29</sup>

**Tennis** clubs were popular throughout the farming districts and sawmill settlements and the railway enabled sporting teams to travel. In 1898 the Lowood tennis team of Doran, Noonan, Smith and Ryan came across to Esk to play the team of Pryde, Hassall, Chaille and Hunter on the Esk grounds. Tennis became even more popular after 1900. Wivenhoe, Linville, Harlin, Moore, Mount



Tarampa, Lowood, Fernvale, Louisavale, and Mount Beppo all had clubs and courts.<sup>30</sup>

Esk's first lawn tennis club commenced with twenty members in March 1894. Miss M. McDonald was Treasurer and T. Schank secretary. The club held a tennis tournament on 29 and 30 September 1899 in Esk when nearly three hundred attended the matches played on three new chipped courts, accompanied by the Glenrock band! The whole tournament was promoted by Pryde and Hunter. At the turn of the century Dr J.I. Moore was president and J.J. Jessop Hon. secretary and treasurer. In the 1930s Wilfred Hawken was captain and he fostered all forms of sport for young people in Esk. The Chailles have always been prominent in the Esk club and in recent years it has been led by newsagent, Rod Weir. The club always played on the Esk Recreational Reserve and in 1985 new \$60,000 courts were opened by the Chairman of the Esk Shire Council, Cr. L. Williams; the courts were begun in November 1984, financed by the council, and constructed by contractors.<sup>31</sup>

Lowood's first tennis court was on storekeeper, L. Schureck's paddock. The club revived strongly

after the second World War and a Lowood and District Tennis Association was formed of the Marburg, Tarampa, Brightview (Wanderers), Lowood, Mount Tarampa (Montana), Mountain Home, Lower Lockyer and Prenzlau tennis teams. H. Beutel was president and Mervyn Utz secretary. In the 1950s produce merchant Edward Profke hired out his tennis courts and in 1959 the courts were floodlit.<sup>32</sup>

The Moore tennis club and courts have been a curious success because they were built on the road reserve in 1909. Additional courts were erected in 1957 when the Linville and Colinton clubs were absorbed into the Moore club to be known as the Moore and District Tennis Club. The council took over the Mount Beppo ant-bed tennis court from the Hall Trustees on a lease basis in 1957.<sup>33</sup>

Toogoolawah had a tennis club from the beginning of the town. It tended to be organized on private courts by town business and factory people like D. Thomson and A.C. Munro. The town courts were built by council day labour in 1946 in McConnel Park and were floodlit for night play in

The action of the Moore Rodeo. 1987.

Terry Conway



## *History of the Shire of Esk*

1949. The club declined in the late 1950s and was reformed in 1967; a new club house was built in 1973 by the Shire Council.<sup>34</sup>

**Basketball** began in the early 1930s in the shire. The Toogoolawah girls were very keen and competed against Kilcoy in 1932. They practised at night on McConnel Park using the electric light. The club was formed officially in April 1933 with Jean Pampling (president), May Humphries (vice president), Ernice Slater (secretary) and Doreen Baisden (treasurer). Jean Pampling was captain and Becky McKean vice captain. Teams were formed at Lowood, Linville, Biarra, Forest Hill, and Laidley in 1934 and Esk had both men's and women's basketball teams in the 1940s and 1950s. **Vigoro** was also popular in Esk in the 1930s, led by Mrs Bailey, wife of the Esk State School teacher, and Mrs I.M. Mullan and they played on the Esk Recreation Reserve.<sup>35</sup>

**Parachuting** began as a military sport and the thrill seekers who practise it have a drop zone at Toogoolawah; Mr David McEvoy has promoted the Toogoolawah Ramblers Parachute Drop Zone as a world class centre. The drop zone was established in 1978 on a farm and the airstrip was constructed at a cost of \$11,000 in 1979. The club facilities are owned by three partners led by Mr David McEvoy, who manages the club of around 87 members. The

club owns one aeroplane and an owner operator provides another. The Ramblers Drop Zone, including clubhouse, bunkhouse, canteen, and barbecue, were opened by the Premier Joh. Bjelke-Petersen on 18 June 1979. A total of \$300,000 has been spent on developmental work at the centre and Toogoolawah and Townsville are the only drop zones in Australia which are owned by clubs. Mr David McEvoy has been a full-time instructor for thirteen years and three hundred people learn parachuting at Toogoolawah each year.

The South Pacific Parachuting Championship was held at Toogoolawah in April 1981. A Toogoolawah team of parachuters jumped in the closing ceremony of the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane. The Third World Parachuting Cup, sponsored by Phillips, was held at the drop zone in October 1984 with canopy stacking. It was the most successful competition ever held there and was followed by the Australian National Parachute Championships in 1985. In 1986 all the teams trained at Toogoolawah for the World Cup held at Gatton College. The Ramblers Early Openers won the bronze medal in the World Cup.<sup>36</sup>

Recreational and competitive sporting activities clearly abound in the Brisbane Valley. Opportunities range from archery to indoor cricket and from water sports to the traditional sports of

Skydiving over Toogoolawah by the Ramblers Club.

*David McEvoy*



bowls, tennis and horseracing. The Atkinson and Wivenhoe dams offer a wealth of planned water sports, the prospect of fishing, waterside leisure amenities and the Northbrook Parkway leading into Brisbane Forest Park.

## ENDNOTES

1. RHSQ *Bulletin* No 222 (July 1964); MBC 6 and 15 June 1852; QT 14 1864 p3.
2. QT 24 June 1873, 10 July 1873, 24 February 1877 p3, 23 October 1877 p3, 5 August 1893, 28 May 1903 and 6 February 1904 p3 c7, 1 August 1912 p7 and 5 September 1919 p7.
3. QT 6 November 1947 p5, 27 November 1947 p6, 28 February 1949 p3 and 20 February 1953 p6.
4. QT 28 January 1892, 16 September 1897, 28 October 1897, 5 February 1898, 11 December 1900, 19 July 1910 p3 and 3 June 1957.
5. QT 21 December 1910, 5 June 1912 p6, 6 April 1918 p10, 8 July 1919 p6, 20 March 1974 p27; ER 2 February 1935.
6. ESKM 14 March 1923 p312 and 11 September 1929 pp70-72; QT 9 November 1911 p6, 19 October 1918 p9, 6 October 1922 p6, 28 August 1924 p7 and 18 May 1925 p3; ER 20 September 1940; BVR 2 August 1968 and 11 October 1968; The racecourse was on a water reserve (R 178) used by travelling stock and this caused some difficulty for the committee, the council and surrounding landholders when the committee decided to fence a portion for holding the campdrafts.
7. ESKM 25 March 1909 p225, 19 November 1970 p9303, 17 June 1971 p9402; The Moore rodeo yards and arena were situated on R. 4921, Parish of Colinton to which the Esk Shire Council and property owners still had access.
8. QT 4 August 1896.
9. Q 7 May 1887 p739; QT 17 May 1888, 14 May 1892, 13 June 1893, 29 August 1893, 15 and 29 August 1901.
10. QT 18 April 1912, 22 May 1912 p2, 23 May 1912 p7, 6 June 1913 p6, 17 June 1913 p2, 23 April 1915 p3.
11. ER 14 May 1932, 29 April 1933, 12 August 1933, 10 June 1933 and 30 March 1935; BVA 19 July 1933.
12. ESKM 13 February 1946 p655 and 9 March 1978 p3; QT 20 March 1946 p6; CM 4 April 1946.
13. QT 14 April p5 and 29 May 1877 p3, 7 January and 10 April 1890; Q 28 May 1887 p887 c4 and 16 March 1889.
14. QT 3 August 1893, 25 September 1894, 13 February 1896 p6 and 28 September 1897; BC 1 October 1898 p11 c4.
15. ESKM 13 July 1921 p97; QT 21 January 1910 p2, 6 November 1912, 28 March 1912, 11 April 1912, 5 December 1912 p6 and 6 March 1915 p3.
16. QT 30 November 1928 p5, 23 August 1930 p12 and 21 November 1931; ER 7 March 1931 and 14 May 1932.
17. *Valley of the Lakes* (1982); ESKM 19 September 1946 p738; ER 18 December 1937; BVA 15 December 1937; CM 9 September 1946; QT 13 November 1951.
18. BVS 17 November 1961; The Linville Cricket ground (Sub 98, Por. 82V, Parish of Colinton, County of Cavendish) has been taken over by the Progress Association in 1981. (ESKM 2 December 1981 p2185).
19. ESKM 30 August 1939 p157 [Council agreed to transfer 35.4 perches, Sub. 1, Section 8 of Sub 7 of Resub. 1 of Sub 1 of Portion 132, Parish of Biarra to the Toogoolawah Bowling Club]; BVA 2 August 1939; QT 1 August 1945 p4, 5 March 1946 p4 and 29 April 1981 p26; *Stanley Bulletin* 17 October 1947; BVS 30 July 1965.
20. ESKM 10 March 1948 p711, 13 October 1948 p779, 8 December 1948 p799, 13 July 1949 p871, 8 December 1954 p1466, 18 April 1974 p9936 and 11, 25, and 29 November 1982 p2628 and 2716; QT 26 March 1949.
21. ESKM 15 June 1949 p858, 12 February 1958, 14 October 1959 p1758, 13 April 1960 p1823, 18 October 1973 p9836, 3 September 1980 p1417, 17 February 1982 p2284 and 27 October and 2 November 1983 p3271; QT 12 October 1955 p11, 24 January 1956 p3; The bowls club is built on Reserve 36 at Esk.
22. QT 30 November 1928 p5, 20 February 1930 p14 and 2 May 1979 p30; ER 7 and 14 February 1931, 3 October 1931 and 17 February 1940; BVA 17 March 1937.
23. *Valley of the Lakes* (1982); Somerset Dam News in ER 14 February 1931, 14 March 1931, 18 March 1933, 28 August 1937, 19 February 1938 and 19 July 1940; QT 15 May 1947 p5 and 3 September 1964 p16; ESKM 25 October 1984 p3878.
24. *Lockyer and Stanley* (Q.I. and T.B., 1908) p79; QT 10 January 1880, 20 March 1917 p7, 24 April 1930 p12, 8 January 1946, 15 May 1947 p5 and 28 April 1950; ER 14 February 1931.
25. ESKM 19 February 1936, 11 March 1936, 19 May 1937 p15, 12 June 1940 p203 and 10 December 1958 p1682.
26. *Esk Shire Directory* 1986 p17; LWDM 2 January 1914 p199; ESKM 12 November 1919 p668, 14 February 1945 p516, 21 February 1963 p2232, 10 July 1980 p1361 and 23 October 1980 p1; BVS 3 January 1958; QT 13 February 1981 p14.
27. *Esk Shire Directory* 1986 p17; ESKM 13 February 1957 p1729, 14 October 1959 p1762, 13 July 1960 p1855, 8 February 1961 p1927, 19 September 1963 p2308 and 22 November 1979 p999; QT 19 December 1913 p7, 18 March 1975 p17 and 14 December 1977 p27.
28. H. Flower, "Toogoolawah and Upper Brisbane River," RHSQJ Vol 5 no 4 pp1160-1161; ESKM 10 March 1915 p79, 16 August 1922 p232; QT 27 May 1890, 28 June 1890, 19 January 1899, 18 March 1911, 8 January 1913 p3, 13 June 1913 p7, 14 September 1916 p7, 6 January 1917 p7, 28 March 1923 p11; ER 23 April 1931.
29. H.P. Somerset, "History of Caboonbah" (Esk Shire Council Library, Local History Collection); QT 16 September 1946, 8 October 1946, 13 May 1947 p5, 28 August 1951, 5 September 1951 and 15 October 1951.
30. BC 1 October 1898 p11 c4, QT 4 August 1898, 6 February 1904 p10, 30 September 1910 p2, 6 November 1912 p6 and 3 May 1912 p2; DM 9 August 1928; ER 18 December 1936; ESKM 31 July 1918 p496.
31. QT 6 March 1894, 10 October 1899, 10 March 1903, 24 February 1930 p10 and 29 April 1985 p11.
32. QT 4 August 1898, 19 April 1949 and 30 March 1951; BVS 21 June 1957 and 24 April 1959.
33. ESKM 22 July 1909 p259, 2 September 1909 p273, 10 April 1957 p1746 and 13 November 1957 p1812; BVS 22 March 1957 p10.
34. ESKM 13 March 1946 p668 and 25 May 1967 p2786; QT 5 August 1918 p7, 23 June 1949 p6 and 10 October 1973 p25.
35. ESKM 12 October 1938 p95, 9 June 1948 p734a and 14 October 1959 p1758; BVA 24 August 1932, 16 May 1934 and 11 January 1939; ER 8 April 1933 and 24 September 1933.
36. ESKM 14 June 1979 p728, 27 September 1979 p907, 25 October 1984 p3,875 and 20 March 1985 p4053; QT 4 January 1979 p5 and 15 April 1981 p28; Information provided on the Ramblers Club by Mr David McEvoy in May 1987.