

DID YOU KNOW?

This is the 55th year we have had the use of what is now known as the “Greg Cavill Building” as the centre piece of our house and entertainment facilities at Manly. Operations in the Building commenced in March 1964 and our then Patron and Governor of Queensland, Colonel Sir Henry Able Smith, officiated at the opening ceremony on 26 September 1964.

The “Greg Cavill Building” was affectionately known to Members as “Cav’s Café” for many years and the front doors into the foyer came from “The Gem” in Gem Road Kenmore. That was the home of the first Wallace Bishop who established the Wallace Bishop Jewellery Business in 1917 and the grandfather of Past Commodore Wallace Bishop AM.

Bill Kirby.



“Cav’s Café” during construction in 1964. Note the circular building and undulating roof.

THE GREG CAVILL BUILDING AND ITS FRONT DOORS

As the name signifies the late Greg Cavill, Life Member and Commodore 1961 - 1964 had a major involvement in the Building coming into existence and he was ably assisted by a number of other Members. P/C Greg was "Mine host" at the Breakfast Creek Hotel for very many years and carried on a family tradition in the hospitality industry.

The tradition of the Cavill family in the hospitality industry commenced with P/C Greg's grandfather, Jim Cavill, at the Surfers Paradise Hotel in Cavill Avenue at Surfers Paradise. In the early days there was a Zoo at the Surfers Paradise Hotel, which predated the Beer Garden. No trip to the Gold Coast was complete without a visit to the Beer Garden. P/C Greg's mother, Molly and father Dick were also in the industry and were involved with many establishments in Brisbane, including the Breakfast Creek Hotel.

The catalyst for the Building being erected was dialogue between the Department of Harbours & Marine and representatives of the then Royal Queensland Yacht Club and others involved in recreational sailing and boating during the 1950s. In 1957, a proposal was put forward by the Department that Government would establish a harbour for recreational small craft to the south of Darling Point, if a commitment was made by an organisation of substance to build a clubhouse on land which would be reclaimed and also, use areas to be dredged to establish a headquarters for sailing and boating activities generally. At the time, the Moreton Bay commercial fishing fleet operated from facilities in Wynnum Creek.

As there had been a search for "Bayside Premises" for a number of years, the Club made the commitment and the Department commenced construction of Manly Boat Harbour in 1958.

The late Doug Kemp, who was deeply involved in the affairs of the Royal Queensland Yacht Club and also chairman of the Queensland Yachting Association at the time, carried out the negotiations with Government during the 1950s. The Queensland Yachting Association was the forerunner of Yachting Queensland.

In October 1963 the Squadron, the name had been changed from "Club" to "Squadron" in 1961, was allocated a 1 acre 1 rood 15 perches, 5,438 square meter, parcel of reclaimed land adjacent to what is now the public car park. Construction of the Greg Cavill Building was completed in March 1964. I recall being told by P/C Greg the land was so soft it had to be topped with large quantities of industrial ash and cinders to avoid ***"sinking up to your armpits"*** and the Building is supported on 45 foot, 13.7 meter, Franki Piles.

The design of the Building was the result of an architectural competition and while I have been reminded by members of his Family P/C Greg would have been content with a more modest structure, the design committee prevailed and the very distinctive circular shape with the undulating roof was chosen. The circular shape and undulating roof are clearly shown in the photograph taken during construction which appears later.

The Greg Cavill Building cost £28,400 to erect and with the fit – out, ground works, infrastructure and initial boating facilities, the total expenditure was £60,000. That is in the order of \$2,600,000:00 at current exchange rates.

The parcel allocated to the Squadron in 1963 was intended to be the first part of an area of 4 acres, that is a little over 1.6 hectares, of reclaimed land and adjacent areas of dredged navigable waterways the Department of Harbours & Marine had been asked and agreed to provide for the Squadron's activities.

During the second half of the 1960s and into the 1970s, difficulties were experienced with the Department being able to provide the dry and wet areas and mooring accommodation for boats required for the overall activities at Manly to be economically viable. That required the Squadron and entities associated with it to start reclaiming land, dredging areas in the Harbour and building Marinas and I'll provide details of that work in another article.

In 1981 - 1982, Past Commodore Wallace Bishop AM was ***"the Committee of One"*** who arranged and supervised significant extensions to the Greg Cavill Building. It was a major undertaking and a high degree of imagination and sensitivity was required to extend the circular shape, particularly the undulating roof structure, without it being evident there were "additions". It also required skill on the part of the contractors to marry the new with the original.

The outcome of the work was aesthetically pleasing and remains so today and when I tell people now the Building was substantially extended almost forty years ago, most are quite surprised and many can't see where the additions were made.

As part of the 1981 - 1982 extensions, P/C Wal donated the front doors into the foyer. They were originally installed in "The Gem" in Gem Road Kenmore in 1932. That was in the homestead at the Jersey Stud P/C Wal's grandfather operated at Gem Road at the time.

P/C Wal worked with me for over ten years from the early 1980s to achieve freehold title over the Squadron's nearly 6 hectares of land, which now forms the majority of the southern peninsula of the Harbour. On another occasion, I'll explain how P/C Wal was instrumental in solving the problem when it was found part of the Greg Cavill Building was located on the 30m Strip of land along the harbour frontage which had to remain under leasehold tenure in order to comply with one of the many conditions for the freeholding.

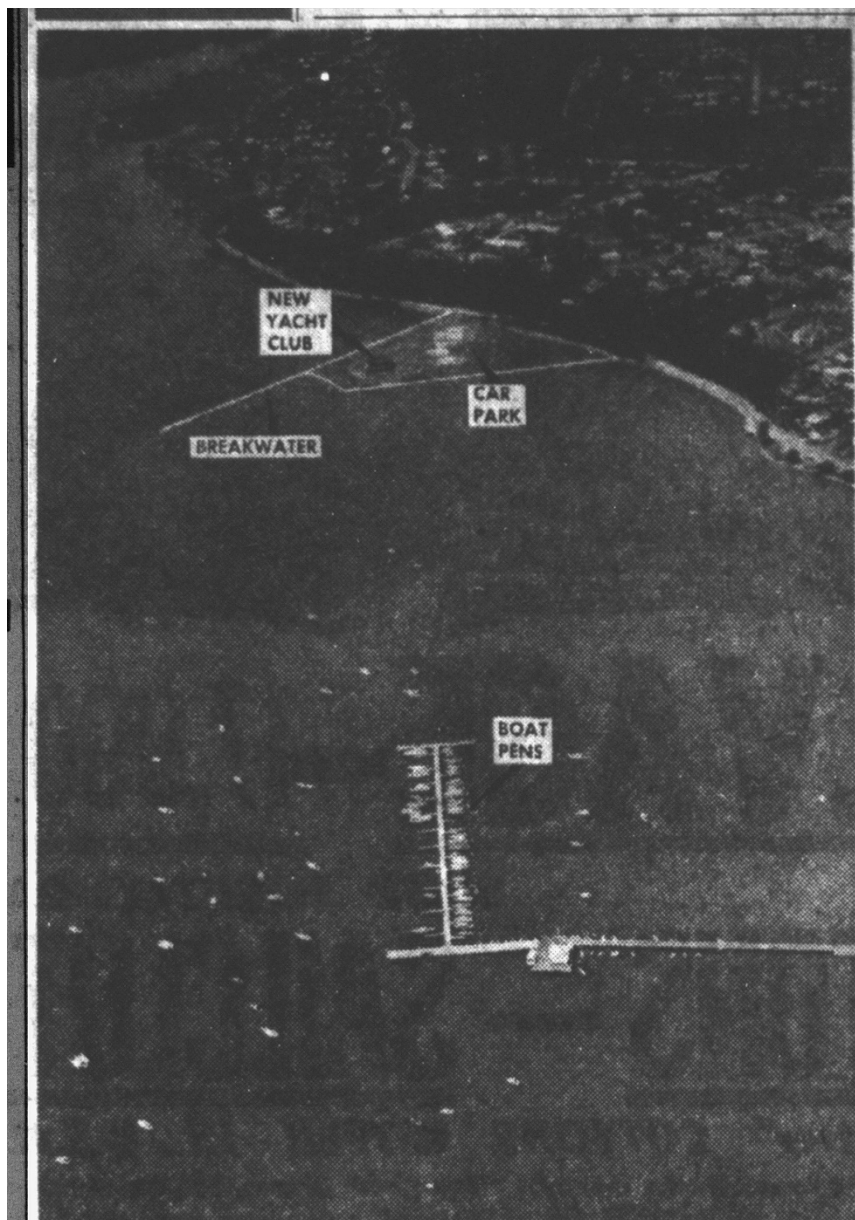
The newspaper clipping which is included was published in the Sunday Mail on 16 February 1964, less than a month before the Greg Cavill Building was completed and operations commenced on 7 March 1964. From about 1970 to 1978, I had boats in the second pen down from the jetty on the outer side. Immediately prior to me, the pen was occupied by the late Bill Warlow – the father of Rear Commodore John.



"Cav's Café" during construction in 1964. Note the circular building and undulating roof.



This photograph shows the extent of the original reclamation.
The land to the right of the Greg Cavill Building is now the public carpark.
I'm sorry the photograph isn't clear however, it shows what has been achieved at Manly.



AERIAL picture of the Manly Boat Harbour which is becoming more popular with boating men.

The Manly Yacht Squadron, which will lease the new clubhouse built by the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron, hopes to occupy the building on March 7.

The boat pens off the Manly pier can hold more than 60 boats with water and electricity available in each bay.

Bill Kirby.