

The first clubhouse

Immediately upon the establishment of the club, there was a felt a strong need for it to have its own premises on the grounds. At this time the motor car was taking over from the horse and buggy, which meant that the old cabmen's shelter at Middle Brighton station was seldom used any more. It was owned by the Council, who were approached via Mrs Bleazby about transferring it to Croquet Club.

The Carmen's Union objected, but the Council eventually agreed, with two conditions. One, the club to bear the cost of moving it, by a team of draught horses and about 100 metres; and to return it if asked. Two, "if the motor car is to prove but a passing fancy and the cabmen are in business again and have need of the shelter, the club shall be responsible to return it to the railway station." (Atkinson 2011 p31).

The club took the risk, made the arrangements and the first of many working bees repainted it. Some members took to calling the clubhouse a "pavilion".

But it was not to last: less than a week into the new year, the clubhouse burnt down (on 5 January 1912)!

The Committee immediately committed ninety pounds to build a new clubhouse, which was opened by the Mayor on 23 February 1912 (Council permits seemed to be less of a problem back then).

Source: Atkinson, B. 2011 *First Centenary of the Brighton Croquet Club*, Brighton Croquet Club Inc, Brighton Victoria