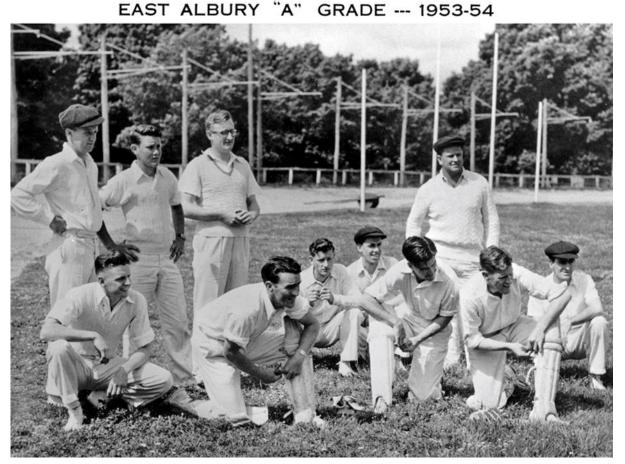# Early Days of East Albury Cricket Club

Richard Lee

At a meeting in August 1944, the recently formed North Albury Youth Club hoped that similar clubs would be formed in Lavington, South, West and East Albury. All branches of sport would be covered first for boys, then girls.

On October 25, 1945, the main push to form the East Albury Cricket Club came from the Joe Klippel, who was elected president. Joe was a Newmarket garage owner who also ran a passenger service to Corryong. He was president of the East Albury Progressive Association as well as the Youth Sports Club.

At the meeting, held at the Albury Wool Exchange, Stan Nugent was elected as secretary and Charlie Leseberg became treasurer. Nugent would later become club coach and association secretary.

The season started on November 10, with East Albury fielding a side in B Grade. The captain and vice-captain elected that day were G Skerry and J McDermott. East also fielded an under 18's team.

East Albury A Grade side padding up at the Albury Sportsground
during the 1953-54 season
Standing: Bruce Seale, Allan Hunter, Terry O'Shaughnessy, Arthur Allen
Kneeling: Geoff Bray, Kevin Hunter, J McDonald, Col Richardson,
J O'Connell, Arthur Larkin, Ron Richardson

By 1946 a dressing shed was proposed for Alexandra Park. Many players would remember the old green shed – it would have a tale or two to tell. The clatter of bat, gloves and other equipment reverberated around the grounds from many batsmen returning to the shed after an 'umpire's decision was viewed as dubious.'

It would not be until 1949 that an official constitution was drafted at a meeting at the Classic Café. The constitution consisted of 17 points and the club was 'To promote and encourage good sportsmanship associated with the game of cricket.'

During the winter of 1952, Alexandra Park had a turf wicket installed. Arthur Allen said that the wicket area was to be two wickets wide about 16 feet by 25 yards (4.9m by 22.9m) and was dug out to a depth of about 12 inches (30cm). Ash from the Albury Railway Station was laid at the base to a depth of 6 inches (15 cm) to provide good drainage. Then Merri Creek soil was purchased and added. Couch grass was found down by the Murray River.

East's spiritual home was the Pastoral Hotel in Townsend Street (the site now under Westend Plaza), built by Charles Waterstreet and James Cox and opened November 1, 1938. Many a chook raffle was held on Friday evenings and Saturday lunch times to help keep the club financially stable. Saturday night would see the teams congregate back at the Pastoral to discuss the afternoon highlights and results.