

ON THE STREETS WHERE YOU LIVE



Central Park

Central Park has played a pivotal role in both the sporting and administrative history of the Lane Cove Municipality.

On 9 February 1895 the Borough of Lane Cove was granted self-government from the Municipality of North Willoughby (now Willoughby). Elections for the new Lane Cove Council followed on 26 March 1895. The first returning officer and Clerk of the Council found that there was no place suitable for meetings of the Council. After consultation a site was rented from pioneering North Shore entrepreneur and land developer, Richard Harnett and a small building was quickly constructed. The cost was £38 10 shillings. It was a small weatherboard building located at the corner of Kenneth Street and River Road West, Longueville. The first meetings of the Lane Cove Council were held there from 4 April 1895.

The new Council also applied for the resumption and dedication of a parcel of land nearby for public recreation. It was also owned by Richard Harnett and located on the summit of the ridge between Woodford and Tambourine Bays. The cost was estimated to be £200 per acre. It was a level site, suitable for recreation and centrally located, however, the area was too small to be used as a cricket ground or for football. The small wooden Council Chambers was built just outside the northern boundary of this land. This building would be used as the Council Chambers until 26 March 1906, when the new Council Chambers at Gore Hill was completed. The first meeting was held in the Gore Hill Chambers in April 1906.

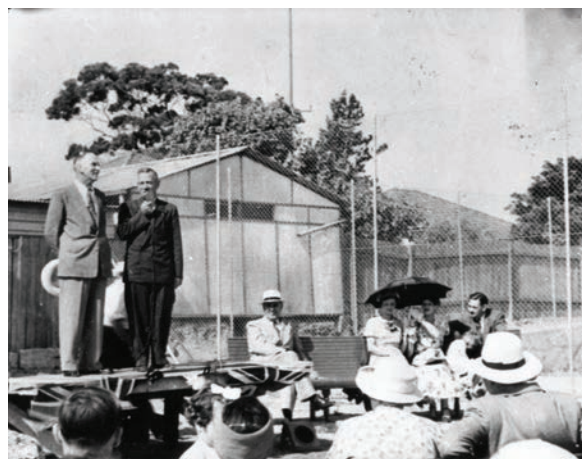
The three acres adjoining the first Council Chambers was proclaimed a dedicated public recreation area on 11 January 1889. At various times the park has been named Foundation Park, Longueville Northwood Park, and Northwood Recreational Reserve and it is now known as Central Park. For several years it was also home to the Council's plant nursery.

In October 1908, the Lane Cove Tennis Club was officially opened on the site of the Council nursery. Alderman Charles Catt officiated before a large gathering of tennis players and their friends. He congratulated the committee upon the successful result of their efforts in establishing the club. He then declared the courts open, and served the first ball. Play commenced and a most enjoyable afternoon was spent with the lady members providing afternoon tea.

In May 1929 Council announced the erection of a pavilion in Central Park for the Lane Cove Tennis Club at a cost of £250. By May 1953, Council's Sporting Liaison

Committee began discussing the erection of a new club house in Central Park at an estimated cost of £4,500, with the Tennis Club contributing £2,500 prior to the commencement of work. In December 1954 the renewal of water service to the tennis courts in Central Park had become an issue and was referred to the Works Committee and the Engineer for reports on the water service requirements at Central Park. Upon completion of the works, the tennis club held a function and invited tennis legend, Harry Hopman to officially turn on the taps at the tennis courts.

Central Park has always played a role at the centre of community activities from 1895.



*Harry Hopman (left) and Mayor, George Venteman (right) unveiling the new water system at Lane Cove Tennis Club, Central Park, circa 1955
(Courtesy of Lane Cove Library)*



*Central Park, Longueville, showing fountain and agapanthus in bloom, December 1972.
Photographer Arthur Rex Ford
(Courtesy of Lane Cove Library/D.Ford)*

