

' THE BIRTH OF THE BLUES '

The story of the Northern Suburbs Rugby League Football Club goes back to the turn of the century when Union was the top code around the Newcastle District.

Senior teams came from South, Central, West and North.

Standard of play was high and many players gained representative recognition.

In these years North Newcastle Union colours were dark blue and many Rugby League players came from the Union code.

NORTHERN REBELS:

With the breakaway of Union players to the League, 'Newcastle Rebels' team played in the Sydney Competition during 1908 and 1909. Northern Suburbs Union men noticed in the new Rugby League code were:-

Hardy - Kay - Croft - Scott - McNeill - Nicholson.

These players were the pioneers of the yet unborn Northern Suburbs Rugby League Club.

Hardy was the grandfather of prominent Northern Suburbs players Mick and Wally Hardy and the tradition is carried on by Wally Hardy's son, Don, who is our present 1st Grade Ball-Boy and also a Newcastle Representative under 10-years player.

RUGBY LEAGUE COMES TO NEWCASTLE:

In 1910 arising from support extended by the sporting public and playing personnel it was decided to commence a local competition known as the N.S.W. Rugby League Northern Branch.

The first game was set down for May 14th, 1910. Teams entered were:- North - South - Central - West.

Meanwhile, down on the waterfront, prominent Rugby Union Officials, Albert Hough and Peter Fleming, were fighting hard to hold the wavering 'Unionites'. - The League breakaways were dubbed 'Professionals' and 'Money Grabbers' for accepting payment of expenses. It did not occur to the Rugby Union Leaders that many players were unemployed due to the Peter Bowling Coal Mining Strike and also the fact that those in employment could not risk injury and subsequent loss of income. The expenses or signing-on fee for one player in 1977 would equal and exceed the expenses paid to every player in the Newcastle Rugby League Competition in 1910.

However, the strong 'Play Union' campaign mounted in the Northern Suburbs area, particularly through Peter Fleming, Honorary Secretary of Newcastle Rugby Union made the task of forming a Rugby League Club very difficult. 'Turncoats' could lose their jobs. Rugby League players were few and far between in 1910.

All this notwithstanding, when Referee, Mr. E. Richardson, sounded the whistle for the North v Central match on 14th May, 1910, the 'Blue Bags' were represented by:-

T. Price, Jones, Smith, Dobson, Dieftap, Walwyn, Jenkins, Hardy, Croft, Cousins, Smith, Scott.

Although defeated 5 - nil in their initial game, North made a bold showing against a powerful Central combination and during the season the pioneer 'Blue Bags' rapidly gained valuable experience in the new

In our initial year although unsuccessful in 1st Grade the Reserve Grade team won the premiership defeating Waratah 7 - 2 in the final. This team scored 55 points for and had 18 points scored against them and was made up of the following Officials and Players:-

Vice-Presidents: A. Kay and J. Richardson.
Secretary: J. (Rattler) Wright.
Coach: H. Dobson.
Trainer: L. Ring.

P. Holt, C. Kay, J. Duncan, B. Keevers, H. Ross, H. Duncan, T. Jones, A. Wright, W. Lahiff, L. Beetsen (Capt), E. Jones, A. Hodgson, F. Gale, F. Symonds, O. Mounter, W. Hodgson, J. Mitten, J. Coleman (V. Capt).

This team was the first Junior team to play under League Rules in the Northern District and won the first League Final in the competition promoted by the Northern Branch N.S.W.R.L. 1910. Their colours were light and dark blue (vertical bars).

It is thought that because of possible retribution through working arrangements the President of the original Club did not appear in this photograph.

After conversations with an original player, Mr. Fred Grahame, and other gentlemen we have decided that this must have been Mr. Ned Rees (who appears in later photos in this position) the brother of the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Percy Rees.

With the promise of many star Union men to come-over to League the following year, 1911, it was a new-look team for North. This combination was to have sweet revenge on Central when they defeated the Beaumont Street boys in what was known then as 'The Potter Shield' Final 10 - 2 and this was the first 1st Grade Final victory on the field of Rugby League for North.

The team that played in the final was selected from:-

Price, McGuinness, E. Jones, T. Jones, Dobson, Hodgson, Holt, Coleman, Scott, Croft, Symonds, Camps, Watt, Lewsam, Cousins, Conn, Gillett, Player, Hardy.

The year 1911 was memorable for North because for the first time a Club achieved the treble - that is, apart from 1st Grade Premiers they were also successful in winning the Premierships in Reserve and Third Grades.

The Reserves made up mainly of the 1910 team comfortably beat Waratah to win their 2nd Premiership.

The Third Grade team which was made up of mainly younger men defeated West Wallsend 14 - 2 to win their first final.

Teams that played in the Third Grade competition in 1911 were:-

East Newcastle, Cardiff, Lambton No.1, Jesmond, Lambton No.2, West Wallsend, Central No.1 and Central No.2.

This team scored 221 points for and had 17 points scored against, played 14 matches, won 13, drew 1 and lost nil.

The players names were:- C. Tory, R. Webber, F. Wilson, A. Baker, R. Pike, J. Newell, E. Duncan (Capt), Fred Grahame, J. Wright, N. Coleman, A. Heslop, S. Towns, H. Wright,

Officials were:- D. Jones and G. Owen Trainers,
W. Watt Esq. Vice-President, Jas Wright, Hon. Secretary and
P.M. Rees, Hon. Treasurer.

Although a Club Championship was not introduced to the Newcastle League for many years it is an undeniable fact that North won the Club Championship many years before other claimants. The success of the Third Grade was an indication and forerunner of the amazing achievements of the North Juniors who to this day still supply the bulk of North Senior players. Two members of this team are worthy of note namely, Fred Grahame who went on to become President of the Club, Delegate and then to Secretary of the Newcastle Rugby League for many years and also R. Webber paternal grandfather of three former First Grade players for North, John Webber, Terry Webber and Maurice Webber.

Since 1910 North entered First, Reserve and Third Grade teams and down through the years have always met their commitments to the Newcastle Rugby League.

The first Committee was headed by:- Ned Rees, President,
J. (Rattler) Wright, Hon. Secretary and Percy Rees, Hon. Treasurer.

It was on this foundation that the Club as we know it to-day was formed and has led to fourteen First Grade Premierships, Eleven Reserve Grade and four Third Grade Premierships.

Although in 1912 the First Grade team was less successful in the finals they had several representative players namely:-

N.S.W. Country Team to Queensland: W. Price.

Hunter Northern: Dobson, Hardy.

Northern Branch: Coleman, Williams, Hardy, Grahame.

The Reserve Grade team won their Premiership for the third successive year.

It is interesting to note that there were three Price brothers in the original Club, Bill Tim and Jim.

Bill Price who represented Country and Newcastle teams on many occasions is the late father-in-law of Bill Mattingley, a North and Newcastle player of distinction in the sixties. Bill Mattingley is at present the Club Trainer.

Tim Price was also a representative player and after his playing career came to an end was Selector for the Club from 1944 to 1950 and then Timekeeper until his demise in 1960.

Jim Price maybe a player of less renown than his brothers, whose playing career was interrupted by his duties as a Sgt. of Police in the Carrington and Wickham areas for a period of 20 years and from there to Sheriff's Officer for 10 years. Jim who is still active to-day at the grand age of 77 years is the father of young Jim Price, who during a long Junior representative career was First Grade ball-boy from 1949 to 1955, First Grade player 1961 to 1964, Trainer and Secretary of the Supporters' Club. He is at present a Director of the Leagues Club and Chairman of Selectors.

1914 - Premiers again defeating Central 5 - 2.

Club Officials were:- Don Rees, President, J. Coleman, Hon. Treasurer, Fred Grahame, Hon. Secretary, A. Lock, Coach, P.P. McColl and R. Maynard, Trainers.

Note the dual position in those days of Fred Grahame, Hon. Secretary and also Vice-Captain of the Winning team.

1915. - The Third Grade team was successful playing 13 games, winning 12 with one drawn match.

Officials being R. Webber, President, F. Grahame, Hon. Secretary N. Vincent, Vice-President.

The players from a team photograph were:- C. Coleman, W. Paxton, J. Dewehy, N.C. Frith, E. Herbert, H. Woolston, (V. Capt), A. Frewin, H. Wood, (Capt), G. Holm, T. Sharp, C. Wright, V. Toll, L. Hackworthy, C. Belcher, C. Bassett.

Mention must be made of two players in this team, Mr. Norman C. Frith who on his retirement, for a period of approximately 30-years, until his death was Hon. Secretary of North Junior body and Mr. H. Woolston the uncle of our present day Senior Secretary, Mr. R.J. Woolston.

During World War 1 a great number of players, not only from North, but from all Clubs went overseas as Members of the Armed Forces and Clubs were unable to consistently field sides. As a result there was no competition proper in 1917 - 1918.

In 1918 a one round competition was conducted which North won but the team photograph for this year illustrated the difficulties encountered, with several absent inserts included showing players in service uniform.

Now the twenties:-

First Grade Premiers: 1920, 1925, 1926, 1929, 1930.

Reserve Grade Premiers: 1922, 1926, 1930, 1931.

At this point the writer must make mention of the invaluable assistance extended to him by many past players and officials, without their memories, photographs and early minute books the compiling of this history would not be possible. Outstanding among these gentlemen were:- Mr. Jack Baartman, Mr. Jack Thomas, Mr. 'Mick' Brown, Mr. Fred Graham and Mr. Jim Price Snr. Unfortunately even these gentlemen could not help to any great extent with information on the twenties so all that can be recorded are the dates and scores of our premiership teams. Maybe with the advent of a Clubhouse of our own more information, photos, etc. will come out of glory boxes and the like to relive these great years and to display to our members the deeds of the 'Blues' in the twenties.

1935 before another Premiership comes our way. The team that represented North is considered by many old timers as the best to represent the Club.

The Officials of this year were:- M. Baxter, President, H. 'Mick' Brown, Hon. Secretary, T. Alcock, Hon. Treasurer, Jack Baartman, Asst. Secretary, Fred Grahame, Delegate.

The players being:- C. Rundle, W. 'Squeaker' White, G. Hardy, C. McQuillan, Herb Narvo, H. Grace, E. Howley, E. 'Lin' Johnson, E. 'Mike' Mitten, C. 'Chip' Charlton, Claude Sharp, Frank Wilkinson, A. 'Rowdy' Toovey, Claude Lock, Capt.

The writer would be remiss if he did not touch on some of the achievements of these players.

H. 'Mick' Brown the Hon. Secretary served North faithfully as a player and then Secretary for many years. He is still currently a Vice-President of the Newcastle Rugby Football League and a great assistance to the North Officials and players.

Herman 'Herb' Narvo played in two North Senior Premiership teams and is considered by many Newcastle and Sydney experts to be the best 2nd row forward Australia has produced. A brief account of his sporting achievements is listed hereunder:-

1932 - 1936 North and representing Newcastle several times.

1937 Newtown.

Toured with Kangaroos to Great Britain 1937 - 38.

1938 North as Captain/Coach on a princely sum of £5. (\$10) a week.

1941 - 45 played with Newtown whilst a member of the R.A.A.F.

1946 Captain/Coach of St. George who in 1945 were wooden spooners. He led St. George to the Final only to be beaten by Balmain on goal kicks.

1947 Coach of Cootamundra.

1948 Coach of Camden.

1949 Coach of Newtown, but was persuaded to come back to play the 1st 5 games of the season with North in an unsuccessful attempt by North to make the finals. This was the last football Herb Narvo played.

His boxing achievements are even more sensational and out of 27 bouts as a heavyweight his record is:-

<u>Won.</u>	<u>Lost.</u>
17 k.o.	5 k.o.
1 foul.	1 foul.
1 points.	1 points.
1 drawn.	

In 1943 he fought Billy Britt for the Heavyweight Championship of Australia and gained the title which he successfully defended many times.

His tragic death at an early age was mourned by the sporting fraternity Australia wide.

Herb's son Frank Narvo who played for North and then went to Sydney to join the N.S.W. Police Force played First Grade for Newtown, Captain St. George and was selected in the N.S.W. Colts Team to play France at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Frank Narvo's son Garry Also played Junior and Senior football with North completing a family dynasty for the Narvo family in their association with North Football Club.

Harold Grace is one of three brothers who played First Grade for North the other brothers being Bill and Norm.

E. 'Lin' Johnson went on to represent N.S.W.

Frank Wilkinson played for North for many seasons and then became a First Grade Referee and is at present in his sixteenth consecutive year as Assistant Secretary of our Club.

C. 'Chip' Charlton a famous centre whose playing weight never exceeded 9½ stone was a member of the Newcastle team in 1936 when they defeated Great Britain for the first time. Also included in that side were:- H. Narvo, F. Wilkinson, I. Dempsey and A. Toovey who was awarded man of the match. Playing in that team representing Eastern Suburbs and later to play with North was Geoff Laidlaw, who during the 2nd World War was trapped on the island of Timor by the Japanese Forces. He stayed on the island for the duration of the war working with the natives in coast watching and harassment of the enemy. At the cessation of hostilities we have awarded the D.S.O.

The Reserve Grade in 1935 were also premiers to give the Club another Club Championship. This Reserve team comprised of A. Gilmore, J. Murphy, C. McKenzie, A. Wilkinson, (brother of Frank), E. 'Nana' Eyre (later coach of 1959 and 1962 Premiers), B. Hopkins, Frank Bailey (later Secretary and President of North and presently Director of Newcastle Leagues Club), F. Redding, F. Dennett, R. Swan, A 'Shoot' Farquharson (later Vice-President Newcastle League), Rennie Baker (presently Vice-President Newcastle League), Jim 'Chidley' Hattam (presently Secretary Newcastle League), O. Bennett, Jack Passmore Jr., B. Bailey, Eric Rutherford (father of 1962 half-back Ken 'Pop' Rutherford)

There is no doubt that these two teams produced many great players and officials without which Rugby League would not be the premier code in N.S.W. to-day.

1935 Club Championship. First Grade. 446 points for 217 against.
Reserve Grade. 312 points for 114 against.

1935 Newcastle Representatives:- Lin Johnson, E. Howley, A. Toovey, G. McQuillan, H. Narvo, F. Wilkinson, W. White.

After the marvelous year of 1935 we had to wait until 1937 before the Reserve Grade once again were premiers.

The team players were:- R. Dean, H. O'Callaghan, D. Jones, C. Parry, A. Farquharson, C. McKenzie, Frank Bailey (also Hon. Secretary), J. Reid, J. Murphy, W. White, A. Wright, A. Burns, C. 'Chappie' Whitmore, R. Johnson, G. McQuillan and C. 'Chicka' Cahill the Coach was Jerry Hawke.

Once again a first for North from this team reversing the present day trend of Newcastle importing Captain/Coaches from Sydney. C. 'Chicka' Cahill left North to become Captain and Coach of Newtown Sydney. 'Chicka' Cahill is the present day President of Newtown Rugby League Club.

R. Johnson, Lin Johnson's brother went from North to South Sydney and represented N.S.W. in the full-back position.

1937. North First Grade final - lost 8 to 5 against Waratah, scoring 239 points for and 213 against.

Reserve Grade won Grand Final 15 - 7 from Kurri Kurri, scoring 326 points for and 159 against.

Representative players: C. Charlton, A. Toovey, J. Dempsey, G. Laidlaw.

1938. Victory for First Grade who beat Waratah 20 - 4, scoring 200 points for and 160 against. Also another Club Championship came

The First Grade team being:- J. Murphy, A. Boler, A. Russell, C. Whitmore, R. Swan, F. Dennett, L. Kelly, D. Middleby, H. Narvo, A. Farquharson, F. Mitten, N. Grace, C. Charlton, L. Johnson, A. Toovey, J. Hattam.

1938 was the year of the first State Cup Competition and North played Balmain on the Sydney Sports Ground on 17.9.38., in the final the result of this match was an 8 all draw. The result of this match in 1938 could not be envisaged in 1977 as the playing strength of the Sydney and Newcastle teams are now poles apart because of the constant drain of talented Newcastle players going to Sydney for financial gain.

Charlie Hazleton made his appearance for North in 1938 and played for Australia.

During the 1938 season the greatest winning margin was 90 points to 7 against Maitland United at Maitland Showground on 23.7.38. in which L. Johnson scored 15 goals and 2 tries. C. Hazleton scored 6 tries.

Before leaving the thirties here are some firsts by Norths:-

First Best & Fairest - A. Toovey.
First to have flood lighting on Training Quarters.
First to supply Sydney Club with Captain/Coach. C. Cahill.
First to participate in State Cup Final. 1938.
First to import player from New Zealand. R. Mauren.
First player to decline selection in N.S.W. Team. Dave Middleby.

In 1942 the Eastern Suburbs team disbanded mainly through the lack of players caused by service in the Armed Forces. The east boundaries roughly encompassed Stockton, Carrington and Newcastle City proper. The Newcastle League in their wisdom allocated Newcastle City proper to South Newcastle and Stockton and Carrington to North. Many talented players were gained by North including the Perry brothers, the Oliver brothers and many more.

These foreign players quickly settled into North territory, our boundaries were not to be increased again until 20 years later.

During the forties North like most other Clubs were not very active but still managed to acquire a First Grade premiership beating Kurri Kurri 5 - 2 in 1948 with the Reserve Grade winning in 1945.

In 1946 Newcastle played Great Britain and ran out victors. North were represented by Arthur Humble, Bob Crane, Jack Hutchinson. Charlie Gill later to become a Kangaroo was considered a certain selection in this team but injured his leg in the previous Saturday game at Cessnock.

Jack Hutchinson represented Australia against Great Britain in 1948 playing in the lock forward position.

The fifties were good years for North winning 3 First Grade and one Reserve Grade final.

1950 was the last year that North has won the Reserve Grade title beating Cessnock 15 points to 7. In this team playing in the centre was George Kapeen who was a current Australian boxing title holder. Also included in this team were players of the calibre of L. Dann, D. McGaw, F. Morrison, M. Linich, F. Smith, R. Morrissey, A. Pritchard, L. Sweeney, R. Piton, J. Cavanagh, G. Maguire and D. Hawke.

1951 found the Club First Grade premiers again defeating Maitland
10 - 8

The First Grade were represented in the final with:-

J. Slade F. Morrison, B. Redding, A. Welsh, J. Doran, C. Smith, E. Long, J. Hutchinson, T. Anderson, A. Linich, C. Gill, R. Crane, D. Hawke.

John Slade who played full-back in this side was later Captain of Parramatta in the Sydney competition and also had the honour of being made captain of the N.S.W. side.

In 1952 for the Kangaroo tour of Great Britain and France North was paid the supreme honour of having three players selected in the touring party, they were Charlie Gill, Brian Carlson and Arthur Collinson. Brian Carlson was 19 years of age when selected and even when Sydney scribes pick Australian Teams in this era he still finds himself selected in their teams.

Arthur Collinson who played his juniors with Stockton and then First Grade with North in 1949 and 1950 moved to Western Suburbs in Sydney and it was from this Club he was picked to play for Australia.

Charlie Gill although small in stature beside some front row forwards acquitted himself well, to this extent, on the return of the Kangaroo side to Australia, Schubert, the hooker nominated C. Gill as his No.1 front rower.

Cessnock were the opponents in the 1953 Grand Final but they were to become runners-up to North in the quest for our eleventh First Grade Premiership. The final score was North 16 Cessnock 11.

The North team included three Australian representatives, Jack Hutchinson, Charlie Gill and Brian Carlson, along with R. Campbell, W. 'Slogger' Burns, B. Redding, W. McKenzie, Charlie Smith, Eric Long, Tom 'Cat' Anderson, Doug Hawke, Bob Crane and Jack Mantle.

The Club had a lean period between 1953 and 1958 but there were many players who represented North on the football field among them, Harry Gibbs, J. Kell, Jim Nichols, John and Terry Webber, Ned Davey, Lou Sweeney, Eric Baber, Stan Farquharson, George Maguire, E. 'Nana' Eyre, J. 'Choc' Daly, S. 'Mammy' Gill, Ron Tolmie, C. 'Woofy' Whyte, John Thomas, Les Gill, D. 'Doc' Bland, Wally Hardy, Allan Flanagan, Ron Gibson and many many more.

Only two players remained from the 1953 side to carry on into our next premiership team. The year was 1959, the players W. Burns and T. Anderson. The team was coached by E. 'Nana' Eyre and they defeated Maitland in the Grand Final 13 points to 12.

Participating in the team along with W. Burns and T. Anderson were:- Neil Hancock, Stan Gill, Neville 'Spiro' Boyd, Joe 'Spider' Irwin, Les Bowditch, Ray Barry, Norm Wilkinson (Capt), John 'Chock' Daly, Bill 'Bags' Owen, Donald Williams and Cecil Bull.

Most of these players continued with North into the 1960's and played a big part in keeping North on top.

In the Newcastle Vs Great Britain game won by Newcastle in 1962, North had three representatives, Don 'Duck' Williams, Norm Wilkinson and Bill 'Bags' Owen.

In 1962 under Coach E. Eyre North were victors over South Newcastle by 18 points to 6. The team was comprised of:- N. Hancock, D. Newton, J. Irwin, P. Ireland, B. deWitt, N. Wilkinson, K. Rutherford, J. Gill, W. Owen, W. Mattingley, J. Daly, D. Williams, C. Bull. B. Askie, A. Screen, B. Gamack, J. Price, M. Platts. (Reserves)

It is worth noting that of the 18 players mentioned only two, Bernie deWitt and Cecil Bull were not originally Junior players for North. Bernie deWitt went on to play several seasons with Canterbury-Bankstown in Sydney, whilst Cecil Bull, a legend in his own time, completed his career by winning the Newcastle Best & Fairest Award (Agland Trophy) at the age of 41.

1962 was the year that Bill 'Bags' Owen represented Australia on the football field direct from North and he then went on to play for South Sydney in 1963 and 1964.

This year was also the first time that North's boundaries were altered to take in areas other than the inner city.

The existing boundaries encompassed Carrington, Wickham, Islington, Maryville, Tighes Hill and Stockton.

The Newcastle League decided to grant the Karuah Area to North. Although an area some 30-miles from our own boundaries and not densely populated it was steeped in Rugby League and had produced players of the calibre of Eric Simms who played for South Sydney and Australia.

North played in finals between 1962 and 1966 but in 1967, although the underdogs by a great margin they pulled off a magnificent victory against Wests winning by 13 points to 11.

The team was:- D. Ellis, D. Newton, D. McManus, R. Hunter, R. Butler, L. Perry, B. Askie, J. Gill, W. Mattingley, K. Hutchinson, W. Owen, A. Jones, D. Nichols, D. Maddison and J. Newton. (Reserves)

Once again all home grown Juniors with the exception of Ray Butler from Gunnedah and Doug McManus from Canterbury-Bankstown.

The tactics adopted by Captain/Coach Jack 'Croaker' Gill and half-back, Brian Askie with drop-kicks at goal caused the Australian Board of Control to change the rule for the 1968 season.

B. Askie is now the Hon. Treasurer of the Leagues Club. His long association with the Club goes back to when he was ball-boy for the First Grade team when his father, Trevor Askie, coached North.

A Milestone was achieved in the 1967 final when former International Bill 'Bags' Owen played in what was his 3rd final victory with North, 1959, 1962 and 1967. After the 1967 season this great player retired from the game and is continuing his association with the Club as an Official.

With the arrival of the late sixties the newly conceived Transfer System had begun to take effect, and players were making themselves available to Clubs with financial backing. North and a few others were feeling the 'pinch' and the competition was developing into a one-sided affair.

Little success was had other than in 1971. The Club made the Minor Semi-Final under the coaching of Eddie Lumsden, but were soundly defeated by Lakes United 27 points to 18.

North were going through a very lean period second last on competition table in 1972 and last in 1973.

Better things were to come. A Reunion was organised by Mr. Jack Doran and the late Les Dann on 31st August, 1973.

This led to the formation of a Supporters' Club which instilled enthusiasm into all North's activities.

At the 1973 Annual General Meeting of the football Club a Committee was elected with many new and young faces.

P. Anderson, President, R.J. Woolston, Secretary and J. Camps, Treasurer were but three new members of the Executive.

Negotiations were started for 1974 with a top-line Sydney footballer, Garry Leo, of Balmain. Although unable to secure this player for the 1974 season he was signed as Captain/Coach for 1975, 1976 and 1977.

Coupled with this signing the Newcastle League realising that North's boundaries were being built-out allocated into their area the prime spots of Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay.

Instant success came in 1975 under Garry Leo, he took control of a young team who went onto win the Minor Semi-Final but lost to West in the Final. That year the Third Grade team were Major Premiers for the first time ever in the history of North.

In 1976 a meeting was held of all interested parties and it was decided to form a Limited Company changing our name from Northern Suburbs Rugby League Football Club to North (Newcastle) Rugby League Club Ltd. This meeting took place on 30th May, 1976 with an attendance of approximately 250-persons. The decision to incorporate was ratified on 21st September, 1976 and our new designation was official.

One reason for changing the name was that the Club wished to encourage our new areas to identify themselves with North and it was thought that Northern Suburbs was too restrictive. As our new areas are to the north of the original boundaries we thus became in affect 'North Newcastle'

These new areas although only 20 - 30 minutes drive from our headquarters are expected to double their population in the next 10 - 15 years.

In recent years the Club has produced many fine players and won many stirring games but has not been able to produce the consistent form required to reach the finals. The Club lacks the depth of players down through the grades and we cannot compete with Clubs having financial assistance in retaining players.

There are now approximately 20 players in opposition sides in the Newcastle competition who are ex North Juniors.

In the history of the Club it is hard to find mention of the Minor Grades, i.e. Reserve and Third. In all records, newspaper clippings and programmes it is the First Grade that receives the publicity, but without these unsung players no Club could possibly operate. Week after week, year after year, these players back-up for their game of football, their love of the game keeps these teams operating. The First Grade have first call on the players so that when injury strikes the higher grades both lower grades are depleted in turn, and it is the rule rather than the exception that these teams take the field with a different side each week.

Hopefully with a change of name and new areas, our long range plan will overcome the problem of player shortages and all persons in our

One thing the Club is very concerned with is the fact that the trophies won by teams over the years are being lost or misplaced.

As an ex player myself I remember seeing these trophies on display in some of the leading hotels in our area. They made quite an impressive display. Although the Club has attempted to save these trophies, when management changes, less care is taken of these important items of history.

Although North have always had training quarters at Wickham Oval, we only rent the area, and we have to share the dressing rooms and facilities with other football codes in the winter and cricket in the summer. Being a Council building it is not a safe place to store trophies and Club records. There has never been a place that the Club could call its own, or have sole access to, and it is this fact more than anything that has contributed to the loss of these trophies.

With the advent of our headquarters at Tighes Hill imminent it is certain that this problem will be overcome.

A history of North would not be complete with a chapter on the late Jack Passmore. When Jack Passmore Snr. passed away in the early part of 1973 he left behind a record of sporting service which will probably never be surpassed. In addition he also gave the youth of Northern Suburbs Rugby League district coaching, guidance and encouragement of such a standard that the 'Passmore Proteges' have played an important part in the rise of North Senior Club to the top rung of the Newcastle Rugby Football League. Forty eight years active association with North Junior Rugby League Club. Continuous Office as President, 1933 - 1973, Life Member of Newcastle Rugby Football League, North Senior R.L.F.C., North Junior R.L.F.C., Stockton Junior R.L.F.C. and Newcastle Junior Rugby Football Association.

Our home ground, Passmore Oval, stands to-day as a tribute to a fine sporting personality who made a valuable contribution to the Rugby League story of the Club.

North can still make the proud claim, as the list below will prove 'that we have won more First Grade Premierships than any other two Clubs'.

SENIOR RECORD:

1911	NORTH	10	defeated	CENTRAL	2
1914	NORTH	5	defeated	CENTRAL	2
1920	NORTH	11	defeated	SOUTH NEWCASTLE	0
1925	NORTH	10	defeated	EASTERN SUBURBS	6
1926	NORTH	15	defeated	SOUTH NEWCASTLE	8
1929	NORTH	10	defeated	WARATAH/MAYFIELD	5
1935	NORTH	14	defeated	CENTRAL	4
1938	NORTH	20	defeated	WARATAH/MAYFIELD	4
1948	NORTH	5	defeated	KURRI KURRI	2
1951	NORTH	12	defeated	MAITLAND	8
1953	NORTH	16	defeated	CESSNOCK	11
1959	NORTH	13	defeated	MAITLAND	12
1962	NORTH	18	defeated	SOUTH NEWCASTLE	6
1967	NORTH	13	defeated	WESTERN SUBURBS	11

FORMER PLAYERS TO BECOME FIRST GRADE REFEREES:

J. Lane, J. Mitten, F. Wilkinson, R. Cody, N. Spohr, A. Cullen, A. Farquharson, R. Baker, R. Lewis.

NORTH PLAYERS TO REPRESENT:

AUSTRALIA.

B. Carlson, L. Dawson, C. Hazleton, H. Narvo, C. Gill,
A. Collinson, W. Owen, R. Johnson, J. Hutchinson.

N.S.W. & COUNTRY.

W. Price, J. Hawke, J. Dempsey, M. Bailey, F. Wilkinson,
L. Johnson, M. Bailey, D. Edwards, M. Humphries, R. Cody,
K. Hutchinson, W. Cody, F. Kelly, L. Lulham, A. Cullen,
C. Walker, H. Williams, N. Wilkinson, Z. Niszczo.

North have played a major roll in the successful administration of the code in Newcastle by providing Officials to executive positions in the Newcastle Rugby Football League.

<u>NAME.</u>	<u>POSITION HELD NORTH.</u>	<u>POSITION NEWCASTLE LEAGUE.</u>
C. Croft.	President.	President.
J. Grahame.	President.	Patron.
F. Grahame.	Player/Secretary.	Secretary.
D. Irwin.	Player.	Secretary.
E. O'Sullivan.	Player/Senior Official.	Secretary.
J. Hattam.	Player/Treasurer.	Secretary.
A. Farquharson.	Player/Selector.	Asst. Secretary.
H. Brown.	Player/Secretary.	Vice-President.
R. Baker.	Player.	Vice-President.
J. Thomas.	Secretary.	Vice-President.
J. Passmore.	President, Junior League.	President, Newcastle Junior League.