

MCC Chronology and Membership growth

1838

- The first MCC cricket match on November 15th, 1838 on the site of the Royal Mint.
- At the same time, Messrs. FH Powlett, R Russell, George Smyth and brothers AM Mundy and CF Mundy met and formed the Melbourne Cricket Club.

1839 (20 members)

- The Club began playing matches near the present site of Spencer Street Station. This was then known as 'Batman's Hill'.

1841

- F.A. Powlett elected President – first office bearer.
- Club published the Laws of Cricket (first publication).

1846 (40 members)

- The MCC moved to a site on the south bank of the Yarra, between the river and present-day South Melbourne (from Walker Street east across Queensbridge Street).
- To enable occupation of this land MCC forms as a 12month per year permanent club. (Previously had suspended operations over the winter months.)
- Published the Rules of the Melbourne Cricket Club (first rules of “new” re-structured club).
- The term ‘Melbourne Cricket Ground’ was first used.

1850

- First football match (12-a-side) played on the MCG. Held as part of the “Separation Sports and Games” carnival

1851

- The MCC played the first inter-colonial match under the name ‘Port Phillip’ against Van Diemen's Land in February at Launceston. This was the first ‘first-class’ cricket match in Australia. It was part of the celebrations for Victoria's separation from NSW

1852

- The first inter-colonial match ever played in Victoria, between Port Phillip and Van Diemen's Land, was sponsored by the MCC, March 29th-30th at the South Melbourne site.

1853

- Permissive occupancy of the present site of the MCG in the ‘Police Paddock’ was granted to the Melbourne Cricket Club by Lt-Governor CJ La Trobe on 23rd September.

1854

- The land for the ground was cleared and levelled.
- First Members Pavilion erected.
- The first cricket match on the current MCG was played between the members on 30th September.

1856

- The 1st first-class cricket match on the MCG is the inaugural Victoria vs. New South Wales match played March 26 and 27th.

1858 (204 members)

- Thomas W Wills, wrote a letter to “Bell's Life in Victoria”, July 10th, 1858, arguing the need for a game to keep cricketers fit during winter. Seen as the foundation of Australian Football.
- The Melbourne Football Club was informally founded in response to TW Wills call.

1859

- The rules of The Melbourne Football Club (later the Victorian Rules) were drafted up by TW Wills, WJ Hammersley, Bruce Wray and TH Smith.
- First game played under the rules on the Melbourne Football Ground in Yarra Park.

1861

- The Trust is established to permanently reserve from sale, the land covered by the Metropolitan Cricket Ground grant.

- The first Trustees, chosen by the Club, were appointed by the Government: Hon. WC Haines, John Goodman, Thos. Hamilton (President of MCC) and Armond Powlett. The Club and Trust are one and the same, with the Trustees joining the MCC Committee.

1862 (381 members)

- H.H. Stephenson's XI began a match against Victoria on New Year's Day, the first time an English team had played on Australian soil.

1865

- MCC opened a bowling green in Punt Road.

1866

- An Aboriginal team under TW Wills played against an MCC team on the MCG before 11,000 spectators on December 26th-27th. The Aboriginal team played on the MCG a further three times to 1869.

1873

- Foundation of MCC Library collection, September 6th, with donation of 10 years of "The Australasian".

1876

- Built the 'reversible' stand at the northern end of the ground – the first major stand, a grandstand for the public.

1877

- Commencing on March 15th, the first 'Test' match between Australia and England was played at the MCG (The term 'Test' did not become common until 1894.) During the same match, Charles Bannerman scored the first century in Test cricket.

1878 (534 members)

- Curtis Reid, the first paid MCC Secretary was appointed.
- In March, the Moonlight concerts run by Julius Herz were held on the ground for the first time.

1879

- Night football was first played on the MCG under electric light on August 6th, Collingwood Rifles v East Melbourne Artillery. Melbourne played Carlton under lights on August 13th.
- The MCC laid down asphalt tennis courts, the first in Australia.

1881 (1500 Full members)

- A new Members' Pavilion was constructed alongside the first MCC Pavilion. The Foundation Stone was laid by Princes Albert Victor and George of Wales on July 4th. The Pavilion was opened in time for the match between Victoria and Alfred Shaw's English XI on December 16th.

1884

- The reversible stand was burnt to the ground, and replaced by a stand known as The Grandstand. It survived until demolished for the construction of the Northern/Olympic Stand in 1954.

1885

- In October, a team from the USS Enterprise, played the first recorded baseball match at the MCG against a team chosen by MCC.

1886

- In November the first Austral Wheel race was held at the MCG.

1888

- Baseball section formed

1889 (2000 Full members)

- The MCC assumed control over the Melbourne Football Club.

1891

- Melbourne Football Club abandoned playing its matches at the separate ground and played its home matches at the MCG

1893

- The first Australasian Athletic Championships were held on the MCG in October.

1894

- The MCC established bowling greens at the MCG.

1896

- Lacrosse section formed.

1900 (2500 Full members)

- MCC Rifle Club was formed.

1901

- Championship of Australia Bowls Tournament inaugurated by MCC.

1902

- Moving pictures were being shown at the Ground.
- The first year that the VFL Grand Final was held at the MCG.

1906 (3500 Full members)

- Premier Sir Thomas Bent expands the number of MCG Trustees and swamps the Club's representatives with those of his own choosing. The Trustees, separate from the Club Committee. New Regulations drawn up making the committee's management of the ground "subject to the Trustees' approval and consent" for the first time.

1916 (4000 Full members)

- On February 24, in Yarra Park at the back of the Grandstand, the Minister for Defence, Senator Pearce unveiled a memorial to the Soldiers who had fallen in the Great War. The temporary memorial, believed to be the first in Melbourne, was in the shape of a broken column. It was designed by A Phipps Coles and was a gift of the Timber Merchants' Association and other groups.

1917

- The MCC Patriotic Carnival held over a period of 11 days, included the sale of "The Blackham Ball", the ball souvenired by Australian wicket keeper JM Blackham at the end of the famous Ashes Test match at the Kennington Oval in 1882. On December 10th, a crowd estimated at 75,000 attended a pro-conscription meeting at which the Prime Minister, WM Hughes, was the main speaker.

1928

- MCC President Sir Leo Cussen laid the foundation stone of the new Members' Pavilion (the Third Pavilion stood until 2003).

1933 (5200 Full members)

- MCG Trust restructured by "The 1933 Melbourne Cricket Ground Act" which declared that the Trustee "controlled the Ground upon trust for the use of the public" with power to delegate, "as they thought fit", its management to the club.

1937 (6200 Full members)

- The Third Test from January 1st-7th draws a world record aggregate crowd of 350,534.

1956 (9800 Full members)

- The MCG was the main arena for the Olympic Games and 107,700 attended the Opening Ceremony. Members voted away their privileges for the duration of the Games in exchange for advance access to ticket sales.

1957

- The MCC offices were removed from Collins Street to Jolimont Terrace.

1961

- MCC Hockey Section was formed.

1968 (12,800 Full members)

- The Western (Ponsford) Stand was completed, including two squash courts. The MCC Squash Section was formed.

1973

- MCC Administrative offices moves to MCG.

1977

- Centenary Test match staged.

1983

- July, 2nd onwards, women admitted to the Pavilion.

1984 (15,000 Full members)

- April 1st, Women admitted as members.

1988 (28,000 Full members)

- 150th anniversary celebrations of the club staged on the ground and open house over the anniversary weekend.

1992 (35,000 Full members)

- Opening of the Great Southern Stand and final of cricket's World Cup, March 25th, with 87,182 people watching Pakistan defeat England.

1998 (49,500 Full members)

- Restructure of the MCG Trust, to boost the Trust's independence, eliminating Trustees "associated with users of the MCG as well as ministerial or political representation the new Trust would avoid potential conflict of interest between the interests of the Ground and its tenants".

2005 (55,000 Full members)

- Opening of the fourth Members Pavilion.

2006 (57,000 Full members)

- Completion of the Northern side redevelopment in time for the XVIII Commonwealth Games.