

History of the Glebe District Hockey Club's Railway Arch at Jubilee Oval Glebe

Jubilee Oval was opened in 1910 and was used by the Glebe Cricket Club lower grades from then on until the 1964/65 season when the Glebe Cricket Club amalgamated with the Paddington Cricket Club to form the Sydney Club. The Sydney Cricket Club played its home games at Rushcutter's Bay Oval.

The Railway Viaduct was built after the First World War which ended in 1918. The railway link between White Bay and Darling Harbour was opened in 1922.

Up until 1940 the turf wicket at Jubilee Oval was rolled by horse drawn rollers. The horses were fitted with special shoes to avoid damaging the pitch. Throughout the 1930's the grass at Jubilee was kept under control by 50-60 sheep which were yarded under the viaduct at night.

At around 1940 some of the Railway Arches were bricked-in and used by the sporting clubs that used Jubilee Oval. The Number 4 Arch, the Arch currently occupied by the Hockey Club, was used by the Saint James' Sporting Club Rugby League team from 1941. It's unclear how the numbering system was arrived at. There are seven arches in this section of the viaduct. The 'Number 4 Arch' as specified on the Lease documents at the time refers to the arch which is third in the row, counting from the Johnstons Canal. This Club had negotiated a five year lease with the Glebe Council and this lease was extended after the Glebe Council was incorporated into the City of Sydney Council.

The Saint James' Sporting Club Rugby League teams played their last season in 1949. A new junior Rugby League Club, called "Bing and Swing" was formed by the players who until 1950 had played for the Saint James' Sporting Club Rugby League team. "Bing and Swing" played in all white with a blue and gold vee. The Number 4 Arch at Jubilee was used by them until the Club disbanded in 1960.

The Hockey Club was delighted at the prospect of acquiring the lease of Number 4 Arch. Negotiations between the Hockey Club and the City of Sydney Council were skilfully handled by Jack Doherty who at the time was a chauffeur with the City Council. Jack Doherty had a son Ken, who at the time played hockey for the Club. This acquisition of a club room was a boon for the social life of the Club and provided a venue for players and supporters to come. On Saturday afternoons during the 1960s, '70s and '80s, it was not uncommon for there to be over 200 people at the club room under the Viaduct after the first grade game at Jubilee. From the time Federal Park became their home ground in 1986, fourth graders were able to stroll across the canal, grab a beer and watch the first grade fixture.

In 1960, the Club's neighbours under the viaduct were the Glebe Youth Junior Rugby League Club, which became defunct in the late 1960's and the Glebe Cricket Club which left Jubilee after the 64/65 season. In the 1980s the Glebe Greyhounds Australian Rules Club acquired

the use of number 5 Arch (the arch second from the Canal). The Hockey Club has always enjoyed a good working relationship with its co-user of the Oval.

In 2008 City of Sydney Engineers decided that the front and rear enclosing walls of all the Arches at Jubilee were unstable and needed replacing. This necessitated moving the existing tenants out of their traditional Arches and replacing the enclosing walls with appropriate materials. In 2008 the Hockey Club was moved to Number 1 Arch Jubilee Oval, the most distant from the Canal. The City of Sydney Council was most helpful in refurbishing Number 1 for the Club. It brought water and electricity to the Arch and helped with the fit-out.

The walls of the Hockey Club's traditional Arch have now been replaced and the City of Sydney Council requested that the Hockey Club move back into this Arch. On Sunday 5 August 2012 the contents of Arch 1 were transferred back to Arch 4. Number 4 Arch still does not have water on tap and the counter and fixtures have not yet been fitted. The interior fit out of Number 4 Arch is still a work in progress as the City of Sydney Council have not been as generous in helping the Hockey Club move back to Number 4 Arch as they were in helping refurbish Number 1 Arch in 2008.

Number 1 Arch and Number 2 Arch have been now been vacated by the Hockey Club and the Australian Rules, and the City of Sydney Council plan to replace the enclosing walls. After the walls have been replaced at the Number 1 and Number 2 Arches, the plan is to use these facilities for storage by the Hockey Club, the Australian Rules Club and the Cricket Club.

Number 4 Arch at Jubilee Oval Glebe has been the Glebe District Hockey Club's Club Room for 52 years, except for the recent temporary four year relocation to Number 1 Arch.