

STURT SOFTBALL CLUB

THE FIRST 50 YEARS

1964 - 2014

www.sturtfalcons.softball.org.au



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FOREWORD



The Sturt Softball Club, originally the Salients Softball Club, separated from the Rebels Softball Club in 1964. Sturt has just concluded its fiftieth season and its achievements over those years have been recorded in this comprehensive book. The original members of the first Salients team had completed two successful premierships seasons, 1963 and 1964, playing in Rebels B grade, with little opportunity to gain a place in the strong A grade team. A decision was made to explore the option of forming a new club. South Australian Softball Association rules did not allow a club to compete in A grade in its first season so Salients began as a one-team club remaining in B grade. Salients lost to the Graymares Softball Club in its first season final but both teams were promoted to A grade for the next season. After three seasons Salients introduced a C grade team and in the fourth season it fielded a junior team.

The South Australian Softball Association began a system of district zoning for clubs in 1969 and the Salients Softball Club was renamed the Sturt Softball Club. The club name of Sturt had been previously used between 1949 and 1957 when this club disbanded. After negotiation, Sturt was allowed to use the name.

In 1964, Joan Hosking and Maria Tormena were central in the formation of the club Salients. They began the task of setting up the new club including its naming, registration with the South Australian Softball Association, deciding club colours and importantly, recruiting players. Both Joan and Maria have remained dedicated Life members of Sturt. Other illustrious members of the 'fifty year club' are Barbara Fielder (Barrett), Lorraine Edwards (Brown), Yvonne Smith, Lorraine Skinner (Pietrafesa), Vicky Moroney (Hastings), Elaine Baldock (Goodfellow), Lyn Glover (Biddell/Klomp), Anne Wickham (Smith), Rosslyn Trembath, Leonie Morrison (Gray) and Meriel Robinson (Tucker). The tragic death on the diamond of Barbara Barrett and the serious

injury to opposition player and friend Gillian Amour, brought a serious dimension to events in the early years of Salients. In each of these cases Joan Hosking gave calm and skilled leadership in a situation of crisis. The premature deaths of Elaine Goodfellow and Yvonne Smith brought sadness to a close knit group of friends. The loss also of Lois King, commemorated in the trophy given in her name, pays tribute to a member who gave exceptional service to her club, especially in the development of juniors.

Sturt won its first A Grade premiership in 1972 with victory over former 'mother' club Rebels, now Glenelg. This began at first under the direction of Joan Hosking and later Lorraine Brown, a period of 14 seasons of the extraordinary achievement of ten A Grade premierships and a further two finals as runner-up. It was to be fifteen years before another A grade premiership was won, this time under newly acquired coach Richard Coombe. Richard was recruited to the club in 1997, having taken over the coaching position from Kevin Bond who, Richard commented, had been the 'bricklayer' for his now successful team. Richard has continued to be involved in the leadership of the club, as head coach and an administrator, into its fiftieth season. It is appropriate that the club can boast an A Grade premiership and be named as the most successful club in both its senior and junior divisions in this anniversary year.

Over the fifty years since Salients began, many people have worked to make this club one of the strongest in the Adelaide competition. Attention to the development of juniors, beginning with Salients first under 16 team in 1967, has contributed greatly to the club's strength. I would like to pay especial tribute to one other person who stands out as inspirational to the Sturt Softball club. Lorraine Brown started her impressive career as a young schoolgirl with Rebels and joined her Rebel coach Joan Hosking with the formation of Salients. She was then fifteen years of age. Her inspiration and dedication as player, captain, coach and club administrator has placed her without peer in the list of illustrious names in the history of a club that has contributed many players to all levels of National and International competition. It continues to produce players of outstanding ability.

Congratulations are due to all those who have contributed to the compilation of this record. Firstly to Lorraine Brown, whose feeling for history is evident in her meticulous collection of year by year data which has formed the basis for the book. Graham and Glenda O'Neill have digitalised the vast quantity of material. John Neller has put the work together and made it ready for printing. Club friend and contributor, Jerry Cuthbertson, has made the final product.

Having witnessed the formation of the Salients Softball Club, later the Sturt Softball Club, and watched its progress over fifty years, I am privileged to have written this Foreword.

Kathleen Correll.

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

50 years of constant success on the diamond is a magnificent achievement, not possible without the players, officials and volunteers who have served the Sturt Softball Club since 1964. High standards set by each generation of players and administrators, both on and off the field, have ensured that our softball club has been at the forefront of softball in South Australia and has become one of the most successful softball clubs in the history of South Australian Softball.

To the many individuals involved, in whatever capacity you participated, I thank you for your contribution to the success of our Club over the past 50 years.

A huge personal thank you to John Neller and the book Committee for their hard work, painstaking research and enthusiasm in making this book a reality.

I am sure that as you read through the book it will for some rekindle fond memories from the past while for others more recently involved it will provide an insight into the formation, development and growth of this community-based sporting organization.

*Richard Coombe
President*

October 2014



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This book is a product of over a year's work by a dedicated Committee comprising Lorry Brown, Mandy Neller, Sue O'Brien, Graham O'Neill and his Mum Glenda, and myself. When we started work on the project we had no idea how comprehensive it would end up becoming because like all projects of its type there ended up being a lot of new ideas coming to the fore that we thought you'd find of interest.

It goes without saying that there have been a number of enthusiastic contributors, without whom the book would not have been possible. These include a number of people who were able to write first-hand about their experiences, including a number of members who were there on day one way back in 1964. These rich veins of contributions have provided us with an almost encyclopaedic bank of knowledge that has made the work of the Committee so much easier and I would like to acknowledge and thank everyone for their enthusiastic support over the past few months.

On your behalf I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Lorry Brown for her passion in maintaining a complete playing history in a little red book and retaining almost every scorebook for every grade for every season in the entire 50 years. In turn, Glenda O'Neill and her son Graham are to be congratulated for the massive amount of work they have undertaken to computerise key information from Lorry's records and the score books to present the detailed statistical information you see presented in the Appendix to this book. To save you counting them, over the 50 years over 1,350 players have pulled on a glove to represent Sturt Softball Club.

Sue O'Brien (nee Wade) has also made a huge contribution to the structure and content of the book, again someone who has kept me right on my toes. My daughter Mandy's very large contribution has been the huge task of selecting the photos you see printed from literally thousands that are taken in what is now a very large club, together with selection of the various Press Articles which although not so prevalent now, were once fairly prolific.

Jerry Cuthbertson, another Sturt supporting family member, has done magnificent work in turning my rough Word documents plus our other material into a highly professional level of printed and graphical presentation which will ensure this 50th Anniversary of our club will find pride of place on everyone's bookshelf for many years to come.

We would also like to place on record our sincere gratitude in being granted free access by authors Kathleen Correll and Lorraine Mildren to their encyclopaedic South Australian Softball "Bible" entitled "Diamond Duels" which provided us with an invaluable reference source for some of the information included in this book.

Finally, producing this record has for me been a labour of love. My association with Sturt Softball Club dates back to 1981 and it has been 33 years of enjoyment in which I have formed a large number of friendships both inside the Club and within the wider softball community. Plus I've had the huge added bonus of being able to watch two of my daughters play most of their 500 games with Sturt (luckily they were in the same team for many years), culminating in their each being Captains of their respective winning A Grade sides - Mandy in 1999/2000 and Shelley in 2001/2002.

On behalf of the Book Committee and each of the contributors, I hope you derive a great deal of pleasure from the book. In closing, I would like to offer an apology to anyone who finds they have been omitted from the statistics or otherwise find an omission or error in the information - whilst we have taken a lot of care to prevent that from happening, we are unfortunately not able to guarantee perfection in our work.

John Neller
Editor



SPONSORS

Thanks to the very hard work of the various committees over the years, Sturt Softball Club has enjoyed support in both cash and kind from a wide variety of Sponsors. That support - together with the valuable work of our fund-raising committees - has enabled us to keep our fees as low as possible and contributed to our being in a healthy financial state at the end of our 50th year

Our Major sponsors for 2013 - 2014 were:.



Over the years we have also had valuable support from Budget Rent-a-Car, Cafasso Motor Body Repairs, Davroe, Fielders, Fusion, Heidelberg Cakes, Hogs Breath Café, Image Wear, Packers, Phoenix Cleaning and Maintenance Services, and Physio West.



1964 WAS A VERY DIFFERENT TIME

Life, and society in general, is so vastly different now to the way it was in 1964 that it's difficult to explain to readers born since that time. Adelaide was far smaller and slower, the (then small) city of Elizabeth was only 10 years old, Trams had only been removed 6 years previously, there were almost no Asian cars on our roads and lots of other interesting things are worth listing to present an impression of what life might have been like:

- In the 1963/1964 season the Softball Association (before District zoning) comprised the following A Grade teams: Dodgers, Forbes, Rebels, Sabres, Norths, Golflands, West Torrens and Oaklands. When District zoning came about in 1969 the teams became Sturt, Glenelg, Walkerville, West Torrens, West Adelaide, Ferryden Park, Seacombe, Kensington, Woodville, East Torrens, South Adelaide, Ingle Farm and Port Adelaide.
- Sturt Softball Club was formed as the Salients to play in B Grade in the 1964/1965 season.
- The Beatles visited Adelaide and were greeted by 300,000 people outside the Town Hall.
- Pubs closed at 6.00pm and there were very limited after-hours sources of entertainment with only a couple of nightclubs and coffee lounges. Corner stores were still popular and supermarkets had only just started to appear.
- There were only two TV Channels (7 and 9) and all programs were in black and white – the third one (Channel 0) opened in Sydney. Popular shows were Perry Mason, Dr Kildare and Wagon Train; Homicide started in 1964 and Adelaide Tonight was hosted by Lionel Williams and Kevin Crease. Teen Scene opened on the ABC and the test pattern helped to fill out the transmission hours on all channels.
- Decimal currency was still 2 years away and metrication of distances, measurements and temperature several years after that. For simplicity, all prices and measures are listed below in their metric form.
- Beer was around 35 cents for a long-neck bottle and wine was just starting to make a limited appearance. A bottle of Tolleys Vintage Port was about 55 cents a bottle and Barossa Pearl was the popular 'fizz' of the day.
- The Adult Male Basic Wage was \$30.70 a week and a new Chrysler Valiant would set you back \$2,390, an EH Holden \$1,990 and a VW Beetle \$1,638.
- In 1970 (no easy-to-find record for 1964) Petrol was around 9.2 cents a litre.
- A bedroom suite could cost around \$170, a 3 piece lounge suite cost around \$90 and a refrigerator about \$400. You could rent a black and white TV for 25 cents a day and buy seamless nylons for 50 cents a pair. Vegemite 8oz was 39 cents and a toilet paper twin pack was 24 cents.
- Ladies Hush Puppies with heels were \$8.00 a pair and a Ladies 3 piece suit cost around \$10.00. A 'normal smart' wedding could cost \$2,000 but a 'really nice affair' could cost \$4,000 (the article didn't mention how many guests).
- A house in Torrens Park could cost you around \$19,000, Largs North \$7,700, Parkside \$11,000, or Seacliff \$14,000, or a block of land at Burnside might be \$3,130.
- Rents were around \$13.00 a week at Burnside or \$14.00 at Brighton.
- Estimated Softball subs were around \$9.00 for seniors and \$3.00 for juniors.
- Births in 1964 included Chris Dittmar, Lee Kernaghan, Karen Knowles, Ian Healy, Jason Dunstall, Dermott Brereton, Mark Taylor and Larry Emdur.
- South Australia won the Sheffield Shield and crowds of between 5,000 and 10,000 attended the very popular night Baseball matches at Norwood Oval on summer Wednesday nights.
- Personal computers were still over 20 years away, hence there was no Internet, no emails, no mobile phones and of course no social media.
- The most popular cars were (in order) Holden, Ford, Morris, Austin, Volkswagen, Vauxhall, Standard and Hillman. Aside from a very small number of Datsuns and Nissans, there were no other Asian manufacturers represented.
- Melbourne (led by Ron Barassi) defeated Collingwood to win the VFL premiership and in front of 56,000 people (mostly standing) at Adelaide Oval, South Adelaide (coached and captained by Neil Kerley) defeated Port Adelaide to win the SANFL premiership in a game umpired by Ken Cunningham - both losing sides were known as the Magpies and neither Melbourne nor South Adelaide have won a premiership since. The AFL was still 26 years away.
- Central Districts and Woodville were both granted entry to the SANFL.

Sources: *The Advertiser* of September 1964 (cost 5 cents), Wikipedia, and memories of individuals



HISTORY OF A GREAT CLUB

In her excellent Foreword to this book, Kathleen Correll outlined the first tentative steps taken in 1964 by key foundation members Joan Hosking and Maria Tormena to form the Salients Softball Club which became Sturt Softball Club when district zoning was introduced in 1969. Such was the quality of the A Grade player list that it was to be only three more years before Sturt won its first A Grade Premiership in the 1971/1972 season.

In the ensuing 13 years up to and including the 1984/1985 season (the first one played under lights) Sturt would go on to add a further 9 premierships, making 10 in all in a dominating 14 year period in which they were also runner-up on two occasions.

What were the primary contributing factors?

- The complete pitching domination of Lorry Brown for the entire period aided and abetted by the terrific catching and batting of firstly Lorraine (Skinny) Pietrafesa and later Janne Stevens. Indeed, the whole team in that era was also very strong in batting and fielding, led by players such as Jenny Thompson and Vicki Hastings, in fact for every year in the entire 1971/1972 to 1984/1985 period we had between 2 and 6 representatives in the Open State team
- Player loyalty leading to very little turnover which contributed to very important stability in the player ranks within the Club
- A strong Committee led firstly by Joan Hosking and later by Lorry Brown as Presidents
- A growing and talented band of Juniors which first tasted premiership success in the Under 14 competition in 1972/1973 and as Under 16's in the 1973/1974 season. The 1971/1972 to 1984/1985 period saw a total of 4 premierships won in the various junior grades.

With the playing retirement of Lorry Brown in 1988 the Club run of premierships dried up and it was not until the 1999/2000 season that we were to again taste A Grade premiership success.

Fifteen years was a long time to wait for our next A Grade success, but that period was by no means wasted. Thanks to the Club's strong junior recruitment and development program we chalked up a further 7 premierships in the junior grades and with the addition to our ranks in 1993 of a very promising pitcher in Laura Bond to add to the other very talented players we had some real clay to mould into a top level outfit. However, it wasn't until Dick Coombe joined our ranks as Coach in the 1997/1998 season to introduce a level of discipline and professionalism to our exciting young group that we were able to reach the pinnacle again in 1999/2000, Dick's third season with Sturt.

Again led by a dominating pitcher in Laura Bond, captained by Mandy Neller and strongly supported in the batting box by Belinda Stansfield, Laura Bond and Caroline Gardner we defeated West Torrens in the 1999/2000 final, thereby breaking the stranglehold that Walkerville and



West Torrens had had on A Grade throughout the 1980's (from 1985) and 1990's. With the combination of our pitching domination, batting/fielding depth and strong coaching we again won premierships in both 2001/2002 and 2003/2004.

But the rest of the 2000's was dominated by West Torrens and for us it was to be another A Grade premiership drought until we won the premiership in 2013/2014 when we were again coached by Dick Coombe. He was supported by brilliant on-field leadership and catching from all-Australian Belinda White, a strong pitching performance from Caitlin Tobin and very strong batting and fielding performances by every player who represented A Grade throughout the 2013/2014 season.

Our success has come from an enormous amount of hard work and dedication by all concerned. This starts from the top with strong leadership, the nurturing and development of home grown talent, a strong coaching group comprising mostly senior ex-players, a strong group of volunteers and a loyal band of parents who enthusiastically support their daughters to help foster their softball interest.

Certainly, the first 50 years of the Sturt Softball Club have provided a very strong foundation to launch the club into its second 50 years and with an A Grade premiership to close our 50th year, the signs are very positive indeed.



AN ODE TO STURT SOFTBALL CLUB



In the beginning, the year was 1964
Joan B Hosking came knocking at our door
"Come and play for my new team" she said
I see exciting times ahead

Our first team was Baldy, Skinny and Maria T,
Scorer Mary, Lyn, Meriel and Barb B,
Coach Joan, Annie, Surfie and Rosie,
Oh! Yes, and then there was me

From Rebels, Bluebirds and Brown Owls we came
Excited to be the new team in the game
We wore black, tan and white
And strived to play with all our might

Our emblem was to be a Salient lion leaping
A picture or form we are still seeking
In the end we settled for a Sturt ball
A logo for us, one and all

Our first year was in the grade of B
In some games we were all at sea
Beaten by Graymares into second place
The next year the A Grade we had to face

In 1969 we changed to Sturt
Losing "Salients" didn't really hurt
Changing our uniform to all blue
It was something we just had to do

Our first junior team came from a school - "Star of the Sea"
We had to have one - it was a necessity
But they say "big things from small acorns grow"
Now we have 10 junior teams on the go

For a while our wins and losses come in 3's
Also, for a short time we were called the double B's
But 10 A Grade premierships in 14 years
Meant there was joy and plenty of cheers

The '84 grand final was the first played at night
Walkerville gave us one hell of a fight
But Gunny's 3 run winning hit did inspire
Joan and Maria to climb the diamond 1 fence wire

Early fundraising was bottles, cans and scrap metal
Lifting 4 dozen bottles in a crate kept us in fine fettle
Down Rundle Street we went in the old bottle truck
Players and Sunday strollers were quite dumbstruck

Our teams have played Club Champs here, Victoria
and the ACT
Neville Lawrance drove the Budget bus for free
We played at Woomera, the US servicemen's home
We combined with Seacombe to become Sturcombe

At Yatala Ladies prison we played the inmates
We were all locked in behind the gates
One player tried to swap her uniform with Jen
Anything to get out of the pen

We've also done the Masters thing
Tiaras and plenty of bling
But we also got to hold
Medals of Bronze, Silver and Gold

Some of you will remember the old green sheds
From which the whole Association we fed
Nanna's pasties, sandwiches cut and the odd
Pallant Kitchener bun
Hard work but always great fun

West Beach, Kingswood, Concordia, Urrbrae, Unley
and now at Waite

We've practiced everywhere in our corner of the State
Not having a permanent home has been hard
It would be great to have our own back yard

We've been outfitted by Imagewear, and coiffured
by Davroe Shampoos
Progressive dinners, Quiz nights and plenty of booze
We've had drive from Budget and breath from the Hog
All have helped keep our finances out of the fog

Now we are being blinded by Bob
Fenced in by Fleurieu for a good job
St. Louis is ready for us in aged care
The Tonsley Hotel will feed us good fare

We've come from a 1 team to a 14 team club
We are certainly at the centre of the softball hub
The biggest club in the State
The club other clubs love to hate

We are here tonight
Reminiscing and replaying with great delight
All the things that we have shared
With the fans, coaches, officials and players who cared

So now we are in 2014
Great players and games we have seen
So give the Falcons 3 cheers
So almost endeth the first 50 years.

*(Presented by Lorry at the 50th Anniversary Dinner
on Saturday 22nd February 2014)*

OBITUARY - BARBARA BARRETT

Barbara Barrett was a foundation member of Salients/Sturt Softball Club and played in the very first game for the club in October 1964, but sadly collapsed and died during a Preliminary Final game in 1971. Young team mate Lorry Brown was very close to the incident and even now 42 years later clearly remembers the shock she felt at the time, and as the article below says, every time Barb's name is mentioned, the horrible memories of that day come flooding back.

There were many tributes to Barbara over the ensuing days but possibly the most appropriate words are the following from an article written by the late Stan Wickham and printed in The Advertiser shortly after her death:

"Barb. gave all to sport"

"If need be, you will give your very life for the game."

"These words, or something similar, have been used by coaches and officials for many years as a spur to get the best out of players.

"Last Saturday I saw a person give her life after many years' invaluable service to both netball and softball, when Barbara Barrett (nee Fielder) collapsed and died while competing in the softball preliminary final for Sturt against Walkerville.

"I've trodden on a few toes and fingers when playing football and showed little remorse to the recipient, but I've never felt so inadequate as on this occasion.

"Football commentator Doug Thomas was sitting with me, and shared the same feeling.

"From the second Barb fell to the ground after running in to second base on a force play, everything was done to revive her.

"Four qualified medical people attended her and are to be commended for their valiant struggle, while plate umpire Nancy Whittingham showed outstanding poise in controlling the situation.

"Barbara gave a lifetime of service as a State and Australian netball player before turning her experience to administration. She was secretary of the association for several years.

"She then became interested in Softball and, as well as playing, she couldn't resist taking on extra duties. She became involved with umpiring and was an ardent worker in lifting the standard and numbers of softball umpires.

"The list of things that Barb did for women's sport is too great for this column, but the memories will come flowing back in a flash when her name is mentioned."

By Stan Wickham

FOOTNOTE: The game was abandoned and replayed prior to the Grand Final on the following Saturday.



LEGEND - JOAN HOSKING



Joan Hosking is a proud Life Member and Patron of the Sturt Softball Club.

She attended Unley High School (now Mitcham Girl's High School) and whilst there the school was issued with the first softball equipment to be allocated by the South Australian Education Department. Softball immediately caught her imagination, even though at the time Joan was involved in coaching and playing Church netball in winter and tennis (doubles with her Mother) in summer.

After witnessing a game between South Australia and Victoria at Goodwood Oval in 1951 she made a move to become involved in the (then) Rebels Softball Club, playing C Grade in 1953/1954, B Grade in 1954/1955 and was a State reserve in 1955/1956. While playing A Grade Joan gained State selection and travelled to Perth to compete in the Australian Championships in 1957 and in the same

SA has Saint Joan

St. Joan and the Rebels. That is how it was today when Joan Hosking, the only non-playing woman coach in women's A Grade softball, led her team (minor premiers, Salients) into the grand final against Rebels.

Six of the eight teams are coached by men (Aileen Daly is captain-coach of East Torrens), so Joan has the prestige of women at stake when she tangled with Rebel and State coach John (Barrel) Tyson today.

Six years ago, Joan was Rebels B Grade coach under Tyson, and took the team top.

Next season she formed Salients (made up of Rebels B team) and again went top in B Grade, thereby earning promotion to A Grade, where they have remained for the past four years, finishing sixth, third, fourth, and first.

Joan's animation and intense concentration rivals that of Jack Oatey and Fos Williams, but her vocabulary is

not as forceful.

A former State player, Joan is at present a State selector, and an excellent administrator as well as being a top coach.

Apparently women softball coaches are falling by the wayside, but while Joan Hosking is in the coaching box, the mighty male will bow his head to her more than she will to him.

season also coached the Rebels C Grade side in which her younger sister Pauline played third base.

In 1958/1959 tennis claimed her interest for a few seasons but in the 1962/1963 season she was drawn back to softball, being re-enlisted by Rebels to coach their B Grade side under John Tyson who was A Grade coach of the club at the time. Joan had considerable success as a Coach and after two B Grade Premierships in 1962/1963 and 1963/1964, with the able assistance of her good friend Maria Tormena and the guidance of her friend and A Grade Coach Kath Correll, they decided to form a breakaway club to be known as Salients which comprised the bulk of her Rebels B Grade players.



In their first Salients season in B Grade in 1964/1965 they were runners-up to Greymares and as a result were promoted to A Grade where in the 1968/1969 season they were runners-up to Rebels, which was to be their last as Salients. At the start of the 1969/1970 season District zoning came into effect and in a very popular move, Salients changed its name to Sturt Softball Club. Still under Joan's leadership and now playing as Sturt A Grade, they were runners-up to Rebels for three consecutive years in 1968/1969, 1969/1970 and 1970/1971. This achievement was followed by three consecutive premierships in 1971/1972, 1972/1973 and 1973/1974.

In 1976/1977 Joan retired from coaching Sturt A Grade and passed it on to the very capable hands of Lorry Brown, ending a very successful 12 year stint of coaching the senior team of the club.

Following this change Joan took on the challenge of coaching the Sturt Under 16 team for two seasons and found it to be an extremely enjoyable experience as the juniors were very receptive to her approach and she found them great fun to be involved with.

The close relationship between Joan Hosking and the Sturt Softball Club has been a mutually rewarding experience which has now spanned the entire 50 years of the Club's existence - Joan has given an immense amount to the club in a variety of roles and the Club has provided Joan and her late and very supportive partner Norm with a home-away from home in terms of a long term and at times thrilling emotional involvement.

Even now in her advanced years, health permitting, Joan is often to be found at various grades of Sturt games cheering on her beloved Club as they continue to do their utmost to build on the wonderful foundation she helped to lay all those years ago.

LEGEND - LORRAINE BROWN

Lorraine Brown (affectionately known as “Lorry” by everyone who knows her) is a founding member and legend of the Sturt Softball Club.

On the recommendation of her then teacher, Mary Parslow, a young Lorraine Edwards joined the Rebels Softball Club (now Glenelg) in 1960 and progressed to play her first A Grade game for Rebels in 1962 at the age of 13. When the Rebels B Grade players defected to form Salients in 1964, Lorry was among the first players the new club recruited, in fact playing second base in the very first Salients game in B Grade in October of that year. History shows that Lorry moved on to become a pitcher, a position she dominated for Salients/Sturt, South Australia and Australia for much of the ensuing 20 years.



In the 50 years since 1964 Lorry has provided an unbroken thread of enthusiastic club service and proved to be not only the Club's greatest player and an inspirational coach and leader, in many respects she has been the catalyst that has provided the leadership to help

grow Sturt Softball Club to the point where today with 14 teams it is the largest, most successful and highest-rating Club in Australia. Although she has had wonderful support over the years from many committee members, coaches, volunteers and supporters, she has helped to foster a powerful 'family' environment to the point where it is a feature of the environment that players and officials stay with the Club for many years, often going on to foster the development of junior players while they continue their playing days in the lower grades. In fact even today at the age of 65, Lorry is still achieving considerable success with her D Grade teammates.

Lorry's influence as a player throughout her career has been enormous, in fact in the 16 years from 1972 to 1988 when she retired from playing A Grade, Sturt won 10 A Grade premierships. But rather than retire and leave the Club, Lorry and her associates focused on attracting, coaching and developing the Club's many promising juniors as well as working with the more senior players as they continued to enjoy their sport in playing and coaching in the lower grades (quite a few have been with the Club for well over 30 years).

Softball is part of Lorry's DNA, and Sturt Softball Club in particular. Although her many achievements have been documented elsewhere in this book, it is worth briefly summarising them here: over 600 senior club games; 24 years as Club President; Australian Softball Federation Hall of Fame in 1989; South Australian Softball Hall of Fame in 2009; Association Player of the year 3 times;

Represented Australia over 9 years including two World Championships played overseas; South Australian player for 20 years (including 10 as captain) and State coach for 4 years. In addition to her playing achievements, Lorry is also a qualified Level 4 Umpire.

What is not self-evident in the statistics is her very warm regard for her myriad of friends, her sense of humour and fun, her intelligence and her love of a glass or two of wine. What can be implied from her softball successes, however, is her completely focused will to win, her serious no-nonsense disciplined approach to sporting achievement and her expectation of the same things from her players. She is regarded with great affection and is highly respected by everyone who is lucky enough to know her, both inside and outside of softball.

Throughout her softball career Lorry has been wonderfully supported by her husband Neil and for many years now in their time away from softball Lorry and Neil can be found striding the fairways at Blackwood Golf Club, ever trying to grind their handicaps down...



LEGEND - RICHARD (DICK) COOMBE



It would probably be fair to say that Dick is widely regarded as “Mr Softball” of the game in South Australia because he is very well known and respected for his knowledge of softball and his ability to spot and develop junior talent. His energetic recruiting work around the many schools and colleges in the Sturt zone is the primary reason why our club is flourishing and in fact is the highly respected envy of many of the softball clubs across Australia, quite a few of which are

even battling to survive.

A former Physical Education teacher by profession, at the age of 68 he is happily retired from work but still devotes an enormous amount of his time to softball administration and coaching activities, both of which can be very time-consuming.

Dick has all of the ingredients to play such a successfully influential role in our sport. His early days of playing football, tennis and baseball, together with his career of working with children, eventually brought him to take a keen interest in softball because baseball and softball share some similarities and he – like other baseballers have done before him – was comfortably able to make the transition.

The long and winding road of Dick’s interesting softball career has so far spanned 43 years, starting just 7 years after Salients/Sturt came into existence, in fact there have been many occasions in his pre-Sturt days that he has – often successfully – coached against us at both senior and junior levels.

It all began in 1971 when he returned to the city from a three year teaching appointment at Gladstone High School where he had started to learn his softball coaching craft. West Adelaide Softball Club was the first beneficiary of Dick’s boundless energy and coaching skills but after 6 years with Westies he moved on to coach Glenelg Rebels



A Grade in 1977, where he was to remain until 1990, a stay of 14 years. In 1990 he moved across to a successful 4 year coaching stint at West Torrens before squeezing in a one year breather with Plympton in 1995/1996 and then in 1997/1998 he found

his softball home with the very talented group of juniors at Sturt Softball Club.

Prior to Dick’s arrival, Sturt had not been able to find the professionalism, discipline and work ethic it needed to win an A Grade premiership but Dick brought all of the leadership, skills and experience necessary to mould the playing group into a winning unit and they won the Club’s next Premiership in 1999/2000. This success

was repeated in both of 2001/2002 and 2003/2004. In the ensuing years the A Grade suffered a number of retirements and a re-building process began under Dick’s stewardship, culminating in the next premiership being achieved in 2013/2014 which was very fitting in our 50th anniversary year. Along the way Dick took a two-year senior coaching sabbatical in 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 to focus on coaching teams in the junior grades. It was to pay handsome dividends.

Dick has now been with Sturt Softball Club for a total of 17 years and coached in every year, but in 2003 he extended his involvement to take over the mantle of President from Lorry Brown. In this role he has worked assiduously with



his enthusiastic Committee(s) to not only continue the development of the club but also energetically drive the identification and nurturing of talent to ensure Sturt Softball Club remains very strong for many years to come.

To illustrate the esteem in which Dick is held by the players at Sturt, it is well worth paraphrasing

some words from a speech delivered by Belinda (Bindy) Stansfield at the Presentation night upon which Dick received his richly deserved Life Membership:

“On any given Saturday you will find Dick at softball. When it’s cold and raining in the winter and most of us are either content to play netball or basketball, or being just plain lazy, for those who want to improve their skills Dick will be inside the gym pitching to them, hitting balls to them or just plain helping out.

“He knows every rule ever written in softball and how to use it to his advantage. He’s a craftsman of the game and if you ever wanted a coach on your side then he’s the man. We understand you Dick - we are your family and your commitment to this club is truly reciprocated.”

When not helping his beloved Sturt players in the off-season, Dick can be found either standing with his mates on the mound at Glenelg trying to revive the fortunes of his long-suffering Tigers or at Adelaide Oval willing on his equally-loved Crows.

It’s almost certain that Dick will remain attached to Sturt Softball Club for the term of his natural life, maybe coaching for a few more seasons while he mentors his replacement plus continuing to guide the Club along as its President for some time to come.



LIFE MEMBERS

Life membership is the highest honour which can be bestowed by the Sturt Softball Club. Many outstanding players and officials will be honoured through our club awards and player milestones, but Life Membership is reserved for a few individuals whose exceptional contribution has influenced and changed the Club over many years of service across more than one field.

The qualities that qualify a person for Life Membership - over and above their playing career - include exceptional, consistent and significant Club contribution and leadership in areas such as Coaching, Sponsorship, Umpiring, Committee Contribution and other voluntary work. The list below is presented in ascending Year-of-Award order, with the longest serving individuals at the top of the list.

1977 Joan Hosking

Club Patron. Coach 1964-1977

Joan had a very long and stellar career, starting with the Rebels Softball Club in 1953/4 and gained State selection in 1957. In 1964 she led the breakaway group that formed the Salients Softball Club which in 1969/70 became the Sturt Softball Club for which she was President for 12 years. Joan enjoyed great success as a Coach, winning three consecutive A Grade Premierships with Sturt in 1971/72, 1972/73 and 1973 /74 before handing over the A Grade coaching to Lorry Brown in 1976/7, ending a 12 year stint of coaching the A Grade side.



1977 Maria Tormena (1964-1971) 16 games

Club Patron. Third Base/Utility

Maria was part of the original Salients team in 1964/65. Has for many years been a strong supporter of the Club and continues to attend matches and social functions. Her talents were described in 'Diamond Duels' as a "Great team player who is comfortable playing infield or outfield". Coached Juniors many years ago and claims that one of her teams won the very first premiership for Sturt Softball Club.



1984 Lorraine (Lorry) Brown (1964-current) 633 games

Pitcher/Second Base

Also a member of the original Salients team in 1964/65, Lorry has been the driving force behind Sturt Softball Club for many years, including two stints each of 12 years as President. Was Association Player of the year 1972/3/5 and captained the State team from 1974 to 1983. Represented Australia from 1972 until 1980 including two World Championships in 1974 (USA) and 1978 (El Salvador). Elected to the Australian Softball Hall of Fame in 1989, and the South Australian Hall of Fame in 2009. Her career has also included many years of umpiring and coaching.



1984 Lyn Klomp (Biddell) (1964-2011) 279 games

Club Patron. Pitcher/Shortstop/Leftfield

Lyn was a member of the original Salients team in 1964/65, starting in the days when fundraising was through collecting bottles on Sundays. Always bringing a bit of glamour to the diamond, Lyn had international success, winning Gold in the over 45's Masters' Games in 1994 in Brisbane and Bronze in the same grade in Portland Oregon in 1998. Her Sturt career was spread over A, B, C and D grades and she retired as Coach of the C Grade in 2011. Along the way she coached premierships in both C and D Grades and also won a D Grade Association medal in 1985/86.



1985 Lorraine Pietrafesa (Skinner) (1964-1986) 375 games

Catcher

Popularly known as 'Skinny', Lorraine was also a member of the original Salients team in 1964/65. She represented the State at senior level in 1970 and was described in the 'Diamond Duels' book as "Showed great skills and talent. Useful batter" but to Sturt she was much more than that. Skinny was a rugged catcher, catching the Lorry Brown thunderbolts for many seasons with great effect and was also President and Secretary of the Club for several years.



LIFE MEMBERS



1992 Vonny Armstrong (Ladd) (1977-2009) 535 games **Outfield**

Playing most of her games in B Grade, Vonny is fondly remembered as a lightning-fast outfielder (mainly centrefield) and was an exceptional club person throughout her long career with Sturt. Over the years she has helped on Committees, umpired, coached, scored, sports'-trained, managed State teams and worked on the BBQ and canteen duty. Now living in China, she badly misses her softball, briefly returning in 2011 to play in the Masters Games.



1993 Pam Margitich (Wallace) (1972-current) 531 games **Catcher/Utility**

A stalwart of the Club, Pam started in the Under 13's and has played in every Grade (150 A Grade games) and literally in every position across her career. Represented SA at Under 16 level in 1975. Has held a number of coaching positions enabling her to use her leadership skills and strong personality to bring out the best in her fellow team members. For many years she was a very active Committee member, including several years as Secretary. Pam continues to catch for the D Grade and has represented Sturt in the Masters Games.



1996 Chris Gent (1974-2009) 435 games **Infielder**

Chris played her softball in the lower grades she has been a tireless worker for both Sturt and softball in general. She served as Sturt Treasurer for several years during the late 1980's and early 1990's and has been actively involved in the game through coaching junior club teams, managing Under 16 Boys teams and promotion of Junior Sports. In a softball context she has been the SAPSASA State 12 and Under Coach and participated in Australian and World Masters Games since 1995.



1998 Neil Brown (1971-1997) **Statistician/Assistant Coach**

Neil (Lorry's Husband) wielded the A Grade pencils for Sturt for 25 years and was the Statistician's Statistician. He was appointed the SA senior team scorer for 1979 to 1989 and Australian team scorer for the mini World Series in Brisbane and also in China in 1980. Was Assistant A Grade coach for a couple of years and as a member of the State Softball executive he organised State Championships for several years and ran the Scoring by Correspondence courses.



2000 Anita O'Callaghan (1980-2002) 222 games **Utility**

Anita arrived in 1980 from Mt Gambier with her two sisters Margaret Wright and Jenny Thompson and filled many roles for Sturt Softball Club. These included Coaching the C Grade in 1992/3, Club Secretary in the late 1980's and as an accredited scorer stepping up to score the A Grade Premiership victory in 2001/2. Whilst she played most of her games in B and C Grade, Anita was always a strong competitor and relied upon to support the Club wherever she could. Her career was brought to a premature end by work commitments.



LIFE MEMBERS

2000 Mandy Neller (1981-2004) 504 games **Junior pitcher/Senior outfielder**

After working her way through the junior grades, Mandy was A grade captain for 8 years, culminating in a premiership in the 1999/2000 season. Represented the State at senior level as an outfielder in 1998 and won the B Grade Association Best Player award in her final year in 2003/2004. She was an active Committee member for many years during a significant period of growth and change within the Club. Is best known as a loyal club person and a leader and mentor to her team mates.



2000 John Neller (1981-Current) **Various roles**

Introduced his three daughters to the Club in 1981 and contributed as an Assistant Coach of the Under 13's, Under 15's and Under 17's until 1986/1987, then started scoring for the B Grade until 1995/1996. Took over as A Grade Statistician after Neil Brown retired from scoring at the end of the 1994/1995 season. Was a Committee Member from 1996 to 1997 and a Tribunal Member and Club Auditor for several years (the Auditor role is still ongoing).



2002 Shelley Neller (1981-current) 485 games **First Base/Designated Batter**

Starting with Sturt in the 1981/2 season, Shelley is one of the true characters of the game. Renowned for her big hitting and ability to motivate her team mates, she represented the senior State side in 1997, 1998 and 2001, and also played in the SA National Fast pitch team during that period. Was a member of the 1997 National Fast Pitch Allstars team and Sturt A Grade captain for the 2001/2 Premiership season. She was also a Committee member from 1995 to 2000, has coached the C Grade and junior teams, and has been an Assistant Coach to the Starz State senior side for the past four seasons.



2003 Keith Sampson (1988-2008)

Administrator

Arriving with his two daughters from South Adelaide softball club 1988, Keith very soon became involved in administration, both for Sturt and for the State. For Sturt he was a committee member and Vice-President in 1993 and for Softball SA he became a member of the Governing Body in 1998/9. He had two stints as State Vice President, culminating in being awarded the President's trophy for outstanding service and became Association President in 2003. He was awarded an Association Life Membership in 2008.



LIFE MEMBERS



2004 Richard (Dick) Coombe (1997-current)

Coach

Dick has had an illustrious career as a Coach of both senior and junior players at Club and State levels, devoting his extensive skills to Sturt for the period from 1997 to 2010 then 2012 to date, bringing us A Grade Premierships in 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2014. His junior coaching work in the Sturt Zone is the main reason why in the 2013/2014 season our club has such huge numbers of new young players wanting to join our ranks. Dick has been Club President for over 10 years - a position he still holds - and has also worked in a number of Committee roles at State level. Was awarded Association Life Membership in 1993.



2006 Tara Andrews (1988-current) 614 games

Infielder

An extremely versatile player, Tara only took three seasons in the junior grades before she played A Grade in 1992/3, the year in which she was also included in the State Under 16's. She then went on to play State Under 19's in each of the next three seasons and after a few years off came back to play Open State in 2005. A very dedicated Club person, Tara helps out in any way she can and has been an active contributor as club Secretary, on various Committees and coaching junior and senior grades. She also took on the A Grade scoring role for a couple of years while being 'benched' due to injury. Tara is currently the Vice President of the Club.



2008 Belinda Stansfield (1991-current) 698 games

Outfield/First Base

Possibly best remembered for the amazing game where she took 8 great catches at Centrefield in the 2001/2 Grand Final 1-0 victory over West Torrens, Bindy started in the Under 13's in 1991/2, played her first A Grade game in 1994 and represented the State at both junior and senior levels for nearly 10 years. She was Sturt A Grade captain for 10 years, an Australian under 19 squad member in 1996/9 and a Senior Australian squad member in 2003/4. Active in scoring and umpiring, she has also been a Committee member and a junior coach since 1999. Won the Kath Correll medal for best A grade player in 2006.



2009 Anna Hambour (1990-current) 561 games

Utility

For over 20 seasons Anna has enthusiastically contributed to our Club. She spent a number of years on the committee, coached Junior teams and was playing coach of the B Grade. Early contact with Lorry Brown, Vonny Armstrong, Pam Margitich and Joan Hosking taught her that the Club gives an enormous amount. Club life is more fulfilling when you give back as much as you can and friends made are friends for life, lessons that continue to serve Anna well.



2014 Graham O'Neill (1989-current) 12 games

Volunteer and Coach

Graham has been an enthusiastic volunteer groundsman for 25 years both for Sturt and at a number of external tournaments, including the Under 19 World Series in 1991. Has or has had coaching and assistant coaching roles for Sturt in Under 15, Under 17, C and D grades with considerable success. Won the Wendy Coppins Outstanding Service Award in 2007/2008 and the SA Softball Volunteer of the Year Award in 2013/2014. He played in the Sturt Men's team in 1993 to 1995 and has been a general committee member for 3 years.



PLAYER LIFE MEMBERS

**The criterion for this award is either
500 senior games or 15 years' service**

Vicki Hastings

213 games played 1965/1966 to 1982/1983

Helen Harpas (Gunn)

321 games played 1970/1971 to 2005/2006

Dionne Biddell

664 games played 1982/1983 to 2013/2014

Sue O'Brien (Wade)

603 games played 1982/1983 to 2012/2013

Jill Behn

311 games played 1981/1982 to 2013/2014

Laura Bond

586 games played 1992/1993 to 2011/2012

Caroline Gardner

415 games played 1997/1998 to 2013/2014

Tania Wilson

209 games played 1990/1991 to 2013/2014

