

In Fairness to the School and Those Who Founded Oval and Pavilion.

IN 1911 the Old Boys' Union gave an undertaking to the A.A.A. of the G.P.S. that steps would be taken to put Sydney High School "on the River," and also to provide it with a playing field worthy of a Great Public School.

In 1924 the first promise was kept, when the School entered two fours in the Regatta, and its 1st Four won handsomely. Some twelve months later talks with the Minister for Education promised fulfilment of the second.

"A new school" had been our cry for more than twenty years, but a long list of Ministers for Education drifted on the slack tide of postponement until 1925, when we found a Minister who meant what he said. He was the Hon. T. D. Mutch. At the Annual Dinner he promised a new School, conditionally on the Old Boys finding funds to provide worthy playing fields. Within eight minutes £800 was subscribed.

The new School was opened in 1928, and, as a result of the continued representations of the same two Old Boys who had been primarily responsible for the venture, some eighteen acres of flat, marshy Centennial Park land were allotted for playing fields.

The Old Boys referred to are the late Mr. R. T. McKay and Mr. C. A. Fairland, then President and Hon. Secretary respectively of this Union. The untiring pair made almost daily trips to see the draining of the swamp, clearing of the ground and levelling. This work was costly, and its completion seemed remote when the depression of the 'thirties hit us. But Mr. McKay, like a fairy godfather, waved a magic wand and the Unemployment Relief Council spent £10,000 to put the ground in order. Thus the School could for the first time play its matches and entertain its opponents on its own ground. The vision of Messrs. McKay and Fairland was in part realised.

As a tribute to the "tireless two," the O.B.U. resolved that the ground should be known as the "McKay Oval" and the building thereon as the "C. A. Fairland Pavilion."

Unfortunately at the present time this structure cannot conceivably be termed a "pavilion"; it is unworthy of the efforts of the man whose name it bears; it is unfit for the reception of visiting teams.

We have all known the pleasure of visiting some well appointed home, not necessarily luxurious, and leaving it with the hope that our own visitors will have similar pleasant memories after visiting us.

We should feel the same in regard to the C. A. Fairland Pavilion accommodation. We wish visiting teams to go away with pleasant memories, not only of their treatment both on and off the field, but also of the comfort and appointments of our Pavilion. Although it is over thirty years since I played for the School, I still remember how, where and under what conditions we were entertained, and those memories form an unconscious background in one's assessment of other schools.

Not only for these reasons, but for the sake of our teams, must we make sure that some measure of comfort and convenience is embodied in the reconstructed C. A. Fairland Pavilion, which must be made worthy of the great School it will serve.

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