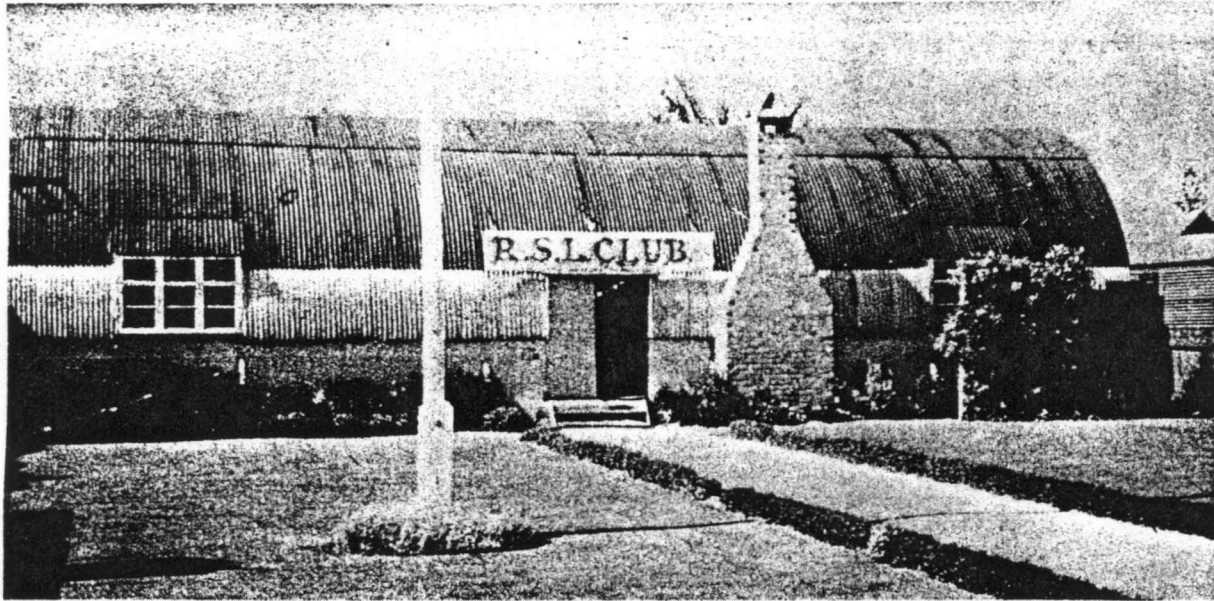
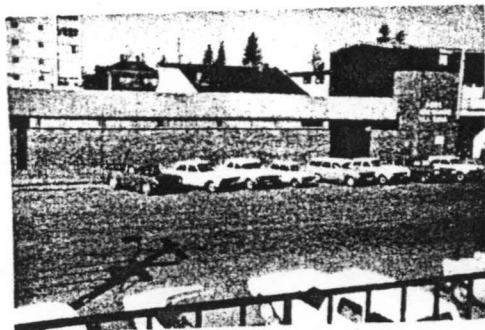
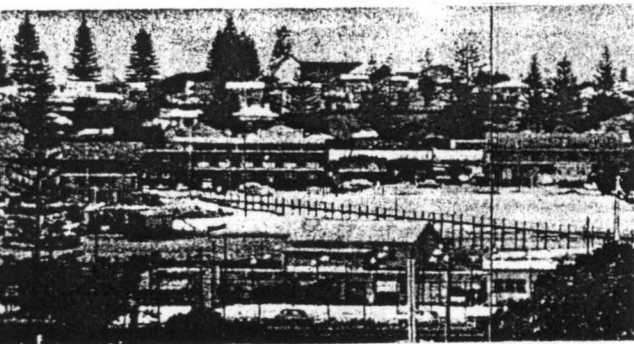


# R.S.L. CLUB HAS MARCHED ON



At top, the original home for the RSL Club, the famous Nissen hut, the venue for many happy days and nights. At left, the club is in the centre of the picture which shows its surroundings with the 1965 Kooloonbung reclamation underway.



The fourth extension to Port Macquarie's RSL Club.



In the immediate foreground above is the 1959 building which transformed the 1955 building but left distinct the ladies lounge which had been added in between these years. At right, the late Sir John Northcott with Messrs. Jack Steep and the late Don Steele at the 1959 opening ceremony.

# WHAT NEXT FOR THE R.S.L. CLUB?

The question is, will the Port Macquarie RSL Club ever be finished?—a question justified by the eight advances it has made since a license was first granted in January, 1948.

The club was fully registered by May, 1948, and in its 30 years has moved up from the stomp-ing within a Nissen hut (its first premises) to carpets and escalators, from fibro and iron to brick and tile, from an initial membership of 147 to 4,800 today.

There was beer, a Clarrie Cheers meat pie, and a pull of the handle of a sixpenny poker machine (bor- rowed from the Golf Club), to be had in the Nissen hut of 30 years ago; and now— a work-out in the gym, a spa, or squash and sauna before that beer and an appetising meal in your choice of snack bar or dining room.

Yet that is but one side of the 30-year tran- sition. Whilst it was a case of "all in together" in the Nissen hut, today there are board rooms, members' lounges, mixed lounges, places for the pokies, assembly rooms, auditoriums, and sports- men's (and women's) areas.

Quite a few of those 147 members of the Nis- sen hut days are still around—like Ian Mc- Lean (a retired NSW Bank manager) who was the RSL Club's first sec- retary-treasurer, and the club's first licensee.

Of the original trust- ees only Dudley Doak remains, and of the original "working bees" perhaps only Jack Steep.

The Nissen hut set up of 30 years ago, in the same site as the club stands today, was good enough to attract the

State President of the RSL, Mr. Ken Bolton, to officially open Port Mac- quarie's RSL Club.

That was just short of 30 years ago—on October 2, 1948, and it is probably inconceivable today that bar roster duty for mem- bers was necessary to keep the club afloat.

An original paid work force of one has grown to, all told, 120 today; the weekly pay from a total of \$15 to \$18,000.

The club functioned within the Nissen hut for six years before flexing its muscle; then, in August, 1954, a bulldozer hooked onto the hut and dragged it about 50 yards south (see picture in this fea- ture), where it served as a Band Hall for a number of years. Meanwhile, Peter Hatsatouris made a dis- eased picture hall (at the rear of St. Clair's Retravi-

sion) available to the club and it functioned there for 10 months.

In July, 1955, His Excel- lency Lieut.-General Sir John Northcott, Governor of New South Wales, here to open the first Carnival of the Pines, officially opened what was then con- sidered a large enough and magnificent enough build- ing for the RSL Club on its Short Street site.

Alas, within two years the women had made their presence felt, and a ladies lounge was added.

Further flexing its muscle, by May, 1957, the property (south) next door was purchased, and Sir John Northcott was back in December, 1959, to open a new two-storied building with a 132-foot frontage to Short Street.

The club's premises were then described as "large and wonderful and exceedingly outstanding by town-size average." The total value was put at \$180,000.

But all that was only a beginning.

In 1965, the club pur- chased the home property

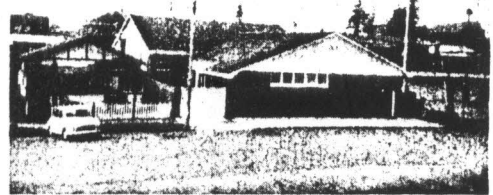
area; the RSL sub-branch gained its own rooms.

Because there was more to be done, there was no official opening for that 1973 extension.

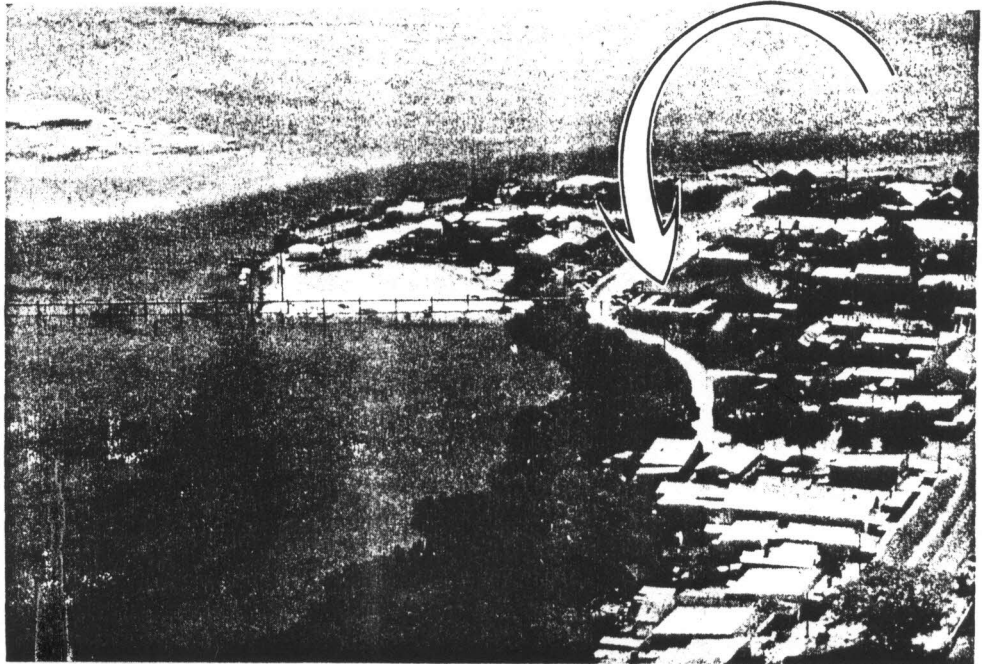
What has been added now is dealt with in this feature. This latest ex- tension cost \$350,000, bringing the total value of buildings and furni- ture today to \$3.5 million.

And so it is a fair ques- tion: is the RSL Club now finished? If not, what next?

A page of pictures in this issue of the "News" spells out the advances the RSL has made.



The first RSL Club building, with two of the three adjoining properties that were eventually purchased.



It was in these "somewhat historic" surrounds in the then short Short Street of Port Macquarie, that the RSL Club in 1959 erected its first building (arrowed). The Nissen hut had been dragged clear to make way for the building, and homes stood at either side of it. The Kooloonbung reclamation project had a 1969 commencement date.

## GOVERNORS AT THE R.S.L. CLUB

Port Macquarie's RSL Club has been officially visited by three governors.

The Governor-Gen- eral of Australia, the late Lord Casey, and Lady Casey, visited in 1968, and as well as the late Sir John Northcott, Governor of NSW, here for open- ing ceremonies in 1955 and 1959, Sir Roden Cutler, VC, and Lady Cutler, the present Governor of NSW, has visited the club on his almost frequent jour- neys to Port Mac- quarie.

# CLUB SPENDS A MILLION

## THREE PROPERTIES ADJOINING

The Port Macquarie RSL Club last week paid in excess of one million dollars for three properties to cater for future expansion.

General manager Mr. Keith Glover confirmed to a "News" reporter on Friday that the RSL Club, after lengthy negotiations, had purchased three properties within the vicinity of the club building including Palm Court shopping mall.

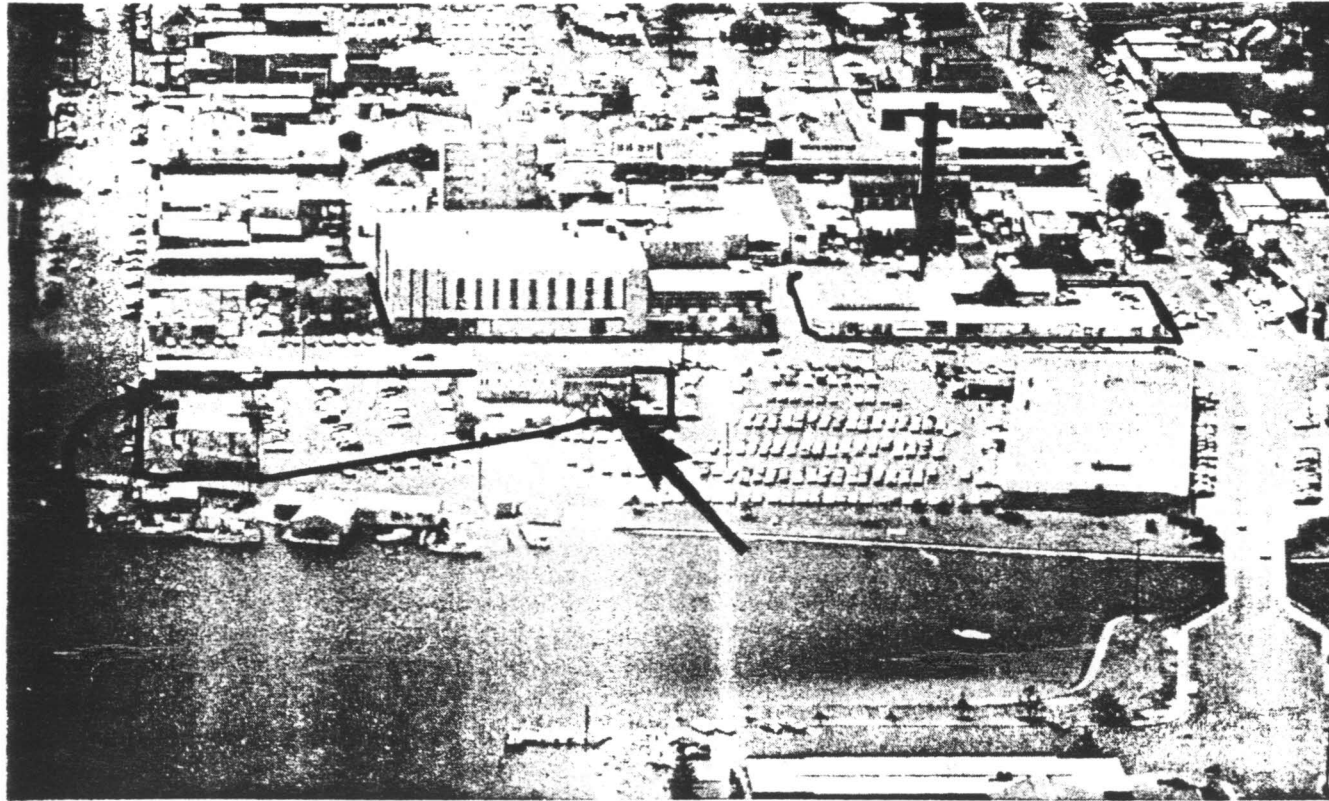
The other two properties are on the western side of Short Street, the first being Denman Court flats directly opposite the club and the second, a small two flat building fronting Clarence Street and backing onto the club's existing carpark.

Mr. Glover said the club's board of directors had negotiated the sale of the three properties through local real estate agents W. A. Thomas and Sons.

It is understood the three separate deals followed several weeks of close negotiations.

In regards to Palm Court Mr. Glover said the board had decided on Tuesday to take up an option it has held for the past six months to buy the shopping complex.

Mr. Glover told the "News" the move to buy Palm Court



*Arrows point to the three properties purchased by the RSL Club last week for more than one million dollars while the real estate now owned by the club in Short Street is outlined.*