

# PRETORIA CLUB

## Q&A with Brian

**Q.** When was the Pretoria Club established?

**A.** On 21 February 1885.

**Q.** In 1885, which were the two closest towns to Pretoria?

**A.** Rustenburg and Potchefstroom.

**Q.** Who was the first President of the Club?

**A.** President Paul Kruger.

*Note – His bust is on display in the members' rooms.*

**Q.** Which South African prime ministers, as members, used the Club library for cabinet meetings?

**A.** General Louis Botha and General Jannie Smuts.

**Q.** When were ladies allowed entry to the Club as guests?

**A.** 1905

*Note – Only allowed once a month – on a Friday evening for dinner.*

**Q.** Do you know the cost of erecting the second Clubhouse in Vermeulen Street? – Photographs are on display.

**A.** The site cost 2 000 pounds. The building cost 11 000 pounds.

**Q.** In 1894, a prime minister was posted for non-payment of membership fees – who was he?

**A.** Cecil John Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Cape Colony.

**Q.** Estimate the value of the most valuable book, locked in the display cabinet in the library, which was signed by the author in 1897.

**A.** R30 000

**Q.** Who was the first paid secretary of the Club and what was his monthly salary?

**A.** Sir Julius Jeppe. His salary was six pounds a month.

*Note – 16 years later, in 1902, he was able to buy all the ground from Magnolia Dell to the Eastern bypass.*

**Q.** The 'rose bowl', on prominent display: Why was it presented to a member by the government of the Z. A. R.?

**A.** George Hey, of Melrose House Fame, paid the civil servants' salaries for a period of time when the government did not have funds available.

### Do you know what is on display in the members' rooms?

1. The original charter document signed on 21 February 1885 by all the founder members.
2. The clock from the House of Assembly, Cape Town, that is able to ring to inform MPs that they were to proceed to vote.
3. In 1891 the second Clubhouse was opened. The photograph of the building is displayed – the Club was open 7 days a week, including the squash court, the second built in South Africa. In 1968 when the property was sold, a member had the bright idea of calculating the number of hours that the members' bar had been open – 100 000 hours.
4. An invitation to attend the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, including parking and lunch arrangements.
5. The Club hosted the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, who used the facilities as royal apartments and hosted a dinner for Club members. On display is a signed photograph and menu.
6. The cup of solid silver presented to Carl Jeppe at the end of his term as President of the Chamber of Mines.
7. The Club played a major role in the development of the Rand Club, Pretoria Country Club, The Pretoria Caledonian Society and the Wanderers Club, Johannesburg, and there are mementos on display.
8. The Crest of the Club, registered with the Bureau of Heraldry, reflects very much the history of Pretoria, and that is the reason why there is a castle relief, lifted from the arms of the City of Pretoria. The towers represent a social gathering and the grapes reflect the social activities.

Brian Forsyth

