



The History of BCG

“1959 – Our year at Kodak”

In 1957 Kodak built an impressive three storey building at 252 St. Paul's Terrace in the Valley. It was barely 200 metres away from BCG's original meeting place, the Don McInnes Pharmacy at 151 Wickham Street. In 1958, Kodak made an offer to BCG that was just too good to refuse. The executive meeting minutes of the 22nd October 1958 recorded that *“It was decided on the motion of Mr. J. Smit and seconded by Mr. W. Smit that the generous offer of Messrs. Kodak (Australasia) Pty Ltd, of the use of their lunch room at their new building in St. Paul's Terrace as the BCG meeting venue, free of rental, be accepted. The motion was carried unanimously.”* Subsequently, the minutes of the 11th November 1958 tabled that a letter had been sent to Kodak accepting their offer. Associated with this, a letter had also been sent to the Overseas League to give notice of terminating the rental of their room at the Scottish Union House at 127 Eagle Street. BCG had been meeting at the Scottish Union House since the 13th January 1958. The first BCG meeting at Kodak was held on the 12th January 1959. The minutes noted that, after a long absence due to illness, Miss Augusta Hobday, a BCG life member and respected club judge was in attendance.

But all was not smooth sailing with the new venue. The staff lunch area where BCG met was on the roof area of the building. Access to this area after hours was by a lift. This, in turn, required the building caretaker to be available. Additionally, the lift could only take a few BCG members at a time. By July 1959, the minutes show that it was felt that some remuneration was appropriate for the caretaker and that BCG was paying £1 to the caretaker for each meeting. While access was a concern, there were other problems. Storage was an ongoing matter but the finishing time was the greater issue. Traditionally, some flexibility of the meeting closing times is required. Finishing times of 10:30 and 10:45 were most common in the year before the move to Kodak. During BCG's tenure at Kodak the minutes note meeting time constraints and meetings finishing no later than 10:00. Most tellingly, the minutes of the 17th August, 1958 noted that *“Don McInnes has approached Kodak in an endeavour to ameliorate the position in which the club is placed on meeting nights and in particular to extend the time of the meetings.”*

Kodak later signified that the continued use by BCG of their St. Paul's Terrace premises was inconvenient to them. The club was then quick to take up an option to meet at the Polish Club at 10 Marie Street, Milton for £2 an evening commencing January 1960. BCG had moved yet again. The Polish Club would be BCG's home until 1968.



Kodak Australasia Headquarters and Warehouse at 252 St. Paul's Terrace, The Valley – circa 1959. Note the Kodak entrance to the left of the man on the footpath. The BCG meeting venue was the Kodak lunch rooms on the roof of the building.