



A CLUB WITH HISTORY: Petersham players in action this year.



The Petersham team that went on the 1971 world tour to Europe.



Petersham's 1934 Kentwell Cup-winning side.

Rugby peak for Petersham

Joshua Levi

THE Petersham Rugby Union Football Club, the oldest subdivision suburban rugby club in Sydney, will celebrate its 125th anniversary next week with a "Back to Petersham Day" at Camperdown Oval.

Club patron Richard Harvey said there was a sense of pride and responsibility playing for Petersham because of the club's rich history.

"I think the fact that the club is old gives people a feeling of strength because they belong to something that has got genuine roots and history. We feel like curators of a very long tradition and people feel an obligation to make sure it thrives and survives," Harvey said.

Harvey played more than 300 games between 1979 and 1994 before he retired to the boardroom.

"I stayed involved because the club is

very important to me, it is a part of my life. I've been on the committee since 1963 and this 125th anniversary will be used to look toward the future by drawing on all of the people who have been involved over the decades."

The club was the first Australian suburban rugby club to tour England when, in 1967, players went on a world tour. Since that tour, players have travelled to Ireland, Wales, Scotland, New Zealand, Spain, Vietnam, Cambodia

and Laos playing rugby and promoting good values, something that attracted co-club captain George Ross.

"They are a big touring side, and I really like touring," Ross, who came to Australia from the UK in 2006, said.

"I used to play for Old Dunstonians in South London and we toured every year. I took two of the Shammies players back to England with me last year and we toured with my old side, then I came back to Australia

and joined the Shammies on a tour of New Zealand."

He said a rugby club quickly became a second home for any traveller.

"The Shammies welcomed me with open arms. I like to say that while girls have trouble travelling, it's easy for blokes because we find a rugby club and we instantly have six mates."

For more information on the club's anniversary celebrations, visit www.petersham.rugby.net.au.

Dinner date for Tigers stars

Wests Tigers players and fans gathered at Balmain Leagues Club on Friday for the annual club dinner to raise money for the Motor Neuron Disease Association. While the Tigers had a bye, many of the players turned out to help the organisation that aims to provide and promote the best possible support for people living with motor neurone disease, their families and carers.

Photos: TIMOTHY CLAPIN



Tigers player Johnny Morris (right) with Motor Neuron Disease Association representative Alex Green.



Joe Mateo with Benji Marshall.



Mark O'Neil and Rabbit Chhadie.