



GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Golf Club Historians Sub-committee.

Golf Club Historians Forum

Minutes

Barwon Heads Golf Club Monday 15th June 2015

Welcome

A small group of GSA regulars and local faces attended the recent forum Barwon's Head Golf Club. An interesting agenda with the main topics presented coming from three district clubs. Kim Hastie, GSA Historians Convenor welcomed all and thanked Barwon Heads GC for hosting the day and opened the meeting.

Reporting late apologies from GSA President Geoff Vincent and Committee member Cliff George. Kim gave a brief talk on the role of the Golf Society, encouraging those interested in Australian golf history to consider joining the society.

Its primary objectives are - to collate and record the history of golf in Australia, bring society members together to enjoy social golf days and dinners, conduct historian's forums. The society maintains two memorabilia displays.

The society produces a quarterly newsletter and has online presence.

Kim encouraged the meeting to go to the Golf Australia website and look at the societies own section. In finishing, talked about the societies on going and recent efforts to bring about a greater awareness of hickory clubs. This is to be covered further in the last agenda item.

Some early history, club membership and the clubs Centenary book David Edge

The meetings first speaker was David Edge, A longstanding member with a very strong family connection to the club. David opened his presentation with some of his early memories.

He grew up in Barwon Heads, remembering as a young school boy how different the quiet fishing village was back then.

He caddied for the gentlemen before buggies came in and remembers the golfing attire they wore.

David gave an interesting insight into the conservative dress code the club had, such as a coat and tie to breakfast. Then going on to tell us how a fire in the clubhouse 1982 brought about a change to a more casual style that remains today.

David went on to give an insight to the clubs early beginnings and his involvement researching the membership for the Centenary book.

1907 The club began as a 9 hole layout in the area to the north of Geelong road, where the Bowling Club and tennis courts are now. The original minute book records an annual general meeting held in 1907, and whilst the wording suggests that it may not have been the first, in the absence of any further records, it was decided that 1907 was the foundation year.

The present site to the west was grassy sandy farmland and was purchased in 1920 by issuing debentures for life membership. The area east of the road was crown land, and an Act of Parliament in 1960 exchanged the original area for it.

Royal Melbourne Professional at the time Mr Victor East was the main designer of the new course. Peter pointed him out in a photograph.



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The clubhouse was built and opened in December 1924 by the Prime Minister Right Hon SM Bruce. There have been several changes over the years – the introduction of en-suites, the addition of the links room, more bedrooms, etc. Outwardly the appearance has been carefully preserved.

The 9 hole par 3 course was built in the sixties and has since been redesigned.

Peter was involved in a group with Val in researching for the Club's centenary celebration book 'Heads you win' by a former colleague at Deakin University, Professor Weston Bate.

His particular task was to compile as best as possible a complete list of men and women members since the start of the Club in 1907. Not a simple task because of the lack of records, made worse by an associate's Secretary who in a fit of pique burned all their records.

The final outcome was incomplete with respect to women because there were many names struck off the list as having married, but no evidence of their new name, many women who having become members, disappeared. Marriage records are not available beyond 1942.

Days were spent scouring newspapers for engagement, marriage notices and wedding reports, but about 100 remained unresolved.

The final outcome was as of 2007, about 4100 men and about 2600 women. Peter continues to maintain this master list.

A second task was to gather a list all the significant (board and silverware) trophies people had. The most interesting was **Joan Fisher** who had been Australian Champion 3 times before and after the war, and won the associates championship 20 times.

With the onset of Equal opportunity about 1985, the Club decided to no longer have the category Associate member, but provide full membership and the opportunity to pay full subs accordingly.

Val Lawrence also from Barwon Heads was our second presenter.

Val a former Queenscliff Mayor and Past General Committee member.

Val spoke to us about the clubs Museum Committee, the early beginnings and her ongoing involvement with the Museum today.

1973 Geoff Adams wrote a book about the Club history, acknowledging Associates President Pamela Evans as being of great help to him.

1993 President Noel Ritchie interested in preserving the clubs history asked member and well known journalist Pamela Evans to Chair a Museum Committee. Which is still in existence today.

Pamela along with a committee catalogued all items and arranged cabinets to house the many trophies and articles. She researched a photographic history of all Lady President and Captains.

In the late 1990s the club had extension renovations and the Associates paid for more cabinets to be built in the Museum's new display area.

Interestingly Val indicated once a Committee is set up and there is evidence of a working Museum club members and outsiders a very willing to donate items.



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To date the Museum has received numerous donations of memorabilia. Items are recorded with donors name and whether on loan or donated. Val made strong emphasis re the importance to have a form for the donor to sign. She strongly stressed the importance of a signature and whether the item is donated or on loan, hopefully this avoids any awkward situations arising with items being reclaimed.

“What to collect” Val suggested some items such as menus, dance programmes, early Minute books as they have beautiful hand written entries, score cards, famous people that have visited the club. Marrum Cup started 90 years ago and today continue to be a very popular week on the Women’s golfing calendar. Currently they researching photos of all the winning clubs.

In closing Val made brief reference to three of the clubs significant Professionals

George Lowe 1912-1915

W L Spicer known as Wally 1924 – 1930

Bud Russell 1930 -1987

Val was a very entertaining speaker and her knowledge and passion for this topic was very evident.

The Thirteenth Beach story so far...

The third speaker was Anthony Masters, the General Manager at 13th Beach Golf Links. Anthony presented a very interesting talk along with some great photos. Anthony opened his talk telling us where club is at today.

It has 1100 members. Equity based membership model- based on The National GC Approaching 65,000 rounds a year across the two courses. Host Club of the Victorian Open since 2013

The early days - Australian Jam Co. (AJC) owned the property in the 1920s. Asparagus grown on the land since the 1920s with the help of a 20km concrete pipe irrigation system

1935 AJC graded the land and planted Monterey Pines, or cypress trees to protect the asparagus from the wind.

“Tomara” It all began in 1972 when Philip McNaughton Snr spotted an ad in The Age for “land with potential” placed by the Geelong office of Dennys Lascelles Limited — three adjoining titles of 405 acres, 163 acres and 52 acres at Barwon Heads. The property was given the name “Tomara” which was the name of Philip McNaughton’s grandfather’s property up on the Riverina district.

The original plan was for a single 18 hole, course and clubhouse, tennis courts, bowling greens and horse riding.

Major concerns around capital offsetting through the selling of residential blocks. Developer needed to show that the project was economically viable.

Over a decade in planning with plenty of difficulty in getting local authorities to see the vision.

A quote of interest Tom Watson visited the property and declared” It’s as good a piece of land as I’ve seen anywhere”

Beach Course - 6441m Par 72 Designed by Tony Cashmore. Fescue Fairways, Bent Greens.

Opened in 2001

Creek Course - 6401m Par 72 Designed by Sir Nick Faldo and Tony Cashmore. Santa Ana Fairways, Bent Greens. Opened in 2004



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Torquay GC early history and the South Western District Ladies Golf Assoc.

Torquay Golf Club made two presentations Gregg Libbis the Club President gave us quite a detailed and informative account of the club's history. The following is some interesting dates.

1920 October 30th a meeting of residents and visitors interested in forming a club was held in the Public Hall. Mr GA Horne was in the chair and it was unanimously resolved to form a club to be known as the Torquay Golf club. The course consisting of nine holes was to be laid out on the grounds in front of the "Palace Hotel" now known as the Torquay Hotel. The President Mr A Crowe who was the owner of the Palace Hotel.

1920 The first competition was conducted. Won by Mr. G.F. Walter who kindly donated the trophy back to the club and be played for at a later date.

1921 May 21st an application was made to Victorian Golf Association for affiliation

1922 land on the west side of Spring Creek was leased from Mr. A.G. White for the sum of 20 pounds per annum. About this time the Golf Club could have purchased the Palace Hotel for 12 thousand pounds.

Mr. G. Lowe, club professional at Barwon Heads, was commissioned to lay out 9 holes

1923 the first life members were bestowed upon Mr. W. Hirst and Mr. A.G White for outstanding contributions to the new club.

1933 that the TGC Associates joined SWDLGA

1937 with a loan of 200 pound from Club President Mr. Basil Collins helped towards the costs for a new Clubhouse, debentures of 5 pounds each were also issued to enable construction of the clubhouse. The holes laid out on the land leased from Mr. White were also first played.

To encourage associates to play at Torquay, the committee made a bus available once a month for the period of their season

1938 Plans to establish the remainder of the course to 18 holes. Not accomplished for many years, due to the outbreak of the 2nd World War in 1939.

1941 strong rumours that the Club was defunct prompted the committee to have denials published in the Newspapers. VGA were also notified that the Club was still a going concern. Further petrol rationing in 1942, plus the threat of invasion saw Club competitions falling away seriously.

Torquay Golf Clubs' struggle to survive had not gone un-noticed and help was offered from the East Geelong Club. On Saturdays, East Geelong and Torquay Clubs shared the competition fees. Torquay ran the Sunday competition.



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1946 was the commencement of another era for the Club. The 1st Golf Week was conducted and proved very successful (this event still runs today).

1948 an Extraordinary meeting approved the purchase of more land to enable the completion of an 18 Hole course. Permission was granted to spend 2500 pounds on the land.

President Mr. Fred Vary approached Mr. Charles with the intention of purchasing his land on which the club had a tentative layout. Mr. Charles offered his 126 acres to the Club for 4500 pounds. As this was more than the amount budgeted for and more land than what was needed Mr. Vary took out an Option on the land with payment of one shilling deposit. Constitutionally the Club was not allowed to deal in land.

Fred had the land, not required by the Club, 63 acres, sub-divided into 220 blocks. Deciding to form syndicate offered the land to club members at 20 pounds per block...the Torquay Golf Links Estate thus came into being.

1952 New course opened with some 300 members, associates and guests were entertained during this special occasion.

1957 18 holes in play and membership rising, improved club house facilities were required, it was decided to purchase a Dining room for 1600 pounds(once formed part of the 1956 Olympic Village in Melbourne). The building was moved to Torquay and erected for 17,638 pounds design by Mr Alex Cameron.

1959 A liquor licence was granted and the new clubhouse was officially opened by the President of the VGA, Mr A.S Martin.

1963 the first fairway watering scheme was brought into use at a cost of 13,000 pounds. The watering scheme provided immediate benefit, consolidating the fairways and greens during the summer.

1972 The system had problems due to a rising salinity, a further scheme was adopted which involved purchasing 17 acres of land on the corner of Bell's Boulevard, Jan Juc Creek for \$13600.

Approval was given by the Shire to pipe from Jan Juc dam to the course. Construction commenced building the holding dam at a cost of \$25000. The money was raised by members and associates working on a voluntary basis .In 1975 the new scheme came into use, providing excellent all year round playing conditions.

Late 1990s a separate purpose built Pro shop, situated near the first tee. The clubhouse remained until the recent acquisition by RACV. Under the new ownership a new complex has been constructed with the Golf Club accommodated in the new resort style building.

Some 7 years since the change of ownership and at the time of the vote, it was extremely difficult for the members, however as time passed there is an effective working relationship with RACV and the clubs culture and social activities have still remained strong since acquisition.



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With the camping ground close by summer holiday makers took advantage of the location to play golf on a regular basis. Gentle rivalry built up between locals and visitors with an event called Tenties vs Townies being very popular on the TGC summer calendar and is still played today.

Greg closing made special to the Committees and volunteers that have worked tirelessly to maintain their course and improve the clubhouse both internally and externally over the years.

Torquay's second presenter was Mandy Buckley.

A Life member/ Ladies Committee member and on the SWDLGA committee for 17 years.

Mandy presented a chronological history of the South Western District Ladies Golf Association (SWDLGA) the following is a summary of her notes and significant dates

Her knowledge, longstanding involvement and passion for this district was impressive.

1933 Association founded by Miss Rene Austin President from 1933 – 1957 Original clubs attending the inaugural meeting of the Association were Barwon Heads, Geelong East Geelong, Torquay and Queenscliff. Colac joined but were not present

Aim of the association was to introduce Pennant Matches within the District

The first SW Championship was played at Geelong Golf Club in 1933 and still use the original cup today.

1941 Pennant matches were suspended for the duration of the war and the Association disbanded, but resumed in 1947 and recommenced playing pennant matches that year.

1957 Miss Austin passed away and a Perpetual Trophy to commemorate the work and name of "Rene Austin" the founder of the S.W.D.G.A. was introduced. The Brooch and Shield are still played for today.

1959 It was brought to the meeting that a group of clubs (a break away from the Corangamite sub-district with Warrnambool as headquarters) had been named South Western District Association. It was a unanimous decision by the Delegates that the Association retains this name and a letter was sent to VLGU to this effect.

1960 VLGU advised the use of SWDA name applied only to Country Teams matches and should not affect this District. Decision on name held in abeyance.

1963 Miss Betty Kernot was appointed Patron of the District, a position held until her death in 1984. She won the Australian Ladies Amateur Championship in 1937 & 1938 and did an enormous amount of work for the District a prestigious SW event was named in Betty's honour in 1972.

1987 Business Women & Junior Girls Sunday Pennant introduced. The first District to provide this.

1992 Geelong Golf Club Centenary year (oldest Golf Club in Australia on its original site).



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2001 SW established a website. First women's district to have one.

2004 Geelong Golf Club disbanded. The Geelong Golf Club was the home of SWD due to Rene Austin, who was a member at Geelong in 1933.

2007 Was Barwon Heads Golf Club Centenary Year. Gladys Hay Interstate series and Australian Foursomes Championship held at Barwon Heads in recognition of their Centenary Year. It was also Queenscliff's Centenary year.

2008 SWD 75th Anniversary 1933-2008. Celebrations included the SWD 75th Anniversary 4BBB Stableford Trophy and a Cocktail Party was held at Barwon Heads GC (being one of the original clubs). A comprehensive display of memorabilia, photos, and records from the past 75 years was on show.

2015 Today 24 clubs in this District, boundaries are from Lara to Apollo Bay and inland to Bannockburn. 10 Divisions of pennant and 16 District events for the 2600 women affiliated with SW. A very informative website is maintained by a very willing band of volunteers.

Torquay Golf Club women have always been an active part of the District, being one of the original clubs. It has produced 3 of the 4 South Western Life Members. Many Torquay women have served on the SW committee over the past 82 years and are still serving now. They have won the SW Division 1 pennant 9 times and their members have won 11 SW championships. Torquay women have also been involved in the 6 Division 1 Country teams SW has won. So from very small beginnings back in 1933 not only has Torquay grown but so has South Western.

The final item on the agenda was about Hickory golf ...

As Cliff George was an apology GSA Committee Member Peter Gompertz kindly stepped in to present his topic.

Peter is a member of the British Golf Collectors Society and always an entertaining speaker.

He spoke from Cliff's notes and also gave us some of his own thought and experience's

For the first twenty years, the Golf Society of Australia had only one Hickory Golf Event, the Frank Shepherd Trophy, a 9 hole Stableford event, played annually at Kingston Heath Golf Club.

In 2003 the 'Al Howard Memorial Trophy' was introduced. This is a 'Teams Event' and is played annually between the Golf Society of Australia and the Australian Golf Heritage Society of Sydney, at a different venue each year.

During this last decade, Hickory Golf has enjoyed enormous growth in the US, Europe and the UK. Therefore GSA has decided to lift the profile of Hickory Golf in Melbourne and grow awareness.

Our purpose is to add a new level of interest in Golf, for the benefit of our local Clubs by developing a Hickory Golf Circuit.

In 2015 GSA now has Hickory events each month. This new program is called "Hickory Hero's" "Cliff" is keen to get more playing in these days and welcomes anyone to supply their contact details for



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Notices for the coming events. He is encouraging clubs, to allocate perhaps one afternoon per month for Members to enjoy a 9 hole events playing with Hickory sticks.

Peter went to talk about the importance of hickory identification and restoration.

Telling us if you don't have any of your own clubs and go out and buy some, you may without knowing pick up a 'collectable' item, which makes it desirable to have them identified.

For those enthusiasts who have some Hickories, GSA can help with that and can advise you on how to restore them, to playable condition should you wish to make changes.

To preserve Antique Hickory Golf, the Golf Society has established a set of rules for Restoration, which means, you can carry out any repairs that were performed out of necessity, prior to 1940 i.e.; re-fitting heads, re-gripping and re-shafting.

As 'Replica's' are not allowed in Antique Hickory Golf, these Rules help to solve that problem. (Heads before 1940). Peter went to answer a number of questions regarding playing with hickories such as distance achieved compared with today clubs and balls.

Kim closed the meeting, commenting how interesting it was to hear the three clubs contrasting early histories and their current operations.

Vote of thanks to the speakers and Barwon Heads Golf Club for their hospitality.

Date of Next Historians Meeting October 12th at Yarra Yarra Golf Club