



GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Patrons: K.F. Shepherd, RFD, VRD & Bar, MBBS (Melb). P. W. Thomson, AO., CBE

All correspondence to: 22 Surf Avenue, Beaumaris Vic 3193 Telephone: (03) 9589 5551

30th July 2009.

Golf Club Historian.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed is the report of the Golf Club Historians meeting held at Huntingdale Golf Club on 13th July 2009.

If you have any queries please contact me on email ian@rennick.com or phone 9890 4430 or Mobile 0412 815 872.

Yours faithfully.

Ian Rennick
President.
Golf Society of Australia.

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Attendance at meeting July 2009.

Box Hill Golf Club
Churchill Park Golf Club
Commonwealth Golf Club
Croydon Golf Club
Eastwood Golf Club
Golf Society of Australia
Green Acres Golf Club
Heritage Golf Club
Huntingdale Golf Club

Kew Golf Club

Kingston Heath Golf Club
Kingswood Golf Club
Latrobe Golf Club
Long Island Golf Club
Medway Golf Club
Metropolitan Golf Club
Northern Golf Club
Peninsula Golf Club
Riversdale Golf Club
Rosanna Golf Club
Rossdale Golf Club
Royal Melbourne Golf Club
Sandhurst Golf Club
Southern Golf Club
Spring Valley Golf Club
Victoria Golf Club
Waverley Golf Club
Woodlands Golf Club
Yarra Yarra Golf Club

Country and Interstate Clubs

Anglesea Golf Club
Ballarat Golf Club
Bendigo Golf Club
Clifton Springs Golf Club
Curlewis Golf Club
Maryborough Golf Club
Women's Golf West Gippsland

Apology
Apology
Mark Wade
Max Findley
John Gale
Janet Hibbins
Keith Wood Maurice Duncan
Apology
Graeme Clark Alison Holden Louise Ellis
Denise Ellis Arthur Ellis John Lord Alf Long
Burtta Cheney Olga Mackenzie Jill Elrick
Barbara Pye Margaret Batrouney
Ian Rennick , Paul Fitz Bob Stannard
Dick Curtis
Apology
Leon Rowbell
Murray Cropley
Peter Gompertz
Cliff George
Prof Western Bate
Michael Church
Diane Lowe
Apology
Apology
Roger Mc Donald
Apology
Pam Sandon
Apology
Dick Kirby
Brian Simpson
Daryl Leask
Apology
Graeme Harrison Peter Swan Graeme Ryan
John Brice

Phil Francis
Phil Roberts
Apology
Phil Smith
Ian Collins
Apology
Mary Morgan

GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA.

GOLF CLUB HISTORIANS' MEETING.

Report of the meeting held at Huntingdale Golf Club on 13th July 2009.

Attendance - See attached sheet.

1. The Chairman, Ian Rennick opened the meeting, and welcomed all present. A special welcome was given to the Huntingdale History committee, including Burtta Cheney, a very well known Victorian golfer. Special mention was made of the guest speakers, Arthur Ellis, Murray Wilkinson and Roger Mc Donald. Ian stated that Golf Club Historian meetings are held to encourage Golf Clubs to preserve their history, as this is the foundation of Australian golf history.

2. History of Huntingdale Golf Club.

Arthur Ellis, a long time member of Huntingdale was responsible for producing the club's history... Arthur stated that the history of Huntingdale goes back to 1893, when the Surrey Hills Golf Club started at Mont Albert. The break up of the Surrey Hills Club was forced on the members because of a housing development. The first group of members to leave, moved to land near Riversdale station, and changed their name to the Riversdale Golf Club. Another group left and started Box Hill Golf Club, and another started a club at Fisherman Bend. That was the beginning of Victoria Golf Club. In 1924 the members that remained at Mont Albert decided to start a club, and leased land "Tullamore" in Doncaster. This became Eastern Golf Club.

The property in Doncaster was a former orchard, consisting of 76 acres. A gardener at the property was Sam Beriman who agreed to design a 12 hole course. The golf club purchased additional land, and became an influential and highly regarded club with strong membership. An enthusiastic group of members had the idea of establishing a championship golf course in the sand belt.

In 1937, land formerly used by the Melbourne Hunt Club became available to buy, but it was overgrown with dense scrub and swamp tree. The land was in very poor condition due to years of disuse. The northern end, so overgrown with swamp scrub it was infested with rabbits, foxes and snakes. A member, Dempster, surveyed the land and said it could be drained, and at a meeting of members on 21st February 1938 it was agreed to purchase it.

An Eastern member had been in London and met the golf course designer Hugh Allison. He agreed to design the course, if he could receive accurate survey models. Sam Beriman was once again asked to construct the course, and in later years he was well known as a course designer. Drainage was a major problem and it was not until 2000 that it was finally solved due to better technology and equipment. In the early development of the course a variety of couch, obtained from various sources, were sown. This mixture of different grasses lasted until 1980's when it was replaced with Santa Anna couch. This quickly improved the fairways.

In 1940 the construction of the course and clubhouse got off to a difficult start because of the start of World War 11. The course relied on volunteer labour, and as building materials were scarce, the Club House was constructed of used timber and remains the foundation of the building today. At the end of the war the course had developed sufficiently for it to hold the Ladies Victorian Amateur Championship. This was won by Burtta Cheney who was a club member. In the 1960's two dams were constructed to help with the watering of the course.. They were in front of the 14th tee and between the 15th, 16th and 17th holes. In the 1970's there were course changes and in 1977 an automatic watering system was installed. In the 1990's the course was very wet because of the heavy rain. A master plan was established to provide surface and sub surface drainage. This meant that greens and fairways were undulated to enable adequate surface and sub surface drainage, and to direct the flow laterally. The Club is now very proud of its course. It has proved to be up to world standard and has successfully held the Australian Masters tournament.

3 Demonstration of document scanning.

Murray Wilkinson, from Wilkinson Electronic Document Solutions gave a demonstration of scanning documents for safe storage, together with a search facility for easy recovery. The software program which has been developed by his Company can save all printed documents, PDF files, Word documents, Excel files and emails. The system is designed to minimise human effort as documents can be filed in categories when they are being scanned. All documents are scanned with OCR (optical character recognition) enabling indexes to be made of every word in the document. These filed documents can be recalled by searching individual words or file name.

For more detailed information, contact Murray on murray@wilkinson.com.au or phone 9818 1301.

4. Some recent additions to the Golf Australia and Golf Society of Australia websites:

In conjunction with the Golf Society of Australia, the 'Historical' page on the Golf Australia website has been restructured and added to. The one page now provides links to a series of documents relating to the history of golf in Australia, golf administration in Australia as well as an 'Honour Board' section providing lists of winners of significant national events.

It is reached from the Golf Australia home page - <http://www.golfaustralia.org.au> under the 'ABOUT' section, then click on 'Historical'. The contents of the page are - the underlined areas indicate a link to a document:

Golf Australia works in partnership with the Golf Society of Australia to research and preserve the history of golf in Australia.

The Golf Society of Australia manages the Museum and Library Collection on behalf of Golf Australia.

Golf Australia Museum

Golf Australia Library

History of Golf in Australia - an article published in 1998-1999 Australian Golfers' Handbook

History of the Australian Golf Union.

History of Women's Golf Australia.

History of the Men's Australian Open.

History of the Women's Australian Open.

Australian Open Honour Rolls.

Men's Australian Amateur Honour Roll.

Women's Australian Amateur Honour Roll.

Click here for the Honour Rolls of Other Australian Championships

Includes the Junior, Senior, and Mid Amateur Championships, and the Interstate Teams Matches

Australian Representative Teams at International Events

Information about the major international team events which Australia contests, and includes Australian Team Members, Australia's finishing position, and host venues.
Golf Society of Australia.

The Golf Society of Australia website - <http://www.golfsocietyaust.com> - has also been extended to provide a page on the on-going research into golf club location. Information has now been obtained from all the metropolitan clubs and approximately 25% of country clubs. It is the remaining clubs we are still keen to hear from, as well as anyone with information about the location of clubs which no longer exist.

Lists have been compiled for:

- Melbourne metropolitan clubs
- Victorian country clubs - in VGA District sections
- Melbourne clubs no longer in existence

The Chairman also advised details of a new interesting website that allows searching of Australian newspapers for articles. At the moment the *Argus* is the only Melbourne paper that has been scanned, but others will be added in the future. The Web page is <http://ndpbeta.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

When searching for a golf club, enter the name in inverted commas. Good luck.

5. **Story of Walter Travis.**

At the Club Historians meeting at Spring Valley last year, Michael Clayton spoke about Walter Travis and the fact that he has been forgotten in Australia's golf history. Travis was born at Maldon in 1862, left Australia and became a US citizen. He started playing golf at the age of 35. Within five years he won the United States Amateur Championship, and in 1904 was the first non British golfer to win the British Amateur championship. Travis was a prolific golf winner, and retired from competitive golf in 1916. He became a golf writer and designed over 50 courses in America including Pinehurst and the National Golf Links. A book titled "The Old Man" was written by Bob Labbance detailing Travis's story. A golf society called the Walter J Travis Society has been formed in the United States detailing all of his achievements.

Roger McDonald was intrigued with this story, and decided to find out more about the Australian part of Travis's life. Roger contacted the Travis family in Melbourne, and has read letters received from Walter Travis's daughter in America. In a letter from Travis's daughter she wrote asking for details of her father's stay at the farm at Berry Jerry as he kept relating his experiences of that time.

Roger has determined that the facts of Travis early life have not been correctly told. The Travis family in Melbourne have written a book on their history but there is no mention of Walter playing golf. Roger has obtained death certificates and Coroners reports for the father and brother of Travis. They show that the father died in the Castlemaine hospital, and his brother died in a mining accident. After the two deaths, Walter at age 18, was left to look after his Mother in Maldon, but later left home to get farm experience at Berry Jerry near Deniliquin. The next reference is that he had obtained employment in Melbourne with Mc Lean Bros and Rigg, the hardware store. From that position he was transferred to America, in charge of their store in New York.

Walter Travis kept in touch with his Mother and returned to Australia several times to visit his family. He was left £200 in his mothers will.

The details that Roger has found differ from Bob Labbance's book. These will be sent to the Walter J Travis Society.

6. Show and tell.

Leon Rowbell showed a Huntingdale 1941 embossed medal for the Prison of War Fund showing the winner as I A Beach

Arthur Ellis stated that a club member Ern. Austin, who owned an engineering works, made monthly medals for the Club. Arthur thinks that it would have been made by him. Leon will ask the War museum if they know anything about such medals.

Leon also had a 1941 *The Australian Home Beautiful* with an article and photo of the Huntingdale Club House.

Max Findley showed a hickory putter with the name Travis stamped on it. Max is unsure if it is a "Schenectady Putter" which Walter Travis promoted. Max estimated that the club would be made about 1905.

7. The meeting concluded at 3.05pm. Thanks were expressed to the speakers, and also to the Huntingdale Golf Club for allowing use of their facilities. The next meeting will be held in October 2009.