

## GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA.

### GOLF CLUB HISTORIAN MEETING.

Report of the meeting held at Rosebud Country Club on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2011.

Attendance - See attached sheet.

1. President – Ian Rennick, welcomed all in attendance, and thanked Rosebud Country Club for allowing the Society to use their club for the meeting. The reason for holding the meeting at Rosebud was to encourage all the Mornington Peninsula clubs to attend.
2. The Treasurer of the Golf Society – Dick Kirby outlined the aims of the Society.
  - .To assist Golf Australia develop and maintain a National Golf Museum
  - . To collate and record the history of golf in Australia
  - .To co-operate with any club, association, organisation, society or individual whose activities or purpose are similar to those of the Golf Society of Australia
  - . To bring together Society members to enjoy one another's company by the arranging of social golf days during the year.
  - . To arrange guest speakers at meetings or show historical golfing films of note.
  - . The doing of such things as are necessary to carry the constitution into effect.
3. The Captain of Rosebud Country Club, Graham Taylor, gave a talk on the history of his club. In 1956, a number of members of the Rosebud Park Golf Club, decided to form a private golf club if they could find some suitable land. Tom Maw was the leader of this group, and he located the land on Boneo Road.

The land was 140 acres on a pine plantation that had been burnt out, and the owner was keen to sell. It was purchased for £47,000 with a deposit of £2,000 with no other payments or accrued interest for six years. The final balance was paid in ten years. The first annual meeting of the club was held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1962, when it took over the assets and liabilities of the Rosebud Park Golf Club. It became responsible for the formation of an 18 hole course and clubhouse.

The course was designed by Jack Watson, who had previously designed a course at Mornington in Tanti Avenue. The Course, initially 9 holes, was built by members with the help of Tom Maw, who was a cartage contractor who owned heavy moving equipment. A building was moved from the Rosebud Park Golf Club, and served as the clubhouse. The course was officially opened by Tom Gallagher, Chairman of the Greens Committee, on the 29<sup>th</sup> February 1964. Golf was played on the course before that date as records show that the A grade men won the pennant and the Thewlis Bowl in 1963. The condition of the course on that day was described as rough with no grass and covered with pine cones. Regular working bees gradually improved the course including some school children who helped gather the pine cones.

In 1965 an equipment shed was built, but in the same year the clubhouse was destroyed by a fire started by a kerosene heater. Unfortunately all the club records were lost. A tin shed was constructed as a temporary clubhouse, and in 1965 a shop was built for the professional. Clive Bardsley was the professional from 1965 to 1969 followed by Ted Stirling and then Russell Wilson.

In 1969, the bowling green was opened, and in 1970 an additional 93 acres of land was purchased for a second 18 holes. Up to this point the course only went to the creek, but the new land that

was a vegetable garden, enabled the club to have the starting and finishing holes for each of the four nine holes near the clubhouse. Each nine is known as Red, Blue Yellow and Green.

In 1976 the Australian PGA tournament was held on the North course. This was the first live televised golf tournament in Australia, and was won by Billy Dunk from Peter Croker in an eighteen hole playoff.

In 1987 a decision was taken to change the grass from Kikuyu to Couch. This was a controversial decision, but years later proved correct, as the fairways are now well grassed throughout the year, and are easier to maintain.

Bill Hitchings has been commissioned to produce a history book for the clubs 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. It is hoped that this will be a valued record for members, the community, and be of lasting value to the club.

Graham finished in praising the foresight of the three men that inspected a burnt out pine forest fifty years ago, and could visualise a club with 1200 members that would be a vital part of the southern peninsula.

4. Moirra Drew, the Society's Archivist, spoke about some of the things to consider when displaying memorabilia, photographs, golf equipment and honour boards in a club house. Sunlight is often misjudged as it changes during the day, and accordingly seasons. Direct sunlight will cause deterioration to woodwork, paintings, photographs and documents. Other things to avoid are heat and steam from urns, kettles and heaters particularly near honour boards, as lettering as well as board surfaces will be affected.

A display cabinet is always attractive but does require maintenance. An ideal cabinet will allow for air circulation, but this does allow dust and insects to enter, and regular cleaning is necessary. If the cabinet is airtight, and especially if the interior is painted or contains adhesives, a regular inspection of metal objects must be made for corrosion and other types of deterioration. Care should be taken that any lighting does not raise the internal heat in a cabinet. Golf clubs should be supported in such a way as to avoid any pressure on the shaft, which is likely to cause it to bend

When displaying photographs, it is prudent to use a copy and retain the original in safe storage. It can be copied again if the display becomes faded or otherwise damaged.

5. Writing a club history. Two booklets have been written about writing a Golf Club history. The first, published jointly by the British Golf Collectors Society and the Australian Golf Heritage Society (previously the Golf Collectors Society of Australia) describes five experiences in writing a history. It is available for download from the British Golf Collectors website – <http://www.golfcollectors.co.uk/page.php?40>. The second is produced by the Federation of Australian Historical Societies Inc., and is a guide for small Societies to help in publishing their history. A copy was available at the meeting to study, but can be downloaded at - <http://www.history.org.au/Publishing.htm>
6. A discussion was held about changes of location of Victorian golf courses. Over the past hundred years, many golf courses on the Mornington Peninsula were started and then closed. A map was on display showing these changes, and further changes will be added. Details of the map can be seen on the webpage [www.golfsocietyaust.com](http://www.golfsocietyaust.com)  
Go to Club Locations, then to either  
Metropolitan clubs no longer in existence or  
Victorian country clubs no longer in existence.



7. General discussion.

Ian Rennick showed five hickory golf clubs that had been donated to the Golf Society by John Snell. The clubs are of particular interest as they were stamped R S (Dick) Banks. Dick Banks was a Victorian professional from 1894 to 1930. He started as a professional/greenkeeper at Royal Melbourne in 1894, went to Kew Golf Club for a number of years, and then Yarra Yarra, before working at Albert Park Golf Club up to his death in 1930. He was the first Secretary of the PGA in 1911 and designed many courses throughout Victoria.

The book on the history of Green Acres Golf Club was shown, and, as the author Brendan Moloney was present, he commented on its production. He congratulated Green Acres Golf Club on the professional way they approached the project. He commented that Green Acres had a committee researching material, but his official contact was with one person, which made it easier to finalise details. Initially it was Keith Wood and later Maurice Duncan. Brendan said that a professional photographer was engaged to take aerial photographs of the course, using a tethered helium balloon which produced some wonderful pictures from approximately 100 metres above the course.

John Green spoke about his 'History of the Courses' of Royal Melbourne, which had been officially launched on 21<sup>st</sup> July. John started to research the course changes twenty years ago, not intending it to be published, but as it developed and became a comprehensive history, he was urged to publish it. John commented that golf club histories were usually about people and events, and did not give enough details of course changes. He hoped that this book showed that there are continual changes to golf courses; some so gradual that members are not aware of them.

Cliff George showed two interesting publications. The first was a Bonhams and Butterfield sales catalogue of old golf clubs and memorabilia with an estimated price for each item. There was a vast array of items for sale which included many clubs made in the USA that we seldom see in Australia. The second book detailed the golf collection of Royal Sydney Golf Club, who claims to have the largest collections of featheries in the world. Both publications feature colour photographs, and are certainly interesting memorabilia.

8. The Chairman closed the meeting at 2.30p.m. thanking everyone for their participation in the meeting and thanked Rosebud Country Club for allowing the Golf Society to hold the meeting in their clubhouse.