

PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT 44th Annual General Meeting - 2025

It is with pleasure I bring you this year's Annual Report.

I will begin by with some sadness, that since our last AGM we have lost four members in .. Bob Stannard earlier this year and in recent weeks John Smith, Michael Church, and Geoff Brearley. Bob was a long-time member (2006) serving as our Honorary Auditor for many years only stepping down in 2022.

Michael Church well known to many here was longtime member at Northern, past VGA Councillor and GSA Committee member He was an enthusiastic golfer researcher.

John a longtime respected member at Metropolitan & the Society and Geoff was a member here at Victoria GC.

Membership numbers remain steady. We always are always disappointed to see resignations but we do understand the many varied reasons why members don't renew.

Pleasingly new members do continue to join the Society. Participation in our hickory events and attendance at dinners, do seem to be the main events where we see new members indicate an interest in joining. So, when possible, please bring a guest to any of our events.

Our program of events

All events this year have been successfully run and won.

Attendance numbers have been down a little. We understand members have busy lives, with commitment to their own clubs, family, travel, and other interests and we appreciate along with increased event costs all are possible contributing factors.

Our dinners are always popular and this year's three were no different, they were well attended and varied in speaker and topic.

In February at Metropolitan, we heard from Nadene Gole -the current Women's Senior Amateur World No 1.

She spoke of previous years successes and how she got there and her plans for the defense of her two Senior Amateur Majors. It was special to have the actual trophies there on the night. Lyn Swinburne did a super job doing Q&A session with Nadene.

Our second dinner was at Commonwealth- where we heard from one of our members Andrew Thomson -We had an insightful & humorous evening as Andrew shared with us his recollections and stories growing up as the son of Peter.

Our third & final dinner was at RMGC past RM Captain Andrew Kirby spoke of the Alister Mackenzie influences at Flinders GC and the several significant member connections between Flinders and Royal Melbourne.

Golf Events

The 4BBB Don Lawrence Trophy was rescheduled but eventually played at Woodlands - this year's winners were Simon Hibbins and John Mann.

Presidents Trophy at Royal Melbourne was won by Bruce Sutherland

The Annual Hickory Day was 18 holes at Frankston Golf Club This little course is proving to be great for hickory play - Andrew Thomson successfully defended his title winning the Frank Shepherd. The Burtta Cheney was not awarded due to insufficient entries.

Through the year - Several 9 holes hickory events were organised by John Trevorow - with good numbers playing on these days

Our hickory calendar had some highlights...

We had the second running of the Victorian Hickory Shaft Championships - We ran a 3-day event at Yarrowonga Mulwala - many thanks to members Todd Le Grand a Yarrowonga M local and John Trevorow for his input into this event.

Justin Ryan won the Men's Championship & Yarrowonga local Judy Kruger the Women's Championship.

Running the event close to Border meant we saw players come from AGHS - NSW attend and pleasingly this allowed us to run the Al Howard Trophy - albeit in a modified format.

AGHS had a stronghold on the trophy, but this year GSA secured a good win. Our State comp. looks to be a regular on the Hickory fixture.

This year's Australian Hickory Shaft Championships were in South Australia in October

It was a well-run and attended event. Several GSA members participated and there was a strong International representation from NZ, Japan & China. Society members Justin Ryan along with Pete Shaw won the Foursomes Championships and I won Women's championship by one shot!

Congratulations to Andrew Baker for organising and running a super successful and enjoyable tournament.

Our Golf Historians forums

This year we attended Kingston Heath where we heard from James Weston the author of the clubs most recent history book- 'Test of Time'. Attendees took up the opportunity to play The Furrows course.

During the Victorian Hickory Championships at Yarrawonga Mul. the club embraced our visit, and their Captain presented the clubs history to the group in the form of interesting slide presentation.

We had a Hickory, Buy Swap & Sell session and ran a small display with items from the Collection.

Our final forum was just a few weeks ago at Flinders GC where President Fiona Reed gave us an insight into the role of women in the clubs history from its earliest beginnings.

Collection and Library work

We completed a project to sort, store, and list the many 100's of magazines and journals held in the collection. We have identified over thirty titles with some early vintage ones discovered. Grant Nicholson has listed by title years and volumes. They are now stored and easily accessed.

Our Artwork deaccession project saw seven items go to new homes.

A book duplicate project and updates to the library list is in progress. This work is being done by Grant Nicholson, John Scheffer, and myself. Shortly we will provide members an opportunity to acquire these books along with the 2nd tranche of deaccessioned artwork and some frames.

The Society operates as the Museum committee for Golf Australia (GA) curating & managing their heritage collection. More professional assistance is needed -and we continually work with GA to seek their financial support and commitment to managing their collection.

I give thanks to Laura Stedman who has assisted us for the last 3-4years This year Laura has found it difficult to commit due to other curating opportunities and her family.

In recent weeks, we have engaged an archival assistant to work on the collection two days a week - we look forward to progressing our work with the assistance of Miriam McBride.

The committee is always looking at ways to share the collection or make part of it more visible.

Recently past GSA comm member Greg Bain put forward a proposal to create a small virtual display. We plan to do pilot or trial display – so it is a case of watch this space.

National Golf Heritage

The Golf Society's commitment to strengthening relationships with the other States continues along with promoting and improving our hickory events.

We share a common interest to research, preserve, and share and we see it important to develop a better National approach to Australian Golf Heritage.

Representatives from most States met via Zoom during the year. We have agreed to do a joint project and currently we are in discussions to develop an online Australian Golf history timeline - this will sit on the new Golf Australia (GA) website.

Author Charlie Happell is assisting us to scope this out. The proposal is close to being finalised and will be submitted for GA for consideration. We see an opportunity to expand golf history and heritage on a dedicated section on the GA site.

The Long Game

Our newsletter, a publication we are proud of and consider it our signature member benefit. It continues to provide informative and enjoyable reading. My thanks to the professional work and wonderful writing skills of John Trevorrow. We are sad to see him step down from the editor role & the committee.

Good content is always needed, so any interesting research findings, a quality writing along with any images are always welcome.

While we are talking magazines -the International publication Through the Green has a section in it called *Letter from Oz.*

NSW based Hugh Jolly writes for the TTG and some recent issues he has written up two GSA events - so it is nice to see we are getting some International exposure.

Our Social media profile - Our Facebook page is low key but plays a role, and we would like to see it grow.

Please feel free to contribute posts and photos to our page, items and articles of interest do in turn stimulate comment.

The website is kept UpToDate with coming events, report, photos, all issues of the Long Game and some collection material can be found on there.

Committee

I want to thank the Committee for their hard work and enthusiastic approach to all the Society's activities and plannings during the year. Special thanks to Stella, who as Secretary does an enormous amount of work – this year Stella initiated changes to our membership database and event booking systems, which has been a progressive step for the Society. Thanks to Grace who handles the finance with ease and this year also assisted with the Historian forums.

To the Committee - John T, John S, Grant, Doug, Aaron and Marty – have all contributed in varied ways and I thank you for your work.

We must remember we are volunteers with busy lives and in the case of this Committee there are grandchildren duties, serving on the Boards at their own clubs/and own work - yet they all give their time generously.

We have had another good year, and the Society is in a good position.

At this meeting we say farewell and give thanks to John Scheffer and John Trevorrow. They retire after many years of significant service to the Society

A special thanks must go to David Greenhill. David is GA's Nominee to the Society a longtime GSA member himself. Whilst doing his main role with GA David gives us great support and wise counsel. He is generous with time and work on the ground, and we appreciate what he does for the Society... thank you David.

Lastly to the Host Clubs and our members

Each year we visit several clubs to run our events, and the Society is fortunate to have some long-standing and much valued relationships. We are all aware of rising costs and organizing events has become increasing more challenging for the Committee.

Be assured we do try to bring you cost effective events as possible.

On behalf of my Committee and the Society- I want to thank all the clubs for their generous hospitality during this past year and to our members, I hope you have enjoyed some of the events on offer, your ongoing support and participation is much appreciated.

Committees Retirees and elections

I give thanks to our two retiring Committees members...in John Scheffer and John Trevorrow.

John Scheffer leaves after 6 years on Committee. We appreciated his wise counsel and assistance with the Collection work and in the library. John is the current Vice Captain at Spring Valley GC and convenes several Committees. We wish him well in the future at the club.

John Trevorrow is stepping down after five years. He joined Committee in 2020 - in April 2024 took on the Long Game Editor role – as a former newspaper sub editor we have benefited from his editing & writing skills. Along with previous past Editor Greg Bain and as part of our rebranding, he oversaw the refreshed look and layout of the newsletter. I think we can all agree John has done a wonderful job as the TLG editor.

Whilst doing his Editor Role John managed our Hickory Hero events and again here does a super-efficient job there

John as kindly offered to continue this role, but I am sure assistance is welcome.

John we thank you so much - your contribution to the Society has been significant and nothing was ever too much trouble.

It is noted that last week John was elected Captain at Box Hill GC. Congratulates John and all the best for the future. You will be busy, but we hope to still see you at many of our events.

Lastly, I would like to welcome our two new Committee members in Ian Weir and Tim Taylor

Thank you

Kim Hastie President