

THE LONG GAME

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Al Howard 2014 teams at KHGC

Al Howard Trophy played for at Kingston Heath Golf Club

By Dick Kirby

The Australian Golf Heritage Society successfully defended the Al Howard Trophy by the narrowest of margins, one hole up, after 16 members from the Golf Society of Australia, and the Australian Golf Heritage Society gathered at one of Australia's finest sand belt courses, Kingston Heath Golf Club in Melbourne.

The format played was individual handicap match play over eighteen holes using pre-1940 hickory shafted clubs. The GSA provided one of its players to NSW to give every entrant a match.

The above photograph shows both teams dressed in period golfing attire.

At the presentation held afterwards in the clubhouse Ross Howard, son of Al Howard who died in January this year aged 100, explained the origin of the Trophy and gave an account of both his grandfather Tom, and father, Al's golfing achievements. As this was the 11th time the Trophy had been played for between the two societies Ross asked that the event be continued in the future as the Al Howard Memorial Trophy.

Tony Doggett, Captain of the Australian Golf Heritage Society, was then called upon to formally announce the result of the matches which resulted in the narrow win for the NSW Society.

Many of the players were then privileged to play the course the following day using modern clubs.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 1

Al Howard Trophy played for
at Kingston Heath Golf Club

Page 2-3

History Forum March 3rd
at Box Hill

Page 3

James Braid and his
Four Hundred Golf Courses

Page 4

GSA Dinner at
Metropolitan Golf Club

Hickories at
The Australian Amateur

Page 5

Claytons' Corner

Page 6-7

The London Flying Club's
Golf Course at Hendon
A Lost Course by Dr. Alister
Mackenzie Rediscovered

Page 8

GSA at the
Australian Ladies Open

FOR THE DIARY

5th May

Dinner at
Kingston Heath Golf Club

27th May

Don Lawrence Trophy
at Woodlands Golf Club

16th June

Golf Historians
at Moe Golf Club



John Triofofi addresses historians

History Forum at Box Hill

by Kim Hastie

Geoff Vincent, President, Golf Society of Australia (GSA), opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Dick Kirby, Committee Member of the GSA, gave a brief history of the society, initiated by Dr Ken Shepherd, and formed in 1981 to research, preserve and document the history of golf in Australia.

Ian Rowell from Riversdale Golf Club spoke about his project looking at Men's Pennant results since the competitions inception in 1899, in particular identifying all players, the matches they have played, and their scores.

Ian has produced archival material of value to Riversdale, and many other clubs. He joined as a Junior Member in 1964 and was a member of the Senior Pennant team during the years 1974-78. He served on the Board 1976-1980, is an ardent collector of golfing history, and memorabilia, and is currently a member of the Riversdale Heritage Sub-Committee.

It has been long and tedious project with Ian telling us of the many hours he spent in the State Library reading through the sporting pages of such papers as *The Weekly Times*, *The Sporting Globe*, *The Age* and *The Argus*.

Other interesting facts that came to light in his research were:

- The articles of 100 years ago were far more detailed than they are today.
- The method by which matches were decided and results reported was referred to as 'up in Aces'.
- The number of players that made up a team and how it varied over the years, before settling on the 7 member team we know today.
- Also, player movement between the clubs was quite common.

Murray Copley, Golf Victoria/Latrobe Golf Club can produce Pennant scores for all Clubs from 1987.

Ian's presentation was very entertaining, and sparked the interest of the women at the meeting who are keen to look at their own clubs Women's Pennant scores.



John Triofofi spoke *Brendan Moloney and Michael Church* about Box Hill's Centenary celebrations in 2013.

He gave some background including the club changing its name from Middleborough Golf Club to Box Hill Golf Club.

The club newsletter *The Whitehorse Golfer* magazine published a number of historical articles.

A Centenary Week of Golf was held with different golf competitions held each day of the week culminating in a Gala Dinner on February 16th.

The dinner featured an audio visual presentation of slides photos and articles from the period. John also showed us the Centenary bag tag that was struck and given to each member, with their name engraved.

To further mark the Centenary, memorabilia has been put on display in the clubhouse, including such items as early woods and irons, and a plaque with a brief history of the golf ball. John invited those present to have a look at the display downstairs, near the pro shop, where a number of old photos have been framed and are on display, including one of the 1897 Open Day along with several others of the course from the 1950's.

Tony McLean acknowledged the valuable work done by Society members Cliff and Max Findlay, with regard to collecting, preserving, and restoring hickory clubs.

Cliff spoke about the popularity of Hickory clubs in the USA which has seen incredible growth since 2000 with 15 participating players growing to approx. 3 million today.

As a result the US Society of Hickories, working with the USGA, has developed a set of playing guidelines, or Rules of Compliance.

Other societies in the UK and Europe have adopted similar guidelines.

Cliff has been a strong advocate for formalising, and adopting, the same guidelines with the aim of preserving the many pre-1940 hickory clubs that we know exist.

3 hickory clubs, in varying states of condition, were passed around for members to examine. There were also many other clubs on display.

Cliff encouraged anyone interested to participate in the GSA hickory days such as the annual Frank Shepherd Troph, the Burtta Cheney Troph and the Al Howard match against the AGHS based in NSW.

Brendan Moloney spoke briefly about a book he has just written, "The Jewel of the North", which is the story of the first 100 years of the Northern G C, and introduced Michael Church, President of Northern, who spoke passionately about the project he started in 2007.

Michael also gave us a nice short story involving Royal North Devon Golf Club in Westward Ho! and an assistant professional, Samson Bennett, who became involved at Northern and later went on to become a prolific course designer in Australia.

GSA committee member, Peter Gompertz, a member of Royal North Devon for 21 years, and the first Curator of its' open Museum, contributed to the discussions.

The book is in print and will be available for purchase soon.

Peter Gompertz also brought along a very unusual aluminium headed putter, made by Cann & Taylor in about 1915, bearing the 'signature' of J H Taylor. JH learned his golf at Westward Ho!, and went on to win The Open Championship 5 times.

Geoff Vincent closed the meeting thanking Box Hill Golf Club for their hospitality.



James Braid and his Four Hundred Golf Courses

By Peter Gompertz

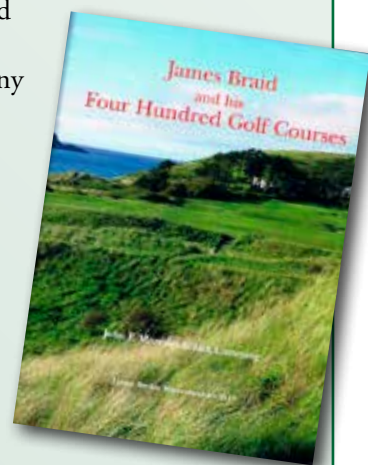
It was not until I read this book that I realised that, having started my golfing life on two public courses, my first venture on to a private course was one designed by Braid some 30 years previously.

I was not aware that Buchanan Castle, a mile from Loch Lomond, is considered a 'late-Braid' in the lexicon of Braid devotees. I enjoyed the office day out with my new colleagues, but completely missed out on the subtleties of playing a Braid course.

Over 40 years later I was privileged to be a guest playing Royal Dornoch and my host, Tom Tew, suggested that we had a warm up game over Brora just along the coast. Part of the enjoyment of playing this very much by the sea links course was Tom telling me that Braids signature was clearly in evidence with the layout of the four par 3s; all being played to a different cardinal point of the compass. By this time I had become a better educated golfer and was far more aware of the importance of a course designers' philosophy which, in most cases, will enhance the pleasure of a day out on the links.

In 1996 John Moreton published his first book The Golf Courses of James Braid, and was inundated with claims that favourite Braid courses had been missed out.

Fifteen years of research later John, assisted by Iain Cumming, and the contents of dusty newspaper libraries, has produced a mountain of information which they have had to distill to 300 plus pages of references to Braids visits to, and plans for, 400 courses the length and breadth of the United Kingdom, some in Ireland and a couple in France. Braid also managed to design a course in New York which he did not visit but drew a design based on photographs and topographical maps. This book is a must have for any apprentice golf architect because of its' insights; a bonus is the dust jacket which is a picture of my favourite course in Cornwall, St Enodoc, the last course I played before I left England for the first time; and if you only ever play one Braid course that should be it.



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GSA Dinner at Metropolitan Golf Club

by Tony McLean



Virginia Gorrell interviews Karen Lunn

A total of 74 members, and guests, attended Metropolitan Golf Club on February 10 to enjoy the first GSA dinner for 2014, the delights of a fine menu from renowned Chef, Brian Baker, and a most entertaining and informative address from newly appointed Executive Director of Australian Ladies Professional Golf (ALPG), Ms Karen Lunn.

We were also fortunate to enjoy the dinner in the surrounds of the new Metropolitan Clubhouse looking out through the large plate glass windows to the 18th green on a balmy night – perfect.

Also present was immediate past-captain of Metropolitan GC, Russell Fynmore and his wife Jill, and we welcomed our newest member of the GSA, Mrs Heather Scales, a past Women's Captain, and President of Commonwealth Golf Club.

The format of our guest speaker's address was a question and answer session where Karen was asked a number of excellent, penetrating, questions by GSA Committee member, Virginia Gorrell, followed by several questions from the audience.

Karen spoke of her early life growing up in Cowra with her equally golfing talented younger sister, Mardi, her playing experiences on the European circuit (10 wins including the 1993 British Open and the Lalla Meryem Cup in Morocco in 2012), her experiences on the US circuit (second and third placings) and most recently, nine years as Chair of the Ladies European Tour (LET).

Karen's immediate challenge at the time of speaking was the Women's Australian Open at Victoria GC, which was commencing the following day and boasting the strongest ever international women's field in Australia.

We thank Karen for her most topical and entertaining address, and wish her well in continuing to build the reputation of the ALPG and all talented young Australian golfers.

Hickories at The Australian Amateur

Moira Drew

At the Australian Amateur championships held at The Grange Golf Club, Adelaide in January 2014, Golf Australia again scheduled a hickory exhibition match as part of the program, involving several of the leading contenders.



Jayde Panos admires the swings of Sue Oh and Lucas Herbert



Ryan Ruffles elegant hickory swing

Due to the extreme heat, the full 'event' did not go ahead, but it was wonderful to see the players dressing the part and embracing hickory play with such enthusiasm, as well as hitting the ball exceedingly well! A selection of photographs of the players posted on the Golf Australia Facebook page elicited some interesting responses, and can only help to increase interest in the use of hickory clubs.

The Golf Australia Championships department is to be congratulated for including the event in the program and encouraging the involvement of elite amateur golfers.



10th at Royal Melbourne West course

Claytons' Corner

with Michael Clayton

Short Par Fours.

The short par four can be the most fascinating hole in golf because its' lack of length opens so many options of club, and line, from the tee. No one wants to be hitting a four or five iron from the tee on a 360 metre hole, but on a hole like the great 280 metre 15th at Victoria there are so many options. That there are so many legitimate choices serves only to confuse; and confusion is at the heart of the best 'little' holes.

Whilst not played over the most spectacular piece of land, the 10th at Royal Melbourne West, easily wins that contest, Victoria's 15th offers more choices. The green is drivable for the longest hitters but Geoff Ogilvy has always cautioned 'the 15th is never a driver.' Jessica Korda with her winning chance gone by the time she arrived at the tee on Sunday of the recent Australian Womens Open said 'I so wanted to hit a driver there, but I just couldn't let myself.'

Steven Leaney won the Victorian Open in 1995 hitting a six iron from the tee each day, and completely eliminating any chance of finding the bunkers lining the left side of the approach shot.

The fairway stretches wide to the right but every metre one plays right of the bunker makes for a subtly more difficult pitch. Some call it 'risk and reward' but that notion has connotations of simple black and white.

Rather, as American architect Tom Doak likes to say, there are varying shades of grey and it is those 'shades of grey' that make even longer holes including Commonwealth's 16th or Royal Melbourne's 17th so great.

There is no black and white, but the closer one drives to the hazard the better the line into the flag and on both holes, every metre to the right the more difficult the line of the approach.

Another first-class short four where the 'shades of grey' principle works particularly well is the 3rd at Kingston Heath. The key is a green so obviously orientated from left to right to reward the player who has driven closest to the bunker on the left. The right side is completely undefended thus encouraging the wary to play far from the sand but the pitch is so much more difficult from over on the right, especially when the pin is cut into the back of the green.

The other interesting thing about the short fours is that whilst the architectural intent of longer holes the world over has been compromised by the modern driver, and ball, the shorter holes are now arguably even more dangerous.

The fact they are now reachable tempts so many more to pull out the driver and because the best of them are so well defended around the green it is a dangerous choice. No one wants to be left with the fifty metre bunker shot, yet it is precisely the threat at Royal Melbourne's 10th, Portsea's 8th (the old 13th), Victoria's 15th, or the 4th at Barnbougle Dunes, and so many others.

The well-designed short four is fun to play because it is such a confounding choice from the tee and we in Melbourne are fortunate to have so many examples. Long may the short 'little' holes remain a critical part of the game.

The London Flying Club's Golf Course at Hendon A Lost Course by Dr. Alister Mackenzie Rediscovered

by Neil Crafter

(This article originally appeared in an issue of *Golf Architecture*)

The creation of the London Flying Club at the Hendon Aerodrome was the dream of pioneer aviator Claude Grahame-White (1879-1959) who, in 1909, became the first Englishman to gain an internationally recognized aviator's certificate and the first British pilot to fly at night.

In 1910 he optioned 207 acres of pastureland between Hendon and Colindale for use as an aerodrome. Blessed with charm and rakish good looks, Grahame-White became England's first home-grown aviation hero and a household name with his flying exploits.

This reputation was further enhanced by a successful – and lucrative – stint at air meetings in the United States in 1910 and when he returned home early in 1911 he was able to invest some of his substantial prize money (reported to be US\$100,000) in establishing the Grahame-White Aviation Company and in acquiring a 10 year lease on the Hendon land that he had earlier optioned, along with a right to purchase the freehold and some additional acreage. He set about the task of leveling and draining the land to form his aerodrome, Britain's third, and some two miles in circumference. Other fledgling aviation companies and flying schools were attracted to Hendon and the facility began to grow, and by the middle of 1912, some thirty sheds and hangers had been erected along the aerodrome's western edge.

Grahame-White organized a series of flying displays at Hendon that stimulated the British public's fascination with flying and Hendon became a mecca for gentleman-sportsmen. In 1913 alone, Hendon hosted over 50 such flying meets. Grahame-White could see the Government's apathy towards aviation, and despite the establishment of the Royal Flying Corps in 1912, he continued to lobby them for support of the aviation industry and wrote a number of books promoting his views. When war came in 1914, Hendon was commandeered as a Royal Naval Air Station and Grahame-White became a Flight Commander, flying a number of combat missions, while his aviation company received its first contract to build aircraft and others followed through the duration of the war.

When the war ended, the aircraft building contracts upon which his factory was engaged, with its 3000 staff, were cancelled overnight with no compensation and Grahame-White's airfield remained in Government hands. He soon began to marshal public support behind his campaign to regain control of Hendon. Despite this, his dream of establishing a gentleman's flying club at Hendon came to fruition in 1919 when he established the London Flying Club with its own separate airfield on the southern side of Aerodrome Road with a flying school, a lavish sixty-room red brick clubhouse with London's best ballroom and fifty accommodation rooms, thirty tennis courts, two polo fields and a planned 18 hole golf course. On September 19, 1919 'The Times' reported that:



Mackenzie's 'lost' course under construction

A “SUPER-RANELAGH.” LONDON FLYING CLUB AT HENDON

The London Flying Club, the largest institution of the kind in Great Britain, which has been established at Hendon as a social centre for private aviation, received an informal “house-warming” yesterday. It has been laid out on lines similar to the country clubs in America, the main building especially following this design. The site, on the heights of Hampstead, includes a private aerodrome occupying about 80 acres. Fifty bed rooms, a library, complete catering arrangements, tennis courts, aircraft garages, flying craft for the use of members, and a school for pupils are among the club’s amenities. The club is within a quarter of an hour’s motor-car run from Golder’s Green. Lord Lonsdale is the president of the club, which includes among its vice-presidents Major-General Seely, Lord Weir, the Duchess of Westminster, Lord and Lady D’Abernon, Lord Curzon, Mrs. Winston Churchill, Lord Louth, Lieutenant-General Sir David Henderson, Sir Sidney Greville, Lady Limerick, Lord Lurgan, Lord Ribblesdale, Lady Helmsley, the Princess of Monaco, and the Duke of Rutland. At a luncheon yesterday, Lord Louth, who presided, said that they wanted flying men from abroad to regard the club as their home. Hendon, he declared, had done its full share in the defence of the Empire, 600 aviators having been trained there. Mr. CLAUDE GRAHAME-WHITE said the club was intended to provide the principal air terminus in London, but the aim of the committee was to organize it at the same time as a sort of “super-Ranelagh,” catering not only for flying members, but for the devotees of sport generally. In addition to tennis courts, a shooting range, and a gymnasium, they were laying out a golf course. They also had a trout stream, and it was proposed to build a real ice skating rink and an open-air swimming bath. These flying clubs were going to be a very important movement all over the world. The committee had arranged for a service of aeroplanes available to go anywhere at any time. The club will be officially opened on Monday.

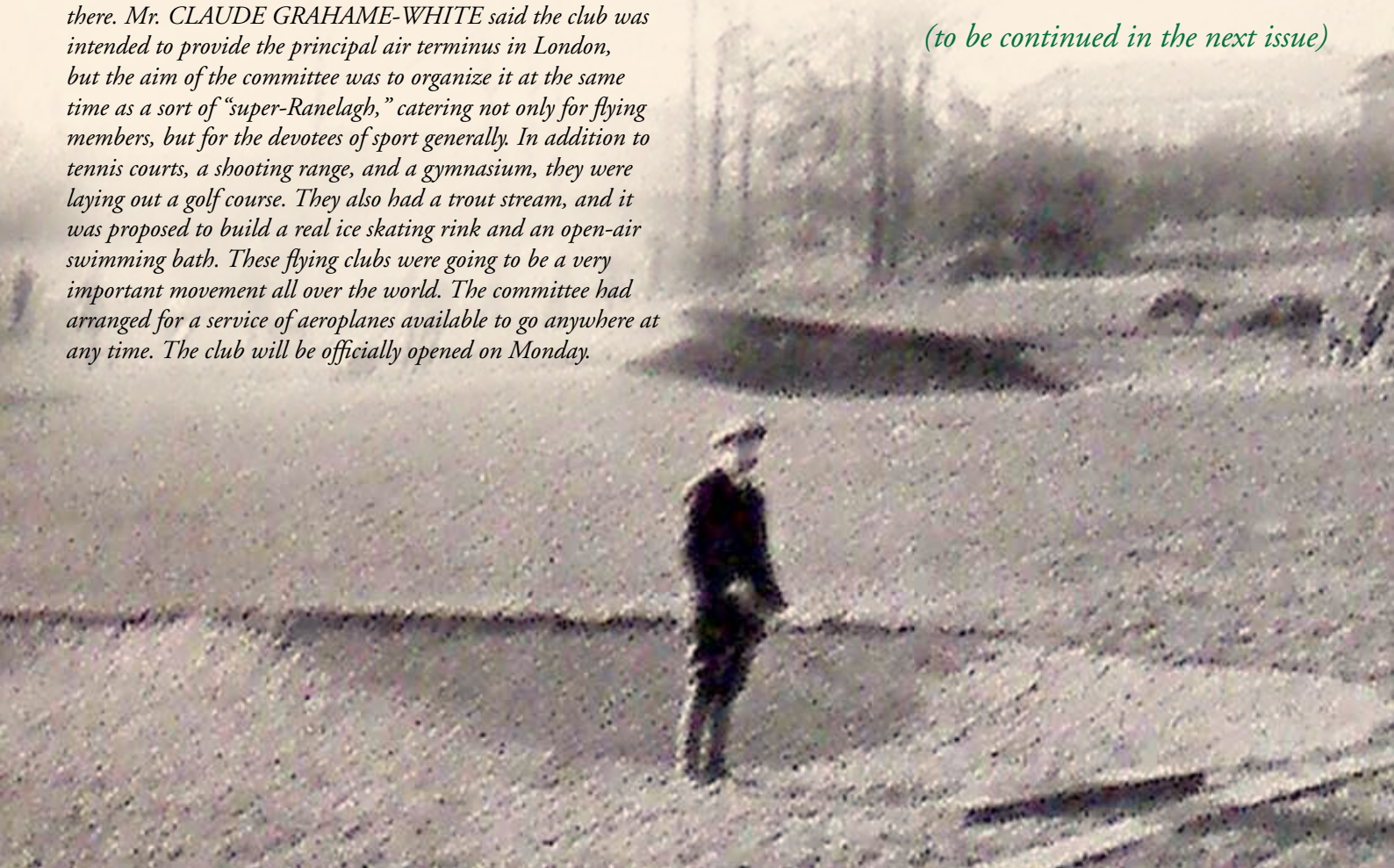
Reports of the lavish club facilities were widely reported outside London, including Edinburgh and New York.

Grahame-White sought out none other than Leeds based golf architect Dr. Alister Mackenzie to design the golf course for the London Flying Club. At this time, Mackenzie had just entered into a partnership with Harry Colt and Charles Alison, and the firm of Colt, Mackenzie and Alison was the pre-eminent design partnership in the country. How the London Flying Club commission came to be Mackenzie’s is not known, but it is likely Colt would have been none too pleased as London was his local territory. No previous record of Mackenzie designing the London Flying Club has been found amongst the authorities of Doak, Scott and Haddock, Fred Hawtree and Cornish & Whitten who have all prepared lists of Mackenzie’s designs, in fact, no reference to the London Flying Club’s golf course at all could be found in golf architectural history sources.

Course construction was underway in September 1919 and by May 31, 1920 ‘The Times’ reported that:

An 18-hole golf course is to be the latest attraction at the London Flying Club at Hendon. The course, which is delightfully situated and immediately adjoins the clubhouse, has been designed by Dr. A. Mackenzie, of Leeds.

(to be continued in the next issue)





Brian Simpson talking about hickory clubs

GSA at the Australian Ladies Open

All members of your committee manned a Museum stand during the Australian Ladies Open at Victoria Golf Club in support of GSA member Max Findlay and some of his collection of hickory golf clubs.

While lack of space did not allow for Max's complete collection of old clubs, he spent many hours talking to a stream of visitors about clubs made by, and for, professional golfers attached to various Melbourne golf clubs. He also talked about clubs in his collection, made by some winners of The Open Championship, which he had mounted on display boards.

Max also gave demonstrations of how to repair, and refurbish, old hickory clubs to golfers interested in playing with their hickories.



Max Findlay demonstrates hickory maintenance

Also helping out was GSA Member, Brian Simpson, the Pro at Victoria, who, I was recently advised, has been admitted to Golf Victoria's 'Hall of Fame'. Well done Brian!

Peter Gompertz

The Golf Society of Australia was formed in 1982 to research and preserve the history of golf in Australia. As part of this role, the Society manages the Museum and Library for Golf Australia. Golf Australia supports the Society by providing office space and administrative assistance.