

# THE LONG GAME

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



No 55, DECEMBER 2015

## Doug Bachli Trophy at Victoria Golf Club

By Peter Gompertz

*Thirty four members faced the starter in a two tee round at the Victoria Golf Club. The sun was out and it was pleasantly warm, while the breeze behind was gentle it became a bit stiff when playing into it, and positively a nuisance when coming from the left, or right. The course itself was in championship condition, so any murmurs of discontent were solely about individual skills, or lack of them.*

Leading the way in the men's division, and Doug Bachli Champion, with an above average score of 37 points, was Russell Fynmore; a couple of furlongs behind came new member, and a regular 'Hickory Heroes' supporter, Charles Wilkins with 33.

The winner of the women's division, and overall second was Committee member, Virginia Gorrell with a hard fought 31 points, playing in the same group as runner up Paula Gompertz with 30; none of the other four ladies reaching the magic figure of 30 points.

President, Geoff Vincent, presented the winners with their prizes at the conclusion of the AGM.



President Geoff Vincent AM and Russell Fynmore



Virginia Gorrell Lady Medallist

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

#### Page 1

Doug Bachli Trophy at Victoria Golf Club

#### Page 2

President's Report .....2015

#### Page 3

Annual General Meeting  
Colonel Bogey:  
19th Hole Nostalgia  
Vale Paul Rak OAM

#### Page 4-5

Golf Historians at Yarra Yarra Golf Club

#### Page 6

Dinner at Royal Melbourne Golf Club

#### Page 7

Hickory Heroes:  
9 hole hickory golf events

#### Page 8

Frank Shepherd Trophy and Burtta Cheney Trophy  
Kingston Heath Golf Club

### FOR THE DIARY

#### Monday 21 March

Golf Historians at Metropolitan Golf Club

#### Monday 28 March

Dinner at Commonwealth Golf Club

#### Tuesday 19 April

Don Lawrence Trophy at Woodlands Golf Club

#### Sunday 15th May

Al Howard Trophy at Woodlands Golf Club

# President's Report .....2015



*Geoff Vincent AM*  
President

*It is my pleasure to present the Presidents Report for the past year.*

We have had an increasing number of events during the year, including three dinners, where we have averaged around 60 members, and guests, at each function.

In February at Commonwealth, we enjoyed hearing Michael Clayton relating his experiences on the professional circuit, including the LPGA where he was involved at the Handa Women's Australian Open, caddying for Sue Oh. In May, John Hopkins AO, Chairman of Golf Australia, outlined his international golf activities with The Open and the R&A. In September Sandra McCaw shared her thoughts about her life in golf at our dinner at Royal Melbourne. This was a special occasion being very close to the sad death of Paul Rak OAM, CEO of Royal Melbourne.

For the past 10 years we have held meetings of the Historians Forum, to enable members of various clubs to exchange ideas on items of history and how to preserve the traditions of the game. In March, Kingston Heath was the venue and Barwon Heads in June, and recently Yarra Yarra in November. Our convenor, Kim Hastie has done a wonderful job.

The golf events held during the year were well attended, particularly the Al Howard Trophy match at Wagga Wagga held on April 19, where a team of GSA members competed against the Australian Golf Heritage Society from Sydney. We were not victorious, as our team obviously overtrained. A return match is scheduled for early next year. There were some 14 Hickory Heroes events held during the year with Cliff George and Max Findlay attracting members keen to take on the traditions of hickory golf.

I would commend the hickory competition to members. Playing with hickories strengthens your game using modern equipment and is good fun.

Other golf events were held at Kingston Heath, Woodlands, Royal Melbourne and Victoria golf clubs. I would again congratulate all the winners and thank all the golf clubs involved for allowing us to play those wonderful golf courses. We are always made to feel welcome and it is a privilege to play at these clubs.

During the year we have received valuable donations of golf memorabilia including the collection from the estate of Daryl Cox, and the scrap book of RAA Balfour-Melville. This has coincided with a review of our collection which was moved in June to better space in South Melbourne.

The Golf Society is working through the entire collection of Golf Australia, and The Golf Society. Cliff George has taken on that responsibility including the use of the Mosaic data base, and has been appointed Curator by The Golf Society, and Golf Australia, for the entire collection. This is important as recently we removed the collection from Moonah Links after that golf club was sold to overseas interests.

I would now like to pay tribute to members of your Committee.

Tony McLean covers the important task of Secretary and keeps us on track, while Dick Kirby, as Treasurer, keeps our finances in check. Peter Gompertz produces *The Long Game*, and endures the frustrations of organising the President. Virginia Gorrell looks after the detail, and challenges, of all our social events, while Kim Hastie arranges our Golf Historians Forums which are growing in interest. Cliff George continues to develop hickory golf as mentioned above.

I would also like to give special thanks to Trevor Herden, Tournament Director at Golf Australia for his ongoing support, and assistance, with our efforts with the collection and with our development of hickory golf. Trevor is a member of our Committee representing Golf Australia.

All have contributed their time, and efforts, which is greatly appreciated.

As President I have enjoyed the year and look forward to further development of Society affairs during the coming year.



*President Geoff Vincent AM addresses the AGM*



# Annual General Meeting

By Tony McLean

*The 34th Annual General meeting was held on at 6.30pm on the 23rd November 2015 at the Victoria Golf Club, Park Road, Cheltenham, Victoria, with 34 members attending.*

President Geoff Vincent gave his annual report (see page 2 Ed).

The Hon Treasurer, Mr R Kirby, advised the meeting of a small surplus from the year's activities and that the accounts are healthy. Office Bearers and Ordinary Committee Members were re-elected nem. Con.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

## Colonel Bogey: 19th Hole Nostalgia

by Al Howard (with kind permission of Ross Howard)

*Next time you mark down a 'bogey' on your score card spare a kind thought for those who brought this scoring symbol to the golfing scene.*

It was back in 1891 when Hugh Rotherham of the Coventry Golf Club introduced the basic system of scoring and course rating, which came to be known as the 'ground rules' for players on that golf course. Amongst others to be impressed with his scheme was Dr T Browne of the Great Yarmouth Club, and his golfing partner Major Wellman.

For the purposes of this story we now have to make a rapid change of scene from the golf course to the music hall where the most popular ditty of the day was 'Hush, hush here comes the bogey man'.

We now revert to the golf course where the Major, probably with this in mind, complained to his partner Dr Browne "I say old boy, this ground score player of yours is a bit of a bogey man; and so the term 'bogey' came to golf.

But wait, there is more to relate. Dr Browne as a member of the United Services Club then introduced this mythical nonentity to fellow members as a quite modest and retiring gentleman, uniformly steady, but never over brilliant. They, in turn, adopted him as one of their own but the Hon. Secretary, Capt Vidal, while impressed with this fictitious fellow, suggested that in accordance with Club regulations he be given a service rank.

In due course Bogey was promoted to Colonel Bogey and that title was later recognised by the Royal & Ancient in 1910.

### *Have you missed a dinner but would like to hear the speech?*

In most cases, when the speaker agrees, we record the after-dinner speeches at Golf Society functions.

If you have missed a dinner and would like to hear any of the presentations, they can be made available on cd for playing on computer or cd player.

**Contact:** The Secretary

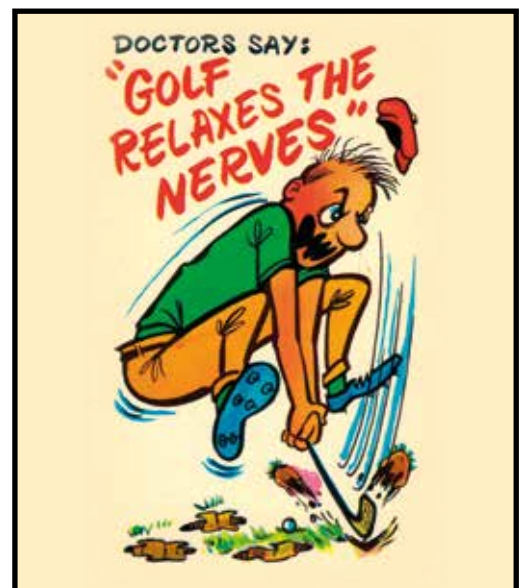


## Vale Paul Rak OAM

By Peter Gompertz

*All GSA members were shocked, and saddened, to hear of the untimely death of fellow member, Paul Rak OAM, a good friend of our Society in his capacity as CEO at Royal Melbourne.*

Paul started as a caddy at Royal Melbourne, working his way up from Barman to General Manager before spending 15 years as Manager at Kingston Heath, then returning to Royal Melbourne as Chief Executive. Respected and admired equally by members and visitors to both Royal Melbourne and Kingston Heath, his wise counsel will be sorely missed by all.



# Golf Historians at Yarra Yarra Golf Club

By Kim Hastie

*Geoff Vincent President of the Golf Society of Australia opened the meeting and welcomed all to Yarra. Kim Hastie Forum Convener introduced the speakers.*

The first speaker was Peter Swan. Peter is a 40 year member of the club and Convener of Yarra Yarra's Historical Sub-Committee.

Peter told us that Yarra Yarra means "flowing flowing". He gave us a brief insight into the clubs early beginnings (Eaglemont Golf Club) going through many significant dates and the decisions made during the early years at the Eaglemont and Rosanna sites from 1889 to 1911

In May 1911 Rosanna site was purchased and was officially opened on the 30th of March 1912. The club was formally incorporated as Yarra Yarra Golf Club Limited.

In 1927 to maintain a successful course, and membership, it was deemed necessary that the Rosanna site be sold, so land at Bentleigh in the sandbelt was bought. The opening day was 23rd February 1929; nearly 87 years on this current site.

Peter mentioned member Herbert Darvall several times citing his major contribution and influence through these years. He also gave us some of his personal thoughts; one nice story was the clubs acknowledgement of long standing staff member Gordon Sharrock. The club installed a flagpole out the front to recognise his many years of service.

Peter touched on the Clubs tournament hosting history citing many well-known winners. He mentioned the Clubs wonderful staff over the years, the course changes and, in recent years, a significant club house renovation. Peter answered several questions from the group.

Our next speaker was Tim Groves, long time member and Yarra Yarra Historical Sub-Committee Member. He spoke about the activities that the history group carry out, acknowledging a small, hard working, group of members who carry out this important work.

Tim supported his talk with a power point presentation, discussing what the history group believe are some of the most important details in the clubs history. Methods for collecting, recording and storing the data remains one of the biggest challenges. There is considerable archival data stored in several ways and it has been huge task to improve and streamline access to it.

Other points of interest include the committees' intent to educate, and increase, member awareness such as during the play of a significant event, the Trophy being competed for is put on display with some informative history. They believe it is important to interview older and significant members.





The club is fortunate to have a dedicated History room for the committee to work in, and members to enjoy. Throughout the clubhouse, Yarra Yarra have wonderful artwork, photos and memorabilia on display and it is a credit to this working group. His presentation gave us an interesting insight to their work and prompted a number of questions such as how they manage certain projects.

Graeme Ryan, a Yarra Yarra member for many years, produced a wonderful slide show of his recent visit to a Golf Museum in Regensburg, Germany. Privately owned by an antique dealer, the museum is housed in a renovated cellar and has an extensive, and impressive, collection of golf memorabilia. Graeme's photo's came up really well and we could appreciate the many beautiful pieces on display. He highly recommends a visit to this museum. His presentation stimulated questions and several in the room had been to the museum agreeing that it is worth the visit. The next presentation was from Ian Rennick Past GSA President, and Life Member. (*This is the subject of a separate article in a future newsletter. Ed.*)

The final speaker for meeting was Peter Gompertz, GSA Committee and a Member of the British Golf Collectors Society since 1987. He gave an entertaining talk about his recent visit to Askernish Golf Club in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland. Land owner Lady Cathcart engaged Old Tom Morris in 1891 to lay out a course for her house guests. Morris described the land for 18 hole lay out as 'second to none' For 30 years this wonderful course was maintained by the local crofters for the enjoyment of her many house guests. Some crofters also doubled as caddies.

In early 1930s, after her death, the course fell into disrepair. Peter went on to outline several significant dates and the many changes the course, and land, went through bringing us right up to 2005 when golf course consultant Gordon Irvine, and

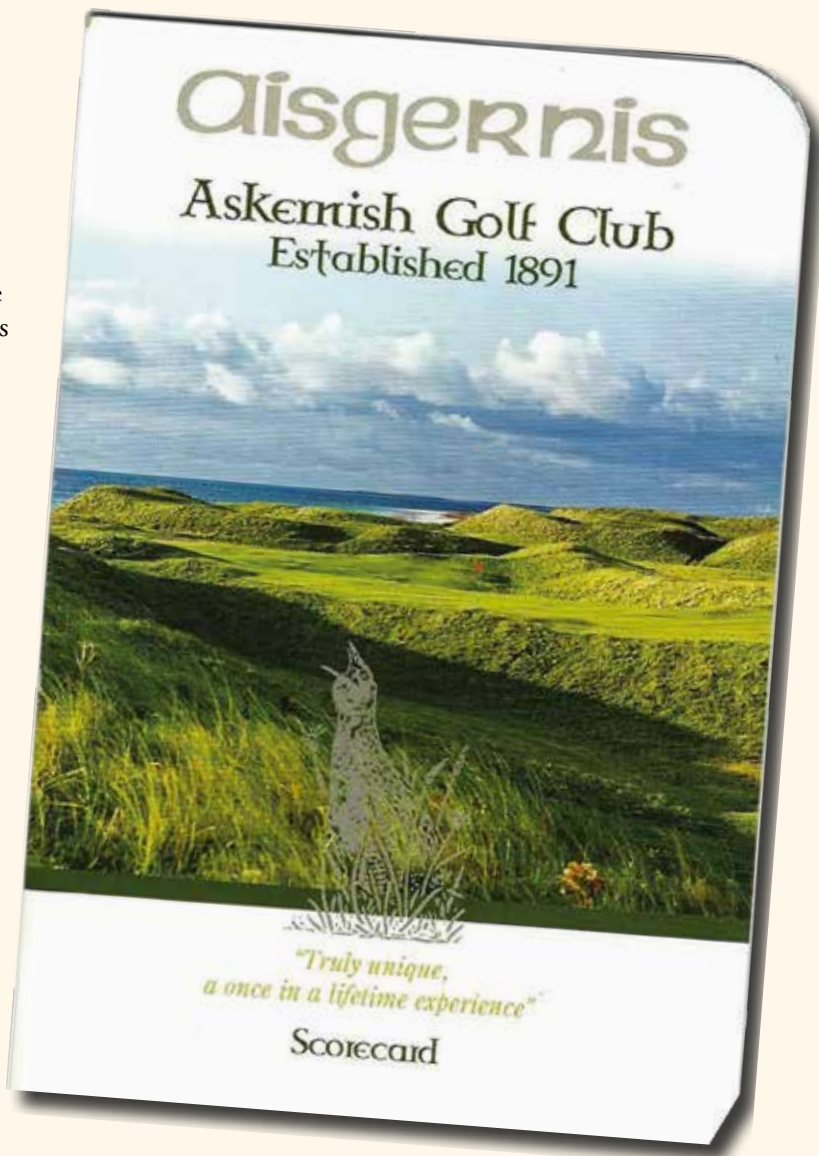
golf architect Martin Ebert, rediscovered the Old Tom Morris 18 hole layout and brought it back to life.

Peter supported his talk with some wonderful photos and we could definitely sense the raw, and natural, beauty of Askernish. Peter a declared, and passionate, links player described Askernish as probably one of the most

natural golf links in the world and, like St Andrew's, everyone should play it at least once, not die wondering.

For the show and tell, and general discussion, part of the meeting GSA Committee member Cliff George spoke briefly about the increasing interest in hickory golf, and the popularity of the monthly GSA Hickory events. Cliff informed us of the recent appointment of Committee member Max Findlay as an approved supplier and restorer of hickory shafted antique clubs.

He encouraged members to contact Max if needing help with antique hickory clubs. Cliff went on to talk about, and stressing, the importance of identification when acquiring and collecting hickory clubs. He brought along two clubs as examples for discussion. The first one being identified as a Golf Medal No 3, and the second, a quite unusual looking aluminium, unmarked, centre shafted putter. The clubs were passed around the room for members to see.



Graeme Ryan brought along a club to show us. It was a graphite shafted, Persimmon, driver estimated to be 25 years old; never used and in pristine condition.

In closing Geoff Vincent produced an amazing item for examination and discussion; it is the original, personal, scrap book of RAA Balfour-Melville, first Secretary of Royal Melbourne Golf Club.

The scrap book, looking a little worse for wear, showed extensive newspaper articles and photos with much of the content seeming to be about racehorses and golf. GSA has this book on short term loan from a family descendant. The pages have been carefully scanned and plans for restoration, and rebinding, of the original are being discussed. It seemed that everyone at the meeting took the opportunity to have a quick look at this fantastic piece of history. It certainly raised much interest and comment.



*The Sandy McCaw and Virginia Gorrell show*

## Dinner at Royal Melbourne Golf Club

*By Peter Gompertz*

*A near record number of members and guests gathered in the dining room at Royal Melbourne Golf Club and, despite the sadness in the room that Paul Rak was not able to be with us, the mood subtly changed after a very pleasant meal as we were entertained by the 'Sandra McCaw and Virginia Gorrell' show.*

Sandra had thoughtfully provided a double page spread of her golfing achievements but, as that would have taken too long to read out, and prompted by good questions from Virginia, her audience, which included a goodly number of her fellow competitors and playing partners across the years, were entertained to a selection of insights into her golfing life starting with hitting her first golf shot with a 7 iron at Long Island Golf Club in June 1965, through her first handicap of 36, and attending one of Burtt Cheney's Anglesea golf camps.



*The National at Long Island Ladies table*

Within six years of that first shot Sandra was Australian Junior Champion and, a year later, the Australian Amateur Champion for the first of her four record equalling Amateur Championships.

Asked what her most memorable golfing experience was, Sandy highlighted getting to the semi-final of the British Amateur Championship on the Old Course at the home of golf, St Andrews, in 1975.

A close second was winning, partnered by Sue Tonkin, the World Amateur Pairs Championship and then there was leading and Australian womens team against a Japanese womens team three times, winning all three and the list goes on...

A truly entertaining evening with great catering, an inspirational speaker and good golfing fellowship.



# Hickory Heroes: 9 hole hickory golf events

By Cliff George, Hickory Golf Co-ordinator

## What have we achieved in 2015?

1. Added a new layer of interest in golf, by reviving interest in hickory golf as it was played before 1940.
2. We have stimulated interest in the history of golf by bringing people together who are passionate about the equipment and course management skills as players. A primary objective of our Society.
3. Club members of History and Heritage Committees are joining our group and appear to enjoy the opportunity to exchange views in an informal way, that hasn't been available before.
4. There are a growing number of entrants who are putting together sets of hickory clubs, joining our Society, investing in plus-fours and becoming regulars at 'HICKORY HEROES' events.
5. We have entrants who have tapped into the SoHG-U.S. and are currently learning how to repair/ restore their own Clubs.

6. The Melbourne sand belt courses, which claim to be the best group of courses in the world, want to be part of the 'Circuit' of our 9 hole 'Hickory Heroes' events.

I believe they have welcomed us, because of the goodwill gained by offering our group the opportunity, not normally available, to play these beautiful courses, making each entrant an ambassador for their outstanding facilities, courses and amenities.

7. At this early stage, the Golf Society of Australia has tried to include as many people, organisations and clubs as possible, and in the process has won the approval of Golf Australia, Golf Victoria and the Victorian PGA, who are starting to establish their own event. I hope we can be part of their activities.

I also hope we can be part of Golf Australia's 'Golf Month' in October 2016.

8. In 2014, the GSA put in place a set of rules, for the restoration of Hickory Golf Clubs, for use in Antique Hickory Golf Events.
9. These rules allow for repairs and restoration of Hickory Shafted Golf Clubs, as would have been carried out before 1940. These rules therefore effectively eliminate the use of Replicas Golf Clubs, made after 1940 in all forms of 'GSA Hickory Golf'.

The Golf Society of Australia has also taken the important step of appointing Max Findlay, as the first 'Approved Supplier' and 'Restorer' in Melbourne, of antique hickory clubs.

This initiative will provide a reliable pathway for enthusiasts to purchase Clubs and have their Hickories restored, and maintained, if they don't wish to do that work themselves. This Initiative will help grow 'GSA Hickory Golf.'

The Golf Society of Australia welcomes applications from those who would like to be part of the approved list, to carry out this work.

10. Another milestone for the Golf Society is the registration of the trading names 'GSA Hickory Golf' and 'Hickory Heroes' which means it now owns what it has created, ensuring we can move forward with confidence.

It has been my observation that, the growing number of entries at 'GSA Hickory Golf' events are enjoying themselves, and that has been very gratifying.



Your Editor putting at Metro



*Winner Geoff Vincent presented with trophy by organiser Cliff George*

## Frank Shepherd Trophy and Burtta Cheney Trophy Kingston Heath Golf Club

*By Cliff George*

*The Frank Shepherd Trophy was supported once again this year by a very strong field of quality golfers, including some interstate guests who were welcome additions to a very colourful group on a beautiful sunny day.*

The low average scores reflected just how tough this fine championship course can be and demonstrated how far golf equipment has developed to meet the challenge of such a fine golf course

The President of the Golf Society, Geoff Vincent AM and Charles Wilkins finished in a tie with 15 points. It took our scrutineers Dick Kirby and Peter Gompertz, some time to separate them and eventually declare Geoff Vincent the winner on a countback; congratulations Geoff.

In keeping with past tradition Geoff, and Charles, will have their names engraved on the Frank Shepherd trophy.

Our visitor from the UK, Ian Pearce won nearest the pin on the 5th, and longest drive on the 7th, with some great golf. Congratulations Ian.

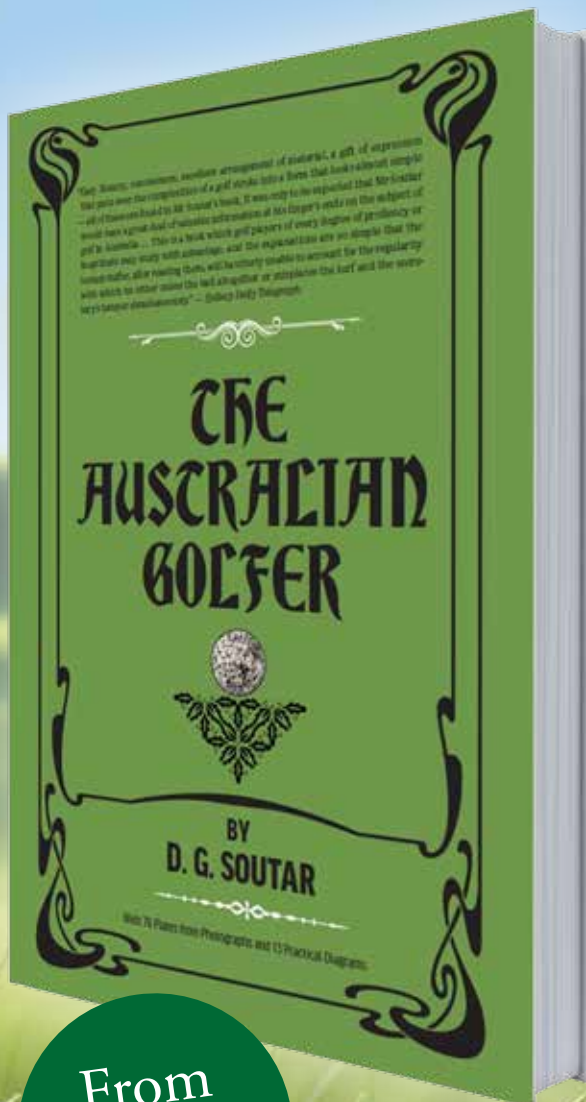
As this year has progressed, it has been very impressive to watch new people come along, build sets of Hickories, join the Society and become regulars at our Hickory Heroes events. This support is a great asset for the future of these colourful events in Victoria.

On this occasion we did not have any entry for the Burtta Cheney Trophy, which I hope will change next year.

*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.*



# CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA



From  
**\$9.99**

*'Easy fluency, conciseness, excellent arrangement of material, a gift of expression of material, a gift of expression that puts even the complexities of a golf stroke into a form that looks almost simple - all of these are found in Mr Soutar's book. It was only to be expected that Mr Soutar would have a great deal of valuable information at his finger's ends on the subject of golf in Australia ... This is a book which golf players of every degree of proficiency or ineptitude may study with advantage, and the explanations are so simple that the veriest duffer, after reading them, will be utterly unable to account for the regularity with which he either miss the ball altogether or misplaces the turf and the secretary's temper simultaneously.'*

*- Sydney Daily Telegraph*

This book has been reproduced by the Golf Society as it is considered the most important book published on the history of golf in Australia.

The Golf Society of Australia was established in 1982 and one of its objectives is to research and preserve the history of golf in Australia.

The author, D.G. (Dan) Soutar was one of the first professional golfers in Sydney. He arrived from Scotland in 1903 and most of the information contained in this book was related to him by other golfers. He admits that his knowledge of early Australian golf was limited, and some of the chapters are written by other people such as the information on Victoria's golf that was written by R.A.A. Balfour-Melville, the first Secretary of Royal Melbourne Golf Club.

*Available to order from the following websites*

[www.portcampbellpress.com.au](http://www.portcampbellpress.com.au)

[www.booktopia.com.au](http://www.booktopia.com.au)

[www.bookdepository.com](http://www.bookdepository.com)

[www.ebay.com.au](http://www.ebay.com.au)

