

THE LONG GAME

NEWSLETTER OF THE
GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



No 62, DECEMBER 2017



Terry White in Shed

Terry has an Eagle Eye for Golfing Collectibles

Courtesy of Kevin Childs, 'The Local' newspaper, Daylesford, Victoria

*So, what's the difference between a golf collector and a drug addict?
Drug addicts can be cured.*

Collector Terry White can only nod his capped head and agree as he stands in his Daylesford shed, jam-packed with golfing memorabilia of every kind, possible and impossible.

In his hands is a French grand piano. Unlike some of the bits and pieces stacked nearby this emits no sound, however, it is a putter with a large flat head dating from about 1914. Terry asked a bloke at a Sunday market in Sydney if he had any golfing stuff and he fetched this from his car. It was \$20 and is now worth about \$1500. Not that money's the issue. Once you get the collecting bug, it seems, little else matters.

Terry worked as a handyman for real estate agents and also played a bit of golf. "I'm a better collector than golfer," he says.

He owned four cherished hickory clubs when his son died of lymphoma at the age of 23 in 1995. "Anybody got anything they want to put in the coffin?" asked the undertaker to Terry's surprise. Into the coffin went the first hickory club Terry had bought.

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September Dinner at
The Royal Melbourne Golf Club

FOR THE DIARY

February 19 Monday

Dinner at
Metropolitan Golf Club

April 23 Monday

Historians Forum
at Victoria Golf Club

May 15 Tuesday

Don Lawrence Trophy
at Woodlands Golf Club

Editor's Column

By *Mango Maguire*

Welcome to Issue 62 of The Long Game, the final edition for 2017. Again, I would like to thank you for your encouragement and support over the year. I am hearing that you are enjoying the diversity of material and the interesting content from our contributors.

From the last issue I need to thank firstly Don H. Bradshaw, Captain of Peterborough Golf Club, for supplying the material for the quiz. This came from his writing of the club's history, and a conversation we had together. Should you ever be down the west coast of Victoria, and are itching for a game, in addition to Port Fairy and Warrnambool, you are in for a treat if you venture to Peterborough. Particularly if you have brought your hickories! We had three correct entries, and from my 'brown' hat Lynne Brown's name was drawn. As I write this over the Australian Open weekend, Lynne and I hope that you are in the harbour city and enjoying the show.

As promised previously, Ray Low's article of golf in that city from his earlier days is included. His games with top amateurs and pros alike must have been fascinating, a privilege few of us have experienced. His mention of The Von leads in beautifully with new member Greg Bain's article. Greg had an ambition to win the British Open, instead he ended up being an editor, including Norman von Nida's biography.

Of special interest for this edition is the article about the extensive and unique collection of Terry Smith. Just looking at the photograph of him in his golfing shed is a picture not of a thousand words, but more likely a thousand stories. Speaking of stories, our master story-teller who is currently on the bag of Curtis Luck this week, intrigues us with his ruminations on championship vs members' courses, and the design components needed for such. Another article is offered from our travelling correspondent Andrew Thomson, who shares a child's reflection of 'Dad' playing in the Australian Open, and being alongside him at the trophy presentation in 1967 at Commonwealth GC.

From the Commonwealth brigade, we have contributions from Bob Harper and new society member David Worley, with recounts from their legends Eric Routley and Bill Edgar. I am assured also that research is currently being undertaken on the club's renowned pro Sam Bennett, to feature in a future edition.

Reports are included from a range of recent events including the board events at Kingston Heath, Victoria, and the interstate Al Howard from Royal Canberra. In addition to the Hickory Heroes matches, Max Findlay has inaugurated a new trophy for a yearly championship.

The dinner at Royal Melbourne was a great success, and organiser Tony Rule has written a report about the topics discussed throughout the evening. At Riversdale, soon after their 125th anniversary celebrations, a full program was offered to all who attended, and Kim Hastie has summarised this in an interesting report.

At the AGM, Graeme Ryan gave his President's Annual Report, which he shares here. Kim spoke with much affection and extended thanks to the committee members standing down; Peter, Dick, Cliff and Max. Thank you gentlemen for your generous offerings over the years.

As many of you will be aware, Professor Weston Bate passed on recently. Peter Gompertz has written a Vale for him, outlining some of the outstanding achievements of his life, including his involvement with golf history.

Next issue will be a Summer edition. It will have a golf artistic theme, where all items will be of an artistic and creative nature. The usual literary articles will be rested, whilst all other contributions will be sought. So please be bold, let your creative juices flow and send in your item, or photo of item, by 28 January 2018, for these to be featured in print.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone an enjoyable break over Christmas and the summer. We can look forward to the newly formed committee taking on all for the events in 2018.



Peterborough Golf Club

GSA President's Annual Report 2016-2017

By Graeme Ryan

Dinners were held at Commonwealth, Kingston Heath and RMGC. All were well attended, in fact, record attendances were achieved. On each occasion, the speakers were most interesting. At RM, a panel of speakers from GA, GV and the PGA discussed current and planned developments in our golfing world.

Historians Forums at Huntingdale, Sorrento and Riversdale also drew record attendances and the speakers presented interesting and relevant topics.

Traditional golf events: Doug Bachli Trophy at Victoria, Don Lawrence at Woodlands, President's Trophy at Royal Melbourne. All were well attended and most enjoyable.

Hickory Heroes held events monthly and the annual Al Howard Hickory Challenge between GSA and AGHS played at Royal Canberra and Queanbeyan.

Our website, after many years of neglect, has been brought up-to-date and is a working resource, with a high level of functionality. It will continue to grow and become a vital resource for the benefit of all members.

Collection/Library:

Much has been done in bringing order out of chaos and it is ready to be taken out of storage and presented to the general public. All I can say at present is watch this space.

Membership:

A recruiting campaign which began late 2016 is successful and ongoing with a net increase of 12.5% over the last year. New members from Victoria and other states have joined and more will follow.

Interstate:

Inaugural meetings of State Chapters in Adelaide and Perth in recent weeks have created considerable interest and already brought in new members.

International:

My visits to the UK and US in July and November were well received by their golf societies and I have presented a Memorandum of Understanding to both. This is currently being considered and I'm confident that reciprocal agreements will be established soon.

National Golf Heritage Society:

Meetings earlier this year have led to the formation of a GSA Working Group which met on Monday 27 November. Early indications are very promising and significant progress will occur in coming months.

I, and all GSA members, have been supported by a strong committee consisting of people who have shown outstanding dedication, wisdom and energy. We have been most fortunate, and they thoroughly deserve our gratitude.

To those committee-men who have retired (Dick Kirby, Peter Gompertz, Cliff George and Max Findlay), I extend my thanks on behalf of us all.

Artistic Contributions Sought for Issue 63

For the next issue, the theme is to be 'Golf Expressed as Art'. As stated in the Editor's Column, it may be any form of art, from drawings to stories, photography to sculpture, and even from poetry to music, and more. If you are not sure what art is, refer to your nearest dictionary. You may be amazed what the definition includes.

This is an opportunity for everyone to contribute. We are all alive, and so have the possibility and need for expression. As the passion that joins us together in the Society is golf and its heritage, consider the art that is created within this context. There will be no distinction between professional or amateur, or indeed golfer or 'artist'. We all golf in some shape or form, and we also express ourselves each day to some extent. The challenge, is to bring these two together in a way that appeals to you, and offer this for inclusion in TLG.

As an incentive, two tickets each to the Women's Australian Open from 15-18 February 2018 at Kooyonga in S.A. are being offered to the three most outstanding entrants, courtesy of Golf Australia. We are looking forward to your contributions from around Australia to be included in Issue 63.

All items to be sent to the GSA Secretary by Sunday 28 January 2018.

Vale Professor Weston Bate OAM MA FRHSV

By Peter Gompertz

With the death of Weston Bate at the age of 92, a passionate life force has been finally quelled. As a young man, Weston Bate flew Lancaster Bombers in World War II, so young in fact he flew them before, in his own words, he had “shaved, driven a car or kissed a girl”!

On his return to Melbourne, after the war, he studied for a degree in History at Melbourne University and then taught history at Melbourne Grammar. The final 10 years of his working life he was Professor of Australian Studies at Melbourne University. In his spare time, he wrote two books on the history of gold mining in Ballarat which prompted the founding of ‘Sovereign Hill’, an open-air museum devoted to the early gold rush days of Ballarat, and a considerable body of poetry, including his major work ‘Somers’.

In retirement he wrote histories of Geelong Grammar and Melbourne Grammar, two of Victoria’s leading private schools, as well as a history of The Metropolitan GC where he became C grade champion in his 91st year. He also wrote ‘Heads You Win’, a history of Barwon Heads GC, where in 1931 Dr Alister Mackenzie was consulted on the layout of the course.

His greatest gift was to energise all those whom he met, and the historical societies and golf clubs that he inspired across Victoria to pursue history with more skill, passion and tenacity.



Weston Bate at Metropolitan Golf Club

Terry has an Eagle Eye for Golfing Collectibles

Continued from page 1

This was a dark time. “For four or five years I went bonkers,” he says. “I have always been a bit of a collector of something and had half a dozen books on golf collecting. Then I started to go to markets, fairs, antique fairs all over Sydney. I was a madman.”

The six books grew to 600, mostly still in boxes, since his move here 10 years ago.

His most valuable item features The Great Triumvirate, the renowned players J. H. Taylor, James Braid and Harry Vardon in a photograph. They were the three leading British golfers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Between them they won the British Open 16 times in the 21 tournaments between 1894 and 1914. With the picture is a card signed by Braid in 1901 and a list of his wins in the British Open that year and four years later, as well as in 1906, 1908 and 1910.

A sterling silver inkwell trophy features a player framed by two golf balls. With a pen holder in front. ‘Hymie’ is an electrically powered little metal golfer who maniacally swings and misses a ball on a wire, perhaps a testament to the futility of the game.

Then there are the other balls, including a ‘feathery’, its shell of pigskin and stuffed with feathers. Nearby is what looks like another feathery but is a Fives Ball, hit against a wall with a golf stick and dating from 1790.

One putter has a square shaft, another a shaft that is only half circular.

Golfers have an almost childlike faith in devices that may help their game. Proof of this is the ‘anti-shank iron’, its shaft curved at the bottom as an alleged cure for such a dreaded shot. A lot of things were invented to help play, or locate lost balls. An electric beeper was conjured up well before a GPS might do the job.

Bob Hope suddenly bursts into ‘Thanks for the Memory’ as he stands in statuette form, club in hand. Hope, who was fond of a dollar or two, also put his name to a radio-controlled miniature golf buggy. He is flanked by Australian-made pottery celebrating the game, its exuberance extinguishing any aesthetic appeal.

Terry shows an Australian-made three-wheel golf cart with a big metal steering wheel. “It doesn’t go,” he says. “It was a project.”

Just a year ago, 69-year-old Terry had a heart attack and bypass surgery. Now he wonders where his collection will go because his two daughters don’t want it.

“I’ve been busy getting it out of boxes and displaying it,” he says, reaching for a gizmo that has a lever which, when pushed, drops a ball which you then hit on the practice tee.

Anyone keen to see a film on reel of the 1958 US Masters should contact Terry.

Then he can show a rarity, a banned golf poster. It was for the Australian Ladies Championship in 1997 and contained the offensive slogan, “Have you ever been hit by a girl?”

Rows of Walt Disney comics (“You have to be desperate!”) are opposite a chocolate mould which produces edible balls, complete with their old-time mesh covers.

And for those who can’t get to a course, there is a nine-hole garden set for the backyard, putters only, to prevent divots.

Since golf is given over to practically anything, why not tapestry? A piece made by his wife, Gail celebrating the Royal and Ancient Game, won first prize at the Daylesford Show.

Clayton's Corner

By Mike Clayton

Who do you design courses for? It's a question often asked and the answer, bemusing to the questioner most often, is we don't design for anybody in particular.

Who is The Old Course designed for? Royal Melbourne? Cypress Point? They are not designed for anybody in particular. There is space to play, lots of it at so many holes and the uninformed often argue all three would be better for narrower fairways and rough. John Huggan, the Scottish journalist, would call them point-missers. He would be right.

Hazards are spread randomly around the course so to affect everybody at some point in the round. There is nothing wrong with the occasional hazard only affecting the shorter hitters or the high markers. Why take away all the interest for them?

A short hitter having to carry a hazard a hundred yards ahead faces the same choices as Geoff Ogilvy having to carry a hazard two hundred and eighty yards away. They still have to hit their best shot and to avoid the carry means considering the alternatives. On a good course those alternatives should be worthy.

The ideal course is surely one capturing the essence of the principle of the better you are the harder the course plays but the higher your handicap the easier it is to match it. Royal Melbourne and The Old Course manage it perfectly. If you place the pins in the more difficult parts of the greens to access at both these courses and at Augusta, you have to drive to the more difficult parts of the fairways in order to play to the flags. It's hard to make birdies playing away from the trouble from the tee because it is much harder to get anywhere near the flags. The poorer players, hoping to make bogeys with a few pars sprinkled in between, can aim safely away from the hazards and play handicap golf.

Coolum, in contrast, was a course where the opposite seemed to happen. Water was a dominant hazard and on many holes, yet it was far enough from the play for good players to make the golf course relatively easy. Yet it always seemed to be a brutally difficult for the poorer players because crooked hitting on what were quite narrow fairways was severely punished. The worse you played the harder it was to make the same score you could easily do at Royal Melbourne, or Victoria or Kingston Heath.

The game was really hard when all of the best championship courses in Australia were conceived. It was played with hickory shafts and the balls, by today's standards, were pretty miserable. Steel shafts, introduced in the 1930s helped, but Kingston Heath in 1932 was just over 6800 yards. Clearly off the back tees it was not a 'members course'. It was designed to test first class play as were the others including The Australian, Royal Sydney, Royal Queensland, Lake Karrinyup, Royal Adelaide, Kooyonga and the best sandbelt courses in Melbourne.

These were to be the premier clubs where big championships would be decided. They were our equivalent of the best, and most testing, championship courses in Britain.

Their genius was the designers also made holes and courses very playable for members. It didn't mean they avoided building hazards, from which escape for the members lacking basic golfing competency was easy.

MacKenzie himself was on site when his amazing 15th hole at Kingston Heath was shaped up. The 'Big Bertha' bunker on the left is the last bunker in Melbourne you want to be in – and that's if you are a good player. How a player with a poor grip (a flaw finding its ultimate exposure playing from sand) ever gets out is a mystery. Mostly they don't.

Build the same hole today and there would be howls of protest by the higher markers suggesting you were 'building holes for pros'. No one complains because you join the club knowing the complexity and difficulty of the hole and it is universally accepted as a great hole. Arguably it is the finest short hole in the country.

Does it pass the playable for all test? It's not even close. Peter Thomson has long argued we don't have the championship courses to match the difficulty of places like Carnoustie, Troon, Muirfield or Royal St Georges. That view was the genesis of Moonah Links, the course purpose built for The Australian Open. It didn't work out as an Open venue but it at least offers some defence against the modern ball.

Welcome to New Members

Bill Atherton

Brian McPhail

Steven Clegg

David Mc Donald

Tony Killen

Ron Mathieson

Hamish Richardson

Claire Walker

Terry Thornton

Richard A Begg

Sandy Jay

Geoff Speirs

John Winter

Ben Jarvis

Reminiscing about Golfing in the Harbour City

By Ray Low

My good friend, the editor, has asked me to pen a few stories from the past.

I'm 70 now, and I have a lot of strong memories of great players I've known from the 60's and 70's.

I hope you find them interesting.

They were very different times back then. There were no dour, heavily trained young blokes all bombing it a mile and playing a similar game. A golfer used to practice from 100 yards with everything from a wedge to a 3 iron, moving it both ways. The focus was more on improvisation, in golf - and in life. Most of the golfers were notorious playboys.

My own game started in 1960 when a cousin snuck me onto Pennant Hills to hit a few balls. I got down to a 1 handicap and there were lots of fascinating losses and victories along the way, but really, I never lived up to the potential I showed glimpses of. So, this article is about the great players I've known.

Jim Moran. I was assistant to him at Cromer for a while. Jim was a great striker who won titles, but you can't even find him on Google. I caddied for him when he was runner up in the 72 holes Lakes Open one year, won by Bruce Devlin.

Bruce Devlin. I met him, and he was so gracious and encouraging. I later watched him in an 18-hole playoff against Jack Nicklaus. He shot 69 around The Lakes but Jack shot 65, including a missed putt from 18. People forget that Jack was by far the longest hitter in the world in his early days. I also watched him around Manly when he shot 61 to win.

He was hitting 4 irons at the first, from just to the right of the front tee. Someone asked him to have a go at the green, a shot of nearly 300 yards. He knocked into a greenside bunker.

Norman Von Nida. I was fortunate to be in an exhibition match with the Von when he was in his 70's and nearly blind. He was still supple and had a sweet swing. Totally uninhibited, he took a piss behind a tree in full view of 100 people. I guess he had nothing to lose.

Jan Stephenson. I was also in an exhibition with Jan, Diana Thomas and my close friend Eric Cooper. She was a beautiful, stylish girl and a great player. Diana Thomas was also an elite golfer but can scarcely be found on Google. She died soon after.

Eric went on to become Australia's top amateur. One year, he was 6 under and in contention after 3 rounds of the Australian Open at Kensington.

Tony Gresham. What a golfer! He played off plus 4 at Pennant Hills and still won handicap events. I played with him in the NSW Cup over 36 holes. I scrambled around for 78-78 in the breeze. He shot 74-74 but it felt like he beat me by 20 shots. I've played with a lot of them, Harry Berwick, Phil Billings, Kevin Hartley, Peter Heard, Phil Wood, Colin Kaye, etc. No-one came close to Gresham.

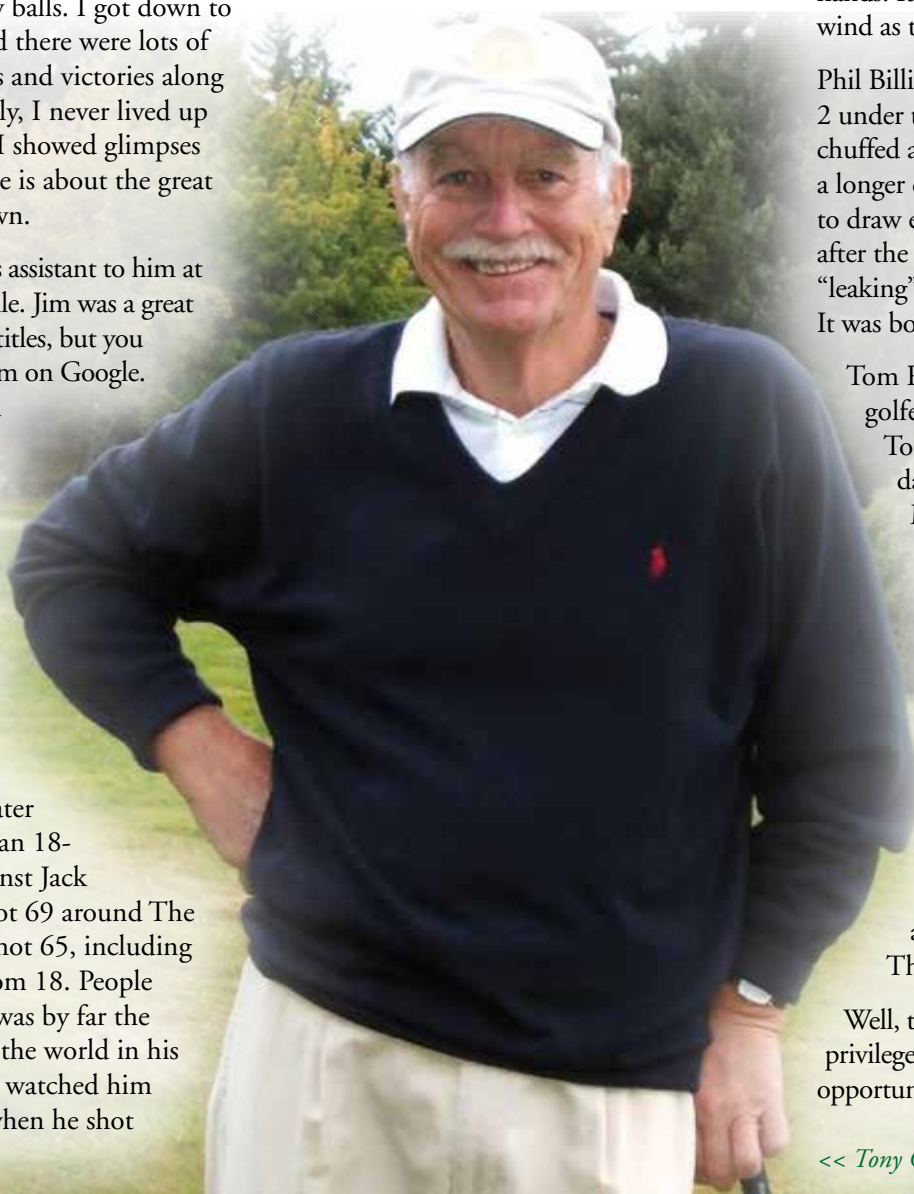
Peter Heard. I played him in a pennant match at St Michael's. Was 2 up after 11 and looking good. He pressed the go button and we were shaking hands after 16. He was a big man with huge hands. It was said he could play in the wind as though it wasn't there.

Phil Billings. Around The Lakes I shot 2 under to his 1 under. I felt pretty chuffed about that. I used to cut up a longer club into the wind. He used to draw everything. Having drinks after the round he chastised me for "leaking" so many shots. He was right. It was both a strength and a weakness.

Tom Ramsay. Not so much as a golfer with a 5 handicap, but Tom had a life. Back in those days there was Tom at The Mirror, Phil Smith at The Sun and Phil Tressider at The Telegraph. Golf was big news. Tom travelled the world in style reporting on tournaments. For a while he dated Jan Stephenson. He was also the editor of the page 5 beautiful girl feature every weekday. You can imagine what that entailed!!! Tom died recently after an amazing life. That was a bygone era.

Well, that's about my quota. I've been privileged and I'm so grateful for the opportunity to share a few snippets.

<< Tony Gresham





Two Australian Open Champions Peter Thomson and Adam Scott

The Australian Open – a child remembers

By Andrew Thomson

Every true golfing nation has an open championship. These are important events in the golf calendar because they are 'open' to anyone, amateur or professional, to qualify and seek victory. They are owned and run not by the PGAs, but by the national golf associations, and they aim to find the very best golfer of the year.

The Australian Open has a rich history of champions both home-grown and foreign. Why not? We are a nation settled by generations of immigrants. We have sandy soil and golf courses the equal of anything outside the sacred seaside land of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. It was from these places that many came, and we hold fast to their golfing traditions. Only we added to those traditions a sense of egalitarianism and a fair go for those who choose to pursue their sport as a means of supporting their families. We welcome and enjoy competition from foreign golfers.

My father won the Australian Open three times, in 1951, 1967, and 1972, a record that spans three different decades. He recalls that in 1951, he was also the New Zealand Open champion when he won the Australian Open, something that he thinks nobody else has done. What isn't widely known is that during the mid and late 1950s he didn't play the Australian Open because the tournament was held in August when he was away in the United States, Europe, or Britain. It wasn't until the 1960s that the Australian Golf Union agreed to shift the date to later in the year.

Looking at the list of winners of the Australian Open you see an astonishing number of non-Australian golfing greats: Sarazen, Nicklaus, Palmer, Watson, Caldecavechia, McIlroy, Spieth. Why did these great players travel all the way to Australia to play this tournament? Back in my father's day, there was more prestige in winning national opens than there is today, and there was an appreciation for the very high standard of Australian golf courses.

In recent decades the scourge of appearance money has changed things somewhat, but the top players in world golf do still respect Australian golf and enjoy playing on our wonderful courses.

As a child I remember the Australian Open as a very important time of the year, more especially when it was played in Melbourne. I remember Gary Player coming to our home for dinner, just him and my family enjoying some lamb chops. Above all, my impression as a child of the tournament was how significant it was that all those great players against whom Dad spent most of the year away battling against were here close-by. When my sisters and I saw them at the golf course we were thrilled. Could Dad beat them? Definitely we thought, though it didn't always happen. That said, in 1967 at Commonwealth Golf Club I was allowed onto the dais to hug my father with the Stonehaven Cup, and in 1972 at Kooyonga, my sister Pan was allowed the same treat. For the Thomson children the Australian Open was always a big thrill.



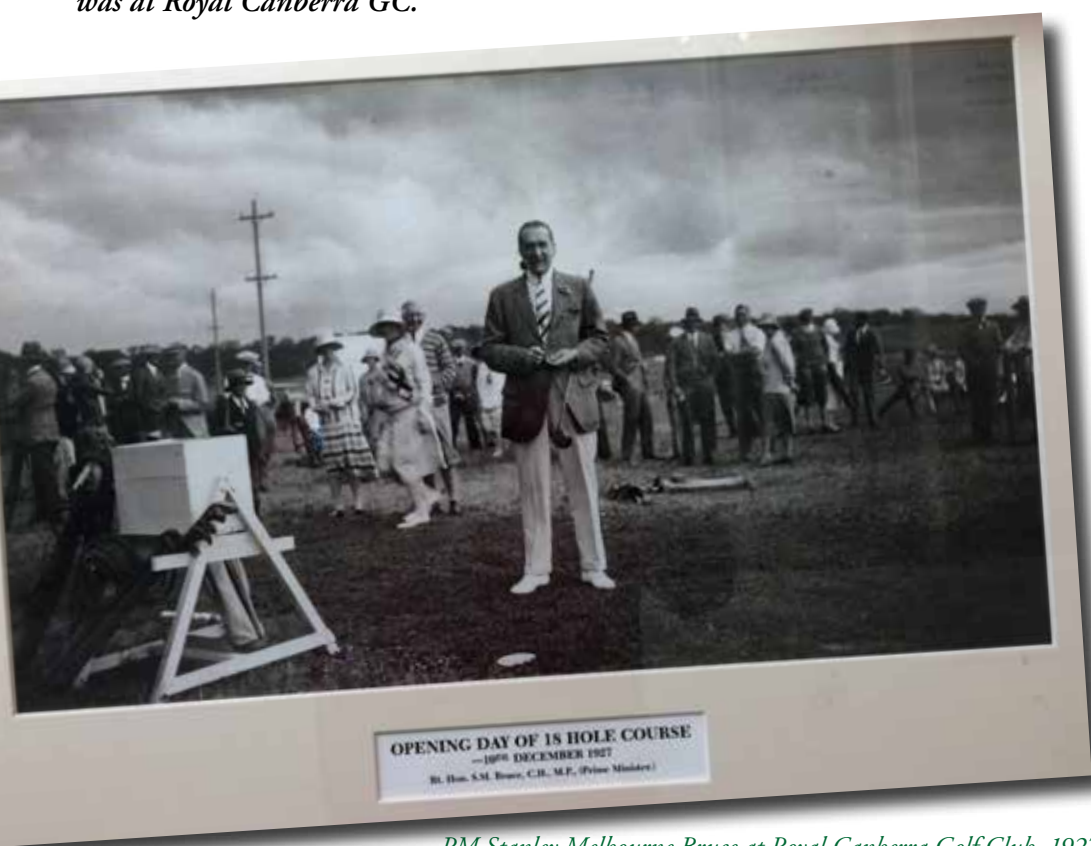
Al Howard Trophy contestants at Royal Canberra Golf Club

Al Howard Match against Australian Golf Heritage Society

By Neil Walker

The annual Al Howard match was held over two days, the 17 and 18 October 2017. The initial assembly was at Royal Canberra GC.

The weather was excellent with clear skies, pleasant temperatures, and the course was ideal.



OPENING DAY OF 18 HOLE COURSE
—1906 DECEMBER 1907
Rt. Hon. S.M. Bruce, C.B., M.P., (Prime Minister)

PM Stanley Melbourne Bruce at Royal Canberra Golf Club, 1927

Five GSA members arrived and the AGHS fielded 5 players as well. Over 18 holes, 5 games of match play resulted in GSA leading by 5 holes overall. Thus, it was a tight struggle between the two teams. All were very impressed with the layout and standard of Royal Canberra. It is a great course and it was enjoyed by all.

On the second day, we played again with five players per side at the Queanbeyan GC, across the border in NSW, as Al Howard had worked on the course layout design. A Stableford format was played with AGHS winning easily. After a warm and dry day, most retired to the clubhouse for refreshments and dinner.

Next year the option to play along the Murray has been suggested.

Norman's Cold Top and Norman in the Limelight (*The Von*)

By Greg Bain

Like many young lads, I got the golf bug aged 13, and set about preparing myself for my first major target – The British Open by age 21. Although a good putter, my long game was missing the 'long', compared to my compatriots, and my quest for glory started to look a little shaky. After a year with George Cussell as Assistant Pro at East Malvern Golf Course (wages of \$50 for 60 hours), I surmised a season on the Aussie circuit as a caddy would be more lucrative. So along with my golf-fanatic cousin, we set off to Adelaide on the Overland train to pick up a pro at the Westlakes Classic. The year was 1976, and it turned out to be Greg Norman's first tournament win.

It was Bob Tuohy's first event as a tournament director, and he assigned me to an excellent Kiwi, John Lister, who had recently won on the PGA Tour. Lister finished well in the Westlakes, so I earned enough to get a flight to Sydney for the Australian Open the following week. I bunkered down in the Captain Cook Hotel for \$20 a week, and joined Lister again at the Australian Golf Club. Big Jack Nicklaus (whose swing I copied for 10 years but without the results) was the marquee player, and it was the last tournament there before he ushered in sweeping changes to the course.

To my delight, my man John Lister was paired for the first two rounds with both Nicklaus and the new star, Greg Norman. I would be "inside the ropes" with the Great Man!

I remember so much about those two days. The passion of the crowd seeing Nicklaus up close, how he could switch his concentration on and off like a tap, and all the wonderful shots I saw from him and his partners. Ironically, it was Norman's cold top off the first tee on Thursday that stole the show.

The Australian Open was a wonderful memory. The sense of occasion for the players and the crowd was palpable. Little did I know then that I would pre-qualify and play in the same tournament at my home course, Metropolitan, in 1979. Fond memories indeed.

Much later, my company published Norman von Nida's book *'The Von: Stories and Suggestions from Australian Golf's Little Master'*. It was a privilege to spend time talking and playing with Norman, and hearing so many stories about early tournament golf, particularly his three Australian Open wins.

Peter Thomson and others were at the launch, and the book included glowing forewords from Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player and Thomson. It was a thrill to see the Von enjoying some limelight and genuine affection from the Australian public in the twilight of his life. During the Open at Royal Adelaide in 1998, the Von noticed Faldo through the clubhouse front windows, practising his putting after a woeful round.

He went over and gave him a few tips, including loosening his left-hand grip.



Faldo's next round was 8 shots better than the first and he said it felt "like a new day".

I asked Norman some time later, what he said to Nick on that practise green. "Nothing much, I just gave him a bit of syrup" he said.

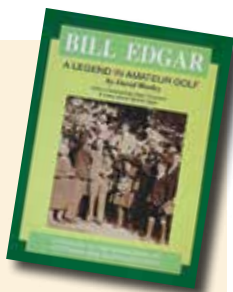
Faldo became a von Nida disciple for a time after that encounter, and agreed to help launch the book at the 1999 Australian Open (Royal Sydney). As the organiser of the event, I had everyone in place in the media tent, except Faldo, who was nowhere to be seen. I quickly dashed up to the clubhouse, and spotted him lunching with his coach. "Sorry to intrude Nick, but I am running the book launch for von Nida and we are ready to start. "I'll be down soon, just having lunch" came the stern reply. "Nick, it's a salad, you can come back for it later", I offered in desperation. With that, he meekly followed me to the event.



The Von with Faldo

Bill Edgar and hickory clubs

By David Worley



Sadly, Bill Edgar died in 1997. Two years earlier I wrote his biography so that his wonderful achievements would be recorded for posterity.

In 1927, Bill won the first of his three Victorian Amateur titles. Just 18-years old, he was at that point in time the youngest ever winner. He had just 8 hickory clubs and I recall him proudly telling me that they cost 2 pounds and 4 shillings in total.

Just prior to Bill's death I figured that probably he and Gene Sarazen were then the only people alive to have won a major golf event with hickory clubs. Steel became legal under the USGA Rules in 1925. Their use was legalised for the rest of the world by the R&A in 1929.

Edgar remembers the early days in trying out steel shafts when any slight mis-hit sent a ringing through the fingers that lasted for minutes. It was only in 1927, when a company in America called True Temper patented the modern-day shaft. It has steps and it is these tapered steps which absorb the shock.

Many golfers continued to use hickory shafts even into the 1930's as it was not until some years later that manufacturing standards improved to the extent that steel shafts became more consistent. In fact, the last American championship which was won with hickory shafts was in 1936 when Johnny Fischer won the US Amateur. The first US Open to be won by a player using steel-shafted clubs was in 1931.

I asked Bill: "What are your recollections of hickory-shafted clubs?"

"A hickory-shafted club had something that I feel steel-shafted clubs have not got. With the hickory shaft, the whole club felt as if it was one piece. With steel or graphite-shafted golf clubs you can feel the head all the time."

"Whilst that was one of the good points about hickory, against it was the lack of flexibility. With steel, they have been able to give you various flexibilities which is helpful as far as different players are concerned. It was also difficult to get two hickory shafts exactly the same."

"When you look back on most of our courses in the metropolitan area, they were mainly designed in the days of the hickory shaft and the small ball. Yet it is amazing to see how well they have stood up to the new equipment. I would love to see Greg Norman use a set of hickory-shafted clubs and see how far he could hit the ball."

Eric Routley Interview

By Bob Harper

(Based on an interview by Brendan Moloney, in June 2017)

Eric Routley is clearly a legend of amateur golf in Victoria and Australia.

Highlights of Rout's (as he is affectionately known) career are:

- 6 times Victorian Amateur Champion
- 16 times Commonwealth Golf Club Champion
- Captain of the Australian Eisenhower Cup team in 1960 at Merion USA
- Represented Victoria many times in the Interstate Teams events
- Twice Australian Seniors Champion

Rout first became involved in golf when he would visit his grandfather at about age 5. His grandfather, Ted Syer, was a greenkeeper at Commonwealth GC, and he and his grandmother lived in the old clubhouse on Centre Road, Oakleigh.

One of Rout's early memories was watching Sloan Morpeth win the Victorian Amateur Championship in 1929. Sloan Morpeth was appointed manager of Commonwealth GC in 1930 and continued to be a positive influence on Rout's career until he retired in the 1960's. It was appropriate that both Eric Routley and Sloan Morpeth were admitted to the Golf Victoria Hall of Fame on the same day in 2016.

Although Rout's Pennant career with Commonwealth was delayed slightly by World War II, he still managed to represent Commonwealth for 45 years without missing a game until he retired in 1990.

Throughout his career, Rout played Doug Bachli many times. Bachli never beat Rout, even in one pennant match at Commonwealth when Rout had an injured back and knee. Bachli finally thought he had his chance. However, after spending the morning with his osteopath, and eventually hobbling on to the first tee, Rout shut the gate after opening with two birdies to win 6/5 to maintain his record over Bachli.

Rout is still going strong at age 93 living in Skye with his wife, Mary.



Edgar in the bunker, Routley on the green at Yarra Yarra, 11th hole



Frank Shepherd Trophy Winner David Worley with Graeme Ryan

Annual Hickory Day - Frank Shepherd & Burtta Cheney Trophies

By Kim Hastie

The Society's Annual Hickory day was held at Kingston Heath Golf Club on 16 October, playing for the Frank Shepherd and Burtta Cheney Trophies.

A warm spring afternoon saw 20 players, with many wearing clothes of the era, go out with their hickories for our 9-hole event.

With great weather and The Heath in beautiful condition with quick greens, it was a perfect day for playing hickories.

A most enjoyable day closed with refreshments and snacks as Secretary Kim Hastie and President Graeme Ryan made the presentations.

The Golf Society appreciates and thanked the club for their ongoing support and hospitality with this event



Burtta Cheney Trophy winner Kim Hastie

Results

Men's Winner:	David Worley
Women's Winner:	Kim Hastie
Longest Drive:	Luke Eipper
Nearest the Pin:	Rod Hiscox
Guest winners:	Terry Thornton and Ros Nicol



Doug Bachli Winner Neil Walker

Doug Bachli Trophy and Annual General Meeting

By Kim Hastie

The year's final handbook event, the Doug Bachli Trophy was recently contested at its regular venue the always challenging Victoria Golf Club.

A good field went out to play our annual Stableford competition on a warm spring afternoon. The course was in wonderful condition and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Committee member Neil Walker was the Doug Bachli Trophy and Men's winner with an impressive 41 points, whilst Tony Lang was runner-up on 35 points. Morag North was the Womens winner with 32 points, and Virginia Gorrell the runner-up with 31 points.

Max Findlay presented the inaugural Hickory Hero Championship trophy to winner Mango Maguire.

The 36th AGM followed the golf, where President Graeme Ryan convened the meeting, presenting his Annual report and bringing us update date on the proposal for a truly National Golf Society.

Due to retirements, the election results saw some committee changes. We farewelled and gave thanks to Hon. Treasurer Dick Kirby, past Long Game editor Peter Gompertz, Cliff George and Max Findlay. These four men have made enormous and varied contributions to the Society over many years.

Graeme Ryan and Kim Hastie were re-elected along with committee members Tony Rule and David Hewitt. Neil Walker was elected Honorary Treasurer.



Doug Bachli Women's Winner Morag North

New committee members elected were Mango Maguire, Murray Cropley, Morag North and Michael Church.

The meeting was closed with immediate Past President Geoff Vincent AM being awarded Life Membership to the Society. Geoff spoke of his time as President and appreciated the recognition given to him

The night ended with a Cocktail party.

Hickory Heroes Report

By Max Findlay

Metropolitan Golf Club hosted the Hickory Heroes on 15 August 2017. With 12 players taking part, it was a day when 15mm of rain was forecast, but only a few spots fell.

New member Chris Thorn shot 2 over the card with 19 points, Richard Fellner had 14 points, and Tony Rule and Max Findlay each had 12 points.

GSA Hickory Heroes Tournament, best 3 Scores from 6 rounds:

- 1st Mango Maguire – 45 points
- 2nd Paul Burgers – 40 points
- 3rd Cliff George – 40 points
- 4th Max Findlay – 39 points

Royal Melbourne Golf Club hosted the Hickory Heroes on 25 September 2017. A great day was had by all. Royal Melbourne Golf Club really go out of their way to look after us.



Hickory Heroes at Commonwealth Golf Club

Semi-Final of Hickory Heroes Tournament:

Mango Maguire defeated Max Findlay 2/1, and Geoff George defeated Paul Burgess on the 2nd play-off hole.

In the Stableford section, Peter Stickley had 18 Points, followed by Greg Bain with 17 Points and Marty Maguire with 15 Points.

Commonwealth Golf Club hosted the Hickory Heroes to play 9 holes on 1 November.



Max Findlay with Hickory Champion Mango Maguire

Final of Hickory Heroes Tournament:

Mango Maguire defeated Cliff George 4/2 in the final. Well done to both for reaching the final. Despite the outcome, the match was closer than the result indicated, with Cliff playing valiantly after being 2 down early on. As is often the case in match play, the match turned in Mango's favour on the long par 5, 6th hole where Mango recovered from two bunkers to make a desperate 6, while Cliff missed his opportunity to win the hole or gain a half after two solid wood shots down the fairway.

In the Stableford section, Commonwealth members Martin Maguire and Bob Harper led the way with the home course advantage with 17 and 16 points respectively, with their playing partner Mark Brasher making it a group trifecta for his 12 points.



Hickory Heroes Peter Stickley putting Hole 9 Royal Melbourne Golf Club

Historians Forum, Riversdale GC, 23 October 2017

By Kim Hastie

Our final forum for the year was at Riversdale Golf Club. President Graeme Ryan welcomed the 30 members and guests and opened the meeting with an update on some of the Society's recent activities and outlined the aim to develop a national golf heritage body.

The most recent progress has been to develop a stronger relationship with the Australian Golf Heritage Society (AGHS) in NSW.

Ken Watson, the club's President talked about the well-known Murdoch family and their connection to the club. We are all familiar with this very prominent and successful family, yet many of us don't know about their talents as golfers.

Ken outlined the family's early connection and contributions beginning with Patrick J. Murdoch, a Presbyterian minister. By early 1903, his three children Frank, Keith and Helen had joined. Ken highlighted a few of the successes of Frank Murdoch. In 1904, age 17, he won the Club Championship at Surrey Hills, then won five more times at the Camberwell links from 1909 to 1913. He also won Riversdale Cups in 1907, 1910 and 1914.

Ken showed a few slides. One of interest featured four members who had achieved the distinction of playing golf at all three locations.

John Boundy, Life Member and Chair History Book Committee gave us insight into the history of the club at the current St Johns Wood location. Established in 1892 as the Surrey Hills Golf Club, golf was played in paddocks below Mont Albert railway station and across Whitehorse Road.

In 1908, the Club moved to leased land in East Camberwell near Riversdale Road, and this location gave the Club its new and continuing name. In 1924, seeking a permanent home to meet the needs of its growing membership, the Club purchased the now current land of some 160 acres. The original course at St Johns Wood was laid out by member architect C J Bidstrup to plans drawn up by Professional Jock Young.

After the loss of land due to the new railway, noted course architect Alex Russell was commissioned to undertake a redesign. He laid out the new 18-hole course which opened to high praise in March 1930.

By 2007, the clubhouse no longer met expected standards. Members expressed a strong desire to retain its location with its views, Concept plans were drawn up by architect and member John Zourkas. Major extensions commenced in 2009.

John's closing comments, "The course has stood the test of time with its Alex Russell layout, largely unchanged from the time of its construction in 1930."

Ian Rowell, Vice-President and Chair of Riversdale Heritage Committee, spoke about the first 20 years of the Riversdale Cup and mentioned some very notable early winners such as the Anderson brothers, Harry Howden, Louis Whyte, Ivo Whitten, Ben Lempriere, and Frank Murdoch who won three times.

In 1896, a competition was first proposed by Harry Culliton, one of the club's early great golfers and administrators. It was originally known as The Surrey Hills Open and the clubs invited to compete were Royal Melbourne and Geelong. A total of 86 players competed in the first event so it was deemed a success to be continued in 1897.

Most of the good players in the state were competing so this created an additional tournament to the national and state titles. Five events were competed:

Ladies' Handicap, Mixed Doubles, Men's Doubles, Championship, and Men's Handicap.

In 1913, there was a record entry of 485 contestants, a far cry from the 86 who contested the first tournament. The Riversdale Cup has provided great competition for 121 years and is still viewed as a major amateur event in this country and retains a high world ranking.

John Boundy returned to the lectern to talk about the club's publication of their 125-year history book.



Riversdale Golf Club Captain Ron Mathieson presenting to Graeme Ryan

The club celebrated its 125-year history 10 days earlier when the book 'Riversdale 125' was launched.

He gave quite a detailed account of the process taken, starting with the selection of the author. John Arnold, author of the previous two histories (1977 and 1992) agreed to do it again. John finished by recognising the four years of detailed work done by a dedicated committee. At the close of his talk, the club Captain Ron Mathieson made a presentation of the book to President Graeme Ryan.

Ross Davis from Metropolitan Golf Club brought along his collection of golf ball markers. The collection is mostly from international courses but contained some significant Australian markers. Ross spoke of his most treasured pieces such as 75 markers from the widely recognised top 100 courses in the world and markers from the 10 oldest clubs in the world.

Cliff George brought a wonderful piece of silverware, a trophy once known as the 'Victorian Golf Cup'. Cliff wrote an article about this trophy in the previous issue. This was displayed alongside the Riversdale Cup. Moira Drew also provided for display a collection of programs from the events discussed.

John Snell, former Riversdale member and Club Champion, shared some of his happy and humorous memories from his time at the club.

President Graeme closed the meeting and thanked the speakers for their interesting and enjoyable talks and the club and the staff for their generous hospitality.



Kingston Heath 14th

Favourite Hickory Shots

By Matt Mollica

Our hickory clubs unite us with golf's past. The names stamped on the back of our old clubs, the tweeds and Fair Isle sweaters we wear when we play, and the players of generations past when we read of hickory era golf. Yet perhaps, most notably, the mode of play we enjoy when using the antique irons and woods.

Today's modern equipment is designed with an aerial game in mind – bomb and gouge as they say on the PGA Tour. Hickories implore an older, more cerebral and enjoyable form of the game, for a good deal of time, being played along the ground. These include the running shots, played with consideration of ground contour, the long putts, and jigger shots that trundle more than they fly.

Australia boasts many courses of great quality, eminently suited to play with hickories. Courses with imposing hazards to negotiate from the tee. Courses with great width, firm surfaces, and interesting greens. The following is a small selection of some of the shots I most enjoy playing with wooden shafted clubs, on courses around our country.

Approach to Par 4 3rd hole, Royal Melbourne West

A famous front to back sloping green, which is fronted by a swale oblique to the fairway and line of approach for most players. Calling for precision, the approach can often be a bump and run. But it better be played with enough weight, and far enough left – lest the ball be swept away from the putting surface!

Third to the par 5 14th hole, Kingston Heath

With 100-140yds remaining, and a ball on the right of the fairway, the slope of the ground aids a running approach shot, played to the right edge of the green.

When executed well, the ball skips and rolls down and to the left, slowly tracking towards any pin cut on the left of the green, almost as if by remote control.

Drive on the par 4 18th hole, Royal Melbourne West

The hole courses up and to the right, over an imposing nest of bunkers. The shorter carry on the left renders the green almost unreachable for hickory players. Brave drives played to the right flirt with the hazard, and bring the green into play on the next. But the drive must be good – one last opportunity to show bravery and skill.

Approach to the par 4 12th hole, Barnbougle Dunes

Following a good drive, this shot is a short yet challenging one. The green is small, and somewhat elusive. Skipping the ball along the fescue fairway, and seeing it slow down, roll through a small dip, and up on to the green, is a simple joy.

Approach to the par 4 2nd hole, Frankston

This short two shot hole features an elegantly understated green, which slopes from front to back. Correctly weighting the approach shot, judging the roll of the ball after landing, is always exacting yet fun.

Royal Melbourne West 18th



Tony Rule, Trevor Herden, Stephen Spargo, Graeme Ryan and Stephen Pitt

September Dinner at The Royal Melbourne Golf Club

By Tony Rule

The third and final dinner of the year was held at The Royal Melbourne Golf Club on Monday 11 September. Approximately 90 guests attended to hear guest speakers Stephen Pitt the CEO of Golf Australia, Trevor Herden the Championships Director of Golf Australia and Stephen Spargo the President of Golf Victoria. Included in the list of attendees were a number of Captains and Presidents from the larger clubs in Victoria.

The evening was a question and answer panel discussion with audience participation. A range of topics was discussed including the latest update concerning the 'One Golf' initiative, the outlook for tournament golf in Australia, and the forthcoming rule changes that are due to take effect in 2019.

Subsequent to the dinner, Golf Australia has announced that the Men's Australian Open will be returning to Melbourne for the first time in 15 years in 2020 and 2022. These are the two 'release years' in the current eight-year contract that Golf Australia has with the New South Wales Government. The reliance on Government support for major events, such as the Australian Open, was one of the key issues discussed.

An update on the 'One Golf' initiative was also provided by Stephen Pitt. This is a proposal to merge the existing amateur bodies around the country under the one umbrella of Golf Australia. This is an initiative supported by Stephen Spargo and the board of Golf Victoria. The benefits of the proposal are significant with as much as 3 million dollars in funds being released to support not only championship golf, but also development of the game at the grass roots level.

The evening was a fascinating insight into the challenges facing the administrators of the game in Australia. The society is extremely grateful to Stephen Pitt, Trevor Herden and Stephen Spargo for providing both their time and their insights into the status of the game.

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.