

THE LONG GAME



GOLF SOCIETY
— of —
AUSTRALIA

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- AGM and Doug Bachli Trophy • 2024 Australian Hickory Championships
- Remarkable lives of a champion woman golfer • Walter Travis photo mystery
 - Graham Marsh at a GSA dinner • The great 1952 dummy-spits
 - Annual hickory day at Frankston GC • Early Olympics golf history

President's report and Bachli Trophy

By Kim Hastie

As another successful year for the Society draws to a close, I reflect on a few of the activities. The second half of the year has been a busy one, including the re-scheduling of the Don Lawrence Trophy played at Woodlands GC, a talk by Sydney-based sports historian Dr Michael Sheret, and a golf historians forum at Shepparton GC in October.

All this made for a condensed program of events, but pleasingly they were successfully run and won.

A highlight of the year was our dinners. We were fortunate to have three interesting and entertaining speakers in Dr Joshua Ralston, Sandy Jamieson, and Graham Marsh. Reports and photos of some of these events are included in this issue.

This past year work has been busy on the GA heritage collection. The activities have included an audit of the many magazines and journals in the collection, and re-formatting and digitising of some old VHS tapes and films. Two display cabinets in the Thomson Room at the Australian Golf Centre at Sandringham have been changed, and now feature two of the greats of the Australian professional game: Peter Thomson and Jan Stephenson. We have also planned for de-accessioning some items of artwork and photography that are judged not to meet the criteria for remaining in the collection.

In our hickory events, we had the successful running of the inaugural Victorian Hickory Shaft Championships at Barwon Heads GC. This was well-attended and pleasingly this event looks to have a solid future.

At the recent 43rd Annual General Meeting we gave special thanks to Greg Bain who retired from the Committee after serving six years. In late 2018, Greg took over as editor of *The Long Game*. His professional expertise in publishing and enthusiasm for the role ensured we have had many years of interesting and enjoyable reading. This past year he initiated and oversaw a re-branding and refresh of the print formats and layout quality to standardise the Society's look.

An example of "our latest look" can be seen in our banner, which we have on hand at all of our events.

Our popular AGM Day and final golf event for the year, the Doug Bachli Trophy, was at Victoria Golf Club. The trophy was

won by one of our new members, Clayton Gunning. Hailing from WA, Clayton and two new fellow members made the most of their Melbourne visit, enjoying the many great courses we offer. We thoroughly enjoyed having them join us. The trophy presentation this year was very special with Doug Bachli's daughter Michelle and grandson Jackson doing the honours.

Michelle paid tribute to her late father, the first GSA president and a brilliant golfer who won world fame in 1954 when he became the first Australian to win the British Amateur Championship. She told a poignant story about how Doug in his latter years would often catch a bus from his Surrey Hills home to his beloved Victoria GC carrying only his putter and a few balls. One day he was on the practice putting green and a group of about 8 younger members looked out the window and remarked: "Look at this old bloke down on the putting green ... but jeez he can putt!" The bar manager Graham told them who Doug Bachli was, and soon the young members disappeared and re-appeared on the putting green surrounding Doug. Graham said it brought tears to his eyes to see the respect for a champion.

Lastly to the members of our Committee, I give my sincere thanks. They contribute in many ways and I very much value their input and appreciate the time they give. The AGM included Committee elections,



Clayton Gunning receives the Doug Bachli Trophy from Michelle and Jackson, joined by President Kim Hastie

and we congratulate those re-elected and welcome our two new Committee members, Martin Maguire and Doug Turek.

My thanks to all members and guests who attended our events this year. Organising and running events is not without its challenges and so your participation and ongoing support is much appreciated. The Society also values the wonderful hospitality given by the many clubs we visited during the year.

Finally, may everyone have a happy and healthy festive holiday season. Good golfing and enjoy the summer tournament season we have coming up.

Doug Bachli Trophy stableford results

Overall winner - Clayton Gunning, 39 points
Men's r/up - Jamie Holland, 36
Women's winner - Sonya Evans, 29
Women's r/up - Kim Hastie, 27

New members

Welcome to new members

John Kelly
Julian Lodge
Michael Loftus-Hills
Tim Taylor
Shelly Turek
Joseph Walmsley
Ron Wilson

Patron:

Anne Court

President:

Kim Hastie

Hon. Secretary:

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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 Collection and Library for Golf Australia.

Dinner with legend Graham Marsh

By John Trevorrow

The third Golf Society dinner for the year drew a large gathering of members and guests to hear a fireside chat with Australian golf legend Graham 'Swampy' Marsh MBE at Riversdale Golf Club. Royal Melbourne Captain Tony Rule sat down with the veteran professional to elicit some colourful stories from inside the tournament ropes and locker rooms over the decades, plus details about Graham Marsh's second career, as a notable designer and builder of golf courses.

Marsh, who was born in Kalgoorlie WA, was voted Australian Sportsman of the year in 1977 and received a Member of the British Empire award in 1984. He was chairman of the PGA Tour of Australasia for six years.

The dinner in September was attended by 86 guests at Riversdale Golf Club. Graham, the brother of Australian Test cricket wicket-keeper Rod, told how their father Ken loved both cricket and golf. After Graham broke his arm in several places as a child, the family doctor said he should swing a golf club as therapy once the plaster came off. Young Graham

discovered a love for the game and quickly progressed, being selected for the WA state team at 18 and turned professional in 1969 aged 25, winning many times on the US, Australasian, European and Japan tours.

Marsh entertained the audience with tales from playing the Masters, many Australian Opens and the Open Championship 20 times. His best Open finish was 4th in 1983 at Royal Birkdale, ahead of Seve Ballesteros, Lee Trevino and Nick Faldo. Marsh shot a wonderful final round 64 on a day of fierce wind, and described how he got back to the locker room early where Arnold Palmer asked how he went. When told 64, Palmer responded: "How did you go on the back nine?" before telling Marsh not to go anywhere in case he had won the Claret Jug. During a nervous 3-hour wait, the wind dropped and Tom Watson went on to overhaul Marsh's clubhouse lead and win his fifth Open Championship.

Aged 33, Marsh began to study the design genius of Alister MacKenzie and Harry Colt and later moved into his second career, establishing the Graham Marsh Golf Design company in 1986.



Graham Marsh with president Kim Hastie and RM captain Tony Rule

He received warm applause from the audience of Golf Society members and guests when he underscored the importance of golf history: "We have to know where we came from if we are to know where we are headed."

The Golf Society thanks Graham Marsh for his generous time, Tony Rule for his research and MC role, and GM Christian Tanner and the Riversdale staff team for their typically warm hospitality.

Historians Forum at Shepparton

Shepparton Golf Club, founded in 1922, was the venue for the fourth Golf Society Historians Forum for the year. Members of the club's Centenary Committee welcomed Golf Society members who travelled to Shepparton in late October, and a number of artefacts and historic photographs from the club's archives were on display. Committee members Neville Lavis, Sally Nayler, Rob Kelly and Greta Keenan recounted the club's evolution from when golf was played in an ad-hoc way around the district from about 1900.

An early golf club was formed in Shepparton in 1909, but had no permanent course and the club went into hibernation with the outbreak of the Great War. The present club was founded in 1922, and gained permissive occupancy of land at its present site, opening a 9-hole course in June

1924. Within three years, the course was extended to 14 holes and the club had 200 members.

In 1931 the club bought 8ha (20 acres) of adjoining land and expanded to 18 holes, with sandscapes for putting. The early 1950s saw electricity and water supply connected and more land purchased. In 1955, course architect Sam Berriman was commissioned to design a new layout on the bigger land with grass greens. A new clubhouse and improved course were opened in 1960. Membership was climbing to 1000.

In 1962, the club hosted a famous exhibition match between a young Jack Nicklaus – the reigning US Open champion – and 1960 Australian Open winner Bruce Devlin. 3000 spectators turned out to see both champions shoot 69 on a memorable day for the club. The club has a series of

historic photos from the day on display in the clubhouse, some of them signed years later by Nicklaus himself.

The 1970s and 80s saw major improvements, more land bought, and a focus on developing junior golf. At times, the club arranged visiting golf coaches to help run clinics for up to 200 junior golfers from around the district. In the late 1980s, the club fought for special permission to play a mixed team of boys and girls in Goulburn Valley junior pennant. The club was finally able to buy the original crown land that it had occupied since 1922.

The Forum ended with an inspection out on the course of the site of the original clubhouse – near today's 17th tee – and one of the original sandscaped greens, which is still clearly visible and has been cleared and signposted in the rough beside the 14th hole. **Turn to page 15 for photo gallery**

Triple crown for Australian Hickory champs

By Les Browne, AGHS captain

The Australian Hickory Open Championship is the premier event in the Asia Pacific Hickory calendar. Players from around Australia, Japan, Canada, China and New Zealand turned up to compete with their 100-plus-year-old hickory clubs, most dressed in period clothing.

Warringah, Manly and Cromer golf clubs, on Sydney's northern beaches, hosted the 50 keen hickory enthusiasts for the 29th playing of the event September 8-10th.

The tournament opened with Canadian foursomes on Sunday at Warringah. With tight fairways and small greens quite a few "I'm sorry's" were heard.

Best pairs on the day with 75 were Craig Bernhardt (Manly) with partner Darron Watt – who plays his golf on sand greens at The Rock, near Wagga Wagga – beating Brendan Barnes (Sawtell) and Scott Bower (Canada) on count-back. Third place was shared by Sydney locals Phil Baird/Dave Saunders and Rob Richards/Wayne Wright on 77.

Brendan and Scott won the Handicap foursomes title with nett 69, ahead of runners-up John Trevorrow (Box Hill)/Peter van Eekelen (Christchurch NZ) 70.

Manly GC hosted the first round of the singles Championship, with its recent Thomson/Perrett course design in keeping with the club's 120-year heritage.

Many of the players struggled in negotiating their way around some of the hazards. Not so for local member Dave Saunders who carded 76, helped by a hole-in-one at the 127metre 15th hole, the first ace in the hickory championship's history. Tim Sayers (Bankstown) and Alex Sutherland (Eastlakes) were 2 shots behind.



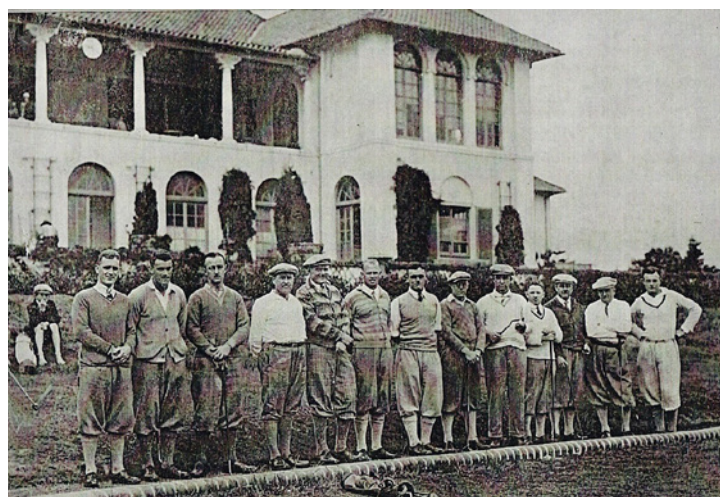
PGA life member Tom Moore and women's champion Suzanne Brown



Foursomes champions Craig Bernhardt and Darron Watt



Dave Saunders scored the event's first ever hole-in-one



In 1929, a field of champion golfers was pictured in front of the Manly GC clubhouse. The 2024 Australian Hickory Championship players gathered on the same lawn 95 years later.



The leading woman was Suzanne Brown, also a member at Manly GC.

Leaders in the handicap section were Suguru Nakase (Japan) on 69 and Zhong Jung Hua (China), 67. An enjoyable dinner followed at the club, where a wonderful selection of Manly's memorabilia was on display celebrating the centenary of the clubhouse.

Day two of the championship hosted by Cromer GC was a real test using the antique clubs around their tight fairways. Cromer also has a long history. It was founded in the 1920s and has had several redesigns resulting in one of the toughest courses in Sydney. The best score on the final day was Craig Bernhardt's fine 73.

As scores were tallied, three players could not be separated on 154 and were declared triple joint Australian Hickory Champions: Tim Sayers (78,76) Dave Saunders (76,78) and Justin Ryan from Bendigo (80,74). Alex Sutherland was one off the pace with 155.

Women's Champion was Suzanne Brown (93/105/198) narrowly ahead of Kim Hastie (Metropolitan) and Rie Mitsuhashi (Japan).

Handicap championship honours were dominated by overseas players with Suguru Nakase (Japan) on 125, followed by Xing Xiao Jun (China) 130 and Peter van Eekelen (NZ) 133.

The over 70s cup went for the second year to Brian Dolan (Concord) 169.

The presentation luncheon was the excellent Cromer

BBQ. The overseas players could not believe the quantity and quality of the food. It was good to have AGHS patron and PGA life member Tom Moore in attendance and GSA President Kim Hastie there from Melbourne.

Following the presentation there was a buy/sell/swap of hickories. There was a big display of good quality playing clubs and Tom Moore took the opportunity to visit his back garage and brought a good quantity of clubs at good prices! All but a few were sold, mostly to our visitors from Japan and China where original hickories are in short supply.

All the players were impressed with the event and the three courses and are looking forward to next year's tournament, due to be played in Adelaide.

The Championship is organised and administered by The Australian Golf Heritage Society.



Darryl Hearsch in action at Manly



Joint hickory champions (left to right) Justin Ryan, Tim Sayers and Dave Saunders



Les Browne in action at Cromer



'Alice' Rie Mitsuhashi, Les Browne, Suzanne Brown and Kim Hastie

The remarkable lives of Helen Bowie

By Bruce Baskett

How a champion golfer played a vital medical role at the World War 1 battlefields of France, and later in the scientific life of Australia

At Metropolitan Golf Club there is an outstanding woman's name listed twice among the famous course record holders. A history cabinet displays a bizarre timber board with a hand-carved kookaburra sitting above a few of those early course records etched in brass.

The name H. Bowie among those records means nought to the golfers who wander daily past. But her name should be specially honoured, even just for her service for Australia in the Great War which was declared 110 years ago in August.

Helen "Nellie" Bowie is an outstanding figure in the annals of Victorian golf, in the Great War and in the history of Australia in many and varied aspects. The altruism and selflessness of this Metropolitan and Flinders Golf Club figure is remarkable.

This is her story.

As a taste of just one of the achievements to come, Helen Bowie was the first female President of any golf club in Victoria and most likely the whole of Australia. The list goes on. Apart from her golfing prowess, she was one of the first party of brave Australian nurses to serve on the battlefields of Europe in World War 1 and saw the horrors firsthand.

Throughout her career at home and abroad she was a notable bacteriologist, ornithologist, ethnologist, horticulturalist, philanthropist and humanitarian. Her name is honoured at Flinders Golf Club where she is a life member; at the National Museum of Australia where she is jointly recognised with her uncle; and at the Collingwood Creche where she was President for a decade from 1936.

Helen Bowie led many lives.

The early years and family background

She was born at Jackson's Creek, Sunbury, in 1873, the second eldest of seven children of William Symington Josef Bowie and Amelia Ann Fell. Her grandfather brought the family to Australia in the 1850s and established Eighnane vineyard at Sunbury with his brother. William continued to run

the vineyard until 1897. An international gold medal diploma was awarded for their "Vin Rouge" in Bordeaux in 1882, highlighting an Australian wine on the world stage for the first time.

Helen's mother Amelia died in 1884 at 34 leaving seven children. Helen was 11 and was known as "Nellie" to distinguish her from her favourite aunt who was also Helen Bowie and who became Mrs Helen Horne when she married Dr George Horne, 17 years her junior, in 1890.

"Nellie" was brought up by the Hornes – who had no children – and was a close companion of the couple for the rest of their days. She was a brilliant student at Hawthorn College which became the Swinburne Technical College.

Dr Horne was a leading Melbourne surgeon and Helen was brought up in a privileged household. At their large home in Queens Parade, Clifton Hill, they established an aviary with hundreds of birds and raised pheasants and other table birds which they sold to the wealthy as a hobby. They were founding members of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union.

They are credited in the naming of one bird they discovered – *Zosterops Bowieae* Horne, 1907 (the official spelling). It was a tiny grey and white-eyed *Zosterops*. Dr Horne had to admit that their new specimen was "unfortunately destroyed by a pair of Amherst Pheasants" at Clifton Hill.

Dr Horne encouraged young Helen's academic achievements and was instrumental in her choice to take up a career as a bacteriologist, an unusual choice for a woman then.

Metropolitan and golf

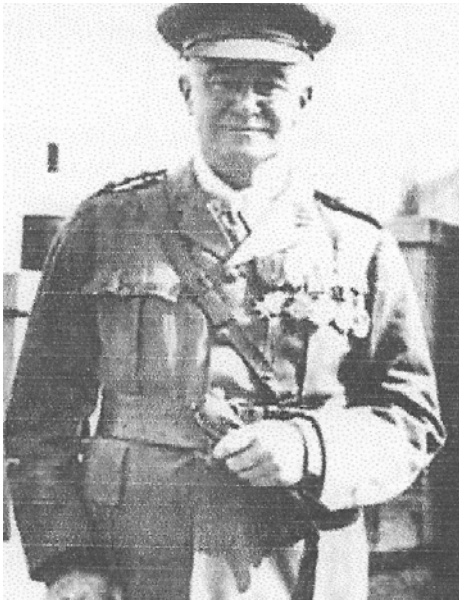
Helen Bowie's golfing prowess was first recorded at Kew Golf Club before she joined the new Metropolitan Golf Club at Oakleigh on February 12, 1910 – only 16 months after the course opened. She won the women's Club championship in 1911-12 and set a course record of 89 in 1910 and lowered that to 85 the next year. It stood for 11 years.



Helen Bowie



Kookaburra Course Records Board



Helen's uncle Dr George Horne in military uniform

Metropolitan's historic kookaburra honour board recording the name of Helen Bowie and the first few record holders was carved by a German artisan at his shop in Toorak Rd. His name was Robert Prenzel, a renowned wood carver who made many of the altars in early Melbourne churches. He was denounced a few years later during the Great War as "Prenzel the Prussian" and there was outrage in the letters columns when he was commissioned to carve memorials for the Anzacs after Gallipoli. As we find later, Helen loved the sounds of the kookaburra and shared them with the world.

Helen Bowie's golfing successes continued when she returned from the war and she won Metropolitan's Witchwood Cup in 1917. She later served on the club's women's committee in the 1920s.

World War 1 in France and the redoubtable Lady Dudley

The wartime experiences of Helen Bowie are a saga of an almost accidental hero whose circumstances and experiences helped save the lives of many of our finest young servicemen. It also brought her into contact and under the influence of another woman, Lady Dudley, wife of a former Australian Governor-General, who set a gold standard example of service in Australia and Europe before, during and after the Great War.

Dr and Mrs Horne accompanied by Helen set sail first class for a holiday in Europe in February, 1914, on the P&O liner "*Maloja*" and planned to further her studies in bacteriology in the UK and



Wimereux Golf course today looking across the Channel

Europe and also to test her golfing prowess against the best British players. After visiting Norway and southern Germany, they departed from Hamburg for London a few days before war was declared on August 4.

Lady Rachel Dudley, wife of the Earl of Dudley who was Governor-General from 1908-1911, had placed an advertisement in the London newspapers on August 17 seeking doctors (men only) and nurses to set up a voluntary hospital at the front in France. She bypassed the military bureaucracy and generals who dismissed this "interfering woman" to personally lobby King George V and Lord Kitchener. Few could resist the approaches of Lady Dudley.

Dr Horne and Helen immediately offered their services to the Empire. "As soon as I decided to go to France, a friend raised 50 pounds for me to purchase the materials to outfit a bacteriological laboratory. Before we left, I had the necessary microscope, incubator and other essentials," Helen said years later.

The Australian medical team was told to take up a position nearer the firing line around Bordeaux. Instead, they decided to head for the coast at a place called Wimereux where, much to Helen's delight, they established the first Australian Field Hospital in the clubhouse and surrounds of the Wimereux Golf Club – one of the first courses that side of the Channel.

Within 36 hours they transformed the building and tent village into a fully-equipped hospital ready for patients. The nurses lived under canvas until a fierce

storm hit one day and blew the camp away so they were billeted in a hotel commandeered nearby.

She was inspired by Lady Dudley who washed the faces of the wounded men until Matron Ida Greaves, an Australian, would shoo her out of the wards. The Australian poet Banjo Paterson who spent time at the hospital was equally impressed with Lady Dudley. "A wonderful woman. She should have been a general, for no doubts assailed her and no difficulties appalled her," he wrote.

"As you can imagine," Helen later told *The Age*, "we all worked at top pressure. We scrubbed, washed and polished without any thought of rest or food." Helen was a 24-hour nurse working round-the clock, taking the place of a theatre nurse who had fallen ill. They did more than 70 operations in the first week. "We began work at 8 am and worked until 1 am the next morning. There was no time to leave the theatre for a meal so we had to be content with cocoa and sandwiches sitting at the door."

Dr George Horne was appointed a Captain in the Australian Army Medical Corps, later reaching the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and was Commissioner of the St John Ambulance in Victoria. He was appointed Surgeon Colonel second in charge of the Australian Field Hospital at Wimereux.

His specialty in Australia was gynaecology – not a required expertise at a wartime hospital. He rarely left the operating theatre, usually assisted by his trusted niece as theatre nurse who had many times taken the same role back in Melbourne.

After a month in the operating theatre, Helen was freed to start work in her bacteriology laboratory in the golf house where she had a refreshing view across the rolling links to the English Channel. Late on a clear day the sun would hit the white cliffs of Dover.

Between waves of incoming wounded, Helen did get a chance to play golf on the Wimereux links and at nearby Boulogne. She occupied the position of golf instructress to many of the hospital staff who grabbed an hour or so on the course between their harrowing and strenuous hours in the hospital.

She had firm views on the captured German soldiers who were also treated at the hospital. "The men were very grateful for all we did for them," she said. "Most of them could speak some English and were so grateful to be in hospital. They said they had not wanted to fight and had been forced to defend their country." However, she was scathing of the German officers. "They showed their hatred of the British, and the autocracy of their natures in the ways they demanded attention. They could not – or would not – speak English."

Dr Horne and Helen returned to Melbourne in late 1915. He was now 55 and she was 42.

Back in Australia

On return, Helen resumed playing at Metropolitan and Flinders golf clubs. Dr Horne was a member at Yarra Yarra. Both their names were recorded on a Roll of Honour at Yarra for their war service and the Club praised their work in serving the Empire.

Dr Horne joined with a group of seven medicos to build Lister House at 61-65 Collins Street with residential areas on the upper floors where the Hornes moved in 1917 as well as sharing the Collins Street surgery. Helen gave up her work as a bacteriologist in 1927.

Dr Horne was a great collector of Aboriginal artefacts and made several trips into the remote areas with his colleague George "Poddy" Alston. They wrote the book "Savage Life In Central Australia." Helen Bowie went on several tours with her uncle and was the archivist who catalogued all his collections.

In 1926 they presented most of their collection to the National Museum of Australia and it was described as the most remarkable private collections of its kind including a variety of stone knives,



Nurses at Wimereux

surgical knives, message sticks, axes, picks, hammers, and grinding and throwing stones.

It is officially known as the Horne-Bowie collection and regarded as the most valuable and remarkable of its kind in Australia. The Natural History Museum of Cambridge made a determined attempt to procure it but Australia won out.

On one of his trips in 1923 Dr Horne became ill and was nursed by his niece for four years until his death in 1927 aged 67. He left half his estate to his niece, including 4000 shares in Lister House Pty Ltd. The two Helen Hornes stayed at the Lister House flat where the older Helen died two years later well into her 80s. She was intestate but her companion Helen "Nellie" Bowie eventually received the entire estate.

Making history at Flinders Golf Club

In 1933 Flinders appointed Helen Bowie as a life member. Her financial support for water projects at the club totalled 500 pounds in various stages.

The Committee at the time introduced a process of appointing members as President for one year on rotation and in 1934 Helen as an Associate became the first female President of any Victorian golf club and most likely any club in Australia.

But she never chaired a meeting. She had arranged a trip back to England

the same year to showcase some of the collection of Aboriginal artefacts including heavy stone implements at various institutions including the British Museum. She had a special phonograph recording made of the call of the kookaburra among other native birds, and the laughter of the kookaburra would ring out to the surprise of visitors.

On her return to Australia, she wrote a letter of apology to Flinders for her absence and enclosed a donation of 20 pounds "to make up for running away during my term of office." The following year she won the Club championship. More recently the Flinders green tee course has been named the Helen Bowie course and there is a trophy in her name for an event held concurrently with the C-grade championship.

Ninety years later Helen "Nellie" Bowie would be so proud to know that Fiona Reed has become the second woman to be President at Flinders.

Helen Bowie died at Lister House in 1959. She left a range of generous bequests to relatives and her favourite charities. Her collection of paintings, inherited from her uncle, went to the Shepparton Art Gallery. Many of her family settled in the Goulburn Valley and were involved in the wine industry.

It was a full and remarkable life.

The mystery of the cricketing golfer

By John Trevorrow

Can you help solve the puzzle of this 19th century photograph of Walter J Travis?

This photograph is a puzzle that is about 130 years old. We are publishing it here in the hope that one of our readers can shed any light on when and where it was taken.

The intriguing picture shows a group of cricketers posing with bats and a set of stumps, apparently with a cricket ball removing one of the bails in front of the wicket-keeper. But it also includes one of the best Australian-born golfers in history – a man who is not very well known in the country of his birth.

The golfer is Walter J Travis. He is the man reclining at left, above a cross drawn on the photograph. Travis was born in Maldon in central Victoria in 1862. He didn't play golf until he was 34 but then became one of the world's best amateur players.

The photograph comes to us from the Walter J. Travis Society in America. The Society's archivist, Steve Kubiak, says the photograph was published in 1999 as part of a collage of items the USGA announced it had received from the estate of Walter Travis. Unfortunately no further information about this photograph was available.

Walter Travis grew up in Maldon and the family moved to Melbourne about 1881 after his father died. Travis was a gifted young man who worked for McLean Bros and Rigg, a prominent firm of hardware and construction merchants based in Melbourne. He was just 24 when the company sent him to New York City in 1886 to head its American expansion. In 1890 he married a woman from a wealthy Connecticut family and became a naturalised citizen of the United States. Travis was a keen sportsman and was persuaded by friends in America to take up golf in 1896. He hit his first golf ball just three months shy of his 35th birthday and then became "an infatuated devotee" of golf. He took up the game with intense zeal and soon became America's top amateur golfer, winning the US Amateur championship in 1900, 1901 and 1903.

He caused a stir in 1904 when he became the first foreign golfer to win the Amateur Championship of Britain. He won



playing a centre-shafted Schenectady putter. The R&A banned centre-shafted putters in 1910 and they remained outlawed until 1951, although the USGA did not follow suit and they were legal for play in America.

So now to the detective story surrounding the old photograph of Travis and his cricketing companions. Here are some clues that might help solve it:

- The trees in the background appear to be Australian bushland rather than an American scene.
- There is a church in the background.
- Some of the men are wearing striped jackets typical of those worn by sporting teams in colonial Australia in the late 19th century.
- We know from early newspapers that Walter Travis played cricket for Carlton Cricket Club and for McLean Bros and Rigg. Research by GSA member Justin Ryan found that Carlton Cricket Club played a number of games at towns along the Bendigo railway line. Could this picture have been taken at one of those grounds?
- Travis left Australia in 1886 to live in New York and made only one return visit: in 1888 for the Melbourne Centennial exhibition. He worked at the Exhibition Building running the display for McLean Bros and Rigg and also visited his family.

He would have been aged 26 at the time, so could this photograph have been taken during his 1888 trip, perhaps visiting old friends from the Carlton Cricket Club or in the Maldon district?

If you can shed any light on this mystery photograph, please email johnatrevorrow@gmail.com

Walter Travis Trophy at Maldon GC

Maldon Golf Club runs an annual hickory event to celebrate the town's most famous golfing citizen. This year's Walter Travis Trophy was contested by 15 hickory players tackling the hilly 18-hole course with sand-scrapes for putting.

Most of the players were GSA members, and two travelled from New Zealand and South Australia for the event on August 26th. They competed for the perpetual trophy, a hickory schenectady putter made by master golf craftsman Ross Baker.

Local player Simon Sheedy won for the second year running, and runner-up was former winner Mango Maguire.

President's Trophy at Royal Melbourne

The Society's 2024 President's Trophy drew a good-sized field of 30 players to Royal Melbourne GC on July 29th. The late winter afternoon was cool and light drizzle was persistent, but despite the weather there were some excellent scores returned on the famed West Course's front nine.

The format for the President's Trophy is 9 holes of stroke, with the top four qualifiers going on to sudden-death matchplay on the East Course to determine the winner. All players must choose only seven clubs for their day.

As the scorecards were collated, all players gathered for afternoon tea in the clubhouse's MacKenzie Room in front of a welcome open fire.

RM life member and archivist Moira Drew led the field with an excellent nett 33.5. Fellow RM member Andrew Thomson was next with nett 34, and he played off in a match against Mango Maguire, who played excellent golf in the qualifier, carding one over par for a nett 34.5.

Four players returned nett cards of 37, and a countback determined Toby Cumming as the fourth qualifier, who faced Moira Drew in the first match. Toby won on their opening hole with a steady par four, and awaited the winner of the other match.

Andrew Thomson's bag on the day contained a modern driver and six antique hickory clubs: a lofted spoon, three irons and a putter. He and Mango halved their first hole and moved to the difficult par-4 second.

Mango made a creditable bogey 5 after taking a penalty from an unplayable lie off his tee shot. Andrew was on the green in three with a stroke in hand, and holed a difficult second putt to win their match with a nett 4.

Toby and Andrew moved to the third hole for the deciding match. Both found the right-hand rough off the tee, and were in

greenside bunkers for three. Escaping wet bunkers with an antique niblick is a difficult proposition, and Andrew went long into another trap. He sportingly conceded the hole and the President's Trophy to Toby, as darkness began to close in on the match and

the spectators who had gathered to watch the contest.

Society President Kim Hastie thanked Royal Melbourne for its hospitality and for hosting another enjoyable day's golf at its sublime venue.



Winner Toby Cumming with the President's Trophy



Toby Cumming overshadowed Moira Drew in their playoff match



Qualifiers Andrew Thomson and Mango Maguire ready for their match on the East Course



Golf Society Discussion Group

Join our robust discussion on all things Aussie golf, on our Facebook discussion group www.facebook.com/groups/golfsocietyofaustralia

We now have over 400 members and some wonderful stories about our golfing heritage. Open for all to join and contribute.

VALE

The Golf Society is saddened to report the passing of long-time member Bruce Fordham. Bruce was a Life Member at Metropolitan Golf Club, and was regarded as a legend of his club.

The Von vs Porky: the Great Dummy-spits

By Andrew Baker

The Lakes Cup, an international match-play event between Australia and the USA, resumed in 1952 after an 18-year hiatus. The tour was notable for some great golf ... and even greater tantrums from two great players

August 1952 marked the announcement of a tour to Australia by four leading American golf professionals. Comprising an exceptionally busy program, the visitors were scheduled to play in the Ampol £3500 tournament at The Lakes Golf Club in Sydney (22–25 October), the Adelaide Advertiser £1000 tournament at Royal Adelaide GC (27–28 October), the first leg of the The Lakes Cup at Huntingdale GC in Melbourne (31 October 31–1 November), the second leg at The Lakes in Sydney (7–8 November) and a second Ampol £3500 tournament at Yarra Yarra GC in Melbourne (12–15 November). On top of playing that busy schedule, it was anticipated that the Americans might also visit Tasmania and Queensland during their month's stay in Australia.

The four visitors were Lloyd Mangrum, Jimmy Demaret, Edward Stewart 'Porky' Oliver Jnr and Jim Turnesa. In The Lakes Cup, ostensibly the main reason for their visit, the Americans were opposed by an Australian team made up of Kel Nagle, Ossie Pickworth, Norman von Nida and Peter Thomson.

In the lead-up to the Americans' tour, the Australian Open Championship had been held at Perth's Lake Karrinyup Golf Club in late August and was won for the second time by Norman von Nida. His aggregate score of 278 was 'four under the record championship score set by Gene Sarazen at Metropolitan, Melbourne, in 1936.'¹

The 'four brightly-dressed wise-cracking Americans' arrived in Sydney on 18 October.² They were met at the airport by their four Australian opponents for the forthcoming Lakes Cup, the Australians' manager (Sydney amateur golfer Allan Black) and about 100 keen Sydney golf fans.

The team was accompanied by a 'surprise' manager, USPGA official Clark 'Specs' Hammond, whose expenses had been paid for by the team. Bringing both large and small golf balls, the players were



The 1952 Lakes Cup teams (L-R). Jimmy Demaret, Jim Turnesa, Ed 'Porky' Oliver, Lloyd Mangrum, US manager Clark 'Specs' Hammond, and the Australian team of Kel Nagle, Ossie Pickworth, Norman von Nida and Peter Thomson

not sure which they would use in the two legs of The Lakes Cup.

Being on an international tour, the visitors were limited to packing light bags for their visit:

Demaret, known as the "rainbow man" of golf because of his bright attire, was mournful because he had been forced to leave most of his varied colored clothes behind. "My luggage had to be curtailed, and I had to leave most of my 100 shirts, 75 pairs of golf slacks and 40 sports coats behind," he said.³

With their first competition scheduled to start only four days later, the Americans were 'not likely to produce their best golf' in the Ampol £3,500 tournament at The Lakes Golf Club. In his column as 'The Argus Special Golf Writer', Peter Thomson revealed how Ed Oliver had stolen the show after his practice round:

... Ed (Porky) Oliver stole the show in the pre-tournament clinic at the

Lakes club this afternoon. He and Jim Demaret staged a two man comedy act that had the large gallery in fits of laughter.⁴

The American Showmen

It was clear the Americans had come to entertain the galleries with their bright clothing and humorous antics as much as with the high quality of their play.

The star appeal of the Americans ensured record crowds at the Ampol £3500. Norman von Nida won the event after an 18-hole playoff with Ed Oliver and Peter Thomson tied for equal third with Jimmy Demaret. With two Americans and two locals occupying the first four placings, the event was a marketing triumph for the Americans' forthcoming appearances.

The Australian summer circuit then travelled to Adelaide, where The Advertiser £1000 golf tournament was played at Kooyonga Golf Club. There, American Lloyd Mangrum played brilliantly with rounds of 68 and 69 to street the field by



The 1952 US team (from left) of Jim Turnesa, Jimmy Demaret, Lloyd Mangrum and Ed 'Porky' Oliver

four strokes. With Ed Oliver as runner-up and Jimmy Demaret tied for third with Kel Nagle, the Americans were glad to have made such a long trip to play in the two-day event.

The following week, the four Americans travelled to Melbourne, where they vowed 'to fight for Uncle Sam' in the first leg of The Lakes Cup. An international match-play event comprising foursomes and singles, the fixture was held over two days at Huntingdale GC. It was the first such meeting between the two countries for 18 years. After two days' play, the Americans led 4–2, having won both of their foursomes matches and two of the four singles.

Living in the accommodation at Victoria Golf Club's magnificent clubhouse and having practised there and played exhibition matches at Royal Melbourne and Metropolitan golf clubs (along with the main event at Huntingdale), the Americans were full of praise for the renowned courses of the Melbourne sand belt. Speaking on behalf of his well-credentialed American teammates, Jimmy Demaret said, "We have travelled the world playing golf. We have not anywhere in our own country nor in Britain, found greater courses than those in Melbourne's famous sand belt."⁵

In the second leg of the contest, played the following week at The Lakes in Sydney, each team won a foursomes match on the first day. The following day, the American team won two of the four singles matches to take the event 7–5. The Lakes Cup was expected to return to the United States with the Americans and an Australian team was assumed to travel there in the future for a return match – however, the cup never left Australia.

One further edition of The Lakes Cup, the third such contest since 1934, was contested two years later, in November 1954. The Australian team of Ossie Pickworth, Norman von Nida, Kel Nagle and D. J. 'Jim' McInnes beat their American opponents 'Dutch' Harrison, Tommy Bolt, Marty Furgol and Dave Douglas 6–4. A fourth edition of The Lakes Cup was planned for November 1956; however, the American side could not muster more than three of the four required players to make a team. The competition was abandoned.

The Ampol £3500 Tournament – and the Dummy-spits

The following week, a second Ampol £3500 was played at Melbourne's Yarra Yarra Golf Club. The event was won by American Lloyd Mangrum by a single stroke from

Peter Thomson. According to Norman von Nida, Thomson would have won this event but had been distracted by one of his playing partners, Ed 'Porky' Oliver, walking off the course after playing nine holes. Of the garrulous Delaware golfer's behaviour, von Nida later recalled:

He enjoyed himself here, and nobody begrudges him that, but people also expected him to try and play his best golf – which he did not. He seemed to regard himself as the team clown, and in exhibition matches nobody minded, but his clowning and bad behaviour reached a climax in Melbourne where, while playing with Peter Thomson, who was then in a winning position, he decided to pick up his ball and go in.⁶

Published four years after the fact in his autobiography *Golf is My Business*, von Nida's recall of this incident was both selective and self-serving.

In his column in *The Argus*, summing up the second day's play of the Ampol £3500 at Yarra Yarra, Peter Thomson wrote enthusiastically about Oliver's jovial nature and the type of pranks that kept his adoring galleries amused:

Happy "Porky" Oliver ambled home yesterday to steal the lead in the Ampol £3,500 tournament at Yarra Yarra with a 4-under-par 69. The 16-stone American joked every step of his first trudge round the beautiful Yarra layout. Then he had to back away from his last putt on the 18th green because he had a mock attack of the "shakes." The putt – a 4-footer – was for a birdie, as well as for the leading position, but that did not stop the irrepressible Oliver from clowning. His hands shook like jelly as he grasped his putter, and he wagged his foot nervously. Finally, he heightened the tension by trickling his ball slowly into the hole.⁷

In this regard, Peter Thomson was well aware of Oliver's on-course demeanor and antics – as was every golfer who had played with him and every spectator who had watched him play.

The Angry Words

What von Nida had failed to mention in his book, was that an ugly incident had unfolded between himself and Ed Oliver on the day before Oliver walked off the

course at the ninth hole while playing with Peter Thomson. On that day, playing in a threesome with Victorian professional Bill Clifford, *The Advertiser* reported:

Tiny Norman von Nida (about 10 stone) and massive American Ed. Oliver (16 stone 1 lb.) clashed today at the Ampol Tourney in one of the angriest scenes ever seen in Australian big golf. A hushed gallery of 1,000 heard bitter words fly between the pair when von Nida complained to Oliver that his clowning annoyed him and caused him to three putt. For the third hole in succession, von Nida three putted the tenth. He tossed his ball away into a bush. Walking to the 11th tee, von Nida told Oliver:— ‘Stop clowning and play golf. That’s what we have come here for. This means money for me. You’ve come out here for a good time, and getting paid whatever you score.’ Oliver – Am I worrying you? Von Nida – Play golf. Oliver, who had the honor, teed up his ball, waited and walked to von Nida and, with hands on hips, repeated. ‘Am I worryin’ you?’ Von Nida – Get on with the game. That’s what we’re here for. Oliver told von Nida to play, picked his ball and walked away from the tee. He said later that he had wanted to leave von Nida and join the three players coming behind. Von Nida beckoned the third player, Victorian professional Bill Clifford and asked him to play. Clifford persuaded Oliver to take the honor. Oliver hit a perfect shot to the short green. Von Nida followed Clifford with another fine shot. The gallery crowded around the two men and heard the angry argument as they walked to the green. ‘You’re the sourest man I’ve ever played with, what’s wrong with you?’ Oliver said. Von Nida – If I was making the money you’re making I’d be able to laugh at a three putt. Oliver – Calm down and keep quiet. Von Nida – I’ll pull you on any time you like. Bigger men than you have tried it and failed. Oliver rammed in his 15-foot putt for two and made a mock bow to von Nida. ‘The Von’ retaliated with an equally fine putt for a two. To a bystander, Oliver said: ‘I would have taken 77 to go round, but now



Big swinging Porky Oliver tees off in 1952 with Ossie Pickworth looking on

that little man has made me mad and I will really play golf.’ Von Nida said to the gallery: ‘The madder I get the better I play.’ On the 12th each sank a putt for a four, and von Nida raised his cap in salute to Oliver. Oliver, who had been clowning, joking with people in the gallery and creating anything but the serious golf atmosphere which von Nida needs for his machine-like golf, was comparatively subdued for the rest of the round. On the last green, Von Nida shook hands with Clifford and walked away. He had taken 73 (his worst in this tourney) against Oliver’s three-under-the-card 70. Clifford,

who must have suffered as much as the others under the strain, had a 74 – also his worst round.⁸

Among von Nida’s comments is a tinge of resentment about the American team’s tour expenses being paid for by the sponsors of The Lakes Cup and, as a consequence, the lessened importance of Oliver winning prize money. Nevertheless, between Oliver’s recalcitrance and von Nida’s petulance, this was a quite shocking public display of bad behaviour by a pair of senior professional sportsmen. In the short term, it was von Nida who seemed to suffer most, posting a disappointing round of 73 to Oliver’s 70. Nevertheless, the effects

of the disagreement were to also affect Oliver's game – although, in his case, the repercussion was delayed for 24 hours.

The following day, on the first tee before his final round of the Ampol £3500 tournament, Ed Oliver declared to the large gallery, 'I've got to stop clowning today.'⁹ In all likelihood, this was the jokester's attempt to break the ice with his fellow competitors and also what may have turned out to be a hostile gallery. He was drawn to play with Peter Thomson and Scotsman Jimmy Adams – and all three were in the running to win the event.

Before hitting off, both Oliver and von Nida had been interviewed by the press about their angry encounter the previous day. They made these comments:

OLIVER: 'Von Nida is a little guy who can't take it.'

VON NIDA: 'I don't think a golf course should be turned into a circus.'

Ed Oliver went on to expand:

Von Nida only wants cheap publicity. He can have it. He is a bad loser. We don't do things like that in the States. If things are not going right Von doesn't like it. It was his bad play yesterday, not my clowning, that made him mad. It's a crowd game and Von should realise this. I have played on the roughest circuits in the States and I have never struck an act like that before.

The American team manager, 'Specs' Hammond, also weighed into the argument, stating, 'Von three-putted the ninth and tenth and then started squawking. He just got mad and looked for an alibi.' In response, Von Nida detailed his main grievance with his fellow competitor:

... Oliver's joking, which has made him the most popular overseas player to visit Australia, spoilt my golf. He annoyed me by joking with a member of the gallery, and tossing a coin while I was putting. My putting was bad enough without this distraction. I like Porky, but I think he should treat a tournament as big as this more seriously.¹⁰

By admitting that Oliver was 'the most popular player to visit Australia' von Nida was possibly also betraying his own deep-seated and well-hidden resentment against his more fun-loving and financially successful opponent from the lucrative

American professional tour. The disparity in the size of the two players along with von Nida's challenge that 'Bigger men than you have tried it and failed,' also has echoes of von Nida's renown for quarrels and incidents. ... and also a possible reversion to the forcefulness of his previous occupation – splitting sheep skulls by hand at the Brisbane abattoirs where he had worked as a younger man.

Sadly, the previous day's events seemed to have taken the gloss off Oliver's zest for the game and, uncharacteristically, he began playing poorly. Despite dropping five shots in the first nine holes, he was placed fourth and still in the running. Nevertheless, at the ninth hole, he decided to walk off the course and leave Peter Thomson and Jimmy Adams to mark each other's cards. Oliver said later, 'I was just tired. I just played bad golf. It's my privilege. It is done often in the States and it is not the first time it has happened to me.' When asked if the previous day's protests by Norman Von Nida about Oliver's clowning had anything to do with his bad golf, Oliver said: 'That was yesterday. I've forgotten that now.'¹¹

Summing up the event's final round in *The Argus*, Peter Thomson was full of praise for the winner Lloyd Mangrum. However, of the 'walk-off' incident, he was plainly honest. After describing his own opening seven pars, birdie at the eighth hole and bogey on the ninth, Thomson went on to describe the effect of Oliver's cantankerous display on his own game:

At this point Ed Oliver, Von Nida's antagonist of Friday's round, walked off the course after he had played only nine holes in 43. Von Nida, whose opinion I respect, insists that this factor cost me the three short putts I missed on the next three holes. Certainly Adams and I were conscious of a queer atmosphere on that ninth green and down the 10th. The tenseness of my fight for the lead was temporarily forgotten.¹²

By now the golfing storm-in-a-teacup was making the front page of newspapers nationwide. That should have been the end of the matter, however, the American team's departure from Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport at Mascot a few days later was marked by a cool atmosphere. During the farewell, Norman von Nida shook hands with all of the departing visitors except Ed Oliver. It was reported that 'when Oliver approached von Nida to shake hands, the

Australian appeared to turn away.'¹³ While walking across the tarmac, the normally jovial Porky Oliver appeared to be quite upset.

Ironically, the plane on which the American team were passengers was forced to return 35 minutes after take off because of a radio defect. Upon the American quartet's second departure the following morning, von Nida was again in attendance. This time, he and Oliver took the opportunity to 'bury the hatchet' and shook hands before the Americans again left for home. Issued with a sigh of relief, Melbourne's *The Age* reported that Norman von Nida and Porky Oliver were 'Pals Again.' In so doing, it stated that von Nida had shaken hands with Oliver and '... presented him with a toy koala bear to give to his small son.'¹⁴

Maybe the moral of this story is that when two men behave like children, there is nothing a stuffed toy can't fix.

Famous Last Words ...

On the following day, Norman von Nida was quoted as saying, '... the whole incident was unfortunate, I've completely forgotten about it. As far as I'm concerned it never happened.'¹⁵ ... although, the records say that it did.

Endnotes

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7. 'Laughed his way to a 69 Oliver Snatches Ampol Lead', *The Argus*, 13 November 1952, p. 11.
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13. 'Von Nida Snub for Ed Oliver', *The News*, 19 November 1952, p. 1.
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15. 'Oliver And Von Nida Shake Hands', *The Examiner*, 21 November 1952, p. 8.

Gallery of pictures

Golf historians forum



Shepparton GC centenary committee members at the site of an original sandscrape from the 1920s



Historic photos from the 1962 match at Shepparton between Jack Nicklaus and Bruce Devlin



The history sign at the old sandscrape



Neville Lavis presenting at the golf historians forum

Annual Hickory Day



Players gather in front of the clubhouse at Frankston GC

Doug Bachli Trophy day



GSA member Richard Fellner's drone camera captures GSA players on the first tee at Victoria GC

Early Olympics golf history

Report by John Trevorrow

Golf historian and sleuth Dr Michael Sheret visited the Golf Society in October to give a presentation about the early years of golf at the Olympic Games. Dr Sheret detailed a quirky, rocky road. Golf was scheduled as a sport in four of the first six Olympics and again in 1936 – but for various reasons was played only twice during those early Games, before being reinstated in the modern era at Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

1900 Paris

The second modern Olympics after Athens was a disjointed affair run in conjunction with the Paris Exposition, a seven-month world's fair. Golf was played at Compiègne, 80km north of Paris, but it's unclear whether it was an Exposition or an Olympics event. The men's event over 36 holes attracted 12 competitors, and was won in 167 strokes by Charles Sands of the United States, who went to the Games to compete in tennis but failed at that and entered the golf as an afterthought. The women's event was contested by 10 players over 9 holes. The winner with 47 strokes was Margaret Abbott, an American studying art in Paris.

She died in 1955 unaware that she was an Olympic champion.

1904 St Louis, Missouri

This time the Olympics was staged as part of St Louis' world fair to celebrate the centenary of the Louisiana Purchase. Golf organising was left to the host Glen Echo Country Club, and it turned into a men-only, mostly American event. The team event over 36 holes had three teams of 10 players, all Americans.

The individual event attracted 72 American players and 3 Canadians. The winner was Canada's George Lyon after an exhausting six rounds of 36-hole matchplay totalling 216 holes.

1908 London

Golf was scheduled as three consecutive days of 36 holes each at Royal St Georges, Princes and Royal Cinque Ports golf clubs in Kent. But bitter disagreement between the R&A and the British Olympic Committee led to a boycott by all British entrants and the golf was cancelled just two days out. Canadian George Lyon, the sole remaining competitor, was offered a walkover win but declined.

1912 Stockholm Golf not included.

1916 Berlin

In the lead-up to the summer Olympics of 1916, the German Olympic Committee asked the R&A to run the golf competition. The R&A rejected the request. With the outbreak of the Great War imminent, the 1916 Olympic Games were then cancelled.

1936 Berlin

Another Olympics overshadowed by world war. The IOC banned golf – among several other sports – saying sports needed a recognised international governing body to qualify.

Germany instead staged a post-Olympics golf competition at Baden Baden, then the best course in Germany. The English Golf Union entered two players, who won the trophy donated by Adolf Hitler. That gilt silver tray was bought at auction decades later for 18,750 pounds by Hesketh Golf Club, to commemorate the win by their member Arnold Bentley, one of the two victorious Englishmen.

Annual Hickory Day

The Annual Hickory Day is one of the oldest events on the Golf Society's calendar. It was first played in February 1983 by many of the pioneers who formed the GSA just 15 months earlier in late 1981, and it launched the Society's social activities.

This year's Annual Hickory Day was enjoyed by 21 competitors on Sunday 18th August at Frankston Golf Club. This sublime 9-hole course, dating from just before World War 1, is perfect for hickory play and entrants were blessed with a mild and sunny late winter's day that felt decidedly like spring.

GSA members competed for the perpetual Frank Shepherd Trophy for men and the Burtta Cheney Trophy for women. The field also included seven guests, three of whom played with hickory loan sets from the Society's collection.

Last year's joint winners of the Frank Shepherd Trophy, Justin Ryan and Mango Maguire, were there aiming to defend their titles. Alas, they fell narrowly short. This year's winner of the men's trophy was Andrew Thomson, with 39 stableford points. President Kim Hastie had the best women's score of 32 points, but declined the Burtta Cheney trophy due to insufficient entries.

President Kim spoke at the presentations in the charming clubhouse with its view over the course and a glimpse of Port Phillip Bay, and thanked the club for allowing the Society and guests to enjoy the ambience of this unique golf club.

Master clubmaker and restorer Ross Baker came to watch proceedings and chat to competitors, many of whom had hickory clubs in their bags restored by or purchased from Ross's new shop ATTGolf in North Rd, Ormond.



President Kim with trophy winner Andrew Thomson