

the Brassie

Brassie n.

'In place of the many spoons of a nearly bygone age, there has come into use a club named 'the brassie'. This weapon, lofted somewhat more than a driver and less than a spoon, is shod or soled, with brass, whereby its wielder is enabled to play off roads and hard lies without injury to the head.'

In Horace Hutchinson's Badminton Golf (1890).

Captain's Corner

The Hickory Invitation event at Rosnay on Thursday 7 July was well attended. A total of 19 members and visitors hit off in bright sunshine with the course in good condition. The event was a two person Ambrose, with a member paired with a visitor, to ease the introduction to the game of hickory golf.

Peter Read was in good form, having just returned from England and Ireland where he won the British and World Senior Leftie Championships. Peter played with Bob Ivory a member of the Woollooware Club. Bob had never played with hickory clubs before and although very hesitant to *hit* the ball early in the game, quickly caught onto the fact that they can be used with some force. His greatest success on the day came from the putter, which he quickly mastered and sank some very nice 10 footers which in the end provided a winning contribution.

After the game and presentations, the focus turned to 'Show 'n Tell' where members brought along an item or two to explain their interest in collecting. Tom showed a water iron, like a niblick but with a large hole in the face. This club belongs to the NSWGA and is being assessed for accession by the Museum.

Peter Read brought along three items of interest: 1) a concave faced mashie niblick, branded 'Royal Crown', autographed Tom Watts Scottish International 1907 – 1908. Des Froneman commented that the

concave face was banned in 1931 when it was ruled that it was possible to hit the ball twice, once on the bottom of the club and once on the top of the concave; 2) a Royal Dalton 'Bunnikins' plate dating from around 1900, with a scene depicting bunnies playing golf; 3) a left handed driver block, in rough form half way through production. The club was to be a 'scarred wood', last made about 1900.

Barry Leithhead showed three *JH Taylor* autograph clubs from his collection and told how he presented a



JH Taylor autograph mashie niblick with a brand mark also on the shaft, to the Zadco Golf Society in Abu Dhabi. Barry had a project there and when in Devon, UK before going back to Abu Dhabi in 2001 found the club in a second hand barn and an old book of British Open Champions in a nearby town. *JH Taylor* won the Open five times with an **average** winning margin of 6.2 strokes!

The Golf Collectors Society of Australia

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Des Froneman showed the beautiful set of replica Old Tom Morris clubs, including a long nosed driver. These clubs go with membership of the 'Keepers of the Green' society – a charitable group that raises funds for disabled people.

Peter Read

Peter Corsar Anderson – a Developer of Golf in Australia

Golf in Australia was founded by people from ‘the old country’ who brought it here, with ancient implements and the desire to find suitable ground on which to play. That foundation was developed by others who followed the founders, men like Peter Corsar Anderson.

Peter Anderson had two passions in his long life – education and golf. Anderson was already an accomplished Scot when at age 25 he arrived in Australia in 1896, having graduated from the old St Andrews University with MA and post graduate studies in Divinity. Anderson had also graduated from the Old Course at St Andrews, where he played often and well, holding for half a season the course record of 80, which was 4 under bogie. His golf was so good that in 1893 when only 22, he won the British Amateur Championship at Prestwick, beating JE Laidlay. However, he was in poor health with pleurisy and hoped for a better climate in Australia.



Arriving in Albany, then the major port in Western Australia, he met his elder brother Mark who was a shipping agent there and also a fine golfer. Albany is some 360kms south from Perth, where the Antarctic wind first assaults the golf course. Mark suggested Peter settle in Melbourne, where he had been Champion of Royal Melbourne Golf Club in 1893. Peter did not delay and within a short time had taken up a tutoring position with a well-to-do farming family at Mansfield, 90kms north east of Melbourne. Six months later he was appointed a master at Geelong Grammar School (GGS) and became a member of Geelong Golf Club (GGC – next pic with dog ‘Sprig’).

If his golfing results are an indicator, Peter regained his health quickly. Within a year he had set the course record of 79 for GGC and he reduced it to 76 in 1898 and 75 in 1899, a record that stood until 1904 when his brother Mark reduced it by a single stroke. Peter won the first Championship held at GGC in 1898 and was Champion for six successive years until 1903. Not surprisingly, Geelong won the Victorian State Pennants Championship from 1899-1901 and tied with Royal Melbourne GC in 1902. It is reported that in 1904 Peter Anderson won a pennant match 16 up! The Riversdale Cup was an important event and he won that in 1898-9 and 1902. Mark had won that Cup in 1896, its first year.



Consider the clubs Peter played with, bought from Tom Morris, paying 2/- for a head and 1/6 for a hickory shaft from America. His most expensive club was a brassie which cost 5/6. He won the Amateur Championship of 1893 at Prestwick with six clubs; a brassie, a mid-iron, a cleek (for long approaches), a mashie, a niblick, and a wooden putter he also used for the short game. As a reserve, he had a driver, which he did not use. At Geelong GC it is said he used only four clubs; driver, cleek, mashie and putter and rarely carried a bag for his clubs.

P.C. Anderson was reported to be one of those who selected the new site for the Royal Melbourne Course when that Club’s old links were becoming hemmed in by building projects. He is also credited with laying out the Barwon Heads course at Geelong although the course did not open until 1907, well after he had gone to Perth.

A Geelong Grammar student recalls: “P.C. Anderson (‘Andie’) joined the school direct from a world golf championship at St Andrews and was naturally an idol in the eyes of the sports loving community. His very broad northern accent captivated us and he joined the boys (chiefly juniors) on their excursions into the bush then surrounding parts of Geelong. Knowing nothing whatev-

er of Australia and its bush life, he welcomed these days and in them learned something of the conditions of his adopted country”.

The GGS Quarterly reports: “Mr Anderson has taken his golf clubs down to the river on several occasions, and has kindly given some of the fellows some hints on how to use them, in the race-course paddock. One of the fellows did not seem to be very enamoured of the game, describing it as ‘the most dangerous thing since Waterloo.’ He, of course, spoke from sad experience”.

PC Anderson developed substantially as an educator in Geelong. He was a Master at the GGS senior school from 1896-99 and in Charge of the Preparatory School from 1899-1900. In 1899 Peter Anderson married Agnes Henrietta Macartney, the sister of the student he tutored at Mansfield and granddaughter of the Anglican Dean of Melbourne who in 1855 was one of the founders of Geelong Grammar School. Peter and Agnes became parents to six sons and seven daughters. He left GGS in 1900 to set up his own school, St. Salvator’s, also in Geelong.

Peter might not have contested the 1904 Geelong GC championship, having moved to Perth, and it was won by Mark Anderson, the first of his three championships at Geelong (also 1907 and 1912). He was made a life member of GGC in 1917. Mark also won the Royal Melbourne Championship five times, the first time in 1893 (Easter – the event was played twice a year in 1893 and 1894) and then in 1894 (twice), 1895 and 1896. There’s a nice quote in the RMGC history from Mr Balfour-Melville, who won an Australian Amateur title but could never beat him in a Club event – ‘M L Anderson always seemed to sink a long putt on the 18th!!’ Mark was runner-up in the 1905 Australian Amateur Championship at Royal Melbourne. In the 12 years between 1903 and 1914, Royal Melbourne won the State Pennant Championship nine times.

In 1904, P.C. Anderson became Headmaster at Scotch College Perth, W.A., where the first four years must have been an all-absorbing challenge for Anderson, the educator.

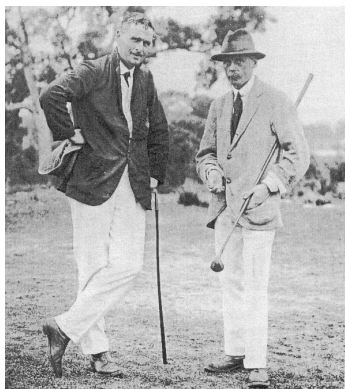
He was intent on developing the learning of students despite the school’s being in such a bad state on his arrival that the governors were thinking of closing it down. The school was sited in grossly inadequate temporary premises and was moved to a new site at Swanbourne, seven miles (10 km) west of Perth, where a benefactor offered land. Anderson at once insisted that, unlike his predecessor, he should participate in council meetings, and soon proved himself a vigorous organizer capable of ensuring the success of the move.

Anderson brought to Scotch College a model of ‘godliness and manliness’, for he was a ‘typical product of a Scottish Presbyterian background’, tall at 6’4”, a strong disciplinarian whose main interest was in sport, and, although not an educational innovator, he was a ‘reliable’ leader. The notion of ‘godliness and manliness’ is at the heart of late nineteenth-century ‘muscular Christianity’, a term coined in response to the work of Charles Kingsley, associated with magazines like the *Boys’ Own Paper* and a host of popular books like *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* and *Corral Island*, and in recent years portrayed in films like *Chariots of Fire*.

We hear a mention of Anderson in relation to golf in 1908 and then it is where no course or Club exists. Scotch College is within sound of the ocean and Anderson and others thought vacant land on the water’s edge might be the making of a golf course.

“Westward towards the coastal sand dunes, a rough gravel track struggled up the hill from Cottesloe Railway Station and lost itself in the scrub at Broome Street. It was early June 1908, and the group of men who trudged up the naturally vegetated hill, battled against a driving westerly wind to the coastline. Among them were F. D. North, one of the earliest residents of Cottesloe, J. M. Drummond, T. Robertson and P. C. Anderson of Scotch College. Their common interests were a desire to play golf and to construct their own links. One, Anderson, thought wistfully of his native Scottish links, of his succession of triumphs that had carried him to the very pinnacle of golf as British Amateur Champion. What a contrast between Scotland and this almost inhospitable Australian coastline. Yet, beneath the drab scrub and sandhills of Cottesloe, Anderson could see the possibilities of first-class greens, tees and fairways. It was worth a try. A few nights later, on 11th June 1908, before a log fire in the local Albion Hotel Commercial Room, 16 men met and agreed to form the Cottesloe Golf Club ”.

This was the origin of the Cottesloe Golf Club and Anderson, along with NC Fowlie (pic next page) designed the course aptly named and still known as ‘Sea View’. The opening of the 9-hole course by the State Governor on 11th September 1909 was only 15 months after the initial committee meeting. A year or so before, Anderson laid out the first nine holes of the Royal Fremantle course, a few miles south of Perth.



In the first two years Anderson won major events at the Sea View course, was appointed Captain in 1912 and one of the Club's delegates to the Western Australian Golf Association in 1913. Fowlie set the initial course record, bettered by Anderson in 1913 (77) and again in 1914 (75). Fowlie was State Amateur Champion in 1914. Anderson won the Club Championship twice (1917, 1919) when his handicap was +4 and his age almost 50.

It is recounted that two Scotch College students, R. D. Forbes and K. A. Barker were invited by their illustrious headmaster to play a round of golf with him. Feeling very pleased with themselves after the completion of their game, one of the students on returning to the Clubhouse said 'Sir, would you care for a drink?' Anderson said, 'Yes young man, I should like a sherry thank you', whereupon the student dug deep into his pocket and produced a ten-shilling note which he laid on the counter. The change however, was picked up and pocketed by Anderson, a costly but subtle reprimand for the young players. Forbes would later win the Club Championship ten times between 1921 and 1938.

Another story told of P. C. Anderson arose from the activities of a few boys from Scotch who developed a practice of trespassing on the course on Saturday mornings. When the chairman of Greens Committee asked 'the Boss' to exercise more control over his pupils, he received the reply: 'I look after the little beggars five days a week – someone else can worry about them in the weekend'.

P.C. Anderson won the last of his four Club trophy events in 1928 at the age of 57. He was a Committee member from the Club's founding in 1908 until 1918 – in 1915 he was appointed Vice President, a position he held for 40 years until his death in 1955. He was appointed the Club's first life member in 1936. Cottesloe GC opened a new course at Swanbourne in 1931, near Scotch College, on seaside dunes/links land with few trees, 5 kms from Sea View. Anderson appears to have played no official

part in the move. Although the CGC History records that he 'continued to make a valuable contribution to the establishment of the present course', PC Anderson's name does not appear in any of the records of the committee who created that course. Perhaps the designers Rees and Stevenson consulted him informally, perhaps even regularly. Given their inexperience in golf course design, it would seem feasible for them to consult the Club's "grand old man" who had designed a number of well known courses. However, the original CGC Swanbourne course would appear to have been largely or even solely the creation of WA Rees and TD Stevenson.

There was evident dissatisfaction with this original design because the Club engaged Alex Russell only a few years later (1934), to redesign the course completely. Russell's routing, totally different from the original, embodied the then traditional single loop of 18 holes – nine holes out and nine holes back, like so many famous courses, such as St Andrews. This Russell routing has largely survived today and surely it would have been more to Anderson's liking. The Sea View course is still in play, bare of trees, on ground that slopes down to the sea.

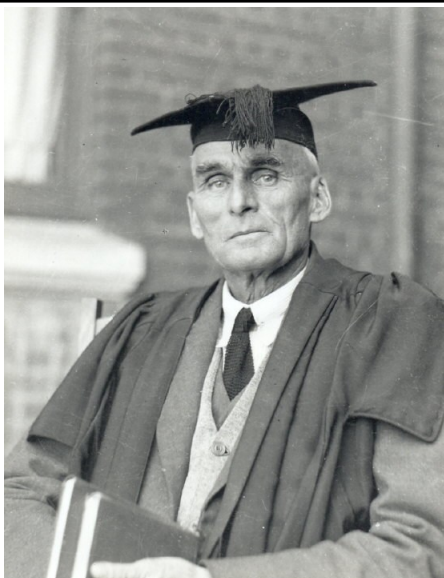
PC Anderson's brother, Mark returned to Albany WA around 1913. He stayed there, apparently, for the remainder of his life; was Albany Golf Club president in 1922-23 and father of Bill and Jean who were dominant Albany golfers and golf Club administrators of the next generation. It is not known from Club records whether Mark won any Albany Club Championships (which would seem likely) but he quite obviously became the "grand old man" of the Albany GC.

Presumably the Anderson brotherhood started the long close relationship between the Albany and Cottesloe golf Clubs which, if not as strong today as once it was, still involves annual Club visits.

The extension of Albany GC from nine to eighteen holes (planned in the '30's but executed in the '50's), was apparently designed by another Cottesloe Anderson – David, CGC's professional in the 1920's.

The Albany GC history records that Mark was an eccentric soul who preferred to putt with a 5 iron. There is a story about him related by Tim Catling, son of Tom. "Tom Catling when 15, was playing with old Mr Anderson, a dour Scot given to playing his golf in silence. During the round, Mark played two remarkable shots from very difficult lies, and each time Tom asked him how he did it and each time Mark explained and apart from that did not speak at all. At the end of the round, Tom thanked MLA very much and the reply was "that's all right, you're a nice lad but you talk too much."

Peter Anderson's great passions for education and golf were played out in three distant arenas – St Andrews in Scotland, and Geelong and Perth in eastern and western Australia. Not only was Peter Anderson's passion for each at a high level but his persistence and determination through difficult times of world



wars and the Great Depression were a significant testimony to his character, as was the quality of his golf.

'The history of golf in Australia' is both how the golf was transplanted to Australia and the development of golf once there. Peter Anderson stands tall in both these dimensions of our history. The heritage of golf he brought to Australia, in how he played the game, the clubs he used and his understanding of the game and the course on which it is played, came from the foundation of golf, at the Old Course, St Andrews.

When we think of people like Peter Corsar Anderson, we recognise and respect the people who were the founders and developers of golf in this country, on whose shoulders were the burdens of building Clubs, courses and the standards of play, and whose passion was encouraging young golfers to play the game well, in its true spirit. These are the shoulders on which we modern Australian golfers stand. Such is the history of golf in Australia.

Compiled by Barry S Leithhead,
4 August 2005

With generous contributions gratefully received from Alasdair Courtney, Archivist, Scotch College Perth, Malcolm Purcell and Fatima Pandor of Perth, Michael B de D Collins Persse, Keeper of the Archives, Geelong Grammar School, Ms Moira Drew, Museum Curator for Australian Golf Union/Golf Society of Australia and Archivist, Royal Melbourne Golf Club, Graham McEachran of Cottesloe GC History Group, Carol Hardie, daughter of Bill Anderson and granddaughter of ML Anderson and recognising the encouragement from John Pearson, Editor of *Through The Green*, magazine of the British Golf Collectors Society.

The Societies Challenge

The Societies Challenge is to be held on Tuesday 11 October at Woodlands GC, in Melbourne. The Challenge, between GCSA and the Golf Society of Australia, is a match play handicap team event, held each year, alternating between Sydney and Melbourne. GCSA, holder the Al Howard Trophy, was unable to send a team in 2004 so it is important that we do so this year. Support events will be held on the trip to Melbourne and for three days on the Mornington Peninsular after the Challenge.

Contact Henry Paterson on 0407 264 668 so you can participate in this great event

2005 Australian Hickory Club Championship

The Auburn Links is once again the venue for the 14th Hickory Club Championship, to be held on Thursday 19th November 2004 with hit-off from 12.30pm. Well suited to hickory play and laid out by Al Howard, Auburn is a varied and enjoyable track..

Handicap and Women's events are held in conjunction with the Championship. The events will be decided over 18 holes stroke play. In the event of a tie there will be a three-hole play off then sudden death. Championship trophies will be awarded. Hickory shafted clubs must be pre-1940 and hire sets are available. Light refreshments will be served following the tournament.

The application form is enclosed with this edition of *The Brassie*, for return to Tom Moore or Peter Read by Friday 4th November, 2005.

News from the Museum

Bruce Nairn, former President of the AGU and NSWGA has accepted nomination as Chair of the Australian Historic Golf Trust. Bruce, who takes over from Geoff Scott, National President of PGA-Australia, will bring a wealth of experience to the Trust that will assist the development program. As well, Peter Toogood, former Australian Amateur Champion, leading amateur in the 1954 British Open and founder of the Golf Museum at Bothwell, Tasmania has accepted a position as Trustee.

The PGA of Australia has announced that it will match the \$5,000 grants of the NSWGA and WGNSW. As well, the PGA is providing staff to assist implementing the Collection database system. With these contributions and indications of more in 2006, the Museum Development Plan gets a real boost. If you would like to share in the action, contact Peter Read on 9871 3728.

Work has started to catalogue books in the Museum's Resource Centre. Julia Hoffman, a specialist collector of

golf books and Erwin Huber are assessing the books to determine what others are needed for a first class Resource Centre. If you would like to help or have books you would like to donate, contact Erwin on 9389 5492. When established, the Resource Centre will be an ideal research space for Golf Club Historians and others.

Tom Moore was invited by the PGA to give an insight into golf history to the Trainee Professionals. The session covered both stories about old time Pros and a demonstration of club conservation. Reports from attendees and people they told were very complimentary and this encourages us to see how we can develop and extend the Museum's Education Program. A Discussion paper has been prepared (see page 7) and if you would like to comment on it, contact Barry Leithhead on 9652 1430.

The NSW Golf Association has again invited GCSA to provide its display at the NSW Open, to be held at the Liverpool Golf Club over 17-20 November, 2005. Make sure you visit the booth when you attend this warm-up event for the Australian Open.

GCSA at the PGA Trade Show & Centenary Open

Tom Moore with help from local GCSA member Noel Pittard and legendary Shark teacher Charlie Earp put on a very successful display at the PGA Trade Show held on the Gold Coast in early August. The Star Guest was Norman von Nida who stopped at the booth for almost an hour and kept the constant stream of visitors entertained with an interesting account of his long life and times in golf. 'The von' has been one of Australia's greatest golfers, who has set the standard for professional golf and encouraged many professionals to play in overseas tournaments.

There is interest in forming a Queensland Chapter of GCSA as soon as there is a viable number of members. Enquiries about hickory events came from Royal Pines GC Queensland and the National GC Victoria.

The PGA is celebrating its Centenary Championship this year at Coolumb on the Queensland Sunshine Coast from 1-4 December and GCSA is providing a special hickory feature in the Pro-Am as well as the usual display.

'The von': Tom's favourite story

Tom Moore's favourite story of 'The von'

A DISCUSSION PAPER:

The Heritage of Golf

The Golf Collectors Society of Australia considers the history of golf in Australia from the aspects of respect, conservation and celebration:

We respect of the traditions of golf, of its foundations of playing, players, the implements of play, the places where golf was played and the clubs where players associated. *Respect for tradition* is based on accepting that modern practice is a development from the past and that enjoyment of the modern game and future improvements rely absolutely on the values handed to us from the pioneers of the old days.

Conservation extends respect by collecting and preserving the relics of golf's history. We collect and restore old clubs, gather and collate information, capture and retell stories that represent the heritage of the modern game.

Golf is a wonderful game and different to many others simply by the depth and value of its heritage. As much as we enjoy the modern game, we *celebrate* its history by playing the game with old clubs, dressed in the old clothes; through visiting collections of items of historic significance; with anniversaries of the founding of clubs; through the championships that are steeped in history and the people and champions that have set examples for others to follow. We celebrate the history of golf every time we play the modern game, provided we understand something of the history.

In the modern world, respect for old times, old people and old places does not come easily. Modern people might see the latest developments as throwing out the old, rather than an extension that relies on it. An education program about the heritage of golf puts the modern game and its future in its ancient context.

Elements of an Education Program

The PGA trainees are a useful example of a model audience for an education program. They are young, talented, focussed on all things modern and needing and wanting to learn their profession. A program that meets the needs of PGA trainees will most likely be suitable or adaptable to other audiences. While playing the game is one focus, the professional's role in the game is another. Both aspects and others that relate to

them have direct and strong links to golf's history.

At the most basic level, an education program could be based on respect, conservation and celebration of the traditions of golf, of its foundations of playing, players, the implements of play, the places where golf was played and the clubs where players associated.

The history of golf in Australia can be seen at two levels – the history of golf in Scotland that was brought to Australia and the development of golf in Australia from those origins.

More specifically, an education program could cover:

1. Etiquette and rules of play (in an historic context)
 2. The origins of golf – the players, places and players
 3. The famous early players, both amateur and professional, before and after hickory
 4. The playing clubs and balls and playing technique
 5. The development of courses, clubs, championships in Scotland and elsewhere overseas;
 6. The migration of golf to Australia through the early professionals
 7. The development of the founding clubs
 8. Changes in the role and position of the club professional
 9. Course designers and green keepers;
 10. The 1920s development of many of Australia's major clubs
 11. The Australian professionals who pioneered playing overseas – Howard, Popplewell, von Nida, Thomson, Norman among many others
 12. Restoration techniques for old golf clubs;
 13. How to play with hickory shaft clubs – relevance to modern play
 14. Collecting the information and stories of club histories
- And more!

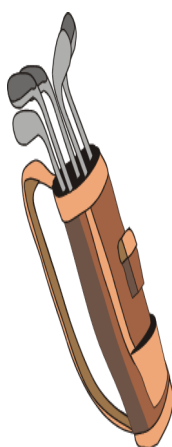
These items are numbered to provide reference and suggest a sequence

Barry Leithhead
20 July 2005

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*Respecting, conserving and
celebrating the history of golf
in Australia*

Invite a golfing friend to become a Golf Collector/Historian

*The Golf Collectors Society of Australia is the ideal forum
for people:*

- *Interested in golf's rich and relevant history;*
- *Collecting old clubs and other memorabilia;*
- *Wanting to play with hickory shafted clubs;*
- *Researching and writing the history of their club.*

*These like-minded people with varying interests across the
spectrum of golf's history find much in common. The help-
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