

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 Australian Hickory Club Championship 2005

A goodly crowd of hickory club wielders assembled at The Auburn Links on November 10 to contest the 14th Australian Hickory Club Championship. The day was picture perfect and the course presented in extremely good condition. The Auburn City Links is rapidly becoming one of the best Public Courses in the Sydney Metropolitan area.

The winner was Peter Read, the long hitting left-hander from Muirfield Club who carded a very good score of 70. Starting with a bogey six at the 1st and a birdie two at the 9th saw him turn even par. A bogey at the 10th was followed by two mighty hits to find the green at the par five 11th for a two putt birdie. On to the 14th (par 4) where he drove to the front of the green and another two putt birdie. An encounter with the hazard at the 15th resulted in a double bogey, a birdie at the 16th and a couple of bogeys to finish for 2 over par 70. Still an excellent result and 5 shots clear of his nearest rival Paul Padagas who carded a creditable 75.

The best nett score of the day went to Mike Sheret (16) from The Lakes on a count back from

Barry Leithhead (18). Both players recorded nett 69. Winner of the Ladies Division was Shuri Yasuda-Hines with a score of 91 which included an ace on the par 3 120m 9th hole. Her first ever!!!. Shuri edged out veteran Marge McWilliam who shot 96.

Dan Cullen Trophy February 2006

Friday 17 February at Long Reef GC is the date and place for this popular 2-ball Ambrose 10-hole event on this ever-enjoyable seaside course, where a breeze always makes a game a test. Hit-off is at 2.30pm and the event is followed by drinks, presentations and BBQ.

The Dan Cullen Trophy is a nice mixture of challenging or serious golf with hickory clubs at a great place to use them. And in Dan Cullen, we have a living legend whose contribution to golf we celebrate.

The Dan Cullen Trophy is part of Long Reef's 'Summer Week of Golf' and an identical event with hickories for their members is played in conjunction.

Come and be part of the fun!!

The Golf Collectors Society of Australia

Volume 3 Issue 5

December 2005

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GCSA's Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held after the Hickory Club Championship on Thursday 10 November 2005. Thirteen members attended. John Fletcher presented the Financial Report (summarised below) and Tom Moore gave his President's Report.

The Executive was re-elected with one addition – Henry Paterson – who agreed to take on the Secretary's role so Barry Leithhead can focus on *The Brassie* and other GCSA activities.

Interesting questions (*with responses in Italics*) were asked in General Business:

Bill McWilliam asked that the Museum's

Sponsors be recognised by a suitable sign and sincerely thanked – *This is in process;*

Bill McWilliam suggested that GCSA gives a special invitation to the Museum for High Schools where golf is a nominated Sports subject

Martin Black, Curator at Castle Hill GC, asked if the Museum's Resource Centre Library included a subject for Golf Course design, development and turf management (*Yes*) as he might be able to provide some materials.

Dan Cullen Jnr asked where GCSA expected its growth to come from:

- *Golf Club Historians with support from NSWGA and WGNSW;*
- *Displays at Tournaments*
- *The program of Hickory Club events*

The Golf Collectors Society of Australia Inc. Financial Reports

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	12 Months to 31-3-04	15 Months to 30-6-05
Income		
Member Subscriptions & joining fees	1790	2,880
Events, Functions	5,291	3,310
Donations & sundry income	1,054	295
	\$8,135	\$6,485
Expenditure		
Events, Functions	4,526	2,863
<i>Brassie</i> Publication	710	704
Museum expenses & Administration	542	1,906
Surplus for Period	\$2,357	\$1,012

BALANCE SHEET	At 31-3-04	At 30-6-05
Assets		
Bank	6,769	15,566
Other Current Assets	0	931
Fixed Assets	4,004	3,708
Liabilities		
Unexpended Grants	0	7,852
Sundry Creditors	542	1,110
Net Assets	\$10,231	\$11,243
Members' Funds:	\$10,231	\$11,243

Golf Collectors at the Big Tournaments

The Golf Collectors Society was invited to hold a display of golfing memorabilia at the big tournaments of the 2005 season.

First was the N.S. W. Open at the Liverpool course in western Sydney from 17th to 20th November. Ross Howard and Henry Paterson and I manned the tent for the 4 days of the Tournament and created a great amount of interest. We were constantly handing out copies of the "Brassie" and applications for membership forms and answering a multitude of questions from visitors asking how to take care of their collections.

Although we were invited to Moonah for the Open, regrettably it was impossible to attend both the Open and the PGA Centenary Championship at Coolum in Queensland. Keith Wood of the Golf Society graciously agreed to hand out copies of the "Brassie" and generally act on our behalf. Peter Stickley, Alan Heil and Ian Alexander volunteered their time should they have been needed.

On Monday 28th November I travelled to Queensland and picked up one of our members Noel Pittard who volunteered his service for the Centenary P.G.A. Championship at Coolum. We were set up in a large tent near the practice fairway which meant that spectators who wished to see their favourite

players warming up came by. Once again we were constantly kept busy showing our display and demonstrating various club manufacturing techniques. Shuri Hines and Judy Scaife spent many hours assisting us. Charlie Earp also came down and spent time in the tent. Charlie, well known Golf Pro from Royal Queensland and Mentor to the great White Shark is incredibly popular and greeted almost every visitor on a first name basis.

The highlight of the tournament for us was that we took our hickories to the par 3 11th hole to allow all amateur players in the Prof Am to hit off with a hickory. For many it was the first chance they had ever had to hit a ball with a wooden shaft and they were pleasantly surprised at the results, we had two near holes in one. What was even more surprising was that nearly all the Professionals asked to also have a hit. They too were surprised by the feel.

The success of our efforts means that it will almost certainly become a permanent feature. It was announced that the PGA Championship will again be played at Coolum in 2006. My thanks go to all those who helped in spreading our aims and aspirations to as wide an audience as we can, particularly P.G.A. Australia who picked up all our expenses at Coolum. A special thanks also to the NSW Golf Association for their help at Liverpool.

Tom Moore



NO MISS

A Londoner visiting St. Andrews for the first time was greatly intrigued by the game of golf and was determined to learn it. Furnishing himself with the usual implements and a caddie, he went out before breakfast. It seemed easy and his first drive was a tremendous swipe. When the turf had ceased to descend, he turned, somewhat dazed, to the caddie and asked:

"What did I just hit just now, my lad?"
"Scotland, Sir."

Golf Club Historians Seminar

The *Writing* seminar at Moore Park GC on Thursday 24 November attracted twenty five people wanting to consider the tough question: *How do you write a good Golf Club History?*

Colin Tatz, author of the Monash and Royal Sydney books as the keynote speaker asked: ‘What kind of history do you want to write?’ and ‘What type of historian do you want to be?’ Colin also explained the vital importance of *Context* – arguing that “unless there is a social/ political/cultural context to the work, nothing is more dull than descriptions of 18 holes of nice vegetation.” A full report of Colin’s presentation is planned for the next edition of *The Brassie*.

Jeannie Walker also spoke and her paper is included below.

Dan Cullen talked about his early times as assistant to the Professional Eric Alberts at the West Australian and Cottesloe GCs in the mid 1930s – words that might never be included in a Golf Club’s history. In fact, Cottesloe GC Historians did not know Dan had ever been at the Club!

GCH Ambassador Don Dunne attended a Golf Society Historians Seminar at Commonwealth GC in Melbourne on Monday 21 November on ‘Sharing Information between Golf Clubs’. Don has a special interest in the links between the early Golf Clubs of Melbourne and Sydney and is the best person to collaborate with The Golf Society’s Historians.

WRITING MANLY GOLF CLUB’S STORY

By Jeannie Walker

I was fascinated to know that, last weekend, there was a seminar being held which was titled “Is History Fiction?” This question poses the primary issues for a golf club history .

Why write a history? Why write a book? What kind of history do you want to write?

I’m sorry I missed Colin Tatz’s talk this morning because of a prior commitment, but his Royal Sydney history was inspirational for me when starting out on Manly’s. The reason? He showed how to write a golf club history with themes, historical context, and analysis. It was not just a boring list of facts ... you know what I mean: this happened, that happened, date, golf score, and so on.

Manly is a lovely seaside suburb. It was a tiny fishing village in 19th century Sydney.

“The first explorers discovered what the aborigines already knew, that Manly is a sublimely beautiful place. In those days, the bush flowers – boronias, flannel flowers, native roses, rock lilies, Christmas bush and waratahs – grew in profusion on the narrow isthmus between Manly Cove and ocean beach ... Coming down from [the top of Eastern Hill], the explorers went around the cove and along the harbour foreshores. The view of Sydney Heads was spectacular from the Fairlight area where the first golf was to be played at Manly just over 100 years later. They climbed, then, to the top of Kangaroo Hill with its wildflowers also growing in abundance. From there they would have seen a wetlands area surrounded by a natural amphitheatre of hills, with reeds and rushes and a lagoon at its northern end. Of course, they were not to know that this place would become the Manly Golf Links”. (*One Hundred Years of Golf at Manly*, p8)

I believe in the importance of the concept of “context” within a golf club history: the golf club within a specific social area, and members living through events which included golf. Our dates went from 1901, when we knew the first golf was played by men who went on to form Manly Golf club, to 2003, the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the club. Members played their golf there through two world wars and an economic depression, as Manly developed from a village to a residential suburb with beaches (both surf and harbour), “seven miles from Sydney and a thousand miles from care”.

Golf changed too: In the early days, the **gentlemen** at Manly worked in their professions and played their golf on Sundays. Most good male golfers in this category remained amateurs.

Other **young lads** who came from poorer families caddied for these men, then went on to become teaching professionals. ‘They were regarded as hired staff, to clean members’ shoes, to play golf with them on demand, and so on. Younger **women** may have worked, or not, until they married. When they married, they stopped working in a job. They joined the golf club because their husbands belonged. Many went on to hold positions for many years on Associates Committees, carrying out administrative roles that today’s woman would be undertaking in paid employment.

It seemed obvious to structure our history book into two halves -the development of the club and golf activities up to World War Two, and then all the changes afterwards.

We were fortunate to have another history of Manly Golf Club, written by C.H. Bertie and published in 1946. I have to say that without this book, this current history could not have been written. But it was also helpful in what it included, and what it excluded. It concentrated on the men golfers, the acquisition of the golf course, and two clubhouses. The ladies, wives of the men who were already in the club, were mentioned as being permitted to join the club. The golfing achievements of these ladies were given one page near the end of the book. Golfing professionals (and these included those of the calibre of Dan Soutar and Joe Kirkwood) were totally excluded, absent from the pages of this first history .In the current book they have a chapter telling of their history , and three are included in the group we called “Manly Golfing Greats”.

I was determined I was not going to write a chronological history - in 1923 this happened, in 1924 that happened, and so on, with the hapless reader trying to connect the various activities across the years. My chapters had their chronology within the chapters, where you have a chapter on the Development of the Club, another chapter on how the golf course evolved, and men’s and women’s golf, and so on. But I was determined on one thing: that the activities of the men and women were to be intertwined, and that the women were not shoved in near the end of the book where you could read that chapter if you could be bothered getting to that point in the book.

The other questions I had to asked myself were: would I deal with racism, with sexism, with class, and I decided I could not, not overtly, that is. Those issues are there if the astute reader wishes to find them, but I had to tell myself over and over that I was not writing a PhD , I was writing an account of the activities at the Golf Club that would provide a pleasurable read for the members. So hence the reference to fiction, above. It is a predominately a happy book, a book without the in-fighting and clashes and injustices and scandals which I, and a number of others, knew had occurred.

I had to fight to get the reference to Aborigines in, but I could not refer to the middens found in the bunkers at the eighth, near the lagoon. “They might come and take over our golf club”, I was told. “But we own our land”, says I. “What makes you an expert?”, came the scornful reply. So hence the ownership of Manly golf club’s land features prominently in the “Club” pages.

But always I had to consider the two historical questions: HOW, and WHY, when constructing the text.

This raises the issue of a **committee** working to produce the book: My committee was already in place -elderly gentlemen, sweet people, but with certain prejudices and their own agendas for the project. As Manly has no established archive, it was necessary that a group work on the project.

Good points in working with a committee:

1. Can’t do all the research yourself
2. Writing takes a huge amount of time -three days per week for a number of years -10 re-writes

I had great help from one committee member who had writing and editorial skills -we would pore over the text during a number of sessions

BUT

Bad points:

1. I knew what I was looking for when I researched the women’s sections by going through their minute books – the others had never done primary research from documents prior to this;
2. By the way, while I wasn’t banned from searching through the club’s Minute Books, I wasn’t offered this facility, and I knew I was treading on dangerous ground – a male member of the committee went through the Board Minutes;

WRITING MANLY GOLF CLUB'S STORY (continued)

3. Personality clashes; you had to argue strongly to get your point of view accepted, made more difficult because I was female. The disagreements were unpleasant. I was accused more than once that "I would write it in a feminine kind of way".

Ultimately, however, all this debate made the book much better.

Another problem: - changes to the Board membership during that time. After getting the green light in 1998 for the structure of the book, subsequent Boards kept changing the goalposts. However, two of the Presidents were particularly constructive on the content of the book.

It takes a huge amount of time and effort to write a golf club history book. It took us some eight years from start to finish -I joined the committee in 1997, believing the book would be published in 2001, the centenary of golf being first played at Manly. The Board lengthened it to 2003, the centenary of the club's beginning. During those years, two committee members had suffered serious illness and couldn't assist taking it through to final stages. Another had

left the club in 2002. I was fortunate I had worked at commercial art and publishing during my working days. So I and one other Committee worked with the Designer on the finished book over the last two years.

I was also determined not to become the junior typist as well, and adamantly refused to type up the golf events champions lists – one gentleman huffily said he would do it, but there were numerous typing mistakes in the lists, many of which had to be done again.

Am I sorry I did it? I don't want to put anybody off, but yes and no. It took a lot of time and energy, and my golf suffered as a result during this period. Yet in the long-term, it is a book that satisfied all members of the History Book Committee and, from comments made, was enjoyed by many of the club members.

It takes, as I said, a huge amount of work, so I would like you to be aware of this. Plan how you are going to do it, and why you are doing it. And, if you can, choose colleagues (if you can) who bring good skills and knowledge to the various aspects of producing a history of your club. **And produce a history of which you can be proud.**

BANJO PATERSON THE GOLFER

a member of Royal Sydney GC, in 1897 wrote:

It was the Bondi golfing man
Drove off from the golf-house tee
And he had taken his little daughter
To bear him company.

"Oh Father, why do you swing the club
And flourish such a lot?"

"You watch it fly o'er the fences high!"
And he tried with a brassey shot.

"Oh Father, why did you hit the fence
Just there where the brambles twine?"
And the Father he never answered a word,
But he got to the green in nine.

"Oh Father, back from behind those trees
What dismal yells arrive!"

"Tis a man I ween on the second green
And I've landed him with my drive.

So on they fared to the water hole
And he drove with a lot of dash,
But the balls full soon in the dread lagoon
Fell down with a woeful splash.

"Oh Father, why do you beat the sand
Till it flies like the carded wool?"
And the father he answered never a word
For his heart was much too full

"Oh Father, why are they shouting Fore!
And screaming so lustily?"
But the Father he answered never a word
A pallid corpse was he.

For a well-swung drive on the back of his head
Had landed and laid him low.
Lord save us all from a fate like this
When next to the links we go.

Poem located by Owen Denmeade

Publicity in the Sydney Morning Herald

James Cockington was so serious in writing this article about collecting hickory clubs that he bought a set, played in the Australian Championship and joined GCSA! The article, a regular feature on Collecting, featured a fine picture of Tom Moore on p13 of SMH's Money Section of 28 Nov-2 Dec.

Many people rang GCSA to ask about the old set of clubs that had been in their garage for years – 'Are there any treasures among them?' was the constant question. Unfortunately no, but as listed below there are hickory clubs of good Scottish makers and a few old steel shafts as well. 'How do I sell them and at what price?' was the next question. *The Brassie* seemed to be the answer.

If you are interested in buying any of these old clubs, please contact the person named (or Barry Leithhead on 02 9652 1430):

1. T Auchterlonie Sammy; Spalding (anvil) Putting Cleek Arthur East Concord GC; (Les Hagan, 02 4365 3608)
2. Crown Golf Co. 4 Iron; St. Andrews Mashie; Spalding Thistle Mashie Niblick; Spalding Bros London Niblick; JA Kirkland Putter; double-faced putter; (Neville Stutchbury, 02 9449 2329)

3. Spalding Bros (Aust) Sweet Spot Irons; (Barbara Jones, 02 9982 8119)
4. Forgan goose neck Putter; (Ray Marginson, 03 9853 6633)
5. Wood; Star Maxwell Clark Bros & Scott Rustless Iron; Wm Gibson Mashie; Wm McKenzie Goulburn GC – three irons; (John Rogers, 02 9817 1465)
6. Kroydon (USA) Fred Poppelwell Mid Iron, Mashie and Mashie Niblick; (Michael Last, 02 9880 2362)
7. Gleneagles Special Wood, Mid Iron & Mashie; Ayres wood; (John Aldous, 02 6550 0867)
8. Gibson Maxwell Mid Iron, Kroflite Mid iron (Tom Howard) & Spalding Sweet Spot Putter (Tom Howard Concord GC); (Fred Powell, 02 6845 1314)
9. Forgan Meteor Rustless Mid iron; St. Andrews Mid Iron; Glasgow Emporium Putting Cleek; Accurate Putter; (Bob Moon, 02 9529 6331)
10. Dan Souter driver; (Barbara Elkins, 02 4334 6868)
11. Driver G Campbell Leura; Fife Golf Co Mid Iron; Smooth faced Mid Iron; Carnegie Clark RSGC Rose Bay special Mashie; Anderson of Anstruther Iron; G Brodie Breeze Deep Faced Mashie; Putter; (Tom Fitzgibbon, 02 4621 2888)
12. Set of four Pin Splitter woods (steel shaft) (Adrian Davis, 03 5975 0335)



Humble Pie-eating Owen with Hickory stick at hand.

Owen Denmeade takes his hickories seriously, as many of us know. But this is something different as the pic on the left will show! A wonderful find at his local Supermarket, Glen McGrath's own Hickory BBQ Sauce. Australian owned and made and a % of profits goes to the McGrath Cancer Foundation.

"You've used the clubs, now have the sauce on your pie!!

*I have and it's **excellent!!**"*

If for some reason your local Supermarket does not stock GM's Hickory Sauce, contact:

Meyer Gourmet Food,
Ashfield NSW 02 9716 4625

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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-
fulness of members is a feature of GCSA and new members
extend their knowledge and enjoyment of golf.*

***Playing with hickories** is good for your game with mod-
ern clubs. With hickories, you go back to basics - an easy
swing, head still, feeling the shaft and the club in your
hands. These are good lessons to relearn.*

***GCSA's Golf Club Historians** have formed a Special
Interest Group that assists and develops your role to
research, record, archive and write the history of your club.
Meet the other historians and share experiences,
approaches and achievements through the SIG.*

Join GCSA and extend your enjoyment of golf!

Join GCSA today!! Subscription to June 2006

Good news!! The annual subscriptions for the year ending 30 June 2006
remains at \$30 plus \$20 joining fee.

NAME:

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CLUB:

Forward your cheque for \$50 (\$20 joining, \$30 Subscription) to:
The Golf Collectors Society of Australia, 52 Becky Avenue, North Rocks NSW 2151