

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 (1896).

Captain's Corner

Coming Events

July-December 2006

A 9 hole Hickory Invitation – 2 Person Ambrose at 2pm on **Thursday 13 July** at Rosnay Golf Links, Weymouth Ave. Auburn – members to bring a visitor (clubs for hire), with Show and Tell after the game; drinks and snacks. Moderate cost.

PGA Golf Show – Darling Harbour Thursday-Sunday 20-23 July
Make sure you visit the GCSA display and if you can spare a few hours to help, it is very rewarding to explain golf's history and GCSA activities to those visiting the display.

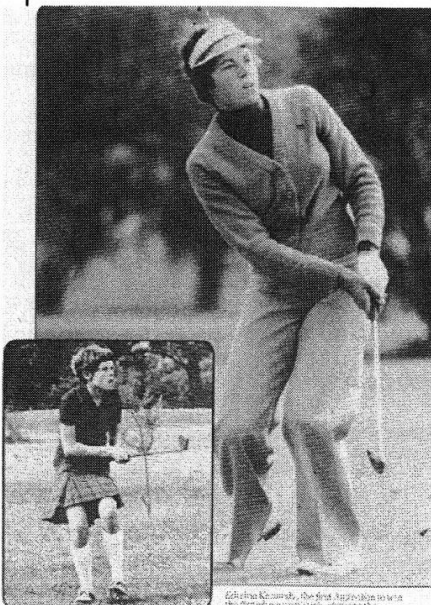
A Living History Dinner with Edwina Kennedy on Tuesday 26 September at Moore Park GC. (7pm for 7.30; \$35ph) Edwina is the only Australian to win the British Women's Amateur Championship (in 1978 aged 19; see pic and aged 12). Organise a group from your club, invite the women members, junior members and their parents. What a great opportunity for junior girls to hear Edwina talk about her motivation, drive and desire to win one of the great women's events in the world.

These dinners have been a highlight of the Golf Collectors calendar, bringing Living History to today's golfers. Phone bookings to Peter Read (9871 3728) or Erwin Huber (9389 5492).

Avalon GC New Clubhouse celebration!! GCSA members are invited to play in a hickory event on **Friday 26 October**. The details are not yet available – it may be a Charity event – call Peter Read (9871 3728) if you need more information.

The Golf Collectors Society's display at the NSW Open at Liverpool GC **Thursday – Sunday 9-12 November** and at the Australian Open; Royal Sydney GC **Thursday - Sunday 15-19 November 2006**. Make sure you visit the GCSA display

The Societies Challenge against the Golf Society of Australia at Oatlands GC with hickories over 11 holes on **Tuesday 21 November**,



Edwina Kennedy, the first Australian to win the British Women's Amateur Championship, aged 12. Photo supplied by the GCSA.

The Golf Collectors Society of Australia

**Volume 4 Issue 3
PGA Golf Show
July 2006**

2006 for the 'Al Howard Trophy'. After dinner in the Oatlands Club House, Owen Denmeade will present the Club with the '1932 BERK Cup', first played for by Club members in 1931. No doubt Owen will have a wonderful story to tell about his acquisition. Having spoken to Oatlands General Manager, I know they are eagerly awaiting the return of this relic to their Club. Please indicate your interest in the golf and/or dinner to Tom Moore (9871 2798) or Peter Read (9871 3728).

The Australian Hickory Club Championship on Thursday 23 November 2006 over 18 holes at Rosnay Golf Links, Weymouth Avenue Auburn. Phone bookings to Tom Moore or Peter Read.

Peter Read

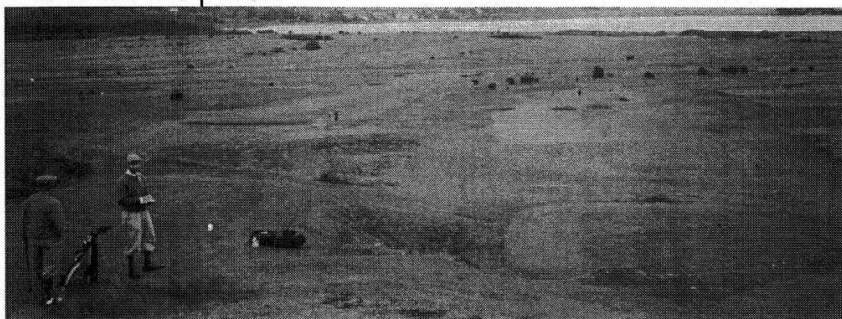
A Hickory Adventure in England and Scotland with Barry Leithhead, Editor

The British Golf Collectors hickory events in May were irresistible – I just had to join and go. For ten days I helped celebrate a Club's centenary, contested the Central England (CE), British Seniors and Scottish championships, played two links courses in wind and rain and a sodden inland course and visited two famous links courses, Prestwick and Western Gables. I met about forty of the British Collectors, two Americans and two Swedes and spent almost a week as house guest of John Pearson, Editor of *Through The Green*, the BGCS's fine magazine.

Stanton-on-the-Wolds GC near Nottingham celebrated its centenary with a 20-a-side foursomes hickory match against BGCS players over 18 holes on Sunday 21st May. After a light lunch the teams did battle on a wet course with some of the Stanton players in fine form and the official result was all-square. A fine dinner in the evening was followed by a picture show of British

golf's heritage and the visitors were billeted in members' homes.

The Scottish championship is the highlight of the BGCS events and it deserves to be. Played on Gullane #3 (par 68) with Aberlady village across the water, (pic below of 14th hole on left,) it is ideal for hickory golf, a stern challenge in a quality field of more Scots than English, three Americans, three from Sweden and an Australian. The warm-up 9-hole foursomes event at the old Musselburgh course in the morning adds the historic touch of class.



Development of the Wooden Golf Club *Golf Illustrated* Editorial 19 January 1900

The tendency in modern clubs is to develop more and more of one species. There is not the difference in make and appearance there was twenty years ago between the drivers of one maker and another, when it was easy without

examining a club to say at once by the cut of its jib as it were, who the maker was. A Forgan driver was as easy to distinguish from a Morris, as it is now to tell between a mashie from a niblick. MacEwans and Patricks had, in like manner, their own distinguishing characteristics, all perfectly familiar to golfers. Few people we imagine, will assert that the new ever shortening and broadening shape of the head is prettier than the old. It is certainly more powerful but what has been gained in effectiveness has been lost in what our American friends would call 'elegance'. Apart from the aesthetic side of the question, however, it has to be admitted that, as a hitting weapon, the modern club is an advance on the old, and that on perfectly scientific lines.

Taken to its conclusion, the present tendency in club heads will land us in something very much like the mallet used about two hundred years ago. It appears to be a scientific fact that a stronger blow can be delivered with a club made on the mallet principle. There is less resistance to the air, more concentration of force, less friction on the ground, and greater accuracy of delivery with this type of weapon than with any other. But in striking a stationary ball, there is really no reason, when one comes to think of it, why the weapon should have a greater area of hitting surface than is necessary to cover the area of the point of impact and support the necessary weight of the blow. We have only touched on the fringe of this interesting subject, which should be taken up by the experts in such matters.

David Strath (1849-1879) Champion Golfer - Discovering David in Melbourne

Researched by Noel Terry, Historian, Royal Melbourne Golf Club

Royal Melbourne's fine collection of historic golf clubs includes a long nose club made by David Conacher [1827-91], the joint designer and builder of The Melbourne Golf Club's first course. Was Conacher the first professional golfer to come to Australia? Noel Terry learned from Dr David Malcolm in St. Andrews that the first professional golfer to go to Australia was David Strath, friend and adversary of the great golfer, Young Tom Morris, but added little was known of his fate. Some reports suggested he may have died on the boat and others that he died not long after arrival.

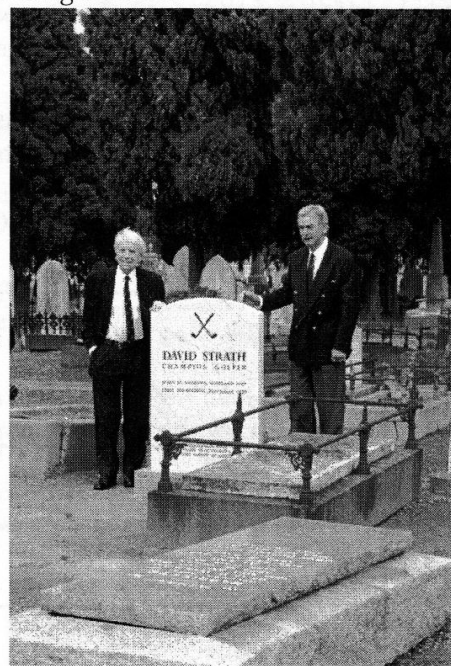
So began the long and difficult search to answer questions about Davie Strath in Melbourne: Why did he come? How did he travel and with whom? Who did he leave behind? Where did he live? What was the story of his health? When did he die and where was he buried? Who were his friends?

Noel and others answered all these questions and

located Strath's unmarked grave in the Melbourne General Cemetery. Funds were raised to erect a suitable headstone to commemorate the life of Davie Strath. The research has been written up in a number of articles published in a variety of magazines, together with a high quality DVD production, with wide acclaim for Noel's outstanding research.

(An article about the research project was published in *The Brassie* in June 2006)

Pic shows Noel Terry [r] and Dr David Malcolm at the David Strath memorial dedication in January 2006



Writing a Golf Club History – Professor Colin Tatz

A presentation at the Moore Park Golf Club, Sydney on Thursday 24 November 2005.

My basic argument is that unless there is a social, political and cultural context to a Golf Club's history, nothing is duller than descriptions of 18 holes of nice vegetation.

A golf club's history writer needs to consider is what kind of historian they are and this helps to provide a framework in which to write. Are you a chronicler and describe the records of year-by-year events? Or are you a narrator and plan to tell a story? Another way of writing a golf club history is as a *Reconstructionist*, from a collection of memorabilia, notes and cuttings you try to reconstruct what was there and what happened. Then there are *Constructionists* – they want to know not *what*, they want to *how* and *why*. Why was this place selected and not in some other locality? The next type is a *Deconstructionist* – like a forensic pathologist who does an analysis to know how it works, how did it get there, does it function well, what are the parts that make up the whole?

In writing a golf club history, I am most interested in *context*. Golf club histories divorced from context other than golf, become fairly sterile. Context is mixture of conditions and circumstances – facts surrounding an issue. What is the political climate of the time? The social and cultural climate? Economic, Geographic and so on.

If Golf Clubs don't have a readable history they may as well not have had a history; it's just a place to hit little white balls a certain distance, have a drink and go home. They are then no better than the local Sports Centre where you play squash, have a shower and go home. There is no sense of loyalty or tradition and more important, no sense of soul. This is the message that comes from a good golf club history.

(The full text of Professor Tatz's presentation was published in *The Brassie* in June 2006)

The Golf Collectors Society of Australia 2006-7 Membership Application

Thank you for joining the Golf Collectors Society of Australia, the group that **respects, conserves and celebrates the history of golf in Australia**. GCSA manages the Golfers Museum at Granville, provides information through *The Brassie*, conducts events using hickory clubs and supports collectors, Golf Club historians, researchers and other enthusiasts in golf history. Make sure you get the most from your membership.

The annual Subscription remains unchanged at \$30, and the Joining Fee is \$20. Please complete the form below, noting your special interests, and send with your cheque for \$50 **payable to Golf Collectors Society of Australia** to:

John Fletcher 1 Camden Street Sylvania NSW 2224

Name Address		Subs paid to June: 2007
Phone		Mobile
Fax		Email
Spouse		
Golf Club Historian (Yes/No)		Home Golf Club
Special interests in golf collecting/history (Enter Yes or No below with details)		
Collect clubs		
Collect books		
Collect (other)		
Playing with hickory clubs		
GCSA Volunteer - Yes/No If Yes, for what?		
Comments: 		