



The Brassie

December '02

The Newsletter of the Golf Collectors Society of Australia

The Hickory Championships

Spring (or is it summer?) has been a busy time for the Golf Collectors. While the weather has been unkind to fairways and demanding on water supplies, we have been making the most of the season. In late October, the 2002 Australian Hickory-shafted Championships were held at the Auburn City Links, Auburn. Peter Read was the defending champion, with Tom Moore an enthusiastic contender.

We invited all the Sydney golf clubs to send participants but none did and the field was limited in size. We must do more to explain the delight of playing with hickory clubs.

After nine holes it was anyone's championship but Peter Read's, at 10 over par. Des Froneman was steady and Tom was threatening.

That was the way it finished, with Des the new champion and Tom (again) being a worthy but disappointed second.

In the handicap division, Barry Leithhead headed off John Fletcher.

As usual, Owen Denmeade provided the on-course entertainment and was tournament photographer.

Cyprus Lakes – 10 years young

Cyprus Lakes had something to celebrate on November 9-10 with a special event for members. GCSA was asked to be part of the fun-day on Sunday with driving range practice using hickories, and it was great to see Brett Ogle and Ken Dukes hitting 200+m drives. Brett encouraged all the participants to join in.

There was a compulsory hit-off using a hickory club on the 16th in the 4-ball Ambrose. It was a straight drive contest as well. Most chose drivers but cleeks and driving irons were a sensible choice. Brett drove long and straight – straight into the far trees. Ken drove straight into a bunker.

It was a great day, with Tom Moore as entertaining as ever and Barry Leithhead in support. We had many opportunities to promote GCSA with the prospect of Ladies' days at a number of clubs and Corporate days in February-March 2003 also possible.

Brett Ogle takes up a new position as Director of Golf at Bonnie Doon in the new year and he is keen to have a hickory tournament for the members.

But the best news is that the Collectors Society earned a tidy sum for the enjoyable activity.

The Melbourne Excursion

Eleven GCSA golfers played the Golf Society of Australia over 9 holes at Royal Melbourne's west course. The event was handicap match play to the 1951 rules that allows stymies. These rules **don't** allow a free drop from bunkers, as Henry Paterson found out to his dismay.

We won!! The score was 6 to 3 with two matches drawn. The GSA had won on both prior encounters.

There is no doubt that playing on Royal Melbourne is a special experience and especially with hickory-shafted clubs. The course is laid so beautifully on the ground that it is natural to view and to play.

The clubhouse is being reconstructed so all the facilities except the pro shop are temporary facilities. Perhaps for this reason, (and not just because of our event) the Australian Open was moved to the Victoria Club.

The evening dinner is a wonderful affair, with a full roll-up of GSA members and some distinguished overseas guests in Melbourne for the Open Championship. The speech from Peter Dawson, Chairman of the R&A Rules Committee (and his responses to many questions) was outstanding. Peter Thompson, 5-times British Open Champion, also attended. Our own Champion, Des Froneman, was joined by his wife Liane, who flew down from Sydney just for the dinner.

The GCSA members making this trip – Tom Moore, Ian Alexander, Alan Heil, Ross Howard, Henry Patterson, Geoff & Will Martin, John Fletcher and Barry Leithhead all felt that we had to make the return event at Royal Sydney GC in November 2003, similarly splendid. It will be a significant challenge but one that will be worth the effort.

The Peninsular Extension

The intrepid ten spent three days playing the Portsea, Flinders and Eagle Ridge courses on the Mornington Peninsula. While not the big name courses, these three are good tests of golf and great to look at. Flinders and Portsea are next to the ocean and all make excellent use of the natural landscape with plenty of hills and dales.

We played stableford to handicap (not with hickories) with the winner judged on the best two of the three rounds. Tom was most consistent with 35, 36 and 37 points. Alan finished with an excellent 42 (69 scratch) to add to his 36 but after a miserable 23 on Portsea, Barry Leithhead came home with 39 and 40 points to win. He was swabbed and a letter sent to his club handicapper.

Seriously though, this was a great event and worth repeating. The first plan is to prepare for the AGS people who will come to play us at Royal Sydney in November. We want this to be an outstanding event that can compare to Melbourne's.

Just for practice, Ross Howard and Henry Patterson played Howlong on the Murray on the trip to Melbourne. They are convinced it is an ideal course for hickories and an ideal place to have a 'half-way' meeting of GSA and GCSA players, say in April-May.

We need to set up a good team to plan, organise and conduct these activities.

Let Tom or Peter know how you can help.

Developing the Museum

The museum is coming along very nicely. The collection keeps growing and Tom has found real treasures to display. Recent acquisitions include:

- Frank (Happy) Eyres scrap book;
- Clubs used by Vic Bulgin, one of Australia's leading amateurs, who finished second to Kel Nagle in the 1959 Australian Open;
- An original London Times newspaper of 1930 recording Bobby Jones win in the British Amateur.

However, not enough people visit the museum and we are concerned that it relies almost wholly on Tom for its operation. A long-term plan is needed.

Two approaches have been taken; one to think of the best place to site the museum to attract enough attendance to sustain a viable operation; the other to approach to PGA, AGU, LPGA and WGA for their involvement in sustaining the museum. The second approach is receiving attention now and based on the interests of the golfing bodies, we can reconsider the siting question.

We have prepared a **Discussion Paper** and if you would like a copy and to be part of the discussion, contact Barry Leithhead at bsleith@ozemail.com.au or on 9652 1430.

The Museum was the venue for a seminar on 'The Essential Volunteer', a Museums Association activity. More than 20 people from various museums and other collections attended and heard about plans and techniques for encouraging volunteering.

If you would like to be part of GCSA's development team, call Tom or Peter.

Developing the GCSA

The Golf Collectors Society has a unique position and opportunity in Australian golf. Our objective, *to promote understanding and respect for golf history* gathers charm and attraction every day. We have no competitors.

But unless we aim to have a viable and self-sustaining organisation and an attractive activity calendar, we will lose the chance and Australian golf will be the poorer for it.

So we have drafted a **5-year Business Plan** and have started to action the key issues. If you would like a copy of the Business Plan and be part of the development team, then contact Barry Leithhead at bsleith@ozemail.com.au or on 9652 1430.

Part of the Plan concerns the Museum and our relationships with the Golf Society of Australia, the Australian Historic Golf Trust and Hall of Fame and the golfing bodies.

During the Melbourne trip, the newly elected President of GSA mentioned to Tom how it could be better if the GSA and the GCSA thought and acted together rather than separately. Tom agreed, and we see this as the start of a very sensible discussion that will help sustain and develop the interest in Australian golf history.

Dan Cullen Trophy

This annual 2-ball Ambrose event will again be held at Long Reef in the first quarter of next year. Details of the date, expected in Later February or early March, will be announced later.

Membership Subscriptions – Due

Some subscriptions are now overdue and if this section is coloured then we would like to receive your cheque for \$30.

The Society's membership is a low-cost contribution (unchanged from last year) that provides you with news and opportunities to share in activities about golf history. Please continue your support to ensure that the great events we are planning do happen.

For the Golfer with Everything

Why not a Christmas gift of a GCSA subscription plus our presentation goblet?

The cost is \$50 and an easy way of satisfying the hard-to-please relative of friend.

Please send recipient name and address details to Tom Moore by Monday, December 16 and he will ensure on-time delivery.

Replica Golf Clubs

GCSA has been negotiating with two suppliers of replica clubs with the prospect of a display in the Museum. Barry Kerr of Heritage Golf, St. Andrews, is very well known for the high quality clubs he creates. The replica Bobby Jones set is the top of the range item. After suggestions and counter suggestions, Barry will be providing the Museum with a few display clubs and this will encourage sales of these quality items.

Ross Baker is a dairy farmer near Daylesford in Victoria and a GSA member. Ross played in the recent event with clubs he made himself using Australian timbers and they are magnificent. Tom visited Ross on the

way home to learn his secrets for crafting and fixing the piece of horn to the sole of the club. Ross might be providing clubs for display at the Museum.

These clubs will form the basis of a 'shop' that Tom Moore is planning for the Museum. The details have to be developed and the product range agreed with Golf Mart, but the idea is a good one. GCSA members will find the shop a good source of interesting items.

Tom also plans to replace some of his genuine (very) old clubs that he uses in GCSA demonstration days, with Ross Baker replicas.

Some of you will remember that Des Froneman is a member of the 'Keepers of the Green', that society that remembers the traditions of Old Tom Morris. The Keepers provide an Old Tom set to subscribers and their surplus funds are directed to charity.

These three sources of reproduction clubs are all very worthwhile, if you want something new and playable, that is in the old style. There is a place in every collection for such clubs.

New Year Resolutions

Already?? Well, plan to make 2003 'the year of hickory-shafted golf'.

Belonging to GCSA provides funds that help to spread the word – encouraging others to join GCSA develops that. You can promote understanding and respect for golf history at your club and share news about our activities.

Make the time to participate in GCSA events and the extra time (if you can) to be part of the 'development team'.

**2003 – the Year of
Hickory-shafted Golf!**