

Golf History in Autumn

The Australian Golf Heritage Society seminar on Monday 5th May promises to live up to the standard set by those of prior years. We have an interesting guest in Dr David Hamilton, Captain of the British Golf Collectors Society, a notable researcher, writer, publisher and printer (on the last letterpress printing shop in Scotland, producing slim, limited editions) of books about golf's rich history. As a resident of St Andrews and a member of the R&A, David breathes history-laden air and leads a good golfing life as a result. The New South Wales Club at La Perouse is the venue – what a view! – and with about forty there, the buzz at coffee and lunch will be something to share!

As well as the seminar, David will be inspecting Royal Sydney's Robertson Collection and will be hosted to a half-round at The Australian and meeting their History Group. He then goes to Melbourne for a few days before taking part in Greg Ramsay's Festival of Heritage Golf in Tasmania.

Golf Club Histories

Bob Ross is a proud father, this time of 'A BIOGRAPHY OF PYMBLE GOLF CLUB', of which he says in the Preface, "I have called this a 'biography' because I conceive of this Club to be a living organism. It certainly had a birth and an infancy; there were teething problems with the Depression and its adolescence during the War years was marked by anxiety. It grew after that to some stature, working through property mortgages, bank loans for 'home improvements', the need for austerity at times in pursuit of the long plan and other situations that parallel private lives." The book strikes me as a fireside chat with Bob, complete with thoughtful insights and careful sentences, likely to be a worthwhile contender for USGA Book of the Year.

Book buffs Bill Clemow, John Lovell and Julia Hoffman combined their talents to compile a Bibliography of Australian Golf Club Histories, a more complete record than has existed before. For avid collectors of Histories it is a guide to what you don't have and for the Golf Library at Granville it is a wish list. Of course, this bibliography, like all others is a work-in-process – it doesn't include Pymble's book and will one day include the twenty or so histories we know are being written. As well, it's a list by inference of all the histories yet to be written, by clubs not yet included. If your club is one of them, ask for our booklet *Writing a Golf Club History*. (Email barry.leithhead@bigpond.com; phone 02 9652 1430 or postal address below). As well, you will receive the Golf Club History Group Charter – a guide for your club Board to establish such a group, resource it adequately for the task and expect good results.

The Golf Reference Library at Granville

We're getting there – not quite open for business yet, but if you have a query or want to read a few club histories, then you are very welcome. The Library is accessible on Sundays when the Museum is open (10am – 4pm) or at other times by arrangement. The catalogue of the books donated is in reasonable shape, the Book

Group has identified the duplicates we don't need and has started to cull the Instruction books that don't fit in a Reference Library. Lists are available of books for sale, most at the bargain price of \$5 each or 10 for \$25 – for a copy contact Barry Leithhead (address on page 1. Sale proceeds will be used to buy books needed for the Library, some of which are only available from 2nd hand book shops.

However, if you have interesting, informative books in your personal library that deserve research and a wider readership, why not donate them to the Golf Library?

How Much Research Is Enough?

What a question! Unfortunately it is essential to answer because too little and the story is depleted; too much and you never get to write the story. The answer lies somewhere in the idea that golf in your club needs to be set against the social and other context of the times – you need to research beyond the club to understand its life in its community and era. For the early clubs this can be a huge task and for any club it is a challenge and important.

We plan to cover this subject in a seminar later in 2008, with other seminars covering a) the history of golf course development, b) the massive photograph collection at the State Library and c) reference to the significant archives held by the NSW Golf Association and Women's Golf NSW.

A View on History – AGHS member Peter Hume writes:

History is indispensable in any area of human affairs; to have an appreciation of what has gone before simply adds a dimension that makes what is happening now so much more significant, so much more understandable, so much more valuable. Golfing history adds to the enjoyment of the present moment, increases our gratitude and respect for those who have pioneered the way, enriches our present sporting experience and ultimately, I believe, rounds out our humanity.

Be Involved in the Historians Group

A major benefit of the Historians Group is the network it creates in the personal and inter-club contacts it provides. We want the Historians Group to grow in size and strength to make the most of these contacts. Your attendance at Historians functions provides the substance of our networking. However, growth won't just happen – it needs time and effort and if you would like to help make it happen, then please let me know. We need a librarian, a website administrator, an organiser and a communicator – is that you?

With respect to our history

Erwin Huber

(100 Macquarie St. Chifley 2036 or phone: 02 9661 6046)