

THE LONG GAME

NEWSLETTER OF THE
GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



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Three hole exhibition match preceding the Australian Amateur Golf Championship

by *Tony McLean*

On Monday 14 January 2013, at 5.00pm at Commonwealth Golf Club, we were privileged to witness a three hole exhibition match played with hickories by four of the leading contenders in the 2013 Australian Amateur Championship commencing the following day on the Commonwealth course. A crowd of some 50 to 70 spectators were in attendance.

The hickories were similar to those used in Australian Amateur Championships of 80 years ago.

The four players participating in the match were Cameron Smith, a 19 year old Queenslander, twice Australian Amateur runner up, Lucas Herbert, a leading amateur from Victoria, Grace Lennon from Kingston Heath GC and Brad James, High Performance Director, Golf Australia.

All players entered into the spirit of the exhibition appearing in traditional clothing worn by golfers of the early 1900s; for Grace, a long dress, buttoned up jacket and boater, and for the boys, plus fours, cardigans, ties, hats and pipes.

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Exhibition match participants

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GSA Hickories Championships at Kingston Heath G C

29th April

Dinner at Kingston Heath Golf Club

21st May

Don Lawrence Trophy at Woodlands G C

3rd June

Golf Historians at Shepparton Golf Club

Golf Historians at Northern Golf Club

Paul Burgess, the new convenor of the Historians group, welcomed about 30 members of the Golf Historians group and introduced guest speaker Lenora Frost, Vice-President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria who explained the variety of resources available from RHSV through its extensive library and archives. Emphasis was made on pre-booking a visit, and advising the nature of the research to be undertaken. In this way time is saved and the Society's representatives can offer optimum assistance. The image collection, and many scrapbooks, are also a potentially rich resource.

Lenora reminded Golf Society of Australia members they have access to the RHSV facilities, as the GSA is an affiliated organisation.

Michael Church, a long-term member of Northern, and current President, spoke on the history of his club and especially its centenary celebrations. He presented his audience with an extract from Golf Victoria magazine featuring an article on the club's history.

Michael also acknowledged the input of Judy Manning, a long-term member of the club who has been a collector of Northern G C memorabilia since joining. This collection has been a valuable resource for the preparation



Michael Church

of displays, and material, for the forthcoming centenary book being written by Brendon Moloney.

A key objective of the every meeting of Golf Historians is to encourage all club representatives to be proactive in recording and promoting the preservation of the history of their individual clubs. Ways and means to achieve this varies from club to club and at these meetings representatives are encouraged to explain how they go about recording their past for the benefit of future generations. Paul

Burgess gave the meeting a run down of the process undertaken at Woodlands Golf Club who will be celebrating their Centenary later this year.

Golf Society member, Cliff George demonstrated certain aspects on how to care for, and restore, hickory clubs recommending that particular attention needs to be paid to whipping (binding) at the hosel where the shaft meets the club head, and to each end of the grip. Cliff also set up a display of old clubs, some that he has made, and advised on the repair and maintenance of some clubs brought along by participants.

Peter Gompertz talked about a wooden walking stick with similar features to a hickory club. Peter referred to the ancient laws of Scotland forbidding the playing of golf on the Sabbath. The 'walking stick' club was designed as a means for disguising a stroll over the links to what was really a practice session for ones short game. The 'walking' stick was simply reversed, to become an efficient club to practise chip and run shots. Evidently they were quite popular in their day and are now a rare, and very collectible, item of golfing memorabilia.

Keysborough Golf Club member Col White brought along an old bag of clubs that Cliff examined and provided information on their history, and suitability for restoration.



Cliff George describes a 'Sabbath' club

Tad Woznica from Moe Golf Club circulated copies of extracts from the original minute book of his club and discussion centred on the ability of the present generation to read the hand written pages. Transcriptions are important when such extracts are displayed to assist readers and retain their interest.

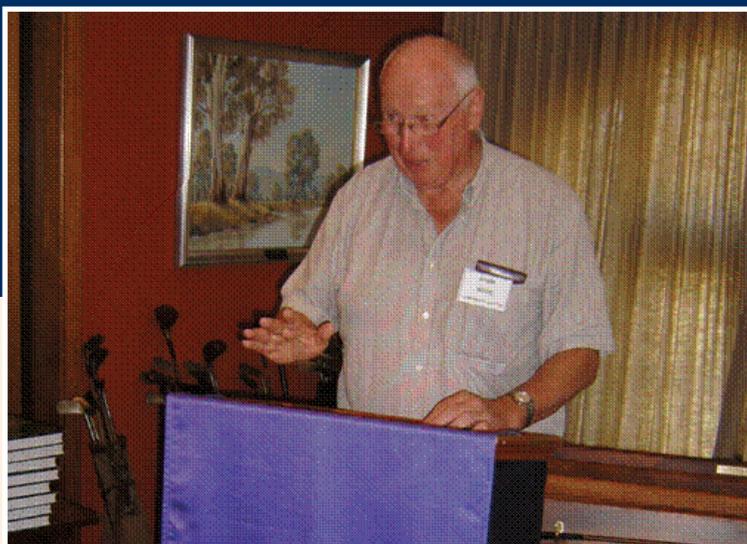
GSA President, Geoff Vincent thanked the Convenor and moved a vote of thanks to Northern Golf Club for providing the venue and catering for lunch which was carried with acclamation.

The next meeting will be at Shepparton Golf Club on the 3rd June 2013.



Guest speaker Lenora Frost

Vale Mark Wade



Educated at Box Hill High School, Mark showed early promise as a sportsman. Graduating from Melbourne University with a Science and Maths degree, followed by an MBA, he then went on to carve out a very successful career with IBM. Forsaking his early prowess in hockey, cricket and swimming, Mark continued with the golf that had earned him a University Blue, playing Pennant for both Croydon and Keysborough golf clubs, before joining Commonwealth Golf Club in 1975.

As the new millennium arrived the Commonwealth Board started to think, and plan, for their club's upcoming centenary in 2019. Mark's organisational and business skills fitted him to take on the research and planning of this event as well as put together the material for the author of a Centenary book despite knowing that his ill health would not allow him to see the fruits of his work.

One of his oldest friends has described Mark as a 'big happy chap' and that is definitely how he will be remembered by the many members of our Society who met him at our Golf Historian meetings.

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All four players acquitted themselves astonishingly well with the hickories, considering it was the first outing with the clubs for most of the group. A plethora of pars were recorded over the three holes.

Preceding the above four was a group of four Golf Society of Australia members, Max Findlay, who supplied the clubs used by the Championship competitors, John Surrige, current President of Croydon GC, Cliff George, a leading hickory club historian, and Luke McDonald, a young Croydon GC member, and runner-up, in the recent National Hickory Championship at Croydon.

Not only did the first timers do well with the hickories, on the Monday Cameron Smith went on to win the 2013 Australian Amateur, and Grace Lennon was joint leader for the match play with Lydia Ko, after the two qualifying rounds.



Grace Lennon

11th green The Old Course at St Andrews

If you ever wanted to rile almost the entirety of the golf world you would suggest altering the greens at the Eden (11th) and Road (17th) holes on The Old Course at St Andrews. This is one of the great courses – perhaps even the greatest of them all. The game played over its crumpled undulations that many have described as sacred ground is endlessly fascinating. Peter Thomson has long argued it is the course that all others imitate.

The Road Hole green is without doubt the most famous green in the game and it comes at the end of perhaps the greatest two-shot hole in golf.

The par three 11th, with its wildly sloping green spawned copies the world over and Alister Mackenzie made an imitation Eden hole at Royal Melbourne's short 5th on the West Course.

The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews announced on a recent Friday afternoon that they, and their consulting architect Martin Hawtree, would be making changes to not only

the 17th and 11th greens but the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 15th holes as well.

One would have assumed the administration would have perhaps given the golf world time to digest the news but by the following Monday morning there were pictures of the work already underway; compare this with the following Wednesday night when they finally announced the effective long-awaited ban on the over-length putters. That ban won't come in on any Monday soon, it waits until New Years Day of 2016.

Tom Doak, who replaced Hawtree as Royal Melbourne's consulting architect, is a lover of the Old Course and one of the world's great architects. He studied it as a student, as all architects worth their salt have for decades, and came to understand its quirks, its moods and the timeless questions it asks of the golfer.

"I'm saddened" wrote Doak "But it's been inevitable for years that the R&A would eventually figure they needed to

mess with The Old Course, after they had to mess with all the other Open venues, because they couldn't mess with the equipment companies."

It is of course the completely out of control modern equipment that has rendered obsolete so many of the world's great courses for the elite players.

It is the job of the R&A and, their American counterparts, the USGA to regulate equipment in an effort to maintain the balance between course, player and skill.

That they have so conspicuously failed the game is the great tragedy of the last two decades and that the manufacturers threaten the administration with lawsuits is to their eternal shame. Damn them and all they stand for, profit borne of selling hope to the gullible amateur.

Doak went further; "I have felt for many years that The Old Course was sacred ground to golf architects, as it was to 'Old' Tom Morris, C.B Macdonald, Harry Colt, and Alister



OSCAR BUNKER AND STRATH BUNKER, 11th HOLE ST ANDREWS

Enthusiastic Amateurs

by Allan Jamieson

MacKenzie before us. It has been untouched, architecturally since 1920 and I believe it should remain so.”

Players too have weighed in. Ian Poulter who played so well at Kingston Heath a few weeks ago said on twitter that ‘if they make changes to the Old Course St Andrews they are insane. The course is great. Just leave the winning score to mother nature.”

Peter Dawson, the Chief Executive of the R&A called the reaction of critics ‘knee-jerk.’

Maybe, but what could he possibly expect when the whole thing was done in such a clandestine manner? Did he think Hawtree’s machines could sneak in under the cover of darkness and alter the 11th and 17th greens without reaction?

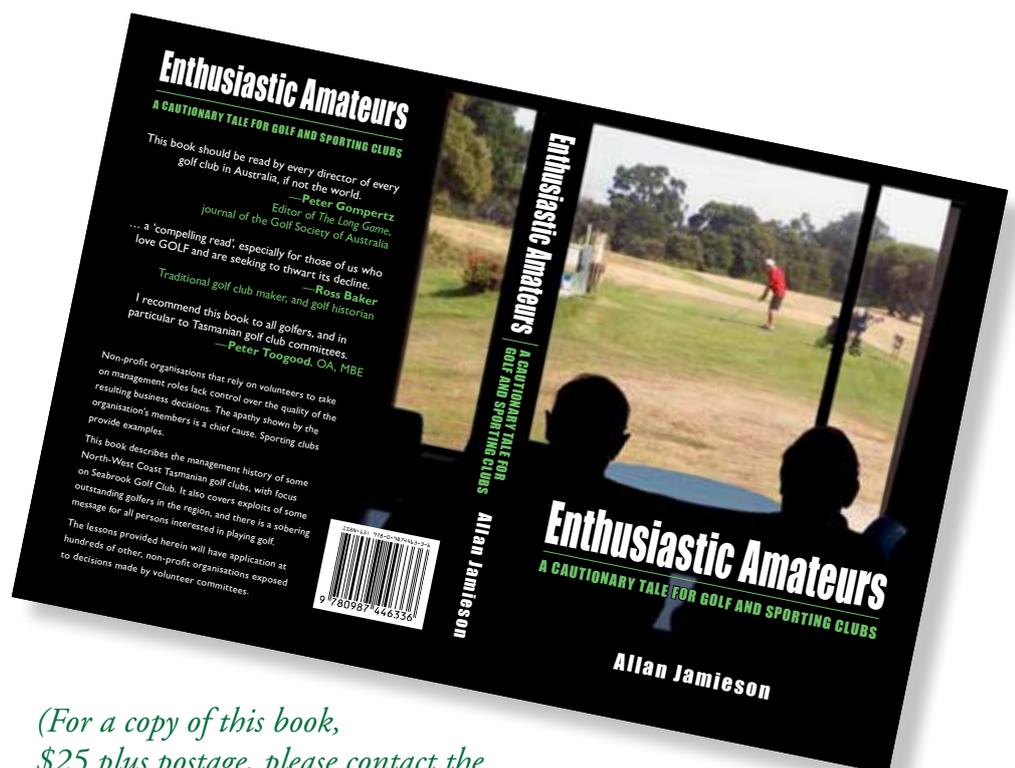
Surely not even they could be that arrogant.

*In Alister Mackenzies seminal book, **The Spirit of St Andrews**, (a must read book for every serious student of golf architecture) he gave the future golfing world some stern advice about how golf club committees should be constituted. He, and his fellow directors of the Alwoodley Golf Course in Leeds, Yorkshire, had actually acted on his advice some 30 years earlier when they formed a permanent committee to run the affairs of the new club.*

Unaware of Dr MacKenzie’s thoughts on the crucial matter of committee qualifications, and terms of office, the early founders of golf clubs in North West Tasmania set out to make their own mistakes, albeit with the best of intentions. No doubt similar mistakes were made elsewhere in the world. Now some 70 years or so later, Allan Jamieson has written a cautionary tale about golf club management which borders on a technical manual of how not to run a golf club. Allan’s working title was ‘The Perils of Lucky Dip Management’ and he has written more in sorrow than anger of the seemingly endless squabbles that have hindered a small golf club in this part of Tasmania from achieving its potential.

Interspersed with a catalogue of perceived errors by sundry local notables Allan writes fondly of the early characters of the nascent golf clubs who gave colour to the golfing scene. Their photographs, and scores, are included to round their stories out, however it is the lessons of other peoples mistakes that makes this a book that should be read by every director of every golf club in Australia, if not the world.

Peter Gompertz



*(For a copy of this book,
\$25 plus postage, please contact the
author at aoki@southcom.com.au)*

Reconsecration of Arnaud Massy's headstone

On Friday 21st June 1907 a mighty wind blew across the Hoylake links of Royal Liverpool Golf Club as French golf professional Arnaud Massy defied history, and heavy rain, to become the first non British golfer to win The Open. Arnaud Massy died in 1950, and for over 50 years the location of his last resting place remained a mystery until a chance conversation between Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak and Gillian Kirkwood, Chairman of The Ladies Golf Union, and wife of David Kirkwood, current Captain of The British Golf Collectors Society, during an AGM Dinner at Hoylake in April 2006.

Gillian told Jean-Bernard that she thought that Massy was buried in the Portobello cemetery in Edinburgh. Not knowing how to go about researching Scottish cemeteries a very excited Jean-Bernard eventually enlisted the research skills of Douglas Seaton from North Berwick. When Douglas found that Massy is actually buried in the Newington cemetery in Edinburgh, a visit to the site revealed that the grave was in very poor condition so Jean-Bernard enlisted the help of members of the European Association of Golf Historians and Collectors to raise the funds for a new headstone.

(What follows is a report from Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak, a founding member of the EAHGC, on the re-consecration of the grave and erection of a new headstone. Ed.)

On Saturday 23rd of February last, the sun was shining in Edinburgh, Scotland, to welcome 30 to 35 people meeting in the Grey Horse Inn, close to the Newington Cemetery where Massy is buried. Over cups of coffee, or tea, old and new friends were happy to meet and chat. As soon as Mr Pierre-Alain Coffinier, Consul General of France for Edinburgh and Glasgow arrived, we all moved to the Newington Cemetery.

The City Council had nicely cleaned the site up and their staff deserve special thanks for these efforts. Douglas Seaton and JBK briefly started the ceremony, giving to Mr Coffinier the honour of opening this commemoration. We then had the privilege of recognising three representatives of the R&A, David Hamilton, Peter Crabtree and Philip Truett, the latter offering a

speech remembering Massy's feats, congratulating Seaton for his efforts to find the location of the grave, and the EAGHC for its initiative in restoring the headstone. François Illouz, from the French Federation of Golf, a strong supporter of our action, reminded us that Massy was the first Continental player to win The Open until Seve Ballesteros got his name on the Claret Jug in 1979. David Kirkwood, representing the BGCS made a nice speech including some French words paraphrasing the well-known Verlaine poem "Je me souviens des jours anciens...". Representing the EAHGC were John Hanna, Georges Jeanneau and JBK; but other members of our Association paid tribute to Massy, by coming to Edinburgh, among them Stephan



Filanovitch, our editor, Robin Bargmann from the Netherlands and Damir Ritosa from Croatia. Many sent apologies for not being able to join us. Finally, on behalf of all our members, I finished the commemoration ceremony by adding thanks to all donors, including AFCOS, whose president, Jean-Pierre Picquot could not be with us. I am very grateful for all the donations from EAGHC members of so many different countries; golf is really a fraternity and this commemoration

was a true demonstration of friendship across so many countries.

Martin Dempster, a journalist from The Scotsman wrote an article about Massy a week before the ceremony. This attracted some of Massy's wife's relations. Among them Hugh Henderson came with a Massy club and brought some nice family photographs. I would like to say here how warm was the contact with the relatives. Also, Veronique Armanet, from France, a cousin of Massy's mother's branch couldn't join us but asked that my wife, Huguette represent her at the ceremony.

The grave was adorned with blue, red and white wreaths from the EAGHC, the FFG, the R&A, and BGCS. In addition, two bouquets, bearing light blue and white ribbons, were laid on the grave by Hugh Henderson, on behalf of Veronique Armanet, and honouring the two ladies lying beside Massy, his wife Janet and his first daughter Margot-Hoylake.

After the ceremony, Mr. Coffinier kindly invited us to the Consular Residence for drinks. Most of us were able to join him, and we continued to share our thoughts of Arnaud Massy, golf, and Scottish-French friendship. It was a most appreciative gathering, closing a great day.

(The EAHGC has published "Arnaud Massy A Chronicle" by Georges Jeanneau and Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak in English. Copies costing 15 Euros plus p&p can be obtained by contacting JB by email:- golfika@yahoo.fr . His English is better than my French! . Ed.)



Georges Jeanneau, Philip Truett, Jean-Bernard Kazmierczak, Francois Illouz, Hugh Henderson, Douglas Seaton and Pierre-Alain Coffinier

Annual tournament to boost King Island golf tourism

About 30 golfers descended on the Bass Strait island last November for a Victoria versus Tasmania clash, which took place in spectacular weather conditions.

The matchplay came down to the final hole, with Launceston identity Denis Tucker and team-mate Steven Walker battling Victorian representatives Cody Cook and Jim Cooper. Tasmania triumphed with a thrilling birdie from Walker that saw those in the clubhouse erupt – and celebrate long into the night.

“It was an outstanding weekend of golf on what I believe is the best nine hole golf course in the world,” said event organiser, Greg Ramsay.

“Such was the success of this event, that it will now become an annual fixture – with next year's tournament to take place in May.”

Next year's Battle of King Island is scheduled for May. Players can register their interest through www.golfkingisland.com.

All players will receive free entry to play at the world's other 2 great 9 hole courses, the Dunes Club in Michigan and Royal Worlington in Norfolk, so they can see for themselves whether King Island's is in fact, the best.

HICKORY CLUBS FOR SALE

GSA member John Fawcett has some hickory clubs for sale.

Please contact John on 03 9867 1938 for details

Al Howard Trophy at Yowani Golf Club Canberra

by Geoff Vincent

This year the Al Howard Hickory Challenge was held at the Yowani Golf Club in Canberra. The weather was very kind to us and a team of 6 players from Melbourne journeyed to Canberra, hoping to bring home the trophy.

The format was individual match play using original hickory shafted clubs, which are not easy to master.

While our elite team from Victoria played strongly, regrettably the team from the Australian Golf Heritage Society, in NSW were successful again in retaining the trophy. Our team from Victoria clearly over trained, in preparation. It is worth noting that some of our regular participants like Ian Rennick, Paul Burgess and Max Findlay, were sadly missed along with Tony Mclean who was a late scratching due to gout in the right foot .

At the dinner on Tuesday evening, AGHS President, Mal Bray thanked all participants for their efforts and for making the time and effort to come to Canberra.

Next year it will be our turn to host the event, and President Geoff Vincent, in responding to Mal Bray, has suggested that the event may be



held at Kingston Heath if sufficient members are interested and able to make the journey to Melbourne at that time.

While in Canberra, many members took the opportunity to play Yowani again, with modern clubs, and also to visit other courses in the vicinity as part of a holiday adventure .

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to
Martin Maguire,
Peter Sticklely

The Golf Society of Australia was formed in 1982 to research and preserve the history of golf in Australia. As part of this role, the Society manages the Museum and Library for Golf Australia. Golf Australia supports the Society by providing office space and administrative assistance.