

### Caddies of Dubbo, Unite!

The threat from the caddies in 1904 came as a bloody-minded affront. Dubbo Golf Club had had enough. Money was short. The drought seemed endless. Farm worker unrest and the squabbles over industrial arbitration were constant irritants. The links were dusty, riven with gullies and thistle-bound. The ultimatum by those forgotten figures of golf from bygone days, the part time caddies, was the last straw.

Here they were – the rascals – threatening to strike for better pay. The going rate was sixpence a round. The reckless dissidents demanded twice as much, one shilling a round.

The Dubbo Liberal reported that the outrage came to head in August. The head stirrer of some twenty five recalcitrant caddies was quoted as saying:

*“I most emphatically deny that any member of this union has attempted to dynamite the tees or steal golf balls; but, of course, you know that in any great industrial struggle like this there are bound to be some unprincipled people who join the ranks of the strikers with the hope that they may gain something out of the state of consternation and chaos that must ensue for some time to come.”*

Dubbo Liberal, 7 August 1904.

The strike proved to be a fizzer – a colossal dud. The caddies had a fatal weakness; their mums and dads were members of the club and therefore their employers. Parental pressure was too much. The caddies raised the white flag on 10 August. The normal Dubbo rate remained at sixpence.

Industrial militancy came again in 1937. Over after-game drinks one rather stingy member declared: “Those kids get paid more than they’re worth. Two shillings a round is far too much. I’m paying ‘em one and six for eighteen holes. They can either like it or lump it. Way things are, they should be glad of the money, any money”.



He was wrong. The first victim of his new pay regime gathered his fellow caddies. He showed them the silver shilling and the six copper pennies he had been paid. *“That’s bloody rotten. Arrh! Old Stingy won’t be gettin’ me to caddy for ‘im again.”* There and then an unofficial black ban was placed on Old Stingy.

A comic ritual was played out. Spotters reported Old Stingy’s arrival. Boys waiting for jobs crept behind the clubhouse. They became invisible. Old Stingy sought a carrier in vain. Humiliation! He was forced to carry his own clubs.

The message dawned on him – eventually. He capitulated. He made it known that he had gone back to the old rate of two shillings and was even prepared to throw in a bonus of a soft drink at the halfway. The victorious militants responded none too eagerly. The days when Old Stingy found a caddy were flukes. The caddies of 1937 forgave but never forgot.

The triumph of the caddies was short lived. Transport technology undid them. Golfers found the hand-pulled, pneumatic-tyred buggies were more convenient to use than kids. The sometimes irritating frailty of the human carrier gave way to the impersonality of the machine. The machine never talked back.

Doug Sadler

The Golf Museum at Granville is proudly sponsored by Golf Mart and supported by the NSW Golf Association, Women’s Golf Australia and Museums & Galleries New South Wales.

### Contents

- President’s Message
- Captain’s Message
- Museum Report
- Historians Group Report
- Coming Events in 2008/9
- News of Members
- Editor’s Note
- Caddies of Dubbo, Unite!



### Patrons

Tom Moore | Dan Cullen

### Management Committee

- Bruce Nairn, *President & Chairperson*
- Henry Paterson, *Secretary*
- Malcolm McIntosh, *Treasurer*
- Michael Sheret, *Captain*,
- Tom Moore, *Museum*
- Erwin Huber, *Historians Group*
- Mal Bray, *Publications*
- Jim Glenday, *NSWGA Representative*
- Frances Crampton, *WGNSW Representative*
- Kyle Francis, *PGA Representative*

### President’s Message



Our most recent meeting of the Management Committee was on 8 September. We discussed the formation of new categories of membership, namely life membership and a category to allow golf clubs to join the Society. Proposals for these new categories will be presented at the Annual General Meeting. Also the Management Committee appointed Michael Sheret as our new Captain.

We’ll have display tents at both the NSW Open and the Australian Open. Tom Moore will once again be to the fore in staffing the displays, but we need volunteers to give Tom a break now and again. Please get in touch with Tom at teemoore@tpg.com.au if you would like to volunteer.

It is very sad to report the death of one of our more prominent members, Bill McWilliam OAM (1921 – 2008). Bill was the inaugural Vice-President of the Australian Golf Collectors Society. Bill was very keen on the history of golf and helped considerably with the establishment of our Society. A fine golfer in his younger days, Bill was also renowned as one of the greatest golf teachers in Australia. Our sincere sympathy goes to wife Margery, who is also a member of our Society.

It is also sad to report the death of an important figure in the history of Australian golf, Bob Stevens (1928 – 2008). Bob was one of Australia’s best amateur golfers. Among a string of championship victories, it was winning the 1958 Ampol Tournament against top Australian and overseas professionals that had him selected Captain of the Australian Team to play for the inaugural Eisenhower Trophy at St. Andrews. Australia had a famous victory. Bob’s motto in anything he undertook was “Remember where the victory lies – in the struggle not the prize”.

For this issue of *The Brassie* Michael Sheret is again acting as editor. The layout and artwork is due to the time and expertise freely given by graphic designer, Thomas Winter, and generous friend of AGHS.



Don’t forget the Annual General Meeting on 20 November at 6.30 pm at North Ryde GC.

Bruce Nairn



## Captain's Message

I am honoured to be the new Captain of the Society. My first priority is to have some playing events in our calendar for the remainder of 2008 and the first half of 2009. I would also like to offer our members a greater variety of golf courses and, in time, to venture to courses in NSW outside of Sydney. Society members are welcome to get in touch with me by email to <SheretMA@bigpond.com> if they would like a hickory event at their club; my preference would be for this to take the form of a match between the Society and the members and associates of the host club.

Unfortunately the plans to hold the 2008 Australian Hickory Club Championship in Perth had to be cancelled. The Championship will now be played at Cronulla GC on 18 November.

The hickory day at Cammeray GC planned for September also had to be cancelled, as Cammeray had a full schedule of other events.

The 2-ball ambrose over nine holes at Auburn on 14 August was won by Tony Pickrell and his visitor, Martin Pickrell (Tony's nephew).

The hickory match between the Society and The Lakes on 22 January will be limited to sixteen players on each side. Society members wishing to take part should lodge their names and handicaps with me as soon as possible. It will be a splendid opportunity to experience the dramatic new holes #1 to #8, which have been redesigned by Michael Clayton and are due to open early in January.

**Michael Sheret**



Martin & Tony Pickrell

## Museum Report

Work on the interpretation plan for the Museum is nearing completion. This was financed by a grant from Museums and Galleries NSW, and was supervised by Megan Barham of Museums NSW. Thanks go to all the volunteers who have helped to improve the presentation of the Museum. I would like to give special mention to: Norm Richardson, for his work on display cabinets and shelving; Derek Scaife, who has agreed to connect lighting to all the cabinets; Anne Kells, daughter of legendary clubmaker Alex (Sandy) Faichney, for her work on signage and the story headings. With the interpretation plan almost complete we can now focus efforts on increasing visitors to the Museum.

*Recent Acquisitions.* We have secured two copies of the Australian Women's Weekly dated 1942 and 1947. Both issues feature marvellous illustrations of lady golfers on the front cover. They are being framed and will make a welcome addition to our display of Ladies in Golf. Three mannequins have been purchased and dressed in golfing clothes of the early 1930s. Just before he passed away Bill McWilliam presented the Museum with a replica of the Sir William Vicars Cup, which was presented to the Bonnie Doon Golf Club by Sir William in the early 1930s. It is still played for annually. Bill was given the Cup which was won in 1935 by a Mr Randall.

We shall have a display tent at the NSW Open at the Vintage (13-16 November) and, in partnership with the Golf Society of Australia (our counterparts in Victoria), at the Australian Open at Royal Sydney (11 – 14 December). We need volunteers to help look after the display. If you can help, please contact me on: (02) 9871 2798 or <teemoore@tpg.com.au>.

The Museum is open every Sunday from 10am to 4pm. Entry to the Museum is free, and there is parking in the courtyard. We encourage all members to visit us as often they wish and to bring their friends. The Museum is located upstairs at Golf Mart in Granville, 4 Parramatta Road, telephone 9637 4720

**Tom Moore**

## Historians Group Report

In conjunction with NSWGA and WGNSW, AGHS is embarking on a project to encourage all golf clubs in NSW to give special attention to their histories. The goal is to have a history group in every club. NSWGA has also asked the Historians Group to help to update David Innes' 1988 book "The Story of Golf in New South Wales". AGHS is working towards a special category of AGHS membership for golf clubs in addition to our membership for individuals. A useful resource package is available for golf clubs that join AGHS.

On Tuesday 16 September, twenty historians visited the State Library and were tantalised by the riches revealed by the Senior Reference Librarian, Ben Clark, from a brief trawl through items about golf. The State Library holds massive collections, and much of it is accessible

*Historians Group Report cont...*

from your home computer, especially if you register as a (free) Gold Card user. Ben took us through the collections with the search key "golf" and displayed thousands of documents and images. With our heads spinning from the vast spread and wealth of these database searches, we turned to the table covered with fifty or more golf-related books, boxes and folders that Ben had located for us in a few hours of searching. For example, we saw the Bonnie Doon GC Minute Book from 1897-1922, much of it in splendid copperplate; the 1905 annual report of Concord GC; 54 aerial photographs, most of them taken in the 1930s, of golf courses around Sydney. The State Library holds an unimagined wealth of material about golf's history and access is possible. Practice will make research easy as well as a pleasure.

The Historians Group has identified in our own library at the AGHS Museum, hundreds of donated books that are duplicates or do not fit the "reference" style of the library. We are selling off these surplus books, most are a mere \$5, and bargain hunters can have 10 books for \$25. All funds will be applied to buying the books we need. If you want a list of books for sale, e-mail <barry.leithhead@bigpond.com>.

**Erwin Huber**

## Coming Events in 2008/9 (for your diary)

### Friday 14 November

Seminar: Exploring the Archives. (Details in inserted page)

### 13 to 16 November

Display tent at the NSW Open at the Vintage GC.

### Tuesday 18 November

Australian Hickory Club Championship.  
(Details in inserted page)

### Thursday 20 November

Annual General Meeting. (Details in inserted page)

### 11 to 14 December

Display tent at the Australian Open at Royal Sydney GC, managed in partnership with the Golf Society of Australia.

### Thursday 22 January 2009

Match: AGHS versus The Lakes. (Details in inserted page)

## News of Members

### Mal Bray

is looking after his wife Judy, who continues to battle ill health. Mal has had to delegate the editorship of this issue of *The Brassie*.

### Michael Sheret

played in no less than five hickory events this September with the British Golf Collectors Society and also played a round over the new hickory golf course run by the Scottish National Trust. Speak to Michael if you want to know more about hickory golf in UK.

### Vale...

### Peter Edwards

**Bill McWilliam** (Beverley Park GC);  
**Malcolm Pearson** (UK member).

## New members are:

### David Hamilton (R & A),

Captain of the British Golf Collectors Society and noted golf historian.

**Martin Pickrell** (Avondale GC), nephew of member Tony Pickrell.

**Ian Rennick** (Kew GC), President of the Golf Society of Australia – our counterparts in Victoria.

## Editor's Note

Doug Sadler, the author of *Caddies of Dubbo, Unite!* is a member of our Society and a member of Dubbo Golf Club. Doug has a keen interest in the history of his club and has written extensively on the subject.

*The Brassie* would like to publish at least one article by an AGHS member in every issue. With the present format of *The Brassie* the article should be about 500 words long, and a photograph or illustration is highly desirable. It is best to submit text and illustrations electronically to <SheretMA@bigpond.com> and <mbray4@bigpond.com>, two addresses to make sure the article gets an immediate acknowledgement.

The topic must be relevant to the aims of AGHS.

For example: the history of your golf club, collecting golf artefacts and memorabilia, the history of golf in Australia or the history of golf in general. It's a fine dividing line between relevant and irrelevant articles, but keep in mind that articles purely on modern aspects of golf are published in abundance in other magazines and newsletters. Authors can write in a light-hearted or scholarly style as they choose.

**Michael Sheret**