



Tee to Green

*Celebrating 100 years
of Golf in Euroa
1908 - 2008*

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Foreword

Golfers of Euroa have been enterprising, resourceful and determined to enjoy their chosen sport for 100 years. This account is an outline of many changes that have taken place, and an appreciation of the dedication and “do it yourself” attitude of members over the century, which has culminated in the achievement of a very good year-around golf course.

Written by club and former club members, using club and historical documents, it is an overview of the work of hundreds of volunteers, greenkeepers and contractors who contributed thousands of hours, together with their expertise, to pave the way for the future of the game.

In the recent driest ten years known in this region, in particular, our club’s survival is a credit to all those who have worked here, and to those who continue to contribute their time and effort for the future of the club.

Robin Weatherald
President, Euroa Golf Club.

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Acknowledgements

This booklet is an outline of 100 years of golf in Euroa, about the where and how that the game has been played. Researchers have concentrated on significant milestones during the century, and hope that their effort may one day be followed by the definitive history of this challenging, enjoyable game here.

Our thanks to Paul and Bettina Rieusset of Euroa Gazette, Loretta McPherson and Euroa Historical Society, major sponsors Shire of Strathbogie, Australia Post, Goulburn Murray Credit Union, BP Australia, and Euroa Golf Club officers, members and former members for access to source material, and their recollections.

Roma Joyce, John Sullivan, Shirley Walters and Beryl Webster.

Early Days of Golf in Euroa

The First Course

It appears that golf in some form or other started in Euroa as early as 1901 as the news item on the 13/5/1901 in the Euroa Advertiser reads “Wanted –man to clean up and renovate the golf links at Euroa Apply – A Palmer Hon. Sec. Euroa.”

A meeting was called in 1908, and a club was set up with 60 members. The course was a 9 hole one with sand greens of 3000 yards laid out by Mr. Banks from Melbourne.

A notice in the Euroa Advertiser on the 5/6/1908 indicates golf was alive and well. “During the week a professional instructor in golf has been in town and judging from the encouragement he received this favorite game will have many followers during the present winter. The old racecourse paddock, which has been granted for the use of the club by Mr. Cusack, will make ideal links.”

A news item in the local paper on the 12th of June that year shows the first course record was set on opening day by Dr. Docker. It reads as follows “The opening set played on the Euroa Golf Course by Dr. and Mrs. Docker was won by the lady in a creditable “tally” of 64 strokes. Later in the afternoon the Doctor made another effort and managed to cover the distance in 55 strokes- only 10 above “bogey.” This will stand as the record until beaten.”

At the Annual meeting in 1909 it reported that 50 members were present.

Golf notes in the Euroa Advertiser on 8/8/1910 write of an enjoyable match between East and West Euroa when 42 players participated with the west winning easily thus revenging the last week’s result. A deciding match to be played next week.

In 1911 the golf season opened in May and later on that year a new club house was opened. We are not sure where this clubhouse was built. In Cliff Halsall’s History of Sport he indicates it was about where the “A” frame building is today.

The golf notes in the Euroa Gazette on 2nd July 1912 talk of a novel driving competition. “A novel driving competition for trophies donated by Mr. Turner will be conducted by Euroa Golf Club tomorrow. Competitors will drive over a wire netting bunker and points will be given for “direction”, goal and behind post being erected. Post entries.”

Extract from early Euroa paper on 16th July 1912 give the membership at Euroa Golf Club as 82 and the length of the links as follows. Hole 1 is par 5, 339 yards, 2 is par 4, 255 yards, 3 par 5, 338 yards, 4 par 3, 154 yards, 5 par 5, 300 yards, 6

par.4,190 yards,7 par 4, 259 yards, 8 par 5, 276 yards, 9 par 5, 302 yards.

On July 30th the same year is a story of a bird as follows “The other day whilst playing a practice round on Euroa Links Dr. Bill drove a high ball from the 4th tee (par 3) which in its flight struck a parrot that had fluttered out of a tree nearby, though he grassed the bird the Dr., careful of his reputation for veracity, gives his assurance that he played for the hole and not the bird.”

The following report comes from the early paper on April 18th 1913; “it has been decided to hold a club tournament on Euroa links on May 7th when the first qualifying round of the championship will be played concurrently with singles competition. The singles tournaments are for trophies provided by Dr. Bill and Mr. Main respectively, first 7/- , second 3/6, in each instance 18 holes. Entries close May 5th.” The system of handicapping agreed on by the Wangaratta conference will be adopted. The players allotted 2/3 of the difference between the averages of their 3 best competition scores and the par of the course. Players who have not completed 3 comps will receive 1/3.

The conditions for the club championship are 3 qualifying stroke rounds be played on May 7th, June 2nd, and 3rd August., the aggregate scores for 3 rounds will be taken ,and the best 8 play off in September under match rules.

On May 4th, owing to the change of the town half holiday from Wednesday to Saturday, the golf had to be changed as well.

The paper in July talks of the success of the first open meeting as follows. “Nearly 250 entries were received in connection with the various open competitions to be played at Euroa links yesterday, today and tomorrow. The entries include those of many visiting golfers who were highly satisfied with the condition on the links and approaches as well as the conveniences for their comfort provided by the club. Mr. Paterson the “driven” secretary had all arrangements in apple-pie order and deserves credit for his arduous labours in the golf course. Yesterday was ladies day no fewer than 3 events were held.”

The Annual meeting of 1914 was held and the season got under way in lovely sunshine and a report of a committee meeting on the 29th May “A stroke competition will be held on Saturday and entry is a cup and saucer (for clubs crockery supply) or 6d”.

In 1915 the season opened and it was agreed to charge 6d to play and money donated to Red Cross. In the same year Sunday golf was discussed but at a meeting reported on 21st May “The question of Sunday golf was disposed of when it was agreed that the rule against Sunday should remain.”

There did not seem to be much golf played during 1916 because of the war.

The Second Course.

A report of 25th May 1917 states that the popular winter pastime of golf is to be revived in Euroa this year the devotees there of may be smaller than usual because of the War. The annual meeting was held and the report on 1st of June read as follows "As the numbers of golfers is now small it is unsuitable to use the race links this season and it was announced that Mr. Stribling had kindly placed his links at the disposal of members and it was decided to use that ground."

The golf for 1918, according to the paper of 31st May got under way in lovely sunshine and with a "dainty" afternoon tea supplied by the President's wife. Not much else is recorded for 1918 the weather must have been wet, as the paper of 2nd August reads "Recent sunny weather has dried up a lot of casual water and when some long grass is clipped away "oh bother" may not so frequently be heard."

Golf for 1919 got under way and a report in the paper of 18th April that Mr. Stribling's links were available and a later report from Mr. Stribling that the links could be used, with some improvements as follows, "That the first tee be moved from the vicinity of the dam to near the golf house and from this tee players play to the right of big tree near the second tree. That direction posts be removed from near the greens as flags are sufficient guidance. That the 6th tee be advanced from the fence. That there be no out of bounds at the dog leg hole. Hand rails be put on all stiles."

A report in the paper of 2nd May states that "golf opening will be next week and this year will be played on Mr. Striblings "Bunyip" links which have been improved and should be in good fettle after recent rain."

A report of opening day in the paper of May 16th reads as follows, "The new links though somewhat shorter than the racecourse links are very sporty, with 9 fences having to be negotiated en route and a yawning sand pit invites the slicer at 2 holes and difficulties await the unwary at almost every hole."

A report of 20th June of that year states that the first intertown match will be played on the new links, also the flags are placed 1 yard back from the green behind the hole, this is to be given a months trial, and hoped to ease congestion on the links in not having to remove the flags, also players are asked not to wear narrow heeled boots or shoes on the green, as much damage is done.

A further report in 1919 reads as follows, "on Wednesday one of the local golf goddesses was responsible for damage to one of our medicos through underestimating her driving ability. The ball struck the Dr. a severe blow on the head causing bruising and swelling needless to say the lady was horrified at her unlikely shot."

The paper of 23rd April 1920 reports about 30 attended the Annual meeting where Mr. Stribling reported on the improvements to the links. "A fresh course had been

laid, and they hoped when the young grass grew that the fairways would be as clear as a table. The greens had been levelled with a drop of about 2 inches outward to prevent water from lying on them, at some holes difficult bunkers had been put in. The improvements had cost a considerable amount and they would be lucky to pay for them this year, and therefore they had not been able to put in turnstiles instead of stiles, but hoped to do so next year. The links would be ready for play with the first rains” A further report on the 21st May “the course has been considerably lengthened, and hole no 2 is now much more difficult proposition than it was last season and with a little more patting down the greens will be o.k.” The season got underway in good weather.

Opening day was late in 1922 and in June of that year the paper of the 16th reports “Interest was shown by local golfers in a visit of the Victorian Champion Mr. C.H.Fawcett, he played against Mr. Stribling to whom he conceded a stroke a hole. He did 9 holes in 39 and finished 6 up on his opponent, and then playing against Mr.Young to whom he conceded a stroke at each of 12 holes. Mr. Fawcett gave a fine exhibition, and a large gallery watched.”

The Euroa Advertiser of 18th May 1923 Reports on the annual meeting of Euroa Golf Club as follows. “The meeting was faced with the difficulty of arranging for new links, the President reporting that Mrs. Shellswell’s Paddock would not be available this year and after some discussion on the matter the meeting was adjourned till Saturday to allow enquiries being made as to available grounds. At the adjourned meeting the President reported that several paddocks had been inspected and the committee recommended Mr. Henry’s paddock on the Shepparton Road which with Mr. Stribling’s 2 paddocks on the old links would be sufficient for the season. (A course has since been laid out on the ground mentioned)”

A motion that the links be open to boys and girls under 16 on one day a week was defeated by 7 to 3 votes.

Local golfers did attend golf around the district as well as further afield - one report is of a trip to Mansfield in the frost on the new road over the big hill

There was not a lot of Golf news for 1924 except a report on the Annual meeting in the paper of 28th March as follows “Vote of thanks passed for Messrs Stribling and Henry for use of their properties” Discussion took place re the links etc .A resolution to be affiliated with the Victorian Golf Union was agreed to .Opening day for 1924 was set and play to commence at 2 o’clock and play 6 holes with putting, driving and various other competitions. The ground is in good order due to recent rains.

In 1925 the annual meeting was held in May with not a large crowd in attendance as a report in the May 15th paper states. “The links are being cleaned up. The first few holes are playable and opening will be next Wednesday.”

A short report the next week said it was a successful opening and the links were in good condition.

The paper of the 5th June indicates otherwise. "Competition on Saturday is over 14 holes. Consent of the landowners has been obtained (Messrs Stribling and Henry). The long grass will be cleaned from the fairways where it interferes with play."

The paper on the 12th June states "the links were in good order and enjoyable contests took place though many players found tussocks and roadways expensive scoring" and the following week the 19th reports "on the 5th and 6th holes there was much searching for balls in the long grass".

Conditions must have been tough for on the 31st July the paper reports "Modesty forbade a number of players handing in their cards" it was a bogey (Par) round. The last report for 1925 on the 2nd October states the links will be officially closed on Saturday but members may play as long as conditions permit. The President congratulated all on a successful year and hoped next year an association would be formed which all district clubs would join.

1926 was a very busy year for Euroa Golf Club as the following reports indicate. The Annual meeting was reported on in the paper of 9th April as follows "The matter of improving the links and lying out of extra holes was discussed and if found practicable will be carried out. Opening day will be on April 14th. A letter from Mr. Stribling stating he had leased his paddock to Mr. Henry and the secretary announced that Mr Henry has given permission to the club to have the use of them" Notes of a further committee meeting reported in the paper of 16th April "It was decided to lay out 4 additional holes in Mr. Henry's paddocks. The report of May 14th states the men played 18 and the women 13 holes and the 4 new holes were in play for the first time and pronounced "sporty". The preparation of the new sand greens is in progress and when completed the club will have an 18 hole course. Some of the new holes will prove tricky and the extra distance will greatly diminish congestion on match days."

The report on the 21st May was " It is anticipated that the extra 5 holes for the 18 hole course will be completed by Saturday when men will compete for trophies .A chart of the course will be posted in the clubhouse and is worthy of attention." The next week's paper of 28th May gave a good report of the new links. "The new 18 hole course was played on for the first time on Saturday last The new holes proved the most sporty portion of the links as the watercourse which has to be played over 3 times makes a fine hazard. As the new course was terra incognita to most players, many got into difficulties, but even these are satisfied that the additions are a great improvement." The bogey now stands at 72.

On the 1st of October the season officially closed after a very busy year and not a large crowd attended owing to counter attractions.

Opening Day in 1927 was delayed because there was no rain and as the paper of

22nd April states "Opening day will take place after the first fall of rain" At the Annual meeting also in April a suggestion was put forward that there be a separate men's and women's committee, and each manage there own competitions, this did not meet with approval.

The committee has 34 pounds in hand and will inspect the links with the object with finding new sites for the 8th, 11th, and 14th holes which were frequently under water.

Opening day in 1927 got under way in May, with good fields.

According to the paper on the 10th June at a meeting the ladies decided to become Associates of Euroa Golf Club. Members were asked to hand in 3 signed cards to obtain handicaps. Maybe before this there was no official handicap system.

In June of the same year the second annual tournament was held at Euroa links with 230 players over 3 days.

Very little Euroa Golf Club news is in the 1928 papers, except that on the 8th June a special meeting was called in the Memorial Hall when the resignation of the President and 2 committee members was accepted with regret. All vacancies were filled.

On the 17 August the same year "owing to a football match there will be no play tomorrow on the local links". The golf notes for that year consisted mainly of results.

In 1929 in the 5th of April paper it was reported that 25 people were present at the Annual Meeting. The President reported that he had interviewed Mrs. Wood and the links would again be available for the season under certain conditions.

As recent rains have made conditions suitable for golf it is expected that opening day will be arranged early.

On 12th April a news item indicates that "part of the links is already fit for play and several players are getting in early practice"

On the 19th of April it was decided to have the stiles put in order, also a new water tank was to be put on the clubhouse.

The associates supplied 18 new flags for the season.

Players were also requested to note that dogs and children, except caddies, were not to be taken on to the course, this being one of the conditions under which the paddocks have been made available.

Opening day was held about this time and it was reported that 84 players played with about 100 altogether for refreshments.

The 24th May it was reported that because of wet weather the men played 18 holes and the Associates 12. In a June paper it reports of a professional being in town for instruction for 2/6 per hour.

The season was drawing to a close for golf once again and it was reported that there would be no golf on Saturday owing to the opening of the Bowls and Croquet. On closing day itself there were insufficient men for ladies owing to other commitments. During the afternoon a "clock putting" competition was held and won by Mrs. W. Saxon. Dr. Rawson and Mrs. Lydiard were club champions for the past very successful season.

In 1930 at a meeting of the committee it was announced that "permission has been secured from property owners to bunker several holes this should make the course much more attractive." The official opening took place in May as a report of the 23rd indicates that 36 pair played 12 holes. A district meeting was held and a report on 20th June states Euroa is to be included in Goulburn Valley Association in a reshuffle of districts. On July 4th it was reported that a "good tournament was held and the fairways and sands were in good order, because of the dry conditions very little water was in hazards". The 3rd of October reported on the close of a very enjoyable season.

The Annual Meeting for 1931 was reported on in the paper of 27th March when only 20 attended. It was decided to reduce membership because of the dry conditions, and to admit boys and girls 14 to 17 years for membership, to have use of the course except Wednesday and Saturday. The delegates to Goulburn Valley Association reported a proposal to institute Pennant this season. The committee will have their work cut out to get the course in order for this season.

The paper of 3rd April states "with favourable weather an early opening of the golf season locally is anticipated. Some difficulty is being experienced in regard to the 2nd and the 16th holes where the fairways are covered in long grass."

The 17th of April paper reports "the official opening took place on Saturday owing to the fact that cricket and tennis were still being carried on, attendance was a long way short of the usual opening day numbers. The day's play was enjoyed though the ground is still rather hard for good iron play, while long grass at the outer holes also caused many holdups in searching for balls."

The associates held a meeting this week and decided to affiliate with the Golf Union.

May the 8th paper reports that the tea room is being enlarged to double present size, which should prove a great convenience.

The paper of 26th June reports of the 3 day tournament but owing to the recent

rain the course was sloppy in parts. President's day was held in 1930 and the report of 21st August speaks of a large field of locals and visitors, 40 men and 30 ladies played in lovely conditions. Closing day for that year was in September and reported on in the paper of 18th.

The Third Course.

The paper of the 7th of March 1933 indicates that members are looking to a new course, this was the start of the course around the Friendlies Society ground. "A good attendance is requested at the Annual meeting next week, though many of the men members prefer a more difficult 18 hole course they will still be interested in making the new course in the park as perfect as possible, as a great many players particularly ladies will do most of their play on the Euroa course and a lot of work is necessary to put it in good order." The next week the report of the meeting reads, "Very enthusiastic attendance. Vote of thanks to Mr. Hemley and all who helped in the work of the new links. A sub committee consisting of the president, and Mr. Hemley and Cr. Nolan was appointed to go into the matter of moving , re-erecting and re-modelling of the club house, plans costs etc. to be submitted to a later general meeting." The President reported on the work in cleaning up of logs from the fairways was under way and an early opening was anticipated. The golf Associates held their meeting and it was reported on in the paper of 11 April, "A lot of business was transacted owing to the removal to the new links." A further meeting of the general committee was reported on May 2nd, "Great progress is being made with the building of the new clubhouse and the preparation of the links, the fairways of which are being rolled. The bridges have been constructed over the creek and very soon everything will be ready for play."

The great day finally arrived and the official opening was reported in the paper of the 16th May, "The opening of the Euroa Golf Club took place on the new links in the park quite near the bowling, tennis, and croquet grounds.. There was a good attendance of local and visitors who were full of admiration for the new club house. Cr. Harry Jacka Shire President formally opened the links and complimented the committee on their enterprise in constructing new links in the park quite near the bowling, tennis, and croquet grounds .The links were a means of beautifying the park and any advancement of the town would have his approval and assistance. Afternoon tea was served in the pavilion. The spacious room has a partition to the ladies dressing room and office and it has a small kitchenette and electric light is being installed.

In 1938 the paper of the 1st of April reads "the annual meeting was not well attended. Last years membership was 44 men and 60 ladies; it was decided to affiliate with the Victorian Golf Union and the Goulburn Valley Association again this year.

The paper of March 30th 1948 reports on the Annual meeting and that the club was in a good financial position and opening day will be May 22nd.

Reports in May indicate that the season is later than usual in opening because of work on the Friendlies Society Park, and that 2 temporary fairways have to be made. In June the paper of the 29th states. "This club held its usual competition over the weekend and good entries were recorded for both mens and associates events. The Euroa links seem very popular at weekends by the number of golfers who play over the course. The committee have had a bad spin this season with some fairways. The regrading of the Friendlies Society Ground has left much to be desired. At present the fairways adjoining the football ground are in a bad state through trucks and motor cars using the fairway. " Could not a parking area be arranged? Several players could not finish owing to cars parked in the fairway of no. 7 hole." A report on the 10th of August indicates they are still having trouble with the course "A great pity cattle are allowed to wander on to the Friendlies' Society Oval when the ground is soft. Deep hoof marks leave ground uneven".

The Annual meeting of 1949 was well attended and held late in March and the club was in a sound financial position, considering the number of members the weekend competitions were not well patronized and the main expense was getting the fairways in order owing to the work on the Friendly Society Park. The president is to talk with the Shire president re the footbridge near cricket oval. (This will be the clubs next major expense.) The getting of the links in order and the repairs and improvements to the clubhouse was left in the hands of the committee. A working bee was called for next Saturday. The report in the paper on May 31st of the official opening taking place in brilliant sunshine. "The fairways have been mown and raked and were in splendid order. The club had use of a mower which did a good job cutting the grass. The layout of the links has been altered since last season. This has given greater length to the course. The fairways adjoining the cricket and football oval has been altered and the new green laid out is a gem." Another report of 30th August "The Euroa Golf Associates entertained the Castle Creek Associates to a enjoyable afternoon of golf in pleasant weather conditions and then served a lovely afternoon tea."

There are not many reports for the rest of 1949 but about 6 lines in the paper of 2 May 1950 reports "At the annual meeting of the Euroa Golf Club last week it was decided that owing to the unplayable condition of the course adjoining the football ground and lack of interest in the club that play lapse for this season. The final report on the Euroa golf club links is that the clubhouse was moved in 1951 to be used as the croquet clubhouse

Roma Joyce.
Euroa Historical Society.

Castle Creek Golf Club

The Early Years. 1930 - 1948.

Castle Creek Golf Club was established in 1930 on private farm land owned by Mr O. Newton on the Mansfield road three miles south of Euroa.

This was a picturesque course played over 18 holes, with a par of 75. The holes were played along the banks of the Castle Creek and crossed over the creek on three occasions. It was laid out by a professional, who stayed with the Newtons for three months while he did it.

Mr. Newton, who was the founding President, welcomed players to the course on opening day in June, and the course was then opened by the Shire President Cr. McKernan.

Many of the local golfers joined as members of this new course, which was then the second golf course operating in the town.

Many improvements were made to the course in the early years, and at a tournament held in 1931, many compliments were made of the course, its condition and also the hospitality provided by the ladies.

The tournament attracted 244 entries from 84 players from as far a field as Melbourne, Wangaratta, Benalla, Avenel, Kithbrook and of course Euroa.

An unusual feature was a par three hole called the Acid Drop. Players teed off from an elevated position to a green below. Initially the "greens" were sand scrapes. These sands were oiled with sump oil and were generally seven or eight metres across, and had a single wire fence around them to prevent sheep from walking on the surface. Sands could be smoothed with a scraper which was provided, except within a putter's length of the hole, when the shaft of the club could be used to smooth the putting area. Ailsa Hulbert, nee Newton, remembers that there were few bunkers, because it was thought that driving over the creek 3 times, and avoiding the lagoons was hazard enough. There was one exception, at no. 7, where players had to hit over the creek on to an elevated green that was surrounded by quite deep bunkers.

When members hit a ball into the creek or lagoon, they would put a stick into the bank nearby. During the week, Mr. Jack Artridge came and raked the water to recover them. Golf balls were precious, and members got theirs back because they had painted their names on them.

In 1934 twelve pounds in weight of creeping bent seed was purchased to be used in an experimental fashion for future grass greens and surrounds.

A small club house was erected in 1933 and used by the members in their season, generally from April to October. Permission was given for the Castle Creek Cricket Club to use the club house during their summer season.

Power to the club house was obtained by batteries, and in 1934 Mr A. Winburn hired a battery to the club for the season at a cost of ten shillings per season. Eventually the club purchased their own battery.

By 1934 Mr Newton was the curator of the course and Mr Ian Currie was President.

Subscriptions were set at two pounds ten shillings for men, while the ladies paid One pound eleven shillings and six pence.

In 1936 Mr T.J. Nolan was elected as the President of the Castle Creek Golf club, a position he held until his death in 1957. The "Nolan Trophy" was played for the first time, and is still played for now some seventy two years later. This is a handicap competition which was played in conjunction with the annual championships, and is regarded as a prestigious event on the club calendar.

Protocol extended to the course where the President was given the honour of always hitting off first, as well as being allowed to play through, if requested.

During these times tournaments were held, and a championship was contested annually. In 1938 it was decided that the championship trophy was not to exceed a cost of ten shillings and sixpence. Other events held were likely to attract a trophy of one golf ball for the winners.

Tenders were called for catering for tournaments, a licence was obtained and applications were called for the operation of the booth.

Affiliations were with a Goulburn Valley association and the V.G.A. for a total cost of less than two pounds. There also existed a Euroa association, as golf was being played during these years at Kithbrook, Strathbogie, Terip, Castle Creek, Euroa Creightons Creek and elsewhere in the district.

The member's golf bags consisted of a canvas cylinder holding usually just five clubs.

Although these bags and clubs would not have been heavy by today's standards, caddies were the order of the day, and a member was appointed as the controller of caddies, and issued permits to caddy applicants.

There is evidence here of the use of sheep to keep the grass down, as in 1939, two thousand sheep were on the property probably just at season's start for a short time to eat the grass down before play started for the season. It is interesting to note that

at this time also permission was given for the purchase of a mower at a maximum cost of sixty pounds.

During the war years, 1939 to 1945, there was less activity on the Golf Course, although golf was still played, and tournaments were played to assist the war effort. Such a tournament was held in 1944, and termed for Patriotic funds.

It was in 1946 that a special meeting was called by the President to consider the purchase of land for a new course at the southern border of the town. He had considered that the days of the Castle Creek Golf Club existing on private farm land would not be a long term arrangement.

One hundred and forty acres of land became available and was purchased for a cost of fifteen pounds per acre.

The deposit for the purchase was raised at this first meeting, and ten pound debentures were issued for members. All were taken up.

The next far sighted move was to engage a professional golf course architect, Mr H.V.Morcom to lay out the new course. Vern Morcom had a great depth of experience and had worked at Kingston Heath. Over many years he was instrumental in designing courses at Lakes Entrance, Lonsdale, Leongatha as well as interstate at Royal Hobart, and Glenelg and Royal Adelaide in South Australia. As well he was influential at Royal Melbourne and Commonwealth in the bunkering layout and greens.

T. J. Nolan as well as being a real-estate agent was also a councillor, and his influence at Council was beneficial in the early establishment of the new course with Council support in supplying some equipment in development of the new course. The property was ploughed and graded, stumps were removed by bulldozer, the timber removed, the course sown down and drained. Most of this work was done by volunteers. The work of volunteers is an aspect of the Golf Course that has been a strong force throughout the Club's history.

The areas for the grass greens were then rotary hoed, levelled, with a small load of topsoil from the Faithfuls Creek and sown down by Mr T. Stewart, a club member, and Head Gardener at nearby Seven Creeks Estate.

John Sullivan, with notes from Ailsa Hulbert.

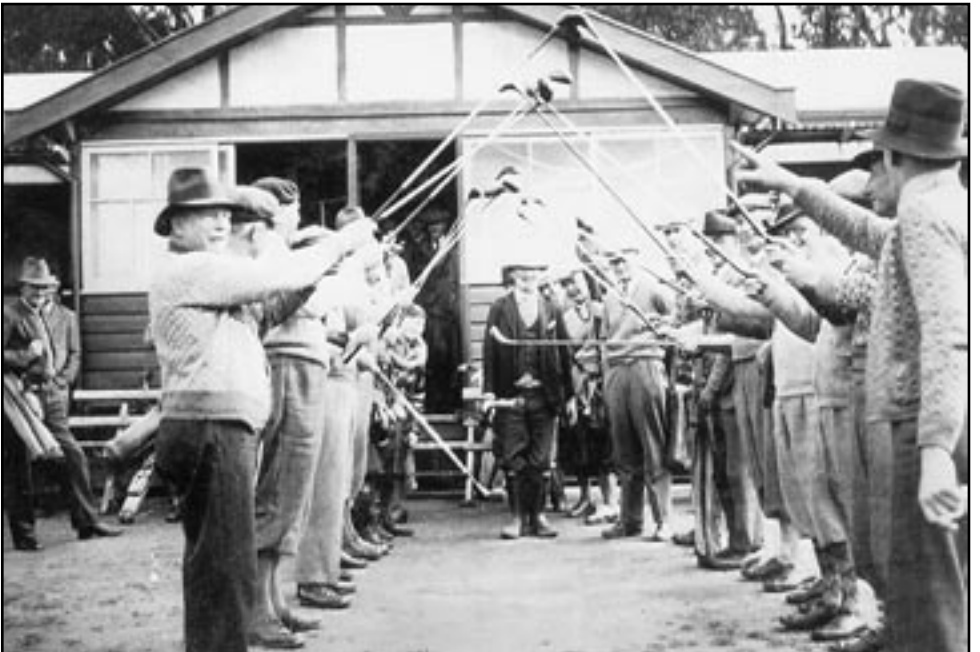


*Pictured above:
Norman von Nida (left)
at Euroa Golf Club in
1953. Club President
Tom Nolan, front right.
(Photo courtesy John
Sullivan).*

*Pictured left: Harriet
Gilbert ready for golf
in the 1930's. (Photo
courtesy Shirley
Walters).*



Castle Creek Golf Clubhouse, Mansfield Rd., 1930's. (Photo courtesy Lynne Sargood)



Castle Creek Golf Clubhouse - Honour Guard on Digger's Day, 1930's. Tom Saxon, front left. (Photo courtesy Stuart Saxon).



*Putting on the 9th sand scrape on the Racecourse links, 1912
(Photo courtesy Euroa Historical Society).*



The former Euroa Golf clubhouse, now the Euroa Croquet Clubhouse. It was moved to its present site in 1951, from where the Euroa Bowls Club's Delahey Green is now. Jean Hahnel joined the club in 1937. Ray McLaine lived near the course, and played a few holes after school .(Photo courtesy John Sullivan).



Pictured left: Euroa Golf Club new clubhouse, 1961, taken across the 18th (now 13th) green. Note the bunker in the foreground. (Photo courtesy John Sullivan).

Pictured right: The Clubhouse with the extension by two windows on the right, and an entrance veranda, in the 1990's. (Photo courtesy John Sullivan).



The Clubhouse with the office extension to the left, the covered barbecue area, and the newest veranda, in 2007. (Photo courtesy John Sullivan).



The 11th tee and the access road, flooded in October 1993 (Photo courtesy John Sullivan).



*February 2007. The empty 56 megalitre capacity on site club dam
(Photo courtesy John Sullivan).*



Aerial view of Euroa Golf Course, on the southern edge of Euroa, taken in the early 1990's. The town begins at the top left, and the Hume Freeway under construction crosses the picture at the bottom right. The club dam is visible nearby. The Castle Creek crosses the top right corner of the course. (Photo courtesy John Sullivan)

Castle Creek - The New Course

1948 – 1973

From the opening in 1948 this new course had eighteen grass greens, and it is believed this was the first course in country Victoria to have such greens.

The first tournament on the new course was held in early October. At a dinner held on Saturday evening the course was officially opened by the President of the V.G.A. Mr C. Willan. Both he and other visitors were complimentary and impressed with the amount of work done over just two years.

All members were required to hold at least one ten pound debenture to assist in financing the project and as well there were five other local people who assisted by giving one thousand pound bank guarantees. Interest paid on the debentures was two and a half percent.

The other major method of financing was by purchase of sheep. One hundred and forty sheep were purchased in 1948 from Strathbogie. Each night these sheep were locked up in what is still known as the sheep paddock. During the day they were let out to graze the fairway areas. The new grass greens were fenced off to keep the sheep out, and these fences were only removed for competitions on Saturday. Even on Wednesdays, which was Ladies day, only the front part of the fence was removed.

The sheep were shorn in a neighbour's shed each year, and the wool sold. In the days of good wool prices this was of great benefit to club finances, and in one year the wool cheque amounted to five thousand pounds. This then allowed the construction of a new and larger club house in 1956. The club house from the old course had been moved in and had been used until then.

By 1950 the financial position of the club was in excellent shape. The purchase of a tractor was covered by the sale of wool, which raised one thousand pounds for the year. Cr. Nolan during these years lauded the value of the sheep in producing funds that were spent on course improvements and equipment. He is on record as saying that "the sheep are our best members."

The sheep continued to be part of the scene for many years, but were eventually phased out in 1965. Both sheep and wool prices had declined, looking after them was carried out voluntarily by Mr Barry Nolan, and a balance had to be made between smaller sheep income, the damage the sheep did with sheep tracks on the course, the curators time in yarding them daily and the wish to carry out an extensive tree planting programme. Once the sheep were gone, another difficulty arose for the players in the form of onion weed, which became a problem off the fairways. One resourceful member sharpened the base of one of his clubs to knife edge sharpness in order to cut through this weed.

Extensive piping had been laid around the course in order to water the greens. The water used was from the local town supply for some years. Some of the greens were reported to have water laid to them, but to water the others long hoses were pulled along, usually behind a bicycle rider to hose points and then the hose was run out to the green. In 1952 a proposal to construct a dam was adopted in order to augment the town water supply. Cost was in excess of seventeen hundred pounds for the dam construction, the large pump, piping and a shed. This dam was extensively enlarged in 1992 with a larger reticulation system in place on the course which then included water to some fairways.

Mr Morcom again visited the course in 1950, and planned a series of bunkers. The course was lengthened by setting back the tees, and he suggested the 11th and 12th holes be lengthened by establishing a green and tee across the creek, as he originally planned. He was assured that this will be done as soon as possible, and the work was carried out in the summer of 1953-54.

Bunkers were constructed around the second green, on the fourth green on the right hand side of the ninth green, and on the fifteenth (now 18th) green. The lack of suitable sand for the bunkers as well as the time to maintain them meant that eventually they were filled in and left as grassed areas or built up as mounds.

Further drainage works on both greens and fairways and tree planting was also carried out during this year.

During the 1950's some very wet seasons were experienced, and in 1952 there were many days when golf was not possible, where fairways were flooded and the greens were affected with poor growth. In particular a great deal of flooding occurred on the third and fourth fairways to the extent urgent works were carried out in the summer months to drain these areas. The annual tournament was postponed, although when it was eventually held it was a successful event.

During these years the attire of players consisted of long trousers, long sleeved shirt, golf shoes(not spikes) and either a cap or a felt hat. Members were required to wear a tie at all times in the club house.

The new Dalhousie Golf District was formed in 1952 with Euroa joining along with towns from Violet Town to Kilmore and also Alexandra and Yea. This association then brought together teams to play Pennant golf, and seven clubs initially participated.

A highlight of the 1953 season was the visit of Golf Professional Norman Von Nida, who played a match with Fergus Murray, at that time a well known North-eastern golfer. Von Nida finished with a 65 off the stick to win, the previous best score on the course had been 74.

It was also at this time that another professional Mr Swabey from Melbourne vis-

ited the club for a week and gave lessons to members.

Again in 1955 another visit was arranged hosting both Von Nida (67) and Bobby Locke (66), both touring professionals, who played an exhibition match.

The Club suffered a severe blow in 1957 with the death of Cr Nolan. He had been the President while still at the old course, but had the vision, the drive and the access to equipment to bring about the establishment of the new course. He used his own funds on many occasions in order that the development could be accelerated. To be able to have a playing surface ready less than two years after purchase is testament to his work and leadership.

Continuing Development

Plans were presented for a new club house in 1955, construction was started almost immediately and the building was occupied during the 1956 season. Members were asked to donate a chair for the new building, and when it opened it was well furnished.

Since then the club house has had various additions and alterations. Power was connected in 1960, the men's room was lined and when application for a licence was made it was necessary to install showers and proper bar facilities.

The application for a licence was made in 1961 after taking a ballot of members, 103 voted for the application, 26 were against and there were 20 abstentions. A new constitution was needed to comply with the liquor laws, and this was adopted in 1962.

With a new club house able to accommodate members further energies were put towards course improvements. In 1960 new men's tees were constructed on the 4th, 6th and 8th holes. Previously the tees were barely higher than the surrounding ground, marked only by markers and a tee box.

The 11th green had been in place for some years, but a new bridge was needed to enable equipment to cross the creek. In 1967 this was constructed, along with further new men's tees at the 3rd and 18th (now 13th). A new 6th green was resited and built using sand to shape and build up the surface.

Again in 1968 all eighteen tees were reconstructed and shaped, water was laid to all the tees using over 3000 feet (1000mtrs) of piping, and the 14th green (16th) was raised and shaped at the back to assist with mowing.

A drain was constructed inside the course boundary to take any overflow water

from the dam. Previous to this some flooding had occurred when the dam filled in the winter. A new machinery shed was constructed in 1967.

Here also the committee were investigating the possibility of establishing a bowling green near the clubhouse. This never eventuated but at the same time indoor bowls was played, and continued successfully for many years.

Mention must be made of people involved in the Castle Creek Golf Club during these years. T.J. Nolan was President from 1936 until 1957 and H.J. Goldsworthy was the club secretary from 1945 until 1972, when he received the first Life Membership of the Golf Club. Dr O.W. Rawson was club champion 8 times during the 1920's and 1930's.

He could drive his hickory shafted club more than 275 yards. Other early champions included young teen-agers in Ken Gall and Graeme Watkins who were becoming well known golfers in the 1950's.

However, it surely is the wider membership that has been the backbone of the Golf Club. Members willingly gave of their time, equipment, and possibly money to further the club's development. Many hours were spent forming up the course as we know it in the early stages, and then the ongoing improvements right up until 1970. These members were assisted by the only full time employee Mr E. Wadson who was the course curator in these early years at the new course.

Combined with the Members were the Associates, as the ladies were known, who willingly over all the years provided afternoon teas, tournament meals, and food for special functions. Visitors to tournaments throughout these years were effusive about the hospitality that was provided by the Associates.

The stage was set for a new generation of members to take over the mantle of the responsibility of the Golf Club.

John Sullivan.

Womens Golf

Castle Creek Associates 1947 – 1972

Euroa Golf Club 1973 – 2008

The first meeting was dated July 26, 1947, in the minute book, at the old Castle Creek golf course on the Mansfield Rd.

Meetings were held at the clubhouse, or Euroa hotel or the rest room at the Civic Hall, but not always on a monthly basis, with the Annual General Meeting held in April.

At the present time the A. G. M. is held in October, with a monthly general meeting.

Golf

Associates were active in discussions organizing golf tournaments and competitions.

In 1948, the new course was opened at the present site on the town boundary.

On a number of occasions the Victorian Ladies Golf Union was written to requesting two players to set a standard scratch. No mention is made of a visit, but a S.S. of 72 was played.

Two associate delegates went to a V.L.G.U. Conference at Commonwealth Golf Club in October, 1947. Although a report was given, there are no details. All players to have a V.L.G.U. handicap to play in competition, or use half of 36.

A new rule was that all score cards must be signed by the marker and countersigned by the player, then handed to the manager of the competition round.

Championships were played over two of three qualifying rounds, 8 to qualify for match play with the final to be played over 36 holes. Players with handicaps 25 and over to play under same conditions with final over 18 holes.

These conditions were played for championship rounds for a number of years when they were changed to three stroke rounds, the winner having the best stroke score.

Golf was played on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the divisions 1 – 24, 25 – 36. In recent years handicaps have been increased to 45, thus giving encouragement to beginners.

In 1952, two delegates were appointed to Hume Group with the view of forming Pennant with A and B teams. No report on this meeting, but a pennant flag was pur-

chased for a win. Later the women played Pennant in the Seymour Group.

Two delegates in 1959, attended a meeting to form the Dalhousie District Ladies Golf Association. This group still controls Pennant and District tournaments. A Perpetual Rosebowl was purchased by the Dalhousie Ladies for the winner of their Ladies Championship.

In 1958, Castle Creek associates were allotted the V.L.G.U. Country meeting for May 1959. A large amount of work was put into staging the two day tournament. Donations of trophies came from Melbourne Clubs and also local ones. Associates catered for the tournament.

Wednesday golf times have changed for the better, (at one time names had to be in by 1.15 p.m.) to the present time of 9.30 a.m Saturday times started at 12 midday with players away by 1 p.m.

Events that are played for during the year.

Championship , Band C Scratch., Burton Trophy, Wright Trophy, Rule match play Trophy on Wednesday, Singles K.O, Eclectic A and B, (winter and summer), plus a number of minor trophies. The Silver Spoon was first played locally in 1952, the winner can play in Melbourne for a case of spoons

A donation of a trophy from the General committee to the Associates in 1981 became the Euroa Bowl. Over 100 players from surrounding clubs take part in this event. When first played in 1981, 4 women from Eildon took home the trophy .In later years there are 3 players in a team.

Catering and Clubhouse

Improvements have played a large part in the activity of women golf members. At the early tournaments, help was employed in the kitchen for washing up, and also on Saturdays to help with the kitchen duties and cleaning of the clubhouse.

Food for the tournaments catering was in the charge of the associates, steak and kidney pie with curried sausages with potatoes and sweets appeared on most menus. The usual sandwiches and cakes for afternoon tea. In later years cold meats and salads with sweets, then at times barbecues , with afternoon tea still being available

At one Womens Tournament, it was passed that they have liquid refreshment in moderation, limit one bottle per person.

Catering is still a very important part of the women members activities. Catering

for tournaments, weddings, private functions and club events.

Following the move to the new course in 1948, the new clubhouse was not built until the end of 1955.

The club President was asked to meet with the women to discuss the clubhouse.

During the following years, curtains were made for the lounge room, kitchen painted, and cupboards discussed, blinds were purchased for the kitchen.

In 1957, a discussion took place regarding the lining of the ladies room, and a footbath, a quote to be obtained, but before the go ahead was given, the builder started work. Some male members complained bitterly so work was stopped for a short time. To save some costs the golf women cleaned the clubhouse with a big working bee before tournaments.

Women Members

Over the past 60 years the women members have played a large part in the growth of the club, both outside on the course and working in the clubhouse

Two women who have to be mentioned are Nance Spurling (Sargood), who was secretary, handicap manager at the time of the changeover to the new course at Euroa, and also treasurer. She also acted as a delegate to V.L.G.U. conferences at Melbourne clubs and later was captain at Castle Creek.

Nance was unfortunately killed in a car accident during the 1960 golf season.

The other member who played a large part over 10 years as secretary of the associates from 1963 was Nell Adams. Nell taught members more about rules and golf etiquette during her term of office. A match Committee was formed during this time.

At the 1985 Annual Meeting of the Euroa Golf Club, the women or Associates of the Euroa Golf Club became full members.. One woman became an office bearer, and others sat on the General Committee.

A GREAT DAY FOR THE WOMEN OF THE CLUB

Shirley Walters.

The Growing Clubhouse

After the new Castle Creek Golf Course was established, the clubhouse from the Mansfield Rd. site was moved in, and it was replaced by a new one 8 years later. It was a renowned venue for social occasions. The new clubhouse incorporated part of the old one, the present kitchen area.

Extensions and changes to accommodate Club functions were made over the years; a dance floor, bar and cool room, lining of the mens and ladies rooms, and the addition of the veranda over the entrance all enhanced the operations of events at the club. Refurbishment of curtains, replacement of wood fired heating and stoves with bottled gas at first, later with a gas tank, renewal of floor coverings, and new furniture have all been ongoing.

During the 2,000's the construction of an outdoor barbecue area, external handi-capped and mens and ladies toilets together with a storage shed, the extension of the office and manager's area and the veranda across the clubhouse façade have all been completed. The toilet building and the veranda were subsidized by grants under the equality of access Government and Shire programs.

A great amount of money has been raised throughout the 60 years, from the early days of the sheep, by many methods. Debentures and levies are mentioned throughout the minute books, as are bank loans and loans by individual members, who often gave generous terms. Catering, raffles, film nights, entertainments, and fashion shows feature in reports to the committee. Varying club memberships to encourage juniors, beginners with provisional membership being offered while achieving an official handicap within twelve months, summer players, and pensioners, with instalments of fees also being offered as an option, and with advertising in metropolitan and regional newspapers for social club secretaries to arrange golf trips to Euroa all supported the financial needs of the club. Road signs along the freeway were placed locally.

21 years of Bingo were a social and financial success for the club. In 1985 – 86, \$6,590 was contributed to funds, and while George Andrews was in charge of the bingo teams, in excess of \$40,000 was raised. By the early 1990's, players and revenue were decreasing, and the nights ceased in 1995, with the equipment gradually being sold. Competitions specially arranged as fundraisers, Skins contests with invited golfers, night golf, the Friday twilight Chicken Run dedicated to raising funds for the barbecue area, were all successful in their objectives. Committee members also met with representatives of Tattersalls and Tabcorp, together with other sporting clubs, and the Shire of Strathbogie between 1992 and 1996 to discuss the possibility of having gaming machines at a venue in Euroa. It was decided to not proceed with this venture.

As well, donations of materials for bridges and the water cart trailer, trees along fairways, volunteer time for planting and watering, construction, working bees – one minute in 1993 noted that 286 man hours were recorded during one week – course signage, sponsorship, honour boards, volunteer course maintenance and reconstruction, gardening, and trophies all have built the successful Euroa Golf Club.

Beryl Webster.

Castle Creek Golf Club / Euroa Golf Club 1948-2008

Ongoing Course Development

The original Morcom plan was not adopted in its entirety in the early days of development.

The course of today (2008) is now identical with the original plan, save for the fact that the 16th/17th/18th holes have been changed around. The original hole layout (changed 1986) showed the now 14th as 16, now 15th as 17 and now 13th as 18.

With the establishment of the course the greens were all flat and smaller than any of the present greens. Perhaps the only remaining green that at all resembles the originals would be the 18th. Although much enlarged it is still reasonably flat.

A similar situation existed for the tees. These were barely raised areas of ground with two marker pegs and small sand container.

No such tees exist today as all have in some way been nurtured and developed. With the advent of water to the tees and building up they are excellent teeing grounds.

In 1950 Mr Morcom re-visited the Golf Club and drew up a plan for bunkers. Bunkers were constructed on a number of holes, but were found to be unsuccessful. Not only were they hard to maintain, but using the local creek sand they did not achieve the proper bunkering effect. Eventually they were changed to grassy hollows or built up into mounds around the greens.

By 1955 the course was playing to a length of 5623 metres. Now in 2008 the course has been lengthened to 5884 metres, 169 metres having been added to the first nine holes, with 97 metres added to the second nine. Much of the extra length on the first nine would have been with the lengthening of the 3rd, the 5th and the 6th holes. On the second nine holes much of the extra distance would have been taken up with the extension of the 13th hole.

The major factors that have influenced the biggest changes have been the flooding of the course in wet years, the need for drainage and the extensive development of a good reticulation system.

In the earlier years flooding was a problem. Extensive drains were built across and along fairways to keep the course playable. The 1950's were extremely wet and were a great challenge for the committee. Bridges existed on many fairways as water lying in depressions was widespread.

In the early 1990's again flooding became an issue for players, but with less inconvenience due to the drainage work carried out over the years.

Now the major open drains are gone and most wet areas are drained by underground pipes.

The reticulation system has seen vast improvement particularly in recent years. Initially the greens were watered from long arm sprinklers, using water from the town supply.

Many voluntary hours went into moving hoses and sprinklers to maintain the greens during the summer months in the early years.

Some twenty five years ago the Euroa Golf Club went from being an April to November season to one of twelve months.

Because of this, extensive works were needed to upgrade the reticulation through the whole course. Over a period of years this has been achieved to the present time where the committee is embarking on the final stages of having a fully automated system supplying both clean and recycled water to all the greens, tees and the fairways.

Early in the 1990's the decision was taken to install an automated watering system to all the tees and greens on holes 10 to 18. Along with the system being extended to include the fairways, this was completed in 1993. Then followed the first plantings of couch fairways in 1995. The couch planting is an on going programme. It is envisaged that all fairways will be planted with Wintergreen couch in the near future.

Major works were carried out on the system on the first nine holes during the 1990's, with the installation of pop up sprinklers. The past 10 years have been extremely difficult, with a lack of water due to the drought, culminating in major problems over 2005/2006, when all playing areas were affected. During that summer all greens were affected, and four greens were lost completely. All other greens were to some extent decimated.

Following 10 years of on and off discussions with Goulburn Valley Water the committee in 2005 managed to negotiate the supply of recycled water from the Euroa Treatment Works.

The installation of a pipe line from the Treatment Works to the Golf Course was completed in 2007, and with the installation of a major holding tank, pump and shed an ample supply of water has resulted.

Another aspect of the course development is seen in making the course user friendly to all players, with further bridges being built, paths made for carts, and generally ensuring all players enjoy their golf at Euroa.

Throughout all of these years an ongoing tree planting programme has been undertaken. Initially pines were planted but recently native trees have been the chosen plantings. Many members and visitors have donated trees to beautify the course with a great deal of success. With the need to hand water the new young trees it is

understandable that some losses have occurred.

Some individual members have taken responsibility for beautification works on tees. This once again illustrates the on going pride that exists in the Golf Club.

In 1991 a large area in front of the club house was changed from a swampy water course into a usable water storage and including a large garden mound. The storage is now used for pumping water onto the fairways on the second nine holes, receiving top up supply from the main dam.

The Euroa Golf Club is a major asset to the Euroa community, and it has been successful due in a large part to the continuous voluntary work carried out by members over all of the past 60 years. In particular the development over the last 20 years have seen some visionary projects come to fruition for the benefit of all the members.

On going voluntary work will still be needed as the Golf Club only employs one full time man. However the example of the past will stand this Golf Club in good stead.

John Sullivan.

with assistance from John Dewan, Ian Lewis, Arthur Frost.

Water Supply-Becoming Self sufficient

In 1952, the club installed a dam which held about 10 megalitres of water, in the paddock where the sheep were held each weekend during play until 1965. Water supply was not a problem during the fifties and sixties, and into the seventies. Many members from that time remember the course as being very wet during the playing season.

Water was laid to those of the tees without a point during their reconstruction in 1968. Gradually, drainage was improved, greens raised, and an in ground watering system was extended along the 9th to the 18th fairways in 1983. It was estimated that when the system covered the 40 acres (1 hectare) of fairways, 9,400 gallons (42 .7 kilolitres) of water was used per week.

Dry summers in the 80's and the prospect of cessation of the town supply connection, except to the clubhouse, as well as the change to a twelve months of the year club led to years of research to achieve the club's declared policy of eventually becoming self- sufficient in water supply. Approval from club members to raise a loan of up to \$35,000 to extend the existing dam, and to fit a suitable pump was obtained in April 1988. By midyear, the dam extension was completed, increasing its capacity to 28 megalitres. At this time, Club Secretary Alan Ludeke mentioned the possibility of pumping water from the sewerage farm to the course.

By the end of 1988, town water was disconnected from course watering. There was further excavation at the club dam by VicRoads and the Shire of Strathbogie during the construction of the Hume Freeway in 1991, and again in 1992 the dam wall was raised, allowing an extra 10 megalitres to be stored. Committee members also began investigating pumping water from the Castle Creek late in 1991. Enquiries of the Rural Water Commission in 1992 found that this could be done if the volume of water flow was sufficient, at a cost of \$8 per megalitre.

Meanwhile, in 1994, the club proposed purchasing or acquiring 20 hectares of land with a dam on the other side of the newly constructed freeway, from VicRoads. It was successful in this venture, and the new dam was connected to the club dam by gravity feed. The club dam and the new dam named the Dewan Dam filled by the end of winter, 1995. Both dams were confirmed as being on designated water courses by Goulburn Murray Water, and a diversion licence fee of \$122.40 with an annual fee of \$2 per megalitre was required. Water from the Castle Creek was pumped to the waterhole dam in 2005.

The connection and reticulation works for the recycled water were supported by grants made available because of the prolonged drought. These were \$100,000 from Goulburn Valley Water, \$50,000 from the Commonwealth Community Fund, \$60,000 from Regional Development, Victoria and \$25,000 from the Department of Planning and Community Development, a total of \$235,000. Work on the planned reticulation for the first nine holes is to commence in late April, 2008.

A tremendous effort was made by volunteer members to install the new system, and they can enjoy with pride the recovery of the course. All members and future players can thank them, the committee members, (often the same people) and the authorities who have supported the club to retain and enhance this great asset to Euroa in the centenary year of golf in Euroa. The lead given by Cr. Tom Nolan in his vision to establish a course 60 years ago is still followed by the Euroa Golf Club.

Beryl Webster.

Golfers over the Century

Golf has been played in the Euroa district for 100 years on various courses.

There have been many notable golfers who claim Euroa as the highlight or starting point of their well loved game.

A notable early player was local Doctor, Dr. Oby Willans Rawson. A very tall loose limbed man, described as having hands like a bunch of bananas, playing in the 1920's and 1930's he could drive his hickory shafted club up to 280 yards.

He won 8 championships from 1927.

He also won the handicap division of country week in 1931, and was runner up in the scratch event in 1934.

When the club moved to a new course at the southern entrance to the town in 1948, grass greens were in place from opening day.

It is believed that this was perhaps the first club in country Victoria to have grass greens.

This was a time of great encouragement of the youth in the town, and championships were often won by teen-agers.

Ken Gall, as a seventeen year old won the 1954 championship, and later went on to win three more times. Ken's highlight was however to win the Dalhousie district championship 5 times in 6 years.

The Watkins family of Euroa possessed a great golfing talent and dominated the champion's boards for many years.

Lee Watkins who spent time as the Captain of the club was a great influence on his young nephew Graeme, who won his first championship in 1959, going on to win a total of ten championship between 1959 and 1974, plus 5 Dalhousie championships over some years, to equal Ken Gall's record. Other members of the wider Watkins family were a great influence on Ladies golf.

Mrs Jean Hahnel was a recipient of 9 titles, her sister Lorna Anderson passed Jean's tally with 14 titles, and a third sister Ruth Frost rounded off the family record with another 5 titles.

It was not uncommon over the years to have either two of perhaps all three sisters in contention in the same year.

An influential family in the life of Euroa golf was the Burton Family.

As a family three generations have won the club titles. Father Bruce, also a Past President and Life member won in 1963, followed by his son Colin in 1979. Colin's son Glen then scored three times in 1997, 1998 and 2000.

In May 1997 Glen won the State Secondary Schools championship, and was included in the Victorian School Boys Team playing in the Australian Championships in Alice Springs. Glen went on to play Pennant with Kingswood and was later joined by his brother Tim in Pennant teams.

Later a more recent champion in Stuart Page played Colts Pennant, also for Kingswood, and captured 4 titles in Euroa starting as a teen-ager from 2001.

In more recent times the outstanding player has been Lance Carracher. Since winning his first championship in 1984, Lance has succeeded on a total of 12 times. He has also won the Victorian Sandgreen championship, and has been a dominant figure in Euroa Golf. His star may well be on the wane as in 2007 his seventeen year old son, Edward gained what will surely not be his only title. Lance's wife Lynette also won the Ladies championship in 1999.

Dalhousie District country week teams have always had a good selection of Euroa players over many years starting when the Dalhousie District was formed in 1952. A great number of Dalhousie Pennant shields are evidence of the Euroa players ability within the district.

The Euroa Golf Club continues to foster young people to play golf from an early age by both individual support and training sessions. The results over the years are evidence that this early encouragement has been justified.

John Sullivan

Did You Know?

Castle Creek Golf Club/Euroa Golf Club

1930. The new course opened in June on private farming land belonging to Mr O. Newton, the founding President.

1931. A three day tournament attracted 244 entries from 84 players.

1934. The Castle Creek Golf Club hired a battery for the season to light the club house at a cost of ten shillings for the season.

12 pounds of creeping bent seed was purchased for experimental work on the greens and approaches.

1936. Dr O.W. Rawson was able to drive his hickory shafted drive 275 yards.

1936. For a 4bbb competition the winners were to receive a golf ball each.

1936. A member was assigned the job of controller of the caddies, and issued permits to them.

1938. The Championship trophy was not to exceed a cost of 10shillings and six pence.

1930's. Protocol extended to the course where the President was given the honour of hitting off first, as well as being allowed to play through if requested.

1946. Land was purchased for a new course at the southern entrance to the town at a cost of 15 pounds per acre for 140 acres.

1948. The new course was opened on 28th May by the V.G.A. President Mr Mr C.Willan.

All members were obliged to take out a Ten pound debenture to assist in financing the purchase.

1948. The new course opened with 18 grass greens, believed to be the first course in country Victoria to have grass greens.

1948. The Architects original fee for planning the new course was 29 pounds and 3 shillings.

1948. Miss Nance Sargood, secretary of the Associates of the Castle Creek Golf Club, holed out in one on the 8th hole. Nance used a 6 iron.

1948. Order of play was decided by members placing their named ball in a "ball race" placed beside the first tee.

1948-49. Ken Gall spent his early years on the course burning stumps and picking up sticks.

1940's-1950's. Members engaged caddies to carry their clubs. T.J.Nolan introduced the first "buggy" in the early 1950's.

1950's. Mr Eric Wadeson, curator, sent the golfers off from the first tee on a Saturday.

The Associates stopped after 9 holes for afternoon tea on Saturdays to allow the members free access to the course.

1950. The 11th hole did not cross the creek, 270 yards to the green.

1950's. These were very wet years, where often the course was closed for some weeks.

1950's. Dress code in the club house required all men to wear a tie.

Dress on course consisted of long sleeved shirts, hat or cap, golf shoes (not spikes),

and long slacks.

The Club joined a new golf district, Dalhousie, and therefore played Pennant. (7 original teams in the new district.)

1952. A new dam was constructed to augment to water supply, currently using the town supply. Total cost was about 2000 pounds.

1953. Norman Von Nida gave an exhibition of play.

1955. Again Norman Von Nida (67) with Bobby Locke(66) played an exhibition match.

1956. A new club house constructed and opened. Finance for the construction came basically from the on course sheep.

During the time that sheep were on the course the greens were fenced during the week, the fences only being removed for Saturday play.

On Wednesdays, Ladies day, only the front panel of the fence was removed. A drop zone was provided.

1960. The final rounds of the Championship and the T. J. Nolan trophy had to be postponed twice because of heavy rain, from September 21, to September 28, then to October 1, when the result of the Championship was a tie between E. Houston and P. Gall, on 72. A. Frost won the Nolan Trophy, and J. Sullivan won both the B Grade Championship and the Nolan Trophy. In the playoff on Sunday October 8, there was again a tie, this time on 78. They finally played off on Saturday October 8 – and E. Houston won. Score not noted.

1964. A nearest the pin competition was instituted on the 15th green (18th).

Cost was one shilling entry fee.

1964. A bottle of whisky was to be presented to anyone playing a hole in one. (Later rescinded)

1965. In a unanimous motion the sheep on the course were sold, due to declining sheep and wool prices, and the desire to carry out course improvements.

1967. A new machinery shed was constructed

Between 1976-2001, the Golf Club won 11 Pennant Shields.

Life Members elected over the life of the Golf Club have been H. Goldsworthy, L. Watkins, H. Morgan, G. Andrews, A. Frost, R. Frost, B .Burton, T. Brodie and I. Lewis.

M. Weatherald has scored three holes in one. Two at Euroa, one at Nagambie.

1986. The transfer of ownership of land from the five Trustees to Euroa Golf Club Incorporated was signed by the five Trustees. They are R. W. Houston, T. B. Nolan, B.A.Burton, F. N. Wright and R. McL.McKernan.

1987. The sequence of holes in the second nine was changed after a few months trial – although the ladies did not favour the alteration.

1988. There was a regular weekly draw for Saturday golf.

1991. Early start for golf was allowed.

1992 . Geoff Vincent had the only hole in one on the 15th hole (17th).

1993. Bush Curlews have for a number of years been nesting between the 14th and 17th fairways. (They have not been seen for some years.)

1994. The captain invited the ladies to join Wednesday competition during summer, same as for twilight and Saturday golf.

1996. Permission was given for the first mobile golf cart to be used on the course, by Graham Chaston. More followed in a short space of time.

2003. Stuart Page won the championship over four rounds with a score of seven under the card.

John Sullivan.

A New Century

The new century brought with it a struggle to maintain the course due to dry summers and the consequent lack of storage water.

Necessity being the mother of invention brought about some radical thinking, resulting eventually in a good water supply. The problems confronted and solved are dealt with in another chapter of this history.

During 2002 consideration was given to adopting the Golf Link handicap system. This was rejected at the time, but in 2008 was accepted and is now fully in place. Golf link is a centralised computer programme that the handicapper has access to, with an input from members cards. Members after their days play can later check their handicap.

One of the major social events on the Golf Club calendar for some years now has been the Melbourne Cup Day festivities.

Featuring an eighteen hole stableford competition in the morning, followed by lunch and interesting competitions during the running of the races from Flemington, it always attracts a full club house of members and friends.

The Lady members have made this a very profitable event in the annual calendar.

Over much of the time since the wet years of the 1990's the Shire of Strathbogie hired consultants to investigate the possible need to raise the levee bank that protects the town. This was obviously going to affect the Golf Club and over years there have been some inputs to the effects to the course. Even in 2008 no full resolution has been realised to this problem, but officials of the Golf Club continue to monitor the situation.

The Golf Club is now in a position where it can develop further qualities during the next years, with a full watering system, wonderful greens and fairways, a dedicated team of members and a climate that allows golfing over a full twelve months of the year.

John Sullivan.



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