

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020

Without doubt 2020 proved to be a very challenging and stressful year for all of us. In early January some of our members were impacted by bushfires, floods in February and then the world was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in late March.

At that time the Board spent a significant amount of time planning the best way forward for our club. We wanted to ensure our members could continue to play golf in a safe and healthy environment and that the club remained financially sound.

Unlike many other clubs on the Mid-South Coast our course was only closed for three days and when we reopened for competition golf, we made the difficult, but in my view the correct decision, to have all competition days as Medley events for our members only. From April until June the course remained closed on Mondays and Fridays and the clubhouse was closed with the exception of access to the toilet facilities.

Our caterer, **Louise Collings** indicated to me in early April that her business was no longer financially viable, and she left. It was important we were able to provide some food for our members, so my daughter provided sandwiches on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays and Board members with the help of some club volunteers ran a BBQ each Saturday during this time. We also gained permission to sell cold beverages and sit in the BBQ area.

Throughout the next six months the Board stringently followed Golf NSW and NSW Health regulations and we made minor changes to our operations in alignment with these requirements.

In late May the Board made the decision to employ **Gail Bateman** as our kitchen manager and she took over the BBQ cooking on Saturdays. Later in the year we employed additional casual kitchen staff to help Gail provide a wider range of Bistro meals. Gail is an outstanding employee, and she works tirelessly to ensure our members and visitors are able to purchase food during and after their games of golf.

In early July we reopened the course on Fridays for social play for our members.

On 2nd August we hosted another very successful Primary School fundraiser, and it was fantastic to see so many locals enjoying themselves. Pleasingly, everyone adhered to the necessary Covid requirements which had been a concern prior to the event.

During the months where the course was closed on Mondays and Fridays the greens staff decided to remove the dead trees from around the course which were becoming a safety issue. Around this same time the Board had been looking at alternative ways of getting some additional income. Given we now had a stockpile of well-seasoned timber we decided to sell it for firewood. This proved a highly successful initiative and provided our hard-working lumberjack volunteers with some exercise.

On Saturday 3rd October the Board decided to reopen the clubhouse for our members and visitors. One of the necessary requirements of ensuring we met the mandated regulations

was to have a Covid manager who checked that everyone had signed in and also sanitised all table tops and helped return glasses to the bar area once a group left the clubhouse. I want to personally thank all those members who volunteered for this task.

During the year we welcomed **Country Motor Company, Matt Shirlaw – Painter and Decorator** and **Gerringong Hardware** as sponsors of the club.

We also signed a reciprocal rights agreement with **Shelly Beach Golf Club** on the central coast which gives our members another golf club they can play at our member prices.

During the year two significant projects were completed. The first of these was the erection of an additional shed to store the golf carts. **Geoff Collins** did a marvellous job as project manager and he was ably supported by **Gary Salway, Paul Hawker** and a band of volunteer helpers. The second project was the creation of a 'garden room' on the eastern side of the verandah whereby louvres and bifold doors respectively replaced the old netting and windows. This area allows members and visitors to enjoy the verandah area irrespective of windy and rainy weather conditions. This project was the 'brainchild' of **Gary Salway** and I commend him on his insightful and thoughtful planning. He was ably assisted in its construction by the same team who erected the cart shed earlier in the year.

As I have mentioned many times in the past the success of our club is primarily the result of our volunteer base, and without that base we most certainly would not be as profitable as we have become. In 2020 there were 3881 recorded hours of volunteer work which given the fact we were not fully operational for at least half of the year is something we should be very proud of.

As has been the case for quite a few years now we have a small, hard working group of volunteers ably led by **Geoff Collins** and **Pat Herrick** who undertake the construction of additional cart paths around the course. Your efforts are very much appreciated.

Another dedicated group of volunteers is our bush care team who under the guidance of **Noel Schneider** spend most Monday mornings ensuring we meet the stringent vegetation management requirements of Shoalhaven City Council.

Thanks also to **Gordon Howes** who for many years has maintained the clubhouse surrounds, **Jim** and **Sheelagh Preston** who look after the gardens around the clubhouse, **Terry Simister** and **Greg Wood** who do the on-course garbage run and **Neil Shields** who oversees the toilet out near the 6th green every day of the week.

In the clubhouse we have a significant number of volunteers who regularly undertake important and necessary tasks. **Col Parrish, Dan Rochford, Cec Montgomery** and **Dave Billet** ensure we have the best beer in town by cleaning the beer lines every Monday morning; **Vice President Greg Montgomery** maintains the stock of packaged drinks, wines, chips and other items each and every week; whilst **Brian** and **Lorraine Rowe, David Wilson** and **Kaye McGuirk** organise the club's daily banking. Additionally, although there are far too many to acknowledge individually, I want to thank all the club members who undertook bar duty throughout the year.

Being a golf club one of our major objectives is to provide a quality golf course for our members, which is well maintained and challenging for golfers of any ability. I have no hesitation in stating that our hard-working greens staff of **Garry Hoare, Chad Casinelli and Damian Spelta** ably led by **Course Superintendent Keenan Hobbs** have yet again done a fantastic job in consistently presenting a top-quality course which is appreciated not only by many of our members but also by visiting golfers.

In 2020 we unfortunately had to cancel our annual Shoalhaven Cancer Care charity day due to Covid. **Keenan** and **Chad** decided to undertake the 'longest day' event whereby they played 72 holes of golf with all monies raised going to Cancer research. With the help of **Director Connie Parrish** who sought donations from members and visitors on their behalf, they raised \$6K and successfully took on the challenge just prior to Christmas. Sadly, from my perspective, Keenan left our employ at the end of the year. I am sure all club members wish him all the best in his new venture. Pleasingly Damian successfully completed his four-year apprenticeship and as of the beginning of January he took on the role of Course Superintendent in an acting capacity.

Another essential component of any successful golf club is the Pro shop. In most instances they are the first port of call for golfers and to have a team who are friendly, obliging and make you feel welcome is a massive bonus and helps make a golfer's day a memorable one. Our team of **Peta Griffin, Brett Lawson and Phil Behan** under the guidance of our club professional **Greg Collins** and **his wife Jo** do an admirable job in this regard. Without doubt Greg has been instrumental in attracting more and more members to our club by adding additional golfing events to our annual calendar. The team summer competition, the top gun event and the Macey Open are three events that Greg has introduced.

Also, of significant importance in a club's success is the role undertaken by the various committees who help ensure the club runs smoothly and efficiently. Thanks to all those members of the Building, Greens and Match, House and WHS committees for your involvement. It is very much appreciated!

Finally, I want to thank the Board for their commitment and dedication to our club and for the support you have given me. In particular, I want to acknowledge the tireless work of our Treasurer **Marilyn Schott** and **Honorary Secretary Alan Davies** both of whom have been instrumental this last year in helping to ensure the club has remained operational and financially viable.

Last but not least I want to personally acknowledge **Connie Parrish** who has been on the Board for the last six years. **Connie** has worked tirelessly in that time planning the Shoalhaven Cancer Care day, helping me to seek sponsors and club supporters and without doubt she is the best raffle ticket seller I have ever witnessed. I thank her for her dedication to the club and I hope she will continue to assist the club as a volunteer.

Rob Russell
President

