

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2021

For the second consecutive year the Covid-19 pandemic was instrumental in making 2021 another very challenging and at times quite stressful year for all of us. Throughout the year the Board continued to ensure our club met all the Golf NSW, Clubs NSW and state government requirements to help keep all our members safe and healthy whilst at the club. Equally as challenging the Board endeavoured to keep the club financially viable. Pleasingly, 2021 produced an outstanding financial performance with a net profit of \$102K which, given that for four months those of our members who lived outside our LGA were unable to play our course, and bar and kitchen had limited trading for five months. This positive result helped to ensure that we continue to have a sound and secure financial position and at this point I must acknowledge and thank our Treasurer **Marilyn Schott** and **Peta Griffin** for their conscientious approach and the fact they were very mindful of being frugal with our expenditure wherever possible.

In January the Board decided to purchase a new point of sale system for our bar and kitchen operations. All packaged products can now be scanned, and the large functional touch screen makes data entry user friendly and quicker for the volunteers to use. Ultimately it will also allow us to undertake stocktake inventories promptly and more effectively.

Also in that month we welcomed chef **Mountain-Eagle Pitt** to our workforce. He has proven to be a very valuable addition and together with our kitchen manager **Gail Bateman** they make a great team and do a tremendous job in producing an excellent array of food options. During the year we also employed **Jamie Griffin**, **Tony Collins** and **Laura Fenwick** on a casual basis to help assist Gail and Mouny in the kitchen and in making our superb coffees.

In September Mountain suggested that we introduce a breakfast menu on Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings. This has proven to be a fantastic initiative and continues to be very popular with local community members and visiting golfers. During the summer months the Links 19 Restaurant also introduced a lunchtime menu of seafood dishes which proved to be popular.

Obviously 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. In January the Board gave **Damian Spelta** the opportunity to take on the role of **Course Superintendent** in an acting capacity and in late April, given he was doing such a commendable job, we offered him the position permanently, which pleasingly he accepted. That same month we also welcomed two first year apprentices **Nicholas Neilsen** and **Todd Mitchell** to our greens staff. Both young men have taken on their roles with enthusiasm and diligence and are proving to be great additions to our hard-working greens staff. **Chad Casinelli** continues to be an outstanding employee who always works tirelessly, and he is an excellent role model for Nick and Todd. This year the Board decided to employ **Garry Hoare** specifically to oversee the maintenance and repair of all our machinery which he does on Mondays and Thursdays, and he also does the late afternoon bar shifts on Wednesdays and Fridays. On behalf of the entire club membership, I applaud them all for the monumental work they do in ensuring we have a quality golf course to enjoy.

In April we hosted the NSW Seniors Championships and once again this proved to be a highly successful event. Many of the visiting golfers were amazed at the quality of the golf course, and they were most complimentary of not only the course but also the friendliness and helpfulness of the many volunteers who helped out during the four days of the event. Golf NSW were so impressed with the success of the last two events we have hosted on their behalf that they have asked us to host the NSW Country Championships and Inter-District teams' event in November of this year.

On Sunday 1st August we hosted another very successful Primary School fundraiser, and it was pleasing to see so many locals enjoying themselves. Over \$ 8 000 was raised for our local school on the day.

As was the case in 2020 we once again had to cancel our annual Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centre charity day due to Covid. However, three of our members **Colin Brown, Ross Hobson and Nic Hall** decided to undertake the 'longest day' event whereby they played 72 holes of golf with all monies raised going to Cancer research. They did a fantastic job in raising \$15K. It is hoped we will be involved in the 'Longest day' event again later this year.

During the year we welcomed **DE Concrete Plumbing, South Central Plumbing and Worksafe Apparel** as sponsors of the club. The club is most appreciative of the support local businesses continue to give the club.

We also signed a reciprocal rights agreement with **Macquarie Links Golf Club** which is located in Western Sydney and gives our members another golf club they can play at our member prices.

In late October we finally received DA approval for the deck extension. The Board elected **Col Parrish** as the Project Manager and in November work commenced on removing all the lomandras and a significant amount of the old pathway in preparation for digging, forming and concreting the footings. A big thank you to **Rob Walker** who used his excavator with precision to do much of the groundwork and later undertook a significant amount of the plumbing involved in the project. In early December the steel infrastructure was put in place in readiness for the floor sheeting and roofing. As has been the case with previous projects much of the work has been done with voluntary labour and there were many helpers who put in countless hours. For those unaware **Col** designed and constructed much of the steel framework himself and spent innumerable hours welding and organising others to help with other aspects of the work. Together with his wife **Connie** they have been on this project since the initial planning commenced, and they have been instrumental in ensuring we have a quality addition to our clubhouse. On behalf of the members, I thank them for their efforts as it is very much appreciated.

Others volunteering their time on the project includes our experienced building team of **Gary Salway, Geoff Collins, Paul Hawker, Keith Muller and Peter Priddle** who undertook all the carpentry and sheeting work, **John Schott** who waterproofed the floor sheeting in preparation for the tiling, **Warwick Merchant** who constructed the concrete path leading up to the ramp, **Stuart Bramley** and his employees who did all the electrical work and **Peter Badman** who oversaw any painting that was required on the project. There were many

other members who helped out on various aspects of the works but there are simply too many to name individually. To all of you I thank you for lending a hand and being part of the team.

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 are now. In 2021 there were 6281 recorded hours of volunteer work which given the fact that we were not fully operational for a significant part of the year is an achievement which deserves praise and an abundance of appreciation.

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** who undertake the construction of additional cart paths around the course. Your efforts are very much appreciated.

Towards the end of the year **Rob Edgerley** formed the Parramatta grass eradication team. On most Monday mornings a group of up to 12 workers can be found out on the course removing Parramatta grass from around the greens and edges of fairways. This is a fantastic initiative and one that hopefully will continue for years to come.

Another small but dedicated group is our bush care team who under the guidance of **Noel Schneider** ensure we continue to meet the stringent vegetation management requirements set by the Shoalhaven City Council. Thanks also to **Harry Delany, Mark Allison, Keith Muller** and **Nick Skinner** who regularly spend most Monday mornings working on clearing lantana and other noxious weeds and undertaking the planting of natives propagated in our nursery.

Thanks also to **Mick Collins** who this year volunteered to take over the role of keeping the clubhouse surrounds neat and tidy; **Jim** and **Sheelagh Preston** who continue to look after the gardens around the clubhouse; **Keith Muller** who undertakes 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 take on important and necessary tasks. **Col Parrish, Dan Rochford, Cec Montgomery** and **Dave Billett** ensure we have the best beer in town by cleaning the beer lines every Monday morning; **Vice President Greg Montgomery** who has done a brilliant job for many years now of purchasing the packaged drinks, wines and crisps each and every week; **Brian** and **Lorraine Rowe** and **David Wilson** who 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 volunteered their services behind the bar throughout the year.

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. In November we farewelled **Peta** as an employee of both the Pro shop and the Club. She has been a valuable asset of the club and

we will miss her skills, knowledge and business acumen. Peta's leaving opened a door of opportunity and **Lloyd Herron** joined the Pro shop team and is proving to be a valuable addition.

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

Despite the fact that since Covid we no longer have a specific day set aside for either the Vets or the Ladies both continue to operate within the designated days of the week. Our Vets committee led by President **Greg Montgomery** continue to do a tremendous job in ensuring that our Vets can still compete in club and interclub competitions. Similarly, the small team of four lady members ably led by **Captain Suzie Collins** are doing a great job in organising and running the various women's competitions at club and Pennant levels.

I also must thank the Board for their commitment and dedication to our club and for the support they have given me. In particular, I want to acknowledge the tireless work of our Treasurer **Marilyn Schott** who has been instrumental in ensuring we continue to be fiscally strong; our Honorary Secretary **John Clawley** whose insightful thinking and planning have supported many of the difficult decisions the Board has needed to make; **Alan Davies** who has taken on the important role of Member's Secretary; **John Ditton** who oversees all aspects of WHS including the everchanging Covid plans the club has been required to adhere to, and Club Captain **Phil Behan** who has ensured all club competitions have run smoothly and efficiently.

In conclusion, I would like to sincerely thank our club members and staff for the friendship, support and encouragement you have given me over the last eight years in my role as President of this great club. It has been an absolute privilege and one I will treasure forever.

Rob Russell
President