

CPOFGC

My recollections of the time I was a member of the CPOFGC.

I started playing Golf in my 2<sup>nd</sup> year in Coober Pedy, 1985. Doug Easton , Telecom, was president. Post footy, I need to play something for my own wellbeing and also social nerve. I was an absolute hacker for the first couple of years, but got below 20 handicap by the time of my departure Jan 1994.

The course was 9 holes and we shared 2 holes (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>) with the Race Club with Number 4 hole being the 1<sup>st</sup> and Number 3 being the 9<sup>th</sup>. We had no artificial grass assistance in those days, just the preferred lie when on fairway.

It was when the AGM for the 1997 season was held, I was absent out bush so I offered to join the Committee . . . I was elected President . . . Tony ummed and erred when telling me and said I didn't really have to accept. For the next 7 years I was President of a strong, diverse, each to their own patch, committee, as well as an active financially viable Golf Club. We could have 15 to 20 players, mainly male each Sunday and a great social gather at the 19<sup>th</sup>. The Monthly BarBQ's with the various other Bodies were very popular and well supported with the Spinning wheel and "one last spin" being the popular cry, which led to many a late night.

I was also on the Trophy Committee of the Race Club, which meant that with the Secretary Trevor McLeod we sort of ran the Race Club. I was only President of the Golf Club . . . I didn't run it! The Two great Clubs used to argue/mouth off at each other at the respective Committee Meetings and occasionally I would have to write a letter to myself outlining the other Club's gripe!!!! It was a great relationship I enjoyed with myself and both Clubs were so vital for the pulse of the Town/Bush. When I joined the Golf Club we had the early days of the old Clubhouse, two transportable buildings in an L Shape on a large Cement Square with a sturdy corrugated iron roof over the complex. A moonrock wall was built around the East and North side of the Square and large Windows fitted to enclose the area. It was volunteers all the way and eventually the Clubhouse was enclosed and secure. Sometime in the future it was the intention to remove the two Transportables and Brick/Moon Rock in the South and West sides . . . the fire pre-empted this stage.

A ceiling was hung, a fireplace built, the Captains Room located in what was the old Cool Room on the Northern end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Transportable and the Bar was opened up a bit by removing some of the Northern wall of the 1<sup>st</sup> Transportable, so that it looked out into the "lounge" area.

With a successful Open each year that had up to 50 competitors in all Grades, a strong local competition each week and a liver cleansing Social life, the Club progressed as a place of simple entertainment and welcome. Members were alive and active on and off the Course, so the vibrant Club grew in grassroots ways. Members would maintain a couple of Scrapes and Tee Blocks and assist the Course Manager before and during the Season.

The Course was originally surveyed for its beginning in 1979, but never actually utilised, so I undertook to see if it was still Golf Club Land. We discovered 2 Dugouts, one South of the men's 8<sup>th</sup> Tee Block and the second North of the 17<sup>th</sup> Tee Block's, had been built. Carl Bratz "keg headstone, have a drink on

me" was a draughtsman, so for a couple of cartons of beer he redrew the Course boundaries from Council Plans and we then paid \$5,000 for a new Survey in 1993. This enabled the oft talked about 18 Hole Course to proceed, something that happened after I had left Coober Pedy under Kim Kelly's Presidency.

People and Memories. Harry Blobel seemed to be the focal point of highs and 19<sup>th</sup> tales with his largesse in all aspects during his time as Captain and Course Manager. Lorraine Sternberg had a firm grip on the kitchen. Olaff Brandt was the faithful, best of Barmen. Rony Sternberg the Champion even on the Course proper. Stella Hyatt was the Secretary who crossed all the ravines. Ralph Underwood the Grand Master glue of the total CPOFGC life, aided by Bob von Bertough, Jim Cunningham, Miroslav Markovic and John Dale, the blue collar workers among many others. Ernie Osborn the brainy practical builder and social being. Kim Kelly and Eddie O'Leary later members who steered the ship past my tenure. The other halves/partners and all members complemented the on/off course heartbeat. Ceduna with our close relationship had the outside view and competitive charm that guards against self-praise. Without doubt the Spinning Wheel was a simple encompassing event that never seemed too much. The gallons of Race Club Port, the Triplets and Seafood packs, the chance to double your money and the general last spin, captivated the uncomplicated mood and generated so much more than a few dollars. Our First Pro Am was in 1993, with over 10 professional golfers coming. It was won by Andrew Hatty and was close to being abandoned because of unseasonal rain that morning! I remember one worried pro asking me around 11.00 am when we could hit off. I had no idea, but could see it had almost stopped raining so I told him 1.00pm . . . .and we did!

Then as now there were always visitors coming for a game . . . .some Danish youth, never played golf before, played in an Open one year and went away with the Bradman trophy and other trophies . . . a story the will tell forever. William Hurt was at a loss on his Sunday off (filming) in Coober Pedy, so I picked him up and played Golf with him. He offered to reciprocate when I visited New York.

A few of my memories written August 28<sup>th</sup> 2014 when recycled as Captain of the CPOFGC> it's in a lull these days, but not on life support thanks to so many tourists wanting to play and that core of members/workers who enjoy the 19 holes!

The Club was founded in 1979 with Greg O'Neill the first President, Faye Nayler Secretary, Ralph Underwood Captain, June Herr active behind the scenes.

In June 2014 Darren DeLacey and Mark Rainey brought 14 professional Golfers to Coober Pedy for a Coaching Clinic with our School Students. It was an outstanding event and supplemented by an abundance of Talent as well as Golfing equipment. They hope to maintain an ongoing link with our club as part of their Remote Golf Scheme and are particularly enamored with the Relationship we have with St Andrews. This relationship was somehow fostered by our then resident Opal Mining Professional Golfer Dennis Ingram, when some Members of St Andrews were passing through Coober Pedy just after the 18 holes were opened.