

## BEGINNINGS

We have very little information on the early days of the BAGS except to know that the oldest Trophy (The Builder Trophy) was first contested in 1933 so, bearing in mind the practicalities involved, the Society must have been first suggested and possibly inaugurated in 1932. We do however treat 1933 as the founding date as there is no other information available.

We understand that the Society was founded by a Mr Hill who was “in insurance” somewhere in the City and that he ran the Society until he passed the reigns onto his son David Hill in the early fifties. David was an insurance broker and he was still Secretary as late as 1969 as he is listed as such on the Menu card for the Annual Dinner on the 21st November that year. David had been a Captain and also served as Secretary of the Society for 25 years. He died in August 1993 and his name still appears in the Society as the annually contested match against the Chartered Surveyors Golfing Society (the RICS) is for the David Hill Trophy.

## SOCIETY AIMS

Membership of the Society is restricted to people involved in some way in property development and construction and the membership list covers a wide range of disciplines.

The Rules of the Society are listed in the Membership handbook and, although there must have been some revisions since they were originally set down by the Hill’s family, it is probably fair to say that the wording currently used still represents the original aims.

## OFFICES

The basic BAGS Committee consists of the current Captain, the Vice Captain, the immediate Past Captain and two other members “in the pipeline”. The intention is that these “other” members will themselves move forward into the position of Captain in order of ascendancy to the Committee. The Secretary also attends the Committee meetings but he is not officially a voting member.

Over recent years the immediate Past Captains have been asked to remain with Committee for a further extra year and in 2013 the position of President was created with the purpose of establishing a role for a past Committee member with long experience in Committee matters who could help to maintain some consistency in Committee decisions. The role of President is not for life but until the incumbent (currently Richard Collins ; Captain in 2011) decides that he wants to step down.

Mrs Lorraine Merry is currently the Treasurer and she also attends the Society golf meetings, organising score cards, handicaps and payments etc. In the past there was always a lady employed to organise the cards etc on the day. During the early 80s and 90’s this role was performed by ladies such as Julia German, Jean Halward and Mike Huxtable’s daughter Pippa.



## VENUES

We do not have records of the venues for meetings prior to 1987 but in that year the golf meetings held were as follows:

Spring Meeting: Wentworth: 28th April

Match against the RICS: (probably at Worplesdon)

Summer Meeting: Walton Heath: 7th July

Autumn Meeting: Sunningdale: 13th October

Alan Sinclair (Captain 1985) refers to a Members Only meeting being held in 1985 at Royal Wimbledon. This meeting was not on the schedule in 1987 however when discussion took place that Bob Pluck (the incoming Captain for 1988) should arrange a Members Only meeting in his year. This was booked for Gerrards Cross GC but changed to Beaconsfield GC for the 1989 meeting. Swinley Forest, Ashridge, and West Hill Golf Clubs were the venues until it settled at New Zealand GC in 1996.

For some time there was discussion at the Committee meetings that a "Veterans prize" should be awarded for players over 60 years attending the golf meetings. This was later changed to be at the Members Only meeting but there is no confirmation that the awarding of that prize was ever a regular event or if, for that matter, it ever happened!

The Schultz Trophy (see below) has an interesting history and was also in existence prior to 1987. The meeting was held at Denham GC from 1989 until 1998 but was switched to the present location at Swinley Forest for 1999.

Wentworth and eventually Sunningdale were dropped as venues due to the high fees that those Clubs were demanding. The Berkshire was adopted for the 1990 Spring Meeting and Royal Mid-Surrey given the Autumn meeting in 1995 but this was switched to Worplesdon in 1998.

A number of changes were made to the schedule of meetings over the years through to 2015 by which stage it has now settled down to the following:

## MEETINGS

- Spring Meeting: The Berkshire GC
- Members Only Meeting: New Zealand GC.
- Summer Meeting: Walton Heath GC
- Autumn Meeting: Worplesdon
- Captain's Away Tour: differing locations each year (2015 = Broadstone GC and Remedy Oak GC in Dorset staying overnight in Bournemouth)
- Schultz Trophy: Swinley Forest



## MATCHES

- Against the RICS - Worplesdon
- Against the EPICS - varying locations (2015 = Thorndon Park GC)
- Against the British Council of Offices - varying locations determined by the Captains of both sides (2015 = Camberley Heath GC)
- Combined match against the EGS, PIGS and RICS = Royal Ashdown GC
- Secretary's Cup: Match Play knock-out tournament played through the season with the final at Swinley Forest

## SOCIAL EVENTS

- The Annual Lunch: The RAF Club Piccadilly
- The Quadrennial Lunch: Past Captains only and held every four years on the 29th February
- The Captains Lunch: Past Captains only held every four years during the intermediate mid point year between the Quadrennial Lunches

## MATCHES

We do not have information on the first time that the BAGS played a match against another Society. Up until the early 1990's the only match played was against the Chartered Surveyors Golfing Society (RICS). These matches were of teams of ten per side; this was eventually changed to the current arrangement of twelve per side.

Discussions about matches against the Comedians Golf Society and the RIBA came to nothing but other challenges did appear and we now play four matches a year:

### AGAINST THE CHARTERED SURVEYORS GOLFING SOCIETY (RICS)

The annual match against the RICS for the David Hill Trophy is now held at the beginning of the golfing year at Worplesdon GC. This match has been in existence for many years and consisted in the 1990's of foursomes in the morning, lunch and the singles in the afternoon. ? when did it change??

### AGAINST THE CIGS

A possible match against the Construction Industry Golf Society (CIGS) was under discussion in Sept 1994 and the first match was held at St Georges Hill in 1995. Colin Searle was given the task of arranging future CIGS matches and asked to investigate prices etc for a suitable Trophy. Reg Gladding (see below) was a prominent participant in these matches and as one of his commonest phrases was to say "Brandy dear boy" when asked at the bar, a Trophy known as the "Dear Boy Trophy" was made by Roy Wright a CIGS member, in the form of an empty Brandy bottle on a small dais. The idea being that the losing team would fill the bottle at the dinner that followed the match. In later years the matches were held at Woking GC and the BAGS were very successful. The match is no longer played but not before the Dear Boy Trophy was lost and eventually found in a bonded warehouse in Cape Town!



## AGAINST THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF OFFICES (BCO)

Tim Battle as the incumbent Captain in 1999 suggested that there should be a match against the BCO and the first match took place at Royal Mid Surrey in October 1999. This has become one of the highlights of the year due to the inevitable craic that has evolved between the two sides but also because each member of the winning team gets to take home a magnum of wine.

The venue has now changed from Royal Mid Surrey so that the respective Captains choose the venue on an alternate year basis. Currently the arrangements appear to be that the BCO choose Camberley Heath GC and the BAGS choose Thorndon Park GC but there are no hard and fast rules except perhaps that Gordon Mackenzie (also a BAGS member) as current Captain of the BCO team is also a member and past Captain of Camberley Heath! Tim Battle Captained the BAGS team for many years and has only recently relinquished that role.

Overall the situation between the sides is fairly even although the BCO were very successful in the early years.

## AGAINST THE "EVERY PROFESSIONAL IN CONSTRUCTION" GOLF SOCIETY (EPICS)

This match came into being primarily because of the ceasing of the CIGS match and the first match was held at Chigwell Golf Club in July 2010. This is a single round 4-ball better ball match and so far the BAGS have not lost although there have been drawn matches. To suit the EPICS the venues chosen are usually "north of the river" and to date matches have been played at Chigwell (twice), Thorndon Park (twice) and Porter's Park.

## AGAINST THE PIGS, EGS, AND RICS

This match was first held in 2012 and involves small teams from the Property Industry GS (PIGS), the Estates GS (EGS) and now also the RICS. Matches are held at Royal Ashdown GC and are a very enjoyable social rather than serious golf occasion.

## MEMBERSHIP

The BAGS membership stands at 157 in February 2015 but, sadly, there are a large number of those who, while paying their annual subscription, do not appear at any of the events. In the early years the membership numbers were restricted and new applicants went onto a waiting list. Admission to membership then took place at the twice yearly Committee meetings. The admission of ladies as members was agreed at a Committee meeting in September 1999 but it was some years before Estelle Reeve (in 2015 still the only lady member) joined.

There have been a number of notable BAGS members over the years and among these are:

### REG GLADDING

Reg was one of the best amateur golfers of his day. In 1979 at the age of 54 Reg took part in the English Amateur Championship at Royal St Georges GC. He and his opponent were drawn after 18 holes and therefore proceeded to play further holes in a sudden death scenario. On the 4th hole Reg put his ball into the top of the enormous bunker on the right. Realising that he could not enter the bunker



from above for fear of creating an avalanche Reg climbed up from below but slipped and fell back to the bottom. He therefore had to concede the match as neither he nor his opponent knew how many penalties had been conceded as he had not only moved the ball but grounded his club many times. Reg resigned from the BAGS in September 1993 as he suffered with glaucoma.

## SIR MICHAEL BONALLACK

Michael Bonallack's name appeared on the BAGS paperwork for some years as an Honorary Member but he did not actually ever play or take part in a BAGS meeting. In the early 80's he was the marketing director of a building company in the Midlands (? Miller Buckley!). He wrote to Jimmy Warner the then secretary of the BAGS requesting membership and, as he had been five times winner of the Amateur Championship as well as being a member of several Walker Cup teams he was accepted. However just after that he was made Secretary of the R&A and as a result played no part in BAGS events although he was asked, unsuccessfully, to speak at the 2000 Annual Dinner

## BRUCE CRITCHLEY

Bruce is now famous as a commentator on Sky Sports but in his BAGS days he worked for Blue Circle Cement. He was a member of the 1969 Walker Cup team and his name appears on at least two of the BAGS trophies. Bruce resigned from the BAGS in 1991.

## JOHN PRETLOVE

John is a Honorary Life Member of the BAGS and was Captain in 1984. He worked for Blue Circle Cement, Hall & Co and spent several years as Marketing Director for Costain but John's primary achievements were on the cricket pitch where he played for Cambridge University 1954-56, and for Kent in 1955-59 being Captain at one time. His first class career spanned from 1954 to 1968 and included scoring over 5,100 runs among which were 10 hundreds and 26 fifties, and a top score of 137. He also took 43 wickets with best bowling figures of 5-55. He was Kent President in 1999 and was additionally a useful footballer and fives player.

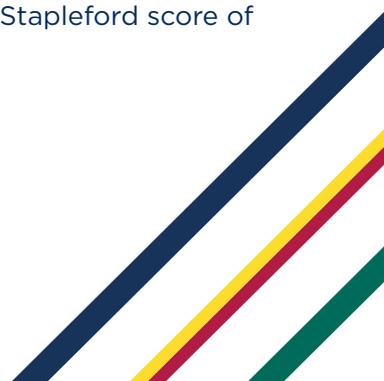
## DAVID HASLAM

David is still an active BAGS member although he has no direct association with property development or construction.

David was the professional at Fulwell Golf Club from 1975 to 1995 and was Wiltshire County champion on six occasions. He played in several exhibition matches with the likes of Bobby Locke and Peter Allis and, in 1969, refereed the Ryder Cup match when Tony Jacklin and Neil Coles played against Lee Trevino and Jerry Barber.

The Estate Golf Society (EGS) had a golf professional as a member and it was felt the BAGS should do likewise. David was proposed and he was voted in as an "Associate" member and as the resident professional in February 1994.

In 2006 David was presented with a special prize as he had managed to negotiate the Old Course at Walton Heath that year with a gross score of 73 being 3 less than his then age and a Stapleford score of 41 points. Needless to say he also won the Bunter Griffith Trophy that year.



## JAMES SHACKLETON

James Schacketon was Captain of the BAGS in 1982 by which time he was the marketing director of Higgs and Hill (is that last comment correct) Jim is however more famous for his Rugby Union career. He played in the Centre for both London Scottish and internationally for Scotland making his test debut against England at Twickenham in March 1959 and finishing for Scotland against South Africa at Murrayfield in April 1965.

## BILL MERRY

Bill is still very much involved with the BAGS and was Captain in 2005. He was a professional Cricketer playing between 1976 and 1987 for Hertfordshire, Middlesex and Minor Counties with best First Class bowling figures of 4 for 24. He is currently Business Development Director of Balfour Beatty Engineering Services.

## TROPHIES

*Note: the dates of first playing are required from the Trophies*

The principle Trophies possessed by the BAGS are as follows:

### THE BUILDER TROPHY

The oldest trophy having been first played for in 1933. The trophy was given by The Builder magazine (now "Building"). Duncan Ferguson (BAGS Captain in 1976) was a later director of The Builder and so the relationship between the magazine and the BAGS lasted for many years. The Builder Trophy is played for at the Autumn meeting (now held at Worplesdon GC)

### THE DYKE CUP

The Dyke Cup is played for at the Spring Meeting (now held at The Berkshire GC). We understand that it was first played for at The Dyke GC near Brighton.

### THE CAPTAIN'S PLATE

Played for at the Members Only meeting (now held at New Zealand GC) We understand that the Plate was donated to the Society by Jack Strudwick (Captain in 1989)

### THE BUNTER GRIFFITH TROPHY

Played for at the Summer Meeting at Walton Heath GC. No information available on it's history or who Bunter Griffiths was!



## THE SCHULTZ TROPHY

Currently contested by the past Captains and the then current committee at Swinley Forest in November. The name of the Trophy is based on the subject of a joke that was called for and told at the Annual Dinner by Peter Halsall over several years (yes; he told the same joke each year!). Peter provided the Trophy and last told the joke in 1994. The Trophy was dedicated to him after his death in 1996.

## THE LEN TROWER TROPHY

This is awarded at the Annual Lunch (previously Annual Dinner) to the member with the highest cumulative Stapleford score over the proceeding season. Len Trower was a Partner of a leading Quantity Surveying practice – Wakeman Trower (is this statement correct and is Peter Trower his son ??)

## THE PRESIDENTS PUTTER

This is a recent addition to the trophy list and is meant to be the subject of a match play contest between the winner of the Len Trower Trophy and the winner of the Secretary's Cup. Unfortunately due to commitments and weather conditions during the winter months it has proved to be very difficult to get this contest organised.

## THE SECRETARY'S CUP

This is a match play knock-out contest that takes place through the summer months with the final being held in October/November. It was first contested in 2006 with the Final played at Wentworth and won by Andy Kimpton (Captain 2010). After 2006 the venue continued to be at Wentworth for a few years where it was partly sponsored by Andy Merry (Captain 2009) who is a Wentworth member. It is now intended that the Final should be played at Swinley Forest on the same day as the Schultz Trophy but circumstances have often intervened and other venues (South Herts, Woburn and Tandridge) have been used. Memorably, the Secretary's Cup was won in 2011 by Estelle Reeve the only Lady member of the BAGS but in the three years 2012 to 2014 Tom Everest has claimed the prize.

## CAPTAIN'S AWAY TOUR

This first started as a match to be played at Royal Cinque Ports (Deal) between a Captain's Team and a Secretary's Team. It was the idea of Robin Bryant (Captain twice in 1977 and 2000) and was to be known as the Millennium Trophy. The arrangement was that members would stay overnight in Deal with dinner in the club house and play the match the following day. In 2000 the Captain's team beat the Secretary's Team by 4&3.

The Millennium Trophy idea was last played in 2004, No meeting took place in 2005 although we did return to Deal in 2006 and continued there until 2010. In 2011 the participants made their way to Woodhall Spa. In 2012 we went to The Oxfordshire, 2013 saw us at Hunstanton and then in 2014 it became a "tour" to Dorset with matches being played at Parkstone and Ferndown between two sides organised by the Captain. The tour in 2015 is scheduled to return to Dorset with matches being played at Broadstone and Remedy Oak Golf Clubs.



## SOCIAL EVENTS

### ANNUAL DINNER (NOW THE ANNUAL LUNCH)

The primary social occasion at the end of the calendar year was up until 2005 a black tie dinner held at a major hotel in London. We do not have details of the first Annual Dinner but for many years it was held at the Royal Garden Hotel switching twice (in 1994 to the Hilton Hotel as the Royal Garden was undergoing refurbishment and in 1995 to The Grosvenor House). The last Annual Dinner was held at the Royal Garden Hotel in 2004 by which time attendances had dropped considerably and the proposal was made that the Dinner should be replaced with a Lunch in 2005.

The first Lunch was held at the Saville Club in Brook Street with Graham Gooch as the Celebrity speaker. From 2006 onwards the Lunch has been held at the RAF Club in Piccadilly and is now considered to be a great success. The RAF Club ballroom is usually full with 136 attending.

During the Annual Dinner's primary years it attracted a large following with numbers as high as 423 in 1990. The arrangement at that time was that the participants would meet for pre-dinner drinks in an ante room where various participating building companies or consultant's practices would have small drinks tables set out. The idea was that the attendees mingled prior to entering the dining room. This has now been replaced at the Annual Lunch with a Champagne Reception that precedes the meal.

An indication of the changing times is that in 1987 Robin Bryant organised "Cigarette Girls" to proceed through the pre-dinner drinks assembly handing out free cigarettes! Unfortunately no photographs seem to have survived.

During the heydays of the Annual Dinner when the numbers attending were so high it was also possible to employ well known Speakers rather than journeymen comedians. As a result names such as Tommy Trinder, Jimmy Tarbuck, Bob Monkhouse and Barry Took were employed as the "Cabaret" while there was also a second guest speaker whose role was to "reply on behalf of the guests". The occasion also had it's low points such as in 2001 when the guest speaker failed to turn up and the Toastmaster had to step in to tell jokes and on an earlier occasion when the "Cabaret" speaker decided that those that had spoken before him were better than he was and so he left the room without saying a word!

### THE QUADRENNIAL LUNCH

This event is for the current and past Captains only and is to take place on the leap year day 29th February. It was first proposed by Peter Trower in 1992. The event has been held at such venues as The Café Royal, The Guinea (in Bruton Place), The Ivy, The Saville Club and the Carlton Club. Alan Sinclair (Captain 1985) suggested in 2013 that four years was too long a gap between the Captain's Meetings and he was also concerned at the low number of past Captains that attend the Schultz Trophy meeting so he organised an intermediate lunch with the intention that this would help to keep the contacts warm. A lunch was organised in 2013 at Greens Restaurant in St James' and was a success so this was repeated again in 2014 with the intention that the next such lunch should be held in 2018. The next "Quad" lunch will take place in 2016.

To the best of my knowledge...

Ray Gardner  
Secretary  
Feb 2015

