

Lexington a win for GHS members

Start to finish, everything about national convention was first-class.

Golf Heritage Society members have met 52 times since the first annual meeting was held in Louisville, Ky., in 1972. We are a traveling group that has since crossed the country to various venues from New Jersey to Florida, Texas, and California. This year, Oct. 12-14, marked our fifth visit to Kentucky, our third to Lexington, which bills itself as the “Horse Capital of the World.” Some of us, in fact, made time to visit the famous Keeneland Race Course. Others took in a tour of such area distilleries as Woodford Reserve and Buffalo Trace.

Everything was centered at the Embassy Suites Hotel, a pleasant spot with excellent service and comfortable two-room suites conducive to the room trading that characterizes these gatherings. And the trading was brisk, golf clubs seeming to be the most popular items, though books and a lot of general miscellanea found new owners.

Playing golf and celebrating its history

The USGA got us off to a strong start with a presentation from two of its best and brightest – Stacy Shiff, USGA Librarian, and Victoria Nenno, Senior Historian for the USGA, delivered a well organized, informative look into some of the history of golf in Kentucky as well as a hint of things to come at the new World Golf Hall of Fame and USGA Experience, both to open in Pinehurst, N.C., in 2024.

The applause had hardly died away before golfers in the audience were heading for their cars and the city-owned Picadome Golf Course (par 72), now named for local golf legend Gay Brewer. Hickories, classics or modern steel, it really didn't matter. Iowa's Kirk Watson took the championship, shooting a gross score 79.

An evening of golfing memories

Following golf, a reception in the spacious ballroom/lobby of the Lexington Country Club treated guests to drinks, hors d'oeuvres, and brief talks from Bob Boring, a friend and former caddie of Gay Brewer; author Beverly Bell, whose book on Marion Miley, a Lexington golf star, was a runner-up for the prestigious USGA Herbert Warren Wind Award; and Stewart Bendelow, whose famous grandfather, Tom, designed and built so many golf courses around the country.

Each GHS national convention presents educational sessions of interest to collectors and historians. For 2023, the



TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS Walter Prince, left, and Philip Truett took a moment to share stories and catch up on their long friendship.

organizers cooked up three winners beginning with a history of the driver, chaired by Bobby Grace; advice on preserving club history and archives from David Moore and John Capers III; and a fascinating look into the world of evaluating golf cards, tickets and photographs from Curtis Loop, a VP of business operations with Golden Age Auctions.

GHS national conventions customarily follow such a day of knowledge with an evening of celebration. For 2023, the night's banquet was marked with the installation of our new president, Bill Robertson, and the induction of five new GHS Hall of Fame members – John Capers III, John Fischer III, Col. Dick Johns, Mel Lucas Jr., and Philip Truett. Bob Georgiade was presented with the 2023 Harris-Wolke Award for his generosity in sharing his expertise in collectible golf clubs. Beverly Bell was presented with the Society's Golden Quill Award for her Winter 2022 article “Promising Futures...Tragic Endings” about the untimely deaths of three of golf's young female stars.

Keynote speaker Bob Boring provided a rich look into his time with former PGA pro Gay Brewer as his caddie (1987), clubmaker and friend. Tour caddies have great stories to tell, and Boring was quite up to the mark with a fascinating repertoire of stories that could have gone on much longer.

The weekend's Trade Show was strong as ever with brilliant examples of everything from clubs, balls and books, to the engaging “smalls” such as jewelry, ceramics, statues and whatnot that so fill out our many collections.

GHS national convention organizers seem to be in a competition to outdo one another as the events are steadily improving. The quality of the presentations is brilliant, accommodations are comfortable, and the nearby attractions for guests are numerous and memorable.

The 2024 convention is scheduled for Oct.16-19 in Pinehurst, N.C., where the new World Golf Hall of Fame is opening in association with the USGA Experience, a facility designed to bring golf and golf history to life. This will be one to mark on the calendar. It is already marked on mine. 🏌️



LEXINGTON 2023: Clockwise from top left: Bob Boring (left) with Spike Abernethy; GHS registration team, l to r, Mary Bernacki, Terri Petrucelli, Janet Mirt and Teresa Smith; past GHS presidents Bill Reed, left, and Roger Hill; golf club historian/archivists John Capers III, left, and David Moore; incoming GHS president Bill Robertson and his wife, Kathleen, with immediate past president Bern Bernacki and his wife, Mary; the golfers at the Picadome Golf Club; Harris-Wolke Award recipient Bob Georgiade, left, with Jim Jeselnick; USGA representatives Stacy Schiff, left, and Victoria Nenno; Col. Dick Johns, right, with special guest First Sgt. Terence Francis; Hall of Fame inductees, from left – John Capers III, Philip Truett and Col. Dick Johns; author Beverly Bell with a Bob Fletcher painting of Gay Brewer and Marion Miley; and presenter Bobby Grace.