



The Carbiner

"For sport and for good fellowship"



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CARBINE CLUB

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Carbine Club of PNG -30th Anniversary

Carbine Club Classics – "A Hard Act To Follow" ~ by Harry Gordon

Carbine Club of SA – Son of France: A Tale of the Turf ~ by Eric Granger

Carbine Club of Hong Kong – Derek Currie: Member Story ~ by Andrew Gerrard

Congress Flashback -2008 ~ by Robin Flannery

The Carbiner is also available on the Club website at www.thecarbineclub.org

The Carbine Club of PNG recently celebrated their 30th Anniversary.

Known throughout our fraternity as "The Travelling Club" – amongst other descriptive and well earned titles, CCPNG is 30 years old in the next edition we will bring some tales from PNG, there's plenty of them!



30th Annual General Meeting - Friday 28th of February 2020

Back Row: Kevin Zimmerman - Gary Haslam - Ben Frame - Stan Joyce CSM - Dan Cassel - Brent St Hill - Mick Nades MBE - Brett Andrew - Derek Hunter - Bill Frizzell - Bruce Telfer - Mark Gibbons

Front Rows: Sundar Ramamuthy - Reg Monagi - Craig Burrows - Andrew Potter MBE - Greg Rudani - Len Pianta - Michael Harrison - Tony Westaway - Bob O'Dea - George Lifu - John Robinson
Peter Lowing CBE - Troy Stubbings - Matt Cooper - Michael Taylor - Dave Wenham - Robert Mordacz - Sir Ramon Thurecht



Tales of the Turf - Son of France

Every one of us would like to own that life changing champion racehorse – some of our well known members have certainly had great success, and it is also good to see Club Member Adam Sangster's breeding operation kicking some big goals lately.

Now who wouldn't like to have a horse that won 27 races? CCSA Committeeman Eric Granger (pictured) recalls how his father's horse, Son of France did just that in the 1950s- here's the story submitted by Eric:

My father George Keith Granger, known as Keith or GK, was Melbourne's leading wedding and social photographer (as Granger of Toorak) from the 1950's until his retirement in the 1980's. Father to six, he still found time for his other passion, horse racing. In 1954 he bought his first horse which was to be trained by Maurie Willmot at the old Epsom racecourse at Mordiallioc, Victoria.

The horse was Son of France, which went on to win 27 races, mainly of country racetracks. So it was indeed a fortunate start to his owner's career, never to be repeated unfortunately. Son of France loved heavy tracks, so the old expression was "spit on the track and he will grow an extra leg" was certainly pertinent in his case.

In 1957, Son of France earnt the right to race at Flemington in the Provincial Plate on the Saturday of the June Queens Birthday long weekend. Provincial Plate entry was restricted to winners in the previous year at Victorian country race tracks who had not won in the city during that time. Son of France won easily on a heavy track and pulled up so well, they decided to race him in the Lancaster Handicap on the Monday of the same weekend. He came out and won by over 12 lengths against a quality field.

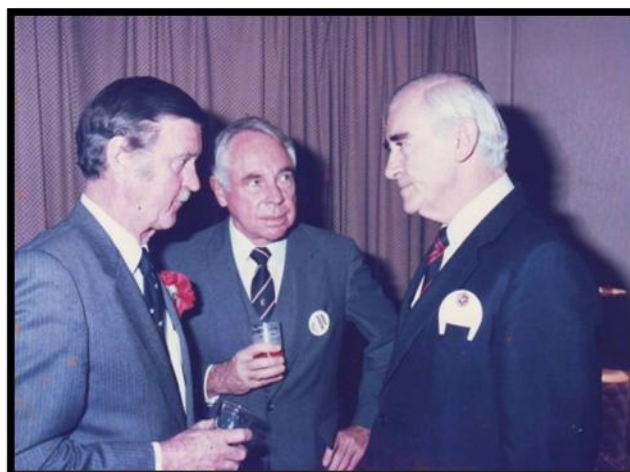
I can't imagine that there are too many horses that have won twice in the same weekend at Flemington and not many won by 12 lengths. Son of France was weighted out of his class after that and rarely won again but dad had a big win on the weekend with which he bought a new car to transport his six kids (without seat belts or car seats). The Lancaster photo had pride of place on dad's wall until his passing in the 1995.

Our thanks to Eric for that yarn – Eric is a long term member of CCSA and serves on the committee of the Club. He played lacrosse at state and international level for 30 years and then coached for another 10 years including SA state teams.

His father GK, proud owner of Son of France, turned out for Hawthorn in the VFL in a career interrupted by service where he flew with air reconnaissance out of Darwin during WW11; Eric carried on the military tradition in the family, serving in South Vietnam.

Continuing our series of lifts from the 2001 publication "Carbine Club Classics" which was drawn together by Robin Flannery, for this edition we have selected a story written by the inimitable Harry Gordon

Harry Gordon, centre, with Jim Killen(l) and Billie Snedden



A HARD ACT TO FOLLOW - By Harry Gordon

It was early 1980, and Trevor Craddock had a problem. He was secretary of the Carbine Club – a post he filled with comfortable zeal from 1974 until 1984 – and was plotting the year's lunches for the coming year. The Derby Eve luncheon of 1979 had been a huge success, with a couple of five-star speakers: Sir Zelman Cowen, the nation's Governor-General, had proposed the toast to racing, and the Aga Khan had responded.

It was a hard act to follow. And that was Trevor's problem. How to ensure that the 1980 Derby Eve luncheon didn't sound like a bit of anti-climax? He telephoned me one day in Brisbane, where I'd recently taken up the job of editor-in-chief of Queensland Newspapers, and said: "You know Jim Killen, don't you? How'd you reckon he'd go as our speaker?"

Indeed I did know Jim Killen, who would become Sir James a couple of years later. He was Minister for Defence, and in that capacity had recently launched a book I'd written on the Japanese prison escape at Cowra. We were mates, and lunched together often. And speak? He could deliver an oration the way Nick Riewoldt can play a game of football, with grace and style and clout.

"I reckon he'd be great," I told Trevor, who then asked me to sound Jim out. At a subsequent lunch at Brisbane's Tatts Club we established that Jim would love to propose the toast to racing. He knew the Carbine Club, had attended lunches as my guest. He was a barrister as well as a politician, and he loved horse-racing. He owned and part-owned many horses, most notably Wellington Road.

Okay, that was settled. What about the response? I suggested to Trevor that Bob Hawke might make the second half of a decent double act. Would I try him? Trevor asked. Again I enjoyed a good friendship with the man. And he was another politician with great affection for the racing game; he also shared ownership in horses. One of his, Belle Du Jour, would later win a Golden Slipper.

Earlier that year, at my request, Bob had launched a book I'd helped to edit, *The Great Australian Annual*. Some years later, when he was Prime Minister, he paid me the courtesy of launching my history of the Hawthorn Football Club, *The Hard Way*. He even visited the Hawthorn dressing-room with me on the day the Hawks won the '89 premiership. He loved sport, and good fellowship.

It was while we were driving from a Bernborough Club luncheon to the Brisbane airport that Hawke agreed to make the second speech of the Derby Day luncheon of 1980. As in the case of Killen, Trevor put the invitation into writing.

And the lunch? It turned out to be one of the great ones. Killen ignited it as he talked about parliament and racecourses, and the colourful people who inhabit those regions. One of his scores of anecdotes concerned a jockey he represented at an appeal hearing against a charge of reckless riding. It was alleged that the jockey had forced a run on the inside of other horses, where there was insufficient room to do so.

The jockey, in briefing Killen, declared vehemently that he wasn't guilty ... that it needed to be made clear to the appeal body that he believed he had ample room to take the run "bearing in mind that his mount was a very skinny horse". The appeal body was not persuaded by this, well, slim argument.

Trevor Craddock was sitting beside Bob Hawke at the official table while Killen wheeled out a procession of such stories. Possibly thinking the occasion might have been more solemn, the future prime minister had brought along a prepared speech.

As Killen warmed up, though, Craddock watched Hawke proceed to take the speech from his pocket and tear it up. Using either the back of an envelope or a table napkin – Trevor can't remember which – Hawke began to jot down a series of pinpoint notes.

When his turn came he matched Killen anecdote for anecdote, joke for joke, colourful character for colourful character. Like Killen, he was at the top of his form. Afterwards, having listened to the reminiscences and observations of these two profoundly eloquent men from opposite sides of politics, the effect was something like having watched a Wimbledon final, or a world championship fight. We felt privileged, because we knew we'd shared something great.

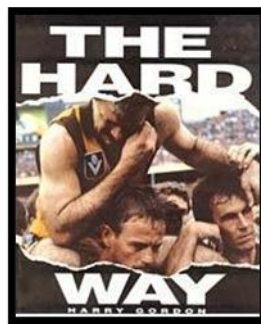
A hard act to follow had been followed by just such another.



Jim Killen



Bob Hawke



Cover: The Hard Way



Trevor Craddock

Carbine Club of Hong Kong

Hong Kong has long been a favourite destination for travelers and the sporting delights such as the international races and the rugby 7s are on so many bucket lists .. CCHK member Andrew Gerrard has reminded us of the importance of football (to most), soccer (to us Aussies) in the golden years of football in HK with the following story on another CCHK member, Derek Currie who is a Special Overseas Member of the Club:

When Jesus Came to Hong Kong: The Derek Currie Story

Derek Currie became one of the first European professional footballers ever in Asia, and became an icon of the game's golden age in Hong Kong. He arrived in September, 1970 from Glasgow accompanied by fellow Scotsmen Water Gerrard (a former CCHK member) and Jack Trainer with the trio proving hugely successful and popular in the then colony. Such were the crowds that turned out to see them one commentator made the famous remark that the crowd was so tightly packed they had to clap up and down, not sideways!

Currie was also the first overseas professional to win the top goal scoring award in 1972 in Hong Kong and in 1978. He became the first professional to play for the Hong Kong National side and in the Asian Cup qualifying in Bangkok in 1979 by scoring against Sri Lanka, Currie was the first overseas professional to score in an International for the Hong Kong National side. During a three-month spell in San Antonio for the San Antonio Thunder in the NASL, Currie scored the official first goal in the Bicentennial League against St. Louis All-Stars; He scored both goals in their 2-1 win at the Alamo Stadium. Currie retired in 1982, playing his final farewell game against German side, VfB Stuttgart in Hong Kong.

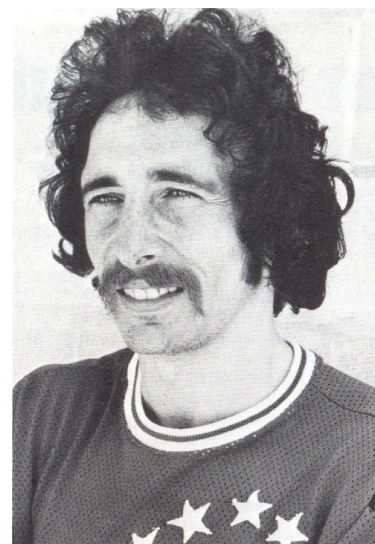
He had spells with the Rangers and Seiko teams in HK, along with the fellow Scots, and he won league titles and trophies aplenty. He also rubbed shoulders with some of the world's best sportsmen and even pop stars, including Pele, Marvelous Marvin Hagler, Rod Stewart, George Best, Billy Connolly and many more.

After football Currie wrote a football column for The Star newspaper and went on to become public relations manager for brewing giant Carlsberg.

And the Jesus tag? This photo of a young Derek Currie shows why the fans gave him that moniker!

Our thanks to CCHK Member Andrew Gerrard for that insight into football history in Hong Kong.

Andrew's father Walter Gerrard was one of the three professional footballers who came to HK in the 70's and he was an early member of the Carbine Club. Walter was known by his Chinese fans as 'Water Buffalo' or just simply 'Big Man'. Andrew continued the family tradition after his father passed in 2014 and has been involved with the Club since then.



Andrew is a keen lawn bowler and as a youth he represented Hong Kong at schoolboy rugby.



(Walter Gerrard & wife Barbara – photo SCMP)

Congress Flashback – 2008

Former editor of The Carbiner and a long standing and always active member of the Club Robin Flannery – pictured right -shares a flashback to the 2008 Congress held in NSW/ACT:



"During the NSW/ACT hosted Carbine Club Congress in March 2008, then Sydney Swans coach Paul Roos was Guest of Honour at the welcome dinner in Sydney and had everyone declare his/her AFL 'true colours'

The first AFL match in the United Arab Emirates had just been played in February between the Adelaide Crows and Collingwood Magpies. It was an official NAB Cup match, attracted a sell-out crowd of 6,102, and saw the Crows run away with the game 136 to 55.

It knocked Collingwood out of the NAB Cup.

Paul expressed his delight at that and called for the 'Collingwood wankers' to stand. I did – proudly – and reminded Paul that despite their NAB demise, my beloved 'Pies' were still second on the Middle East AFL ladder.

Never to be outdone, Crows fan Wolf Blass jumped up and exclaimed on that criterion his homeland could claim it came second on the Western Front. Twice!

Closing the session, congress chairman Allen Aylett welcomed the banter and declared it a classic example of the underlying congress theme: fun and friendship.

At the same congress, delegates unanimously endorsed a proposal by The Carbine Club that Wolf Blass AM be designated Carbine Club Ambassador-at-Large "for service to the development and benefaction of clubs, and his untiring promotion of good fellowship among members".



Wolf Blass



Paul Roos



*Trevor Craddock, Rod Johnson and Ian "Octa" Wilson
with Allen Aylett*