

Scottish Archery – History

Check out our history of where it all started and the path that lead us here to the present day.

A thank you to Ray Masson who put this together and to both Murray Elliot and Muriel Kirkwood who shared this for our current website.

You can check out Archery GB's history of archery section which explains to the origins of archery in the UK - Uncovering the roots of British archers. The bow and arrow have woven their way through British history for thousands of years.

The history of archery societies includes some interesting examples dating back to the end of the 15th century. The Ancient Society of Kilwinning Archers was formed in 1483, following the monarch's directive to ready for combat.

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LOOKING BACK - Part 1

Having laid my hands on the original SAA minutes book, and after having read through a fair bit of it, it occurred to me that it might also prove of interest to current day SAA members to learn how SAA came into being and just what changes and progress have been made during the years since the formation of the Association as we know it today.

It seems that in the latter half of the 1940's there were a number of archery clubs operating in Scotland, purely on an individual basis. As a result of a meeting at the Kelvin Hall (Glasgow) Exhibition of 1947 between two members of the Troon club and a representative of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, the possibility of setting up a National body for the development of Archery in Scotland was explored, culminating in a meeting of members of the various clubs in existence at that time.

This inaugural meeting took place in Edinburgh on 15th January 1949 under the chairmanship of a Mr. Dand of the Scottish Education Department. After some lengthy discussion the Chairman summed up the feelings of the meeting, saying that two points had arisen, (1) whether a Scottish branch of GNAS should be formed or (2) whether a Scottish Archery Association should be formed. After further discussion, during which letters from the GNAS secretary were read indicating that they (GNAS) did not feel it would be advisable to set up a Scottish branch, nor that any real benefits would be gained by affiliation of the Scottish clubs to GNAS, the meeting unanimously agreed that a Scottish Archery Association should be formed. An interim committee was formed and the meeting then considered points in a draft constitution which had been drawn up by the Troon club in conjunction with the CCPR. After some debate the objects on which the development of the Association should be based were agreed. The clubs present at that inaugural meeting were : Burntisland A.C. : Dundee A.C. : Edinburgh Ladies A.C. : Ettrick Bowmen : Glasgow Archers : Kilwinning Society of Archers : Royal Co. of Archers : Troon A.C.

The first meeting of SAA as such took place on 19th March 1949 in Edinburgh in the CCPR offices. The meeting was mainly concerned with the draft constitution and rules. One point of interest to emerge came in a letter from GNAS stating that their AGM had decided, to conform with other Nations customs, that in future all archery rounds in England would be shot one way only. Up to that time shooting had taken place in two directions, archers shooting at targets, retrieving their arrows, then shooting them back at targets at the end from which they had shot the previous ones. SAA agreed that they too would adopt the one way shooting system, except for clout. The meeting was concluded with the election of the first SAA Executive Committee consisting of a President, Secretary, Treasurer and two ordinary members.

Four further meetings were held in 1949 at which the following were the main points of interest. A letter to the Scottish Education Department applying for a grant in due course produced an offer of £75 to help get the SAA on a sound financial footing. The grant was used to purchase bows (£29), target bosses (£31.10/-) and a file for

the secretary (£12). A proposal was put forward to hold a Scottish Championships, and to use the Edinburgh Open shoot for this purpose. The rounds agreed were a York for men and an American for ladies. Entry fee to be 5/- for SAA members and 10/- for others. It transpired that problems arose and it was eventually agreed that The Ladies Championships would be the Edinburgh Open and the Gents would be in Glasgow at a later date. As difficulties in getting any sponsors to provide trophies also arose, it was agreed to give each of the winners a bow and each of the runners up a set of six arrows. It was also agreed to give a plaque to the first Scottish Lady and Gent, 'Scottish' being defined as by birth. Subject to enquiries of H.M Customs and Excise, it was agreed to admit spectators on payment of gate money. After further problems with the Edinburgh Open, both the Ladies and Gents Championships took place in Glasgow in September 1949, but though a report of the Championships appears in the minutes of the November meeting, no mention is made of the winners.

The first meeting of 1950, in February, shows an offer from Slazenger to supply a silver arrow trophy for the Scottish Championships. It was agreed to accept this generous offer, but to see if they would consider awarding one for both Ladies and Gents. The date of the first AGM of the Association was also agreed, fixed for Saturday 28th March 1950 and to be held in Edinburgh.

The minutes of that first AGM show that there were seven clubs affiliated to SAA, each club paying an affiliation fee of £1.1/- and the accounts showed an income of £19 and an expenditure of £13.1/-, leaving a balance of £5.19/-, minuted as being very satisfactory. The first President, Mr. George Hamilton, stated that this first year had been extremely difficult for the committee, with little progress being seen in the first half of the year but encouraging signs showing in the last six months. Perhaps the problems of that first committee can best be summed up by the following quotes from Mr. Hamilton's report .

“The first Annual General Meeting of any new organisation is always something of an event in the history of that particular body, because the committee are looking back on a year of adventure with something like exhaustion, wishing wholeheartedly that they had never been elected to office, while the rest of the meeting are looking forward to the massacre of the laziest committee ever heard of.“

“ We forged ahead, bursting with inexperience, organised a Scottish Open Championships and Edinburgh shoot, and retired smarting from blows and also public, and private, abuse. “

The minutes of the AGM also report that SAA had received a letter from GNAS recognising SAA as the official body for archery in Scotland, and there appears as well the first mention of the need to set up a scheme of coaching in SAA. The new Executive Council was then elected to office, there now being a sixth member in the post of Match Secretary. For the record, there was an attendance of just ten at the meeting, representing five of the affiliated clubs.

LOOKING BACK - Part 2

During 1950 the question of setting up a coaching scheme was discussed at several of the meetings but the differing ideas left the committee no further forward at the end of the year than it had been initially. Finance was also a great problem for the Association in these early years, as the following extract from the minutes of one 1950 meeting put it. “ The Treasurer was not able to give a clear picture of the financial position owing to the temporary misplacement of the bank and account books, but was able to convince the meeting that the Association was in debt. “

Also at the end of 1950, with the question of joining GNAS still not resolved, it was suggested that SAA should apply for membership of FITA, but this was left for future consideration as the committee could not make up its mind which course of action to follow. Late 1950 also saw the first mention of International matches with the receipt of a letter from Northern Ireland asking for a match between the two countries. SAA asked in a return letter for further information, and in February 1951 when no reply had been forthcoming, a further letter was sent. This February meeting also had a lengthy discussion on whether to allow the use of bowsights, but was completely divided on the matter and decided to refer it to the AGM.

The second AGM took place on 24th March 1951, when new clubs were reported at Ayr, Annandale and Edinburgh (Gents). Mention was also made of the receipt of two Silver Arrows from Slazenger for the Scottish Championships. The first flight championships were also reported to have been held, and the proposal to allow bowsights to be used was defeated by 6 votes to 4.

In 1951 came the first mention of an agreement to form SAA into three Areas, East, North and West. The coaching question had apparently been resolved as a list of ten coaches was drawn up and from these two panels of examiners were named to test new candidates in the East and West. The proposed International match with Northern Ireland had been arranged for the end of June and was held in Belfast. The team was comprised of five Gents plus a non-shooting reserve. The round to be shot was a York. Official team dress was decided upon as blue sweater, white trousers and white cap. The crossing to Northern Ireland by boat was apparently pretty rough and after the 100 yds, Scotland trailed by 147 points. A report of this first ever International match held in the United Kingdom was printed in the August/September issue of the British Archer magazine (a forerunner of today's Archery U.K.).

It states that although Northern Ireland led at the halfway stage, the first couple of dozen after the break saw the scores virtually level. Scotland soon went ahead and remained in the lead until the end when the final totals were Scotland 2096 and Northern Ireland 1875. (Those of you able to put two and two together will realise that these scores meant that the 5 Scottish archers averaged about 420 each for the York round. To put this into context one has to remember that they would probably have been shooting with steel bows and had no bowsights. The British archer report also mentions that the Northern Ireland captain, their best shot, had some difficulty with his equipment, breaking four bowstrings in fairly rapid succession).

The team representing Scotland in the match were named as Mr. G. Hamilton, Mr. B. Douthwaite, Mr. W. Douthwaite, Mr. R. Campbell and Mr. G. Penman. (The same Mr. G. Penman is still shooting and has been at the Skye shoot for a number of years). Also in 1951 there is mention of a visit by the Royal Co. of Archers to Kilwinning where they had a shoot using the ancient 9 inch targets at 30 yards. They also apparently returned the Ancient Trophy to its rightful owners.

The question of membership of FITA had resurfaced and after a letter enquiring about this possibility, FITA had replied stating that SAA could not join as GNAS were recognised as the governing body for archery in the United Kingdom. It was also reported that the conditions set by GNAS at that time for SAA to join them were not acceptable, though it makes no mention of what these conditions were. In August 1951 there is mention of the Western Area now being a functioning unit, and asking for a rebate of 10/- from the affiliation fees of each club in the Area to defray expenses. As SAA had no funds as such, this was refused. The first West Championships were held in September 1951 with over 30 archers competing, after which tea was taken at a local hotel, followed by the area AGM. There is in addition a report of a successful shoot taking place at Dundee where the surprise was the triumph of a Lady over all the Gentlemen in winning the trophy, presumably all shooting the same round.

The first meeting of the East clubs late in 1951 was poorly attended and no decisions were taken. The SAA committee agreed to have commemorative medals struck for the members of the team who took part in the International match with Northern Ireland.

A letter was sent from the Scottish Archery Association to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II offering condolences on the death of her father, King George VI.

In 1952 letters were still going back and forth to GNAS regarding a possible meeting of the two to discuss differences between them, though little progress was being made. A letter was received from the secretary of FITA saying he was coming over to Scotland for a visit and would hope to meet the SAA officials. A new British record for the Hereford round was set by a Mrs. Hartley of the Burntisland club with a score of 808.

At the third AGM in March 1952, more new clubs were reported in Berwick, Gorebridge, Cowdenbeath, Perth, Kilmarnock and Airdrie. A total of eight shoots had been held during the season, and the Western Area had organised a postal league during the summer months which had been won by Kilwinning. A further proposal that bowsights should be permitted was again defeated, this time by 16 votes to 2. A proposal that binoculars be

prohibited by both 'archers' and 'spotters' was also defeated, though it was agreed that only archers should use them. A proposal that SAA should affiliate to GNAS was also defeated.

The committee proposed that affiliation fees be increased to £2.2/- per club but this was amended to a fee of 2/6d per club member, which was carried. The accounts for the year showed an income of £175.14/1d, including a grant from the Education department of £125.3/7d, with expenses of £83.9/10d, these figures representing almost ten times those of the first years accounts. The secretary, in his report, defined the Executive Committee as a group of widely differing personalities, ranging from 'mulish stubbornness' to 'extreme forbearance', despite which the year's work had been successfully dealt with. (seems nothing changes !)

LOOKING BACK - Part 3

The first meeting after the 1952 AGM reported on the formation of an Area Committee by the clubs in the East, who arranged to meet twice a year, in April and September. The inaugural Eastern Area Championships were arranged for Dundee on 31 August, and the round to be shot was a Western. The club at Stranraer had now affiliated and there was a report of a club being started in Arbroath. The two Slazenger Arrow Trophies which had been donated were to be presented for the first time at the Scottish Championships to the 'Open' winners. The second annual International match against Ulster was arranged for September 13. A flight Championships was arranged to be held at Troon. The secretary submitted an expenditure estimate of £101.8/- to the Education Department, which led to a grant of £66 being approved in due course.

An administrative error at the CCPR offices (Central Council for Physical Recreation) resulted in the 1952 AGM business being sent to the British Archer magazine and being published in same. This resulted in an objection from one of the Committee members, Mr. McDougall, about items relative to Scottish affairs being discussed in the magazine. The secretary said he felt no great harm had been done, in fact he felt it reflected to SAA's credit. Mr. McDougall also raised the point made by members of some of the clubs in his (East) Area that "thumbnail sketches" of Committee members made by the secretary at the AGM were in bad taste. No one on the Committee agreed. One member of the Committee said she regretted the apparent lack of a 'sense of humour'.

The first winners of the 'Open' Slazenger Silver Arrows at the Scottish Championships were shown as a Miss M. Sutherland and a Mr. G. Rice. The teams for the International with Ulster were announced and there was to be a Ladies team included for the first time in this year's match.

The March '53 AGM passed without much happening, a few changes to the Constitution and Rules being approved, also the adoption of 'Score and Record' sheets for all archers was agreed, and these were ordered. Clubs would send their members cards in to the Match Secretary once a month, who would record all the scores and return them to the clubs.

The Scottish team had again been successful in defeating Ulster in the International between the countries, though no scores are recorded. Team dress for future matches was discussed and agreed as white skirt and blouse with royal blue cap for ladies and white trousers and shirt with royal blue cap for gentlemen. It was also agreed to look into the possibility of flying to Belfast for next years match.

A planned visit of Her Majesty the Queen to an Edinburgh Sports meeting to be held in June led to the organisers offering a site for archery in Hunter's Bog, the valley between Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. Miss Gillespie reported she had visited the site and had found it to be rough and unsuitable, as a result of which the invitation to take part was declined. It subsequently transpired that the area of ground shown to Miss Gillespie was in fact not the correct site. It was now proposed to use the Royal High school playing fields for the archery event. The President and Treasurer had visited that ground prior to the meeting and found it suitable. As a result, the decision not to take part was rescinded, shooting an Albion round with a 3 pm start.

A match between the East and West Areas (presumably the first since the East Area was only formed a short time previously) was organised for July at the Edinburgh club ground. At a later meeting the Edinburgh club reported that their ground was not large enough to accommodate six targets, nor were there any dressing room

facilities, and it was proposed to see if Burntisland could host the event. As the Burntisland club were already organising a long distance shoot in August, 12 dozen at 100 yds for men and 12 dozen at 80 yds for women (can't see that proving very popular with too many archers in 2004), it was agreed that if they also declined, the Area match would be run as a postal, though even that was reported later not to have taken place.

The Education Department grant of £61.14/- was received (the balance of the promised £66 grant, was received at a later date), and a letter approving the next year's grant of £80 was received. A letter was received from Messrs. Lillywhite (sports equipment suppliers) proposing to put out a fixture diary throughout Scotland, and offering to include archery events if the Association wished. This offer was accepted, the Match Secretary being asked to notify them of the relevant events. The third International with Ulster was scheduled for August 1953, and travel had been arranged by plane from Renfrew Airport (the predecessor to today's Glasgow Airport), at a cost of £67.10/-, with £20 being made available from the Association's funds, and the balance made up by the team paying £3.10/- each. Ulster had sent a letter requesting a change of team format from the five ladies and five gentlemen of the previous year to three ladies and six gentlemen, as they were having difficulty raising a Ladies team. In their response, SAA asked Ulster to make every effort to field a Ladies team, though subsequently it was agreed that for this one year only, it would revert to a match between the two mens teams. Scotland maintained their record of having won all of the previous matches by winning by 2,335 points to 2,236.

The committee received an approach from Bangour Hospital with a view to starting archery as a means of rehabilitating the patients, and asking if SAA could supply an instructor for the hospital. This was found not to be possible, but it was arranged for someone from the hospital to be given basic instruction in coaching archery at one of the Edinburgh clubs. It was reported at the following meeting of the Committee that Edenhall Hospital in Musselburgh had also been considering the introduction of archery, Tulliallan Police College had an archery club, the National Cash Register Co. had asked if it would be possible to have an archery demonstration, and Anderson Boynes (coal cutting machinemakers) were interested as well. The President, Mr. Hamilton, reported that he was already visiting the Miners Rehabilitation club at Uddington once a week, helping patients doing archery. The Committee welcomed this evidence of the development of the sport, and agreed to give all possible assistance.

In February 1954 a letter was received from the Ulster Archery Association by the President Mr. Hamilton, informing him that the Ulster Association had decided to withdraw the trophy that they had put up and which had been shot for between the two countries at the 1952 and 1953 matches, and asking for his views. In his reply, Mr. Hamilton said the committee regretted the decision to withdraw the trophy but accepted it nevertheless. No mention is made of any reason for the trophy being withdrawn.

There are no minutes recorded in the minute book for the 1954 AGM, though at the following Committee meeting a draft copy was read out and amendments made as required.

An archery section of the Scottish Aviation Social Club at Prestwick Airport joined SAA as an Associate Club, and were having a recreational ground laid out at the Airport. The Committee felt that it might be possible to hold the 1954 International match with Ulster there if this could be agreed with the club. A new club in Alloa had now affiliated, and a possible new club in Kilsyth had been visited and given some elementary instruction by the President.

FITA were again approached by the Association for recognition, and after a meeting with the FITA secretary, Mr. Lars Ekegren, it was again pointed out to us that GNAS were the only body FITA could recognise for archery in the United Kingdom. He did say that he appreciated our point of view, and in fact notified GNAS of his meeting with us, as a result of which a letter was received from GNAS in December 1954 asking if the two bodies could try to resolve their differences. The President replied saying that the situation would be discussed at the next Committee meeting. After general discussion, the opinion of that meeting was summarised thus : 1 - SAA had no wish to lose its identity : 2 - that the grant from the Education Department might possibly cease if we joined GNAS : 3 - in addition to which we would also be liable to pay the GNAS subscriptions and adopt their constitution and rules. The meeting then agreed that they wished to remain as a separate body, but to attempt to ensure that we had some say in the selection of British teams, and to try to persuade GNAS to make their Championships an 'Open' event. This elicited a letter from GNAS inviting SAA to send two members to

the next GNAS Council meeting in February 1955 to discuss the whole matter. This invitation was accepted and the President Mr. Hamilton and a Mr. Munro were appointed as the Association's delegates to the meeting. The basis of their assignment was to ensure that SAA did not lose its own identity as the National Association for Scotland. If this was agreed, they would examine any basis for closer co-operation between the two parties. If not agreed, they were to press for representation in the selection of National teams, and to enquire what arrangements were in place for payment of expenses for members of National teams should SAA have a member of such a team.

Two members of the Dundee club had applied to become SAA coaches. They were asked to attend and sit a special coaching examination, and Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Brown were asked to prepare a suitable list of questions. The possibility that new clubs might be formed in Falkirk, Aberdeen and Montrose was reported. Purchase of 25 80cm target faces and 25 60cm faces was authorised for the sum of £9.7/6d. Clubs could purchase these for 5/- per face. It was also agreed that the SAA financial year should now end on 31 December, this to enable audited accounts to be prepared prior to the annual grant application to the Education Department.

Ray Masson. (2004)

LOOKING BACK - Part 4

The first meeting after the 1952 AGM reported on the formation of an Area Committee by the clubs in the East, who arranged to meet twice a year, in April and September. The inaugural Eastern Area Championships were arranged for Dundee on 31 August, and the round to be shot was a Western. The club at Stranraer had now affiliated and there was a report of a club being started in Arbroath. The two Slazenger Arrow Trophies which had been donated were to be presented for the first time at the Scottish Championships to the 'Open' winners. The second annual International match against Ulster was arranged for September 13. A flight Championships was arranged to be held at Troon. The secretary submitted an expenditure estimate of £101.8/- to the Education Department, which led to a grant of £66 being approved in due course.

In February 1955, the SAA delegation of Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Munro met with the GNAS National Council in London. The correspondence which had already taken place between Mr. Hamilton and the GNAS President, Mr. Henriques, was discussed at length. Mr. Hamilton said he felt that any outstanding difficulties to SAA joining GNAS were national rather than constitutional. SAA also felt that there was too much control from GNAS and that they wished to be an independent Association within GNAS. He also pointed out the anomaly which had allowed a Scottish archer to qualify for a Gold level badge under GNAS rules some two years before he qualified for the Gold level badge with SAA. He added that Scotland now had some archers who were almost of International standard, and that SAA would want them considered for selection of future U.K. teams.

Mr. Hamilton also said that SAA rather resented the claim by GNAS to be the governing body for archery in the whole U.K. but would not make a great issue of it if some measure of co-operation could be evolved between them. At this point, a Mr. Bilson from GNAS intervened to say that Scotland would have its own National Association and would remain autonomous, as was the case with the current GNAS Regions, who were themselves autonomous. Mr. Bilson suggested that perhaps GNAS could appoint a committee to look at rewording their constitution where necessary.

Regarding the inclusion of SAA archers in future U.K. teams, it was agreed that if SAA were to send in scores for archers who they felt might be considered for places in International teams, invitations could be extended to some to attend the selection shoot at Leamington in June, where all competitors would have the opportunity to shoot together under the same conditions and rules. Mr. Hamilton pointed out that until now, the club at Burntisland (the only SAA club at that time affiliated to GNAS) were the only people in Scotland to receive invitations to GNAS shoots, leading to the feeling within SAA that GNAS considered the Burntisland club as 'Scotland'. Mrs. Frith, the organiser of the National team, at this point expressed willingness to in future send invitations to SAA themselves.

The meeting finally agreed to form a sub-committee to consider what changes to the constitution might be required to allow SAA to join and remain an independent body, and to report back to GNAS National Council. This report would be circulated to all GNAS regions and National bodies, as a general meeting would be required to approve any changes deemed necessary. As no report had been received by the next Executive meeting, it was agreed that nothing further could be done at this time.

An enquiry regarding the purchase of large cloth target faces, these having a greater lifespan than paper ones, had been made, but at a cost of 45/- each for a minimum order of 30 faces, it was agreed to take no further action. A part grant of £16 (total grant £30) from the Scottish Education Department for 1955 had been received. A letter from a Mr. Thomson in Aberdeen regarding the possible formation of a club there was received, and the committee agreed to offer him whatever help they could.

At the May meeting, a letter had been received from GNAS inviting SAA to nominate one member to be co-opted by GNAS on to their National Council, but that person would require to be a member of GNAS. This would give the SAA a say in the International teams affairs. SAA felt that this did not resolve the problem regarding their joining as a separate National body, but as a temporary expedient, Mr. Hamilton was authorised to become an Ordinary member of GNAS and to accept the place on National Council.

For the Ulster match that year, it again, as the previous year, looked as though there would not be a Ladies team, as Ulster were again having difficulty in finding Ladies of a suitable level. SAA did however decide to select a Ladies team in case the situation should change before the match in September. They also appear to have nominated a Ladies team for the previous years match, this apparently to allow those who would have shot had there been an Ulster ladies team to be entitled to claim a Scottish team badge and also a year badge. (Seems a strange decision in view of the limited funds they had available at that time, as presumably the badges would not have been cheap, assuming they were wire ones similar to those of the current era). The committee had also agreed at the March '55 AGM to have fixture cards printed, these being obtained by Mr. Hamilton at a cost of 25/- for 300, and were distributed among the Committee for dispersal. It was reported that the East v. West match, which the Glasgow club had been asked to host, could not be held there as the tenure of the club's ground would not permit it.

It was also reported that a letter had been received from a number of pupils who attended Gordonstoun school. It appeared that there was no possibility of archery being made a school sport, and the pupils, who came from England, were looking for somewhere they could shoot. It was agreed that they could be offered, if desired, a chance to shoot during holiday time at either Ayr or Troon, where they could be given some help and instruction.

At the meeting of 7 th August, the team for the Ulster match was selected, but in view of the small number of Scottish ladies who were currently shooting, they decided not to select a Ladies team as they had agreed previously. Travel for the Ulster match had been provisionally arranged by plane (an 8 seater De Havilland Rapide), leaving Prestwick at 8 am and returning about 8 pm the same evening, the flight time being about 1 hour. The cost of the charter was £45, and after some discussion, the committee agreed to take £25 from the International fund to subsidise the cost, the six team members and two officials to pay £2.10/- each, this covering the £45 outlay.

Further to the earlier agreement with GNAS re SAA archers being invited to the trials at Leamington based on scores submitted by SAA, a contribution of £3 was agreed for Mr. D.K.C. Anderson who had received an invitation to attend. The Gents Scottish Championships that year had been won by the South African champion, and in conversation with Mr. Brown the SAA match secretary after the event, it was agreed to have a postal match with South Africa. As many archers as wished could shoot and the best ten scores, either Ladies or Gents, would be used. The round to be shot was, for men, 30 arrows at 80, 60, 50 and 40 yards, and for women, 30 arrows at 60 yards, 60 arrows at 50 and 30 at 40 yards.

The October meeting reported that Mr. Hamilton, who by then had joined GNAS as an Ordinary member, had received an invitation to attend their Council meeting on 12 November, but that he would be unable to attend due to business. It was also reported that Mr. Anderson, who had shot in the selection trials in June, had been lying in 4 th place at the end of the long distance (York round) and had eventually finished in 7 th place. There

had been a scoreboard there throughout the day showing the leading 8 archers, and Mr. Anderson had been on it virtually throughout. At the end of the trial, three archers were selected for the U.K. team, their expenses being paid by GNAS, and the team was completed by a further three archers who would be required to pay their own way. Mr. Anderson was unable to accept an invitation to shoot in the team on these terms. A total of 30 archers had taken part in the shoot. The Ulster match had been a close affair with Scotland eventually winning by just 47 points with Mr. Hamilton scoring 691, only 9 points short of the 'Gold' qualifying score. The original trophy for this annual fixture had been withdrawn by Ulster two years previously, but they were arranging for another trophy to be made available. SAA agreed to meet half the cost.

The archery section of the BP Chemicals plant at Grangemouth had joined SAA as an associate club, and some of their members had attended the shoots at Troon and Glasgow. A Mr. Manchula of the Perth club had passed the examination for admission to the Roll of Coaches, this being duly approved by the committee. It was agreed that coaches on the Roll should only remain there as long as they remained members of SAA. There was also a report that archery had been included among the sports for the 1956 Olympics to be held in Melbourne. The committee also agreed to an approach being made to Rangers F.C. for the use of their ground to hold the Scottish Championships. A later meeting indicated that this had been rejected by the club.

At the first meeting in 1956 in January, it was reported that there was still no progress with regard to SAA joining GNAS. Mr. Hamilton indicated that he proposed to attend the next GNAS council meeting in February. Mr. Brown reported he had received a letter from the GNAS International Team Committee, asking him to submit a list of MB and 1st class archers with a view to some invitations being extended for the selection trials in June, to be held this year at Windsor. There is also mention in the minutes that Mr. Hamilton attended a meeting of the Scottish Council for Physical Recreation in Glasgow on 28th November last, where it was learned that the arrangements for the SCPR to buy the Hills Hotel in Largs had been delayed due to one or two unresolved problems. (This was presumably what we now know as Inverclyde National Recreation Centre). Once these problems had been resolved, the project would continue. No indication was available at that time of likely costs.

Re the previously mentioned postal match with South Africa, the response to this by the Scottish archers had been very poor. The lowest of the ten South African scores was higher than the best Scottish score. SAA badges were sent to the ten South Africans whose scores had counted. A motion for the '56 AGM in March had been received from the Ancient Society of Kilwinning Archers (don't think Mr. Tough was around in these days), proposing 'That the balance sheet and related accounts of the SAA be circulated to affiliated clubs along with the intimation of the AGM'. (No record of the March AGM appears in the minute book so I do not know if this proposal was passed at that time).

At the April meeting, Mr. Hamilton explained why at short notice he had been unable to attend the February Council meeting of GNAS, and he is to take up with GNAS the question of whether they will accept a substitute on occasions when he is unable to attend future meetings. A grant not exceeding £30 had been approved by the Scottish Education Department for 1956. There was still no progress with GNAS re SAA joining. Also agreed was a proposal to include Juniors in the classification scores system, using the same scores as presently required by Ladies. An archer at that time was regarded as a Junior until his 17th birthday.

The October meeting reported still no progress on the GNAS situation, though Mr. Hamilton was able to assure the committee that we now had good liaison with the GNAS International Committee, who recognise that we now have in Scotland, archers of a very high standard, namely Mr. Anderson and a Mrs Reynolds. The West beat the East in the Inter area match, held at Luncarty just north of Perth, as the ground at Scone, where it had been hoped to hold the match, on inspection proved unsuitable. At the Scottish Championships held in Hogarth Park in the north east of Glasgow, Mrs. Reynolds won the Ladies with a Hereford score of 719, while Mr. Anderson won the Gents with a York of 648. The Treasurer reported that the Association had a very satisfactory balance of just over £77. In view of this, the committee agreed to the purchase of a further 4 target bosses.

A meeting of the SCPR was to be held at the end of October, and Mr. Hamilton would be attending. The Hills Hotel project at Largs was the main item for discussion, although it was stated that it would not be ready for occupancy until the end of the summer of '57. Mr. Hamilton suggested it would be of great value to SAA if

we could run a coaching weekend there ourselves for coaches and potential coaches. A suggestion to hold this in April prior to the start of the outdoor season was agreed in principal. Mr. Hamilton was asked to pursue the matter in more detail, including the question of costs.

Ray Masson. (2004)

Author's Note : Right from the start of this short history of the SAA in 1949, we have heard of the ongoing discussions with regard to SAA joining GNAS. We have now reached the end of 1956 and it would appear that SAA is no nearer reaching a resolution to this situation. Seven years have passed, and it will be a further 14 years before eventually SAA joins GNAS in 1970, this largely due to the threat at that time by a number of clubs to break away and form their own Association and join GNAS if SAA didn't, since by then it appeared as if the Executive committee of SAA were no longer convinced that joining GNAS would be of benefit to Scottish archery.