

# The Long Game

**The Official Newsletter of the Golf Society of Australia**

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## **Annual General Meeting— 12 November, 2007**

In his final President's Report, Keith Wood gave a summary of the year's activities. (The full report appears on pp 3-5) He advised of his retirement as President, expressing his appreciation for the support of the Committee and members during his term of office. Treasurer, Ian Rennick reported the healthy state of the finances. There were approximately 50 Committee and members present.

### **Election of Committee and Office Bearers:**

President — Ian Rennick  
Honorary Treasurer — Richard Kirby  
Honorary Secretary — Janet Hibbins  
Committee: Barry Donaldson, Elizabeth Hodgkins, Keith Wood. Committee members continuing and not requiring election are:- Michael Clayton, Daryl Cox, and Noel Terry.

Immediate Past President Anne Court moved a vote of thanks on behalf of the Members, congratulating Keith Wood AM for his excellent leadership and commitment over the last five years.



Incoming President , Ian Rennick

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### **For the Diary:**

**Dinner — Royal Melbourne GC**

**Monday 3 March, 2008**

**Australian Women's Open, Kingston Heath GC  
— 31 Jan - 3 Feb 2008**

The Society will host a tent at the Women's Open, in conjunction with our friends from the Australian Golf Heritage Society in Sydney (Previously Golf Collectors Society of Australia), and with the assistance of Golf Australia.

Displays will feature items of memorabilia relating to women's golf and golfers.

### **Kevin Hartley—interviewed**

Kevin Hartley is one of Australia's finest amateur golfers. In fact, the late Garry Mansfield, a fine writer and scratch player himself, described him as "arguably Australia's best ever amateur golfer" for winning both the Victorian and Australian amateur championships, representing his country four Eisenhower Cups and winning the Ivo Whitton Trophy for scoring averages an unprecedented 13 times.

Known as 'The Dart' for his accuracy on the course, he came to prominence in 1950 when he won Victorian Boys Championship at Medway, his home course. More than half a century later he sat down and reflected on an amazing career in which he played with the greats of his era including Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player. In a wide ranging discussion with Keith Wood, Libby Hodgkins and Brendan Moloney he spoke frankly about playing at the highest level while raising a family and earning a living as an engineer, his involvement in golf course design and some notable run-ins with organizations and individuals.

An edited version of the interview appears on pages 6-11.

## **President's Trophy: Royal Melbourne GC — 20 August, 2007**

9 hole stroke event, four to qualify for match-play. 1950 rules applied and players were limited to 7 clubs.

Qualifiers: Denise Dawson, 34<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, Norie Macleod 34<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, Max Findlay 35<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, Huan Walker 38.

Denise and Norie continued their form, each winning their semi final, Norie proving the steadier in the final.



**Right:** Finalists, Norie Macleod and Denise Dawson

**Left:** Max Findlay and his caddy in the semi final, Havel Rowe



## **Doug Bachli Trophy & AGM: Victoria GC — 12 November, 2007**

**Doug Bachli Trophy** - 18 hole stableford event

**Winner and Men's Medal:** Geoff Cupples, 36 points

**Runner Up:** Paul Fitz, 35 points, on count-back from Frank Greig

**Women's Medal:** Virginia Gorrell, 31 points, on count-back from Paula Gompertz (Runner-Up) and Bernice Davies.

## **Dinner: Commonwealth GC — 3 September, 2007**

### **Guest Speaker: Nicholas Green OAM**

Nick is currently Director - Game and Club Development with Golf Australia, overseeing the growth of participation in all areas of the game, the Rules, handicapping and a new initiative of Golf Australia, the Australian Golf Club and Industry Advisory Service.

Known to Australians as a member of the 'oarsome foursome', and honoured with an Order of Australia Medal in 1993, Nick has dedicated himself to building Australia's sporting profile on an international scale as an Olympic administrator and broadcaster. At the Sydney Olympics he was invited to carry the International Olympic Flag at the Opening Ceremony. He currently holds executive board and director positions with the Australian Olympic Committee and Sport Australia Hall of Fame and is the President of the Victorian Olympic Council.

Nick spoke about various aspects of sport and its relevance in Australian life, as well as some of his Olympic experiences. Using the example of elite sports attracting 80% of the funding available, he posed the question, 'How do we involve everyone?', in playing golf as well as in administration, his view being that everyone needs to be able to contribute ideas, and not just leave it to Golf Australia! Amongst the guests at the Dinner, were representatives of Rowville Secondary College involved in the recent establishment of a student golf program with the assistance of Golf Australia. Nick gave an over-view of this initiative.

After relating some of his Olympic experiences, Nick noted an important parallel between rowing and golf - relating to the number of strokes taken over a given (rowing) course or (golf) round. It is not necessarily the good ones that make the difference, it is the lack of bad ones!!

## President's Report to AGM 2007

It is my pleasing duty to present my report for the year 2007.

Membership has steadily increased, the new Museum Display is nearing completion, country visits have been made by the Club Historian Group. Golf Events and Dinners were well attended. The Long Game and Web Page both have a new image.

To our new members I extend a very warm welcome to you and trust that you will enjoy your membership of a group of dedicated historians, join in the golf events and attend our dinners.

The National Sports Museum at the MCG has agreed to give Golf Australia an exhibition space. Golf competed with several other sports for the right to be represented at this magnificent sporting venue. Our display has three major themes. The evolution of golf clubs, balls and other equipment. Photographs depicting Australia's golfing champions, and major golfing team events. Storey boards explain the items on display and there is a continuously running audio visual screen depicting golfing over the years.

The Long Game continues to be published with the aim of four issues per year. The web page has been upgraded and presented in a new format. It is easy to follow and contains a wealth of information. Past issues of the Long Game are available on the site, club locations are recorded, golf results and feature articles continue. Under consideration is a virtual museum on the web site with photographs and descriptions of the museum items. This is being developed in conjunction with the VGA.

Dinners have been very well attended with guests being entertained by excellent speakers at Royal Melbourne, Victoria and Commonwealth. The December Dinner has been cancelled due to the Australian Open again being played in Sydney in mid December.

Golf events are a major part of the Society's activities. Members participating have enjoyed the traditional Hickory Day at Kingston Heath, the Don Lawrence at Kew, the Presidents Day at Royal Melbourne and today the Doug Bachli Trophy. Congratulations to this years winners.

The Society is very conscious of the difficulties of obtaining opportunities to play on Member Courses. We are most appreciative of the cooperation the Society is receiving for golf events and dinners and we thank the Clubs for their continuing support.

To Golf Australia with whom the Society has a close working relationship, we thank them for their continued support. The Society is the custodian of the Museum Collection and display and is mindful of this obligation to continuously work together towards the ongoing display of all items.

The Club Historians Group is growing in enthusiasm and numbers. It is very pleasing to see new members at each of our meetings. During the year the group visited Ballarat, receiving good support from the District Clubs. A new segment of the meetings is "Show and Tell" with a surprising number of items on show. Meetings are held on a regular basis with all clubs being invited to send representatives. All members are welcome.

During the year the Society has been represented at the 100 year celebration of the Bacchus Marsh Golf Club. The Club started on the Bacchus Marsh Racecourse and is now located on a new course at Bacchus Marsh North.

Queenscliff celebrated 100 years "On the island". The Society contributed to a plaque commemorating their long servicing professional George Lowe. Ian Rennick addressed the gathering on the evolution of golf clubs relating to changes in ball type. Golf with Hickory Clubs was a feature of the day.

Club locations are still being researched with results being published in the Long Game. It is interesting to learn of the various moves clubs have made tending to follow the fringe of residential development.

This year we have continued to interview notable past champions and administrators including Max Eise and Rosemary Wakeham. These interviews will appear in **The Long Game** over the coming issues.

In NSW the Golf Collectors Society of Australia have resolved to change their name to the Australian Golf Heritage Society and accept the

assets of the Australian Golf Heritage Trust, which is being wound up. The new Chairman will be Bruce Nairn.

At 2008 Australian Women's Open being played at Kingston Heath the Society will be represented at a marquee display in the Tent City area, where memorabilia, photos, storey boards will be on display. Members are asked to support the Australian Women's Open. The Society will not be exhibiting at the Australian Open in December.

It is with a great deal of sadness that we record the passing of Hedley Ham and Hartley Mitchell. Hedley worked tirelessly with the History Sub Committee. They will be sadly missed.

The Committee is conscious of the need to keep members informed and to provide opportunities to play golf enjoy dinners and social activities. I feel this has been successfully achieved this year.

My thanks go to all of Committee Members who have worked tirelessly through out the year on the sub committees of the Society. It is our aim to involve more members on these sub committees. A special thank you to Janet Hibbins our secretary and Ian Rennick the treasurer. Thank you Jan, Ian.

To the Members I thank you for your support of the Societies activities and to me personally during my term of office it is very much appreciated.

As you will be aware from the Agenda, I am retiring as President. I have enjoyed my term of office and I trust it has been productive and that the Society will continue to grow and prosper.

My congratulations to Ian Rennick, the incoming President, to whom I offer my full support.

Keith H Wood AM, President

## **From the in-coming President**

As your newly elected President I welcome you to the first Long Game of 2008. The Society is starting the year with a display at the Australian Women's Open at Kingston Heath starting on 31 January. Please call in for a talk, and if you have some spare time we could do with some help.

The social events this year will be similar to the past years events, but an extra trip to the Murray to play with hickories is being planned for April/May.

The opening of a new National Sports Museum at the MCG in March will feature an area for Golf, and it includes many items from the Societies golf collection. Moira Drew has spent many hours with the organisers on the display. If you have the opportunity I am sure it will be worth going to see.

One of the objectives this year is to increase support in the Sub committees already formed. We would be grateful for any volunteers from Members who could assist.

As your President I am looking forward to the year ahead and hope you have a fulfilling year.

Ian Rennick

## **New Members:**

Welcome to new members:

- John Cleave
- Frank Davis
- Philip Francis
- Ian Lynagh
- Faye McPherson
- Gerald McPherson
- June Newton
- Peter Shepard
- Wes Willoughby

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## **Help required for golf history research**

In 2004 a sub-committee was formed to record the history of golf in Australia. During the past four years the study on golf in Victoria up to 1890 has been undertaken but the next phase is now to be taken.

Members interested in joining the History sub-committee are invited to do so by giving their name to Honorary Secretary Janet Hibbins 03 9589 5551 or Committee representative Daryl Cox 03 5987 3497.

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## A view of Europe

Mike Clayton recalls a trip to Europe in 2007 — his first foray into the Seniors Tour— and some side-trips to courses he had not previously played.

One of the great mysteries of modern sport is the senior golf tour. I can well understand that when it started in America in the late seventies people yearned to watch great players like Sam Snead, Roberto de Vicenzo, Tommy Bolt and Peter Thomson but we are more familiar with the best current American players who dominate the tour like Jay Haas and Loren Roberts and their names do not exactly elicit the same emotions as Snead or Palmer, Nicklaus or Trevino.

The European Tour has a smaller version with almost twenty events beginning in Turkey in April and whilst there are a few continental events most are played in Britain.

Sam Torrance and Carl Mason are the most successful players and I was lucky enough to play a few events in the middle of the year. It was a great chance to see old friends and play some golf courses I had missed when I was playing the main tour in the eighties and nineties.

The way of modern professional golf is that venues are chosen for their commercial viability and not their architectural excellence so for me to see the courses I wanted they had to be squeezed in early in the week.

Many of you will have played Royal County Down and it must be one of the most awesome experiences in golf and it is clearly one of the ten or fifteen courses everybody should see sometime in their lives.

It is physically beautiful with the mountains and the sea so close but the dramatic shots you are asked to play make for about as much fun as you can have on a golf course. From the back tees it's frightfully difficult with the big carries across the dunes making it an intimidating place for high markers and it's not really a place where you want to play with a scorecard in your pocket.

The heathlands of south west London are the home to a group of courses to rival and even surpass the sandbelt. I had seen most of the courses but a couple I had missed with The Addington and West Sussex. Both are under 5800 meters with pars under seventy but they are

fabulous courses and unlike Royal County Down eminently playable for the average player. They are cut through forests of pine, birch and heather giving them a beautiful character but the trees are well away from the golf and like all great courses it is the bunkers, the greens and the great variety of holes that make them fun. What both do is achieve the balance of difficulty without great length. Both have only a couple of par fives but the architects made the long threes and fours really difficult holes ensuring there is much to stretch the scratch players as well as the high handicappers.

Swinley Forest, just down the A30 from Sunningdale is a small club that does nothing to advertise its presence and forty players make for a busy day. The great architect Harry Colt called it his 'least bad' course and looking at the 6000 yard scorecard and a par of 69 one would be tempted to dismiss it as a relic. It is far from that.

The five short holes are both great and difficult and it would not be unreasonable to suggest as a group that are one of the finest in the world. The short fours match the quality of our best short holes on the sandbelt like the 3rd and Kingston Heath and the 15th at Victoria and like The Addington and West Sussex the long holes are difficult. A course that asks you to hit every shot in the bag – as opposed to simply every club – is a fine course and Swinley is one well worth the effort.

My other great discovery was Fontainebleau, an old Tom Simpson course just south of Paris. Simpson was a brilliant architect and one of my favourites is his Morfontaine to the north of Paris.

Both are cut through similar pine, birch and heather forests that make for such beautiful golf in London and Simpson was a master at placing bunkers randomly across his course making them a lesson for those who think bunkers should somehow be placed for specific players. Everyone at some point in the round has to deal with Simpson's hazards beginning at the first hole where a line of bunkers are set into a ridge eighty meters in front of the tee.

Paris is one of the most underrated cities in the world for golf with magnificent courses at Morfontaine, Fontainebleau, Chantilly, St Cloud and St Germain and any of you contemplating a trip there should make the effort to organize golf. It is simply magnifiqu – a bit like Sam Snead's golf swing. ●

## **Kevin Hartley interviewed – by Brendan Moloney**

From an interview conducted as part of the GSA Oral History Project:

"My parents (Walter and Emily Elizabeth Broderick) came to Melbourne when I was two or three. They were country people from poor families. That was the way it looked like being until they tried their luck in Melbourne. My father got a job with a builder. From then on, apart from the war, everything was on the up and up. They enjoyed a good life. I have a younger sister, June, who lives in Footscray. My parents were determined that we would have a much better life than they had. To their credit, they achieved that. I have never wanted for anything in my life as a result. They took up golf at Medway after the war, in about 1946. We lived in Yarraville.

"My first recollections of Medway are that it was treeless. I have a photograph with the pro, Leo Horn, who was my teacher. It was taken on the 18th green after I won the 1950 schoolboys championship, looking down that hole and the biggest tree was less than a foot high. That was my first win and it was quite a big deal at the time. I had been playing for about two years. I used to play on a little nine-hole sandscrape course at Spotswood where Westgate is now before I went to Medway.

Both my parents were keen and Dad got down to single figures. I was at Medway until about 1955. In those days it was absolutely essential that you be a member of a Sand Belt club if you were going to make any progress in golf at all. That was the way golf was run. There was a fellow at Footscray who was a member of Yarra who organized me to join there. I won Yarra's club championship in the first or second year there. I remember Hartley Mitchell was there and was a big help to me.

"I went to an absolutely elite engineering school, Footscray Tech. There was only one university. You went to the Footscray Tech, Gordon Institute in Geelong, Ballarat School of Mines, Swinburn or Caulfield or Royal Melbourne (University). I actually went to Royal Melbourne later on and did another course. I am a qualified mechanical engineer and I went back and did another year and became qualified electrically. I was playing golf through all this time. I had to borrow a car to get to Yarra. Before that, getting to Medway for all those years was the way all

kids did it, on a pushbike. Now they get Mum and Dad to drive them or they don't play.

"Then I went overseas. I lived in Canada for about 18 months. I had a look around America and saw some of the golf there. I won one tournament in Canada. I really wanted to go to America but you couldn't get a work visa. You had to have a Green Card. It was interesting because there were currency restrictions in those days. You were allowed to leave Australia with enough money to get back in. I left Australia with 500 pounds which was about six months' wages and I had a job teed up in Canada. I went on the Orion and I was sick before we got out of Sydney Harbour. I went from Melbourne to Sydney by rail, on the maiden trip of the Southern Aurora. I was sick all the way from Sydney to Auckland.

"Vancouver is a lovely place. A pal I went with was a toolmaker and he finished up getting a job in the same organisation I was with, a company called Vivian Diesel and Munitions. They were a mechanical engineering company. It was a good outfit with terrific people. I loved it. I played at a semi-public course, Quilchena, which is no longer there. You could pay your fees by the month. I did win one tournament there and then I took off travelling. I tried to get a job in Toronto with a big company. It was the time that Ford brought out the Edsel car. It did not sell and there were toolmakers and engineers on the streets everywhere, looking for jobs. That was the end of that. I was walking down the street one day and I saw a passage on one of the Oriental Line ships going back to Australia in two months' time. I booked on that and then hopped on a Greyhound Bus and went all around America. I went to a couple of golf tournaments and watched the pros.

"Peter Thomson was over there at the time and he was very good to me. I travelled at night so I could sleep and have a look at the cities or the country during the day. It was a beautiful trip, stopping off here and there. I had my golf clubs with me but I did not see a lot of memorable courses. The one that sticks in my mind was at Hot Springs in Arkansas where I caught up with Thomson. He arranged for Jimmy Demaret to pick me up at the motel each day and take me out to the golf. Jimmy and Dale Douglass and one of the Turnesa brothers were fantastic. They just talked golf all the time, how they played each hole, what went wrong, what was good.

"The great thing about that trip is that Ben Hogan produced his five lessons. This was the way he suggested golf ought to be played. People like Mark O'Meara, Larry Nelson and endless numbers of golfers have adopted that. I still go to the book. In fact, I am going to it more often because I am playing worse and worse.

"In 1957 I entered the Australian Amateur and I remember a conversation between Peter Heard, who I had to play in the first round at Commonwealth, and Hartley Mitchell. I've always remembered this and I mentioned it to Hartley the other day. Peter asked him whether I could play. He said I could play, all right. Peter beat me 6-5 over 18 holes. Next year I won it over in Adelaide. I also won the Riversdale Cup in 1958 and was picked in the state team. That was a good year. In 1959 I made the team that went to South Africa. That was the first national team I was involved in. That was six weeks in different parts of South Africa and playing in the British Commonwealth matches. I flew this time but we flew at sail pace. Remember the old Constellations? They flew at 200 knots. First up we landed in Perth. I think that took a day and a half. The next stop was the Cocos Islands. From Perth to Cocos they flew by the stars until to got within radar distance, about 200 miles. They started to put the plane down at this point and it was like being back on the Orion again. I was as sick as a dog. It was in the middle of the night and 110 degrees. The airport was right alongside the beach so Doug Bachli and I decided to go down to have a paddle. Doug was a good friend and a great bloke to travel with. There was a sign that said to beware of sharp coral, stonefish and all sorts of terrible things. They called us back to the plane in the middle of the night and I got sicker and sicker and sicker. What a terrible flight.

"Peter Toogood was also in the team and Bruce Devlin, with whom I roomed. From memory, we tied for first with the South Africans. They had some good players but none of them went on to be like Ernie Els. Dennis Marshall turned pro but he did not make it. Bobby Cole and Dale Hayes were also in their team. The main matches were at Royal Johannesburg. Each of the six Commonwealth teams were organised to go to the state or provinces to play. We had Durban on the way to the games and the Orange Free State. They were Boers who spoke Afrikaans as their first language. They were terrific people. They took us to the Kruger National Park and looked after us very well. Whether that was their

normal hospitality or just a show because of the Apartheid business, I'll never know, but it was the best six weeks of my life.

"That year (1960) the Amateur was played at Royal Sydney. That was where my life might have changed. Devlin beat me at the 20th hole in the semi-final. On the 19th hole he hit the worst shot you'll ever see. It was on the first into grass three feet deep. There were 200 people there and it took 15 minutes to find his ball. I don't know what circumstances the ball was found in and what circumstances it was in when he hit it. We were playing in New South Wales, don't forget. He managed to get it on the green. I'm 20 yards from the green and the ball was sitting up nicely. I'll never forget it. I only had to hit it close to win and I'd win the final. Anyway, it went 12 feet past the pin and I missed the putt. On the next hole he hit a two iron to a par five to about a foot. Eagle. Out of business. The way it was reported was that he made four and I didn't. He made eagle and I got up and down out of a greenside bunker to make four. Had I won, in retrospect, I might have become a professional. The only amateur who won two years in a row was Jim Ferrier. I might have been persuaded to be a professional, even though I was married, although without children at that stage. The next year I went to Perth and was beaten in the first round. That was a bit of a dull year.

"In some ways I regret not turning pro. Bob Shearer probably summed it up best. He said, 'Do you know why I turned pro, Dart? I didn't want to be like you and never know how good a player I could have been.' That is pretty close to the truth. It would have been nice to find out how good I might have been. I wasn't short of dedication or anything like that. But on the other hand, Jeez, I've had a good life. I had a game in South Africa with Bobby Locke. Bruce (Devlin) putted beautifully that day. Locke told Bruce he should turn pro. To cut a long story short, he (Devlin) was living in Melbourne and working as a plumber for a friend of mine. He was also playing pennant for Commonwealth. Slazengers took him on and paid him 1200 pounds a year. It was less than I was being paid but it was certainly enough to live on. It was in the days when you had to do an apprenticeship (with a professional golfer). Peter Thomson had to do it. The pros had some stupid rules. They took him (Devlin) on and he basically travelled around with the Von, giving exhibitions all over the place.

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## **Kevin Hartley interviewed (cont)**

"About that time, in about 1958 or '59 the Von contacted me and asked if I would like to have a game of golf. I started to use Slazenger equipment, naturally. The Von was terrific with me. I don't think he was trying to point me towards a pro career. He summed the situation up. Without being silly about it, I had something that the others didn't. The difficulty was that I was an engineer with not a lot of interest in engineering so I had to go the management route. That was work that you could not stop. You could not put it in abeyance for five years and start again. I had to be the production superintendent, I had to be this type of engineer. I had to be the next sales manager. I had to do all these things in my career path. It wasn't easy or appropriate to have a try at being a pro and perhaps fail. Then what?

"Bob Shearer said in the VGA Magazine recently that I would have made a terrific pro. The kids at Koorinal read it and have been giving me a hard time. I think it is good because at least they know where I have been.

"The Von is a great fellow. He came down from Sydney and was staying at the Sheraton which was the hotel in those days. He was going to give me a lesson at Albert Park. I was driving an FB Holden and pulled up outside the Sheraton at about 7.00 am. The Von came down, absolutely dapper as he always was. He got into the car with his clubs and it wouldn't start. I had a flat battery. There is the Von, pushing my car down Commercial Road, swearing like a trooper. He never drank but he could swear. We got to Albert Park and were in the rough hitting balls. Down the track comes this truck with two big men in it, navvies from the golf course. 'P... off,' they said. The Von draws himself to his full height of five foot six and says to this big fellow, 'I've been on golf courses all around the world and I've never been thrown off one. You won't be throwing me off this one.' They were eyeing each other off. I said, 'Hang on Norman, I'll go and pick up the balls and we'll get out of here'. When I got back, this big fellow is crying and the Von has his arm around him saying, 'You were only doing what you have to do'. This big bruiser realized who he was. The Von was his golf idol. This was the guy he had admired all his life. I wrote to the Von recently and reminded him about it.

"The best tip I ever got was from (Ossie) Pickworth. He was a scallywag but a real good fellow. He'd win 50 pounds in, say, the Medway pro-am and not take any of it home. He'd buy beer. He was a real man's man. He watched me play one day and he said, 'You know, Kev, when I was playing my best golf I always aimed my ball into the middle of the green and the pin was never far away.' I saw him shoot 63 at Royal Melbourne. I played with him at Victoria GC in real wind and he shot 68, 69. On the (par five) ninth he hit three woods and a seven iron to reach the green. That's how hard the wind was. He could play. When he said that to me, I said to myself there was a message here. From that day on, it was going for the safe spot. It was brilliant. The range of my scores narrowed considerably. That was the best tip of my life.

"I lived alongside Koorinal and my practice time in the winter varied from shortly after daybreak until 7.30 when I had to drive to work. We knocked off at five o'clock and without trying to make it too obvious, I was first out the door. Then I'd be there until dark. In the winter time I might be averaging an hour or so's practice a day in the worst circumstances, in rain and God knows what. That was what I thought I had to do. I wanted to believe that I was the best practised of the people in my class. I went to a lot of trouble with Slazengers to make sure that all my golf clubs were perfect. When I got a new set of clubs I would check them by various means and if they weren't right I would send them back. My practice and preparation were perfect. The other thing I understood, mainly through people I was associating with in the upper level in my company, was personal presentation. I endeavoured to be the best dressed on the golf course. I felt with all this that I deserved to win. That was my crutch. I used to get annoyed when it didn't happen. That was what I thought was necessary.

"Years later I came across a fellow by the name of Dr Dennis Whately. He was a psychologist for the first moon shot. He came out here and gave a series of lectures. All the football coaches went. I was the boss in Victoria at that stage and I decided to go along. We had budgets for executive education and that sort of stuff. He outlined about 10 different things like positive self-awareness. Dale Carnegie continued on with

it. Out of the 10 things, there were four that I was up with. I wish I had known about the other six.

"There was a weakness in the situation that I ultimately became aware of. When I knew I was the best prepared, with the best equipment and the best presented, I knew I was going to be hard to beat. When I knew I was not the best prepared, I was not able to win. That would happen when I ran into players like Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player. I could handle all the local players because they all had a job like me. They were all working in pro shops. The local pros were really amateurs. But against Nicklaus, Player, Ossie Pickworth, I knew I couldn't win. I knew before I started that it could not be done. This was wrong, according to Dennis Whateley.

"My first Ivo Whitton win was in 1960. I have a beautiful photograph of Ivo presenting the cup. He was good. I never saw him play. He was quite a bit older than me. The scoring was interesting. The VGA changed the rules three times just to try to get another winner. I took delight in that because Walter Lindrum was alive when I was a kid and they changed the rules in billiards to try to beat him. I can't remember the exact details with the VGA. It started off the best 25 rounds, or something like that. After I won it a few times they said, 'This is not right, we'll handicap the courses.' It was almost like a travelling circus. Billy Edgar actually organized it. He got most of the clubs in Victoria to put an open event on. Midlands might have been a par 70. When I got home I'd find the course had been handicapped three shots a round by some goose here in Melbourne. He didn't know what the weather was like or what the course was like. A lot of the results you see have handicaps added on. They thought it was still not working so they made it the best 20 rounds. Then they invented a rule that if you didn't complete a round, you got penalized with a score of 86. I can't remember where it was but I started this tournament when I shouldn't have, played nine holes and pulled out. I copped 86. I made a bit of a fuss about it. I told them that the next time I wasn't feeling too good, I wasn't going to Mildura or wherever...It was a sick situation. The averages for that period were not the actual scores that were shot. It is not honest... But it was good for golf. The VGA was encouraging the competitions and it brought a lot of people into the game.

"People think I did not like match play. It is more accurate to say I did not like match play over 18 holes. I was quite happy to play anyone

over 36 holes, in other words, all day. Anyone can get a good start or a bad start and in 18 holes there is no recovery. It is stupid. I have had enormous arguments with officials when I was a player about the way they played the Australian Amateur. I would not play in it. You go out and play 18-hole matches and yet for some unknown reason, the final is over 36. Explain the logic to me. You may say that playing 36 holes from the start will take twice as long to play. There are practical ways to overcome this. You play 36 holes but only have eight qualifiers.

"My best handicap was plus two but I have no idea how long I was on scratch. I was on scratch when I was 18. It would have been more than 20 years. I can't remember how many course records I held, either. I did have a lot at one stage but Billy Dunk had the most. He has course records all over the place.

"Being part of an Eisenhower Cup win was a good thing. We beat the Americans. After we won, 'Sports Illustrated' in America had a story on the fact that we'd won in Mexico. It said an Australian team composed of a nobody, a nondescript, another thing starting with an N and who? This was a great put down. I wrote a letter to 'Sports Illustrated' and gave them a bit of a blast. I said you didn't have to be an Englishman or an American to play this game. The article was later published here in Australia. That was a real put down, quite stupid. I played with Bob Murphy in the last round. On the first tee he tried to get on top by being obnoxious. They weren't all that flash, with the exception of Lanny Wadkins. He was a nice fellow. Another good one was Deane Beman who was later the PGA commissioner. He had an insurance company called Beman and Buffet. Tom Crow and I spent a lot of time with Beman...it comes down to personalities. A lot of people don't like me. You can't help it, can you? It is human nature. There are a lot of people in golf I don't like, I can assure you of that.

"Around 1971 a couple of things happened. I got left out of the Australian team to go to New Zealand. It was absolutely outrageous. There were two selectors who were very anti-me and were waiting for an opportunity. I was named as non-travelling reserve. I was 37 but I still could have beaten any of them. That was really the end of representing Australia. The President of the AGU came out and said I'd had a good innings. What is that supposed to mean? Another thing happened with the state team about that time. I

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## **George Lowe, professional golfer in interesting times**

As part of the celebration of 100 Years of Golf on Swan Island at Queenscliff, the Society contributed to a plaque to commemorate George Lowe Sr, and Ian Rennick presented a short history of 'George Lowe in Scotland':

George Lowe was born in Carmyllie Scotland, North of Dundee in 1856.

George was born at the beginning of the most exciting period of golf development, caused by the development of the "Gutty" golf ball.

Up until this period golf struggled to survive, mainly due to the cost of the golf ball, called a "feathery". A feathery was a ball made with a leather cover, stuffed with feathers and then painted white. It was a very effective ball, but expensive and cost more than a golf club. It could burst open with a miss-hit and when it hit a sharp object, it usually covered the player with feathers. Another fault was that in wet weather it became soggy and was unplayable. The cost of playing golf in this era limited players to the gentry, as it was not uncommon for a player to use several balls in a round.

Around 1848 a Scottish doctor was toying with some gutta percha and formed it into a ball, and the "Gutty" ball was discovered. Gutta Percha was a packing material used when sending breakable goods home from India and Asia. When heated it was pliable, and when it cooled it formed a hard protective layer. When it was discovered that gutta percha could be used as a ball, it meant that the cost of playing golf was within the means of most people. A secondary effect was that it forced the change of golf clubs used. When playing with a feathery, the clubs were wooden headed, but with the harder ball, it meant that the ball damaged the club face. Leather was first used to protect the club face and later bone inlays were used, but near the end of the century iron clubs became popular.

In 1850 there were only 17 Societies or Clubs in existence in the world, but in the next 50 years golf boomed in Scotland and England. These were the years that George Lowe learnt his trade and his career flourished. George must have been caught up with the golf fever, as he lived just north of St Andrews links. He then became an apprentice to Frank Bell at the Barry Links Carnoustie.

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## **Kevin Hartley interviewed (cont)**

was captain. We had eight players in the team and six of them wanted to play No 7. No one wanted to be up the front, copping them hard. I thought, 'What am I doing here?' National selection is gone, I'm playing with a bunch of wimps. At the time about the only people involved in golf course design were a couple of green-keepers and Peter Thomson and Michael Wolveridge.

"I thought it (course design) was an opportunity. I let be known that I would like to be involved and had some capability. Keith Wood and his partner, architect Bob Green, at the time suggested going in with them. In retrospect, that was the second opportunity lost. I chose to try and play good golf as an amateur and develop a career. While golf helped my career, it was also responsible for my career never really developing. I had an opposite number in Sydney who did the same job as me and he finished up as managing

director. If I had not played golf and devoted my attention there, things might have been very different. Having realized that there was a wide open field in the golf course business, I was not prepared to let the other go, for reasons of family commitment. As far as the business Keith and I could have had, I did not do my job as I should have to develop the business to rival Thomson's.

"I have not told anyone this before that I have often thought I was the wrong horse. But on the other hand, Keith had another business that required him to spend time looking after his clients. With my status in golf, I should have really pushed it hard and made a name. Having said that, the business we did have more than achieved my personal financial objectives. I'm not enormously wealthy but I don't want for anything. Had I been more aware of the future, and had more balls, we could have been big. We achieved a lot and I am more than happy about it. As I said before, I can't complain about my life." ●

After 8 years learning his trade, he became assistant professional at Royal Liverpool Golf Club, Hoylake, and in 1890 went to St Anne's on Sea (North of Liverpool). This obviously states he was successful in his career, and in 1905 was appointed professional and greenkeeper of The Old Links Club at the age of 49.

To be a successful professional in this era, you needed to be good at all aspects of golf. This included club making, repairing, coaching and green keeping. George is credited with making more than 25,000 clubs in his career, some of his own design which he patented.

His green keeping experience helped him as a course designer, and he designed 120 courses in England and Europe, five of these being Open Championship courses. Probably the most famous course he designed was Lytham and St Anne's.

George was also a good player, representing Scotland in the first international match against England.

In the years from 1850 to 1890, golf spread throughout Scotland, Ireland, England, and also on to the Continent and then into some of the British Empire countries. It was not until the mid 1890's that it became popular in Australia, New Zealand and America.

George Lowe married in 1885 while living in Liverpool. He had 6 children. His third child, George Jr became a golfer and moved to Australia, where he was the professional at Barwon Heads Golf Club from 1913 to 1915 and 1919 to 1924.

George Senior's decision to come to Australia was made after his wife's death in 1919. His two sons had already moved to Australia, so he decided to follow with his daughter Annie. On the 11 October 1921, George Lowe applied for the position of Professional at Queenscliff, but only stayed for 7 months resigning in May 1922.

In the 50 years that George Lowe was a professional golfer many things changed. In 1850 the featherie ball was still used but was replaced by the Guttery that lasted until 1895. The Haskell ball was then invented by an American, and was the first of the wound elastic balls. The golf clubs in 1850 were all wood-headed with spliced joints between the shaft and head and were heavy with fat wooden shafts. Because of the introduction of the hard Guttery ball the shape and type of clubs changed. The heads of the drivers became shorter and broader with bone



**Above:** George Lowe (1856-1934)  
**Photograph:** Queenscliff Golf Club

inlays to protect the club face. A range of irons were introduced with romantic names of mashie, niblick, and cleek. The early courses were flat sandy ground near the sea that was formed by the wind, sheep and rabbits. By 1920 the courses were sculptured with artificial bunkers, modern Clubhouses and paid Curators to maintain them.

George Lowe lived and worked as a professional golfer through all of these changes. He helped design courses, make clubs and he also coached thousands of people to play golf. On the 23 September 2007, a celebration was held in recognition of 100 years of golf at Swan Island. A plaque was unveiled at Queenscliff Golf Club to recognise his life's achievements.

Ian Rennick

For more on the work of George Lowe and George Lowe Jr, there is a comprehensive article by Alan Jackson, John Scarth and Neil Crafter in **Golf Architecture** No 9.

**AGM & Cocktail Party: Victoria Golf Club — 12 November, 2007**



**Above:** Outgoing President Keith Wood at the AGM  
**Below:** Dick Kirby and Bernice Davies



**Above:** Cliff George with Paula and Peter Gompertz  
**Below:** Ian Rennick, in-coming President



**Above:** Lorraine Clothier

**Right:** Past Presidents Keith Wood, Daryl Cox and Anne Court, with Ian Rennick

