

# THE LONG GAME

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



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## The Matter of Margie Masters

By Karen Harding

*Margie Masters is known as a pioneer of Australian women's professional golf but there's a lot more to her than just that. She speaks about her life in golf to KAREN HARDING.*

With the passing of Peter Thomson, the mantle of oldest Australian golfer to win on the major US tour shifted to Margie Masters. Many might be surprised to learn that, indeed, she herself was expecting it to be Bruce Crampton. The records show that at 86 to Crampton's 85, she has the honour.

Like many of her sporting compatriots who have travelled overseas to play professional sport and then settled there, Margie's influence in Australian golf has been dimmed by distance and time. But make no mistake, there is much more to her than simply outliving every other US tour winner.

As the first Aussie to play on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour, Margie has been described as a 'pioneer' of Australian women's professional golf, and that she is, yet she is also responsible for a decision in United States immigration law that opened the way for other sportspersons wanting to ply their trade in that country.

Little could she have known or dreamed of making such an impact when she was a youngster riding her bike in the seaside town of Frankston.

Born in Swan Hill, Margie moved to the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria with her family just as she was entering her teens. Her parents played golf at a nearby municipal course, the land of which is now part of the local hospital. It wasn't long before Margie thought she might try it.

*Margie Masters after being inducted into the Woodlands Hall of Fame in 2007.*

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### VOLUNTEERS

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# Vale Tom Crow: 'Baffler Man'

By Graeme Ryan and Tony Rule

*Australian Golf lost one of its most significant contributors when Tom Crow passed away earlier this year. Born in Melbourne and educated at Scotch College, Tom was a gifted sportsman, but it was at golf that he truly excelled.*

A multiple Club Champion at Royal Melbourne, Kingston Heath and Royal Sydney, Tom's crowning golfing achievement was winning the 1961 Australian Amateur at Royal Melbourne.

Despite his amateur success, he was not tempted by the professional ranks, and chose to go down the path of equipment manufacture. He joined Precision Golf Forging (PGF), advancing quickly to Sydney-based sales manager and director.

PGF was the result of a merger in 1959 between two historic Australian golf equipment makers, East Bros and Chesterfield, and produced the highly successful 'Little Slammer' and PGF Status clubs.

During the 1960s, PGF began to actively pursue overseas markets. Tom's frequent travels throughout the Pacific Rim countries took him to the United States where he immediately recognised the potential in a market twenty times the size of Australia's. He headed to the US with his family in 1973 and founded Cobra Golf in San Diego, southern California.

*Below: Tom Crow with Greg Norman (Australian Golf digest)*

The first few years were difficult for Tom as he struggled to develop new products for a new, highly competitive, market. He launched the 'Baffler' steel-shafted fairway wood with two parallel ski-shaped runners on the metal soleplate and personally hawked it around pro-shops and golf retailers. He was pleased to find that his Australian accent opened many doors ahead of US competitors and there was real demand in the market for this unique club similar to the PGF Little Slammer. Tom's approach to the business was based on a 'golf through science' design philosophy aimed at the development of lightweight golf clubs for the market segments of senior players, females and those with longer handicaps.

Cobra grew rapidly through the 1980s consistent with their stated principles of 'building the highest quality golf equipment possible... providing the functionality players seek... making the game easier and more enjoyable to play and always offering products at a fair price.' They introduced many ground-breaking marketing strategies to the golf industry and one of their coups was the signing of highly visible and respected professional golfers including Hale Irwin, Beth Daniel and Greg Norman.

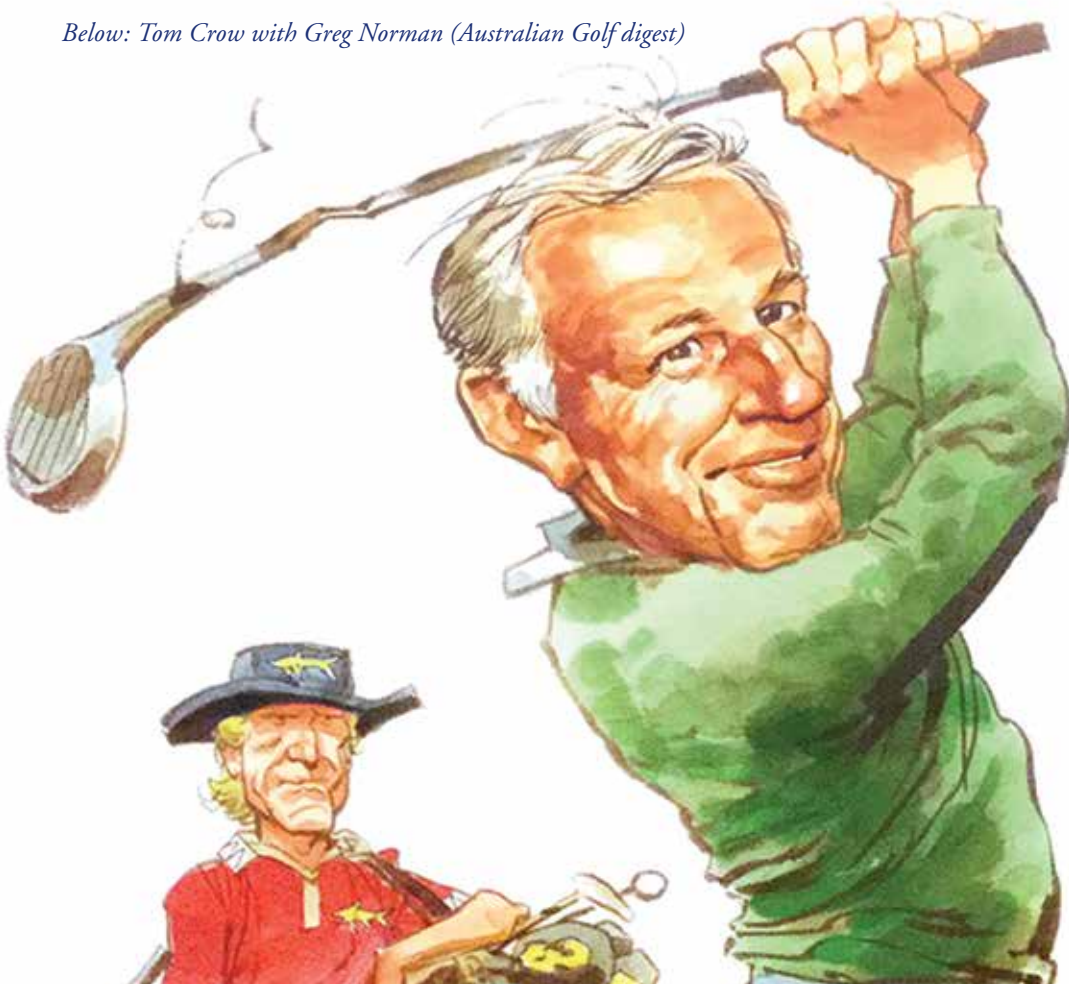
Norman's first contact with Tom Crow occurred in 1982 when he phoned from Britain to order a set of Cobra irons. He liked the irons, immediately won four tournaments in seven weeks and ordered a back-up set. This was the beginning of lucrative business alliance, and a lifelong friendship between the two men.

Cobra's success was bolstered by Norman's peaking career in the early 1990s. Well known and admired, he featured on magazine covers, in newspapers, on billboards and television screens worldwide.

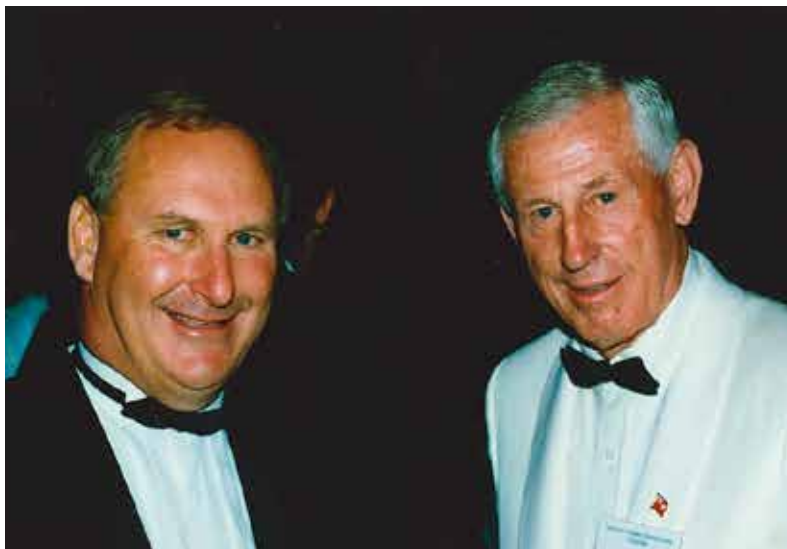
Cobra's sales sky-rocketed from US\$20 million in 1989 to US\$56 million in 1993. In the mid-1990s the King Cobra line of oversize clubs was launched through an advertising campaign featuring Greg Norman in a series of network television promotions.

After a friendly takeover of Cobra by Fortune's Achushnet (with brands Titleist, Pinnacle and FootJoy), Tom Crow and his various family companies received a payout reported to be almost US\$43 million.

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*Tom Crow with Bruce Langford-Jones at the Hall of Fame presentation*

He remained with Cobra as a member of the Acushnet advisory council and on the wall of his office in California was a signed photograph of Greg Norman. On his desk, a Cobra clubhead served as a paperweight.

In 2005 Tom wrote a book with Al Barkow titled ‘Tom Crow King of Clubs – Reflections on the game from the course to Cobra’. The book is a fascinating read and highlights Tom’s deep passion for the game and the issues that it faced. Not surprisingly the issues he discusses 15 years ago are the same issues the sport faces today.

Tom also had a great passion for the history of the game, and he was instrumental in bringing the life story of Bobby Jones to movie screens in *Bobby Jones – Stroke of Genius*. Not surprisingly Tom included a quote from Jones in the preface of his book.

*Golf means fellowship. It bridges the gap of generations. It is the only game I know where a father and a son may meet on exactly an equal basis, where the good player and the duffer may compete on the same terms.*

*I know I can meet men one hundred times on a business or social footing and never know them. But once you go out on the golf course with a man and play the game with him, you know him.*

*Golf to me has meant and always will mean a list of real friendships besides which all other successes of life are negligible. Of course, it's a great thing in my life. But the greatest thing in golf is friendship.*  
– Bobby Jones circa 1930

This quote could just as easily have been attributed to Tom Crow.



*Tom Crow, 1961 Australian Amateur winner*



## President's Report

*By Graeme Ryan*

*Our first dinner for the year was held at Riversdale GC where the guest speaker was Andrew Newbold, the new Chairman of Golf Australia.*

He spoke about One Golf and GA's commitment to “grow the game” with special emphasis on attracting girls and women in line with the objectives of Vision 2025. Mention was made of the perceived barriers traditionally in place at some clubs along with limited opportunities for potential players to learn about the game at both private clubs and public courses.

Andrew stated that “golf needs to adapt” to today's lifestyles by the introduction of “different products” in terms of membership categories and events. However, there is reluctance to change world-wide and many clubs (even in Scotland) are under stress resulting in course closures.

In response to a question about GA's marketing strategy, Andrew drew comparisons with other sports (eg Australian Football) and that “our use of communications technology was a long way behind, we are lacking data on public course players and don't presently understand our stakeholders.” He raised the question, “who are we marketing to?”

With the Australian Open returning to Melbourne this year, Andrew suggested that a significant increase in prize money could result from GA's One Golf which “now has five states under the umbrella” together with state government funding and commercial sponsorships.

Andrew was a most interesting and informative speaker in the Q&A format expertly conducted by Tony Rule.



*Christmas break-up at Woodlands Golf Club*

# Doug Bachli Trophy and AGM Report - 2019

*by Kim Hastie*

## Rod Hiscox wins the Bachli Trophy.

*The Doug Bachli Trophy returned to its regular venue the Victoria Golf Club.*

On a glorious spring afternoon, a good field of 38 players enjoyed the course in superb condition. Following the day's play, the 38th Annual General Meeting was held.



*Doug Bachli Trophy winners Rod Hiscox and Kim Hastie*

President Graeme Ryan presented his report and gave us an insight into the events and activities that were successfully run and enjoyed throughout the year.

Treasurer Neil Walker gave his Financial Report for the year ended 30 June. He reported on a trading surplus and on areas of significant expenditure such as work on the collection, hickory restoration, Long Game publications and website improvements.

Neil advised that the Society is delighted to be receiving a generous donation from the late Peter Toogood's family. This donation contains many significant items from his collection and includes several golf trophies, photographs and various memorabilia.

On the year's agenda, Committee proposed two new categories of Membership.

These were for International applicants who reside permanently outside Australia and Young Membership for applicants under thirty years of age.

In the interest of broadening the scope of the membership, it is felt the new categories will assist the committee with its aims and strategies to create a greater awareness of the Society and its activities. They were put to the meeting by Special Resolution and passed unopposed.

The second Special Resolution put to the meeting, was to honour Richard (Dick) Kirby with Life Membership of the Society. It was carried unanimously.

President Graeme Ryan spoke of Dick's lifelong contribution to the wider golf community and the Society. He served the Society over a 13-year period, worked on the committee and served as Treasurer on two occasions.

Dick accepted his Life Membership with great honour and humility and spoke fondly of the Society and the importance of its presence and activities.

Secretary Kim read election results for officer bearers of the Society. President Graeme Ryan, Treasurer Neil Walker, and Secretary Kim Hastie were re-elected unopposed for another year.

For the Ordinary Committee, Tony Rule was re-elected for a second three-year term

At the end of the meeting the Secretary read the golf results announcing Rod Hiscox as the Doug Bachli Trophy winner with a great score of 39 points. Kim Hastie was the Women's winner.

An enjoyable Cocktail Party closed out another successful Doug Bachli day and 2019 for the Society.



# Stewart Ginn: a life of golfing triumphs end happily in the doghouse

By Bruce Baskett

*The kid growing up over the fence from the 12th green at Royal Melbourne back in the 1950s watched in amazement as the likes of Sam Snead, Cary Middlecoff, Gary Player, Roberto De Vicenzo, Peter Alliss and the Australians Peter Thomson and Kel Nagle did battle in the Canada Cup (now the World Cup).*

He cheered the Australians' win and it opened the eyes of the world to the talent down under and to a jewel on the sandbelt. And it widened the eyes of a young boy.

The kid's name was Stewart Ginn. He was 10 years old and his dream of becoming a professional golfer started right then as a caddy on that remarkable course which once again took world centre stage in the 2019 Presidents Cup – sixty years on. Once again the superstars of world golf were playing a course that is little changed and just as daunting, deceiving and difficult.

Stewart's story starts there. He was recently back in Melbourne from his home in Malaysia during the tournament but it was family that drew him home. His brother is

battling prostate cancer and Stewart wanted to be by his side as he underwent a course of radiation to arm him for his battle.

The sixty years since the kid became besotted by the game has been quite a journey.

And it began as an assistant manager at Royal Melbourne and now ends up as the owner of a dog hotel in the jungle in Malaysia. It's a twisting tale.

We had a chat in a coffee shop along the road from the Alfred Hospital. There's a lot of golfing history and a lot of fun along the way interspersed with some remarkable golfing and personal achievements.

As he says: "I was never a marquee player. I don't look on myself as one of the greats. Never won an Australian Open."

But when you go through the list you wonder why his career has not attracted more plaudits and recognition. Maybe because he has lived in Asia for decades and maybe because he doesn't blow his own trumpet or chase publicity.

He is often recognised around the world for a different reason. He bears an uncanny likeness to the Hollywood legend film director Stephen Spielberg. More on that later.

Look at this most impressive record:

**Ten Australasian PGA tour wins from 1973-1986 including the New Zealand Open, Australian PGA, four Tasmanian Opens, the Victorian and NSW PGA championships, the Victorian Open and the North Coast Open.**

He has won big events on four continents. On the European Tour he won the 1974 Martini International and the Azores Senior Open, in Asia he has won two Malaysian Opens, the Malaysian Masters and the Indian Open and in the US on the Seniors Tour he has won the Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf with Sir Bob Charles (one of his idols) and his major win was the Ford Senior Players Championship in 2002 which was his biggest collect of more than \$670,000.

Time for some recognition.

"My early memory was winning the caddies championship at Royal and that really set me off."

"I left school at 17 and a job came up as assistant manager at RM. I think Colin Phillips started about the same time in a similar role at Metropolitan."

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*Stewart Ginn early in Tasmania 1981*

# Stewart Ginn: a life of golfing triumphs end happily

*Continued from page 5...*

“Bill Richardson was the RM Secretary Manager, a great influence on my life. He was a top golfer in his own right and really pushed me into becoming a professional golfer. I often thought that he was a frustrated pro and that was a career he would have always liked to pursue. He also pushed me to wear the plus fours. He said you’ve got to be a bit different.”

“He moved me into the pro shop as an assistant. I could practise every lunch time and after work. The grounding was fantastic.”

Stewart said the course then was not much different from what the stars are still playing. “They might feel the course is playing short but it is a sneaky devil. It gets you.

“Claude Crockford was the superintendent and he was a legend with grasses. Peter Williams followed him and was also superb. It’s a Mackenzie course and should never change.”

(Stewart had a game at Metropolitan while he was in Melbourne and where he broke the course record with a 66 while winning the Victorian Open in 1975. He caught up with Metro Life Member Mike Fitchett who he described as a local legend. Stewart loved being back on a sandbelt course. “It’s a beautiful track. There are changes. I’m old school. You’ve got another national treasure there. Don’t stuff it up.”)

Stewart spent his time in the pro shop at Royal with Alex Orr doing everything from teaching to shaping clubs. He played at Victoria as a junior.

“I always wanted to play. That was my ambition, my goal. I wanted to be a playing pro, not a club pro. So after about a year, I set out. No money,” he said.

He reminisces that he feels he could have had an even better career if he had been smarter.

“I’ll be quite truthful here. Today’s players go about their business a bit different. I grew up with the likes of Ian Stanley, Bob Shearer and Jack Newton. We had a great time.

We would play hard and play hard again at the end of the day,” he said.

He went to Asia and Japan. He said he was talked out of going to America by Peter Thomson. “I remember going to his house in Walsh Street South Yarra, and he said go to Asia and Europe and don’t go to America until you are ready.”

“It was a bit of a lonely life in those early days. I had three kids and it was easier to zip back to Australia,” he said.

Ian Stanley got a van and he and Bob Shearer travelled the circuit together. It was quite a learning curve.

Two players he admired were Kel Nagle and Bob Charles. “I had absolute admiration for the way they conducted themselves. You’d never see them lingering in the bar into the night and they were absolute gentlemen.

“I tried to copy them. I did my best. But I buggered it up a little bit. At least I tried.” What happens on tour stays on tour.

He was said to have got the nickname Hollywood at one time for his likeness to his doppelganger Spielberg but he maintains he was the one that gave it to Greg Norman.

“It was in England and we went past a Ferrari dealership where there was a silver model sitting in the window. Norman said: ‘I’m going to have that.’

So he went over with his cheque book and said he wanted the car, he wanted it now and wanted to drive it out that day. So I told him he was a ‘Hollywood’. He already had a red Ferrari but he wanted this silver beast.”

Stewart played at the highest level in Europe and in Asia and won many times. His entry into US golf finally came on the Seniors Tour.

He had played only a couple of times there during his earlier career. That was the setting for his richest and most prestigious triumph.

The Ford Senior Players Championship is a Major on the tour. The names on the trophy include Palmer, Nicklaus, Player, Casper, Floyd, Couples and Langer.

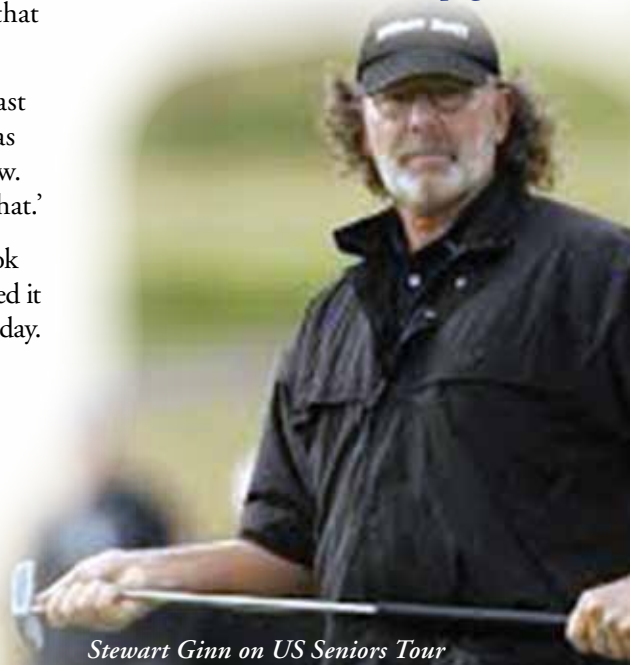
“When I won in 2002 I finally proved to myself that I could mix it with the best,” Stewart said. “Standing on the range with Trevino, Palmer, Player, Watson and Irwin. You’ve got them all there. It was a terrific treat to win.”

Apart from the prestige, the purse of \$US375,000 or \$A670,000 in those days was a nice little earner.

He can see his likeness to Stephen Spielberg. It has been a lot of fun for him, especially in America where he has signed a lot of autographs and even hostesses on a flight will ask for an autograph “They must think I’m flying under an assumed name,” he said. “I never get asked when I’m flying down the back of the plane.

“A mob chased me through the Duty Free at Dubai once. One girl asked my wife, ‘Is that Stephen Spielberg?’ She said to the girl, ‘Please don’t say anything.’

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*Stewart Ginn on US Seniors Tour*



# in the doghouse

Of course she did, and then I'm off with 20 of them after me, while my wife's laughing her head off."

For all those international fans of 'Aussie' Spielberg. If they look carefully at the autograph it says: STEWART SPIELBERG!

Stewart has headed back to Kuala Lumpur (KL) after his visit to resume managerial duties at his Doghouse Broga and to prepare for a knee replacement for a problem that has plagued him since his junior golfing days. He did have keyhole surgery in KL for a meniscus injury years back by the aptly named orthopaedic surgeon, Dr Saw. That was some time back but now it is time for the full doing. He plays at Royal Selangor where he is taking a photo of the Metropolitan honour board to prove to his mates he did once break the course record.

The dog hotel is about 45km out of KL and may seem a strange career move from an international golfing pro to caring for dogs on holidays – especially in a Muslim country like Malaysia where dogs are regarded by the religious as impure.

He and his Malaysian wife Meng bought four acres and built the dog hotel out of the jungle.

It is quite lavish. It looks somewhat similar to the Hobbit village in Lord of the Rings where the dogs have their individual stone houses with exercise area and there is a magnificent resort pool for them to splash around in.

The market is the number of ex-pats living in KL who have dogs in their apartments or town houses. They need somewhere to send them when they are travelling on business or holidays or even just a day for exercise in the outdoors during the week.

Stewart says it is a niche market. "We're boutique and we have a taxi service to pick them up and take them back."

"I'm up in the morning at six. They are ideal guests. They never answer me back. They don't ring room service and ask for ice or extra towels.

What better than to have a guest who greets with you with a wag of the tail and a lick of the hand."

The future for Stewart is still a bit like a Spielberg mystery unfolding.

"Australia is winking at me and saying what about it. I have a son who is very successful in the US, a daughter in Daylesford, Victoria, another in Queensland and nine grandchildren. Plus my brother and sister and brother in law in Melbourne.

I love the sandbelt. I will be back.

Maybe some day they will spread my ashes at Royal Selangor and Royal Melbourne. There is quite a bit of my soul already attached already to both great clubs."



Stewart Ginn and "Guests"

## Welcome to New Members

*We warmly welcome the following new members to the Golf Society*

Sam Cowie  
Peter Gill

Martin Hirons  
Gregory Vawdrey



# 2020 is the year when Commonwealth Golf Club celebrates its 100th birthday.

By Ian Pearce, CGC Heritage Working Group

*As with most celebrations of great age, the Club is marking the occasion with a series of entertaining and diverse events that began with a flag-raising ceremony, set on the practice putting-lawns framing the entrance to its architectural jewel, the much-admired 1920s art-deco clubhouse.*

Visitors to the Club who stroll in through the welcoming portico are sometimes surprised to see the odd, stray ball bouncing gently across their path. It is usually followed by a red-faced owner come to reclaim their errant white pebble, smiling and saying hello in the friendly way that Commonwealth members do, while hoping that some inspiration will restore the delicate touch required to challenge the fast-running Sandbelt greens.

A bluebird day of high, white poles and a sweep of smart gazebos welcomed over 250 members to the opening event and an opportunity to review 100 years of history.

“As we hoist our Club flag in recognition of this momentous event, we ought to reflect upon the traditions of Commonwealth” began club captain Paul Rainey, in his opening speech. “Not because we should be rigidly bound by our past traditions but because we need to understand them and appreciate their significance. What is the Club’s tradition and how do we define it?”

“The answer lies in the character and actions of our forebears – those early members of Commonwealth who set the sails which have brought us to where we are today.”

In the case of Charles Lane, who with both inspiration and perspiration, designed and constructed the new golf course, the club had a member who literally ‘set-sail’.

“In 1923 the Club was barely three years old”, continued Rainey. “It was still finding its feet at its new location in Oakleigh when Lane was appointed as its third Captain. At that time a member of Commonwealth described our fairways as consisting mainly of carrot and cape weed... it was, he said, “as plain as you could get – just a flat piece of land with a few undulating hills...”

“Before starting out on the task of rebuilding the course, Charles Lane took passage on a British ocean liner, the RMS Maloja, to spend six months in the UK and the United States learning from some of the greatest golf architects in the world at that time: Walter Travis, George Crump, Charles Alison and the great Harry Colt. By the end of 1929 he had completed the rebuild. His design and layout of 18 holes is essentially as we play them today.”

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Harry Colt

Commonwealth Clubhouse: 1934



Lane could often be seen driving a tractor, sometimes he had a shovel in his hand. To a questioning journalist, he remarked that, "When I was with Colt he insisted that on the job was the place to do the job."

Lane, warming to his work, continued, "Colt was not satisfied to map out a scheme and leave it at that. As the work progressed he watched every detail, and continuously modified a feature here and there as opportunity offered."

At a time when most of its famous Melbourne Sandbelt neighbours were calling on the services of Alister Mackenzie, Commonwealth showed a certain confident and independent spirit by looking elsewhere.

Herbert Rymill, the noted Adelaide links architect paid a visit to the club in 1930. Rymill said of Lane's work: "Commonwealth is undoubtedly the best test of golf in Victoria. The green formations and bunkering are the equal to anything I have seen in the United Kingdom." High praise indeed.

Paul Rainey takes up the story: "With a new course, clubhouse and confidence we hosted our first major event the 1929 Victorian Open Championship - won by a young New Zealander, Sloan Morpeth who was to become our General Manager in 1930."



"During the great depression, which started in 1929, he saved costs by inventing multi-skilling. For example, AC Tait the long serving Club green keeper also served as the club barman in the early 1930s. I suspect Mr Tait might have been a better barman than greenkeeper for, by the mid-1930s, Commonwealth's greens had deteriorated to the extent that the reputation of the course was being affected."

Sloan, who had a serious interest in course architecture was charged by the Committee in 1935 to "undertake renovations to the greens and course bunkers" and did so based upon the principles developed by Tom Simpson. The outstanding greens and green surrounds we have today are largely a result of Morpeth's design.

Sloan Morpeth was described in a 1990 interview with Commonwealth stalwart Bill Holmes as, "A wonderful personality... an extremely pleasant person. He was a New Zealand farmer who came over here as a golfer. During his reign here at Commonwealth, the whole place blossomed."

Paul Rainey completed his speech by reflecting on Lane and Morpeth: "Attempting to distil the qualities of these two men is not a difficult task. They displayed:

- self-reliance fashioned by experience and intellect;
- steadfastness of purpose in good and bad times;
- thoughtful energy and frugality;
- an unstinting goodwill and affection towards the Club; and
- a clear vision of what makes a great golf course, stately clubhouse and contented membership.

I believe these qualities demonstrated by two of our earliest leaders, became the tradition of Commonwealth Golf Club and today remain central to that tradition. I wish you all, including Charles and Sloan, compliments on our 100th birthday."

Readers may be interested to know that the Club's plans for the rest of the year include the launch of the Club's centenary book, a coffee-table styled publication written by Charles Happell: "... this is not a regular club history, more an entertaining, readable, engaging jaunt through CGC's past century... that focusses on people and human-interest stories as much as history and council minutes."





# The Matter of Margie Masters

*Continued from page 1...*

In shades of the famous story of Seve learning golf whacking balls round with a three-iron on the beach at Pedrena, Margie was sent into a bunker at Frankston Municipal with a three-iron and a large bucket of balls while her dad played his round. Don't go back to the clubhouse until you can come out of there, she was told. So she got to it. It was the roots of a solid work ethic that served her throughout her golfing life.

As her proficiency under coach George Naismith grew, so did her dedication. In her teens she would ride to Long Island with her clubs over her shoulder. To play pennant, she would have to take the train, sometimes two, and possibly a bus, all the while carrying her clubs. Then when she left school: "I started work in a local pharmacy. I'd get up at 5am and ride the bike about three or four miles up to Long Island to practise, ride to work, then ride to a public course at lunchtime and hit balls and then hit balls again at night. I worked very hard on my golf and I got somewhere because of that," she recalled.

She certainly did. Consider this record as an amateur. After joining Woodlands in 1950, 70 years ago, on a handicap of plus-two, she won the first of nine club championships in 1952 as a 19-year-old, winning again in 1953-54-55-56-57 and again in 1960-62-63. She won four Victorian Junior Girls Championships on the trot in 1951-52-53-54 and five Victorian Women's Amateur Championships in 1957, 1959, 1961-62-63. She was in the Victorian state team continuously from 1952 to 1962 and represented Australia in national teams between 1954 and 1963.

Then there are her international amateur wins. In 1956 she claimed the New Zealand title and in 1957 raised the South African trophy. 1958 saw her win both the Australian Women's Amateur Championship and the Australian Foursomes Championship with Queensland's talented Joan Fletcher. She set a number of course records, including, remarkably, sharing a course record at Woodlands with Burtta Cheney when both shot 78 on 23 July, 1957, only for Margie to better it solo the very next day with a 76. She set an unofficial record at Woodlands with a 69 in 1964 and recalls shooting a casual 64 there one other day around that same time.

That's some good golf. It also earned her the 1964 Canadian Amateur Championship, which set in motion her professional career.

Margie was already interested in the happenings at professional level and her win in Canada was further encouragement. "I used to look at the scores the professionals were shooting and I knew I could shoot them," she said. "I had a sponsor for a while (friends of golf writer Don Lawrence) and I thought, 'well, I'll just have a tryout'. And, actually, it turned out pretty well, I just got out there and got my card and went from there and that was it."

In her first year as a pro, she amassed the princely sum of \$US 7,785 to finish 16th on the money list and was awarded the 1965 Rookie of the Year Award. The first three years of her professional career were particularly strong. In majors, she finished tied 11th in the 1965 Women's PGA behind Sandra Haynie, tied second in the 1966 Western Open to Mickey Wright, and seventh in the 1967 US Women's Open won by 22-year-old amateur Catherine Lacoste.

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*Margie Masters (right) after defeating Burtta Cheney for the 1962 Victorian Women's Amateur Championship.*



The climax of her career was her two wins in 1967, the first in the Quality Chek'd Classic at Lake Waco, Texas, where she defeated Carol Mann, Kathy Whitworth and Mickey Wright by a shot. "I played the last round with two of the best players on tour (Whitworth and Wright) and they were lovely to play with, very kind." For context, Mann won 38 LPGA titles including two majors, Whitworth 88 titles including six majors and Wright 82 titles including 13 majors.

She remains particularly impressed with one of those stars. "I feel like I played with the best player that there ever will be in Mickey Wright. She had the best swing I've ever seen. Even Ben Hogan, who played out of the same club in Texas, said she had the best swing, man or woman, that he'd seen and when he says something like that, he means it. She was just brilliant. If she was playing today, she'd still be a world beater," she said. Wright passed away recently, just three days after her 85th birthday.

Margie's other win was the Yankee Teams Championship with her great friend, 11-time LPGA Tour winner Clifford Ann Creed. With Creed she would later play in an exhibition match at Bairnsdale in country Victoria, her most vivid recollection being the less-than-thrilled reaction of Women's Golf Victoria officials to their outfits.

"We came out looking a bit different; it was probably hard for them to accept. We were used to Bermuda shorts and slacks but here they were, still wearing a shirt and tie in interstate teams events," she said.

What did change on her watch was passage in and out of the US for professional sportspersons. "Every six months I would have to go out of the country and come back in. I'd go into Mexico or Canada and then come back. It was very frustrating," she said.

Margie made application for reclassification as a preference immigrant under the new provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. This Act, also known as the Hart-Celler Act, amended the Act of 1952, known as the McCarran-Walter Act, and replaced the National Origins formula, which had applied since the 1920s, with a seven-category preference system.

The National Origins Formula had been challenged for some time as being discriminatory. Abolishing it and overhauling immigration policy was an important pillar of President John F. Kennedy's strategy to address the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Though it was ultimately President Lyndon Johnson who signed the new Act into law in 1965, JFK's brothers Bobby and Ted, both senators, strongly continued his support of the bill after his assassination in 1963.

Section 203 (a) (3) of the new Act provided for availability of visas giving indefinite residency (known as the green card) for persons of 'exceptional ability in sciences or arts who would substantially benefit prospectively the national economy, cultural interest or welfare of the United States'.



*Margie Masters with one of her five Victorian Women's Amateur Championship trophies.*

In the decision handed down in her favour on 22 January, 1969, Margie was deemed to be an entertainer displaying exceptional ability in the arts. The decision is known as the Matter of Masters.

"A lot of other sportspeople. Including a very good tennis player, were then able to come in under that category, so I was quite proud of it," Margie reflected. She entered dual citizenship of the US and Australia in 2016.

With her playing career more settled, Margie continued as a solid member of the LPGA until 1979 when she retired. "I think I'd had enough," she said. "I was getting older and, you know, you give as much as you can. You know when your time comes."

A tenure as a teacher in Michigan followed. Though she may have left her playing career, deserved accolades still followed. In 2004 she was made an honorary member at Woodlands and entered its Hall of Fame in 2007. In 2013 she was honoured with Victorian Hall of Fame induction.

Margie now lives in Tucson, Arizona, surrounded by friends and her much adored chihuahua Lucy. Significant injuries, the result of repetitive stress from years of dedicated practice, have dogged her though. In a rough trot, she recovered from two serious ankle surgeries, only to suffer a stress fracture of her lower spine in 2018, and currently uses a walker to take Lucy out and about. It's not what she expected, nor what she likes, yet she has happy memories of her time as an LPGA player.

"I've met so many wonderful people in my life through golf. It's just been a joy to be able to have seen all those places and meet all those people. We had a really great bunch of girls play on tour. We never made great money compared to today, but it was a good time. I've had a really wonderful life."

# Ogilvy on 2020 VicOpen

By courtesy [LPGA.com](https://www.lpga.com)

*As another hugely successful VicOpen shows the golf world that mixed tournaments not only attract great interest, but are here to stay.*



One of the key voices of support is US Major Winner and Golf Society Member, Geoff Ogilvy.

Here is his letter recently posted on [lpga.com](https://www.lpga.com):

*I've always been a fan of the women's game but not to the degree I am now. I couldn't watch the LPGA Tour, LET or ALPG that much throughout my career because I was playing at the same times as the women. I would always catch the ANA Inspiration, the old Dinah Shore, out in the California desert because it felt like The Masters for the LPGA Tour. It was fun to settle in and watch because it always aired later in the day on the East Coast. And I've always enjoyed the U.S. Women's Open because I like seeing how the women battle USGA setups.*

*But the event that changed a lot of thinking was the 2014 U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open played back-to-back at Pinehurst No.2. A lot of people didn't think back-to-back championships would work, but it turned out to be a revelation. Not only could the men and women compete on the same course, they could do it under virtually identical conditions.*

*Now, here at the ISPS Handa Vic Open, they're doing it simultaneously.*

*When I'm at a golf tournament now, I'm watching other people play just as much as I'm playing myself. Last year at the Vic Open and again this week, I found that all I wanted to do was watch the women and how they went about it. Some of them are just machines. They don't hit bad shots. I watched one after another hit hybrids onto greens to 10 feet. Men don't play that way. When I hit a hybrid, I'm happy to hit it anywhere on the green.*

*So, for those who haven't watched the best women in the game, there is something to be learnt from both men and women, and there's enjoyment in watching both styles of play.*

*The VicOpen should open people's eyes to the fact that our game is full of amazing golf talent. It also proves that women and men playing together can work. Tennis has been doing it for years and has clearly benefitted from it. There are certain major tennis championships where the women's final draws more eyes than the men. I know some people think it's not complete equity – the women play best of three sets and the men play best of five, that sort of thing - but at least they play at the same place at the same time. And, they play for the same prize money.*

*There have been mixed events in golf over the years. The J.C. Penney in the U.S. was an unofficial tournament where women and men played together as partners, but it was late in the year and the sponsors went away.*

*I've had the opportunity to play with So Yeon Ryu and Su Oh, and I'm envious of their ball striking. Men could learn a lot by watching the consistency and efficiency of the game's best women. Other men pros have said the same thing. They didn't realise until they played with professional women just how good their games are.*

*The point is, golf shouldn't be so stuck in conservative traditions. Look at the rest of the world. The Japanese Ladies Professional tour is a much bigger and successful than the Japanese men's tour. Women's golf in Korea turns out record crowds and record ratings. Whenever the women's game is presented properly, it's just as popular as the men's game. We just have to give it the same opportunity.*

*Certainly, concurrent Australian Opens, men's and women's, at a Royal Melbourne East and Royal Melbourne West or Peninsula Kingswood North and Peninsula Kingswood South would work. Or, you could have neighbouring courses and combine the common areas. There are logistical ways to pull this off. But the sum will almost always be greater than its parts.*

*The Vic Open has proven that men and women together is not only possible, it's fun to watch. The Pinehurst U.S. Opens proved that back-to-back events work. When Martin Kaymer won and then Michelle Wie the next week, we all loved it. I watched more of that U.S. Women's Open than any other because I was interested to see how the women played the course that I had just played.*

*It just requires a bit of creative thinking, and it requires a change in mindset. Guys need to open their eyes and their minds and realize that there is good golf being played in the women's game. Once the mindset changes, the money will certainly follow.*

**Geoff Ogilvy,**  
February 2020



# OLD TOM

By PGA Professional Tim Ward

*There is such an enormous variety of great international games, hobbies, activities and sports which provide opportunities and appeal for all types of people. In my case there is one particular sport which I prefer and can easily separate from the rest; a game which requires good coordination, a certain skill, great discipline, mental toughness and a cool temperament, the one I consider to be the best of the best.*

It is, of course, golf. A game of universal appeal across countries; from young girls and boys to Presidents, Kings and Queens.

It is so good to be active under the sun and sky. The invigorating fresh air of nature's playground; the open spaces of hills, valleys, lakes and rivers. Such an environmental wonderland is difficult to compare. The thousands of people one meets, amazing places one visits, and the long-term friendships one makes along the way; all this is unique to golf.



As a young boy I was always interested in reading stories about famous people, their philosophy of life, their trivial beginnings, ultimate achievements and their pinnacles of success. I connected most with a famous Scottish golfer, affectionately known as 'Old Tom'. Considered one of the true pioneers of the game, Tom Morris won his first of four British Opens at the age of seventeen, with such deft skill and aplomb. Old Tom was a legend, setting the standard for everyone to follow. His natural skill and love for the game, separated him from all the rest.

May I please indulge your attention for just a few moments as I reflect on my own life as an aspiring young golfer, and later, so fortunate to join the ranks of the Australian PGA. As I think back to those formative years, the memories are grand, and the friendships treasured. I wouldn't change a thing. I feel privileged and give special thanks for every day.

Starting out my career at the tender age of only fifteen, I left my weekend job as a caddy to fill the position of trainee apprentice to the professional at Royal Melbourne Golf Club. I was so excited to leave school, pursue my dream to play golf for a living and this was the place where I first met my wife Andrea, her brother Stewart Ginn and my dear friend Bruce Green.

It is always a pleasure to catch up with BG and talk about those fun times we had, all those memorable long years ago. We were young and adventurous. Occasionally we were naughty (although pretty harmless) boys playing cricket in the Pro Shop when the boss was at lunch and although I'm not sure, I don't think he ever did know? On one occasion when I hit a full toss for six, it smashed a window and we were "cacking our daks". Mr Orr had a good eye and there was no way he would be likely to miss, so BG called his friend "The Mirror Man". I am happy to say the window was miraculously repaired only seconds before the boss got back from lunch. How we love to reminisce!

Although the years have taken their toll and all of us old golfers will eventually retire, the game and all its rewards, good memories and friends we've made on the journey, will remain in our hearts forever. To be a part of this challenging and rewarding occupation that virtually everyone can play, has given me great satisfaction.

Given the chance, I wouldn't change a thing. Although when I started out with visions of grandeur, I was just a kid with no training or experience. As a novice, it was that famous 19th century Scottish legend who inspired me to start playing, and I sincerely thank him for showing me the way. That canny wee Scot from St Andrews, Fife and the 'Home of Golf', the talented and remarkable, 'Old Tom Morris'.

<< Tim Ward (left) Brother-in-law Stewart Ginn (centre)  
Bruce Green (right)



*Guest speaker Syd Thompson*

## Historians Forum at Portsea Golf Club

20 October 2019

*By Kim Hastie, Honorary Secretary*



*Guest speaker Pauline Powell*

*In keeping with the Society's ideals of holding forums in regional areas, the final forum for the year was held at Portsea Golf Club on the Mornington Peninsula.*

A pleasing number attended, with good support from the Portsea members.

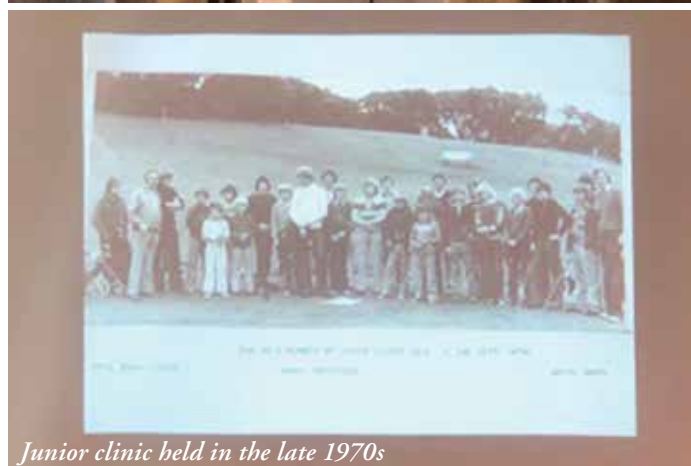
Life members Syd Thomson and Pauline Powell were the speakers.

These much-loved club stalwarts have both made enormous contributions to the club and served in many capacities.

They are two of the three authors of *Within a Bull's Roar* a book celebrating the first 75 years of the Portsea Golf Club 1926-2000.

Syd and Pauline gave very interesting presentations and insight into the club's early, and what seemed at times precarious beginnings.

Their talks were complemented with a slide presentation showing the early 9-hole layout and the subsequently added holes. Syd produced photos of the significant visionary pioneers and the many skilled men that shaped the course steering the club towards an 18-hole layout in the 1960s.



*Junior clinic held in the late 1970s*

*continued on page 15 >>*





Portsea Forum display

Familiar names such as Arthur W Relph, Scottish professional Jock Young, AO Barrett, Alex Russell, Jack Relph, Sloan Morpeth, Reg Jupp and Jack Howard were just some of the many that Syd referred to.

Pauline spoke of the impressive contribution Portsea's women made to the Club's early years, they were a very active, hardworking, generous and capable group and remain so today.

Pauline contributed many wonderful photos of the members in successful teams, competing in many pennant and district events, as well club competitions.

On display were many original documents, early correspondence, proposals and plans, gorgeous little hole layout sketches and founding member lists.

Following the forum, a light lunch was served, and the group had a chance to look through this wonderful display.

Several society members played golf afterwards, some for the first time and all thoroughly enjoyed the course

On a personal note as a member of Portsea it was quite special to have the Society visit and showcase to the attendees the wonderful views the new clubhouse now gives.

To learn more about Portsea Golf Club, I recommend that you read *Within a Bull's Roar*.



Portsea Forum display

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

See website for details:  
[www.golfsocietyaust.com/](http://www.golfsocietyaust.com/)

**March 16**

**Historians Forum**  
Metropolitan Golf Club

**May 12**

**Don Lawrence Trophy**  
Woodlands Golf Club

**June 30**

**Dinner**  
Metropolitan Golf Club

**July 13**

**President's Trophy**  
Royal Melbourne Golf Club

**Hickory Events**

*Monthly Hickory Heroes dates and locations  
to be advised by the Hickory Coordinator*  
Hickory clubs available for hire from the GSA

## Vale

*The President, Committee and Members of the  
Golf Society of Australia are saddened to learn of the  
recent passing of members:*

**Robert Harper**

**Muriel Lawrence**

*Our thoughts and condolences go out  
to their family and friends.*

*By Kim Hastie*

Don was perhaps best known for branding Jack Nicklaus with the moniker ‘The Golden Bear’. Nicklaus went on to name his company ‘Golden Bear Inc.’ and the image used is one of the most iconic logos in all of sport.

The origin of the nickname has always been acknowledged by Nicklaus and on Don's passing he sent a gift to Muriel in recognition. The gift was a silver tray with the following words engraved on it.

– Jack Nicklaus 29 August 2002

The silver tray is on display in the bar at Don and Muriel's home club Victoria Golf Club. Next time Society members are at Victoria make sure you seek out this significant piece of Australian and World Golf memorabilia.

The Don Lawrence Trophy continues to be hotly contested at the Golf Society. After Don's passing, Muriel was invited back to present the trophy each year and often attended.



Mr. Don Lawrence  
Author of "Victoria Golf Club 1893-1988"



Do you have items of interest to readers about Australian golf history?

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