



Late Night Shopping

No time left for last-minute Christmas gifts?

The golf shop will be open till 9pm on Thursday 17th Dec.

Staff will be on hand to help with all your golf needs.

All purchases on the night will go into a draw to win a GOLF BAG!



The 18th hole.

Sunday 13th December

Members' Christmas golf day and party



'Nine & Dine'

Shotgun start kicks off this 9-hole competition at 4pm, followed by the regular Friday evening raffles & a gourmet dinner!



Book early for the next event on Friday 8th January
Phone 5532 1577

New 18th hole open

BACK on Monday 31st August the 18th hole was closed for re-development as per the course master plan with a \$410,000 budget (GST exclusive). Construction was completed by mid-October, both ahead of schedule and under budget.

The major changes include:

- the new tee that has been re-positioned to the left, raised by 0.8m and doubled in overall size to create a slight dogleg effect. This will make the hole about 6m shorter, totalling 365m in length;
- a complete new fairway has been developed with extensive drainage, new irrigation and new greenlees park turf. Two fairway bunkers have been built on the right side of the fairway approximately 220m and 256m from the tee, and the left side pond has been extended at the 260m mark;
- the first 240 metres of the fairway have been widened;
- we are trialling new 150m markers by removing the old wooden posts and positioning new native grass trees in their place. Any member feedback on this trial will be appreciated.

As a result of these changes, the 3rd tee has been extended to lengthen that hole by 10m.

Since construction was completed we have been allowing the newly shaped fill and the newly planted turf to settle and mature so that we have now resumed playing our course in its entirety.

As acknowledged by new president Phil Ratcliff: "completion of the 18th hole re-development is a significant milestone for our club, and credit should be given to the many directors that have contributed to implementation of the course master plan over the past two decades".

A new handicapping system

EFFECTIVE from 1st February next year, a new handicapping system is the first of two major changes to be implemented by Golf Australia over the next few years.

Your new handicap will be calculated as the average of your 10 best scores from your last 20 games. This average is then multiplied by a factor of 0.96, and the resultant number is rounded to the closest full number.

Players will no longer go out 0.1 each time they do not play to their handicap. Those who want their handicaps to go out should put all their cards in.

Many members' handicaps will change overnight on 31st January and the CCR system will no longer be in operation.

The other change a little further down the track will be introduction of the 'slope course rating system'. More information on this aspect will become available in due course.

President's Report

IN MY first contribution to Tee to Green as president I wish to pay tribute to immediate past president Don Phelan and captain Jim Townley for their years of dedicated service to the club.

Don had two years as a director, three as captain and three as president; while Jim served three years as captain after putting in two years as captain and two years as a director of Royal Canberra.

During the last three years Don and Jim have presided over redevelopment of the 13th and 18th holes, ably assisted by fellow board members, and they have certainly left their mark of performance behind them.

Doug Henderson also did a fine job as a board member, and I am sorry to lose him to the pressures of business.

Making up for the departure of these members is the new board comprised of Robert Sayers as captain, Graham Roberts as vice-president, Ken Window remains Treasurer, and Norm Thomson steps up to vice captain. Brad Dowling was re-elected as a director, while Keith Anderson, Andrew Taylor and Tony Irvine join as new directors.

Enthusiasm

The board has already had its first meeting and directors have been allocated to sub committees. The enthusiasm of this new board is already evident to me.

My expectation is that 2010 will be a period of consolidation for the club as we replenish the coffers and plan the next holes to be developed, as

well as other projects to enhance the club and add value to membership.

These projects will probably be undertaken in 2011; this will give members the opportunity to play the course without interruption since we opened the 18th on 25th November.

Memberships

Over the last financial year new memberships were very flat, totalling only 67. I suspect that during the uncertain economic period people were simply not spending money on such things as joining fees and membership of private clubs. However, there appears to be more confidence now, and in the first four months of this fiscal year already 53 new members have joined. Traditionally this rate will diminish as Christmas approaches, and in January a recovery will take place.

I would also like to acknowledge the steady contribution to the club of treasurer Ken Window, who keeps us solidly on track financially, and general manager Andrew Kirkman, who gets through an incredible amount of work while juggling many balls in the air at the same time.

On behalf of all members, I take my hat off to Ken and Pam Yarwood for their untiring efforts in the production of *Tee to Green*.



Phil Ratcliff

Phil Ratcliff

Captain's Call

I AM extremely proud to have been elected captain of this distinguished golf club and thank you for the opportunity to serve you, the club's members, to the best of my ability. If there is anything I can assist you with during my tenure as your captain please feel free to talk to me at any time.

For those of you who don't know anything about me: I am 54 years old and have been playing golf for most of my life. My father introduced me to the game at the age of 10 whilst on holidays at Rottneest Island off the coast of Perth, my home town. I joined the Cottesloe Golf Club at 14 and achieved a single figure handicap a few years later. I have played off single figures most of my life, and my current handicap is nine. I was the WA schoolboy champion in 1971, and captain of Cottesloe's winning junior pennant team in 1973.

I am very fortunate to live with my wife Lesleigh in Shaw Street, overlooking the fourth fairway. As a real estate valuer, I have been in business in the private sector for the last 25 years after living and working in Hong Kong for some time.

Challenge on the 18th

We have now all had the opportunity to test the new 18th hole. The previous board members and Andrew Kirkman are to be congratulated on a job extremely well done in providing us with such a challenging hole, construction of which was achieved on time and within budget.

Members can look forward to a break from construction projects for a while, but behind the scenes your board will be pursuing design strategies for those holes under consideration for development in the future.

Basic consideration

During my time as your captain I will be encouraging members to assist each other in maintaining the excellent condition of our course. Our greens staff does a fabulous job presenting the course as they do, but there are some members who do not show the basic consideration expected of any player on the course.

Keep play moving at an acceptable pace by keeping up with the group in front. Rake the bunker as you exit; and if you see a part not adequately raked,

take time to fix that area as well.

All players are required to take a sand bucket onto the course; but some must imagine this is an optional fashion accessory, because they choose not to use them. Please fill in all divots. If you see a divot someone did not fill, take the time to put some sand there too.

When you arrive at the green, repair your own and any other pitch mark you may see. Our greens staff provides us with a well-presented golf course under many different conditions, but **we must assist them** by doing those little things that make everyone's golf experience more pleasurable.

Addressing complaints

Numerous members have complained over past weeks that the lack of grass under their ball around the greens makes it difficult to play a shot. This situation has been partly created by members who persist in driving their buggies as close to the greens as they feel is convenient, and not staying on the buggy paths provided – as is the club's directive. We have therefore placed rope fences in areas of obvious wear near the greens to restrict traffic and so allow regeneration of the turf. I seek your cooperation in supporting this initiative; drive your buggies on the paths provided!

There have also been complaints about some members not abiding by the Rules of Golf. I encourage everyone to report any such incidences to the match committee, who will act quickly to stamp out any wrongdoing.

How fortunate we are to have such a magnificent golf course with the modern high-rise buildings of Surfers Paradise as a backdrop, with birds and wildlife of all varieties living in a beautiful parkland setting. Please do your bit to maintain the excellent condition of this enviable golfing and social venue.

Good luck and play well.



Robert Sayers

Robert Sayers



Norm Thomson

House Committee Report

WE are all looking forward to the festive season, and I encourage you to attend the club's Christmas golf day and party on Sunday 13th December. This party always proves to be a fun event, and we have booked singer Michelle Little to entertain you as you enjoy your dinner of turkey, ham, pavlova and pudding! Cost is \$35 each for golf, dinner and entertainment; bookings can be made through Bernadette in the golf shop.

Looking back, the past few months have been rewarding, with member Ashley Travers winning a \$500 voucher towards a new set of Callaway golf clubs during the regular Friday night festivities, and the Melbourne Cup event was a huge day with 110 members and their guests enjoying the fashion, food and racing.

Friday nights really are the social highlight of the week at our club, and I encourage you to come along at 6pm to meet some new friends, stay for dinner and be in with a chance to win the \$500 Callaway voucher and the cash members' draw that is worth over \$3,500 at the time of writing.

New initiatives

Our new house committee will be trying some new initiatives for Friday nights to keep things fresh. If you have your own business and would like to become a sponsor of the raffles, please see me or our general manager, Andrew Kirkman.

Looking forward to 2010, we will again be hosting a Sportspeople's Dinner as one of the feature events of the year and are currently talking with a couple of high profile sportsmen and women – so stay tuned for more details.

Next year we will also be holding two more of the Trivia Nights that proved very popular this year, and the Nine & Dines will continue through summer.

Being a member of our club can be about just playing golf or it can be much, much more – the choice is yours!

Hawaiian night

Recently we welcomed some of the 50 new members who have joined in recent months with a small gathering on the deck of the clubhouse. The deck provides a wonderful setting on a summer night and so on Friday 15th January at 6pm we will be using this area to hold a Hawaiian night. There will be a free Hawaiian cocktail on arrival for all members and their guests, complimentary nibbles, and prizes for best (lairst??) Hawaiian shirt! This will be a laid back, casual, themed evening with our regular raffles and members' draw as usual. So mark down Friday 15th January and start searching for that favourite old Hawaiian shirt!

Our caterers Helen and David will also be offering a Hawaiian dinner menu for those interested in making a real night of it.

Have a wonderful festive season, and you are most welcome to chat with me if you have any suggestions to help the strong social side of our great club.

Norm Thomson – Chairman

SOCIAL CALENDAR

December	Sunday 13th	Members' Christmas golf day & party
January	Friday 8th	Nine & Dine at 4pm
	Friday 15th	Hawaiian and cocktail night from 6pm
	Sunday 24th	Australia Day golf and bush band party

Where have all the birdies gone?

by Nev Morton



Nev Morton

DURING 1998 I presented an article for Tee to Green listing 67 bird species observed over several years on our golf course.

While not purporting to be a scientific survey, regular observation of birds on our course in 2009 shows a sharp decline in the number of species recorded 11 years ago.

Birds we no longer see, or rarely see, are mostly small insect-eating birds such as *yellow rumped thornbill*, *rainbow bee eater*, *tree martin*, *rufus whistler*, *mistletoe bird*, *leaden fly catcher*, *white-breasted wood swallow* and *Australian reed warbler*, to name a few.

The reed warbler could once be seen and its beautiful voice heard in the reeds growing around the pond next to the 12th tee. In our wisdom we ripped out the reeds several years ago – so bye-bye *reed warbler*.

As for other missing species, why is it so?



Indian Myna bird.
(Source: Andrew Tathell, Big Island Photographics)

A dangerous marauder

Loss of habitat as the Gold Coast spreads inland is one theory. Another is the arrival in our area about 4-5 years ago of the *Indian myna* bird (or *common myna*) known in bird circles as 'the cane toad of the air'. Introduced into Australia in 1862 to eat insects in crops (similar reasoning re the cane toad), this aggressive bird has spread up the east coast and is now being reported as far north as Bundaberg. It takes over nests and nest sites of other small birds, destroys eggs, kills chicks and has been declared the second greatest threat to native birds after land clearing.

Remedial efforts

Many east coast councils, such as Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour, have put in place eradication programs to stem the tide of these pests. Wire traps are provided to local citizens and are baited with pet food. Trapped target birds are killed humanely; others of course are released unharmed.

Judging by the numbers exploding on our golf course – early morning bird watchers have seen flocks of up to 50 *Indian mynas* – perhaps it is time to enquire of our city council whether there are any eradication plans in place.

Whatever steps are taken, eradication will probably prove as difficult as cane toad elimination; but efforts should be made to at least contain this scourge that is decimating our native birds.



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From the General Manager's Desk



Andrew Kirkman

THE past year has seen a substantial amount of course redevelopment successfully completed, with the 13th hole re-opened in mid February and the 18th late last month. Thank you to all members for your patience throughout this period; I hope you enjoy being able to play the course in its entirety once more, particularly with the back nine now completed and the course fully recovered from spring renovations.

As shown in the annual report, the club generated a profit of \$337,702 over the 2008/2009 financial year – a fantastic achievement considering the extreme rainfall and uncertain economic circumstances.

Due to this result we were able to proceed with the 18th hole redevelopment one year ahead of plan.

Members' contributions

Many clubs throughout Queensland have struggled to operate positively over the past year, and I would like to thank those many members who actively contribute to our club being successful, whether it be by having a drink after your round, by sponsoring an event at the club, by investing in a new set of clubs or by using the clubhouse for your son's or daughter's wedding.

During the first four months of the current 2009/2010 year the club has produced a profit of \$74,000; this is ahead of budget but slightly less than last year over the same period.

Thanks for feedback

Thanks to all members for their feedback this year regarding the change to the new point-of-sale system, particularly those who have expressed their appreciation in having trophy vouchers automatically deposited into their

trophy account – as they would often lose their vouchers. Please remember that:

• All trophy vouchers won from 1st January to 31st October will expire at the end of this month and hence need to be used by 31st December 2009.

- Trophy vouchers won from 1st November onwards are valid until 31st December next year.
- Trophy vouchers are just that - vouchers to purchase a trophy in recognition of a placing in a competition. They can be used to purchase a trophy from the golf shop such as golf balls, a shirt, a golf bag etc, or to purchase a trophy from the bar such as a bottle of wine or scotch, or a carton of beer as a take-away.
- Trophy vouchers cannot be used to purchase a pot of beer or pay competition fees, or for range balls.

New competition

Looking ahead to 2010, we are currently finalising the fixture program and social calendar and I welcome suggestions from members. An addition to the golfing program will be the new

'Player of the Year' competition to be run over 12 fixtures spread throughout the year. The member with the best 10 aggregated scores in 2010 will be crowned Southport Golf Club Player of the Year at the annual presentation night. Stay tuned for more details!

Welcome to the many new members who have joined our club over the past six months, it is great to have you with us. Welcome also to PGA pro Ben Campbell, who joined our full-time staff in the golf shop in August and has helped a number of members with a new set of clubs to suit their game – he has even helped me!

Yuletide greetings

On a personal note, I wish all of you and your families a safe and happy Christmas and new year festive season. Thank you to all those members who sent presents, cards and best wishes for my wedding a few months ago, my wife Genevieve and I were overwhelmed by your kindness. And as a man with just one brother in a family of four, I am looking forward to my first Christmas with my wife's family of Mum, Dad, 11 brothers and sisters, their 11 partners, and 27 nieces and nephews!

Andrew Kirkman

Renovations nearing completion

THIS year, having renovated the 13th and 18th holes, we have completed the back nine in accordance with the master plan.

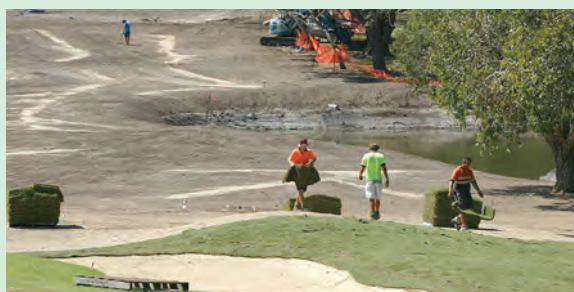
On the front nine the 2nd, 3rd and 7th have already been upgraded; that leaves six holes to renovate.

Principal work will again involve upgrading these fairways with introduction of greenlees park turf, an irrigation upgrade and of course improved drainage.

However, a period of time is required to rest and consolidate these works to enhance members' enjoyment of the improvements when play recommences.

Indeed, the standard of our course is becoming more professional, to the extent that it now compares more than favourably with higher rated golf clubs and resort courses as identified in recent national golf literature.

Maintaining this standard will necessitate an increase in budgetary



Renovations under way on the 18th

be constantly monitoring maintenance practices in order to keep up our high standards.

This course traces its origins back to 1924 and has been constantly changing and improving since that time. We can now claim parity with the more recently established courses that have had the advantage of being built to schematic plans from day one.

Stuart Moore – Course Superintendent



Stuart Moore

allocation because of the increased need to rectify fairway compaction and wear, through for example solid tyning, coring, slicing and top dressing.

Certainly, we've moved and prospered with the times and as the master plan progresses towards completion, we'll

BEHIND THE SCENES

OVER many years some of our club's youthful members have joined the professional ranks.

Now Daniel Paton, who joined the club in 2000 when just 11 years of age and is now employed in the golf shop, has completed a one-year diploma in golf management at the PGA International Golf Institute and has progressed to Griffith University, where he is studying for a bachelor of business degree majoring in sports management.



Daniel Paton

Daniel remains involved with the PGA-IGI through weekly games with fellow students and attending skills sessions at Hope Island golf club. He plays off scratch and currently leads the PGA-IGI order of merit.

Best score

His best ever score so far was a 65 at Southport, and he's played off a handicap of five or less since he was 15 years old.

Earlier this year Daniel fired an ace during a pennant match at Sanctuary Cove, the only hole-in-one in pennant history within the Gold Coast District Association.

"That was on the 16th at Sanctuary Cove, and I've also had an ace on the 16th at Southport," says Daniel, whose present focus is on more important aces.

The first is completing his university degree, and the other when he rounds out his golf education by becoming a trainee professional.

"My main goal though is to become a touring professional; but if that doesn't eventuate the next step would be to move on to teaching and open my own academy."

P.S. Two months ago Daniel won the Australian University Games Championship, a 72-hole event held over four days at the Colonial Golf Club, with rounds of 74, 69, 70 and 72 – 12 strokes clear of the runner-up.

He was presented with three medals: one for his individual win; one as a member of Griffith University's team of seven players; and one as a member of the green and gold team that will represent Australia in Spain in July 2010.

Golf Shop Staffers

BEN CAMPBELL bought a house soon after finishing his secondary education at Coombabah High School, then 18 months later sold into a rising market. The healthy profit he pocketed enabled him to travel the world building up accreditation as a professional golfer.



Ben Campbell

Now aged 27, Ben admits he has never won a major tournament – but there have been good times in pro-ams.

Here and overseas he also played guitar in various bands.

How is he enjoying life in the golf shop?

"It's great – and there's a lot of talent here under the very professional eye of our golf operations manager, Bernadette Lance," he says.

Apart from being available to give advice, Ben takes on teaching, equipment repairs and general administration aspects in the golf shop.

"Please don't hesitate to call on me, because helping members with their game and equipment selection really spurs me on," says Ben.

MICHAEL BROWN, now aged 24, was educated at Mount Saint Patrick's College in Murwillumbah.



Michael Brown

He did later think about seeking a golf traineeship, but with a university degree already under his belt he decided to go into administration and sports management, so undertook the one-year certificate course at Griffith University.

What motivated him to join Southport's golf shop?

"Well, a private club is a good place to get a foot in the door, and a step in the right direction for my future career, so it was a logical choice," says Michael, who is focused on eventually gaining a position like that of the club's general manager, Andrew Kirkman.

Back in 2007 Michael played successfully in a number of tournaments in Melbourne and Adelaide and was poised to play in that year's Gold Coast Open, but glandular fever knocked him out.

Kevin Healey, who now guides Daniel Paton, has brought Michael from a handicap of 12 down to two in just 12 months. No wonder then that back in September Michael won the Murwillumbah Championship at his home club and was also a member of the victorious Coolangatta-Tweed A-grade pennant team that this year defeated Arundel.

Ground Staff

YEARS ago when Blair Hamwood was aged eleven he would wander down Shaw Street, jump over the club's fence and recover golf balls to sell to golf shops.



Blair Hamwood

After completing his secondary education at Benowa High, Blair was a bit hazy about his future but found work looking after people's gardens.

When he turned 21 though he joined the ground staff at Royal Pines, where he remained for nearly 12 years; but looking for a new challenge, he made the move to Southport.

"Over the past 12 months here at Southport I've been enjoying my work in a much more relaxed atmosphere. There's a great group of the guys here on the ground staff, and members are much more involved than resort course golfers," says Blair.

Even though he's tried to play golf, Blair concedes that the best he can do is occasionally chip practice balls from nearby fairways back onto the driving range.

Courtesy

As do other members of the ground staff, Blair extends courtesy by cooling down engines when players are hitting off tees and putting on the greens.

He's very keen on watching movies for relaxation, and when he takes holidays doesn't go for just one or two weeks – he 'saves' his annual leave entitlements so he can travel extensively.

"Yes, going overseas needs at least six to eight weeks – my last holiday was in Europe during 2005," says Blair.

Next trip he says will again be Europe and probably Asia, while later on he's planning a visit to Argentina or Peru.

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OUT & ABOUT

Doctor with a love of golf

GRAHAM THOMPSON has been a member of the Southport Golf Club since 1972. Originally playing off a handicap ranging between 11 and 13, now as he approaches 80 years of age his handicap is following the inevitable outward curve.

Looking back though he has four honour board events under his belt: the President's Trophy twice, the E D Pike Trophy, six monthly medals and the former Courier-Mail team event.

Also, he can boast a hole-in-one to supplement 16 eagles.

Certainly over the 60 years he has indulged his love of golf, Graham has been a member of several Queensland clubs: Townsville, Mt Isa, Maryborough and Warwick, where he served as both captain and president.

Ever keen on sport, he represented his school and university college in cricket, rugby, athletics – and the 'intellectual sport' of chess.

Medical career

Born in Sydney, Graham was dux of his school and was subsequently awarded one of the first 200 Commonwealth University Scholarships. He graduated in medicine in 1956 from the University of Sydney, and commenced his career as a medical officer at Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred hospital. There followed three years as surgical registrar in Townsville and two years in general practice in each of Mt Isa and Maryborough.

Graham's aim in this early stage of his career was to raise funds for travel to the United Kingdom to further his studies. This accomplished, he went on to obtain surgical qualifications from the Edinburgh Royal College of Surgeons in 1965.

Following his return to Australia, Graham was admitted as a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Surgeons in 1978, then went on to obtain a Master of Health Planning degree from the University of NSW in 1981.

Gold Coast Hospital

Appointed to the position of medical superintendent at the Gold Coast Hospital in 1972, Graham came with not only his surgical skills but also administrative experience gained as acting medical superintendent of Townsville hospital, where he was involved in planning a multi-storey block, and as medical superintendent of Warwick base hospital during upgrading of wards, outpatients' department and operating theatres.

In 1971/2 Graham spent four months in Vietnam as a member of a surgical team in Bien Hoa, part of the Commonwealth's commitment under the South East Asia Treaty Organisation plan.

Retirement

Graham retired in 1989 from the Gold Coast hospital. Interestingly, during the 17 years he spent there the local population escalated rapidly from 70,000 in 1972 towards the current half-million plus. Also during that time the hospital was upgraded from a 120-general and 20-maternity bed small country hospital to a 550 bed major hospital – thus becoming the third busiest hospital in Queensland.

As medical advisor to the board he oversaw the planning of the first stage of expansion completed in 1978, then the second stage completed in 1986.

Graham also introduced all of the current specialist services, and was responsible for developing and obtaining recognition of the hospital as a training centre for specialists in surgery, obstetrics, orthopaedics, medicine, anaesthesia, radiology and emergency medicine (accident and emergency).

Other commitments

Despite the above commitments, Graham also found time to serve on a Health Department equipment committee, the 1979-80 state government review of the ambulance service, the Surf Life Saving Association medical advisory committee and the Queensland Cancer Association surveys for skin cancer. He was also a lecturer to medical students at the University of Queensland from 1976.

Frustration

Ongoing problems of bed, staff and funding shortages brought about by the rapid population growth have created much frustration for patients, doctors and other staff over the years, and the issue of bed shortages continues to be a problem that Graham keenly monitors.

Retirement has not meant a stop to working, however, as Graham still maintains an interest in surgery; for the past 15 years he has acted as surgical assistant to many other surgeons. He always wanted to 'do medicine', and fulfilled this ambition by following a path to variable general surgery and also taking on the challenge presented by trauma.

He is indebted to his parents, who always supported him in his ambition; and to his children and late wife, who tolerated the demands on his time that kept him away from his family.



Graham Thompson

BACK TO NATURE

with Course Horticulturist Aaron Goding

MOST of our fairways are lined with a variety of exotic as well as native tree species.

This year many have been uprooted by fierce winds or destabilised by flooding, so over the past six months a program of new plantings has been undertaken, particularly along the third and ninth fairways.

As part of the 18th re-development we've also removed all ficus and some other trees to widen the fairway, with compensatory plantings now completed. All removals and new plantings were of course approved by the Gold Coast City Council.

Palm trees, as pointed out previously in this column, need constant attention.



Palms at the 12th green

Indeed, every day a reconnoitre is necessary to check for heavy fronds and seed pods that are threatening to fall. Members should be very careful when in the vicinity of these trees, particularly in the area around the 12th green and on the right side of the 15th fairway.

Our hundreds of trees not only have aesthetic appeal but also provide a safe haven for wildlife in the middle of suburbia.

They also represent a challenge to keep shots straight, and there's always the fun, too, of searching for balls that may well be embedded high up among the branches...!!



OUT & ABOUT

Overcoming anonymity

MOST of us have knowledge of at least two to three generations of forebears, but how do you trace your origins if you don't even know who your parents were?

That's an obstacle Penny McGovern would dearly love to overcome; but without even a birth certificate, her past is a mystery.

Penny, who joined Southport Golf Club three years ago, looks back on an early life that can be described as Dickensian in its bleakness.

Born in 1946 and brought up in an orphanage near Inverness in Scotland, Penny has knowledge neither of parents or other relations, nor whether she has any siblings.

The grind of orphanage life taught the child to be seen but not heard, and to obey without question.

When Penny reached her 12th birthday she was fostered out to a family whose head, schoolteacher Tom McMillan, had taken up the position of headmaster at Kinlochbervie in the bitterly cold far northwest of Scotland. The senior McMillan was also an organist in the local church and his wife May sang in the choir. Penny was of course required to be present in the pews every Sunday.

Life unbearable

From the first day in the McMillan household Penny wanted out because Tom's wife, May, made life unbearable.

"May was cruel in the extreme. She regarded me as a slave, whilst implying that I was filth and she was pure. Any self-esteem I had at that stage vanished completely," recalls Penny.

Things were no better at the local school, where the newcomer was treated to playground bullying and ridiculed for not being a 'real' McMillan.

It was almost a relief, although unsettling, to be sent off to a boarding school for secondary education; but holidays were looked upon with considerable dread.

Drudgery and beatings

Penny was a servant to the family during holidays. A seemingly never-ending list of tasks greeted her each day; if work did not come up to May's standard it had to be redone immediately, often to the tune of a thrashing by cane, leather slipper or strap. May devised another particularly cruel and humiliating form of punishment that she meted out regularly, revelling in allowing her son to watch.

Floors in those days were covered with linoleum, and one of Penny's chores was to scrub off the polish then re-polish until May could see her face.

Then on Sundays after church she had to polish every pair of shoes the family had – whether they'd been worn or not.

When Penny turned 16 she asked her headmaster whether she could leave the McMillan's house – a request that was denied until she turned 17, but she subsequently received the worst thrashing of her life.

An escape

Soon after her 17th birthday Penny found freedom when she gained a traineeship in nursing, then three years later she met a gentleman through whom she saw the possibility of a new life.

"His name was Arthur Davies, and he was looking around Inverness for people to work in a whisky distillery in New Zealand; and although it took me two years, I eventually made it there – arriving just before my 21st birthday," Penny recalls.

"Obviously it took time to adjust and settle down, but I married there and had three children.

"That marriage though turned out to be even worse than life with the McMillans. My husband, a Scot who had followed me out to New Zealand, became violent towards both the children and me; he drank heavily and I lived in absolute fear of him. After a particularly brutal beating my

doctor arranged for me to see a divorce lawyer.

"After some time I re-married, and in 1988 we moved to Australia; but eight months later I discovered my husband was having an affair with a co-worker. Despite my pleas to end that relationship he refused, so I left and moved in with a girlfriend."



Penny McGovern

Starting over

Penny was absolutely devastated about the marriage break-up. After a period of adjustment, and vowing never to allow another man into her life, she fell back on her nursing skills and found work at Carindale Nursing Home.

After some 18 months it became evident to Penny that the owner of the home, John Cox, was attracted to her and she, despite her avowal to keep away from men, found herself reciprocating – and her life took a turn for the best.

The pair worked together in developing and running several nursing homes in Brisbane, and on retirement in '06 moved here to the Gold Coast to enjoy life together and play golf, which Penny had long wished to do.

"Golf is an ongoing challenge, and I am extremely lucky to be part of Southport Golf Club," says Penny in her lilting, soft Scottish brogue.

"There will always be the sadness and frustration of not knowing my ancestry, but John has turned my life around and I'm now a very happy and fortunate girl."

Richly deserved – and evidenced by those sparkling blue eyes, ever-present smile and warm, generous nature.

Associates' News

THE last third of this year seems to have flown by, and we have enjoyed the clear blue skies and mild temperatures. This lovely weather has certainly been of advantage during development of our new 18th hole, which is now open for play.

Our pennant teams all had great success: Grade 1 brought home the pennant, Grade 2 ran third, and Grade 3 came in second. We also won the junior girls' pennant, and India Matthews

won the National Indigenous Title held in the Hunter Valley – quite a coup! Congratulations to all players, and thanks to all the caddies who helped out in these events.

This year's Medal of Medals was won by Amanda Garrard. I had the honour of playing with her that day – what a lovely golfer! Airlie MacLachlan of sponsors Samarang Furniture presented the prize, and Amanda capped her great day by also winning the Captain's Trophy.

Four members of your committee are retiring this year and the new committee will be up and running early next year. I wish them all the very best!

I also wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and a healthy, prosperous New Year.

Sandy Mojsish – Vice President



Sandy Mojsish



David McKean

TEACHING PRO'S CORNER

If you are focused on improving your game, the main areas to work on during practice should involve:

- swing technique,
- chipping,
- bunker play,
- putting, and
- on-course practice

Many members come to me with concerns about their swing technique, and I do recommend that instead of trying to iron out the problem yourself, you'll benefit by having a lesson to understand better the mistakes you are making.

As for chipping: many golfers just do not put enough time into practising what can be a very expensive part of the game. Did you know about 80 per cent of your golf is played from inside 50 metres!

So get out there on the chipping greens and practise distance control.

Bunker play

Many players have no trouble getting out of bunkers, but keep in mind that you want the ball to land as close as possible to the flag.

The bunker by the chipping area adjacent to the seventh green is there for you to work on developing your consistency and accuracy.

If though you feel that putting lets you down, it's best to organise some practice time on a day you're not playing, and spend 30 minutes to an hour just honing your technique. If you're not sure about your technique, let's put you on video and see what we can learn.

Benefits

There's also benefit in playing let's say just six holes in the late afternoon, at a time when you can stroll around and hit the ball without any pressure. This can certainly help you approach competition play in a more relaxed frame of mind, and give you confidence to play with lower handicappers – a move that will often further improve your game.

Great tips and guidance can also be found in books released by leading professionals.

One of my favourites is Stan Utley's *The Art of the Short Game*.

Even those at the top of the game admit they're always on a learning curve. Tiger Woods, for one, is constantly striving to improve his technique and adapting to change as necessary to play even better.

It has been said that in the history of golf only two players ever owned their own swings: Ben Hogan and Moe Norman. Tiger has said he wants to be the third. The other two guys had to work it out for themselves; but Tiger has helpers, so it may not be possible – too many opinions!

David McKean – Teaching Professional

Greens Committee Report

WITH the growing season upon us, the course has benefited from significant rainfall during November. One and a half tonnes of slow release fertiliser had been spread on the fairways just prior to the rain, greatly enhancing growth.

Stuart Moore and his staff completed renovations to the greens, tees and fairways in late September, a mammoth task undertaken in just three days. A remarkable effort by Stuart and his team – well done.

Buggy wear and tear has resulted in parts of the course needing protection, and those areas affected have been roped off. It's unfortunate we have players in carts who completely disregard the cart signs. I feel we all have an obligation for the sake of the greens surrounds to remind any offenders of their wrongdoing. After the protective ropes come down, hopefully we won't need to see them again.

The putting green outside the golf shop has had its problems over the years, so the board decided to plant a hedge around this area to minimise foot traffic as much as possible. Many people were using it as a conduit from the carpark to the golf shop and back again – hence more wear.

In the short space of time since the green has been locked off, the improvement is certainly noticeable. A good decision!

Good golfing and have fun.



Graham Roberts

Graham Roberts – Chairman

Our Junior Golf takes on a new start

OUR club has a proud tradition as one of the leading clubs in the state to foster and develop junior golf. The current victorious men's pennant team contains a number of stars who first started in the Sunday morning junior clinics; and the junior boys' and girls' pennant teams, who also won their respective pennant flags this year, are a direct result of these Sunday morning clinics.

A lot of the credit must go to member Karen Caban and our resident PGA teaching professional David McKean, who have both managed and promoted the Sunday morning junior clinics for almost a decade. Karen in fact has given more than 10 years of service to developing junior golf at our club.

During 2010 the junior clinics on Sunday mornings will be held again to help introduce your children and grandchildren to our great game. The clinics are held at 8am each Sunday and will start up again on Sunday 7th February with an open day that will include free range balls, free tuition from a PGA pro, and a free sausage sizzle.

JUNIOR OPEN DAY

Sunday 7th February 2010
8:00am to 9:30am

FREE range balls • FREE Professional tuition
FREE Sausage Sizzle • Fun environment

The focus in 2010 is on quality tuition in a fun environment, and hence the clinics will be open only to those children that are friends or relatives of current club members; so if a child or grandchild of yours or a close friend is curious about trying golf, bring them down to the free open day on Sunday 1st February where all children aged five to 18 are welcome.

If they enjoy themselves, they can be signed up for the regular Sunday morning clinics to commence the following week, with a \$30 sign on fee and a \$5 weekly charge thereafter. On registration all children will receive their own SGJ junior polo and cap and, most importantly, will have a wonderful opportunity to learn the game that we all enjoy.

For further information please see David McKean, Ben Campbell or Bernadette Lance in the golf shop.

Andrew Kirkman – General Manager

TEE TO GREEN is a regular publication for members of Southport Golf Club. It is edited, written and produced by Ken and Pam Yarwood. Editorial & advertising enquiries should be directed to the **General Manager**.

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