

George Town Golf Club – 2012 Chairman’s Report

2012 has been a reasonably busy year for us. Our financial position remains firm, albeit as David will detail later is a little down on last year.

We continue to return much of our income back into the club to improve the amenities for our members and have made some significant purchases that will help us continue to develop the course for us all to enjoy.

This is despite our membership being down due to tough economic times not to mention an aging membership base that is a concern not just for us, but all golf clubs.

2012 membership was down some 16 members compared to 2011 and membership was the lowest it has been since 2008. We need to look at encouraging younger members wherever we can which may challenge our thinking and how we do things.

The main reason we are able to continue to improve our club and facilities is not just because of the wise and steady hand of our treasurer David and the board members but mostly because of the excellent good natured volunteers who put endless hours into our fine club. We are deeply indebted to you all and also the good humour displayed in carrying it out. It continues to be a pleasure to be involved with you all.

Some of the main activities and events that have occurred in the past 12 months are:

- Near completion of the new putting green. While this was underway this time last year we encountered issues with the soil and after Garry’s fine construction of the retaining wall Don Murray has nursed the soil back to better health and it will soon be ready for use.
- We now have an online presence with the launch of our website. We were approached by a young graphic designer (Sahara design) just starting out and offering quite a good deal to get a site up and running. I hope most of you who are online have checked it out. All our upcoming fixtures are there on the calendar with competition results mostly published weekly. We have had some 1550 visits over the last 6 months with 6100 page views and we average about 45 views per week with people accessing our information through phone computer or tablets. Our web address has also been added to national and international golf search websites.
- We limed the course for the first time in many years applying some 18 tonnes.
- We found ourselves a little bereft of green keeping expertise so approached Ray Lowe of Exeter and formally of Greens Beach to help us. Ray was more than happy to help out and his 40 years experience is evident in the way our greens are currently looking and testament to his skills and the hard work Bill and his team have put in. The greens have been cored twice with nearly 50 sq metres of sand applied plus many litres/kg of appropriate fertilizer, fungicide etc, none of which come cheap. Ray’s advice has been priceless getting on top of problems before they occur and we have been getting good feedback from visitors and

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members alike which is both pleasing and encouraging. We will also be de-thatching our greens on a more regular basis.

- Unfortunately we had 3 break-ins during the year - all in the machinery shed. Small items of machinery were targeted such as chainsaws and line trimmers. One of the chainsaws has recently been recovered by the police. We have since then increased the security of the shed by fitting a roller door and further securing the side shelter by making it fully enclosed. Many thanks to Gary Ritchie for his efforts there. Annual insurance is a major cost to the club and break-ins do not help the premium. David has just this week negotiated a significant saving through our broker and with a change of insurer.
- We have recently purchased a new tractor with a front loader and slasher attached. This item will play a major roll in improving and keeping the course maintained with it’s flexibility of use and among other things will be put to good use improving the tee beds which we hope to work on over the next 12 months.
- After 15 years at the helm Jock Millen retired as Treasurer of the vets and after a vote they decided to come further under the umbrella of the club proper.
- We currently have underway the external painting of the clubhouse and many thanks must go there to the volunteers helping out with the painting especially Geoff Bannon and Peter Florrissen and the behind the scenes work that allowed this to go ahead.
- The other major project currently underway is the new floor being fitted to the kitchen and we are indebted to our landlord Bell Bay Aluminium for their valuable assistance in making this happen. We are also looking to upgrade the cupboards at the same time.
- Repairs have also been carried out on the squash court roof and we have recently added 2 more new ball cleaners around the course.
- We have run a number of successful external functions throughout the year including community events, fundraisers and engagement parties. All with positive feedback regarding the venue itself and the excellent catering done by the ladies which have generated further interest in our facilities. These events of course also form an important part of our income.
- The ladies must also be congratulated on a very successful Trophy night and a fun night was had by who attended.
- I also want to recognise the wonderful effort all have put into running our club events. We have run a number of tournaments through the year ranging from our club tournament to vets and other ladies tournaments none of which would be a success without the excellent management great support we get from our members.
- Pennant season is about to start again and we wish the division 3 team well. Last year we won division 4 so congratulations are in order to Robbie and his team and Joan and Glen who continue to set the pennant catering standards for other clubs.
- I would also like to acknowledge and congratulate all the Club Champions.

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- Terry has also recently organised Devonport pro Nathan Stubbs to come to our club and 8 of our members took the opportunity to have a lesson with him. He will return again with a date yet to be determined.
- The club has also taken the first steps to become engaged in the national Good Sports program with accreditation verifying and confirming our family friendly values and that we are a safe and responsible club to be involved with.

I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the many day to day things that happen all the time. They tend to disappear in our minds a bit like the hills that surround us because they are always there but if one day they were not it would be very obvious.

So (if you will excuse the metaphor) thanks to the people who are the hills around us.

- Thanks to Joan, Peter and David who spend so much time behind the bar.
- The many people around the course who help - Bill, Les, Keith Neil, Gary and Ozzie These people keep greens, fairways and rough cut, keep machines going, drains clear, bunkers raked, and cleaned up after storms, water monitored, leaks fixed and the shed and surrounds neatly presented and painted and all manner of minor chores.
- The board and all the behind the scenes work done with the management and administration of the club.
- The sponsors who support us year in and year out and the individuals who sponsor a particular day
- The vets, the ladies, the match committee who make it all just happen.

I know I don’t see everything that goes on here and I apologise if I have missed anything or you are a hill that has disappeared because you are there all the time.

I would to encourage you all to help out where you can if you have the time and inclination, or if you can’t - say thanks to the people who are.
Thanks are always appreciated.

I would also like to briefly acknowledge the sad passing of members Simon Bryan and Bill Smith.

Bill as you would be aware was presented with Life Membership last month. It had been many years since the club had bestowed life membership and we will be looking at this closer over the coming years to recognise the exceptional hard work done by individuals for the club.

On closing I would also like to encourage you, our members to consider standing for the board. We have room for more and most of the current board have been

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in positions for quite some time and are looking to be inspired by new ideas. The more diverse opinions we have the better our decision making.

Thank you.

Ian Harris
GTGC President

Member of the year.

Every year it is difficult and definitely this year was no exception but the 2012 MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD goes to Gary Ritchie for all the work he has done around the course, the retaining wall out the front the raking of the bunkers, the fitting of the roller door to the shed and further securing of the side shelter and the work done and continuing to be done on the pathways around the course.

Thank you Garry

Life Membership

As I mentioned earlier in my address it had been many years since the club had bestowed life membership and we will be looking at this closer over the coming years to recognise the exceptional hard work done by individuals for the club. To this end I wish to announce the granting of another Life Membership and that is to Betty Menzie.

Betty has put in untold hours over many years and I would like to call up Elly Andrews to talk a little about this.
