

2013 has been a steady year for us but there are some concerning trends. Our membership was the lowest it has been for the 7 years I have been maintaining the list. It was down to 89, some 24% less than it was 3 years ago when we had 118 members and it looks like decreasing even further this year. This has probably not been helped by a tighter economic climate where we are all looking to tighten our belts and this is the main reason we again decided not to increase membership fees for 2014. Decreasing and ageing membership is a challenge presenting at most clubs with younger people often opting not to take up membership in favour of other activities vying for their dollar.

The drop in membership numbers is also reflected in the size of our fields on Saturdays and also on our board where we have the capacity for 12 members but currently only have 10 and 2 of which have chosen not to renew this coming year. So without some more people standing up and coming on board we are looking to have only 8 Board members for 2014. While we are lucky in many respects to have so many great volunteers around the club helping out in so many ways, and more on this later, the more people we have on the board the better our decision making will be, the more inclusive we can be and the fresher the ideas will be and the more the load can be spread. I understand that time is precious and it may seem like a lot of work but it not as much as I personally expected it to be and it can be quite satisfying, so I urge you to seriously consider giving it a go.

So moving on to our main activities for the year:

- As we sat here last year the kitchen was all pulled apart and after the new floor was fitted with help from Bell Bay Aluminium we had new cupboards and sinks etc fitted and many thanks there to the ladies for a generous donation towards helping make that happen.
- With some wonderful outside assistance a wash down slab was laid on the eastern side of our shed and some plumbing fitted which enable us to efficiently wash down our machinery without the residue running down the road and blocking our drains
- That same help also laid a slab and constructed a concrete sand holding bunker that shelters the sand and reduces waste. And thanks also to Coffey Plant Hire for the donated precast blocks and assistance in transport and construction.
- And they also helped clear some drains and do some road repair while the machinery was here thanks to Les' cheeky request.
- Painting of the exterior clubhouse proper and the flat has been completed and I must say it looks very good. Thanks also there to Geoff and Flossy for doing large chunks of the work and to Hawk Signs and Graphics for the upgraded signs.
- Some new windows were fitted to the flat and other minor repairs completed and some internal painting carried out.
- We purchased a rake for the tractor which reduces many hours of manual labour required to clean up which has been put to good use with our rough looking neat and tidy and has helped present our course in a better light.

In fact I must say how great the course in general looks and the greens in particular – perhaps the best ever – We get many positive comments which is very gratifying. The back end of winter was very wet which made things a little difficult for a while as we had to close the bottom 3 holes which also had an affect our bottom line.

- We continue to get great advice from Ray Lowe and Bill has been doing a great job as Course Superintendent spending many hours out here. Sometimes he does not play golf on Sunday as he is expected to spend at least one day a week at home.
- The greens were cored in late October and vertidraind recently. Doing this every year has been one of the main reasons the greens are looking so good – they are becoming healthier and will consequently require less chemicals for control of fungus, insects and mildew etc.
- The greens have also been regularly been dethatched with Bill making good use of the hand dethatcher we have.
- Some 50 or more trees have been planted including some 25 purple birch, 15 Hakea shrubs plus some gums, all lovingly propagated and donated by our nurseryman extraordinaire Don Murray
- Don has also assisted in getting the new green out the front looking better following some concerns with the soil composition.
- New reels and bed knives have been fitted to the greens mower
- Many new sprinkler heads have been fitted and leaks and electrical problems sorted out.
- 2 new ball washers were fitted around the course
- Cape weed and Paspalum were targeted yet again. We are fighting a war there which is very difficult to win.
- Drainage was improved around the 1<sup>st</sup> to minimise flooding.
- Garry Ritchie levelled and raised the 3<sup>rd</sup> tee bed and has done some great work upgrading pathways as well as some other drainage work on the 6<sup>th</sup> and fitted new steps out here at the side entrance.
- Tree maintenance after storm damage

We did not have an end of year trophy night but opted instead to have a more family friendly BBQ after close of play. This looks like a format we can build on and it was pleasing to see that most of the trophy recipients were present, something that was not always the case when we held it later in the evening.

We also looked to make a family BBQ a more regular occurrence after play either on Saturdays or even after the midweek 9 hole competitions but there did not appear to be enough interest so that idea has been parked.

The ladies numbers looked like slipping, though they have rallied with some new members which is great, but during this time the board formalised that ladies are welcome to play on Saturday and compete evenly for prizes. This has not yet been taken up but the option remains open.

Our website continues to receive increasing traffic, some 5593 visits and 16155 page views in the past 12 months. That's a little over 100 hits per week. We continue to publish competition results weekly to help keep information fresh.

We have had a fairly smooth transmission over to the new national handicapping and slope system where we are all rated on Stableford points from each game regardless of the type of play and the fact we have a daily handicap that's dependant on which tees we play off at which club.

With a change of tenants in the flat we opted to list the flat with a local real estate agent.

We hosted a number of weddings and other functions that significantly help our bottom line and by all accounts the feedback we receive has been very positive.

And once again we held a number of successful tournaments in no small part due to the great organisational skills of Terry and the merry band of volunteer helpers we get with the catering and other behind the scenes help.

Volunteers, what would we do without them?

All of the great I work I have just talked about has been done by our volunteers. Bill on the course has had great help and many hours have been spent out here by Les, Keith Ozzie, Gary, Don and Warren *and others* cutting greens, fairways and rough. Poisoning, fertilizing herbiciding, fungiciding, raking brush cutting, drain cleaning, tree maintaining, lopping hosing, scarifying coring and maintaining and fixing machinery

We have our ever present bar staff Joan, Peter and David.

Joan and Glen helping out with the pennant catering and the ladies giving great support for the tournaments and events in the kitchen.

All our tournament helpers, starters and money collectors.

All the behind the scenes work that often goes unnoticed, some of it even gets done from overseas.

Thanks to Leigh Darcy for all his help, a busy man who drops all and comes and saves me when I am confused with an electrical problem on the sprinkler system.

Leigh also continues to be quite influential behind the scenes in making many of our projects happen.

Thanks to the vets for successfully running many events here throughout the year.

The match committee.

Thanks to our corporate and individual sponsors who often donate year in year out. A great and much welcome effort.

Thanks to our Patron Gary Ritchie, always ready to help out doing the bunkers, an odd job or donating a prize.

And of course thanks to all our board members. Your contribution is greatly valued and a special thanks to David and Terry for putting in so much for so long.

I would also like to thank Laurence Head and Tony Newport for their time and valuable input on the board - both very good level heads. Tony has a very heavy work load and Laurence as I think we are all aware has some back problems and we wish him all the best and a speedy recovery.

I know I don't see everything that goes on here and I apologise if I have missed anything which I am sure I have.

I also wish to briefly acknowledge the sad passing of Life Member Bill Smith and long time vet President Jock Millen.

So in closing I would just like to say our future success depends on continuing to be an inclusive club that is welcoming to all. We must be a place where people want to come and enjoy the atmosphere and our company. We can all play a part in that simply by being friendly and inviting and encouraging others to be a part of what we have.

#### Member of the year

Never an easy decision, with the work done by so many, however, this year I would like the 2013 MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD to go to our bar manager Peter Florissen.

Peter has done a lot of work for the club over many years. He is here many times every week helping behind the bar organising the stock and cleaning up. He has also spent a significant amount of time helping out with the painting of the clubhouse. Peter also helps out around the course on the machinery he makes himself available to open up and man the barbeque when we have visiting groups. Congratulations Peter.

#### Life Membership Terry Street

There is one other final announcement that I would like to make and that is to award life membership to someone who has done an enormous amount of work for the club and in many ways has been our heart and soul for many years. Congratulations Terry Street. We all know the great effort he has put into this club but I would like to just here briefly mention some items.

Has been on the Board since 1988 – that's some 26 years and has been Captain for the past 11 years during which he has organised the tournaments and required sponsorship. How many times have we seen him come in from his game of golf then while we are all enjoying a refreshment he has his head down in the competition book checking cards, doing count-backs and then delivering a fine summary at the close. Has been the main man in the match committee for as many years and has put many a fixture list together.

Terry has been a main driver of organising the Pennant teams as well as played in our pennant teams perhaps more times than any other player. He has always been ready to chip in and volunteer with any working bee and has been the main point of contact for our local school and has led and encouraged untold groups of school children onto and around our course introducing them to golf.

Terry has also been the Vet's President for the past 2 years

In 2010 Terry was inducted into Tasmanian Golfing Hall of fame as a volunteer based on the work he has done here and at Scottsdale so he certainly well qualifies for this recognition.

Congratulations again Terry.

Ian Harris  
President GTGC