

The World Amateur Teams Championship for **the Eisenhower Trophy**
Golden Jubilee Luncheon, 3 July 2008, at The Australian Golf Club
Celebrating Australian's Team Victory in 1958
Address by Peter A. Toogood



I am honoured to be here to pay tribute to R.F. (Bob) Stevens, Captain of Australia's 1958 team. Following the establishment of the World Amateur Golf Council (now the International Golf Federation) in 1957, Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 34th President of the United States of America, allowed his name to be used for the Championship Trophy.

Fittingly, the inaugural Championship was scheduled to be played over the St Andrews Links, Scotland, in October 1958, then to be played every second year. The championship comprised national teams of four playing 18 holes stroke play each day over four days with the best three scores each day counting in the final standing. Twenty nine nations gathered in St Andrews, Scotland in early October '58.

The selection process of the then Australian Golf Union announced only three of the four team members in August 1958. They were Doug Bachli, Bruce Devlin and myself. The fourth team member was to be named after the Australian Open and Amateur Championships in Adelaide early September.

There was a great deal of media speculation - most considered Barry Warren, Harry Berwick, Bob Toohey or Eric Routley would contest for the final team spot.



Peter Toogood and Bob Stevens

As well as performing well in the Australian Open, Bob Stevens won an open event in S.A. defeating professionals and amateurs and was chosen for the final spot in the team and was also named as Captain. Mr Prendergast was named manager. I shall be eternally grateful that Bob was chosen as Captain. I will explain my reasons later.

After three days and nights flying in a 'Constellation' we arrived at Prestwick airport. Fitted out in appropriate golf shoes for playing at St Andrews in autumn, we proceeded to St. Andrews. Bob, Doug and I had played St Andrews in 1954. Bruce, who celebrated his 21st birthday during the tournament, had not.

Three days of practice, the first together, then Bob organised for us to play with members of the other teams. I played with the Indian Captain and Manager, and an Argentinean Jorge Hedeshia. Recently I received a card from 'Penge' who visited the Golf Museum at Bothwell.

On the 8th October the event commenced and after the first day we, the Australian team, was in seventh place, 19 strokes behind. This first day was extremely cold with gale force winds. We all had hit-off times around midday when conditions were at their worst. Very few players broke 80, only those who hit off about 7:30am. There were many instances of balls being blown off greens and onto adjacent greens. For example, the Caddie was ready with ball marker and I ran up to the ball and marked as it stopped.

After the second day we moved to 4th place, 9 strokes behind the leaders and after the third day we moved to a tie in 3rd place, 4 strokes behind the leaders New Zealand. The Kiwis on 687 strokes led the USA on 690 with Great Britain and Ireland, the leaders for the first two days, and ourselves on 691 strokes.

I had the good fortune of posting a 71, the lowest score in the event. In this 3rd round I was playing with Charles Coe (USA). I noticed Bobby Jones, Captain/Manager of the USA team, in a golf-cart following us down the first hole. I was concentrating so hard to get too excited about him being there - after all he wasn't really watching me - he was watching his team player. He left for a couple of holes then returned to follow us to the end of the round. I was changing shoes when a well dressed man appeared before me.

“Mr Jones would like to see you now, in his suite. Follow me.”

What did I do wrong on the course? I was there with him for two hours having tea and scones. Bob, my captain, did not know where I was. I'm not sure I knew where I was. He asked how I had developed an American styled swing and technique - so much like Byron Nelson - where did I come from? I told him the story, that my father had played with Americans during the 1930s. He had cut out photos from the Byron Nelson book and pasted them around the fireplace. Then we talked about course management, shot selection, playing under pressure.

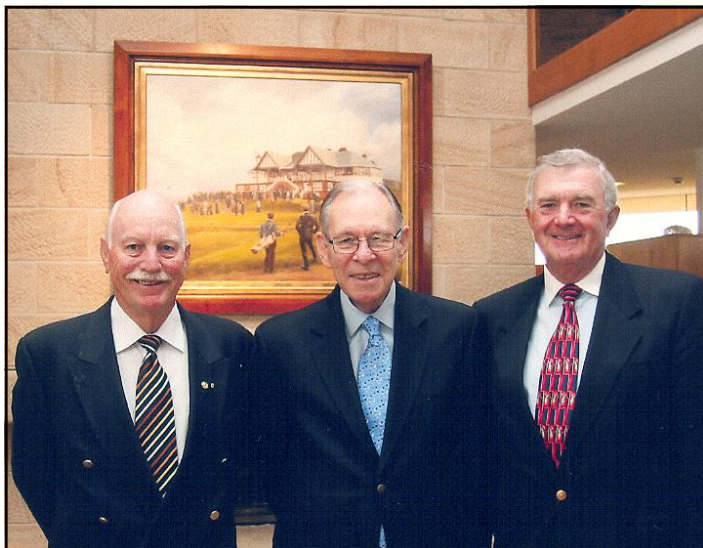
In the final round, New Zealand shot 234, the USA 228, Great Britain and Ireland 228 and our team 227. We had tied with the Americans.

On this last day, I was the last in the field. After Bob and Bruce had finished their rounds they came out to the 12th green and told me that if I finished with par figures we would win by one stroke. I parred 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th then came the 17th, a par 5. I was on in 2 (I hit a 4 iron), then putted to within 2 feet. The birdie putt lipped out, then I double hit the next 6 inch putt back handed – only my caddie and I saw what happened. As I walked from the 18th tee Bob came up to me and asked why I hit off last. I explained what happened. Said Bob, “I did worse than that – I'll tell you after – get your par”. I hit a wedge 6 feet from the hole. After I tapped in for par - Bob rushed up to me, told me we had tied and how he had a 2 stroke penalty. The Captain/Manager of the Indian team took me away to his hotel room to shield me from reporters.

Bruce Devlin shared the individual honour with R. Jack of Scotland and W. Hyndman of the USA. The 18 hole play-off between ourselves and the Americans was scheduled for Monday as play on the Old Course at St Andrew was not permitted on Sundays - a 'common'. Bob, our Captain, got our team away from St Andrews on Sunday - he took us down to Muirfield where we enjoyed a luncheon with the Honourable Company's Secretary, after which we played a very relaxed 9 holes.

In the play-off on Monday, Bruce Devlin shot 72 against Frank Taylor's 76, Doug Bachli shot 79 against Charles Coe 73, I shot 75 against Bill Hyndman's 78 and Bob and Bill Patton both shot 75s. Australia had won by 2 shots. We were the toast of St Andrews.

Throughout (the tournament) Bob initiated a positive approach and even after the first day, he said “in this competition, we can pick up a heap of strokes in one round.” In the hours between the final day and the play-off, no mention was made of my stupid indiscretion and I know Bob did not allow the others to mention it. Bob's leadership and purposefulness was responsible for our win – Thank you, Bob



Over sixty people connected with Australia's contests for the Eisenhower Cup attended the celebration at the Australian Golf Club. The Captains included (from left to right) Tony Gresham (1976), Bob Stevens (**1958**) and Phil Billings (1964 - **1966**).

The three winning teams shown in **bold**.

The Players included Phil Billings (1962-64-**66**), Colin Kaye (1974-76), Peter Toogood and Bob Stevens (**1958**), Phil Wood (1974-76), Barrie Baker (1964) and Tony Gresham (seven tournaments from 1968-1980)



The Team Managers included Bruce Nairn (**1996**), John Higson (1980) and Greg Simmons (1994-96).



Without a doubt this was a very special celebration and the enthusiasm was very high among those renewing old friendships. The celebration was of an historic victory fifty years before, but just as much, an important slice of Australia's golfing history was in the room. These in the main were the elite amateurs who were not tempted to become professional golfers and who set the high standard for amateur golf for many years

The 2008 Eisenhower Cup will be contested at the Grange and Royal Adelaide in October.

The Historians Group is an activity of the Australian Golf Heritage Society, which is supported by the NSW Golf Association, Women's Golf NSW, PGA-Australia and Golf Mart.

Golf Historians Seminars – note your diaries!

“Images from the Past”

The State and Mitchell Libraries have unexplored treasures waiting to be discovered, and this includes golf. *Bell's Life in Sydney and Sporting Reviewer*, of 28 November 1857 reported one of David Robertson's money matches in Hyde Park – Michael Sheret, *The Brassie's* sub-Editor held the original in his hands a few weeks ago. And there are the old photographs as well.

We have arranged with the Library's staff to hold a Briefing just for golf historians on accessing their resources. It is a talk and walk to hear about the Collections and visit two of the reading rooms. There will be two 90 minutes sessions, for groups of 20-25, from 11am – 12.30pm and 1.30 – 2.30pm on **Tuesday 16th September 2008**. There is **NO COST** for this seminar.

Catering for this activity is your own arrangement and own cost.. The nearest lunch place is the Chifley Square Food Hall in Hunter Street. The Library coffee shop adjoins the book store off Macquarie Street.

The entrance to the Mitchell Library is around the corner from Macquarie Street opposite the Botanic Gardens. We meet our guide in the marble foyer **15 minutes before the starting time**.

“Exploring the Archives”

Women's Golf NSW are getting their archives into good shape, thanks to the determined efforts of Jeannie Walker and Joanne Wilson with support from The History Company on the database. Frances Crampton AM, Women's Golf CEO and a member of the AGHS Management Committee extends an invitation to golf historians to hear from Jeannie, a well known golf historian and formerly a professional Archivist about their project. Kylie Rees from the History Company will demonstrate the database and explain the synergies with the NSWGA database which the History Company also manages.

This Archive is a very valuable extension of the records available to golf clubs. It's likely your research of almost any golf history topic involving women will be incomplete without browsing what Women's Golf has waiting for you.

The seminar is 10am for tea/coffee on **Friday 14th November 2008** at WGNSW's offices at Unit 53, 11-21 Underwood Road Concord. There is some parking in the complex and adjacent to a sporting field opposite this office complex or a STA 525 bus runs between Parramatta and Strathfield. A sandwich lunch follows and the cost is \$25 ph.

Booking is essential! Notify your attendance:

For the State Library Images by Monday 8 September; for WGNSW Archives by Friday 7 November to:

AGHS Golf Historians Group,
PO Box 23 Glenorie NSW 2157
(02) 9652 1430 or
barry.leithhead@bigpond.com