

# Keith Alexander

“...one of the few accomplished Canadian golfers who take their love of the sport from the course to the boardroom with the same zeal and commitment.”

The Alberta Golf Hall of Fame

## A True Renaissance Man



he public record on Keith Alexander reads like the story of a true Renaissance Man: a well-educated, diverse thinker excelling in a number of fields. From Golf Canada Hall of Fame inductee to MLA, Keith Alexander's remarkable abilities range from the athletic to the intellectual.

The son of a plaster contractor in Vulcan Alberta, Keith was an all-round high school athlete who golfed occasionally. He only took up golf seriously at the age of 20 when his father exchanged an outstanding bill for ten lessons in 1950 at Martin Allred's indoor golf school in Calgary.

Keith Alexander won all the 1960 major events in city, provincial and national competitions, including the Canadian Amateur.  
*Photo Credit: Calgary GCC.*





Allred, who also taught Hall of Fame inductee Bob Wylie, spent a winter with Keith and the results are in the record book. In 1960, Keith won all the major city and provincial events and capped the year by winning the Canadian Amateur. Most notably, he would go on to six Alberta Amateur Championships, participate on 16 international teams, and become a Canadian Golf Hall of Fame member.

"I gave up all other sports," Keith recalls, "for tournament golf."

### Phi Beta Kappa

One of the first Canadians to develop his game in an American university program, Keith quickly displayed proof that he had the talent to become an international golf competitor, and the scholastic ability to match.

Attending on a scholarship, he captained the University of Colorado's golf team for three years and won its first individual title while compiling a comparable record in the classroom where he received four citations for academic excellence and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, the national scholastic fraternity.

In 1957, married and with a son, he borrowed the money to join the Calgary Golf and Country Club because, he says, in those days "That's where the best players were congregating." Those players included Doug Silverberg, Bob Wylie, and Joe Ferguson.

### "We really fought for those positions."

Keith credits the competitive atmosphere at the Calgary GCC with improving the level of everybody's game to the point where positions on international teams became the prize.

"We really fought for those positions."

Keith also used his talents to benefit other golfers through his commitment to the Alberta Golf Association from 1968 to 1982; he served as president in 1977.

While all his worldly successes have been rewarding for Keith, the most revealing sign of his Renaissance Man diversity is in the strength he derives from his spirituality.

"I grew up in a strongly Christian home that believed in doing things as the Scripture says – whatever you do, do it with all your might."

At one time, he considered joining the ministry but was not completely sure it was the right direction to take his life. He continued golfing and balanced the sport with a dedication to his family, his community and his career which included printing and publishing, investment banking and a stint as an MLA.

He retired in 1992 and golfed "with only modest success" on the Seniors Tour.

### A Full Circle

Most important to Keith, however, is maintaining his lifelong spiritual commitment which includes participation in Links Players, an international Christian golfers group.

"Life has always been much more than golf. I have a belief in the spiritual nature of Man which transcends everyday events and gives life its fuller meaning."



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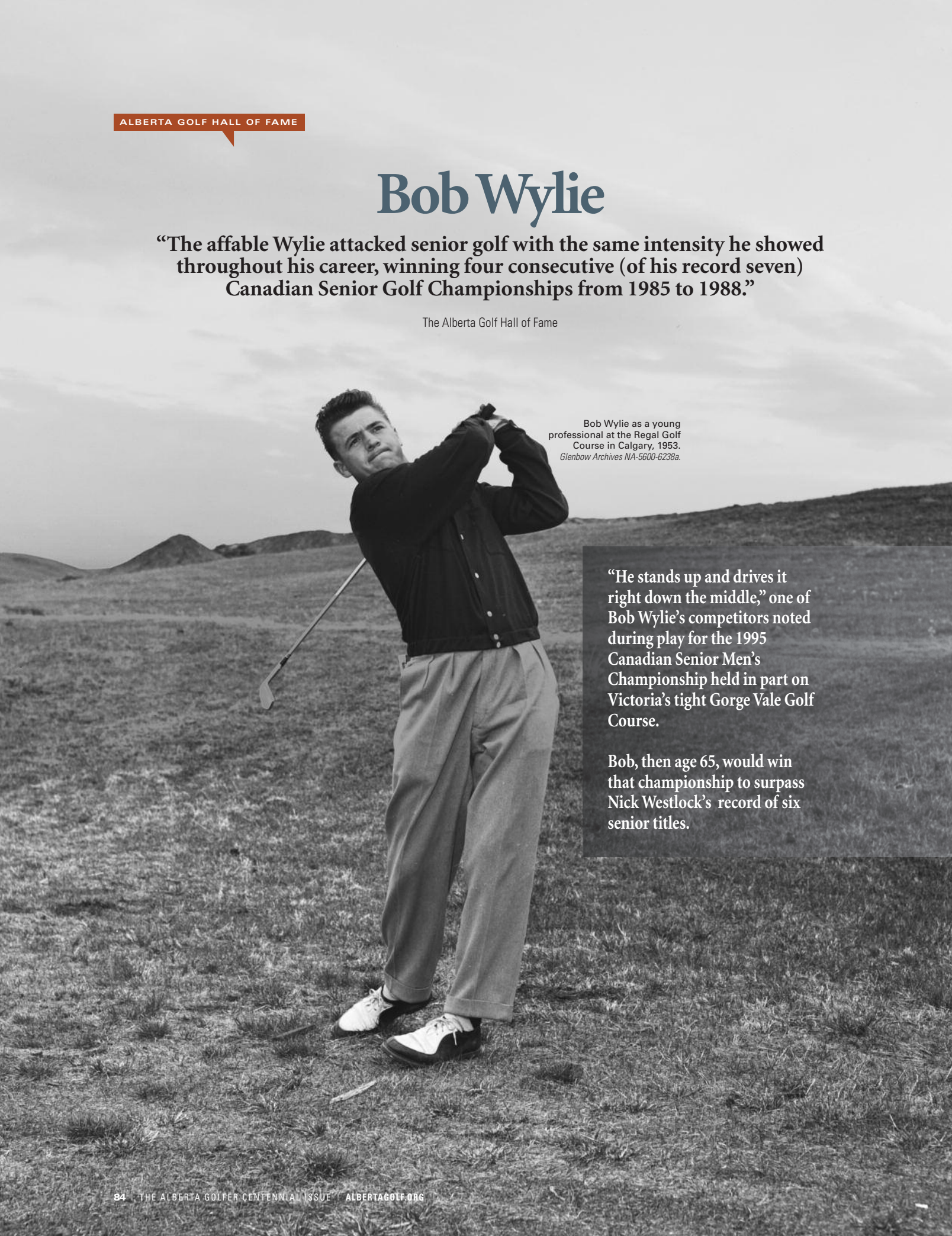
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# Bob Wylie

**“The affable Wylie attacked senior golf with the same intensity he showed throughout his career, winning four consecutive (of his record seven) Canadian Senior Golf Championships from 1985 to 1988.”**

The Alberta Golf Hall of Fame



Bob Wylie as a young professional at the Regal Golf Course in Calgary, 1953.  
*Glenbow Archives NA-5600-6238a.*

“He stands up and drives it right down the middle,” one of Bob Wylie’s competitors noted during play for the 1995 Canadian Senior Men’s Championship held in part on Victoria’s tight Gorge Vale Golf Course.

Bob, then age 65, would win that championship to surpass Nick Westlock’s record of six senior titles.

# Doug Silverberg

“When he needed them to, most went in.”

Keith Alexander

## A Competitive Personality



t 6'1" and 195 pounds in his most competitive years – from 1957 to 1965 – Doug Silverberg brought a combination of tremendous athletic ability and a dominating presence to the course.

Keith Alexander, a Canadian Golf Hall of Famer and perennial competitor of Doug Silverberg's, always marvelled at his friend's ability to establish control of a game.

“He is dominant in personality, style and the way he approaches the game. Fellow competitors over the years will always remember the way he settled over an important putt – those huge hands enfolding the grip – staring down the line with a look that virtually dared the ball not to go in.

“When he needed them to, most went in.”

An undeniable force on the Alberta golf scene since the late 1940s, Doug Silverberg won every major provincial championship in his home province including the Juvenile, Junior, Amateur, Open and Match Play.

In addition, Doug won the Canadian Junior Championship in 1950 and the Canadian Senior Championship in 1994. He also represented Canada at the Commonwealth Tournaments, Americas Cup and World Amateur Team Championship.

Starting as a caddy at age ten in his home town of Red Deer, Doug was soon pedalling his bike to the course in the evenings to golf. His school principal recognized Doug's exceptional talent and often found a way for him to stop by the course 'and deliver some nails' and while there, hit a few balls. Doug's competitive nature was established in the junior tournaments. “I never lost as a junior,” he recalls.



Doug Silverberg powered through golf courses with a control and determination that his competitors often found unnerving. *Photo Credit: Calgary GCC.*

Winning the junior championships, to Doug, meant more than a trophy. It was the only way for him to compete outside the province as interprovincial play only allowed one junior from each province to compete.

“I knew I'd better not lose the provincial because it was the only way for me to get out of Alberta.” As well, as the province's top junior he received an honorary membership at the Calgary Golf and Country Club which offered him the opportunity to play on grass greens.

Like many young men of the era, golf was often the summer sport that complemented the tremendously popular hockey – another sport that Doug excelled in. He attended Colorado College on a hockey scholarship.

On his return to Calgary, he was hired by London Life who recognized his potential as a businessman, and he proved the company right by eventually becoming a regional manager. Like Bob Wylie, his golfing contemporary at the Calgary GCC who had also chosen a sales position, Doug had the ideal opportunity to merge his career with golf.

While Doug claims his best years were from 1957 to 1965, Keith Alexander recalls a 1971 Commonwealth Cup match in New Zealand that showed “Silver” hadn't lost his competitive nature or his golf ability in the 1970's.

Keith had just halved his round and went to tell Doug, who was ready to hit a dicey pitch over a bunker to the 18th hole, that they needed a win from him to put away the match.

“He looked mildly disgusted with me for only getting a half in my match – then he knocked it stiff to the hole, thus winning his match and wrapping up the Commonwealth Cup for Canada.”

About that time, the responsibility of being the father to a young family had set in for Doug and he chose to put golf into second place. He would serve as President of the Calgary Golf Association for three years and be inducted into the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame in 1985 and the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame in 1989.

“Golf,” he said almost a decade later as he reflected on his decision to put his family first, “is a very time consuming and very selfish activity if you play it competitively.”

One wonders if Doug Silverberg could play it any other way.



# Betty Stanhope-Cole

**“To be a happy person, I couldn’t have gone any other way.”**

**L**n measuring Betty Stanhope-Cole’s accomplishments as a golfer, the question is not which championships she’s won, but how many times she’s won them. From the Provincial Championship (17 times) to the Edmonton City Championship (25 times), Betty owned the provincial record book from the 1950’s to the 1980’s.

As well, she’s won Canadian junior, amateur, and closed championships, been runner-up for the senior title, and competed internationally for Canada. Just to keep her life interesting, Betty also skipped three Alberta Championship Curling Teams. Her team placed second in the 1978 Lassie and has won 13 zone and Edmonton Championships.

Indicative of Betty’s unrelenting ability to compete is that in winning her 25th Edmonton golf championship, she defeated Heather Lee whose grandmother (Hazel Jamieson) and mother (Gale Lee) Betty had also golfed against.

But, in a world where high profile athletes with exemplary records are expected to be outgoing, charismatic and even inspirational, Betty is an anomaly: she’d rather play golf than talk about golf.

“I’m pretty much an introvert,” she says. “I don’t deal well with a lot of people.”

Today, Betty is a grandmother in her early 70’s and lives in a southwest Edmonton main floor condo overlooking a small park. “It’s very functional,” she says, “and it has an open feel that I like.”

She has dark steady eyes that are a challenge to meet and she moves with a fluid, youthful gracefulness that must be the envy of other senior ladies.

The only acknowledgement that Betty makes of her golfing accomplishments is contained in a basement corner of her condo where she displays photographs of some of the golf friends she has made.

Betty grew up in the oilfield town of Turner Valley, south of Calgary, where in the 1940’s her father was a toolpusher and later a drilling foreman.

Even though the town had a pasture-type golf course, Betty didn’t take up golf with her parents, preferring school sports and horseback riding. The family followed the oil industry to Edmonton after the 1947 Leduc discovery and there Betty accidentally discovered golf as a young teenager.



Betty Stanhope-Cole, (far L), as she entered her first tournaments. ca. 1952.

“It was really a set-up,” she says. Her father had booked himself a lesson with Alex Olynk and then, mysteriously, had to cancel. Her mother then arranged for Betty to take the lesson.

By the end of the summer Betty was working at the driving range with a crowd of boys and hitting all the golf balls she could but rarely playing a match.

“It was ideal ... the right training for me. Alex was so good with juniors and beginners.”

In 1951 Betty’s parents joined the Highlands Golf Club.

“I remember going down the hill to the golf club the first time ... and there was Henry (Martell) by the pro shop. He had a mat and was hitting balls off a tee.

“I was just in awe of his wonderful golf swing and how far he could hit a ball.

“I spent most of my days there. I hung around the pro shop a lot. There weren’t any girls around my age so I played a lot by myself. You could just go on a fairway and hit balls.”

Despite not having played many matches, Betty entered the city juniors.

“In those days it was 21 and under. I got to the 8th hole and I hit into the trees on the right. I went for the green and ended up playing all the way in the bush. I think I scored in the double figures.

“I might have come second. I don’t know. But I do know I didn’t win.”

## Cathy Galusha McMillan



Betty Stanhope-Cole was honoured in Edmonton as a park overlooking the Highlands GC was named after her.



By 1953 Betty, age 15, began to win. "At first I wasn't going to enter the provincial juniors," she says, but was persuaded by her father and others.

"It was match play. Three rounds. I got to the finals against Mona Morup. She was the daughter of the greenkeeper from the Calgary Golf and Country Club.

"I wasn't nervous or anything. I just played and I beat her."

"My dad seemed really pleased. That got me hooked."

Three decades later, Betty was still winning.

While she doesn't like talking at length about her golf, Betty opens up quickly when asked about Henry Martell. "I loved playing with Henry. He was so good to me. I caddied for him and I learned a lot about golf that way from him.

"He would talk to me. About how to handle a bad lie. About wind. About course management."

But, she says, her interest in golf has now changed. "Today I'm a fair-weather golfer. I've played in the rain and in storms. I've done that and I'm done with it.

"I got burned out," she explains. "I played at a high competitive level. I never got away from the stress. Now I have almost no interest. Part of me would like to play more, but part of me says 'Why?'"

In looking back on her golf career, she understands the price competitive golf has cost her and what she has

had to overcome: from a divorce to injuries, to scoliosis and a kidney transplant.

"To be a competitive golfer, or any athlete, you have to have a bit of selfishness to succeed."

"But I had to do it. To be a happy person I couldn't have gone any other way."

Her last competitions were in the late 1990's as a senior. Since then Betty has been playing off-and-on with a ladies group at the Highlands who, as friend 80-year-old Enid Hart humorously notes "found her quite intimidating at first. We were embarrassed to ask her to play with us.

"We didn't think we could help her with her game."

The group, which likes to take a little time to discuss the scenery while golfing, has learned that Betty is not a 'chatterer' nor will she often stay afterwards and have a meal in the clubhouse.

"She's usually busy. She doesn't like sitting around with the girls. When she does, she rarely talks about her golf — you never hear her brag — but she will talk about her world travels. When she opens up, she's a lot of fun," said Hart.

However, the group has learned that on the course Betty can still get impatient when players are talking, not golfing.

"We think she's mellowed — but every now and then you'll hear her say, 'Come on. Speed it up.'"

In the summer of 1963, 16-year-old Cathy Galusha left the sand greens of her rural, nine-hole Ponoka course to play Canada's best junior girls on the manicured Rivermead fairways and grass greens in Hull, Quebec. She returned home as the Canadian Junior Girls Champion and was treated by her hometown to a celebration parade and given the keys to the town by the Mayor.

Looking back to that summer, Cathy is still slightly overwhelmed by the town's warm response. Then, almost as an afterthought, she points out something that many golf historians have overlooked: "I was probably the last Canadian Champion to come from a course with sand greens."

Playing sand greens, she says, was almost like playing a sand trap — the ball doesn't roll so where it landed was where you played it. The sand was mixed with oil to keep it in place.

Because the golfers ahead of you always left the sand tracked up, you were allowed to mat the sand - smooth it with a rake or board to give you a smooth putting surface.

In a career that encompasses 14 provincial teams, including the senior squad which won four of five Canadian titles, one of Cathy's best memories is from the 1963 Junior Championships when Betty Stanhope-Cole and Rae Milligan, competing in the Ladies event, ran to her side to congratulate her. "I'll never forget the way they shouted 'You won!'"

And, as far as the sand greens go, Cathy doesn't miss them. "Your shoes and socks were always black by the end of a round."

valuable during the boom for golfers to afford. In fact, many older 'country' clubs that were by then surrounded by growing cities found themselves under pressure to cash in on the good times by selling their land to real estate speculators.

Thankfully, the members resisted these temptations but often had to have tremendous legal savvy on their side when shareholder battles took place.

Justice Earl Lomas, a member of the Calgary Golf and Country Club, helped solve one battle and later noted, "The issue was really that the shares were purchased to join a golf club, not to make a real estate investment."

One interesting course development outside Calgary, Redwood Meadows Golf and Country Club, was opened in 1976 on land leased from the Tsuu T'ina Nation and in 2004 and 2005, hosted the PGA Nationwide tour.

### The Provincial Government Steps Up To The Tee

When oil and land prices fell in the 1980's, golf entrepreneurs could afford to build courses and satisfy the pent up demand for tee times. It wasn't only private enterprise that stepped up to build courses: The Government of Alberta also took the initiative and backed the development of what would be 36 holes in Kananaskis Country.

Lougheed's government created Kananaskis Country in 1977 to combine wilderness protection with recreation and some development. Then, financed by the Heritage Trust Fund, the Kananaskis Country Golf Course opened with two courses in 1983, both designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr.

### Alberta Golfers of All Ages Continue to Shine

While the 1970's and 1980's may have been a rollercoaster ride for golf entrepreneurs, for Alberta golfer Bob Wylie it appeared that he was steadily improving all the time. A multiple championship winner in the 1960's, Bob showed astounding endurance when, in 1985, he began an unprecedented series of seven Canadian Seniors championships, starting with four consecutive titles in 1985.

Pat Heisler, a golfer of great talent from the Earl Grey Golf Club, began her series of over 40 major championship wins in the late 1960's and continued on to the mid 1980's with club senior championship wins.

Marilyn O'Connor, who relocated to Alberta in the late 1970's, competed internationally and interprovincially through the 1970's and 1980's and won her final Alberta Ladies Championship in 1994.

Ken Tamke, a Medicine Hat native, competed in the 1970's and 1980's for Alberta in Willingdon Cup play, for Canada in Commonwealth play and won the Inaugural Alberta Mid-Amateur Championship in 1986.

## ALBERTA GOLF HALL OF FAME

### Marilyn O'Connor



In addition to being an Alberta Golf Hall of Famer, Marilyn was inducted into the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame in 1999 and the Pacific Northwest Golf Association Hall of Fame in 2005.

The daughter of a golf professional, Marilyn was destined to be a golfer. She grew up in British Columbia where, in 1963, she won her first of three junior championships.

Her international record includes: twelve Canadian team participations; a member of the winning Commonwealth team in 1979; the 1971 New Zealand Foursome Champion with Jocelyne Bourassa; the 1972 International 4-Ball Championship; four qualifications for the US Amateur; and one qualification for the British Amateur.

After marrying Don O'Connor in 1978, Marilyn relocated to Alberta where she would win six Provincial Championships from 1983 to 1994.

She believes her win of the 1986 Canadian Amateur was her most exciting victory, coming as it did, later in her career.

## ALBERTA GOLF HALL OF FAME

### Pat Heisler



Pat Heisler won the Canadian Senior Ladies Championship in 1975 and was runner up for the same title in 1971 and 1974.

Between 1971 and 1979 she was the Alberta Senior Champion no less than six times and an Alberta senior team member for eleven straight years. Three times she won the Calgary Senior Ladies Championship title while winning the Earl Grey Ladies Club Championship title eight times and the clubs' senior ladies championship on ten occasions.

Although it appears that Pat's golf game blossomed after she turned forty-five, the fact of the matter is that she dedicated herself to teaching her teenage girls and their friends the game in her younger years. However, when she decided to play the game competitively the results were simply incredible and, of course, of Hall of Fame stature.

For Pat the most important part of golf was teaching her teenage girls and their friends. For their enthusiasm and talent, her girls in the 1970s became known as the "Hustling Heislens."



# Henry Martell

“A great golfer playing at the wrong time.”

Clyde Martell, Henry's son.



Henry Martell's best golfing years coincided with the Great Depression of the 1930's and World War II, 1939 – 1945 when golf tournament prize money had dwindled to almost nothing.

During the lean years between 1936 and 1947 inclusive, Henry Martell worked, raised a family and still managed to win nine Alberta Amateur Championships and might have won two more if the events weren't cancelled for two years during the war.

In addition, between winning the 1935 Edmonton City Amateur when he was 22, to the the 1971 CPGA Senior when he was 59, Henry also won four Alberta and Saskatchewan Opens, the Canadian Amateur and two CPGA Championships.

He also posted some astounding lifetime statistics provided by his son Clyde:

- A clean sweep in 1936 of the Edmonton and Alberta Open and Amateur titles
- Winning the 1944 Alberta Open by 23 strokes
- Shooting 8 birdies in a row
- Shooting a 65 at age 66 to become Canada's youngest golfer to shoot his age

When asked why his gifted father never tried playing as a touring professional, Clyde's reply reflects his father's pragmatic attitude:

“Sponsors willing to provide backing were hard to find. Golfers couldn't even afford to pay their expenses from prizes in those days. They were living in their cars.”

Henry and his three athletic brothers (Burns, Herman and Emil), the sons of a Polish blacksmith, grew up knowing that if they wanted to play sports, they had to pay their own way. They worked paper routes and whatever else they could do to afford sports. They spent their spare time at the local YMCA playing basketball, table tennis, and even managed to get a start as tennis players. Henry, for example, won the city junior tennis championships twice. The brothers were competitive with each other at every sport, but especially golf.

“They could all shoot their age when they were older,” Clyde says. “They all had tremendous hand - to - eye coordination.”

As a young man Henry considered his athletic choices carefully before choosing golf over tennis or basketball. Golf, he reasoned, was the only sport where you saw old players competing and that made it the right choice for a young man thinking ahead.

From a start playing on a makeshift course with an old iron he and his friends found, Henry at age 18 began developing his smooth golf swing over the winter by swinging between attic rafters and driving balls into a tarp.

Henry's classic, self-taught swing, Clyde says, would eventually be known throughout North America by professionals such as Bobby Locke, Sam Snead, Byron Nelson, Gary Player, Arnold Palmer, and Babe Zaharias who played exhibitions with Henry.

Henry Martell's classic, self-taught swing was envied by professionals throughout North America.  
Photo Credit: Highlands Golf Club.



Always the entrepreneur, Henry introduced golf carts early on to the Highlands Golf Club. Henry (right) with his golfing friend Jim Harper. Photo Credit: Highlands Golf Club.

Married and starting a family when he won the Canadian Amateur in 1939, Henry had to make a choice: get a job or continue the almost futile struggle to make golf pay during the War. The choice must have been difficult for Henry as he was named “Canada's Golfer of the Year” by *The Canadian Golfer* magazine.

The Martell brothers had all worked during the Depression in the GWG clothing factory in Edmonton. Henry had hoped to become a teacher and passed the one year course but the only positions available were in remote northern towns such as Fort Chipewyan.

However, because he was well-known as a golfer, Henry was offered a job by the golfing chief of the Edmonton Police, Reg Jennings. Henry accepted, thankful that he would have a steady income.

## The Golfing Policeman

Henry served with the Edmonton Police for nine years and, as he continued to make headlines in the sports section, he became known as ‘The Golfing Policeman.’

After the war ended and golf began to make a resurgence, Henry became the head professional at the Highlands Golf Club where he would stay from 1948 until his retirement in 1979.







Henry Martell with his protégé Betty Stanhope-Cole (L) and Canadian Champion Marlene Stewart Streit.  
Photo Credit: Highlands Golf Club.

### A Couple of Sets of Clubs

As the club pro, Henry was expected to provide the shop inventory and teach lessons, without financial backing from the club.

"It was tough starting out," Clyde remembers. "He had a couple of sets of clubs to sell and some balls. Everything he had went into building up the shop. We couldn't even afford a car."

Henry, it turned out, was an astute businessman. He expanded his business every way possible and didn't mind working hard to save money. He and his brother, Herman, built an addition to the shop and began a lucrative year-round club repair business that brought them customers from shops all over the Edmonton area.

"He spent all his time at the Highlands. He would open his shop at 6 and close it at 11. But it wasn't until the 1960's that he started to have some money."

### "Go take lessons from Henry Martell."

Henry turned his natural aptitude for golf towards teaching and immediately became recognized as the man to go to when you were having trouble.

"Go take lessons from Henry Martell," Sam Snead told an Edmonton golfer having swing problems. Jackie Burke, a World Golf Hall of Fame member, offered Henry a teaching position in Houston.

While there are untold golfers in Alberta today, of all abilities, who give Henry credit for improvement to their game, none is more notable than Betty Stanhope-Cole who joined the Highlands as a teenager and went on, with Henry's guidance, to join him in the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame. (See article page 110)

In addition to his regular teaching, Henry participated in the television-based golf instruction series sponsored by CBC and hosted by Ernie Afaganis: Tee to Green. He also participated in the *Par 27* televised events, winning it four times.

### "A Heart of Gold"

In his later years Henry developed a reputation for being gruff and impatient, but few knew that he was living in almost constant pain.

If Henry had a weak spot, it was his knees. He had 11 operations on them without long-term relief.

"He was eating aspirins like crazy when he did the CBC series – and his swing was perfect," Clyde says.

Ray Milne, who took over the pro shop when Henry retired, worked with him starting as a club cleaner in 1962. For Ray, Henry was a father figure respected as much for his life lessons as his golf game.

"I know he was sometimes short with people because of the pain in his knees," Ray says, "but he had a heart of gold. Henry was a second father to me.

"To work with a man like Henry was more than I could ever hope for. He taught me anything I wanted to learn. The more I asked, the more he gave.

"Here was somebody who could work as hard as he did, golf only six months a year and still accomplish all his feats ... I don't think anybody will ever equal that."

While Ray can – and loves to – tell hundreds of stories about Henry's golf accomplishments, there is an unusual story he believes sums up Henry's straightforward attitude and determination.

At a time when passersby could stroll along the edge of the Highlands course by the river, Henry hit a new ball near the river and saw a boy dart out of the woods, grab the ball and start running away.

Henry yanked a club from his bag – it turned out to be his favorite Calamity Jane putter – and chased the boy.

"It brought out the policeman in Henry," Ray says with a laugh.

After running almost 600 yards with knees long past repair, Henry caught up to the boy and tripped him with the putter – which broke.

Henry pulled the boy to his feet, admonished him more than severely, and returned to his game. With his broken putter and recovered ball in hand, Henry told his partner:

"I'll guarantee that kid will never steal another golf ball."