

## GUY CATCHPOLE Sales and Marketing Director RETIRES

**Guy Catchpole, Sales and Marketing Director of the Ipswich based grass and farm machinery manufacturers Ransomes Sims & Jefferies, retired in September after 38 years with the group.**

Guy, a long serving Vice-President of the B.G.G.A., joined Ransomes under a special apprenticeship scheme in 1948 after service with the Rifle Brigade. Following an intensive course of training in the factory he joined Ransomes distribution company in Edinburgh where he gained his commercial experience.

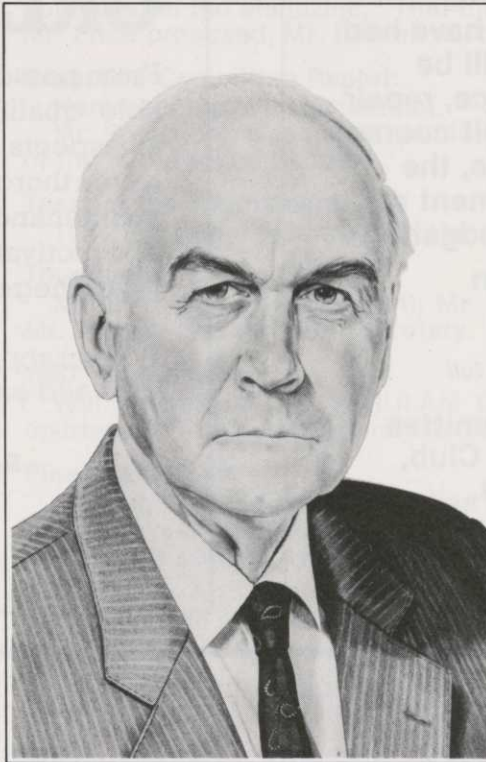
After seven years in Scotland Guy Catchpole moved south to operate in the South East as farm machinery representative.

### FOLLOWING IN FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

Despite his deep interest in farm machinery he jumped at the opportunity in 1960 to become Lawnmower Sales Manager to begin 26 years of his association with greenkeepers. He was following the family tradition as his father, Stanley Catchpole, had been Ransomes lawnmower representative in the South East.

The first major move by the company to become a world leader in mechanised grass machinery for the professional user was made in 1964 when, after careful market research, the Motor Triple was introduced. Another significant advance was made in 1968, following a worldwide study, when the Hydraulic 5/7 gang mower was put onto the market. This was the first machine to be totally hydraulically operated. Both the Motor Triple and the Hydraulic 5/7 are still in production and continue to sell successfully today. It was from these two units that Ransomes further developed their range of self propelled and tractor drawn cylinder mowers to occupy a dominant position in world markets.

Feedback from the field continued and while new products were being created by the engineers, new overseas markets were being exploited. Guy Catchpole's philosophy was that export markets can only be built up with a strong home market acting as the springboard for success overseas. "You have to make sure when you move into a new market" said Guy Catchpole "that the right products are going to be available and staff are there to give the distributors adequate back-up in the field". These have been the basis of Ransomes export successes with overseas sales in 1985 accounting for 60% turnover.



*Illustration by  
Stephen Spellman  
for Golf Greenkeeping*

### APPOINTED TO THE BOARD

In his capacity of Sales and Marketing Director, he was appointed to the Executive Board in 1977 and the Main Board three years later. He has also served on Ransomes subsidiary company boards in the U.S.A., Germany and France. He organised the transfer of the Australian company to Victa and sales to that market exceeded £1 million in 1985.

One of his great interests has been the growth of the Group's business in North America. The opportunity for a total plan for the U.S.A. came when Guy was approached at the Portland Show in 1977 and was asked if he could assist in the overseas distribution of a range of rotaries made in the U.S.A. This approach resulted in Ransomes acquiring the rotary manufacturer and forming Ransomes Inc. Based on a 40 acre site in Wisconsin the American company distributes the Group's products in the U.S.A. The machines made by Ransomes Inc. are, with the exception of North America, marketed worldwide from Ipswich.

An important change, he feels, is the emphasis now being placed by local authorities throughout the world for cost effective turf grass maintenance. This has caused us, he says, to develop, in conjunction with these authorities, high workrate machines such as the Motor 213D and the Motor 350D as well as triple mowers for golf greens maintenance. These all incorporate technology learned as a direct result of the Motor Triple and Hydraulic 5/7 gang mower introduced some 20 years ago.

### GRASS MACHINERY A MAJOR PART OF THE BUSINESS

In 1960 grass machinery contributed barely 25% of Group turnover. Today it is nearly 80% and the 1970 turnover of £3 million had grown to £47.62 million in 1985. "This has been a team effort and we would not be where we are today had it not been for the major contribution and hard work of everyone in the Ransomes Group and the support of our dealers in Britain and Overseas", said Guy.

Three years ago he took on the additional responsibility of Sales and Marketing Director of the Farm Machinery Division. A re-organisation under his guidance has already resulted in a significant share of the plough market in the U.K. being regained and the beginnings of new developments in the campaign to gain more overseas business.

Described by some as a workaholic Guy Catchpole has certainly been dedicated to Ransomes and hearing the Company's name taken in vain is an anathema to him. He has not been known for doing things by half. Once he gets his teeth into something he sees it through to the bitter end.

### GOLF, FISHING AND WALKING

During his well earned retirement Guy Catchpole will continue living in Ipswich where he and his wife Myra, whom he met whilst in Scotland, will be able to spend more time together. They enjoy golf, and visiting their friends in Scotland for golf, fishing and walking.

A great supporter of Greenkeepers, Guy has taken every opportunity possible to meet Association members both on their courses and at Association meetings.

Members of the BGGGA would like to express their thanks to him and his staff for the help and encouragement always freely given and wish him a very active, healthy and enjoyable retirement.