

Guy Catchpole retires



Guy Catchpole was given a framed John Campbell cartoon by *Greenkeeper* publisher Michael Coffey (right).

THAT familiar glint in the eye of Guy Catchpole on the eve of his retirement from Ransomes reminded me that he has never lost his dry sense of humour and interest in people during the 25 years I have known him, writes *John Campbell*.

His affable manner and extensive knowledge of the grass machinery business has always been a great asset to the company and has earned him the respect and esteem of a wide circle of friends in the sports and recreation industry.

Guy joined Ransomes in 1948, became manager of the warehouse in Scotland afterwards and was appointed grass machinery sales manager at Ipswich in 1960. Eventually, he progressed to sales director for grass and farm machinery after joining the main board in 1980.

He was responsible for a number of Ransomes feature films, including *The Royal And Ancient Game* and *The Training Of Golf Greenkeepers*. For many years, he took a close interest in the activities of the Institute of Parks and Recreation and was instrumental in Ransomes making a film celebrating the institute's

golden jubilee.

Guy has been involved with many significant developments within the company's grass machinery division, including greater emphasis on machines for the professional user, the introduction of the hydraulic gang mower followed by the all-hydraulic self-propelled mower, forming a countrywide network of specialist dealers, which entailed an extensive programme of dealer training that continues and the purchase of Wisconsin Marine in America, now Ransomes Inc, to provide the company with a base for expansion in US markets and a range of rotary mowers for its worldwide dealer network.

Guy has always maintained an active interest in the affairs of greenkeeping and has done much to further the profession's progress. He is a vice-president of the BGGGA and past-chairman of the British Lawn Mower Manufacturers Federation.

A keen golfer, he has served as captain and green chairman of Woodbridge GC, where his wife Myra is captain of the ladies. With more time on his hands, he will undoubtedly do more fishing at

some of his favourite Scottish haunts.

The good wishes of us all go to Guy and Myra for a long and happy retirement. Lang may their lum reek!

Guy's successor

Keir Wyatt, 43, who joined Ransomes' main board this year as sales and marketing director, takes over from Guy. Keir worked with a farm machinery dealer and tractor manufacturer, where he held senior posts in the marketing, selling and servicing of products through a UK and overseas dealer organisation, before joining Ransomes.

"I have been encouraged by the co-operation and help from all at Ransomes and also by our dealers, in this country and overseas," Keir said. He believes Ransomes' improved performance during recent years is due to the company's substantial investment in new product development and the latest in manufacturing technology. "This is a policy we shall continue to further improve our position in today's competitive world markets."



Keir Wyatt.

Greater use is now made of robot and automatic techniques. Manufacture is controlled by a site-based central computer, which incorporates all systems from production control to financial analysis.

Managing director Bob Dodsworth said: "We are proud of our past, but we are neither dependent on it or live in it. We accept the reality of a highly competitive world and to be successful we must continue to offer products that get the job done at a price customers can afford."

Among an interesting range of new equipment is the Ransomes GT triple greens mower, which does not replace the Triplex 171, but is seen as an addition to the range of greens maintenance equipment.

This machine is designed with a low centre of gravity for working on slopes. It is equipped with a Kubota twin-cylinder water-cooled diesel engine (12hp), which drives two hydraulic pumps - one for hydrostatic transmission, the other for the cutting units drive and lift. A digital readout, calibrated in cuts per metre, enables the required cutting ratio to be selected and set for mowing speeds up to 5mph. Transport between greens (7½mph) does not disturb the setting.

Selecting the cutting units for perimeter mowing and operating the back-lapping system are by push-button control. In addition to greens cutting units, the Ransomes GT is available with tee cutting, as well as verticut and



The new hydraulically operated GT triple greens mower.

vibra spiker units. Units are interchangeable without the need for tools.

Other impressive features are the ease with which the grass box on the centre unit can be taken off for emptying and the way the cutting unit itself can be detached from the mower and removed for routine maintenance. By releasing a latch, the operator's footplate and steering console is easily raised making the unit readily accessible.

Most greenkeepers will appreciate the Ransomes GT's good all-round visibility and the positioning of the sophisticated controls.

Another innovation is the new Ransomes TMV (Turf Main-

tenance Vehicle), available with a range of turf maintenance attachments made by specialist manufacturers. Powered by a 20hp twin-cylinder Onan petrol engine, the three-wheeled TMV incorporates hydrostatic drive to the rear wheels, a pto and hydraulic services. It has infinitely variable speed control from 0-16 mph.

The efficient suspension gives the operator a comfortable ride at top speed, with plenty of room for a passenger. In addition to a hydraulically operated ¾ ton capacity dump box, other attachments include slitters, a core tiner, top dresser, seeder, brush and scarifier from Dabro International and Allman an sprayer.



Also new, the Ransomes TMV with a Dabro International slitter.