

THE BRITISH GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY



ISSUE NUMBER TWO - SEPTEMBER 1987

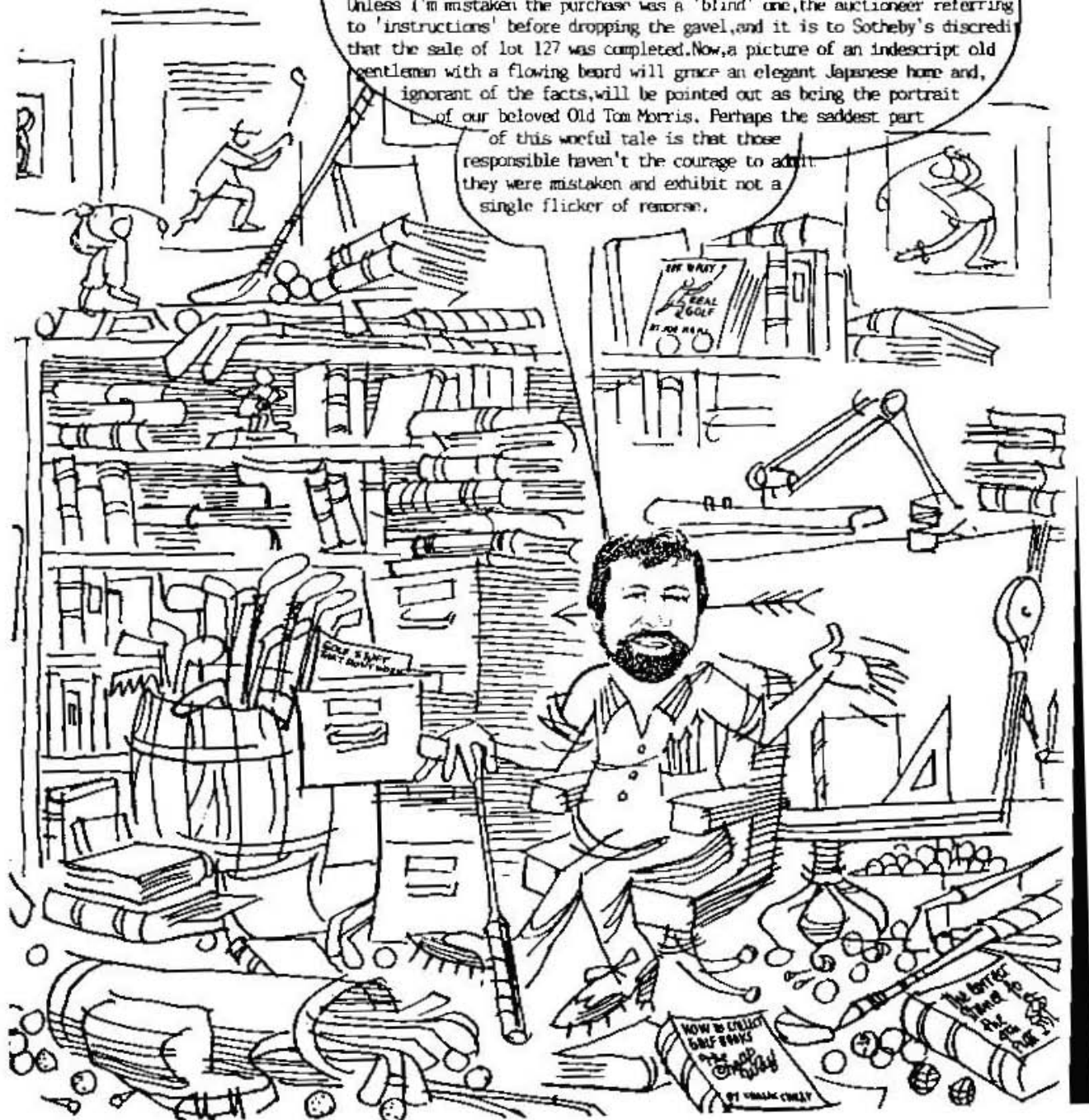
Through the green

.....is the official journal of the BRITISH GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY and is published quarterly in June, September, December and March. It provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information aimed at the golf collector and historian. Through these pages we hope you may increase your knowledge and understanding of the rich history and lore of the finest game on earth, make new friends and further develop old friendships. Contributions, comments or suggestions are always welcomed, occasionally acknowledged and like as not end up being printed in specially designated feature pages. This is YOUR journal, publish and be damned!



EDITOR: DAVID WHITE
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 COMMITTEE: PETER CRABTREE,
 RAYMOND GOSSAGE, TONY HAWKINS,
 TIM SMARTT, PHILIP TRUETT,
 DAVID WHITE and DAVID EASBY.

Under the heading 'Bidding for time pieces, or just any old irons', The Independent newspaper highlighted an act of high minded arrogance by the Sotheby's auction house in selling an oil painting by W.G. Mackenzie as being that of Old Tom Morris. Long before the sale of July 21st began many of our most knowledgeable golf antique experts had expressed grave doubts as to it's subject authenticity and their collective voices of protest had been heard by the 'so called' Sotheby's experts. Undaunted by the overwhelming evidence, they dealt out a massive insult to our superior knowledge and intelligence by continuing with the sale of the infamous lot 127, eventually knocking it down to the Japanese department store of Seibu, for the outrageous sum of £8800. Unless I'm mistaken the purchase was a 'blind' one, the auctioneer referring to 'instructions' before dropping the gavel, and it is to Sotheby's discredit that the sale of lot 127 was completed. Now, a picture of an indescript old gentleman with a flowing beard will grace an elegant Japanese home and, ignorant of the facts, will be pointed out as being the portrait of our beloved Old Tom Morris. Perhaps the saddest part of this woeful tale is that those responsible haven't the courage to admit they were mistaken and exhibit not a single flicker of remorse.





LETTER FROM AMERICA

Your erudite Editor, as they say in this country, 'blew my cover' but I will continue to submit garbled syntax to him for any possible use he may perceive. We hope he is recovering nicely from his hospital seizure and is back on the links, swinging awkwardly - as he always does - from the left side.

If you did not go to the States this summer, you picked a good year not to do it. The weather has been hot, humid, "sticky" and thoroughly disagreeable. This made it all the better for some of us who invaded your shores. The weather in Scotland was, as they say, "variable" but it was deliciously cool. Among the invaders were Mort (Florence) Olman, Joe (Betty) Murdoch, Frank (Maryann) Henry, Leo Kelly, Johnny Henry, John McGoogan, Alastair Johnston, Wayne (Claudia) Aaron, Dick (Angie) Donovan and there may have been one or two others who 'strayed' in, escaping our notice.

To you 'old timers', an auction (golf) may not be a highlight but we enjoyed our first experience. Under the expert tutelage of Peter Crabtree, Tony Hawkins, Philip Truett, Archie Baird and David White, we quickly learned to sit on our hands lest a false move be construed as a bid. We were impressed with the wide variety of golfing artifacts offered and how alert one must be to 'stay on top of it'. It was most enjoyable - not least, of course, the companionship that is a nice part of the proceedings.

We speak, specifically, of the Phillips' auction in Edinburgh on the 16th July. We did not attend the Christie's sale in Glasgow the day before nor the Sotheby's sale in London the following week but we are sure that each of these were equally pleasant and entertaining. Your Editor will, we are sure, make certain that a report appears on the lovely 'British Gathering' at Gullane on the evening of 15th July. Speaking for a coterie of 'colonists', it was a thrill for us and so nice to be welcomed so warmly. We would hope that these annual affairs continue and that we may be a part of them.

We must compliment British golf spectators. The weather on (particularly) the Saturday of The Open was as vile as we have seen but there you all were, 25,000 strong we read later, in the wind and the rain and flying debris. In this country, they would have called the whole thing off.

On the book front, we were stunned to find no new books by Peter Alliss and your Editor will no doubt list those books of British origin for you. Here, our old G.C.S. member, Dawson Taylor has collaborated with Craig Stadler to produce 'SECRETS OF THE SHORT GAME' (Chicago: Contemporary Books, \$10.95. Stiff wrappers); a delightful 'GOLF WIDOWS REVENGE' by Patricia Jean Smith (née Murdoch - which can't make her all bad!); 'ACTION ON THE FIRST TEE' by Doug Sanders with Don Wade; 'WALK THRU TO PAR' by Peter Beames, with Frederick Swan; 'GOLF, PLAIN AND SIMPLE' by Don Trahan; and 'GOLFING, A DUFFER'S DICTIONARY' by Henry Beard and Roy McKie make up our summer's search for the new (and not always different) selection.

Another of our G.C.S. members, Gunby Jordan, is about to produce 'CADDIES' which we had the pleasure of previewing....we thought we knew every old caddie story but Gunby has turned up some new ones and we think it will be a notable addition to our golf library...address Gunby directly should you be interested in a copy due to be published early October.

We will leave you with 'The library of a good man is one of his most constant, cheerful and instructive companions; and as it has delighted him in youth, so will it solace him in old age.' That was penned by Thomas Dibdin and as we approach senility, we find it to be true.

.....by 'MARTINI'.

THE SOMETHING FOR NOTHING DEPARTMENT.

The golf links at SEAFORD HEAD, in Sussex are celebrating One Hundred years of continuous play (save for a brief war-time period when the course was used for agriculture) and have issued, through the good offices of the Lewes District Council Leisure Services, a twenty page handbook. Free, a copy may be had by sending a 6½"x9" self addressed and stamped envelope to me at 13 Great College St. BRIGHTON BN2 1HJ. East Sussex.

BOOKSHELF

Langley Park Golf Club belatedly celebrate seventy five years of existence with the publication of THE HISTORY OF LANGLEY PARK GOLF CLUB 1910 - 1985. Written by B.G.C.S. member Alistair Macdonald, it was commissioned following seventy fifth year celebrations and has taken Alistair just 18 months to complete - a noble effort but, as he himself admits, it should have been started in 1960! The hardback book has 176 pages, with four colour as the history nears its last decade and splendid illustrations, photographs and cartoons. It is not a definitive history, more a series of vignettes in loose chronological order starting with the Romans (who drove a road through their patch) and ending with the visit of their most famous member, Henry Cotton. The style is somewhat controversial, written in the third person and to avoid possible boredom is sprinkled with 'intermissions', anecdotes and fascinating trivia. Interestingly, the club members undertook the giant share of production work, doing design and layout, typesetting, artwork, illustrations, photography & the cartoons, having only to meet the cost of printing, folding and binding. Such effort reflects the keen price of only £7.50 and copies may be obtained from Alistair at 99 Elwill Way, Park Langley Beckenham Kent, after October 16th. Be sure to add £1.00 for postage. DOUBLE EAGLE is the title of a new novel by Keith Miles and published by Andre Deutsch at £9.95. Murder, violence & intrigue are the main ingredients in this story which centres around the exploits of a British pro golfer who, after a disastrous year on the pro golf circuit, is invited to compete in California. An American golfer is murdered, he is prime suspect and matters are complicated when the grieving widow hops into his bed for 'comfort'. The language is earthy with rather too many four letter words for my taste. THE GOLF BOOK OF EAST LOTHIAN by the Reverend John Kerr is a book that, in its original 1896 edition, forms a cornerstone in the library of very many of our members. But.....it is a hard book to find and copies have been fetching high prices at auction. Now the East Lothian District Council, in conjunction with Spa Books Limited have produced a facsimile edition in a limited edition of 500 copies. That the GOLF BOOK OF EAST LOTHIAN is an important work cannot be denied but members may have to indulge in some soul searching to find justification for the cloth bound new edition at the high price of £75.00. Our member David Hamilton has created some delicious little gems from his hand press, THE PARTICK PRESS at 18 Kirklee Circus, Glasgow G12 0TW, and our newer members may care to learn of the availability of two of his books. The first in the series EARLY GOLF IN GLASGOW has long since been sold out but a few copies of EARLY ABERDEEN GOLF - A reprint of the section on golf from Wedderburn's rare Latin Vocabula from Aberdeen in 1636, together with comment and review of early Aberdeen golf - limited edition of 450 copies - are still available & worth searching out. EARLY GOLF IN ST. ANDREWS is the last of the trilogy, in which the account books of three students at St. Andrews are reprinted and reviewed for the first time and giving valuable new information on the early game. Available in a limited edition of 350. ABERDEEN is £13.00 & ST ANDREWS is £8.50. Add a pound for postage.

DAVID STIRK is no stranger to our members, being the author of GOLF IN THE MAKING, the collectors 'bible', and consultant to the auction house of Christie's. His knowledge both as player and collector is quite enormous and he has collected golf clubs for something approaching forty years. Now the Fhaidon Press,



DAVID STIRK

St. Ebbe's Street, Oxford OX1 1SQ have published his most ambitious work - GOLF : THE HISTORY OF AN OBSESSION. It is lavishly illustrated, tracing the evolution of golf and its growth in popularity from its origins up to the modern tournament scene, drawing on the first pictorial records and culminating in the finest examples of contemporary sports photography. Throughout the book, picture essays tell the stories of great players, clubs, and other topics of particular interest. Of special interest to collectors is the section which highlights the wide range of objects, both beautiful and bizarre which have been produced, over the decades, to cater for the golfer's insatiable appetite for the sport. It is a very grand production and promises to be something of a classic. 160 pages, 190 illustrations, 63 in colour it is priced at the not inconsiderable sum of £25.00. Finally, a little item which delighted me: A leather bound copy of THE LIFE OF TOM MORRIS, with a special message from Donald E. Hearn, president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, was among the golfing 'treasures' buried in a time capsule at Foxberg Country Club, Foxberg, Pennsylvania., on August 2nd. Foxberg, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary, provided the opportunity for the G.C.S.A.A. to leave a message to those golfers who will reopen the capsule on August 2nd, 2087.

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF COLLECTING CIGARETTE CARDS?

asks FRED BATSON.

Many more years than I care to record, like most of my contemporaries, I collected cigarette cards. The sources of supply were swaps, competitive games involving dexterity in flitting cards and, in response to the question which surely should be recorded in the annals of folklore, "Have you a cigarette card mister?" (or sir, or gunner, according to one's social background). In those days it seemed that every male adult smoked cigarettes, but the ladies never, at least not in public. But having become a man and put away childish things, would you, as a serious golf collector risk being accused of second childhood and consider extending your field of activity to cigarette cards? If so my thoughts on the subject might be of interest.

The attraction of cigarette cards, apart from the scarcity value, undoubtedly lies in the variety of topics displayed in picture and text on these small pieces of card - biography, instruction, humour, history, photographic and artistic skill, and literary content. Yes - literary content. In 1934 two sets of cards were issued by Churchmen entitled "Can you beat bogey at St Andrews" and "3 Jovial Golfers in Search of the Perfect Course". The illustrations on these cards are descriptive diagrams of the golf holes at St Andrews and other well known courses, with the text on each card written by none other than Bernard Darwin. They are miniature literary gems. For example card number 55 in the first named set reads:-

"When anybody else does a hole in one, it is just a fluke, but not when the player does it himself. Then it is the crown of skill. Top it! Of course he didn't top it! He meant to hit a low shot and the ball did not kick luckily in from the right; he played for a shade of draw. So a halo of golden light seems to encircle the hole and unseen brass bands play in his ears." See the Conquering Hero". He has entered into the Company of Immortals".

In the second set, The 3 Jovial Golfers, Mr. Rabbit, Mr. Everyman and Mr. Tiger, in search of the perfect golf course, play eighteen holes selected from well known inland courses and a further eighteen from seaside courses. Each card illustrates one of the holes and describes the antics of the three golfing chums in playing the hole. Golfers will recognise some of the subtle devices used to gain an advantage over an opponent. Bernard Darwin might be held responsible for inventing some of them, for example:-

"Seems to be nothing in the way here" said Mr. Everyman
 "There's plenty on either side" suggested Mr. Rabbit
 Thereupon Mr. Everyman hooked into the rough!

So innocent - but very effective.

The holes were obviously chosen by Bernard Darwin, one being the 16th at his beloved Aberdovey. What an interesting golfing pilgrimage they would make now. These two sets are still occasionally available and would make an excellent cornerstone for a golf card collection.

There are a few sets of cards devoted to golf instruction. One of the most sought after, "Famous Golfers and their Strokes" was issued in 1914 by the MARSUMA Company. The fifty cards consist of action photographs of some of our early great champions demonstrating golf shots and techniques:-

James Braid	: 'the winding up of the spring'
J.H. Taylor	: 'Playing a full cleek shot'
W.J. Travis	: 'Putting' (he won The Open at Sandwich with a borrowed putter)

These cards show Vardon, Ray, Taylor, Braid and Hilton all with bent left arm at the top of the swing. Apart from this characteristic there appear to be very few changes over the past 70 years.

In 1930 John Cotton (the tobacco company and no relation to Henry) issued a series of novelty instructional cards in sets of fifty. These cards, when held together by an elastic band fitted into notches cut in the side of the card, form an action 'flicker' book. One can view Archie Compston playing a full drive, a full one iron shot, a high lob, a scotch run - up, a full mashie and a putt.

There are many, many sets, close on four hundred known, with only one or a small number within the set containing golfing interest. The Wills 'Do You Know' set contains a single card - 'Why a golf ball is not smooth'. The 1917 Adkin set 'Sporting Cups & Trophies' includes three cards illustrating the Amateur Golf Gold Challenge Vase, The "Daily Mail" Golf Cup and The "Daily Mail" Runner - up Cup. A 1909 Gallagher set 'Latest Actresses' has a photograph of Marie Studholme shaping up for a drive. My favourite comic cards are the eight illustrated golfing situations in the United Tobacco Company set 'Humour in Sport'.

.....continued on 5th Tee.....

One of these shows two golfers leaving the course after a game:-

"That was a lovely drive of yours"

"Which one?"

"Why, the one when you hit the ball!"

In 1929 humour was so simple, but then so was life in so many ways.

If this random selection of golfing cards arouses some interest perhaps our Editor will invite me to contribute a further article.* Incidentally, I am planning to publish, in the not too distant future, a catalogue of golfing cigarette and trade cards which will hopefully be of some use to collectors. For the uninitiated a 'trade' card is issued with a commodity other than cigarettes, such as confectionery, food stuffs and periodicals with some very attractive cards in this category. Pearks Stores, Huntley and Palmers (Biscuits) and Leibigs each produced very colourful sets containing a 'golf' card. If you are old enough and these names induce a warm feeling then you could be suffering from a mild attack of nostalgia!

So to those already addicted - good hunting, and to those about to consider exploring a new field - bon voyage.

* Fred Batson is one of the world's foremost authorities on this highly specialised field of golf collecting - more please, Fred.



THE INTERNATIONAL PHILATELIC GOLF SOCIETY

News arrived from Stuart Mackenzie just after our June issue was posted, informing of the formation, in America, of The International Philatelic Golf Society. Though based in the U.S.A. the society has a truly international flavour with members from such countries as Italy, South Africa, Japan, Dominican Republic, England, Scotland and the U.S.A. A magazine is to be edited by Stuart from his home in Ross-shire and when things take proper shape they plan a convention for golf philatelists. Members of the B.G.C.S. who are interested may obtain further details by writing to STUART MACKENZIE, CABERFETICH, RIVERSIDE, FOULWIE, ROSS-SHIRE, SCOTLAND IV22 2LA.

OUR PROPOSED WEEKEND OF GOLF IN THE MIDLANDS

The idea seemed a good one and a venue was selected, golf booked and five star comfort assured. But.....I took my harp to the party and nobody asked me to play.....we had just THREE members who showed interest and the decision was made to call the whole thing off! We'll try again for next autumn and give ample notice to you all. HOWEVER, this Society is NOT a Travel agency or a marketing organisation. If you WANT something to happen you must SUPPORT. For a start does anyone know of a rather special golf course that would be happy to entertain our weekend players, say twelve to sixteen golfers, sometime in late September or early October 1988, with a pleasant hotel close at hand?

The Editor,
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East Sussex



Letters-to the editor

A Forum for your views, news and opinions...

From BILL BIRKH..... Have to get this down for your consideration in the next B.G.C.S. Journal. Archie (Beird) prompted me to speak to Bob Cowland about next year - so that a Chester auction might tempt MORE people to St Arnes for our gathering - provided care goes into the choice of date. I explained things to him so that his ideas won't clash with us, or The Open. He said that Phillips auction would certainly be played for Chester and on THURSDAY 12th July, before AGR day! Great! He told me I could quote same to you. Next.....I was asked by both Wayne Aaron (Atlanta) and Dick Donovan (New York) if U.S. members from the G.C.S. would still be able to attend the "British Gathering" in future years. Of course, I said YES. Both reserved places for St Arnes once they became aware of the Phillips auction date. Perhaps you will advise other U.S. people accordingly, in case they think it's going to be something of a closed shop! The Clifton Arms will accommodate 120 of us - so lets have a 'full house' if its possible. More power to your typewriter old pal, Yours etc.....

From DICK DUNN..... Many congratulations on the first issue, I shall look forward to subsequent issues with anticipation. As editor, honorary and unpaid, you have taken on a daunting task & I wish you well. I'm saddened at being unable to see my friends at Gullane on July 15th but will raise a glass of scotch from my deckchair in Spain & toast the winner! Here's a small token which you may care to put towards a prize. (thank you Dick - most generous) With regard to suggestions may I offer the following:

- a) I believe the Society should encourage gatherings to both exchange views and show memorabilia.
- b) We should maintain close links with our friends in the U S A once the fog has cleared on their side of the water.
- c) The journal should be seen to be different, but can we crib the 'Items for sale & wanted' theme?
- d) Can visits be arranged to those clubs which have collections, be they on display or not. I have in mind St. Andrews, Hoylake, Woking etc.
- e) How about some articles from some of our old pro's (do we have any old pro's? Eh.)
- f) Keep up the pressure on the auction houses re dates. Sincerely etc.....

From PETER BOW..... Congratulations on the first issue, no particularity in sight, or even mentioned! However, I did expect to learn something of our Committee's deliberations and expectations. Delighted that Joe Murdoch will be contributing - it's important that the British golf men learn what's happening in the American golf publishing places. An autumn break would appeal to Keith & I and suggest you try for winter-break terms at the Welcombe Hotel & Golf Course at Stratford upon Avon. (about this issue see elsewhere, Ed.) Terry Stacey said that The Belfry wasn't worth the money; and, please Sir, I've played all the others in the area! Sincerely etc.....

From HANISH DAWN..... A note to thank you for the review of the Neim Golf Club book in Journal One. I note your yearning to play the Neim links and should you decide to make the journey I will be pleased to guide you round - and any other member for that matter! I made The Open on Tuesday this time, with great deliberation as to the Christies auction or the Gullane meeting. I enjoyed my day but thought it was a pity that there was no exhibit or stand for the Society - perhaps something to be considered for future years? Incidentally, there are five courses at Ganton-on-Spny, Kurgassic, West of Ganton etc; should you care to make your trip a week or so of golf. Kind regards and best wishes for the future success of the British Golf Collectors Society.....

THE BALL

A FEATURE ARTICLE IN TWO PARTS

by ALISTAIR J. MacDONALD.

Throughout history many factors have influenced the development of golf. Some events have actively promoted the sport, but along the way of over 1000 years there have been some setbacks, some deliberate and specifically designed to put the game into reverse, and others equally regressive, simply a spin-off from a changing, and perhaps in the context of social boundaries, an unchanging way of life.

Whatever influences have nudged and prodded the game through the ages, no one object has had a greater impact than the ball, from its earliest basic construction, to today's highly sophisticated aerodynamic projectile.

It is not easy to envisage any dramatic future change in golf ball design which could have such a cataclysmic effect as has been experienced in the past 100 years or so. Certainly who among the laity in 1850 could have foreseen say, television, nuclear power or, beyond all human comprehension, heart swaps? Given that, and even accepting there is more ahead than we have left behind, what possible innovation could turn the game upside down as the ball undoubtedly has during the last century?

Not only has the ball dictated the design of other golfing equipment, primarily the clubs, but it has also determined who shall play the game - cobblers or kings, or both; a game of the people or, like polo, a game of the privileged few. Whatever social strata indulged, or was permitted to indulge, so was the scale, the volume of participation established - the game of golf, a little minnow in the big pool of sport, or one of the big fish. Today it is firmly established in the latter category and its international stature and ubiquitous appeal is primarily due to that much maligned object, maligned as much today as it has been for the past thousand years, the ball.

The millennium from the 11th Century to the present day can, in the context of ball development, be conveniently split into four segments. This review concerns itself mainly with the first three, the final one of which conveniently terminated at the beginning of this century where we may leave its 20th Century successors to find their own way.

The three critical periods are:-

- 1) THE WOODEN BALL. Certainly in use in the 11th Century, but largely, although not totally redundant and overtaken by quite momentous events around 1600.
- 2) LEATHER AND FEATHERS. The featherie, emerging at the end of the first decade of the 17th Century and reigning supreme for the next 250 years.
- 3) THE GUTTA AND GUTTIE. From the Malaysian tree gum (GETAH) which changed the face of golfing history. Born 1848 - Died 1896. Shall not be forgotten.

And finally the rubber core, coming in from the beginning of the 20th Century by which time golf has started to really take off. From that point onward all that remains in terms of basic golf ball development, from a players viewpoint, was to cross the 't's and dot the 'i's, to see us through to the present day.

We, and countless others owe it all to the guttie. Without the 'accident' of its birth, Blackheath and Manchester might today still be the only two golf clubs in England as they were in 1850. Twenty million Americans would be wondering how to fill in the weekend and golf would still be no more than "a passion of the Scottish people to hit a very small ball into a very small hole with implements singularly ill - adapted to the purpose".

The guttie rescued us from that unhappy and inconceivable situation, but much happened before its very tentative appearance on the golfing scene around 1848.

Of the wooden ball era not a great deal is known. A form of golf was almost certainly being played many centuries before our existing records mark its presence as a sport. This is hardly remarkable for it is likely that most early ball games relied on a wooden ball. Certainly such national pastimes as cambuca, hurly and shinty could not have been played without a ball made of wood. No other material was as easily obtainable, cheap and durable, and in fact many of golf's cognoscenti believe that those early primitive sports were the true forerunners of golf as we know it today.

Continued on 8th Tee.....

THE BALL - continued.....

The ball in those early days was most probably turned out of boxwood, oak, yew or other such hardwoods. It would have been cheap to make and the enthusiastic golfer - handyman could, with little skill, turn one out in his spare moments. It would have three indispensable qualities - cheapness, not drastically affected by inclement weather and of prime importance when considering cost would be its virtual indestructibility. (Iron head clubs had not yet put in an appearance.)

The game in Scotland during this period (1000 - 1600) was a 'game of the people' attracting as it did the displeasure of James II of Scotland who, in 1457, saw fit to ban the game as it was interfering with archery practice, an important part of national defence. The archers, judged guilty of such unpatriotic neglect would be of the rank and file and not the lairds and nobles, although there is evidence during this period that the game was played right across the entire Scottish social spectrum. Was not Mary, Queen of Scots, criticised in 1567 for playing 'at the goff' just two weeks after her husband's murder? And quite uniquely, in England on the same social scale, Katherine of Aragon, first wife of Henry VIII, wrote in 1513 to have been 'busy with the golfe'. It is extremely unlikely that the ball could have been anything other than wooden.



PART TWO OF THIS FEATURE WILL APPEAR IN THE DECEMBER ISSUE

THE FIRST BRITISH GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY 'OPEN' MEETING

In July 1987 the first 'Open' meeting of the British Golf Collectors Society took place at Gullane, the little stretch of Gull's own golfing country situated in East Lothian, Scotland.

In the final full-on Number One course some thirty members and guests took part in the competition - ably masterminded by Archie Baird and very properly managed by his wife Sheila.

Of those who played golf there were four ladies and of the remaining members players chose to do battle with the weapons of a former extremely hickory. The weather was testing the course an even more majestic and the scores.....well, in the most hilly of positions!

After a long walk, the long trip from Gullane, County Cork with his golf club, sees the winner of the first 'Open' and Jack Barker, grandson of Old Willie Barker, the sixth winner of the Peter section, with Brian Baines a close second. Jim Gullville, son of their old George, won the hickory section with Archie Baird in second place.

By the evening there followed some seventy conversational, any degree, collectors and friends gathered in the handsome Gullane clubhouse for an event that progressed with every minute added to the evening.

As a result - probably the best golfer in the B.G.C.S. and certainly the most widely published - came along to meet the best golfed members, with a quality number disappointed that the evening could not last so late as such being the drinks made upon such a long play during Open week.

The course started slightly while seventy buffet suppers were enjoyed and silence reigned when our beloved American founding father, Joe Burdick, addressed his new collection. We were very fortunate that this was the first 'Open'. Of course he has attended many events before, such as the Philadelphia Cricket Club Open and the LPGA Open, but this was his first into the 'Big Time'. He spoke with his usual warm humanity and wished the collectors well. We hope he will return on more regular visits.

Then came Young George Gullville! He slipped into his 93 years of memories and pulled out plum after plum, all perfectly ripe and full of Maccabean Flavour. He has promised to give an account when he returns to Gullane in 1992!

Those present were Sarah Baskin, David Hamilton, Christopher Whitson, David and Dorothy White, George, Jim and Ian Gullville, David Easty, Joe and Betty Burdick, Jim Nolan, George and Jim Braid, Sandy Milson, Bob and Sandy Gashland, John McTeer, Bill Dowie, John Bogg, Alan Jackson and his wife, Peter and Roger Gashland, Norma and Gordon, Warren, Leo Kelly, Tony Haskins, Graham Walters, Graham Lennie, Norman and Evelyn Hendrie, Alan and Brenda, Philip Turner, Peter and Vic Bann, John Stewart, Manfred Soutter, Bill Purdie, Gullane and Marie, Nelson, Michael, Maudie, Colin Henderson, Gordon Mac, Walter Mordant and Alexander Buchanan, John Campbell, Dick and Angus Bannan, Al and Tracy Bannan, Bart and Florence Olm, and last but not least our host and hostess Archie and Sheila Baird. To Sheila particularly must go the thanks of everyone who attended this memorable evening - her hard work made this all possible.

This meeting to Archie Baird, who provided the 'meat' of the above report and who gave me permission to 'fiddle about' with it. I then will have the last word and thank him for his steadfast gift of time and effort in making it happen.....



THE PRIDE OF MISERABLE - YOUNG GEORGE GULLVILLE - STILL A LITTLE TO BE REMINDED WITH THE LIONS - AT GULLANE 1987.

THE GOLF COLLECTORS SOCIETY MEETING AT FAR HILLS NEW JERSEY, U.S.A. 8th, 9th, 10th October 1987

For those members of the British Golf Collectors Society planning to attend this meeting I am advised that accommodation bookings must be made direct to THE HOLIDAY INN, CLINTON, NEW JERSEY. Telephone: (from England) 0101 - 201 - 753 - 5111. Be sure to mention you are with the Golf Collectors, otherwise you will be told 'No room at the Inn'.....

TALKING POINT

AUCTIONEER - WANTED OR NOT? asks ROBERT GOWLAND, F.R.I.C.S.

As a keen observer of the Golfiana market (after all, it is a part, albeit small, of my business) I feel there is a definite part to be played by the competent and interested auctioneer, as he benefits both collectors and sellers - that is that he provides the supply and marketing of golfiana.

The knowledgeable and interested auctioneer, by gathering together a comprehensive sale, provides one of the main sources of supply to the modern collector in the most convenient form. Many such collectors take their hobby very seriously (the reasons for collecting are not to be discussed here) but do not generally have the time in today's busy world to chase around thousands of bric-a-brac shops and second-hand book dealers in the hope of striking lucky once in a thousand tries. The specialised golf auction saves the prospective buyer time - and time is expensive.

Some collectors do indeed get great pleasure from browsing at weekends; for myself I would rather work on miniature clubs in my workshop - far more satisfying than achieving a very low browsing strike rate.

There are, of course, many general furniture, ceramic, book and metalware dealers who believe that anything with a golf theme may be valuable. Dealers attend hundreds of sales and visit thousands of shops a year and the resultant 'finds' tend to gravitate to known centres, one of which is the auction house. However, there is always the need to sell to specialised dealers - some of whom are golf club pros, as often the individual needs cash quickly and does not want to wait up to six months for payment.

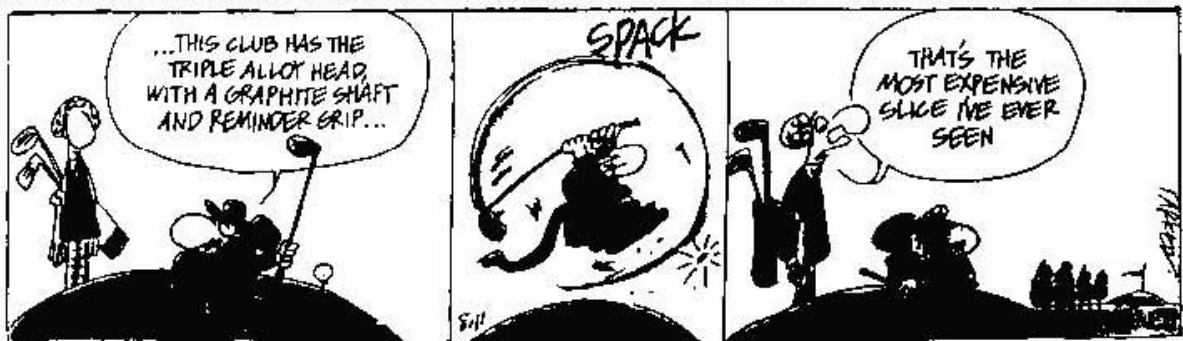
It is probably fair to say that anything really good is, by now, in a collection (of one sort or another) and is recognised for what it is. However, the next generation who inherit may not care for those items which their ancestors enjoyed or collected (which is just as well both for auctioneers and future collectors) and so the collection may come on the market again and a new generation of people may enjoy trying to afford the items.

Marketing is the other part played by the auctioneer for his vendor client. After all, nobody knew what 'The Goff' would fetch in January 1986 or the 'Robb' in January 1987. Catalogues were sent world-wide and for the really rare and expensive items those few collectors in the enviable position of affording almost any price were able to commission purchasing agents to do their bidding. There is no doubt that the top prices in the world at that time were achieved. A sale by private treaty may or may not have achieved the same result - however, justice was at least seen to be done and the vendors were naturally very satisfied.

The trained and experienced auctioneer can acquire technical knowledge quickly - mostly by 'looking and listening' - he is, after all, trained to recognise style. In golf, as in every facet of the antiques world, shape, form and materials evolve and develop for a variety of reasons. The competent auctioneer will assimilate such golf knowledge by 'objective recognition' as he does every day with all the other subjects he handles and should thus be able to recognise the rare and unusual. By sheer volume of good items that are handled the auctioneer must become - provided he is interested - knowledgeable.

Underlying all this altruism is, of course, the need to earn a living and auctioneers will succeed only if they continue to provide a wanted service - I will be happy to return to my workshop when that ceases to happen. My sadness is that having handled so many top quality items I am no longer satisfied with the 'ordinary' (even though this is affordable) and I cannot afford the very best. However, I am lucky in 'possessing' these rare items for just a few months - that is enough.

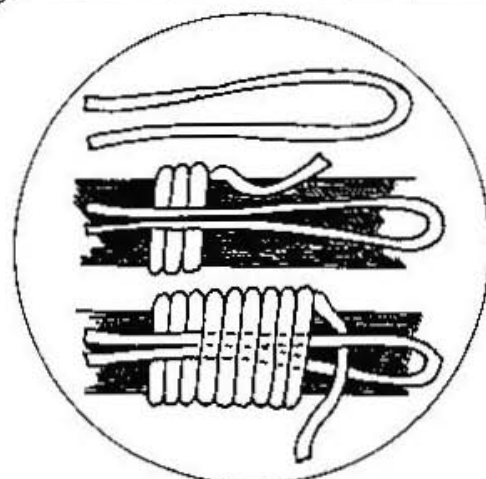
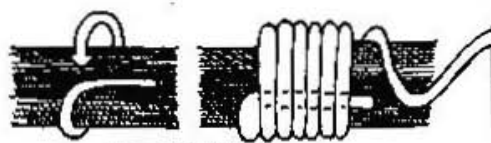
ROBERT G GOWLAND IS A DIRECTOR OF THE PHILLIPS IN CHESTER AUCTION HOUSE.



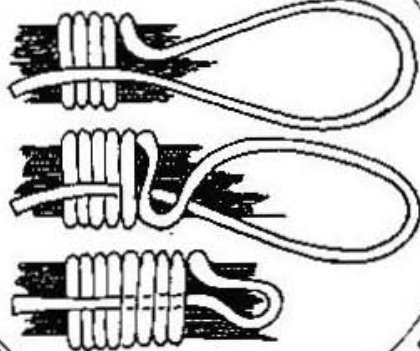
AT THE BENCH

We acknowledge and thank Patrick Kennedy of Burlington, Vermont U.S.A. for the opportunity to reissue his splendid illustration which demonstrates the skill of applying whipping on a golf club. It first appeared in 1973.

TO START, PLACE END ALONG SHAFT (START AND FINISH ON UNDERSIDE OF SHAFT) AND WIND ON WHIPPING IN A CLOCKWISE DIRECTION AS YOU LOOK DOWN THE SHAFT - AFTER ABOUT 3/8" TO 1/2" CUT OFF EXCESS AND CONTINUE WINDING.



PLACE LOOP ALONG SHAFT - CONTINUE WINDING TO STOPPING POINT - PLACE LOOSE END THROUGH LOOP - PULL LOOP OUT.



PUTTING WHIPPING ON A GOLF CLUB

TO FINISH: ABOUT 3/8 TO 1/2 INCH FROM THE STOPPING POINT FORM A LOOP - MAKING IT LARGE ENOUGH TO GO OVER CLUB HEAD PLUS THE AMOUNT NEEDED TO FINISH - PULL LOOSE END THROUGH.

Grooving in the golf club

KEEN GOLFERS will be interested in the curious matter of the shape of the grooves on the striking face of a club. Usually these have a "V" cross section, but a US golf club maker, Kirsten Manufacturing Corporation, has made the grooves square, maintaining that more backspin can be put on the ball by experienced players.

Whether or not the grooves break US or UK rules of the game is unclear. In any event, a British company, Hymec Hydraulics, has developed a £16 handtool that will, with a few minutes of scraping, turn the "V" grooves into square ones on existing clubs.

The tool has hardened cutters (which can be changed by rotation when they get blunt). It is designed so that the width of a groove does not exceed the 0.035 inch maximum allowed on existing golf clubs.

The Royal and Ancient Golf Club, St Andrews, has not ruled the tool out. However, it says users should ensure that after conversion, the separation of the grooves is at least three times their width, and that there are no sharp edges.

Extract from the Financial Times: May 15th 1987

An interesting 'spinoff' (if you will forgive the pun!) is that this tool, whilst doing all that is claimed on new clubs, is equally useful for re-scoring old mashies and niblicks that have become semi smooth through constant cleaning. Those of our members that enjoy an occasional round with old hickories may find it worth investigating.

The tool may be obtained direct from: HYMEC HYDRAULICS LIMITED, Unit 4 Hoskins Place Watchetts Road, CAMEERLEY Surrey GU15 2PB.



Portrait of a Collector -

Peter Down is a collector - of golf books, golf courses, and golfing companions - he is, in the opinion of the writer, the true epitome of a collector, being enthusiastic without demonstrating any form of fanaticism.....

Fifty five years old, Peter Down is blessed with the most tolerant of golfing widow wives, in the shape of Kath, who over the years has shown more than a kindly humouring to her collector husband as he busies himself in the task of improving his collection. Peter was educated at the Bristol Cathedral School, where his strongest subjects were English Literature and History; it is no wonder that he is now a 'book man'. In 1951 he began a career with Her Majesty's Customs and Excise and remains to this day a tax gatherer! So too were Chaucer and Robbie Burns, their literary efforts achieving some considerable distinction.

As a serving officer for H.M., Peter first encountered Scotland as a new boy in Customs & Excise, arriving as a player of cricket he found a few new 'customs' and left the country seven years later a confirmed golf addict. 'The Scots have a lot to answer for', says Kath. Now his pulse will rise several points on those occasions when his golfing surges take him across the border. As a member of the Broadstone Dorset Golf Club, Peter plays from the southpaw side, to a mean handicap of 14. He is also a member of the Golf Society of Great Britain, The Golf Collectors Society and, his greatest love, The Searchers Golf Society. His other interests include Rugby football and National Hunt racing. You may imagine how his loyalties have been strained over the recent demarcation of Musselburgh following the addition of the chase course over those hallowed links.

Peter is a founder member of The Searchers Golf Society, formed in 1966, and is instrumental in organising a 'new year' golf tour in which the members play thirty six holes of golf on a different course each day for seven days! As their Tour Director he is responsible for tour arrangements each year and it is to his credit that after twenty-one years he has yet to run out of courses or golfers keen to play them. An observation and perhaps criticism of the G.C.S. was that the collecting of golf courses actually played was not included as a form of collecting within itself. There would, he maintains, be no point in bragging about the number actually played, any more than bragging about the number of books on one's shelves and to support his argument for this diversity is to write an article in defence of his thinking, (to appear in I.T.C. December 1987).

It was the course interest which led to his more serious form of collecting when at the 1962 Open at Troon he was fortunate in following Arnold Palmer over the final two rounds, played over the same day in those days. In the evening he went down to Prestwick and played the course - those were the days of super fitness - and added it to his 'collected' list. In the clubhouse afterwards he saw an old programme showing John Ball and Freddie Tait at the most dramatic moment in their final of the 1969 Amateur Championship. The photo showed both golf balls in the bunker fronting the 17th green. Tait's lay in water, Ball's in an even worse spot on hard sand under the boards! Both recovered safely, with Ball winning the championship on the first extra hole.

Twenty five years later this picture remains the most dramatic golf picture he has ever seen. At the time he knew nothing of the golfers and set about finding out all he could about them, by visiting second - hand book shops. Within a month he had gathered 'F.C. This A Record', 'The Bulimont Library of Golf', Hatchingman's 'British Golf Links' and 'The Golf Courses of The British Isles' by Bernard Darwin. These were the balmy days when good books were easy to find! By 1979 his book collection had grown modestly with the thought uppermost in his mind that books collected should be books worth reading..... Then came an eye opener in the shape of Joe Murdoch's 'Library of Golf' and a new world opened up. His collecting intensified and has only of recent times slowed up. This due in some part to high cost and scarcity, he now concentrates more on club histories, safe in the knowledge that with more and more clubs reaching century status that the supply will be constant.

In 1981 the Walker Cup matches were played at Cypress Point, with the 1985 series played at Pine Valley. On both occasions he promoted successful SEARCHERS tours to these areas, drawing on the friendly help and advice of those GCS members he had corresponded with. From these contacts lasting friendships have evolved and it is these bonds of human companionship which he regards as the over-riding pleasure of the whole collecting business - more important than adding books to the shelf, reading them or the playing of new courses. Here is a man who appreciates fully the original purpose of Murdoch's philosophy, the promotion of good fellowship.

It is this same comradeship which has kept the Searchers together for twenty one years. Many members are employed in the Customs service, an old seventeenth century job description being taken as the Society title, a 'searcher' being one who is employed to look out for contraband. The society insignia portrays a 'stick' man with a golf club in one hand with the other hand being used to shield his eyes. In deference to our feminine readers I must refrain from fully explaining the reason for such a posture but it is, as you may guess, to do with taking 'relief'. By the time this issue reaches our B.G.C.S. readers the Searchers will be away on a tour of those links in the Wirral area with thirty six invigorating holes at Ruylake as a start. The Searchers will never play every course within their lifetime, just as a book collector will never own every book ever published on the game of golf. It is the search which unites us all, both gaining pleasure from our treasures and our memories.



NEXT ISSUE

THE LATEST DATE FOR COPY IS NOVEMBER 20th