



The Bunnet

Official newsletter of the
James Braid Golfing Society

President : Peter Thomson

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Summer 2001

From Under the Bunnet

I write to you from another space. The Secretary has invaded my Study and is making serious inroads into my last bottle of Clynelish as I ponder the effect of homelessness on the working hack and marvel at the fact that we are now playing the back nine of the Year of Our Lord 2001.

How quickly this year has gone. It seems no time at all since I was able to occupy my Study without fear of occupation and was reflecting in the last issue on what the year might have in store. Now that year is well nigh gone and much indeed has happened in our Society.

Our President, Peter Thomson, has been honoured in his country with the award of the Order of Australia for his services to golf as a player and administrator and for his unstinting work in the community on behalf of drug rehabilitation. It is recognition richly deserved, and I know I speak for everyone in the Society in sending him and his wife Mary our warmest congratulations.

It has been a year of mixed fortunes on the battlefield. Professor Lindsay Symon led the troops into the field in the match against Walton Heath in my absence, an act of unreasoned valour for which I thank him sincerely.

I cannot speak too highly of man who would take his responsibilities so seriously that he would turn up a week before the match to fine tune his battle plan. Bill Wood found the Prof in the gentlemen's lounge at Walton Heath, resplendent in Society tie, patiently awaiting the arrival of his troops and working on his pairings.

Much as we would like to believe that commitment to the cause was the motive, the truth is that the good professor, far from forward-planning the demise of the Walton Heathers, had actually got his dates wrong and was a full week too early for hostilities.

Naturally, he should have been fined for such nutty professor behaviour but it would be another seven days before anyone could get there to make the charge stick!

At this distance in time, reviewing the scoreline of the match, I see the only consolation as being the fact that had I been able to play we might easily have finished third instead of second.

At Brora, against the might of Royal Dornoch, the result was not as we had anticipated either but we console ourselves with the thought that in most other circumstances a record of finishing second in two consecutive outings would not normally be considered too unworthy.

I was delighted that so many attended the Captain's Pink Balls event at Golspie on the Sunday of the Summer Meeting. It was a record attendance for what might best be described as the "hangover" event from the Summer Meeting on the Sunday morning and Mike Beckerich proved that Americans can play stableford with a fairly comfortable win. It was a worthy victory not only over the rest of the field but in the 3,726 other matches he had running at the same time with his fellow travellers.

It was indeed a great pleasure to be able to welcome so many members from all over the world to meet in the common bond of James Braid. I am sure he would have heartily approved of the spirit in which everyone came together for the weekend reflecting the real values of our wonderful game.

And if further proof were needed that our quest to sustain the traditions and values that James Braid so personified is important, perhaps we have to look no further than the Open Championship at Royal Lytham. How sad it was to hear the idiotic fringe with their imbecilic cries of "get in the hole" and "you're the man" resound across those famous links in the world's greatest golf championship.

I now firmly subscribe to the view that the culprits should have "moron" tattooed upon their pencil-thin foreheads before being evicted from any future participation in the game. Were I not so liberally-minded I might suggest something even more appropriate.

Those in favour say "aye" and send all letters of protest to golfing authorities who continue to allow the louts through the gates of the great events, or still, through the doors of our clubhouses.

Malcolm L. Campbell, *Captain*



Our President Honoured



JBGS President, Peter Thomson CBE, has been awarded the Order of Australia for services to golf and to the community.

The award recognises Peter Thomson's huge contribution to the game of golf as a player and administrator and for his work as a drug-rehabilitation campaigner. He has been made an Officer in the Order of Australia (AO) which is awarded "for distinguished service of a high degree to Australia or to humanity at large".

Peter Thomson won five Open Championship titles, four of them in a five-year period between 1954 and 1965. In 1985 he joined the US Seniors Tour and won a then record nine tournaments in one season. Since then he has become a highly successful golf course architect and has three times been Captain of the International Team for the President's Cup.



Clinton "Sins" Again

Yes, it is former US President Bill Clinton caught in another Valley of Sin. This time it was the Old Course at St Andrews where JBGS member Peter Landau, the world's foremost authority on golfing Presidents and author of 'Presidential Lies', captured this world exclusive for The Bunnet

The former President was in the auld grey toon on an unannounced visit for a round on the Old Course but, by cunningly avoiding a tight security screen, our on-the-ball photographer with the Presidential low-down snapped the intrepid Bill during the former President's whistlestop visit. Word has it that PL is now shooting interiors at San Quentin!

From The Secretary's Quill

Uniquely, in the Secretary's scribbles to date, I sit in the study of our Captain, gazing across the Firth of Forth towards Gullane and Muirfield, seeking inspiration from a dram and the gathering twilight.

I continue to sit.

In the last *Bunnet* I reflected on memories from New York in autumn. The friendships made there were cemented during this summer, when Mike Beckerich and Mike Gentile, President and Captain of the Saint Andrew's Golf Club of New York visited Fife & the Highlands to play in the Summer Meeting. Peter Landau, the Club Historian and an auld Scottish hand, graced Walton Heath with his unique style and a unique golfing partner. (*More of this later - ed.*) Bob Smith of Pine Valley, James Dean from Connecticut, Dr. Ron Morris, Verle Millsap, Werner Michel and Norm Schmeltzer from California all made the trip across the pond. The cultural import / export of golf across the Atlantic continues more than 100 years after John Reid of Dunfermline set club to ball in Yonkers in the Hudson Valley.

The growing English contingent among Society members also made their presence felt this year. Peter Stanbrook of Northants pipped the pill around Walton Heath in a gross 72, net 67 to win the Braid Cleek. An immediate fine was imposed for *professionalism*.

A very special *thank you* to Bill Wood for organising the Spring Meeting and for supplying such a fine body of select men to take on the Society's finest and to give us a thorough gubbing once again! We will see you next year!

Nigel Hilliard and Peter Stanbrook (again) featured heavily in the stableford at Royal Dornoch, although Mr. Hilliard was subsequently fined for sporting inappropriate neckwear.

The rest of the travelling English gentlemen and gentlewomen added enormously to our Highland gathering and we look forward to welcoming you once again next year. (N.B. Pipe smokers will continue to be fined at will.)

The match against Royal Dornoch, and the clubhouse dinner that followed, were the highlights of the Summer

Meeting. It was also the venue for the introduction of a new Society Award, inspired by Uwe Kersken of Koln, film director, fisherman and world traveller. The *Groovy Uwe Award* was inaugurated for nominees demonstrating on the links a *triumph of style over content*. Uwe (pronounced "Oovy") was not only the inspiration, but also the recipient of the inaugural award. The award itself was handcrafted in one of the traditional workshops of Mario Maciocia, designer of *automata* and fabricator of fine confectionery.

A pair of delicately carved lovebirds in the Bavarian style, complete with internal accompaniment by Mozart will now grace the trophy cabinet at Kersken Towers. A good time was enjoyed by all and we thank the ever hospitable Secretary & Manager of Royal Dornoch G.C., John Duncan, for his wonderful invitation.

Twilight has turned to darkness on Gullane Hill and the dram has completed its work. So have I.

Stephen Toon, Secretary.



Professor Lindsay Symon with Peter Osgood, winner of the Braid Quaich for junior members at Walton Heath, pictured visiting the grave of James Braid after the match. Peter is the son of the Walton Heath golf course superintendent.



A Grace to Remember

John Duncan secretary at Royal Dornoch offered up an unusual grace before the match dinner. It is well worth recalling.

*"Heeds doon, up paws,
Thanks to God who gave us jaws"*

Brora Thank You

Brora Golf Club has sent a special message of thanks to St Andrew's Golf Club President, Mike Beckerich, for presenting the prizes at the James Braid Open at Brora at the end of June. Mike was resplendent in his red club blazer for the prizegiving and warmly welcomed by the Brora members.

Hello! Bunnet has spared no expense whatsoever to bring members these exclusive shots of Braid Society socialites at play. *Hello! Bunnet* has negotiated incredible deals to bring you this exclusive window on the world of who's doing what to whom and why, and possibly whether, in our much-heralded and already massively popular Society Section.

OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS

Mario "Superfly" Maciocia and "Groovy" Uwe Kersken were put in charge of catering arrangements before the match against Royal Dornoch. They delivered the fishes but came up short on the loaves proving that miracles take just a little bit longer.



IN CONVERSATION

Chatting whimsically at the Royal Dornoch match, James Dean from Tamarack, Connecticut and Royal Dornoch's Brian Rush. Do expressions reflect the overall result of the match, *Hello! Bunnet* asks?



OFF BREAK

Dr Krishna took a break from the batting crease to play in the match against Walton Heath. He was en route to St Nom la Breteche to play in a match for The Duke's Club at St Andrews against the Paris club.



DOC DOES IT AGAIN

Tim Walton (left) and Uwe Kersken simply "falling about with laughter" at another Dr Ronnie Still whimsy in the Braid Room at Brora. Mrs Hilary Maciocia smiles as efforts to remove the good Dr. fail yet again.



CAPTAIN OUTRAGEOUS

Mike Gentile from St Andrew's in decidedly better shape than the Captain at the Royal Dornoch Dinner. Suggestions that Mike bore an uncanny resemblance to a St John's Ambulance man brought in to administer succour to the ailing leader were later refuted by Mike's solicitor.



THAT INNER PEACE

Professor Lindsay Symon, standing in for the Captain at Walton Heath, casting an eye across a bleak landscape of JBGS results. Bill Woods looks on, cunningly disguising inward feelings of delight.



LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION

Mike "Rosy Cheeks" Beckerich and Robert "the Snooze" Powell pictured in deep and meaningful conversation at the Royal Dornoch match dinner. Royal Dornoch secretary John Duncan looks for inspiration elsewhere while Doc Still gets steamy about the glasses.



AE LONG SWING

by Colin McAllister, JBGS member and former Captain of the New Club, St Andrews

Ae long swing, my best endeavour!
Follow through – it flies forever!
Deep in prickly whins I'll lodge thee,
Onto holding greens I'll wedge thee.
Who shall say that golf it grieves him,
While the star of hope it leaves him?
Me, nae cheerful twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my wooded putter,
Nae swear-words my mouth will utter!
But to play golf is to love it
Love but it, and love forever.
Had I never golfed sae madly,
Had I never golfed sae badly,
Never tried – or never started –
I had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Nae mair will I tak my driver,
Never chance mair than a fiver,
But noo ma golfing's just for fun
And I shake hands when a' is done.
Had I never swung sae quickly,
I'd not found the whins sae prickly,
Never Lost – nor penalised –
My golf dreams I'd hae realised.

Fare-you-weel, you Old Course fairways!
You to me were Heaven's stairway!
Yours be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, Enjoyment, Love and Pleasure!
Ae long swing, my best endeavour!
Follow through – it flies forever!
Down the middle straight I'll send thee,
Onto holding greens I'll wend thee.

Getting on the Holy Grail

By Jim Finegan, Vice-Captain

There are times when the last thing in the world you expect to hear is your name. The large clock on the Royal & Ancient clubhouse – is it the only timepiece that really matters in the royal burgh? – showed 2:04. Towing my golf bag on a trolley, I took my usual shortcut across the 18th fairway, and headed on the diagonal toward the first tee in order to sign up as a standby for a round on the Old Course.

It was a pretty day in early July, more blue sky than white clouds, temperatures in the low 70s. A foursome was walking up the 18th toward their tee shots, but I would be out of their line in a matter of moments. Preoccupied, I only vaguely took in the usual scene at the first tee – players in the 2:10 group practice swinging, several nearby caddies, other players clustering near the starter's hut to pay their green fees, tourists passing in front of the squat bulk of the imposing clubhouse, a handful of observers leaning on the dark wooded railing and gazing idly down the vast double fairway toward the Swilcan Bridge.

And then abruptly, shockingly, came the announcement over the powerful public address system, in the profoundly authoritative tones of Mr. Drysdale, starter that day on the Old Course: "Mr Finegan" – pause, not only to get my attention, but that of the entire constituency; I froze in my tracks, a full football field away from his modest headquarters – "Mr. Finegan, please come back at 4:30, 4:30 at the earliest."

My reaction was one of acute embarrassment. For there I stood, solitary, immobile, in the middle of the broad sweep of closely mown turf that leads to the 18th green and the first tee. I remained paralysed for perhaps three seconds, thus unwittingly giving everyone the chance to see just who was being sent packing. I then bowed my head in meek acceptance of the directive, turned, and retreated. I would return at 4:35 and, as it turned out, tee off not half an hour later.

For eight or nine years, my wife and I have been spending much of the summer in St. Andrews (an occupational hazard of a golf writer who specialises in the courses of the British Isles). I work in the morning and play either in the afternoon or in the all-but-endless evenings, on the New Course or the Jubilee or the Eden, or, when the golf gods smile, on what seems to me the most complex great course in the world, the Old.

SPECIAL AWARDS

- The **"Groovy Oovy Award"** went to Groovy Uwe (pronounced Oovy) Kersken himself for *"The Triumph of Style over Content"*.
- The **"Captain's Fes Award"** for *"public displays of outstanding ignorance"* went to Norm Schmeltzer from California for not knowing what a Fes was.
- The **"Late Entry Award"** was won comfortably by Lachlan McIntosh for entering the Summer Meeting six milliseconds before tee off time.

JBGS Diary Dates 2001

Autumn Meeting:

East Neuk of Fife

Friday Sept. 7th

President's Putter: Lundin Links

Sat 8th Sept.

Match v St. Andrews'

Kummeleers: Kingsbarns

Sun 8th Sept.

Match v Golf House Club at Elie

2002

Spring Meeting

Walton Heath

Thurs 23rd May

The Braid Cleek

Fri 24th May

Match v the Bill Wood Select

Summer Meeting 2002

Highlands

Thursday 27th June

St Andrews Stableford and
the Curate's Egg

Friday 28th June

Match v Shivas Irons Society

Saturday 29th June

The James Braid Open

Sunday 30th June

The Captain's Pink Balls at Golspie

RESULTS BOARD



SPRING MEETING

Walton Heath - May 24th, 2001

The Braid Cleek –

Peter Stanbrook (5) 41 pts.

Dr. Douglas Fowl (5) 37 pts.

Verle Millsap (11) 34 pts.

SUMMER MEETING

Brora June 28 – July 1, 2001.

The Curate's Egg –

Mike Beckerich

Dornoch Stableford –

Peter Stanbrook

The James Braid Trophy –

Ron Simm (72, 76) 148

The Captain's Bunnet –

Dougal Spavin

Captain's Pink Balls –

Mike Beckrich 34

James Dean 32

Robert Smith 31

Saint Andrews Clynelish – **Mike Gentile**