

The Founding Meeting

June 21st/24th 2022

After a 3-year absence it was wonderful to welcome back our overseas members to the Highlands alongside the UK stalwarts who have kept the society fixtures ticking over whilst we dealt with the issues that the Covid-19 pandemic has thrown at us over the past couple of years.

That said, it was clear from the outset, that we were not out of the woods yet, as logistical problems were encountered by Bill and Lisa Case, Malcolm and Mike Harris and Rick Bragdon as far as flights and luggage were concerned.

June 21st 2022 – Fortrose & Rosemarkie Golf Club at Brora GC

This match had originally been arranged for 2020, when it was agreed that Fortrose & Rosemarkie would travel to Brora to celebrate what would have been James Braid's 150th birthday. It was greatly appreciated by the society that this fixture was honoured by F&R two years later.

A fantastic turnout of 31 JBGS members participated in this match (we loaned 1 x player to Fortrose & Rosemarkie) at Brora Golf Club, which required a x 2 tee start.

Fine weather and a gentle breeze welcomed the teams and the course was found to be in excellent condition.

While the Captain of the JBGS had a level of quiet confidence that the society may sneak a rare victory due to local knowledge, he naively overlooked the fact that Fortrose & Rosemarkie Golf Club were equally familiar with the course which resulted in them gaining a well-earned victory (10-5).

Following the match, participants enjoyed the company of their respective playing partners while enjoying an enjoyable meal of their choice.

Speeches followed, and both Captains agreed that the day had been a success and that the JBGS were looking forward to visiting Fortrose & Rosemarkie Golf Club the following year.

Gifts of shot glasses were provided for the members of the Fortrose & Rosemarkie team and the proceeds of the traditional "Bunnett Collection" was presented for the club's junior section.

Very generously, Fortrose & Rosemarkie also held their own collection and passed this to the JBGS Captain.

Special mention should go to Richard Perry, who put himself in line for a fine by playing for the opposition and having the audacity to contribute to the victory over the JBGS Captain and Alistair Picken. Also, to Chris Taylor who was an early runner for the Marco Polo award by travelling to Fortrose & Rosemarkie Golf Club, when we were playing at Brora Golf Club – yet still making his tee time!

June 22nd 2022 – Free Day

For the second day of the tour, we were afforded a free day, which members chose to use as they felt appropriate.

Some member's chose to rest, while other groups tackled Fortrose & Rosemarkie, Tain, Bonar Bridge and Reay Golf Club's respectively.

All members reported having an enjoyable day and were ready for the following day's challenge.

June 23rd 2022 – Royal Dornoch Golf Club

Prior to travelling to Royal Dornoch Golf Club a forum was held in the “Peter Thompson Room” at Brora Golf Club, where updates were given to members regarding the structure and activities of the society, and opportunity was given to members to voice any concerns and ideas they may have. A constructive discussion was held, with a number of suggestions made, that would be followed up on in due course.

On arrival at Royal Dornoch Golf Club, we were greeted with sunshine and breezy conditions along with a course, in pristine condition with the playing of the Senior Amateur Championship due in early July.

The JBGS team was up to full strength with the arrival of Rick Bragdon, following the loss of his clubs and clothes en-route from California to the UK. However, while the society performed gamely, we were overcome by good golf and local knowledge and The Friendship Trophy remained firmly in the hands of Royal Dornoch Golf Club (8 – 4).

Once again, a fine meal and superb company was enjoyed following the match, with the Royal Dornoch members being very appreciative of the commemorative shot glasses and the “Bunnett Collection” for the junior section.

Both Captain’s speeches were reflective of how successful the day had been, and how they both looked forward to repeating the fixture next year.

June 24th 2022 – The Founding Meeting - Brora Golf Club

And so, to the finale of our week. The Founding Meeting competition at Brora.

18 holes of stableford golf over the magnificent Brora links. 42 entrants competed for the various prizes on offer, but all hoping to take the principal prize of the “Peter Thomson Memorial Trophy”.

As had been the case all week, we teed off in fine weather with a light breeze though a haar was to roll in later in the round, resulting in sweaters being hurriedly put on.

The course was found, as usual in superb condition with good golf being rewarded and poor golf penalised. This was reflected in the broad range of scoring but did not detract from the enjoyment of both the course and the company.

That evening society members met up at the newly refurbished Royal Marine Hotel, where following drinks and an enjoyable meal, the Captain announced the days winners. These were as follows:

The Peter Thompson Memorial Trophy:

Winner: Chris Clegg

Runner up: Martin Baird

The Captain’s Pink Balls:

Winner: Angela Grant (Back 9)

Runner Up: KJ Redman

The Curates Egg:

Winner: Malcolm Harris

The Groovy Uwe Award (Triumph of Style over Substance):

Winner: Denny Walsh (Black feather cap number)

Marco Polo Award (Greatest determination to get to the meeting):

Winner: Rick Bragdon

The captain also presented welcome gifts to new members making their first appearance at a meeting:

Martin Baird, Duncan Robertson, KJ Redman and Max Redman

The captain went on to thank the Society Members for making the week the success it had been and for also enabling him to maintain his 100% record of defeats since taking on the captaincy.

Whilst the captain was pleased to see such healthy support for the week's events, he was aware that some members were unable to attend for various reasons. With that in mind the captain proposed a toast - "To absent friends"

As a way of thank you from the society, gifts were presented to Tony Gill on his retirement as secretary of Brora Golf Club and acting as a conduit in organising the Founding Meeting. Also, to Alison Stanbrook, for her tireless work in organising not only the Founding Meeting, but all the JBGS events.

The captain then handed over to the newly elected master of fines (Sherriff) Mr. Len Bunton, who proceeded to ruthlessly hand out penalties for misdemeanours reported to him over the course of the week. These misdemeanours spanned a wide range of topics from dress code violations to downright stupidity. An amnesty was offered to all members, to avoid heavy fines, and the level of guilt amongst the society members must have been high, as £405 was raised for Brora Golf Club Junior Section. Thank you, Len for your contribution, your services have been retained for next year.

With no other outstanding business, the captain closed the evening with a toast to the man we gathered to honour – "James Braid".

Summary:

Overall, a fantastic week, where it was great to see both old friends and make new! A heartfelt thank you, goes to all the JBGS members who attended.

As always, I would like to give a special thank you to our Members' Secretary Alison Stanbrook, whose coordination of this event was impeccable and ensures the members enjoyment when we meet up. Her time and effort are second to none.

I appreciate that not everyone's trip went as planned, what with travel schedules being disrupted and Covid-19 being contracted by a number of members post trip.

Hopefully, these issues will not tarnish what was a magnificent week and you only hold onto fond memories.

We now move onto the Northumberland tour in September. I am looking forward to seeing another healthy turnout, and to those who can't make it, stay safe and we'll see you all again soon!

Regards,

Barrie.