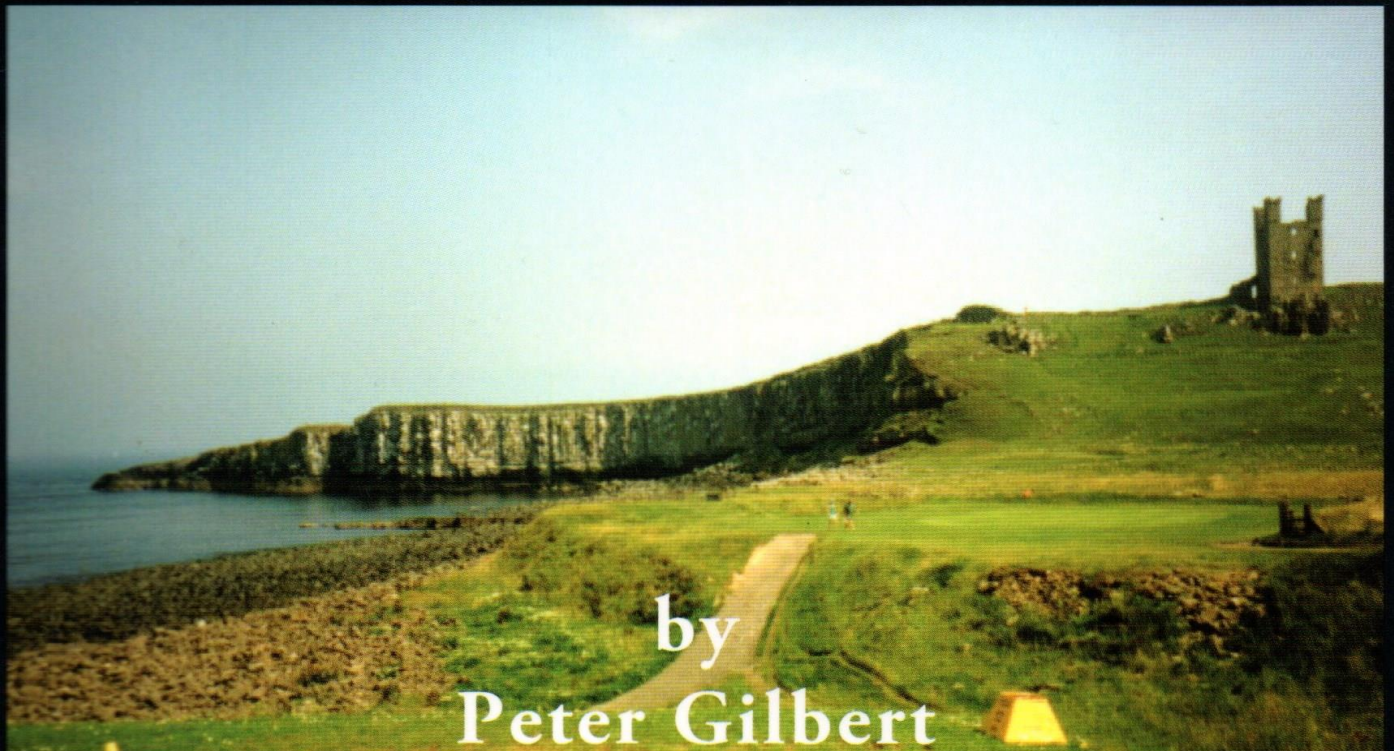
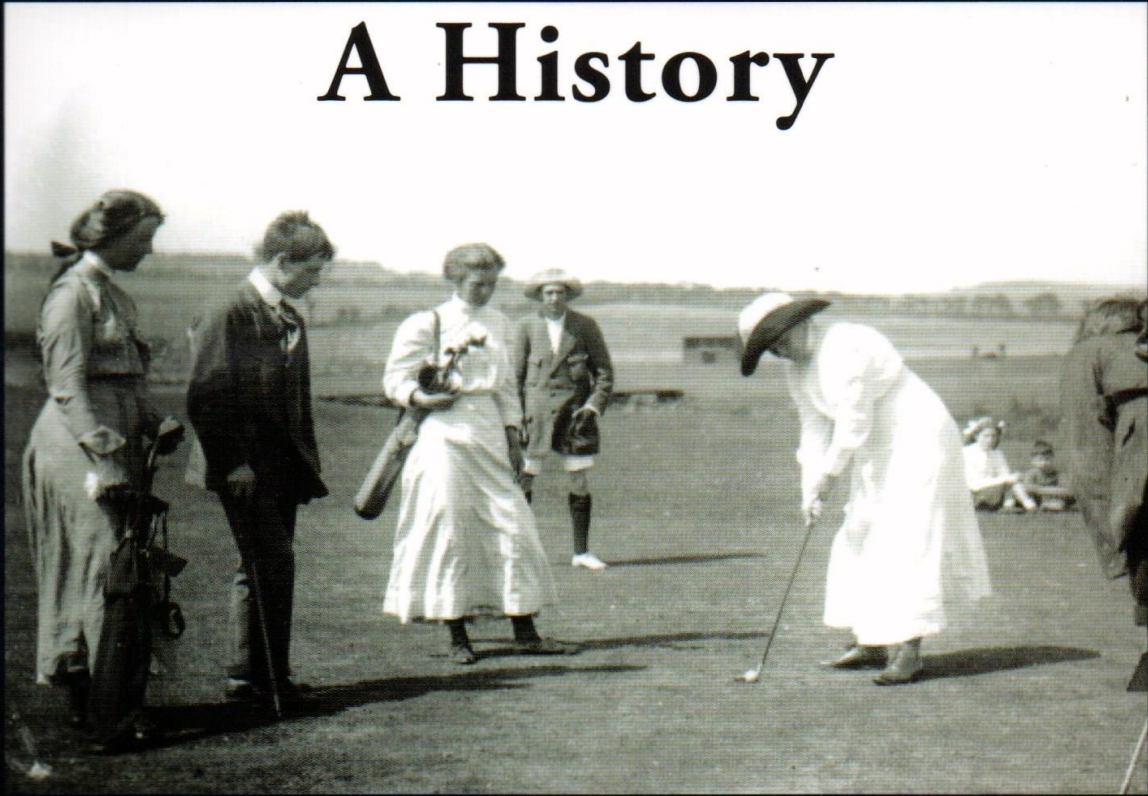


Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Course

A History



by
Peter Gilbert

and
**William Sutherland, Tom Foggett,
Eric Wealleans and Judy Robson.**

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Peter F. C. Gilbert

With contributions from: William Sutherland, Tom Foggett,
Eric Wealleans, Judy Robson and Colin Biott

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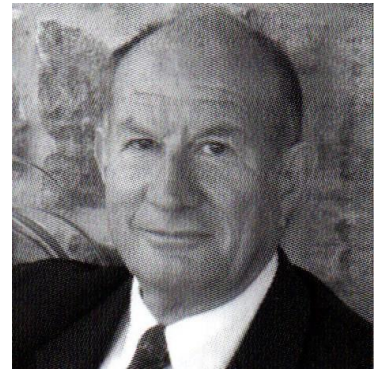
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FOREWORD



It is one of the intrinsic pleasures of the game that good golf courses grow out of their locations and that they stimulate and inspire as well as challenge our abilities at shot-making. What matters, in addition to condition and presentation, is a mix of three qualities: the lay-out and design; the visual appearance of the course and its surroundings; and the ambience and 'sense of place'. If we have enjoyed playing a course, as visitors, we sometimes ask ourselves whether we would like to play most of golf there, as members.

When we talk with visitors who have played Dunstanburgh Castle for the first time they often tell us that they have been captivated by the scenery and challenged by the sporting test it provides. They are not surprised when we tell them that we never tire of playing here. Like members of all golf clubs, we sometimes discuss how we could improve particular holes, but it is always a joy for us to play, for example, the run of holes from the fifth to the tenth with the sound of the sea and the changing views of Embleton Bay and the castle. It also pleases us when visitors appreciate the informality and friendliness at Dunstanburgh, an atmosphere which is partly down to current staff and members and partly a legacy of its history.

For this reason we are pleased that the current owner, Dr Peter Gilbert, and contributors, have traced inter-related influences of owners, members and visitors over the past hundred years.

In the opening chapter, Peter Gilbert notes how it is unusual for a course of this age to have been a proprietary golf course. This natural links was founded in 1900 by Dunstanburgh Castle Estate as an attraction for visitors to Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel. Peter refers to key events such as the purchase of the estate by Sir Arthur Munro Sutherland in 1919, and the re-design of the course by James Braid in 1920. He also outlines changes to the 'lay-out' over time.

The next two chapters recall formative, boyhood hours spent on these links. For young William Sutherland, it was a second magical garden. He draws, poetically, on memories of scenery and wildlife he enjoyed as he played and worked on the course. He became a very keen golfer, but was barely out of his teens when his parents passed on to him the responsibility for managing the course. He faced some financial problems, but we are grateful that he was able to prevent its return to agricultural land.

The unsurpassed views, wild birds and flowers also left a lasting impression on young Tommy Foggett. He describes the origins of the men's club, recalling how his father encouraged local residents to play on a subscription basis, including a few 'artisans', who kept their clubs in the neighbouring farmhouse.

In the final two chapters long term members, Eric Wealleans and Judy Robson summarise the history of the men's and ladies' clubs. They outline the growth of competitions amongst members for increasing numbers of club trophies and the introduction of both 'friendly' and league fixtures against other clubs in the area.

This is a welcome book which adds to our understanding of the cultural history and character of Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club, and also alerts us to what has been done to preserve golf's natural heritage.

It is, indeed, a privilege to play in such a beautiful place and we are aware of our responsibility to care for the natural surroundings we appreciate so much. We are grateful for what has been done in the past and proud that, last year, our greenkeeper, Simon Olver, won a 'Special

Initiative' prize in the British and International Greenkeepers Association Golf Environment Competition (see photo below). Continuing environmental stewardship will maximize the wildlife protection of the course and ensure a sustainable relationship between golfing quality and nature conservation. It will enhance the enjoyment of the game of golf for all who play the course.

Colin Biott, Captain 2008



From left: Kelly Harmer, Sports Turf Research Institute, Peter Gilbert, Simon Olver and Sir Michael Bonallack, former secretary and captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews.

PREFACE

For its age Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Course is unusual in that it has always been a proprietary golf course. This has presented certain difficulties in compiling its history. Unlike its neighbouring members clubs of a similar age Dunstanburgh has virtually no early records of members' competitions or club memberships: it was only after the Second World War that Men's and Ladies' Clubs were founded at Dunstanburgh.

Because of difficulties in searching out some of the early historical material it has taken longer than anticipate to complete this history. The original aim was to publish this history to coincide with Dunstanburgh's Centenary in 2000. However I am grateful to those who have supplied additional material in the intervening period and made the wait worthwhile.

Peter F.C. Gilbert October 2007



The thirteenth green with view of 14th Century Lilburn Tower of Dunstanburgh Castle in the background

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