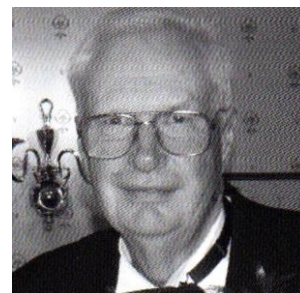


A HISTORY OF THE MEN'S CLUB

by Eric Wealleans



These observations are based on the club minutes book which starts in 1947. There do not appear to be any earlier records that survived the Second World War. There is reference, however, to an earlier club, formed in 1907, but it is not known if it was on a formal basis.

The two cups that were played for before the war, namely the Pitt and Pettinger, were donated to the club by the persons named after the club formed or reformed in 1947.

The men's club was formed at a meeting held in the clubhouse on Sunday 18th May 1947 with Mr Thomas S. Foggett elected as secretary/treasurer. It was resolved to ask Sir Arthur Sutherland Bart to be President and Mr. B. Ivan Sutherland to be Vic President. Mr Dixon Donkin was unanimously elected as captain for the season with the committee to comprise Messrs. D.M. Campbell, J.S. Foggett, Chas. Varnham, L. Bookless and Wm. Callan. The subscription was to be 5/- per member.

At this meeting William Pitt offered his cup to the club and it was resolved to ask Mr Pettinger to do the same, which he did. The Pitt was to be played as a medal and the Pettinger as a matchplay knockout competition. It was also resolved to approach other local clubs with a view to playing matches and to apply for club affiliation.

At the next committee meeting in June replies had been received and dates set for matches with Bamburgh and Alnmouth. The club had also been accepted as an affiliated member of the Northumberland Union of Golf Clubs. A draft copy of the club rules had been prepared by the secretary.

Although no mention of the status of the lady members is made in the minutes, they competed for a separate captain's prize. In the secretary's report of April 1948 lady members numbered 10 and the gentlemen 40. At this time the lady members started to investigate joining the LGU.

The Club Championship was introduced in this year, being won by J. Elder. In 1949 Dunstanburgh Castle GC were founding members of the North Northumberland Golf League with Alnwick, Alnmouth and Warkworth. The format was to be two-ball foursomes with the top six matches to count for points. This meant, in effect, a combined league match and friendly.

Over the next few years there were a few changes in the committee with the secretary/treasurer leaving the area and being replaced by Mr Walter Appleby and there is mention of the membership falling to 25 in 1950.

The first President, Sir Arthur Sutherland, died in 1953, and as he was also the owner of the course, this had a great effect on the club. There is a letter from his son B. Ivan Sutherland dated 18th November 1954 which states that the estate was to be divided between five members of the family and as he had a personal interest in the Links, he had offered to buy the others' shares and was hoping to conclude the transaction by the following April. If he did become owner he would like to have a greens committee, formed out of the Club, consisting of three members to advise on the best ways of economic maintenance, as whilst not seeking profit he wanted to course to pay its way. In his words, "am told that it can do this and still retain its good name". A greens committee was elected at the 1954 AGM to consist of W. Appleby, J.S. Foggett and D. Donkin, to co-operate with Sir Ivan if he did indeed become owner.

A separate office of treasurer appears in the 1954 AGM minutes. Mr. T.H. Donkin was elected to the post and he joined the committee at this time. At the AGM of 1955 W. Appleby retired as club secretary and was replaced by J.J. Neesham. It was also noted that A.L.L. Glendinning had collected from the members to purchase the Sutherland Memorial Trophy.

A committee meeting held shortly after the 1955 AGM in December was attended by Sir Ivan and his agent D.M. Campbell and the greenkeeper R. Thompson, along with eight members and officials. The President, Sir Ivan Sutherland, stated that whilst the administration of his later father's estate had not been completed, he anticipated ultimately becoming the owner. He had been through the accounts for the year with his agent, which in spite of the excellent summer showed a loss of some £200, with considerable outlay needed on machinery. He stated whilst he did not look for a profit, he could hardly be expected to finance its losses.

Various members referred to the condition of the course, particularly some of the greens. Mr Campbell stated that fertilisers were purchased each year but with the limited amount of money which could be spared, fell far short of what was required to bring the greens into first class condition,. There then followed a discussion of the course maintenance, which seems very basic by today's standards.

Sir Ivan and his agent then left and, during a very wide-ranging meeting, there are references to discussion of course measurement, 200 yard distance pegs, naming of holes, competition boards and a 'frank discussion with the greenkeeper, Mr Thompson, on the state of the course'.

At the next meeting in February 196 a letter was received from H. Parkinson, the North Northumberland League secretary, asking about the future of the league as so many clubs were having difficulty raising teams. The reply was a suggestion to reduce the number of players from 14 to 8 or 6 and to try and keep the league going. This idea was carried at the league meeting with the agreed number being 8 players per team and the matches being singles, still with the supporting friendly matches.

In the report by the captain Mr. F.A. Leach in 1958 he said it was the most successful year of the club so far, winning the teams championship of the North Northumberland Golf League and finishing top of the League Table. There was a dinner and presentation at the Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel after the AGM. The tickets were 8/6d per head.

In December of 1958 one of the founder members, Dixon Donkin, died and his widow and family presented a trophy to the club to be played for annually. The story of the Tim Trophy is mentioned in the 1959 AGM, being presented by Mr James Smith whose terrier (Tim) was adept at retrieving golf balls. These balls were sold by the greenkeeper to fund the trophy, an onyx ashtray with a statue of the terrier on top.

The membership total in 1959 was 66 with the fees set at 5/-. Sir Ivan Sutherland, the President and owner of the course, attended the 1959 AGM and stated that he had given the whole coastline between Newton and Craster, including the site of the golf course, to the National Trust on condition that the golf course be maintained as such, but he had been appointed as agent by them in administration of the property.

At the AGM of 1960 A.L.L. Glendinning retired and William Robson started a long service to the club as treasurer and later secretary.

Throughout the 1960's the running of the course changed when Sir Ivan handed it over to his wife and son William to manage, with our member Dr. Shanley acting as part time secretary. Some members would like to have the club take over the lease and there must have been delicate negotiations, between the doctor and members, but nothing was forthcoming.

This new regime, with the appointment of John Carss as greenkeeper, with his wife Nellie as stewardess, appears to have worked well as more positive remarks about the condition of the course and the excellence of the catering appear regularly in the minutes. This was said to be leading to an increase in visitors so essential in a club with so few members. Many societies were making more than one visit a season.

The club was now well established in the local golf scene and made a modest mark on the county scene with Keith Barrs, Ken Saint and Jeff Smith playing for the Northumberland County team. Keith Barrs had made his mark on the club competition scene, first winning the Club Championship in 1954. He reached his peak with a sequence of 6 wins from 1964 – 69. He represented the club on many occasions in county events and played for the county three times. His sequence of Club Championship wins was ended by the left-handed Ken Saint, who went on to turn professional. He played also at Backworth and Ponteland, but spent his early years at Dunstanburgh. Barrs and Saint were then followed on the honours board by Jeff Smith, who was a prolific winner, able to score in any weather. He represented the county 15 times, winning seven and halving one of his games.

Towards the end of the 1970's the membership declined as the course condition became poorer due to lack of green fees and investment, and eventual change of ownership of the lease, with the club once again having to negotiate to maintain their position.

With the transfer of the lease to Dr. Peter Gilbert, came a more long-term view. The lease was renegotiated with the National Trust, enabling the clubhouse and greenkeeper's shed to be renewed. This also led to much better liaison between club and course with a more direct management, including a greens committee, with a consultant agronomist visiting every year. Investment in course materials and machinery, and the introduction of new greens and tees has seen the course getting back into the fine condition with more rounds being played each year. The club membership has also recovered to around 150, with 60 players competing each Sunday for the trophies added to over the years by the members.

The North Northumberland League has now reached 14 members clubs, namely: Alnmouth, Alnmouth Village, Alnwick, Bamburgh, Belford, Berwick, Burgham Park, Magdalene Fields, Rothbury, Seahouses, Percy Wood, Warkworth, Wooler and ourselves. The format is now a 6 man scratch matchplay league played on a Wednesday evening, a Saturday Open Day 9 man team event with the best 6 scores for each team to count gross and nett for 2 separate leagues and an end of season's President's Bowl for the single and teams championship. In addition, there are friendly matches with most of the nearer clubs played on a Thursday evening with teams of eight pairs.

Thanks to the generosity of the owner, the club also hosts an open Mixed Foursome, a joint fixture with the Ladies club, a members' invitation day, and Open Pairs and Seniors Pairs Competitions.

CAPTAINS 1947 – 2008

1947	D Donkin	1948	T Foggett
1949	W Appleby	1950	T H Donkin
1951	J Grieves	1952	C E Varnham Jnr
1953	T Watson	1954	H Glendinning
1955	C E Farnham Snr	1956	K Thompson
1957	Jack Carss	1958	F A Leach
1959	J Smith	1960	M E Anderson
1961	W Robson	1962	W Elliott
1963	N Laidler	1964	J J Neesham
1965	John Carss	1966	G Magnay
1967	W Patterson	1968	E Potter
1969	K Barrs	1970	A Sutherland
1971	G A Pitt	1972	D S Davison
1973	L Michelson	1974	B Magnay
1975	L C Raeburn	1976	M Scott
1977	R J Paxton	1978	W Foote
1979	M McGrady	1980	W Scott
1981	T Ford	1982	R Carss
1983	J Carss Jnr	1984	L Turnbull
1985	E Wealleans	1986	A Robson
1987	T Thompson	1988	D Hogg
1989	H Grant	1990	G Fettis
1991	D Jackson	1992	D Jackson
1993	M Robson	1994	S White
1995	G Rycroft	1996	J Givens
1997	B May	1998	R Jamieson
1999	G P Curry	2000	G A Camozzi

2001 W Price
2003 C V Fettis
2005 W Sage
2007 M Carss

2002 G W Temple
2004 C Reid
2006 D Banbury
2008 C Biott

CLUB CHAMPIONS 1947 – 2007

1948 J Elder
1950 T H Donkin
1952 T H Donkin
1954 K Barrs
1956 T H Donkin
1958 F A Leach
1960 K Barrs
1962 G Paterson
1964 K Barrs
1966 K Barrs
1968 K Barrs
1970 K Saint
1972 J Smith
1974 J Smith
1976 D Appleby
1978 W Scott
1980 M Robson
1982 B Hodgson
1984 D Thomson
1986 A Moir
1988 T Scott
1990 G Richardson

1949 T L Bookless
1951 T H Donkin
1953 C E Varnham Jnr
1955 C E Varnham Jnr
1957 K Barrs
1959 K Barrs
1961 F A Leach
1963 G R Dixon
1965 K Barrs
1967 K Barrs
1969 K Barrs
1971 J Smith
1973 J Smith
1975 J Smith
1977 I Turnbull
1979 S Blackshaw
1981 C V Fettis
1983 M Robson
1985 M Robson
1987 T Scott
1989 G Stephenson
1991 G Stephenson

1992 M Robson

1994 G Stephenson

1996 J L Naisby

1998 M Carss

2000 M Carss

2002 M Carss

2004 S Olver

2006 M Carss

1993 M McGrady

1995 A Robinson

1997 M Carss

1999 M Carss

2001 G Forrest

2003 M Carss

2005 M Carss

2007 M Carss

A HISTORY OF THE LADIES CLUB

By Judy Robson

Ladies were playing golf at Dunstanburgh long before a club was thought of. An early photograph of Mrs Peggy Donkin was taken on the course in 1925. In the thirties a yearly family ticket cost £9. Ladies played with their husbands, friends and children.



At Dunstanburgh, August was the main month of the year when country members came for their annual holidays. Competitions were arranged in the main by Mr. Charlie Brown, and they proved to be very popular. Sir Arthur Sutherland Bart. K.B.E. gave an inscribed silver spoon every August dating from the early twenties until the war years.

In 1986 three of these spoons turned up in an antique shop in Newcastle. As fate would have it, the proprietor, Owen Humble, was a member of Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club and very kindly had them mounted as a trophy and presented them to the ladies club – The Embleton Spoons. Only one spoon appears to have been presented to a lady and that was in 1936 to Mrs Edith Unsworth (nee Appleby) as a seventeen year old before she went to university.

After the war, and the re-opening of the course, a few of the local ladies decided to start their own club. The first fees were paid in 1950 and an application was made to join the L.G.U. to enable members to have official handicaps. The standard scratch score at that time was 68.

A committee was formed in 1951 with the obviously choice of Mrs Peggy Donkin as the first lady captain, a position she held for the next four years.

During 1952 the committee felt that it was now appropriate to have some trophies to play for, and Mrs Donkin and Mrs Kate Robson (Dunstanburgh Castel Hotel) went to a house sale in Alnmouth and bought the Coffee Pot. It was first played for as a medal competition and then eventually in 1987 became the Bronze Trophy. During the same year two more pieces of silver were generously donated. Mrs Betty Fleming, a regular visitor to Embleton and at one time renting the manse, very kindly gave a trophy. It was played for at first as a knock-out competition, and from 1972 the Fleming Trophy became the cup for the Club Championship. The second piece of silver, the Cake Dish, was given that year by a found member Mrs Ibbie Appleby, daughter-in-law to Mr Mark Appleby, the local quarry owner.

In 1954 Mrs Mary Granlund, wife of Canon Granlund of Embleton Vicarage, gave a cup, the Granlund Trophy, which she had won prior to living here. Although she never played golf at Dunstanburgh she thought it would be nice to leave it to be played for by the new club.

Lady Sutherland took over the running of the course in 1964 when she was invited to be our first Lady President.

The first Ladies Open was held in 1960 and the event ran at a loss until 1965. Since then it has become one of our big days of the year and our main source of income.

A combined captain's and invitation day began in the mid-sixties. The event has been played in various forms, and in some years invitations went to local clubs – Alnwick, Alnmouth Village and Warkworth – to help boost the numbers. Later, members were asked to invite a guest. Then with the growth of the club, in 1996, it was decided by the captain that the time had come to have separate events, so that we now have both a captain's day and invitation day.

In the early years of the club, ladies played their competitions on Sundays and Thursdays, the latter to fit in with the half-day closing in Embleton. From the mid 70's to 1980 Tuesday

became the medal day. This was not so suitable for the members from Newcastle, and to encourage them to play, Mondays and then Sundays and Mondays were introduced. At the 1986 A.G.M. members who were also members at Alnmouth Golf Club (Foxton) requested Saturday play. Since then, Saturdays have been the main competition days with Mondays as an alternative for the medals.

At the beginning the club had eighteen members paying 5/- (25p) subscription. The numbers had doubled by 1967, falling back in the mid-seventies to the mid-eighties, this corresponding with the mid-week play. The present day membership is 40, made up of both local and Newcastle people.

In 1948 a family called Smith bought one of the bungalows on the dunes. They had a baby, Jenny 3 months old, and by the age of three she was holding her first golf club, cut to size by her father. She played around the top three holes, as it was then, in bare feet and was worried when she was asked to play in the county trials where she had to wear shoes. Her father died when she was twelve and she began to take golf more seriously with lessons from Eddy Fernie (Alnmouth), who would not take any fees from her mother as she showed so much promise. Next stop was John Jacobs, and when she was fifteen he forecast that she would play for England, which she did in 1973.

She has a wonderful record – Northumberland County Champion 1972, 1973 and 1974, playing for the team from 1970 to 1977. She was a member of the team when Northumberland won the English County Finals for the first and only time in 1973. She was Wills Match Play champion in 1974; represented Great Britain in the Curtis Cup 1974 and 1976; was an England International 1973-74-75-76; a European team championship member in 1975; represent G.B. in the Commonwealth Team Championship in 1975; the World Team Invitation in 1975 and the World Team Champion in 1976. She also won the Newmark Open Stroke Play Championship and was British Open Champion in 1976. In 1976 she was voted the Daks Woman Golfer of the Year. Jenny Lee Smith turned professional in 1977 gaining her players card at her first attempt. She then played on the L.P.G.A. tour as an international member for eight consecutive years. She was winner of ten tour events on the European Tour between 1979 and 84 and was leading money winner in 1981-82. She was a founder member of the W.P.G.A. and it all began at Dunstanburgh Castle Golf Club.

In 1982 Mrs Wendy Richardson, a Dunstanburgh member, felt that there was a need for more match play and introduced an inter-club charity competition in aid of Save the Children. Dunstanburgh was one of the eight original clubs along with Warkworth, Seahouses, Bamburgh, Alnmouth, Goswick, Morpeth and Alnmouth Village. The latter two clubs have now been replaced by Rothbury and Belford.

1983 heralded the start of the North Northumberland Coastal League, the inspired idea of Mrs Nancy Girling (Bamburgh), a past county player for Northumberland and Hampshire. Local clubs had played friendly matches against each other, but nothing competitive. Only three clubs in the area played in the County Shield and Mrs Girling thought that by introducing the league it would give good experience of match play, especially to those who might like to play in the County Shield eventually. The original clubs taking part were Bamburgh, Alnmouth Village, Goswick, Alnmouth, Seahouses and ourselves. With new clubs opening in the district it has now grown to eleven teams. Dunstanburgh finished second in 1990, '97 and '98.

With the alteration of the first six holes of the course in 1971 the S.S.S. was increased to 72, and in 1972 with further new holes on the south side, a reassessment was required and the .S.S.S. was 73. This was increased to 74 in 1976 at the request of club members. In 1995 when laser measurement took over from the chain and tape method, it was found that the course did not meet the necessary requirements. Despite lengthening the 11th, 16th and 18th holes, Mrs Margaret Pickard still assessed the course as a S.S.S.73.

In 1987 when Dr Peter Gilbert took over the course he gave the ladies equal rights with the men, a progressive step at that time. In 1990 a greens committee was formed and a lady was included. This has been a great advantage to the ladies and gives them an understanding of what is taking place on the course, and they are made to feel part of a club and not just an appendage, which is so often the case in ladies golf.

In 1994 the Ladies' Club challenged the Men's Club, with the two teams competing for the Rolling Pin Trophy. To date the honours are about even.

It has not been easy compiling this history of the Ladies Club as there are no traceable minutes before 1982, but early members, of which there are very few, have helped with their memories and their old diaries.

CAPTAINS

1951	M B Donkin	1952	M B Donkin
1953	M B Donkin	1954	M B Donkin
1955	H Blair	1956	D Skipper
1957	M B Donkin	1958	M B Donkin
1959	D Leach	1960	E Varnham (Jnr)
1961	D Skipper	1962	D Skipper
1963	E Varnham (Jnr)	1964	E Patterson
1965	L Elliott	1966	E T Carss
1967	D Skipper	1968	D Skipper
1969	J Sutherland	1970	S Sutherland
1971	M Lively	1972	E D Carss
1973	M Hogg	1974	L Wade
1975	J Foster	1976	E D Carss
1977	H Blair	1978	H Hudson
1979	E Patterson	1980	M B Donkin
1981	D Wilkinson	1982	C Currie
1983	I Wright	1984	D Skipper
1985	W Richardson	1986	R Macintosh
1987	K Moody	1988	J Leathart
1989	P Humble	1990	J A Robson

1991 A Reay

1992 I Wright

1993 J Moorin

1994 A Camozzi

1995 J Long

1996 D Rock

1997 A Bell

1998 L S Dixon

1999 P Daymont

2000 D Lillie

2001 E J Hilton

2002 M E J Readman

2003 J Watson

2004 E Murphy

2005 E A Camozzi

2006 J Moorin

2007 C Broome

2008 D Lillie

SECRETARIES

TREASURERS

1950 – 1967 M B Donkin

1954 – 1964 L Wade

1968 – 1983 E T Carss

1965 – 1967 E Patterson

1984 – 1987 D Humble

1968 – 1986 E T Carss

1988 – 1993 J Scrivener

1987 – 1989 W Richardson

1994 – 1996 A Reay

1990 – 1992 R Macintosh

1997 – 1998 J A Robson

1993 J Straughan

1999 - D Wilkinson

1994 – 1996 C Broome

1997 - A Camozzi

PRESIDENTS

Lady Sutherland 1959 – 1966

M B Donkin 1987 – 1989

D Skipper 1990 – 1992

E D Carss 1993 – 1998

J A Robson 1999

CLUB CHAMPIONS

1952 J Miller

1953 No Award

1954	M E Donkin	1955	D Leach
1956	D Leach	1957	D Leach
1958	M B Donkin	1959	M B Donkin
1960	D Leach	1961	E Varnham (Jnr)
1962	E Carss	1963	C Smith
1964	No Award	1965	E D Carss
1966	J Sutherland	1967	J Sutherland
1968	J Harrison	1969	J Sutherland
1970	J Harrison	1971	J Sutherland
1972	J Forster	1973	E D Carss
1974	J Sutherland	1975	J Foster
1976	D Skipper	1977	D Skipper
1978	E D Carss	1979	D Humble
1980	D Humble	1981	W Richardson
1982	I Wright	1983	D Humble
1984	J A Robson	1985	I Wright
1986	I Wright	1987	A Bell
1988	A Bell	1989	A Bell
1990	J A Robson	1991	D Rowland
1992	A Bell	1993	I Wright
1994	A Bell	1995	D Rock
1996	P Daymont	1997	P Daymont
1998	P Daymont	1999	S Temple
2000	P Daymont	2001	E J Hilton
2002	S Temple	2003	S Temple
2004	S Temple	2005	C Broome
2006	S Temple	2007	S Temple

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY TROPHY WINNERS

1980	Spring Bronze	Miss D Humble
1985	County Vets	Mrs R Macintosh
	Cecil Leitch	Miss J Logan
1986	County Vets	Mrs W Richardson
1988	Bronze Trophy	Mrs A Reay
1990	Bronze Trophy	Mrs P F Humble
	Journal Final	Mrs D Rowland
1992	Cecil Leitch	Mrs A Pattison
1993	Spring Bronze	Miss J Logan
1994	Spring Bronze	Mrs C Tippins
1999	Past Captains	Mrs J Moorin and Mrs J Long