

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Society newsletter for 2015, a time when we look forward to our main golfing events at Leith Links and reflect on "what might have beens" with events already held.

This edition carries information of forthcoming events, particularly our major one to Muirfield in October, updates on events since the last edition, plus a well-deserved honour and musings from our Secretary, Brian Graham.

The newsletter is of course, for all our members and anyone else with an interest in our Aims, so please pass this on to anyone you think might be interested and also, of course, send in any information and/or articles for inclusion.

Events 2015



July 1 st to 4 th	Annual hickory events at Leith Links
1 st	- Challenge match with Musselburgh Old
2 nd	- Challenge match with Bruntsfield Short Hole
3 rd	- Foulis Medal (for Leith-based teams)
4 th	- Hickory Open
July 11 th	Outing to Kingarrock (Hill of Tarvit)
July 23 rd	Challenge match versus Bruntsfield Short Hole at Bruntsfield
September 11 th	Outing to Liberton golf course
October 27th	Statue charity day at Muirfield

Hickory events at Leith Links July 2015

At the time of going to press, arrangements are well underway for our 4 days of events that continue to raise the profile of our Society and the reason we exist in the first place!

In the last edition of the Newsletter, we showed pictures of the work that Edinburgh Council carried out in November to improve the drainage on the Links.

Unfortunately, the ground has not fully recovered yet, which has made the siting of our greens more problematical. So, players this year will experience a different course from previous years, but we are sure many of the challenges faced will be just the same!

Good luck to everyone who takes part!

The Society welcomes our second Life Member

At our 7th March event at the Queen Charlotte Rooms in Leith, our President, Douglas Foulis, was presented with life membership of the Society. Douglas was one of the small group of people who started the society in 2002 to coincide with the Open Championship at Muirfield and has been instrumental over the ensuing 13 years in developing the Society to where it stands today.

And Douglas is not just a figurehead President. He has attended almost all committee meetings since 2002 and is seen competing at our summer events at the Links, as well as representing us in many of our matches over the years. He remains on the course, a doughty competitor, in the nicest sense!

Congratulations Douglas, you have very much earned your award alongside Archie Baird.



Wither Rattray Now?

Rattray's fame is spreading through the good work of the Statue Committee and friends of LRGS. Very many thanks go to Bob Gunning, Secretary of Longniddry Golf Club for taking the Rattray maquette to the Scottish Golf Show in March this year at the SECC in Glasgow. Over 17,000 people visited the show tho' statistics failed to record how many viewed Rattray!

Again "Rattray" attended the 7th March anniversary lunch in Leith and attracted interest among our invited guests from the High Constables of Edinburgh and Leith to friends from East Lothian with connections to Prestonpans. Rattray was one of a number of surgeons called to help the troops after the Battle between the Jacobites and the troops of King George II in 1745. Arran Johnston of Prestonpans Heritage Trust has promised to include Rattray in his Jacobite talks on Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Our plans for a Golfing Event on 8th May at Craigiellaw were thwarted as competing attractions meant numbers were too few to justify running the event and auction. Craigiellaw Golf Club generously donated green fees for those who elected to play a round of golf on the day – it turned out sunny and almost warm by this summer's standards and a number of LRGS members and friends enjoyed a splendid day's golf in East Lothian where "big skies" and some clever putting were the order of the day.



http://www.britishbattles.com/battle_of_prestonpans.htm

Rattray popped up again on 13th June at Leith Gala Day. This time in a handsome glass case and surrounded by golfing artefacts courtesy of John Dixon of Georgian Antiques. Just a selection of the huge range of specialist golfing memorabilia John has in his 5 floors of warehouse at 10 Pattison Street, Leith.

Upcoming Events

Over and above the events mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, we will be found out and about over the next few months.

- 11th July - Outing to Kingarrock (Hill of Tarvit)
- 23rd July - Challenge match versus Bruntsfield Short Hole at Bruntsfield
- 11th September - Outing to Liberton golf course

Please check the website for details, we would be delighted to welcome to our outings.

Muirfield 27th October

The information leaflet and entry form for this major event is being prepared and will be issued to members and other interested groups in July.

Please get this date in your diary now if it isn't already, it promises to be a truly memorable day, a round of golf at a course rated one of the world's best, plus breakfast and lunch for a cost not much more than the normal green fee for one round!

What have we been doing this year?

AGM on 27th January. Our official business was followed with Philip Knowles giving a fascinating talk on the historical perspectives of golf in Leith, in particular on the development of clubs and balls.

Annual Commemoration of 7th March. This year our venue was the Queen Charlotte Rooms in the heart of Leith. After lunch, our speaker was Lionel Freedman, whose topic was "The first 10 years of the World Hickory Championship". As already mentioned, the day saw the bestowing of honorary life membership of the Society to our President Douglas Foulis.

Challenge Match with Musselburgh Old Course. This year we almost got a magic draw in our annual match, but sadly just fell short by 3½ matches to 2 ½.

Musselburgh Challenge 27th June. For the first time, we were able to enter a team in this event, strokeplay format for a team of 4 using hickory clubs. We did not pick up the marvellous trophy, but our players thoroughly enjoyed themselves and we hope to take part again in the 2016.

"Down your Way" with the Society

Readers of a "certain age" will remember a famous radio programme of this name? If you do, then you know what it was about. If you don't well this article from our Secretary, Brian Graham, might give a clue!

During the course of the last 12 months I have visited a number of organisations to speak about Leith and its part in Scottish golf history. Needless to say people are still surprised when you say the first recorded rules were written for a competition to be held on Leith Links. As you would suspect they ask about St Andrew's and their role in the making of rules. Some see it as a bit of a cheek that they do not put the record straight. I always say we have no issue with St Andrew's being the "Home of Golf" as long as they do make clear Leith's role in golf history.

If we can convince people of that we are already moving people forward.

One of the strange things that happens is people also assume I have great knowledge about how much their Grandad's golf clubs will be worth. It is not uncommon for people to bring along golf clubs for me to look at. As you can imagine I spend a lot of time pondering before trying to let them down gently. At a recent Probus meeting a gentleman brought along a full set of hickory golf clubs which had belonged to his father, I studied

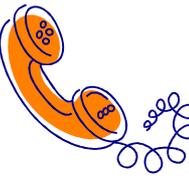
them for a minute before telling him they were in fact steel which had been painted to look like hickory. I did advise him to hold on to them for another 10 years then they might be worth something!

At the Leith Gala Day this year we had a stall on the Links at which we were showing the maquette and also speaking to people about our plans for the statue. We also had some other nice pieces of golfing memorabilia which had been loaned to us by John Dixon of Georgian Antiques. Everyone seems to have had at least a dozen wrapped Dunlop 65's which their Granny must have thrown out because she did not know they might become valuable. But they all agreed to go home to search out their garage in case there were any golf gems lurking in the back. Some of the claims on what they did have or had in the past makes me wonder where all of these golfers have gone. Thank goodness there are guys like John Dixon who does know the value of these things and saves them for future golf collectors.

If you know of any organisation who might like us to "down their way" then please let me know.

Brian Graham
Secretary

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