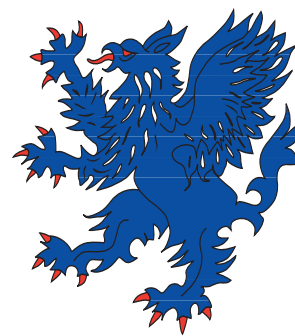




1903



2003

Bangor Golf Club

One Hundred Years

Jeremy Stanley
&
Paula Campbell



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Centenary Captain's Foreword

To be elected Club Captain of such a prestigious Golf Club as Bangor must always be considered an honour; to be chosen as Captain in its Centenary Year is a special privilege which gives me immeasurable pleasure.

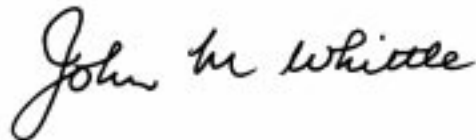
The founders of the Club who bought the original land and designed the course could scarcely have imagined the rich legacy they would leave the town and the surrounding area. The Chairman at the inaugural meeting said, "I don't know much about golf but understand it is a game for those past middle age and it attracts visitors."

He would hardly recognise the membership today which ranges from 10-year-olds to those in their eighties. How could he have foreseen the many advances in technology which led us from hickory shafts and feather golf balls to the trolleys and electric buggies which have done so much to extend the golfing activities of those who are well past middle age and not quite so nimble as they used to be?

In Bangor we have been privileged to nurture the careers of more than one famous golfer and we will always be proud to say that for these many well known golfers, the magic all started here!

I hope you will join with me to enjoy the extensive programme of celebration our Centenary Committee have planned to mark this milestone. As we reflect on the past and look forward to the future we should enjoy the memories and help build an even greater future.

John Whittle

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Whittle". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

The Lady President's Foreword

Having been a member for 37 years and Lady Captain in 1985, it is an honour to be Lady President of Bangor Golf Club in this Centenary year, 2003.

During my membership the Ladies' Branch has flourished due to the continuing enthusiasm and hard work of the various Lady Captains and Council members.

We all look forward to the new century in the hope that the Club generally will continue to progress.

The many visitors to the Club, whether for golf or various functions and social activities, are always warmly welcomed, and it can truly be said that Bangor Golf Club plays a large part in the social life of the town.

I know you will enjoy reading this history of Bangor Golf Club. It is a fitting testament to all the members past and present.

Mona Fox



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Mona Fox" with a horizontal line underneath.

Centenary Lady Captain's Foreword

I am indeed privileged to be Lady Captain during Bangor Golf Club's Centenary year, 2003.

All members will I know enjoy this historical record, and its writers, Jeremy Stanley (Main Section) and Paula Campbell (Ladies Section) are to be congratulated on providing a comprehensive document which should be of great interest to young and old alike.



In my twenty years in the Club I have seen the Ladies' Section thrive, with new, keen young players and the Junior and Juvenile girls showing great promise and potential.

Mixed Foursomes, social events and co-operation ensure extremely good relationships within all sections of the Club, while friendly matches and ILGU competitions forge many golfing friendships throughout Northern Ireland and particularly the North Down area.

Our thanks are due to the Centenary Committee, (Chairman Maxwell Ledlie), the Historical Committee and the many other members who have worked hard and long to make our Centenary celebrations successful and memorable.

Mrs Beth Gillan.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "B. Gillan" in a cursive style.

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Acknowledgements

Albert Simpson, then Honorary Secretary, approached me in the car park one day in 1995 and said, “We need someone to write the history of the Club. You’ll do that for us, won’t you Jeremy?” How could anyone refuse?

Soon after starting I realised that help was needed, and was fortunate to enlist Roy Mullan to do research. He has meticulously read through all the Club’s Minute Books and made invaluable notes. Besides that, he sorted out the Club photographs and captioned and dated them where possible. His work has been invaluable.

Paula Campbell consented to write the Ladies’ Section, and she has proved an inspired choice.

Many members gave me help and encouragement, principally Bertie Young, whose memory went back to the days of the old course, as did that of Frank Hunter. Hugh Greer was kind enough to interview the Club’s older members.

Hal McGimpsey and Billy Feherty both contributed pieces about their respective sons, and Alan McDade, as well as putting me right on many matters to do with golf, contributed pen portraits of individual golfers. Bryan Blaikie also gave of his expertise in golf matters.

Maxwell Ledlie kindly proofread my draft, corrected much grammar, and produced the tables of Officers of the Club. There were many others who helped, among them the Secretary/Managers of Ardglass, Clandeboye, Donaghadee, Helen’s Bay and Royal Belfast Golf Clubs, and Trevor Grey, Historian of Bangor Grammar School. Thanks to all of you.

Thanks also to the Ladies in the office; Pauline and Julie, who patiently wrote letters for me, answered questions and instructed me in using the photocopier. Thanks to successive Secretary/Managers, Tom Russell first, and then David Ryan who has been a tower of strength in many ways, not least in sorting out computer problems. Martin and Bryce also were always ready to help.

Ian Wilson at North Down Heritage Centre kindly allowed us to reproduce some historic photographs and gave advice and assistance, as did Noelle Kavanagh of the Family History Society when we were hunting for elusive portraits of long ago Captains, two of which were provided by Tommy Ross the noted Bangor Historian.

The GUI in Dublin and Brendan Edwards in Holywood also assisted, and I gratefully acknowledge the loan of written material by Stuart McLeese, Bertha McGimpsey, Bertie Smyth, Maureen and Eric Cameron, Sam Hamilton and Beryl Crothers.

Jack Hamill contributed anecdotes about his father, and about the Club, as did several other members. People kindly lent me books, among them; Norman Drew, Charlie Burrowes, John Neill, Bertie Wilson and Roy Mullan. Thanks to A.S. Campbell for his notes on the Snooker Section, to Colin Gibson for notes on the Table Tennis Section and to Derek Campton for notes on the Bowls Section. Thanks also to Jack McCloskey who took photographs as required, to George Boyd for permission to use his 1944 aerial photo of the clubhouse and to David McNeilly who allowed us to reproduce some photos from his 1998 Course Yardage book, and to the

Acknowledgements continued...

Ordnance Survey who allowed us to reproduce a section of their 1920 map of Bangor.

Assistance was also received from Robin Adams of Trinity College Library; Karen Latimer of Queens Science Library; and the staff of the National Library, Dublin, and the Linenhall Library. We received advice from John Hanna and W. Hanna who produced the Malone history, and more than one hundred people donated or lent photos, newspaper cuttings or other historic artefacts.

Special thanks to the other members of the Historical Subcommittee, John Gavin and Alan McDade who gave much

needed assistance in selecting the illustrations for this book. They were unfailingly supportive, especially in the production stage and had to listen to me when things were not going well. Thanks also to my wife for her support and all those cups of coffee.

Finally thanks to the Publishers, especially Tommy and Mark who, as they say themselves, “Kicked the thing into shape.” Inevitably there will be some people left off this list, and to them as well as to those listed above, thank you all. Without your help this book could not have been written.

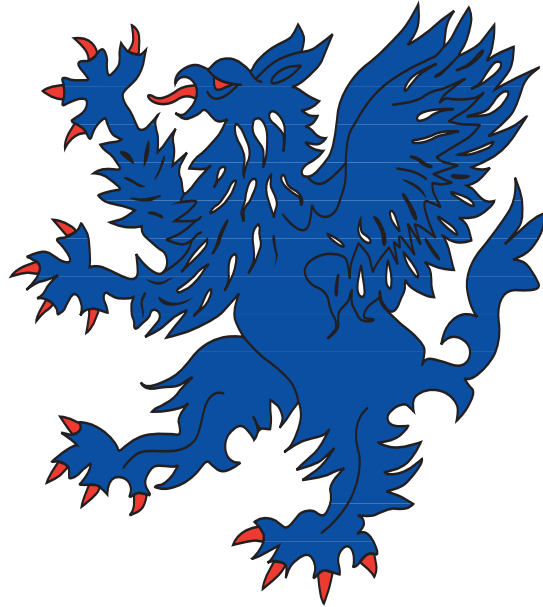
Jeremy Stanley. Historian.

Bangor Golf Club Centenary

Significant Dates

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 21 st February 1903 | Inaugural Meeting. |
| March 1903 | Instituted and affiliated to Golfing Union of Ireland. |
| 5 th May 1903 | Ladies Branch Inaugurated. |
| 13 th June 1903 | Club Opened. |
| | First Nine Opened. |
| | Exhibition Match; Reade and Newett. |
| 20 th June 1903 | Ladies Branch Opened. |
| | Miss Connor drove first ball. |
| 25 th July 1903 | Exhibition Match; Pulford and Turnbull. |
| 19 th December 1903 | Foundation Stone Laid. First Clubhouse. |
| 25 th March 1904 | First AGM. |
| 21 st May 1904 | First Clubhouse Opened. |
| 2 nd July 1904 | 2 nd Nine Opened. |
| | The Captain (F.C. Doran) drove first ball. |
| 4 th September 1934 | Foundation stones laid for new clubhouse. |
| 6 th April 1935 | New clubhouse opened by Lord Craigavon. |
| | James Braid course opened same day by Lady Craigavon. |

Chapter One



Early Days, 1903 & 1904

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

There is something very special about reaching the “Century Mark”, be it our own age, a cricket score, or, as in this case, the continuous life of a club. It is a landmark that cries out to be celebrated, a moment in time for all connected with Bangor Golf Club to be proud, and perhaps a time to cast just a glance backward to have a look at the beginnings of our Club, and the men and women who founded and maintained what has grown into our heritage today.

The world of 1903 seems impossibly remote to us today. The Wright brothers made their first flight. Scott and Shackleton came closer to the South Pole than any other explorers before them, and King Edward VII inaugurated London’s first electric tram service. Most of the world’s commerce was still carried in sailing ships, and most houses were still lit by candles. But to the men who sat round a table in the Downshire Hotel, Main Street, Bangor, on a day in February 1903, the future looked bright. They were talking about forming a golf club in Bangor.

Royal Belfast Golf Club was already established at Carnalea, but in those days that was some distance from the town. Motorcars were a rarity and for most golfers the railway was the only practical means of getting there, and Carnalea was two stops away. There was the ever-present risk of either missing your train home, or having to cut your game short. Even aside from these drawbacks, these men, with the future of their town at heart, felt that Bangor should have its own golf club.

The Belfast and County Down Railway was bringing prosperity to Bangor as people found that they could work in Belfast and yet live by the sea. The town was

starting to expand, handsome villas were being built along the roads that led away from the railway station, and the people who lived in those villas would need their recreation.

Those men had a vision of a golf club as fine as any in Ireland, and who can say that their vision was flawed as this year (2003), we celebrate one hundred years of Bangor Golf Club.

First things first. A notice was inserted in the local papers and a public meeting was called for February 21st, 1903. Fast work, but some of them had been thinking about this for around two years, probably talking about it as they went to work on the train, and they had already done some preparatory work, like locating suitable ground.



The public meeting took place as planned in the Downshire Hotel, Main Street, Bangor. This was a temperance hotel, but had a room that could accommodate two hundred people. In the event more than fifty turned up and there were apologies from twenty more so that was an encouraging start.

Mr John McMeekan J.P., Chairman of the Urban Council, was elected to chair the meeting. You can’t help feeling that it was a good move to get the Council on side right away. In any case he was enthusiastic and in his opening remarks stated that he believed a golf course

Chapter One - Early Days 1903, 1904.

would attract visitors to the town, and he personally was prepared to do everything in his power to help found the Club in the interests of Bangor. In the manner of the reporting of those days the newspaper says that these remarks were greeted with applause, as well they might be. The meeting then got down to business and the first item was to choose a name for the new Club. "Bangor Golf Club" was proposed and passed unanimously. Seconding the motion was Mr E.L. Woods, an architect who was later to design the first clubhouse.

Next to speak was Mr T.E. McConnell J.P., a noted Helen's Bay golfer and an estate agent, who better to outline proposals about the land to be acquired. Then, businessmen all, the next item was subscriptions. Entrance fee was fixed at one guinea, (£1.05); annual subscription one guinea; ladies and boys under the age of eighteen to be half price; Life Membership five guineas, (£5.25). Today we can only gasp at those figures, but to put it into proportion, the average wage for those times would have been about £20 per year.

Club Officers were then elected: Mr J. McMeekan, President; Mr T.E. McConnell, Captain; Mr F.C. Doran, whose idea the whole thing had been in the first place, Secretary; and Treasurer, Mr William Robinson. Another inspired choice, William Robinson would design Bangor's first nine, then go on to redesign Carnalea in 1927 and in 1933, design Clandeboye from scratch.



*Captain 1903
T.E. McConnell*

Fifteen Council members were then elected and the meeting closed with the usual vote of thanks. Bangor Golf Club was on its way.

J. McMeekan held the office of President until 1905 when Doctor R.L. Moore took over. George Herbert Brown, whose trophy we still play for today, in turn succeeded him, and he remained in office until his death in 1908. The Club was then without a President for a year until Herbert Brown, G.H. Brown's son, was elected. He stayed in office until the end of 1910 and Bangor has never had another President since that day.

Meanwhile, in order to report progress, a meeting for members of the new Club was held in the Town Hall on the 21st April 1903. Fifty-four turned up, and among other business it was stated that five additional members of Council had been co-opted and that proposals for rules were to be laid before the members. The land had been rented and work on the new course was in hand, being carried out by local labour under the direction of the newly engaged Club Professional and Greenkeeper, Mr. G. Turnbull, who had come from Malone. Council had enlisted the aid of Mr. Butchart of Royal County Down, one of the leading golf course architects of the time, to carry out William Robinson's design and supervise the work, and he was quoted as having said that Bangor would have one of the best nine hole courses in Ireland. The meeting heard that membership stood at 220, comprising 151 Ordinary Members, 41 Life Members, 25 Ladies' and 3 "Youths". Debentures for the building of the clubhouse were on sale and were eagerly taken up. These cost £5 and paid 5% interest, which was good for that era, and were repayable at the

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

discretion of the Trustees. The Treasurer reported that even after paying out for the acquisition of the land and the work going on, the Club was still in the black. These remarks drew applause from those present and in the words of the reporter present, "It is clearly evident that the career of this organisation cannot be otherwise than flourishing." Among other business, four Trustees were elected: J. McMeekan J.P., T.E. McConnell J.P., W.I. Mahaffy, and F.C. Doran.

It is interesting to note that although the number of "Lady" members is mentioned at this stage, it was the 4th May before the meeting to inaugurate the Ladies' Branch was held, by which time it was stated that there were 50 Lady members. Council had already elected the formidable Miss Connor as President of the Ladies' Branch, and she took the chair at this meeting, which was attended by 25 ladies.

The land that had been rented was forty-five acres of farmland, twenty three acres just off Hamilton Road and lying adjacent to the present Ward Park, where Moira Drive is now, and the remainder on the other side of Broadway. The work of clearing the land and constructing the course was all done by hand, and so

well did they work, those few men and a couple of horses, that less than four months later, on the 13th June, 1903, the first nine hole course could be opened, and on opening day Mr W. J. McGeagh, Honorary Secretary of Royal County Down and the Bangor Club's first Honorary member, was able to remark that the course was an excellent one, and that it was in splendid condition, greens, fairways and bunkers.

Membership of the new Club had already grown to 300, even before one ball had been struck, and a considerable crowd was present on Opening Day to watch an exhibition match between the Irish Amateur Close Champion, H. Reade (Royal Belfast), and the previous year's Champion, F.B. Newett (Malone). By all accounts the match was a good one and the result was close. In an eighteen-hole stroke competition, H. Reade went round in 84 and his opponent in 85. The course "Bogey", or par as we say today, for two rounds of the nine-hole course was 80 at this time. An Open Stroke competition for members followed and the day closed with an informal gathering and prize giving in the temporary clubhouse, a rented house on Hamilton Road. The speeches usual on such occasions were made, and Messrs Reade and Newett were presented with suitably inscribed silver mounted walking sticks in the shape of golf clubs. Sometimes known as "Sunday Clubs", these could be carried inconspicuously while walking on the course on Sundays, when play at that time was not allowed, then perhaps out of sight, a shot or two could be practised. Prizes for members were £3 for best gross, £3 for best nett, £2 for second best nett, and a box of one dozen "Haskell" balls for second best gross.



Butchart Advertisement

Chapter One - Early Days 1903, 1904.



First Council, 1903 - 1904.

*D. Orr, J.W. Shepherd, T.C. Sheriff, W. Hazley, J. Hollywood;
E.L. Woods, W.H. Mussen, W. Robinson, T.E. McConnell (Captain), F.C.Doran, R.J. Woods;
J.A. Hurst, G. Absolom, J. Currie.*

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Just over one week later, on Saturday 20th June, 1903, the Club Captain, Mr T.E. McConnell stepped onto the first tee and placed a ball on a small pyramid of sand. Miss Connor, the newly elected Ladies' President, struck that ball and became the first lady to drive a ball on the new course to open the Ladies' Branch of Bangor Golf Club. An Open Stroke competition followed.



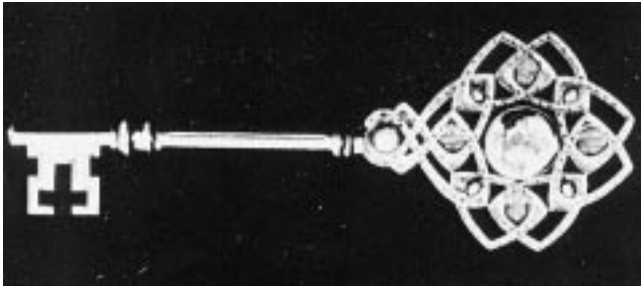
Newett Putter - Presented to Mr. F.B. Newett, at the opening of the links 13th June, 1903.

The Club now settled down to regular play, and competition results started to appear in the Press. The newspaper "*Northern Whig*" reported the results of Bangor's first Captain's Prize Competition, which took place on the 18th June, 1903. Mr T.W. Gibson won the cup presented by the Captain, Mr T.E. McConnell J.P. The August edition of the same paper states that the month is a slack one for golf news due to holidays and the heat. Despite that they were able to report on a match played on Saturday 29th August between G. Turnbull, the Club Professional and George Pulford, the Professional at Ormeau. Turnbull lost, 4 and 3, after

four rounds of the nine-hole course, but as Pulford had the reputation of "One of the First Golfers in the Three Kingdoms", the result was perhaps not all that bad. The band of the Royal Irish Fusiliers entertained those spectators who did not follow the players round and a substantial sum was raised for local charities. The newspaper report comments on the excellent state of the course, especially the greens, only two months from opening day, due in the main to heroic efforts by Turnbull and his staff. Perhaps Turnbull took advantage of those very conditions by going round in 33 the next month, to set up the first nine-hole course record.

Plans had already been put in hand for a clubhouse, some of the money being raised by the sale of debentures as we have heard, and on the 19th December of that same year (1903), there was a good turnout despite the rain, to see Miss Connor lay the foundation stone of Bangor's first clubhouse. The marble stone, which was framed in brass, was set into the floor in the front hall of the new building. To mark the occasion, the contractors, Messrs J & R Thompson, presented Miss Connor with a silver trowel, which is still in the possession of the Club.

This very fine building, built at a cost of just under £1000, was ready for use by May of the following year (1904), and was officially opened with due ceremony on the 21st May, again by Miss Connor. Although the membership of the Club was steadily growing and land had already been acquired for the second nine, yet they had the forethought to design the clubhouse so that if the Club was not a success, it could be readily turned into a private dwelling and sold should that prove necessary. Built in red brick and with a slate roof and



Opening Original Clubhouse, 1904.

wooden balconies, the new clubhouse faced south overlooking the course and Ward Park lake. On the ground floor, to the left of the entrance hall, were two large function rooms divided by a folding partition. On the other side were the Ladies' Rooms complete with separate entrance and to the rear were kitchens and the usual offices. A large stained glass window graced the top of the stairs that led to changing rooms and locker rooms on the first floor. There also were the Smoke Room and Billiard Room, both opening onto the veranda that can be seen in the drawing. But no one had thoughts of a private villa on Opening Day. Before a large and appreciative audience assembled outside the clubhouse, the Captain's daughter presented Miss Connor with a bouquet of flowers and the Captain, Mr F.C. Doran, then handed Miss Connor an ornamental gold enamelled key with which to perform the opening ceremony. This key, suitably inscribed, is also in the possession of the Club to this day. More details of the life and work of Bangor's first Lady President will be found in the Ladies' Section of this book.

Meanwhile, the Opening Ceremony proceeded -



The Original Clubhouse, 1903.

speeches were made, Miss Connor opened the door of the clubhouse, and the whole party then proceeded upstairs where Miss Connor presented the Club with a billiard table. That same billiard table is the one nearest the door of our snooker room today. The commemorative plate on one end reads as follows: **"Presented to Bangor Golf Club by Miss Connor. June 1904."** Mr McMeekan struck the first ball on the new table and, in the manner of the day, there were more speeches. Finally, Miss Connor was asked to accept a pair of silver candlesticks as a souvenir of the happy day. A happy day it must have seemed too. Just over a year previously all this had still been a dream, and though the many speeches made on that day have a pomposity about them that we are not used to today, yet those who made them had a right to be proud of what had been accomplished in such a short time.

Club Captain Mr F.C. Doran duly opened the second nine on the 2nd July, 1904 by driving the first ball. This time a professional course designer had been employed

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years



*Architects Sketch - Original Clubhouse, 1903.
(Image courtesy of Trinity College, Dublin).*

Chapter One - Early Days 1903, 1904.

and the total cost was £250, all raised by donations from members and from the Belfast and County Down Railway Co. who gave £75. It was fast work as the available land had only been surveyed in April. Once again an 18 hole Open Stroke competition followed. 18 hole competitions had been played over the original nine; there was one on 5th April, 1904, when it was reported that there was a large turnout and that the links was in "capital" condition, and another on June 7th for a special prize donated by Miss Connor. This was some match - the newspaper report of the day called it "A very severe struggle". Played between members James Hunter and W.F. Hunter (no relation), it finished on the 37th green. James Hunter won and was presented with a silver cigarette box that is still in the possession of the family.

Major competitions, however, commenced later in 1904 after the opening of the full course. The four Trustees presented a cup, now known as the "Trustees' Cup", which has been played for annually ever since,



Cigarette Box won by James Hunter, 7th June, 1904.

and which was won for the first time by Mr J McAvoy. Then on the 29th October an exhibition match was arranged between the newly engaged Club Professional, Fred Smith, who had come from Malone, and the Professional from Royal Portrush, Harry Hamill. This match, which was played over 36 holes and won by Hamill, aroused much public interest. What Hamill saw of the course may have impressed him, as he returned to Bangor as Club Professional in 1923. Another of the Club's first major competitions was played on 27th December, 1904, for a prize of eight guineas (£8.40), or



Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

about five months salary to many people in those days. Open to members of recognised Golf Clubs, it was another 36 hole stroke competition. *"The Irish Golfer"* reported that there was "The largest number of competitors ever seen on the Bangor Links". Winner of the first prize, best nett, was W.F. Hunter.

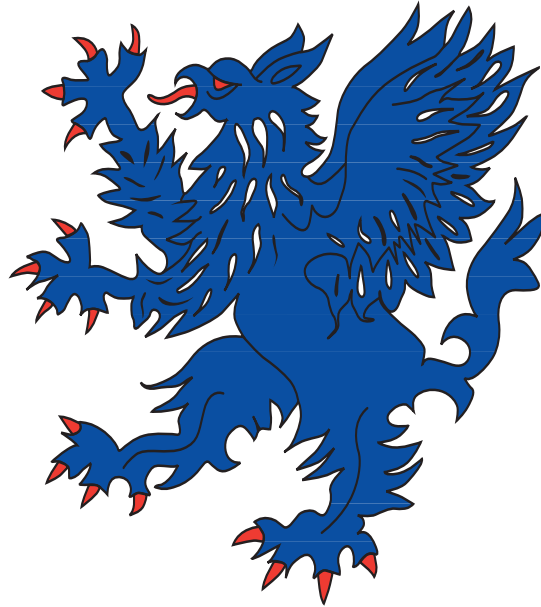
The first AGM had been held in the Town Hall on Friday March 25th 1904, but when the second AGM was

held in the new clubhouse for the first time on the 8th April the following year (1905), the retiring Captain, F.C. Doran, could reflect on some very sound achievements. Firstly of course the founding of the Club, then in succession, the opening of the first nine, the building of the clubhouse, and the opening of the second nine. With a vigorous and active Council and an enthusiastic membership of nearly 400, they could face the future with confidence.

These things actually happened.

An elderly member habitually sliced off the first tee. One day he sliced the ball right into Ward Park lake. In a fit of temper he threw his bag, clubs and all into the lake, only to realise later that his keys were in the bag. A Caddie was paid to retrieve the bag.

Chapter Two



The Old Course

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

What was the course of those early days like to play on? We have already heard the opinion of Mr. McGeagh, Honorary Secretary of Royal County Down, delivered on opening day, and other contemporary opinions did not differ. The "Newsletter" reporting the events of opening day said, "The new course is beautifully situated off the Hamilton Road and is a fine addition to the numerous links in the neighbourhood of Belfast." While the magazine "The Irish Golfer," though admitting that the course "was not of that sporting character which is found say at Newcastle or Portrush", yet conceded that the links had been prepared in a splendid manner. At least they were prepared to make the comparison with those two splendid courses.

Grazed by sheep and with greens hand cut by scythe, the original nine hole course consisted of some forty acres, just over half of which lay between Hamilton Road and Broadway, where Moira Drive and Maralin Avenue are now. The remainder was on the other side of Broad-



*View across the 2nd fairway, 1904.
(photograph courtesy of North Down Heritage Centre)*

way where our modern course now starts. It was at that time agricultural land, presumably grazing, with the usual complement of whins. Manpower and horses transformed this in a few weeks into a passable nine-hole golf course, approximately 2,300 yards long.

Stepping out of the clubhouse, the 9th green was immediately on your left, and the 1st tee to your right, near the entrance. The first hole ran along parallel to the lake in Ward Park and was described as being 270 yards from tee to green with a bunker at 210 yards. With the equipment of the day that would have been quite a good drive. This hole has given rise to many legends. The ground on the right hand side of the fairway sloped down to the lake, so a right-handed slice would often finish in the water and caddies had to be rewarded for retrieving the ball. Early balls were expensive and as the lake is shallow there would be no question of abandoning the ball. In fact the first hole became one of the primary reasons for the move to the present location in 1934, as children's swings were erected in the park in 1925, where they still are today in fact, and the danger of hitting a child became too great.

The 2nd was about 200 yards and lay nearly at right angles to the first, playing towards Broadway. The second green was about where number 64 Moira Drive is today, just short of Broadway. It can be seen in the photograph with the two small tin greenkeepers' sheds to the left of it. One of those sheds was a stable for the horse, and the mower lived in the other. The picture looks across Broadway and up the hill towards Williamson's farm visible on the skyline, where the Greenkeepers' sheds are today. Play then continued on



*Ward Park Lake looking towards the 1st fairway and original clubhouse.
(Photograph courtesy of North Down Heritage Centre).*

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

the other side of the road. The 3rd was 351 yards and noted as being a nice long hole of a good sporting character. It followed, more or less, the line of the present first, and you can still see the old green on the patch of level ground before the dip about a third of the way down the present 2nd fairway. Play then continued in a loop that followed the boundary of the course, which at that time ran from Broadway, diagonally across the present 3rd and 4th fairways and up the hill to the left, joining the present boundary hedge just beside the present 11th green. Here, when the light is right you can just make out the site of the old 5th green. The 6th, the longest hole on the course and one of the longest in Ireland, then continued back down the hill in the direction of Hazeldene. You then played back across Broadway to the 7th green, then up the hill towards the flagpole and the 8th green where Maralin Avenue is now, and so down to the 9th green beside the clubhouse. This was the original course laid out by William Robinson, founder member, Treasurer and one of the Club's earliest Greens Conveners.

The Club prospered and the membership increased so rapidly to 450 playing members that less than one year after Opening Day the original nine-hole course was seen to be inadequate. Council quickly decided to acquire more land and make the course up to eighteen holes. The members subscribed the necessary funds, and aided by a substantial donation from the Belfast and County Down Railway Company, sufficient land adjoining the existing course was bought on the far side of Broadway. It was of course very much in the railway company's interest to help the Club, as a good golf club would attract more passengers. Willie Fernie of Troon

the professional Golf Course Architect, opted to redesign the whole course, as opposed to just tacking the new nine onto the old. A noted golfer himself, and brother of the Scottish International Champion, Fernie was recognised as one of the foremost authorities of the day on the laying out of golf courses. He laid out the new course in two loops, both finishing at the clubhouse, and local firm A and W Legge did the construction work.

The newly completed 18 hole course was opened on the 2nd July, 1904, the first ball being driven by the Club's second Captain, Mr F.C. Doran. The usual 18 hole stroke competition followed, in which the ex Irish champion Harold F. Reade played. Not unnaturally Reade won the best gross. Playing off +4 he had a nett 85, gross 81, and won the first prize of £3. The prize for best nett was won by member T.W. Pyper with a score of 88 gross. Playing off 14, his nett score of 74 won him £3 also.

The following year (1905), the official description of the course in the *"Irish Golfers Guide"* was as follows:



12th Green, 1905.

Chapter Two - The Old Course.

"The course consists of fields and the chief hazards are fences, ditches and artificial bunkers", but by 1910 the *"Official Guide to Bangor"* quotes a visitor as saying "...The turf, in the season, is perfect and with the many long holes there is plenty of scope for the use of every club in one's bag. Special attention has been devoted to the putting greens". By constant weeding, dressing and attention, in 1910 the greens at Bangor Golf Club were as good as the visitor had had the pleasure of playing on, something that we can say has not changed in one hundred years. That same visitor, had he come to Bangor by the B&CD railway, perhaps using one of their reduced price golf vouchers, would have had a five minutes walk from the station to the clubhouse. Well, they were brisk walkers in those days, and would have had to pay one shilling (5 p) for his round of golf. The caddy would have been extra, perhaps sixpence (2.5p), if he had a good round. Annual membership at that time was available for two guineas (£2.10p.). In 1910, the *"Irish Golfers Guide,"* recommending Bangor to the visitor, while stating that the course is just over 5,000 yards long, still insists that it consists of fields, the main hazards being "fences, ditches and artificial bunkers". Course "Bogey", or par as we say today, was 76. The guide goes on to say that alterations to some of the later holes have made the second nine a bit more interesting. Not sure if that description would have fetched me from Amiens Street station! Still, they do say that Bangor is "A charming course".

Those alterations were the result of the purchase of another field, known as "Allen's Field" that lay in the centre of the course on the far side of Broadway, allowing the whole second loop to be remodelled and the course lengthened from 5,036 to 5,600 yards.

The alterations must have been successful as the Bangor course hosted the qualifying rounds of the News of the World Professional Golfers Tournament in the last week of July that same year (1910). Harold McNeill, Professional at Royal Portrush won, defeating Michael Moran, then Irish Professional Champion, and the trophy is still in our trophy cabinet.



News of the World Trophy, 1910.

We are fortunate to have an account of a round of golf played on the old course in 1928, and I will let this account speak for itself. It was written by Mr W. Wilson, a member from 1928 until he died in 1991, and was given to me in 1997 by Mr Billy Alexander.

"My father had bought me a bag with four hickory shafted clubs and I became a Juvenile member of Bangor Golf Club. The clubs were a driver, a mid-iron, a mashie, (6 iron), and a gunmetal putter. We lived near

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

the golf course and I was very keen to play. I was eleven years old.

The fine red brick clubhouse was a few yards from where the Tonic Cinema (now the Tonic Fold) stood. Later it became Connor House School, the preparatory department of Bangor Grammar School. The first tee was just below Bertie Young's bedroom window, their house was on Hamilton Road, and he used to appear in pyjamas on summer mornings and call out that he would join me in a few minutes. Even then he was a good player.

Moir Drive and all those houses had not yet been built and the first hole ran alongside the pond in Ward Park. The fairway sloped down in a series of terraces to the park with the result that many a sliced drive ended up among the ducks. The 1st green was near where the Rev. Millar Craig lived and was well bunkered. The 2nd hole was parallel to the playing fields and was a straight-forward par four.

You then walked across Broadway and played the 3rd to your right alongside the hedge. This brought you down a slope to the boundary of the course where open fields took over and you turned back towards Bangor. This was a fairly short hole. The 5th was rather long and the green was on top of the hill about fifty yards to the left of where the 11th green is today. You can still see the shape of it quite clearly. This was the furthest point from the clubhouse.

The tee for the 6th hole was built up inside the hedge along the right of the 5th fairway. You drove towards

Ballyholme Bay and found the 6th green nestling near the site of the present 10th green .

In those days there was a country lane running from the start of today's Beverly Hills past the old farmhouse that stood on the site where Jack Neill built his house. This lane is said to be the old road to Newtownards.

From the 7th tee you had a lovely drive down the steep hill and over a hawthorn hedge and ditch in the direction of Hazeldene Gardens. The green was where the 10th tee is now. The 8th was a short hole back up towards the present clubhouse and the 9th was downhill back to the old clubhouse, finishing up just short of McMurrays' laundry, from whose tall boiler chimney black smoke often belched.

The second nine was perhaps not as varied as the first nine. The 10th green was high up near today's Maralin Avenue. (Although today we tend not to be



18th Green, 1905. Note: "The Pin" with numbered metal indicator. These were used during that era as they did not indicate the wind direction.

Chapter Two - The Old Course.

aware that there is a hill there, I have noticed that all contemporary accounts speak of this hill and it must have appeared as a significant feature in the play of that time). The 11th involved a drive over Broadway. The 12th green was in a saucer near the present clubhouse. The 13th, 14th and 15th were rather meandering, and the 16th was a pleasant short hole. The 17th was the longest and probably the best hole on the course and was over 500 yards. The green was on the Ward Park side of Broadway and it took two very good shots to clear the road, especially into the wind. I well remember John Hamill, the Professional, in the final of the Ulster PGA Championship playing a heroic second shot which just caught the top of the netting wire fence protecting Broadway, and fell back on his side of the lane. The 18th was a quiet hole over the hill (Maralin Avenue) and back to the fine green in front of the clubhouse. (The 17th, mentioned earlier was actually 564 yards at this time, and a "Bogey" 6.)

If you were a golfer of some substance you would then hand your caddie sixpence (2·5p.), for which he would then sandpaper your iron clubs and give them back to you before you left to go home."

Those early clubs actually required quite a bit of

maintenance. The heads would rust of course, if put away wet, and the wooden shafts needed to be lightly oiled with linseed once per month, but not on a wet day. Contemporary advice was to have the clubs polished by the maker every three months.

Balls were in a state of transition in the early years of the 20th century. Gutta-percha balls were in common use, but were gradually being replaced by the American rubber cored ball, the "Haskell", introduced into the game in Ireland about 1900. The "Gutties" were cheaper, but distance was harder to achieve and they shared one characteristic with their predecessors, the "featheries", they tended to break up in flight as they got older. The rule was the same; another ball could be played from where the largest section of the ball had landed.

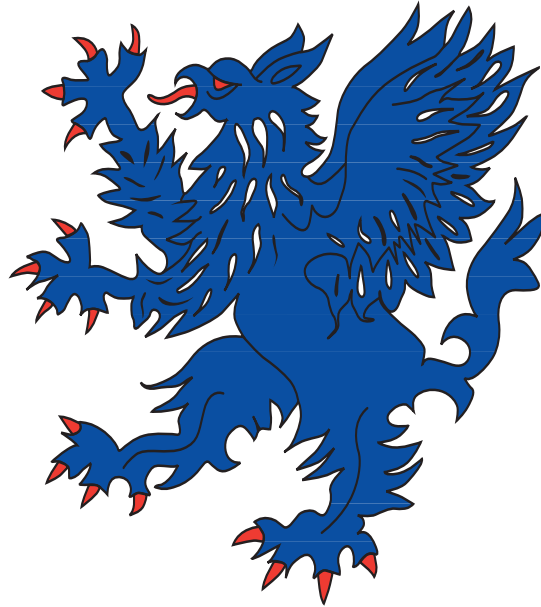
With this course as the field of play for thirty years from 1904 until 1934, Bangor Golf Club firmly established itself on the golf scene. Important competitions were held on this course, notably the qualifying rounds of the Irish Professional "*News of the World*" Tournament, but crucially for the future of the Club, it became a favourite for members and visitors alike. To quote the "*Official Guide to Bangor*" for the last time, "As an inland course, from all points of view, it is hard to beat."

These things actually happened.

In 1936, a Bangor member was playing in the Irish Open at Royal Portrush. On the first tee he was somewhat startled to hear the Starter say to him, "I see that you play at Bangor. You must not touch your ball until it is in the hole." At that time you could lift and clean your ball when playing on a parkland course, but not on a links course. The rule was changed soon afterwards.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Chapter Three



Towards Maturity, 1904 - 1920

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Reading the minutes for these early years, you soon come to realise that some of their concerns were not so different to those of the present day. The Club overdraft for instance; some members summoned to appear before Council for being on club premises after hours; or the complaint of a neighbour that golfers were breaking down his fences in pursuit of balls. More surprising is the amount of discussion on the grazing of sheep on the course. We tend to forget perhaps that they were very efficient mowing machines. The Club rented out the grazing on the course for £25 for six months. One hundred sheep and lambs were permitted, although actual lambing on the course was strictly forbidden. The Club did also possess a horse drawn mowing machine, sometimes referred to in the minutes as “The Reaper”, and the expense of keeping horses was a large item in the annual accounts. The Club had two horses, but one of them was provided on loan, free of charge by the Ormeau Bakery, for which they were thanked every year in the AGM Report. Still, it had to be fed I suppose.

Then there were the Caddies, who were normally boys under the age of sixteen. It was not compulsory at that time to take a caddie, but at any rate it was the accepted practice. In fact a Local Rule states: “Players employing caddies may pass players carrying their own clubs”. Not only did the caddie carry your clubs, but he would also advise on club selection, if asked, and tee up your ball for driving on a little cone shaped pile of sand. This sand was kept in small pyramidal boxes on the tees, and from this practice comes the expression “Tee boxes” that is still sometimes used today when referring to the teeing areas. When the use of wooden tee pegs became more general after the 2nd World War, these

boxes tended to become ashtrays and litter boxes and gradually disappeared during the 1990s.

Although not actually employed by the Club, caddies were appointed and strictly supervised by a Caddiemaster who was employed by the Club. At any time there would be a dozen or more caddies available and on 22nd September, 1911, their behaviour was reported as being so bad that the Caddiemaster was dismissed and one James O’Brien, late Colour Sergeant of the Leinster Regiment, was employed in his place, at a wage of 15 shillings (75p) per week. His hours of work were from 9am to 4pm, with an hour off for lunch. He was then required to mark for billiards from 7pm until 11pm. In the same year (1911), a new House Steward was appointed. He lived at first in a rented house on Hamilton Road opposite the entrance to the Club, but would later move into an apartment in the clubhouse. The wages were advertised as £1 per week with free gas for light and cooking and coal for the fire. There were 200 applicants.

Rigid economy was practised in those days, but courtesy also. The Ladies’ Committee was always thanked in writing for relatively small donations to funds, and also for services such as repairing flags. The Captain too received a vote of thanks for planting out some flowerbeds at his own expense.

Perhaps they were planted to impress some visitors from the Royal Navy. A flotilla of torpedo boats was visiting Belfast Lough at this time (1911), and the Officers were invited to use the links. This is an early instance of the hospitality offered to visiting naval ships, a prac-

Chapter Three - Towards Maturity, 1904 - 1920.

tice that commenced with invitations to the Officers of the Home Fleet that accompanied King Edward VII on his visit to Bangor in 1903, and continued throughout the Club's history. Among others, a match was played against the Second Cruiser Squadron Golf Club in 1908, and in this case the Naval Officers presented the Club with a magnificently framed engraving of the Battle of the Nile, which used to hang in the dining room until the 1999 refurbishment. Visits of the Royal Navy to Belfast Lough were a regular event until the 1960's, and matches were frequently played and enjoyed. Hospitality was returned also, as witness the invitation in 1908 to the Captain and Committee of Bangor Golf Club and their families to "Theatricals" aboard *H.M.S. Drake*. This tradition of hospitality extended to the American Navy and a match was played as recently as 1995 against a team from the U.S. Coastguard Cutter "*Dallas*" when she visited Bangor for the V.E. Day celebrations. The most recent occasion was in the year 2000, when the brand new minehunter *HMS Bangor* visited her namesake town and members of the Ship's Company played our course.

The Club has been enriched by many gifts from both the British and American Navies. Most visiting ships have presented plaques to the Club, and other naval presentations were the clock in the back bar, from the 4th Destroyer Flotilla in 1914, and the lifebuoy presented by *U.S.S. Arkansas* in 1943, also in the back bar. Souvenirs of happy days enjoyed by members and guests alike.

Despite a dip in the number of members to 295 in the year 1910, a year in which there had been a dramatic drop in the number of visitors also; by 30th March,

1912, it could be recorded at the A.G.M. that the total number of members was back up to 321, of which 139 were full members, 91 ladies and 15 youths. Sixty-eight Life members, one Honorary member, and seven House members made up the total. The finances of the Club were on a satisfactory basis and extensive improvements had been made to tees and bunkers. There had been a proposal to have the course open for play on Sundays, but it was heavily defeated. This may sound strange to us today, but at that time church going was almost universal and any move to "Secularise" the "Sabbath" was strenuously opposed.

Despite the improvements to tees and bunkers and other work carried out on the course, or perhaps because of it, Council sanctioned the use of the links for an air display sponsored by the "*Daily Mail*."

Up until this time there had been no formal committees, except a Match Committee, but at a special meeting held on the 4th April, 1912, Finance, Handicap, Greens and House Committees were set up. W. MacDonnagh was elected Convenor of the Greens Committee but had to resign due to ill health the following month and William Robinson, who had designed the original first nine, and had voluntarily carried out this function almost since the Club was founded, was appointed Greens Convenor in his place. Joe Hurst took charge of House.

Green fees for visitors were increased from 1/- to 1/6 (5p to 7.5p). Far from putting visitors off, revenue from green fees rose from £151.7.6d in 1912, to £270.12.0d the following year, representing an increase in visitors from

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

3,027 to 3,608. This speaks well for the popularity of the course and serves as a testimonial to the work of William Robinson and the Groundsman, or Greenkeeper as we would now call him, Thomas Kelly. Further work on improving the course was carried out during 1913, when a fourth groundsman was employed. Their work that year was even noted in the *"Irish Golfers Guide"*. The Club had started to play inter-club friendly matches with, among others, Fortwilliam, Whitehead, Greenisland and Knock, but now they felt able to enter G.U.I competitions for the first time. In response to the suggestion of William Davidson, Hon. Provincial Secretary to the G.U.I., the Club had subscribed two guineas (£2.10) towards the purchase of a cup, to be known as the Ulster Cup. This competition was played for the first time in 1913. Bangor reached the final and, fielding a team that included two founder members, beat Knock at Donaghadee. Amid great excitement the cup came to Bangor clubhouse for the first time and the Honorary Secretary was instructed to convey the thanks of the Captain and Council to the members of the Club who had placed their motorcars at the disposal of the team on the day of the final.

1914 saw the appointment of the Club's fourth Profes-



Ulster Cup Medal, 1913.

sional, James Ross, at a wage of 13 shillings (65p) per week, just over half what the Club Steward was getting.

Bangor Golf Club was starting to make its mark, and possibly with an eye to the future, Lord Frederick Blackwood, son of Lady Clanmorris, was elected a member. The Clanmorris family of Bangor Castle (now the Town Hall), still owned most of the Club's rented land of course.

1914 was the year of the outbreak of the First World War, often known as the Great War. But beyond noting in the minutes that no teams were to be entered for GUI competitions during "existing circumstances", it seems that at this early stage the war had little impact. Although a letter from Captain Wintour of the 4th Destroyer Flotilla thanking the Club for hospitality received by him and his officers, was noted as having been opened by the Official Censor. Seemingly of more importance was the instruction given to the House Convenor to see that the billiard table was brushed every day. This surely shows the proper spirit.

The Ladies' Branch also showed proper spirit. Writing to Council, they considered that the provision of Ladies' tees was unnecessary, and that the Ladies would wish to play off the same tees as the men. A tactful reply was drafted, rather marred by one reason given for refusing the request: - "To protect the tees used by the men from damage" Having said this, the Ladies' Branch

Chapter Three - Towards Maturity, 1904 - 1920.

was very active, then as now, and carried out a full programme of events, perhaps even despite the (Men's) Council, who passed some resolutions concerning Ladies that would strike us as rather strange today. For instance: Ladies could only play on the course after six o'clock in the evening if in a mixed fourball, and Ladies' Day apart, could not use the links in winter except in the company of a Gentleman member. However, men's fourball foursomes and threeballs were not allowed on Saturdays either, winter or summer. Anyway, all these restrictions on the Ladies, annoying and petty as they may seem today, appear mere trifles compared with the edict of Royal Belfast Golf Club prior to 1914, which stated that no lady was to pass the clubhouse window between 12.30 and 3 pm.

The Great War soon started to have an influence on the Club however. As members, including the Assistant Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, started to depart for active service, resolutions were passed that Club competitions were to be cancelled if less than twelve competitors showed up, and that members on active service were to pay no subscription. No Fixture Card was issued for 1915, and occasionally in the minutes we read of condolences passed on by Council to relatives of members who had been killed in action. The Caddiemaster, James O'Brien, rejoined his old regiment and saw out the remainder of his service as Depot Sergeant in Birr, Co. Offaly. He died in 1917 of natural causes.

William Robinson finally relinquished the position of Greens Convenor in 1915, when the "Best thanks of Council" was recorded in the minutes for his valuable

services. He may have resigned as Greens Convenor, but he was immediately co-opted along with the Captain and Mr W.J. McMillan to serve as the Club's representatives to the Council of the GUI. He would also continue to serve as President of the Greens Committee and on Council, finally resigning from both in February 1920.

The proposal to rent the old abattoir on Broadway strikes an odd note in the minutes at this time. A red brick building, it lay into the Club's land, beyond the 3rd green on the Old Course, in the dip, halfway down today's 2nd fairway. The purpose of this, of course, was so that no one else could use it. Eventually the Club acquired this building and had it demolished.



Clubhouse Honours Board.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

It was in 1915 also that the Honours Board recording the names of Past Captains was presented to the Club, with some ceremony, by Mr. W.S. Kingan, the Immediate Past Captain. In a short speech he made reference to the "illustrious names that would be inscribed there in the future". Few would disagree with that. The newspaper report of the event refers to the "beauty and appropriateness of the carving", and members may judge that for themselves for that same board now hangs in the entrance lobby of our present clubhouse, nearly ninety years later.

In the following year (1916), a putting green was laid out in front of the clubhouse, and we have a photograph from this time showing an open air entertainment for wounded soldiers at the Ladies' side of the clubhouse. There is a large marquee erected on the far side of the 18th fairway, lots of nurses are present and nearly every-

one is in uniform. Soldiers were also regularly entertained in the clubhouse, usually at "Smoking Concerts", a popular entertainment of the day. The Cottage Hospital on Hamilton Road, not far from the 1st tee, was the only hospital in Bangor at this time, and wounded Bangor soldiers, repatriated from France, were accommodated there to convalesce. This building, now two "listed" cottages, still stands. Patients were also sometimes brought in members' motorcars from the U.V.F. Hospital in Belfast, where the Club had endowed two beds. There must, however, have been a slight problem as the gates of the Club were not wide enough to admit motorcars, and they were not widened until 1920.

Personalities came and went. In 1916, founder member Rev. Canon Peacocke was appointed Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, and so had to leave Bangor. He had been appointed to Council in 1910 and so highly did they



Red Cross Day 1916: entertaining wounded soldiers.

think of him that this tribute appears in the minutes. "For many years a diligent and useful member of Council and while a keen player of the Royal and Ancient game, was at the same time looked upon by every member as a valued and personal friend." Who would not warm to a tribute like that? He was unanimously elected an honorary member at the March 1916 A.G.M.

Good news came also from the war front. The Honourable Barry Bingham, a member, and younger son of Lady Clanmorris (The Club's landlord), had not been killed at the Battle of Jutland as had been reported earlier. A naval officer, Bingham was in command of a destroyer that had been sunk. He had been rescued by a German ship and was a prisoner of war for some time. Repatriated in 1917, he returned to Bangor with the Victoria Cross and was given a Civic Reception by the town and a dinner in the Dufferin Hall. The Club presented him with a gold cigarette case, suitably inscribed.

In 1917 also the Compulsory Tillage Act of Parliament was passed, which compelled the Club to plough up a proportion of its land for growing food. The Club dealt with this by renting an additional piece of land from Mr. Johnston, a neighbouring farmer, thus keeping the course intact. This was a strip of land on the far side of Broadway, outside the Club boundary where the 10th fairway is today. Later that year Council entered into lengthy negotiations, not concluded until 1923, with Mr Johnston for the purchase of that piece of land.

The course was starting to assume the shape we know today. Lady Clanmorris had offered to renew the Club's lease for 21 years, so the immediate future appeared to be secure.



June 1918 saw food rationing introduced in the Club. Late in the day it would seem to those of us who knew rationing in the 1940s. The minutes that year record the best thanks of Council to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr H. Warburton, for his gift to the Club of the handsome picture of the Battle of the Somme, but the minutes for November make no mention of the end of hostilities.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

That comes in January 1919 when Council decided that money raised at a “Smoking Concert” was not to go to Prisoners of War, but to other charities. As a reminder of those times, the “Roll of Honour” hangs in the front hall. On it are inscribed 32 names of members who served with the armed forces.

In August of this year (1919), the Ulster Cup was played again for only the second time, play having been suspended during the war. Bangor retained the cup they had won in 1913 after a tightly fought match with Ormeau.

The decade before the twenties ends with the notable purchase of a separate clubhouse for Lady Members. The Ladies had long complained of lack of room in the main clubhouse, and they had in fact been renting a house on Hamilton Road for extra accommodation, but now they were to be accommodated on the Club’s own ground. Known to one and all as “The Hut”, the new clubhouse was in fact a large prefabricated building on a brick base, with a spacious veranda running right along its front. Indeed the Club bought two huts that year. One was for the Professional costing £20, which came from the North pier where it had served as the railway company’s ticket office for coal carts. However, the Ladies’ clubhouse was a much more elaborate affair and cost over £800. Sometimes more grandly known as the “Ladies Pavilion,” it was large enough to

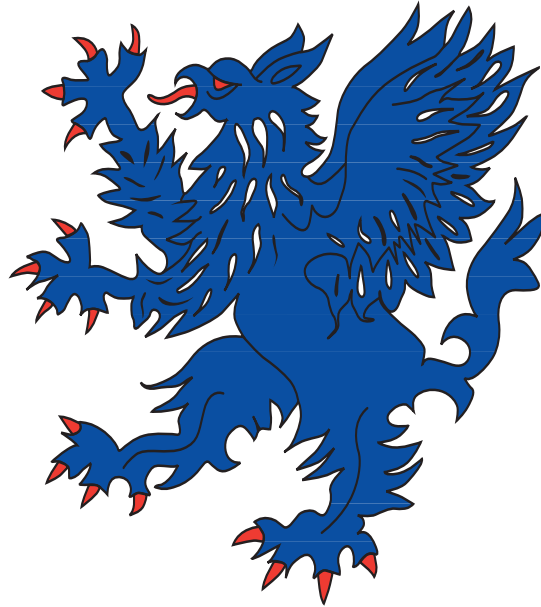
accommodate the Annual General Meetings from 1921 until the move to the new clubhouse across Broadway in 1935.

The opportunity also arose in 1919, to purchase for £5,000 the 43 acres of land leased from Lady Clanmorris. A General Meeting was called for Friday 4th July, 1919, to put this proposal to the members. The proposal was carried and this, possibly the second most important vote in the history of the Club to date, effectively ensured the future of Bangor Golf Club. However, to finance these purchases the Club now had an overdraft with the Belfast Bank for £6,500, which the Bank only allowed on condition that all Securities belonging to the Club were deposited with the Bank, and that all Council members signed a personal guarantee for £100. This overdraft would lead to much heart searching and the most stringent economies in the years to come, but was paid off over the next ten or so years. Several members handed back their Debentures to help ease the situation. The Annual subscription (Men) now stood at three guineas (£3.15p). Membership, all categories, stood at 629 and the Club was acquiring a reputation for excellence, recognised in that year (1920), by the G.U.I. who allocated the Junior Cup competitions to be played at Bangor. Still the sheep grazed the course, to be a subject of debate at nearly every Council meeting, but the gates of the Club were widened for the purpose of admitting members’ motorcars.

These things actually happened.

A certain Club Captain lost his ball in trees at the back of the first green. The grounds staff were ordered to cut the trees down.

Chapter Four



The Move, 1920 - 1940

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

In the wider world, the American Congress passed the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, banning the manufacture and sale of alcohol, and in Russia the Red Army finally crushed the last White Russian resistance in the Crimea. But in Bangor the big question was Sunday golf. In common with most clubs at this time, play was prohibited on Sundays and the Clubhouse was closed. There was an emerging debate, however, in the Press and within clubs as to whether this rule was acceptable to the majority, but when it was raised at the 1921 AGM, a motion to delete the rule was heavily defeated. The next resolution before the meeting was a proposal to ban gambling and the sale of "Excisable Liquor" on the Club's premises. Gambling, of course, would merely refer to playing cards, bridge etc, for pennies. This second resolution was also heavily defeated, happily in the case of excisable liquor anyway, which left the way open for the subscription for a full member to be raised to four guineas (£4.20p). Ladies' subscriptions remained unaltered, but daily Green Fees were raised to three shillings (15p). The time was right to raise subscriptions. So popular had the links become that it was noted in July 1922 that an Official Starter was required on the first tee at peak times. A full time Secretary was also required and Joe Hurst was appointed. There had been a succession of part time Secretaries, mostly ex army and naval officers, but the job was now becoming so demanding that a new approach was required, hence this full time appointment, at a salary not to exceed £60 per year. This was quite good for the times. Joe Hurst had served on Council since the formation of the Club and would serve nearly thirty years as Secretary. He was made an Honorary member in 1925 for his services to the Club. During his time in

office, both he and the Ladies' Honorary Secretary, Janie Smith, ruled the Club with "rods of iron", especially with regard to Juveniles.

As far as the outside world was concerned, the momentous events taking place in the South in 1922 found no echo around the Council table in Bangor and the formation of the Irish Free State was not mentioned. What was mentioned, and proudly, at the 20th AGM (1923), was that the Club had finally purchased 14 acres of land from neighbouring farmer Samuel Johnston. After negotiations lasting nearly four years the Club paid £2,450 for the land that they had leased during the First World War to comply with the Compulsory Tillage Act. This together with the Clanmorris land purchased in 1919/1920 meant that the Club now owned all its own land.

Perhaps they had been starting to think about moving the course as far back as 1920, when the rented land was purchased from the estate of Lady Clanmorris. Any land that became available thereafter on the far side of Broadway was eagerly purchased, and so when the opportunity arose in 1922, Council lost no time in closing with Samuel Johnston to acquire his four fields that adjoined the course and now make up the tenth fairway. Today you can still see the ridges and furrows of cultivation running at right angles to the line of play. But they had to wait more than ten years before Williamson's farm came on the market and they could realise their dream of a completely redesigned course on the far side of Broadway, all on the Club's own land.

Ward Park had been laid out in 1909 and the danger of a ball, sliced off the first tee, accidentally hitting a

Chapter Four - The Move, 1920 - 1940.

member of the public must have become a worry. But when the children's swings were set up in 1925, and Council had tried unsuccessfully to get them moved, it became urgent to move if possible over Broadway. With the purchase in 1933 of the land from the farm they could do just that.

In the meantime however, no bicycles were to be parked in front of the clubhouse, and no motorcars in front of the Ladies' clubhouse.

During the winter of 1922/23, James Ross, the Professional, and William Robinson had measured the course, the measurements were sent to the G.U.I., and in March the Course "Bogey" was fixed at 74. This work had no positive effect on the career of James Ross, however, who had got into financial trouble and was asked to resign. Harry Hamill came instead at a wage of thirty shillings (£1.50p) per week.

This year (1923), the Annual Dinner, held in the clubhouse, and also the Annual Dance were resurrected. They had both lapsed since the First World War. Dances at this time were glittering occasions, formal of course, and fully reported in the local press with meticulous descriptions of every lady's dress. The Club's dances were held either in the Palace Hotel on Quay Street, which became Barry's, or later in Caproni's "Palais de Danse" on Seacliffe Road, opposite Ballyholme Yacht Club. Both of these Bangor landmarks have now sadly been demolished. Tickets for the dance were fifteen shillings (75p). At least two generations of Bangorians met their future life partners in Caproni's marble ballroom, which was noted to have the finest sprung dance floor in Ireland.

A note in the minutes for 1924 states, "Past season was wet and cold and most unfavourable for golf." Makes you realise that not much changes really. Despite that, Bangor was able to win the Ulster Cup for the third time, beating the holders, Knock on their home ground.

The following year, in 1925, Club Professional Harry Hamill resigned. John Hamill (no relation), came from Ardglass to replace him and stayed for the next 38 years until 1963. When John joined, the mower was still pulled by horses and sheep still grazed the course. Later that year a motor tractor was bought to pull the mower and the horses were sold.

The outside world meanwhile was gradually reaching towards what we today regard as modernity. Many houses now had "Wireless Receiving Sets" and possibly through headphones, would have heard the "Charleston" dance, introduced to Britain in 1925, and George Gershwin's latest, "Rhapsody in Blue." As far as the Club was concerned, the GUI considered the condition of the Bangor course fit to host the Junior Cup and sheep grazing finally ceased that autumn.



John Hamill, 1925

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

| BANGOR GOLF CLUB. | | | |
|---|---|------|-------------------|
| FEES for TEMPORARY MEMBERS | | | |
| GENTLEMEN. | | | |
| Morning Round (Except Saturdays. Not to start later than 7 a.m.) | 1 | 6 | |
| One Day | - | - | 3 0 |
| Saturdays (being May, June, July, August, and September, July 12th, Christmas Day, Easter Monday and Whit-Monday) | | | |
| One Week | - | 15 0 | One Month - 30 0 |
| Two Weeks | - | 21 0 | Three Days - 10 0 |
| LADIES AND JUVENILES. | | | |
| One Day | - | 2 0 | Two Weeks - 12 0 |
| One Week | - | 7 6 | One Month - 22 6 |
| Temporary Members must be Members of a recognised Golf Club, and be introduced by a Member of the Club. | | | |
| Ladies may not play on Wednesdays and Fridays after 6 o'clock; on Saturdays between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.; nor on Easter Monday, Whit-Monday, 12th July, and Christmas Day; but Ladies may play on Whit-Monday after 6 p.m. | | | |
| Temporary Members' Tickets do not entitle Ladies to play on the Links after 6 p.m. on any day unless the holder is playing with a Gentleman who is a Member or Temporary Member. | | | |
| Juveniles are not allowed to play on the Links after 6 o'clock on any day; after 1 p.m. on Saturdays; nor at any time on Easter Monday, Whit-Monday, 12th July, and Christmas Day. | | | |
| The Council reserve the right to cancel any Temporary Membership at any time, by refunding a proportion of the Fee paid, according to the length of time the Temporary Membership has to run. | | | |
| Weekly or Fortnightly Tickets, which include 12th or 13th July, will be charged 5/- extra. | | | |

After all this excitement life settled down at the Club. There was sporadic trouble with caddies, one or other of them was always in trouble it seems, and in October 1926 their privilege of being allowed to play the course was withdrawn. Happily that did not last long, and later the same year we see that the winner of the Cad-die's competition was awarded a pair of boots.

A proposal to lay out tennis courts and a bowling green came to nothing and there were allegations of hare

coursing on the course, which were referred to the police.

Ladies fourball matches were banned due to complaints about slow play, but on the other hand Council permitted "Young Ladies engaged in business" to play on the course after 6 pm when not accompanied by a gentleman.

The principle of reduced green fees when playing with a member was introduced for the first time and green fees were reduced also for a morning round.

A new Caddiemaster was employed in April 1927 at a weekly wage of £1, but he was to receive 7/6d, (37.5p) per week extra for patrolling the course on a Sunday in order to prevent play, which was still banned. He didn't get his extra wages for long however. By April the following year (1928), Council were urging local hotels to sell daily green fee tickets for Sunday play at five shillings (25p) a time.

The first of a series of letters arrived from the Borough Council about the Club's responsibilities with regard to "the lane known as Broadway". That subject would be quite familiar to a member of today's Council. But of more interest was the visit to Bangor, on Saturday 7th May, 1927, of Messrs Vardon and Herd, two of the most famous professionals of the time. They had played an exhibition match to open Carnalea's new second nine (designed by William Robinson), and were paying a courtesy call at Bangor at the invitation of the Captain and Council. They were "persuaded" to play nine holes, so Harry Vardon and William Robinson, who

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played off "Scratch", took on Alex Herd and John Hamill. The newspaper report says that Herd and Hamill won comfortably, but that a stroke less than par was needed to win a hole. Some match, and what a day for William Robinson.

The Stormont parliament was now starting to flex its muscles and hearing in November 1927 of a Bill for the prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquor, Council fired off a strong letter to the Constituency M.P. pro-

testing about the attempted interference with their rights and privileges. This was one American fashion that was not imported. One that would be was steel shafted clubs. Supplies of American hickory were starting to run short and steel shafts had been made legal by the US Golfing Association in 1924, but it would be 1929 before the Royal and Ancient followed suit. For many years following the introduction of steel shafts they were painted to resemble hickory. The John Hamill club to the right of our fireplace in the mixed lounge is an example, made



*Belfast & District Cup Winners, 1929.
J. Hurst, B. Mullan, H. Clements, W.C. Dream;
J. McAuley, J.C. Nicholson, F.J. Boyd (Captain), J. Taylor, G.A. Simpson.*

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

about 1931. Whether or not they were using steel shafts, Bangor won the Belfast and District Cup for the first time in 1929.

Talking of modernity, electric light was installed in both the main and the Ladies' clubhouses during 1930. Previously they would have been lit by gas. Many Bangor houses were still lit by gas in the 1950's, so the Club was right at the "cutting edge" in this respect.

In July 1933 came the news that had been eagerly awaited. Williamson's farm was up for sale. Even the normally staid minutes come alive with a sense of urgency. Concerns about the overdraft were forgotten (as a matter of fact they had a credit balance with the Belfast Bank at the time), and a special subcommittee was formed on the spot to make enquiries. The importance of this farm cannot be overemphasised. It comprised sixty-one acres of ground that joined the Club's land at the bottom of what we now know as the "Fourth Hill", and stretched away to the east past the "Dell" and over and beyond what is now the dual carriageway. This land would enable the Club to expand the course to conform to the standards of a modern golf course with regard to length and layout. Williamson's farm was tailor made for Bangor golf course and had to be bought. A Special Land Committee was formed to do just that.

The amazing thing is that they could then go on to debate a resolution passed in 1931 banning play in fourballs on a Monday evening. The resolution was rescinded. Oh, and the price of bacon and eggs on the Club menu was raised from 1/9d (8.75p) to 2/- (10p).

The Special Committee reported on 1st August, 1933,

that they had bought the farm for the price of £3,300. This was not a bad price, approximately £54 per acre, compared with the £111 per acre they had paid Lady Clanmorris in 1920.

Decisions of Council now followed thick and fast. The 23 acres on the town side of Broadway, including the clubhouse, were to be sold for building land, and a Golf Course Architect was to be employed to lay out a completely new course using the new land. An earlier decision had called on William Robinson to draw up plans for the new course, but this was later rescinded, though he did get paid for his plans. Williamson's farmhouse was to be refurbished and let. Whereas in the past, Council could agonise for weeks over whether or not to write to a member about some trivial infringement of the rules, they showed now that they could act decisively when required.

By February 1934 there were two offers for the land and clubhouse for sale. £9,000 from R.H. Finlay was rejected out of hand, but £11,250 from S.M. Claney was accepted and it was proposed that instructions be given immediately to a firm of Architects to construct a new clubhouse for the price of £4,500. This proposal was then amended so that four architects were instructed separately to draw up plans at a cost not to exceed 15 Guineas (£15. 75p) each. The most suitable design would then be chosen. The new clubhouse was to be built just off Broadway between the then existing 12th green and the boundary with Hazledene. People say today how magnificent it would have been to site the new clubhouse at the top of the hill where the 16th tee is today, but cars were something of a rarity even in 1934 and that site

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would have been considered right out in wild country and almost inaccessible. The place that was chosen is dramatic enough and a commanding view of the course can be seen from the windows on the east side. Moreover, what could beat the sight of the clubhouse at dusk, as you come down the eighteenth, with lights just coming on in the bars. Sublime!

The next proposal on 19th February, 1934, was that James Braid be asked to plan and lay out the new course at a cost of £2,450. James Braid, the almost legendary golfer who won the Open five times, was at this time the pre-eminent Golf Course Architect in Britain. Today we would call him a "Superstar" and he would have something of the aura and fame of Faldo or Nicklaus. Evidently Bangor was not going to do the thing by halves. Having said that, Braid's fees were modest even for the times, usually in the order of twenty guineas (£21) plus expenses. Professional at Walton Heath Golf Club in the south of England, he would commonly make one visit to the proposed site of a course, usually on a weekend, walk round it, sometimes hit a club or two, then produce an accurate plan from memory, often on the journey home. He normally worked with a Scottish based firm of contractors, John R. Stutt Ltd. who could be relied upon to put his proposals into effect. This combination was responsible for more than seventy golf courses over the years, all



James Braid.

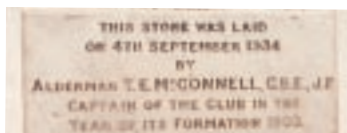
round the British Isles. Among the more famous were Carnoustie, Gleneagles and Royal Troon. On this occasion James Braid also had a cup of tea in Bertie Young's father's house, Robert Young being Convenor of Golf at that time. He laid out a course that, despite cosmetic modifications and changes, remains today much as he intended. There have been attempts at radical change, the most striking being to play the course back to front in the early 1960's, but that didn't last very long, and of course we lost a chunk of land when the East Circular Road was driven through the course in 1968. But despite all of this, the course remains very much as Braid left it.

Architects S. Stevenson won the competition for the construction of the new clubhouse and work commenced in September 1934. Work on constructing the new course was going on simultaneously and sods taken up from the former 12th green on the site of the new clubhouse were used on the approach to the new 2nd green. Though a temporary nine-hole course was laid out so that normal play and competitions could continue, even this was closed during part of the winter of 1934 and a generous invitation was received from Scrabo for members of Bangor to play their course without payment of green fees whilst ours was closed. The temporary course was so arranged as to be variable to facilitate the ongoing work. Nevertheless, there were complaints from members that it was "tedious and difficult". You can't please everyone.

The sun shone as four foundation stones for the new clubhouse were laid on Tuesday 4th September, 1934. The Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Rt. Hon. the Vis-

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count Craigavon; the Mayor of Bangor, Walter Malcolm J.P.; the Club Captain, Gordon J. Stephenson (Sen.), and Alderman T.E. McConnell C.B.E., J.P., the very first Club Captain in 1903, all laid stones. To complete the ceremony, and showing that the Club had not lost touch with the past nor was it going to, each of the stone layers was presented with a silver trowel, suitably inscribed

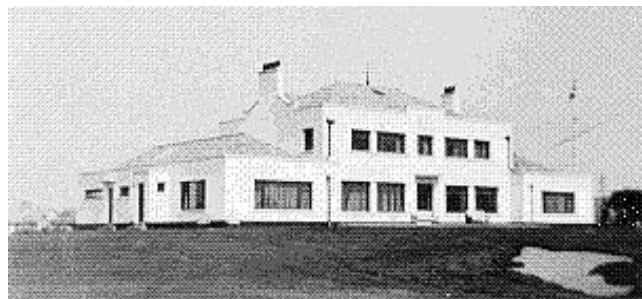


One of the four foundation stones.

and similar to the one presented to Miss Connor thirty years before. Lord and Lady Craigavon then presented a cup each to the Men's and Ladies' Branches, to be played for as soon as the new course opened. The Immediate Past Captain, Mr G.V. Acheson proposed a vote of thanks and the usual speeches were made. To complete the day, the honoured guests were entertained to a "Dainty tea" in the old Ladies' Clubhouse. The Ladies' Competition by the way was played on the previous Monday.

The new clubhouse was ready for opening on the 6th April, 1935, as was the new course. In fact the clubhouse was finished before this date and the Captain, Gordon Stephenson (Sen.), was able enthusiastically to welcome members to the 1935 A.G.M., held there on the 29th March. The Ladies Committee had donated money towards the furnishing of the new dining room, and several members clubbed together to present electric clocks.

Work had continued on the new course throughout the winter in accordance with the James Braid plan, so that by springtime it was ready for play. Temporary in



New Clubhouse, 1935.

nature the course may have been, but still the Bangor team was able to win the Ulster section of the Junior Cup. Described as a thrilling contest, Bangor beat Knock at Castlerock. At one stage the score stood at two matches each, and in the last match, at the fourteenth, Bangor was two holes down. E.A Heney for Bangor then scored three birdies in a row to go one up and halved the eighteenth to win the match and the Ulster pennant. Bangor won the Ulster section again the following year, 1936, and again in 1939.



Presented to Walter Malcolm J.P., Mayor of Bangor, on the occasion of the laying of a foundation stone of the Bangor Golf Club House on the 4th September, 1934. (One of four trowels presented).



*Visit of the Prime Minister, 4th September 1934 to Bangor G.C. to lay foundation stones of the New Clubhouse
(the old clubhouse is in the background).*

*Back Row: Austin Reed, W.C. Milligan, J. McAuley, Gerry Gray, R. Young (Sen.), J.F. Neill;
Front Row: Walter Malcolm, J. Hurst, Viscount Craigavon, G.J. Stephenson (Sen.), W. Magee, J.B. O'Neill, H. Clements, W.R. Ellison.*

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The Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, Rt. Hon. Viscount Craigavon was invited to open the new clubhouse as he had promised to do when laying the foundation stone. On the appointed day, Saturday 6th April 1935, Lord and Lady Craigavon were met at the door by the Captain, Morris McKee accompanied by a sizeable crowd, and in a ceremony again recalling Miss Connor's opening of the first clubhouse in 1904, the Prime Minister was presented with a gold key, enamelled with his Lordship's coat of arms. Suitable speeches were made and replied to, and the whole party then went on a tour of inspection of the building. What they saw was not so different to what we have today. Immediately opposite the front door was the dining room, with parquet floor and starched tablecloths glimpsed through the glass doors. To the right down the corridor were the Ladies' room and locker room, and to the left was the Men's bar. The staircase with its curved handrail led upward to the Billiard room and service flat for the Steward. Once outside again it was the turn of Lady Craigavon, who had been invited to open the new course. In his speech Lord Craigavon had referred to his wife as a capable golfer. She had been in the finals of the Parliamentary Championships the previous year, and was clearly the right person to open the new course when a long straight ball off the tee was required. The party accordingly then moved to the first tee (actually today's tenth as the course was still a temporary one), where the Ladies' Captain, Mrs Mabel Gaw, presented Lady Craigavon with a new driver, suitably inscribed and made especially for the occasion by John Hamill. Capable golfer or not, on this occasion Lady Craigavon must have suffered stage fright in front of all the people, for although the newspapers of the day say she

struck the first ball and a photo shows her to have a reasonable swing, an eyewitness tells me that she handed the driver to Morris McKee and said, "Please Morris, you whack it for me" and this he did to the approval of the large crowd.



Ladies' Captain, Mrs. Mabel Gaw, presenting Lady Craigavon with a new driver.

Originally James Braid had been asked to open the new course, but travel was not really his thing as he suffered from travel sickness.

The day was an enormous success; there were a large number of invited guests, the President of the GUI, Mr. D. Wilson Smith, and the Ulster Branch Chairman among them, as well as Captains of neighbouring Clubs. One of those, Captain of Royal Belfast, Mr J.D. Barbour, presented a cup, known as the Barbour Cup, which is still played for. The day closed with those present being entertained to tea in the new clubhouse.

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The new course was measured and the GUI returned a Standard Scratch of 75 for a total yardage of 6,385. On the 20th June, 1935, the keys of the old clubhouse were handed over to the new purchaser and one era in the Club's history closed and a new one began. You could say that it began quite well with a first time win for Bangor in the Ulster Section of the Junior Cup as we have heard. They were beaten in the final by the Hermitage Club from Dublin, but came back the following year (1936) to win the semi-final again with nearly the same team.

Attention now turned to the social life of the Club and in an effort to attract younger members a piano was purchased, "for not more than £20", and two table tennis tables. A second billiards table would be purchased the following year, but in the meantime plans were made for a series of Hot Pot Suppers, dances, whist and bridge drives. No time was lost in having the first dance, for it was held in October 1935. By all accounts it was a great success. About one hundred members and guests attended, and for the first time members could see how the partition between the dining room and the bar could



Clubhouse with haystacks, 1935.

be folded back, making one large room very suitable for dancing and with an excellent hardwood floor. The Caddies were not left out either. Council entertained over fifty of them on Monday 12th October, 1935. There were Matchplay and Stroke competitions and a putting competition to start with, into which the boys entered with enthusiasm as you can imagine, and some of the play was described as well up to professional standard. This was followed by a hot-pot dinner and the Lady Captain distributed prizes.

This year also a decision was taken to have the clubhouse open on Sundays. At first it was just the locker rooms and lavatories; the decision to open up the whole place was deferred for one year, but on 3rd April, 1936, following a vote at the AGM, it did happen, and the Steward's wages were increased by 7/6d (37.5p) per week.

Gordon Stephenson (Sen.), Captain in 1934, presented two honours boards to the Club and they hang in the entrance hall to this day. Another notable presentation to the Club was made by Mr Logan, the purchaser of the old clubhouse and ground, who gave a chair, two gates and a flagpole. The second billiard table was purchased this year. According to the "Athletic Stores" of Belfast, who supplied it, this is a "massive" walnut table made by the firm of Burroughs and fitted with a two inch Bangor Blue slate of the best quality. The three-year-old table cost £87. 10s. (£87.50) with a new Championship quality cloth which was a small fortune for those days. However, when you take into account that this price included balls, cues, cue rack, long and short rests, scoreboard and dust cover, overhead lights complete with shade, delivery and erection, it becomes a

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very good investment indeed, especially as it is still in use today. The price for a similar table, new, was £140.

There were initially some temporary features about the new course but by the end of 1936 it had settled down and Mr Fitzsimons, member and local artist, could draw and present to the Club a plan of the course that is quite recognisable to us today. Stutts the contractors must have been pleased with their work anyway, for they presented the Club with a £14 cheque for prizes. The Captain's Prize at this time was limited to £6 in value.

John Hamill, the Club Professional, organised an exhibition match at Bangor in September 1937. These matches were popular at this time and many people would have turned out to watch. The players were Joe Kirkwood and Walter Hagen. Superstars of their time, they were on a world tour. After playing a few holes, they invited Club member Jack ("Bunny") McAuley and the Caddiemaster, Sammy Lowry to play round with them. When the match was over they entertained the crowd by hitting trick shots, like driving off the toe of someone's shoe. For his part in laying this on, Council awarded John Hamill one guinea (£1.05). Jack McAuley had won the Ulster Scratch Singles at Portrush earlier that year and was congratulated at the A.G.M.

1938 was a quiet year except for Bangor's second win in the Belfast and District Cup. Our team defeated Royal Belfast after a very exciting match.

If 1938 was quiet, there was plenty going on in 1939. The shadow of war was creeping across Europe, and if anyone had ears to hear, there was a warning in the let-

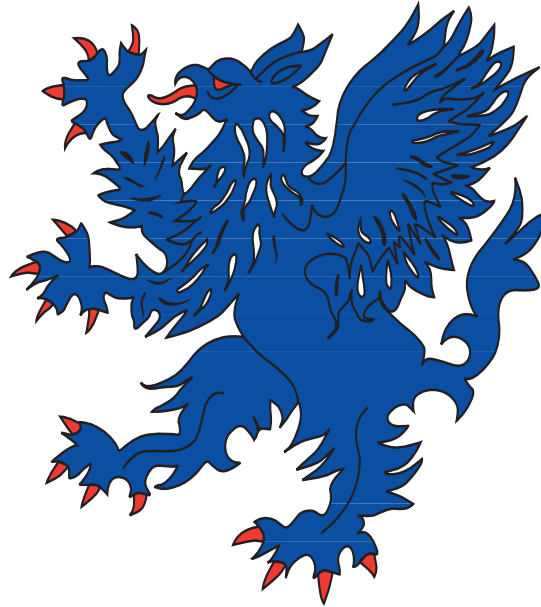
ter from the Captains of H.M. ships Vindictive and Resolution in July, regretting that they could not avail themselves of the amenities of the Club due to a "Change in the Fleet programme". Three months later both these ships were in action against German targets.

If the Fleet couldn't play Bangor however, at least one Sidney Gleave could. On the 12th June, 1939, he and Ernest Smith, Club Professional at Davyhulme Park, Manchester, set off to play a round of golf in five different countries, for a bet of course. Playing in Scotland, Ireland, Isle of Man, England and Wales and travelling by plane, they arrived at Bangor at 7.15 a.m., and went round in 1 hour and 30 minutes. Smith's score being 76.

War against Germany was declared on 3rd September, 1939 and later in the month it was difficult to raise a team to play a match against Scrabo. As had happened in 1914, members were once again departing to join the Forces. This time modern communications were to play a part in Bangor's war. Council approved the purchase of a wireless receiving set (radio) for the Club. At the same time they voted to allow members of H.M. Forces to use the links without payment of green fees. Bangor Golf Club was at war again.

For us the decade ends on the 26th December, 1939 with a dance in the clubhouse, held in aid of the Cigarette Fund for H.M. Forces. How attitudes have changed. Not only attitudes - the price of a scotch and soda was 10p. Membership stood at: Men (All Categories): 303, of which 213 were Full Members and Ladies (All Categories): 202, of which 171 were Associates.

Chapter Five



Our Professionals

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Bangor moved quickly to employ their first Professional in the year the Club was founded. The "*Newsletter*" of 15th June, 1903, notes that Mr Geo. Turnbull has been engaged as "Professional and Greenkeeper". Originally from North Berwick, Turnbull came to Bangor from Malone, where he had the reputation of an excellent player and coach. That he was an excellent player is beyond doubt for he set up the very first course record: 33 strokes for the 2,400 yard nine hole course, on 18th August, 1903, but he didn't stay long and was replaced by Fred Smith, also from Malone, the following year.

Smith stayed for four years and set up his own record for the by now 18 hole course on 7th June, 1905, when he went round in 70 gross, incidentally beating the previous course record of 71 set up by Harry Hamill, then Professional at Royal Portrush. Harry Hamill had played Fred Smith in a match arranged at Bangor in October 1904, shortly before he left Portrush for Ormeau.

In 1908, James Edmundson came from Royal Portrush to replace Fred Smith, and we have a club made by him on display. The making of clubs was an important part of the Professional's duties in those days before mass production of clubs and famous brand names. Club Professionals would make a set of clubs to order for a member, measured and made up to suit the individual, and would then put their personal stamp on the back of the club heads, which were, of course, bought in. The selection of types of wood for the shafts was very important. At this time hickory was favoured for the best shafts, with persimmon for the heads, but putter shafts were made from greenheart. These shafts were carefully sanded to give the right degree of flexibility

appropriate to the player, and then stained with pitch. They had to be regularly oiled with linseed to make them more flexible. It was recommended that clubs were polished by the maker every three months. The clubs either side of the chimney in the Mixed Lounge were made at different times by Club Professionals Harry and John Hamill.

James Edmundson was born in Portrush in 1886. He eventually became Club Professional at Royal Portrush and became the first ever Irish Professional Champion when the Tournament was played at Portrush for the very first time in 1907. He won it again the following year and also played in the British Open Championship in 1908, finishing a creditable tenth. Clearly, even at this early date, the Bangor Club could attract a top player from a top club, whose reputation would help to get the Club known in wider circles. Edmundson reduced the Bangor course record score to 69 on the 14th June, 1910.

However in 1914 he moved on and James Ross took on the job at a weekly wage of 13 shillings (65p). Good value apparently, as a note from Council comments on his "ability as a golfer and coach, and his unvarying civility." That they thought highly of him is evident as alterations were made to the Professional's hut to enable him to carry on club making and repairing. This he continued until 1918 when he joined the army to fight in the First World War. His place was taken temporarily, and at a reduced wage, by I.H. Martin, on the understanding that when Ross returned he would get his job back. Martin was the Head Caddie and it is interesting to note that he won the Caddies' Day prize in 1919, the year that Ross returned. Ross stayed for another

four years, enjoying the reputation of “a clever and painstaking Professional and club maker” and leaving finally in July 1923. The previous winter, he and Wm. Robinson had re-measured the course.

Harry Hamill then came from Ormeau to take up the post on the 12th March 1924, but he only stayed until February 1925, and in the following month John Hamill - no relation - who was at that time Professional at Ardglass, joined and stayed until his retirement in 1963.

Born in 1893, the eldest of the twelve children of the Greenkeeper of Ardglass Golf Club, John was a man about whom there are many legends. A very fine golfer, he played in the very first Irish Open at Portmarnock in 1927 and won the Ulster Professional Championship in 1928. He played for Ireland five times during the 1930's in the Professional Internationals - three times against Scotland and twice against England. He won the Robinson Scratch Cup in 1931, and in 1932 set a new course record at Belvoir Park. But Bangor members will remember him best for his sense of fun. Probably some readers will remember sessions of cards and jokes in the Pro's shop in bad weather, when Bob Young, Ross Boyd and Sammy Lowry (Caddiemaster) would be present, and in the late evening sometimes he could be found on the practice fairway showing how trick shots were played, like playing while seated on a chair, or he would organise competitions, chipping over the top of the flagpole, which then stood where the practice nets are today, just outside the Pro's shop. John's great friend was Pat Sawey, Professional at Carnalea. Pat had a glass eye and when playing with John at Bangor would leave his wallet in the Pro's shop, then take the glass eye out



Dunlop Course Record Presentation Cup awarded to John Hamill.

and set it on top of the wallet, “to keep an eye on his money”. When coloured golf shoes first came out, John appeared on the first tee in a new pair, but every time he addressed the ball he said he saw the shoes looking up at him, so eventually he went in and changed into an old black pair.

Characters often attract other characters and John used to tell the story of Harry Lauder, the famous Scottish singer of the 1920s and '30s, coming into the shop to have a club repaired. On collecting it he asked what had been done and John told him that he had replaced the screws holding the brass plate on the sole of the club. Harry Lauder asked if he could have the old screws as they might come in useful. John always encouraged

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

the younger members and said that he thought the finest introduction to the game of golf was to be a Caddie. During his time at Bangor, Caddies disappeared altogether and John always said that their disappearance was a tragedy for the game of golf. At that time Caddies could get 3 shillings (15p) for carrying two bags, which was a good sum, but not easy money and they would have to give sixpence (2.5p) of that to the Caddiemaster. One of their little privileges was to carry the Captain's bag on their day off! Another was to be out at four a.m. on Captain's Day to cut the greens by hand. They could play golf however, and Hugh Greer remembers the time just before the Second World War, when on a Sunday evening if no one was about, they would go out in a twelve-ball and complete the course in about two hours.

One of the Professional's duties at this time was to hoist the Club flag in the mornings and lower it at night, but not until the last member had left the course. During the Second World War, when "Double Summer Time" (GMT + two hours) was in force, this could be one o'clock in the morning.

The story is told of a well-known member who played against John on a regular basis for a wager of half a crown (12.5p). The member won once in six months and John said that his handicap should be cut.

A favourite John Hamill saying was, "pitch and tar covers many a scar, good morning to you bricklayer".

In return for his long and faithful service to the Club he was made an Honorary member in 1950, and pre-

sented with a beautiful hand lettered testimonial. John Hamill eventually retired in 1963 at the age of seventy, having served the Club for thirty-eight years. In the words of the Club Captain at that time, he was "A very loyal servant and a wonderful man about the place".

The popular and courteous Ernie Jones succeeded him. Born on the Curragh, Ernie served his apprenticeship and became Professional at Carlow in 1952. From there he moved to Foxrock, Co Dublin, where he stayed until moving to Bangor. Irish Professional Champion in 1955, and noted in 1963 as being one of the best professional golfers in Ireland, Ernie brought more lustre to Bangor by winning both the Irish Open and the Ulster Professional Championships soon after joining the Club in 1964, and the Ulster Professional Championship again in 1974. He also represented Ireland in the Canada Cup in 1965, and in addition to many other successes including the Hoey Cup, became Kenyan Open Champion in 1971. In 1972, playing with Bryan Blaikie at Clandeboyne, they won the Christie Flag for Bangor. Ernie left Bangor in 1975 to go to Royal County Down. Subsequently in recognition of his achievements during his time at Bangor, he was made an Honorary Member in 1997, and at the time of writing is Professional at the "K" Club in Co. Kildare. He was replaced by another Jones – David (no relation) who had won the Ulster Professional Championship in 1975. Noted as being "a worthy successor to Ernie Jones in both ability and personality", David's golfing career blossomed during his time at Bangor. In 1978 for instance, he won both the British and the Irish Club Professional Championships, the Irish Dunlop Championship and, on the way to winning seven Pro-Am tournaments, he broke

Chapter Five - Our Professionals.

ten course records. 1978 was definitely his year, for in addition to all that, he was elected Chairman of the Northern Ireland Professional Golfers' Association, played for Great Britain and Ireland against America in the Mini Ryder Cup for Club Professionals, and was awarded the Irish Golf Writers Award for the year. More top trophies came his way in 1979 and with the permission of Council he started to play on the European Tour Circuit during 1980. Among other achievements he finished runner up to Des Smyth in the Irish Matchplay Championship. He left Bangor in 1982 to take up the European Tour full time and by the following year he was in the top 60 of the European rankings.

Norman Drew came from Malone as Professional early in 1983, which was more like a homecoming for Norman really, for it was as a Junior member of Bangor that his golfing career really took off. After a distinguished amateur career including winning the Irish Open Amateur Championship in consecutive years and playing in the Walker Cup, Norman turned Professional in late 1953 and became Irish Professional Champion in 1959. In the same year he was selected to play for Britain in the Ryder Cup at El Dorado, U.S.A. The following year he played for Ireland in the Canada Cup (now World Cup) at Portmarnock. He therefore became the first golfer on either side of the Atlantic to play in all

three events, and was also the first Great Britain and Ireland golfer to have the unique distinction of playing in both the Walker Cup and Ryder Cup teams. Now a Past Captain of the Irish Professional Golfers' Association and one of golf's most popular personalities, Norman was back at Bangor, for although he had been an Honorary member of Bangor since 1954, his entire professional career had been spent with other Clubs. Worth of note during his five years in Scotland was his caddie, known as "Lucky Dip", his club selections were obscure to say the least.

While at Bangor Norman continued to play on the Irish Circuit and then in the Seniors. He continued to win Tournaments, bringing the Christie Flag to Bangor in 1985 and again in 1986 playing both times with Bertie Wilson, and having the best gross in the Cork Dry Gin Pro/Captain Tournament, which he won playing with Roy Mullan also in 1986. Joined by his son Gordon for a few years as Assistant, Norman Drew stayed at Bangor, maintaining the tradition of golfing ability and good humour that has been displayed by all our Professionals, until he retired in 1997. Roy Skillen, who had been Norman's assistant, took over, and stayed until the arrival of Michael Bannon in 1999. Michael has also proved to have all the qualities that have been displayed by our Professionals since the earliest days.

These things actually happened.

The Grounds Staff were instructed to cut down a "Fairy Thorn". No one would touch it. Finally a groundsman by the name of Squance volunteered to do the work and cut it down. He was knocked down and killed by a car on his way home that evening.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years



John Hamill.



Ernie Jones.



David Jones.



Norman Drew.

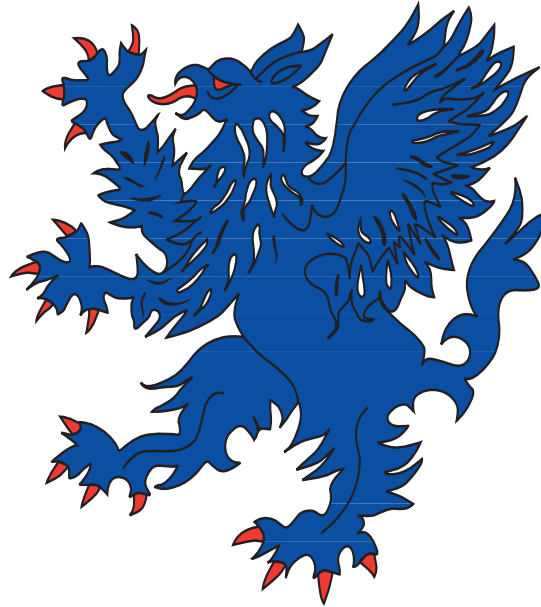


Roy Skillen.



Michael Bannon.

Chapter Six



Our Teams and Trophies

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

History of Golfing Union of Ireland Inter-Club Trophies.

The Golfing Union of Ireland was founded in 1891, and is the oldest Golf Union in the world. There were 28 Golf Clubs in the whole of Ireland at that time, but the original nine founding Clubs were all located in Ulster. Ladies formed their own Irish Ladies Golfing Union in 1893. Membership of the G.U.I increased slowly until 1960, when the staging at Portmarnock of the Canada Cup, now known as the World Cup of Golf, triggered enormous interest in golf in Ireland. Today there are 398 Clubs affiliated to the Union, representing a total membership of over 200,000



Junior Cup, 1935.

Ulster Section Winners:-

*R. Young, W.K. Brown, G.J. Stephenson (Jr.), A.E. Heaney,
H. Marshall.*

Junior Cup.

The Irish Golf Clubs Junior Challenge Cup Tournament was inaugurated in 1899. Subsequently it became known simply as the "Junior Cup". Bangor Golf Club entered teams for this cup, but did not have any success until 1935 when they won the Ulster Section. They won the Ulster Section again in 1936, and in 1939. Further success then had to wait eighteen years until 1957. Regrettably we have never won the All Ireland final of the Junior Cup.

Those who played on the teams were:

| <u>1935</u> | <u>1936</u> | <u>1939</u> | <u>1957</u> |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| R. Young | R. Young | W.K. Brown | D.B. Blaikie |
| W.K. Brown | W.K. Brown | J. Brice | J. Campbell |
| G.J. Stephenson(Jr.) | G.J. Stephenson(Jr.) | H. Marshall | H. Greer |
| A.E. Heney | J. Brice | G.J. Stephenson(Jr.) | D. Hamill |
| H. Marshall | H. Marshall | | W. G. Tinsley |

Senior Cup.

The Irish Golf Clubs Senior Challenge Cup Tournament was also inaugurated in 1899. It is interesting to note that in the inaugural year only six clubs entered - three from Leinster, two from Ulster and one from Munster. Subsequently it too became known simply as "The Senior Cup". There is no record of Bangor Golf Club participating in the Senior Cup before 1930, possibly because they did not have the makings of a Senior team. Bangor had no success until 1981 when under Team Captain Des Hillen they not only won the Ulster section, but also went on to win the All Ireland final - cup, medals and pennant. Bangor won the Ulster section in 1983 and in 1988, but in 1984 Jack Kissock's team repeated the success of 1981, won the Ulster Section once again and went on to win the All Ireland final.

Chapter Six - Our Teams and Trophies.

The teams were selected from the following:

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Ireland. | Ulster Section. | All Ireland | Ulster Section. |
| <u>1981</u> | <u>1983</u> | <u>1984</u> | <u>1988</u> |
| Des Hillen* | Jack Kissock* | Jack Kissock* | Lloyd Morgan* |
| B.J.S. Kissock | P. Barry | P. Barry | P. Barry |
| J.A. McDade | B.J.S. Kissock | B.J.S. Kissock | G. McGimpsey |
| G. McGimpsey | J.A. McDade | J. A. McDade | N. Anderson |
| B. Wilson | S. Irvine | G. McGimpsey | N.D. Woods |
| N. D. Woods | N. D. Woods | N.D. Woods | J.A. McDade |
| D. B Blaikie | B. Wilson | B. Wilson | B.J.S. Kissock |
| E. Sterrett | D. B. Blaikie | D. B. Blaikie | B. Wilson |
| B. Kearney | G. McGimpsey | | |

* Non-playing Team Captains.

Belfast and District Cup.

This was the third major G.U.I cup to be inaugurated. It was first played for in 1903 and although Bangor Golf Club had to wait until 1929 before winning, we have since won this trophy six more times.

The Teams were selected from the following:

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| <u>1929</u> | <u>1938</u> | <u>1953</u> | <u>1970</u> |
| F.J. Boyd | W.K. Brown | G. Balmer | D.B. Blaikie |
| H. Clements | J. McAuley | W.K. Brown | R. Ewart |
| W.C. Dean | H. Marshall | N.V. Drew | B. J. S. Kissock |
| J. McAuley | H. Martin | J.G. Edwards | J.A. McDade |
| J.C. Nicholson | G.J. Stephenson | (Jr.)G.E. Gregory | R.H. McGimpsey |
| G.A. Simpson | W.J. Thompson | A.H.G. Love | C.R. Mullan |
| J. Taylor | R. Young | E.C. McDade | J.G. Neill |
| | | W. McMillan | W.I.D. Sanderson |
| | | J. Neill | N. M. Tims |
| | | G.J. Stephenson | (Jr.)N.D. Woods |
| | | R. Young | W.G. Tinsley |

1980

Des Hillen*
D. B. Blaikie
R.S. Irvine
B. Kearney
B.J.S. Kissock
M. McAuley
J.A. McDade
G. McGimpsey
W.I.D. Sanderson
E. Sterrett
B. Wilson
N.D. Woods

1981

Des Hillen*
D.B. Blaikie
P.R. Dawson
R.S. Irvine
B. Kearney
B.J.S. Kissock
J.A. McDade
G. McGimpsey
E. Sterrett
J. Whittle
B. Wilson
N.D. Woods

1983

Jack Kissock*
P. Barry
D. B. Blaikie
R.S. Irvine
B.J.S. Kissock
M. McAuley
J.A. McDade
G. McGimpsey
G. Moore
B. Wilson
N.D. Woods

* Non-playing Team Captain.

It is believed that Bangor Golf Club is unique in that on three occasions fathers and sons have played on winning Belfast and District Cup Teams. Eddie McDade and Jack Neill were on the 1953 winning team and Alan McDade and John Neill were on the 1970 winning team. Hal McGimpsey was also a team member in 1970 and Garth McGimpsey played in the 1980 winning team.

Barton Shield Foursomes.

The Barton Shield Foursomes was inaugurated in 1910 as an inter-county tournament and was first competed for in 1911. It became an inter-club tournament in 1920.

Bangor won the Ulster section in 1949 and 1989, but in 1951 they won the Ulster Section and went on to win the All Ireland medals and pennant.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Teams:

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Ulster Section | All Ireland | Ulster Section. |
| <u>1949</u> | <u>1951</u> | <u>1989</u> |
| R. Young (Capt.) | R. Young (Capt.) | Lloyd Morgan* |
| E.C. McDade | E.C. McDade | G. McGimpsey |
| W.K. Brown | W.K. Brown | J.A. McDade |
| G.J. Stephenson (Jr.) | N.V. Drew | B.J.S. Kissock |
| | | G. McAllister |
| | | P. Barry |
| | | R. Dornan. |

* (Non-playing Team Captain)

The Ulster Cup.

This trophy has an interesting history.

The Ulster Branch of the Golfing Union of Ireland was formed at a meeting in the Grand Central Hotel, Belfast, on the 10th January, 1913. At that meeting it was proposed to institute an inter-club competition open to all Clubs in the Province. Each Club could enter a team of seven. The players had to have a handicap of 12 or over, and be 30 years of age or over during the year of the competition. In order to purchase a suitable cup, the Provincial Secretary wrote to all Clubs in the Province asking for a donation towards the cost. Bangor sent two guineas (£2.10). The rest of the Clubs stumped up £23 between them and the Ulster Cup was bought.

The history does not end there however for in 1970 the cup was in Fortwilliam Golf Club when it was blown up by a terrorist bomb. The cup was almost totally destroyed in the resulting fire. The GUI had an exact replica made which incorporates on the base the only surviving fragment of the original.

Bangor won the cup in 1913, the first year it was played for. Due to the First World War it was not played

for again until 1919, when Bangor won it for the second time. Further success came in 1924 and in 1949. Fifty-one years then passed until the year 2000 when a team captained by Sam Brown brought the Ulster Cup back to Bangor for the fifth time.

Teams:

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|
| <u>1913</u> | <u>1919</u> | <u>1924</u> | <u>1949</u> |
| W. Campbell | W. Pollock | W. Dobbs | A.N. Trimble |
| J.W. Shepperd | N. Venables | A. Chambers | F. Goldstein |
| R. McMaster | R. McMurray | S. Morrison | W. McMillan |
| H. Walker | W. Dobbs | J.C. Stanley | J. Ellis |
| S.A. Orr | D. Shaw | H.F. Sheppard | J. Neill |
| J. Douglas | H.V. Barnes | J. McAuley | E.J. Taylor |
| J. Fetherston | W. Milliken | H. Mullan | T.A. McIlwaine * |
| | | J. Neill * | |

*Team Captain.

2000 Ulster Cup Team: the full squad.

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Sam Brown, (Team Captain) | Gordon Parker |
| Michael Currie | Eddie Skinner |
| Michael Davis | John Donegan |
| David McMeechan | Peter Davidson |
| Raymond Brown | Eric Sterrett |
| Gareth Edge | Gary Galbraith |

Pierce Purcell Shield Foursomes Tournament.

Inaugurated in 1970 and competed for in the same year for the first time.

The Development Committee of the GUI recommended that this competition be named in memory of Professor Pierce Purcell in recognition of his great services to Irish golf. A Civil Engineer by profession, Professor Purcell was a low handicap golfer and a prominent member both of Portmarnock Golf Club and the

Chapter Six - Our Teams and Trophies.

GUI for many years. As well as being a father figure to younger golfers, he was connected with Irish golf at the highest level and is credited with having brought the "Canada Cup" to be played in Ireland.

Bangor has had only one success so far in this competition, bringing home an Ulster pennant in 1985.

The full squad was;

T.E.A. Guthrie, Team Captain

Pairings:

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| B. Irwin | R. Cromie |
| W. Elliot | T. Millar |
| M. McMorran | M. Ledlie |
| J. Marshall | P. Watson |
| S. Duffin | W. Moore |
| A. Shaw | K. McKee. |

Jimmy Bruen Shield.

Inaugurated and first played for in 1978, this foursomes trophy is for mid-handicap pairs

Jimmy Bruen was born in Belfast in 1920, but grew up in Cork. In the 1930's he was one of the brightest prospects for British golf, but it is generally accepted that the 1939-1945 war came at the wrong time for him and ruined his career, though he won the British Amateur Championship in 1946. His power to hit golf balls huge distances was legendary.

To date, Bangor has had only one success in this competition. In 1989 they won the Ulster pennant, then Roy Mullan took the team to Woodbrook Golf Club and won the All-Ireland final, medals and pennant. It was the

first time that a Bangor team had won an All Ireland handicap tournament.

The full squad was:

R. Mullan (Team Captain)

Maurice Boyd

D. Cooke

D. Cull

P. Davidson

P. Feherty

N. Lavelle

N. Porter

K. Duncan

B. Skelton

J. Whittle

G. Yarr

H. Armstrong

T.C. Fergie

W.A. Thompson

J. Paisley.

Christie Flag Club Foursomes.

J.K. Christie, Honorary Secretary of Ormeau Golf Club, in 1922 presented a flag to the Ulster Branch GUI. to be played for annually. This eventually became known as "The Christie Flag". The format is Foursomes - alternate shots over 36 holes. The Club Professional plays with a member, or two members of the same Club can play.

Bangor have won this five times and been "Runners Up" four times.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| 1951: G. J. Stephenson (Jr.) and J. Hamill | Pennant. |
| 1952: E.C. McDade and N.V. Drew | Pennant. |
| 1971: B.J.S. Kissock and K. Hall | Runners up. |
| 1972: D.B. Blaikie and E. Jones | Pennant. |
| 1975: G. McGimpsey and D. Jones | Runners up. |
| 1979: S. Irvine and L. Esdale | Runners up. |
| 1985: B. Wilson and N.V. Drew | Pennant. |
| 1986: B. Wilson and N.V. Drew | Pennant. |
| 1990: G. McGimpsey and N.V. Drew | Runners up. |

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

All Ireland Mixed Foursomes.

Beaten finalists in Ulster Section in 2000:
Marie Fleming, Linda Bradshaw, Ann Reynolds, Kathy Cunningham, Gary McAllister, Jackie McMurty, Pamela Henry, Colin Mc Evoy, David Cunningham, David Graham, Raymond Bell, Michael Jones, Mark McMurray, John Gavin and Carol Eadie (Team Captains).

Other Major Trophies.

J.B. Carr Diamond Trophy.

Bangor won the County Section in 1997, 1998 and 1999. In 1999 the Team went on to become Ulster Champions and travelled to Woodenbridge for the National Finals; only to lose in the semi-final.

The 1999 Team was:

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| C.I. Burrowes (Team Captain) | D.B. Blaikie |
| R.S. Donald | H. Dornan |
| J.W. Gavin | T.E.A. Guthrie |
| R. James | N. Lavelle |
| W. Malcolm | B. Morgan |
| W.I.D. Sanderson | B. Skelton |

Holt Shield.

On three occasions the Club have been runners-up in this competition. 1964, 1965 and 1971.

Belfast Telegraph Foursomes.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| 1964: H. Greer and W.S. McGimpsey. | Winners. |
| 1976: I. Alexander and T.E.A. Guthrie. | Runners up. |
| 1981: I. Alexander and T.E.A. Guthrie. | Winners. |
| 1995: R. Bell and M. Ross. | Winners. |

Carlsberg Trophy.

Winners in 1976, the first year the Competition was played in N. Ireland.

Sam Hamilton, Bangor Golf Club Captain and non-playing Team Captain, selected his team from the following:

| | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| T.E.A. Guthrie | J.B. Boston |
| T.O. Taylor | A. McCartney (Sub). |
| W. Forde | J. McCloskey |
| W.A. Thompson. | |

Vauxhall Golf Club Team Classic.

Runners up in the G.B. and Ireland final in 1992, the team was:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| J. Paisley, (Team Captain.) | |
| Peter Mulholland | Nigel Anderson |
| T.E.A. Guthrie | J. Whittle |
| C. Goddard | R. Dorman |
| B.J.S. Kissock | N. Porter |

Daily Mail Foursomes.

Des Hillen and Alan McDade represented Ireland in the Great Britain and Ireland finals at Woodhall Spa, England, in 1977.

Famous Grouse Competition.

Ted Guthrie and John Whittle represented Ulster in the Great Britain and Ireland finals at the Old Course, St. Andrews in 1992.

The Pennants and Flags appropriate to these trophies are all framed and displayed throughout the Clubhouse.

Chapter Six - Our Teams and Trophies.

Major Club Trophies.

Connor Challenge Cup.

Presented in 1904 by Miss Connor. A Stroke qualifying event with 16 players going forward to the Matchplay stages.



Trustees' Challenge Cup.

Presented in 1904 by the original Club Trustees.
The Club's premier Handicap Matchplay trophy.



Jordan Shield.

Foursomes matchplay trophy.

G.H. Brown Cup.

Presented in 1906 by the Club President, George Herbert Brown, J.P and formerly known as the President's Challenge Cup. Originally played for annually as an Open competition, but is now a Club stroke play competition.



Lord Craigavon Cup.

Presented by the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland on the occasion of his laying a foundation stone for the present clubhouse in 1934.
Stableford competition.



Barbour Cup.

Presented in 1935 by Mr. J.D. Barbour,

Captain of Royal Belfast Golf Club on the occasion of the opening of the new clubhouse. Strokeplay competition.

H. Tyrrell Cup.

Presented in 1947 by Herbert Tyrrell, Club Captain.
Competition for members over 50 years of age.

Royal Army Medical Corps. (R.A.M.C.) Cup.

Also known as the "General Hospitals Cup".
Bangor Intermediate School on Castle Street was turned into a Military Convalescent Hospital during the 2nd World War, and this cup was presented in 1946 by the R.A.M.C. to be played for by members who had served in H.M. forces during the 2nd World War. Last played for in 1992, it is no longer played for as there are not so many "Veterans" about.

J.F.Neill Scratch Cup.

Presented by John F. Neill, Past captain and Trustee to celebrate 50 years membership of the Club. 36 holes, Stroke, Scratch Club Championship.
Qualifying based on four best gross scores from six Monthly Medal competitions.
All previous winners are also eligible to play.



Vice – Captain's Tankard.

This annual competition has become known as the Club Nett Championship.
It is a 36 hole stroke-play competition.
Qualifying is based on the best four aggregate nett scores from six Monthly Medal competitions; the leading 35 players and the holder to qualify.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Gordon Tims Putter.

Presented by Noel Tims in memory of his father. The winner is the competitor who records the best nett score; usually combined with the Hamill Driver.

G.H. Hambly Cup.

Presented in 1961 by George Hambly, then Headmaster of Bangor Secondary School, and originally known as the "Anno Domini Cup". Competition for members over 60 years of age.

John Hamill Driver.

Presented by the Club Professional, John Hamill on his retirement in 1963. The prize is awarded to the competitor with the best gross score.

Oneida Trophy.

Strokeplay competition. Presented on the 1st October 1966 by the Directors of Oneida Silversmiths who at that time had a factory in Balloo Industrial Estate.

Stephenson Cup.

Presented in 1968 by Gordon J. Stephenson (Jr.). Awarded to the winner of the Annual Match-play Scratch Singles Competition

Chris Boyd Memorial Trophy.

Silver cup presented in 1973 by Mr. D.O. Wilson in memory of Assistant Professional Chris Boyd, who tragically died in a car accident on the Bangor Road in June 1972, grandson of Head Greenkeeper John Boyd. Played for by Juniors under the age of 21.



Past Captains Rosebowl.

Presented in 1976 by Sam Hamilton, Captain in that year. This trophy is competed for by Past Captains, on Captain's Day, over the first nine holes.

Quin Cup.

Presented by Bishop Quin in 1961. Played for originally on a Thursday and by invitation, but now open to all Club members. For many years this was a big event in the Club's year, with a meal and prize giving afterwards, but it has now become one of the Saturday Competitions.

Harry Lord Trophy.

Presented by his daughter in memory of her father. Played for in two years only. Awarded on Captain's Day to the competitor over the age of 80 years with the best score, but now no longer played for.

Gerry Fox Cup.

Presented in 1988 by member Gerry Fox, Captain in the year 2002. A Stroke Qualifying competition, fourball better ball, followed by Matchplay for the leading 16 pairs.

McKee Cup.

Presented by member Ken McKee in memory of his mother. Awarded to the player with the best gross score on Captain's Day.

Winter League Trophy.

Presented by Bass Ireland. Usually played during the months of January to March.

Chapter Six - Our Teams and Trophies.

Competitors are divided into teams and weekly scores are aggregated.

Team and individual prizes generally awarded at the Winter League Dinner.

Victor and Ruth Salters.

Presented in 1969. Mixed Foursomes Matchplay.

Dunlop Mixed Foursomes.

Originally know as Ava Mixed Foursomes. Sponsored by Ava Bars (Des Hillen) from 1973 until 1988. It became the Dunlop Mixed Foursomes in 1998 when the local building company took over sponsorship of the event.

Juveniles Cup.

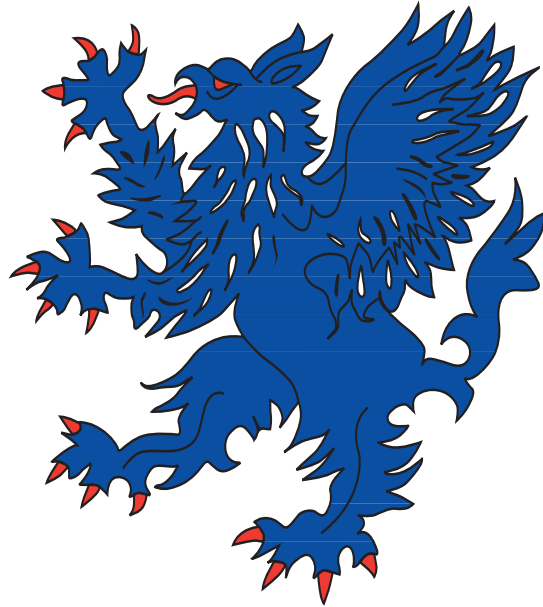
Presented in 1903 by T.E. McConnell and played for annually on Juveniles Day, many of the winners have gone on to achieve considerable sucess as golfers.

Billiard Challenge Cup.

Presented in 1905 by James Hollywood, Club Captain and Trustee in that year.



Chapter Seven



Some Notable Members
Notable for golf that is!

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

This is difficult, because we are all notable in one way or another. Most of us have experienced that “Purple Day” at least once, when you are hitting the ball a mile, arrow straight. When you get that kick off the edge of the bunker into the heart of the green, and you are holing putts from everywhere. If you haven’t yet, you probably will. Those people have their name on an Honours Board or a cup somewhere, but some achieve more than that and play outside the Club in Inter-Club matches or GUI matches, perhaps even Interprovincial or International matches, and those we will look at now.

Perhaps our first achievers were the team that won the Ulster Cup in 1913, and in that way anyone who represents the Club on a winning team is notable, and they have a mention in the previous chapter. But to represent Ireland as an amateur is another thing and the first person in the history of Bangor Golf Club to do that was Dr. John Nicholson, who played against Wales in 1932.

Dr. James Nicholson was born in 1905 on an island in the Vanuatu Group in the Pacific, where his father was a missionary. He was an extremely good player, it goes without saying, but he was a modest man who seemed totally unaware that his skill was anything out of the ordinary.



Hal McGimpsey, Club Captain in 1971 and who sadly died in 2000, was a senior member and Trustee of the Club and no mean golfer himself. The father of Garth McGimpsey, he wrote the following piece at my request in 1995. It is quoted here in full as Hal’s comments on

golf are worth listening to: “On the field of play, the Club has only had winning teams on relatively few occasions, but there has been much individual success.

As soon as competitive golf restarted after the Second World War, Jack McAuley, known to all as “Bunny”, reached the final of the North of Ireland Championship. Jack Kissock also achieved that distinction in 1947, and these two continued to play at a very high level for many years.

With the coming of Norman Drew, Bangor became a real force in Inter-Club golf, and won the All Ireland Barton Shield in 1951, and the Belfast and District Cup in 1953. This team embraced several very good young golfers, amongst whom were Bertie Young and Eddie McDade, the beautiful stylist, and Gary Love, who was to win the Irish “Close” Championship. These were well supported by Willie (“Lugger”) Brown, Gordon Stephenson, John Edwards, and Gower Hunter among others. This was a very powerful team, perhaps as good as ever represented the Club.

Other young players were making their way, and Roy Mullan reached the final of the Ulster Boys Championship in 1950. Gary Love won it in 1952 and Alan McDade also won this Championship in 1957 as did Noel Tims in 1959. Alan McDade went on to become perhaps the most consistent player of this era, playing many times for Ulster and reaching the final of the Irish Close Championship in 1964, as well as reaching the final of the North of Ireland Championship in 1979. Added to this very strong nucleus were, Bryan Blaikie, Desmond Hamill, John Neill, Nigel Woods, Ian Sanderson, Hal

Chapter Seven - Some Notable Members.

McGimpsey and Gordon Tinsley (who also played many times for Ulster), Hugh Greer and Joey Campbell. From these players was formed a squad that in 1957 reached the Ulster final and the all Ireland final of the Junior Cup. Four times beaten in the Ulster final of the Senior Cup, and also in the Ulster final of the Barton Shield, success eluded them until in 1970 they won the Belfast and District Cup.

Individuals continued to flourish, and the Club produced in Garth McGimpsey an extraordinary golfer who was entirely home bred. From the Juvenile section of Bangor Golf Club, he rose through all the levels of Amateur Golf to play eventually in the Eisenhower World Trophy Team.

Yet another home product was Billy Pope who won the Ulster Boy's Championship in 1973, and Gary McAllister who won the Ulster Youth's Championship in 1988, playing brilliant golf. Richard Dorman has made steady progress and has represented Ulster at Senior level.

Apart from the Belfast and District Cup, during the 1970's team success was always just round the corner, but with the emergence of Garth McGimpsey, and when Bertie Wilson joined us from Clondeboy, we were able to field an unbeatable squad which not only had great success in the Senior Cup in 1981, 1983, 1984 and 1988, but also won the Belfast and District Cup in 1980, 1981, and 1983.

Bertie Wilson was a remarkable golfer for over twenty years and played many times for Ulster. Indeed,

Bangor have had three players on the Ulster Interprovincial Team on two occasions, Alan McDade, Garth McGimpsey and Bertie Wilson in 1980, and Brian Kissock, Garth McGimpsey and Bertie Wilson again in 1982."

The author is indebted to Alan McDade for the following profiles of Notable Golfers.

Jack McAuley, known to all as "Bunny," won the Ulster Scratch Singles in 1937 and became Bangor's first Ulster player when he was selected for the Interprovincial Championships in 1938. As soon as competitive golf restarted after the Second World War, "Bunny" again reached the finals of the Ulster Scratch Singles at Royal Portrush. This event was given Championship status in 1947 and became the North of Ireland Amateur Championship. Jack McAuley has the unique distinction of having won the Captain's Prize at Bangor three times: in 1924, 1925 and 1927.

Eddie McDade, having learnt his golf at Carnalea, joined Bangor in the late thirties. He is remembered to this day for his classical swing, which he based on that of the great Harry Vardon. In 1949, Eddie and his team mates W.K. (Lugger) Brown, Gordon Stephenson and Bertie Young reached the All Ireland final of the Barton Shield, and in 1951, with Norman Drew replacing Gordon Stephenson in the team, they won the Barton Shield for Bangor at Little Island, Cork.

During the late nineteen thirties and forties, Eddie played off a scratch handicap and was Bangor's leading player. Throughout the fifties and sixties he contin-

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

ued to represent Bangor on Inter-Club teams, partnered Norman Drew to victory in the Christie Flag at Bangor in 1952, and was a member of the winning 1953 Belfast and District Cup Team.

“Lugger” Brown and **Bertie Young** during the 1930’s played on the Junior Cup Team, Belfast and District Cup Team and Senior Cup Team. In the Barton Shield Foursomes All Ireland Finals at Little Island, Cork, in 1951, they were partnered together as usual and with Norman Drew partnered by Eddie McDade, became our first All Ireland Champions. According to Bertie Young, “Lugger” Brown would just hit the ball full bore every time with whichever club he was holding. But if you told him the distance, he could hit it to within a couple of yards of the target”.

Jack Kissock, also came to Bangor from Carnalea. He was a remarkable young golfer who attained a handicap of scratch at the age of 17, and maintained that handicap for 28 years. Indeed, during that period he was +1, and +2 for a time. Jack reached the final of the North of Ireland Championship in 1947. He played Barton Shield, Senior Cup and Belfast and District Cup Inter-Club golf in the nineteen fifties, sixties, seventies and eighties and was Captain of Bangor’s winning Senior Cup team at Tramore in 1984. Jack also played in a number of Exhibition Matches, notably at Carnalea in 1953 when he partnered Fred Daly against Norman Drew and Eric Brown, winner of the Irish Open that year. The legendary Dai Rees refereed the match. Now in his 77th year (2002), Jack continues to play with almost as much enthusiasm as he did fifty odd years ago.

Norman Drew, joined Bangor in November 1949, the same year that he won the inaugural G.U.I. Ulster Boys Amateur Championship at Royal Belfast and was beaten in the final of the British Boys Championship at St. Andrews. He had an outstanding amateur career, all the more remarkable in that it was achieved in only four years.



Norman won the North of Ireland Championship in 1950, and the Irish Amateur Open Championship in 1952. That same year he played in the Home Internationals at Royal Troon, won the East and the North of Ireland Championships and was Runner Up in the West and South of Ireland Championships, losing by 2 and 1, and by one hole in the respective finals. At Killarney in 1953 he played in the Home Internationals again, partnered by the great J.B. Carr in the Foursomes and went on to win the Irish Amateur Open Championship a second time, beating some of the very best English,



Chapter Seven - Some Notable Members.

Scottish, Welsh and Irish Internationals who had been playing in the Home Internationals over the same course immediately beforehand. Norman recorded 8 wins, 2 halves, and 2 losses out of the twelve matches played in the Home Internationals, and in recognition of such an outstanding record the Royal and Ancient honoured him with selection to represent Great Britain and Ireland on the Walker Cup Team against the USA at Kittansett, Massachusetts in 1953. Norman was only the second Ulsterman to achieve this honour.

Norman represented Bangor many times in Inter-Club matches between 1950 and 1953. He was a member of the first Bangor team to win an All Ireland Final when they took the honours in the Barton Shield at Little Island, Cork in 1951. In 1952, partnered by Eddie McDade, he won the Christie Flag at Bangor in an exciting 9 hole play off, and the following year he was a member of Bangor's winning Belfast and District Cup Team. Having won practically all the honours open to an Amateur golfer, Norman decided to turn professional in 1953. Elected an Honorary Member of Bangor in 1954, he then left to commence his five year apprenticeship. His achievements since then are listed in Chapter Five. "Our Professionals."

Gary Love, who won the Ulster Boys Championship in 1952 was an extremely talented golfer who represented Bangor many times in Inter-Club matches in the early 1950's, and was a member of Bangor's winning Belfast and District Cup team in 1953. Sadly for golf, though not for the Medical profession, Gary's studies at Queen's University took precedence over golf. It is a measure of his ability at golf that he won the Irish Amateur Close

Championship at Malone in 1956, despite the limited time he allocated to playing while at University.

Gordon Tinsley, who was capped for Ulster in the Interprovincial Championships in 1963, was another excellent golfer who represented Bangor in Inter-Club matches. Together with Bryan Blaikie, Joey Campbell, Hugh Greer and Desmond Hamill (son of John Hamill), he represented Bangor in the All Ireland Junior Cup Finals at Galway in 1957. Gordon also represented Bangor with distinction in the Senior Cup, Barton Shield and Belfast and District Cup Teams. He was leading qualifier in the North of Ireland Championship in 1969, scoring 67 on the Valley course and 71 on the Dunluce.

Unfortunately his career was cut short by a car accident that left him unable to compete in serious competitions.

Brian Kissock, was Bangor's outstanding player throughout the nineteen sixties and into the mid seventies. Runner-up to fellow Bangor member Noel Tims in the final of the Ulster Boys Championship in 1959, he was first capped for Ulster in 1961, and following a 100% record in both the four-somes and singles of the Interprovincial matches, was selected to represent Ireland in the International matches against England, Scotland and Wales. Brian was selected a further four times to represent Ireland in the International matches, in 1962, 1963, 1974 and 1976. In 1978 he was selected to represent Ireland in the Quadrangular Continental matches. During this period he also played for Ulster many times in the Interprovincial Champion-



Brian Kissock.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

ships. In 1974 he won the silver medal for leading qualifier in the North of Ireland Championship which he went on to win that year, and in 1976 he won it for the second time. 1981 turned out to be a “nearly” year for Brian. He led the qualifiers in the West of Ireland Championship, lost in the semi-final of the Irish Close Championship, was beaten by one hole in the final of the “North”, and finished joint second in the Willie Gill Award, the order of merit for performance in the six Irish Championships. Some compensation came however with a gold medal when Bangor won the All Ireland Senior Cup finals at Grange that year. Brian was also a member of the winning All Ireland Senior Cup Team in 1984 and played on four winning Belfast and District Cup Teams in 1970, 1980, 1981, and 1984. He is a modest man, for when the author asked him for a few words about his career, the only thing he would tell him was about the time he sliced a drive into Broadway off the second tee just as a woman opened her front door. The ball entered the house and went up the stairs without breaking anything or hurting anybody.

Noel Tims, son of Gordon Tims, in whose memory the Gordon Tims Putter is played for annually, joined Bangor as a Juvenile and won the Ulster Boys Championship in 1959, beating fellow Club member Brian Kissock in the final. Noel represented the Club for many years on Inter-Club teams and was a member of the successful 1970 Belfast and District Cup Team.

Alan McDade, son of Eddie McDade, joined Bangor as a Juvenile in 1950. He won the Ulster Boys Championship at Holywood in 1957. In 1962 he reached the semi-final of the North of Ireland Championship and was

selected as Travelling Reserve for the Ulster Interprovincial Team. Joe Carr beat Alan in the final of the Irish Close Championship at Royal County Down in 1964 and the following month he lost in the semi-final of the “North”. Following these performances, Alan was rewarded with his first full Interprovincial Cap. Alan reached the semi-final of the “North” for the third time in 1967, only to lose narrowly on the last green, and was again selected to represent Ulster in the Interprovincial Championships. Twelve years later (1979) he lost the final of the “North”, but had some consolation the following week when he won the Royal County Down Open Scratch Tournament. Following an excellent morning round of 69, he went round in 74 in the afternoon to win by two shots. He received his third cap for Ulster in 1980. In Inter-Club golf he has represented the Club in the Senior Cup, Barton Shield, and Belfast and District Cup throughout the nineteen sixties, seventies and eighties, and during that period helped Bangor to win two All Ireland Senior Cups and four Belfast and District Cups. To crown this distinguished golf career, Alan Captained Ulster’s Interprovincial squad for three years. Currently he holds the record low score for the Club Championship, the J.F. Neill Cup, with a 36 hole total of 136.

David Feherty, son of Past Captain Billy Feherty, joined Bangor Golf Club as a Juvenile in 1968. In 1977 at the age of nineteen, when he was playing off 5 handicap, he turned Professional. After a period as Assistant at Holywood and Royal Belfast, David moved to Balmoral, from where, under the guidance of the late great Fred Daly, he gained his European Tour Card. David’s success as a Tournament player began with victories in the

Chapter Seven - Some Notable Members.

Irish Championships in 1980 and 1981, and between 1983 and 1992 he won nine major tournaments, including the Italian and Scottish Opens in 1986 and the South African PGA and South African Open. In 1989 he won the Ulster Championship with a record low score of 28 under par. David represented Ireland five times in the Dunhill Cup at St. Andrews and captained the Team to victory in 1990. That same year, playing with Ronan Rafferty, he represented Ireland in the World Cup, finishing in second place. But perhaps his finest hour came in 1991 when he beat Payne Stewart, that wonderful gentleman of golf, in his singles match on the final day of the Ryder Cup at Kiawah Island. For these achievements he was made an Honorary Member of Bangor Golf Club in 1991. Ranked 38th in the world, David qualified to play at Augusta the following year in the "Masters". Following his retirement from Tournament golf in 1996 his career took a different turn and he became a commentator and golf analyst for CBS at which he is equally successful.

Billy Pope, was the fifth Bangor member to win the Ulster Boys Amateur Championship in 1973.

Bertie Wilson, who joined Bangor in 1980 represented Ulster many times in Interprovincial Championships during the nineteen sixties, seventies and eighties, and played for Ireland in an "Official Friendly" against Sweden in 1966. Bertie won the prestigious Mullingar Scratch Cup in 1978. As a member of Bangor's Senior Cup, Barton Shield and Belfast and District Cup Teams, Bertie's talent gave the teams the additional depth that resulted in two Senior Cup and three Belfast and District Cup victories.

Garth McGimpsey, son of the late Hal McGimpsey, was born in 1955 and joined Bangor as a Juvenile member in 1965. Garth is not only Bangor's best ever amateur golfer to date, but his record places him alongside the Greats in Irish Amateur golf. Although beaten in the final of the 1972 Ulster Boys Championship, Garth was selected to represent Ireland in the Boys International match against Wales. Two years later, in 1974, he was runner-up in the Ulster Youths Championship and was selected to represent Ulster in the Junior Interprovincial Championships. He was again selected for the Junior Ulster Team in 1976 and 1977. Garth was Irish Long Driving Champion in 1977 and 1978 with drives of 320 yards and 287 yards respectively, and in 1979 he won the British Long Driving Trophy, with a drive of 303 yards. Henry Cotton presented the Trophy. During his competitive years Garth gained the Willie Gill Award for the most consistent player in the Home Championships on three occasions, 1984, 1988, and 1993. He has twice been given the Irish Sports Writer Award, and twice the Bangor Borough Council Sports Personality of the Year Award. Garth surely reached the pinnacle of individual success when, watched by a small band of enthusiastic Bangor supporters, he won the Amateur Championship at Royal Dornoch in 1985, a feat previously achieved by only three other Irish players: Jimmy Bruen, Sam McCready and Joe Carr. Following his victory in the Amateur Championship Garth was invited to play in the U.S. Masters at the Augusta National, and in 1986 he became the first Ulsterman to do so. He had the unique experience that year of playing with Jack Nicklaus in a practice round on the Tuesday before the Tournament, and with Arnold Palmer in the first round on Thursday, and beating both of them!

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

The Royal and Ancient first rewarded Garth's success in Irish golf in 1984 when he was selected to represent Great Britain and Ireland on the St. Andrews Trophy Team against the Continent of Europe, and he received greater honour later the same year when as one of the four best amateur golfers in Great Britain and Ireland, he was selected for the World Cup Team to compete for the Eisenhower Trophy played that year in Hong Kong.

He was selected again for both these teams in 1986 and 1988, winning a gold medal in 1988 when Great Britain and Ireland won the Eisenhower Trophy. Following these achievements, in 1990 and 1992, Garth was once again selected to represent Great Britain and Ireland in the St. Andrews Trophy Team. Previously in 1985 Garth had been selected by the Royal and Ancient to represent Great Britain and Ireland on the Walker Cup Team, certainly the most famous and arguably the most prestigious amateur team golf event in the world. In 1989



Garth McGimpsey.

Chapter Seven - Some Notable Members.

he was selected a second time for the Walker Cup Team, and became a member of the first Great Britain and Ireland Walker Cup Team to defeat the United States on their home soil. He made a third appearance in the Walker Cup Team in 1991 when the matches were played in Ireland for the first time, at Portmarnock Golf Club. A host of Bangor supporters were there in support and although the Cup itself was lost, there was delight as Garth's "Radar like wedge to the 18th green closed out his opponent in the opening singles." Garth eventually played no less than eleven times for Great Britain and Ireland in the Walker cup, winning four matches, losing five and halving two. Garth's record in Irish Amateur Championship golf is extraordinary; apart from being Runner-Up in the Irish Amateur Open Championship, and also in the Irish Close Championship in 1996, he was:

Irish Close Champion in 1988.

West of Ireland Champion – 1984, 1988, 1993, 1996.
Runner-Up in 1983.

East of Ireland Champion – 1988, 1994, 1998. He was Runner-Up three times, in 1979, 1980, and 1997, being beaten in a sudden death play-off on the earlier occasions.

North of Ireland Champion – 1978, 1984, 1991, 1992, 1993. Runner-Up in 1997.

To have won "The North" a record five times makes Garth unique in the history of this Championship, as no other player to date has won it more than twice.

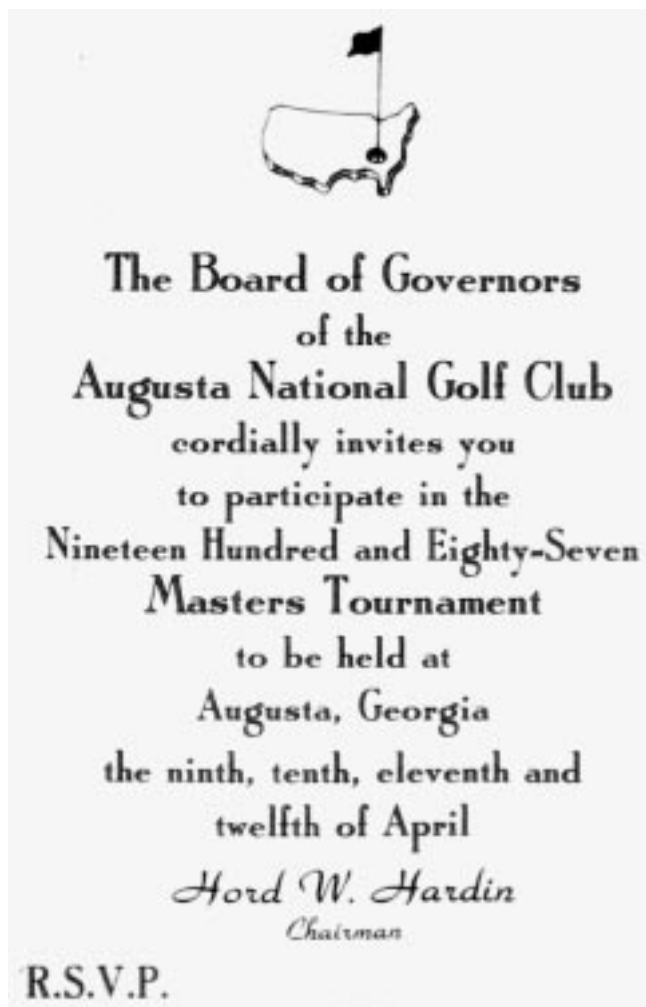
In 1988 also, in atrocious conditions he established a new record score of 67 for the Dunluce Course on his way to reducing the Championship record low qualifying score to 136.

Garth represented Ulster in the Interprovincial Championships every year since he was first selected in 1978 until his retirement from representative golf in 1999.

He represented Ireland in the Home Internationals in over 100 matches and was a member of the Irish Team every year between 1978 and 1999, with the exception of 1979 when the tournament, which should have taken place at Royal County Down, was cancelled due to "The Troubles". Garth's win in the East of Ireland Championship in 1998 was his 13th Irish title in 20 years, a record surpassed only by the great Joe Carr. Garth was a member of the six man Irish team for the European Biennial Team Championship from 1981 to 1987. He also represented Ireland in Quadrangular Biennial Matches against Germany, Sweden and France from 1984 until 1994.

Besides this, Garth has represented Bangor with distinction for over 20 years in Inter-Club Tournaments, winning two gold medals in the All Ireland Senior Cup, one in 1981 and the second in 1984, and has been a member of three Belfast and District Cup winning teams in 1980, 1981 and 1983. In 1990 Garth was selected as Captain of the Ulster Youth's Team and served for three years.

Although Garth has now retired from representative golf for Ireland and Ulster, he continues to represent Bangor enthusiastically in Inter-Club matches, and to compete in the Irish Championships. In 2001 he established a new amateur Course Record of 64 and in 2002 won the Club Championship for the seventeenth time.



In December 2001 he received further honour from the Royal and Ancient when he was selected as non-

playing Captain of the Great Britain and Ireland Walker Cup Team, and the St. Andrews Trophy Team.

It seems likely that when the next Centenary History of the Club is written in 2103, his record of achievements may well need to be amended.

The author is grateful for permission to reprint the following: **"Playing in the Masters"** by Garth McGimpsey. "The most exciting letter I ever received arrived just before Christmas 1985. It was from the Augusta National Golf Club inviting me to take part in The U.S. Masters. Enclosed in the letter were a number of forms to be filled in stating my credentials, two club house passes for my father and brother and four for the tournament which were taken up by members from Bangor. Unknown to me my father had written to Jack Nicklaus asking him if he would have a practice round with me and I had the nicest letter in reply saying he would be delighted and would meet me on the putting green at 1 p.m. on the Tuesday of 'Masters' week. When we arrived in Augusta airport, special cars were available to take competitors to the course and it was the greatest thrill ever to be admitted by the Pinkerton armed police force at the main gate and to be driven up Magnolia drive to the old, white wooden South Georgia clubhouse. There I registered and was offered accommodation reserved for amateurs in the crow's nest at the top of the clubhouse. I was also given a player's badge, which entitled me to every possible consideration, including the use of a huge stretch limousine with driver. The atmosphere in the wall-to-wall green and white-carpeted clubhouse was one of reservation. Everyone moved at a slow measured pace and no one raised their voice. The waiters were at your side as soon as

Chapter Seven - Some Notable Members.

you sat down and at the next table was, perhaps, Seve Ballesteros or Greg Norman or Tom Watson or even the ghost of Ben Hogan or Bobby Jones or Gene Sarazen.

On the putting green I watched all the great players practicing: Bernhart Langer, whose practice round by himself took over six hours; Ray Floyd, whose record score of 271 seems impossible and Billy Casper putting up a slight slope and waiting as the ball stopped, if it didn't go in, till it rolled back down again to his feet. The course is perfectly manicured with the fairways absolutely weed free. Every hole is called after some sort of flowering tree and surrounding the greens and down the fairways are flowers such as azalea which make a blaze of red and purple and white and yellow. The holes are isolated from each other by a forest of Georgia pines and are lined from tee to green by spectators. This is no time to be looking for your swing or being afraid of the occasion, for the world's television is here and every newspaper in the world is represented. Everybody knows about the greens at the Augusta National, that they were actually designed to be fast and terrifying, for Bobby Jones recognised that this was the only defence a course can have against the world's best Professionals. There was no great difficulty in hitting the greens if you could control your shaking hands and pounding heart, but that was only part of it. You have to hit the part of the green that leaves you an uphill putt and if you don't, you take three or four or more and the world applauds politely as you leave the green.

The game with Jack Nicklaus was a great success for he was as nice a person as you could hope to meet. There

were two other amateurs and my partner and I actually won our match and I have a letter from him enclosing his cheque for \$4.00 and a note on it saying, "For getting beat at the Augusta National". He was telling us how thrilled he is to get his invitation every year for it is by invitation only and if you transgress in any way you don't hear from them again.

By now the pairings had been made up and I was to play with Arnold Palmer, one of the most magnetic personalities in golf and the leader of Arnie's army. The crowds around the first tee were five to six deep and as the players were announced about ten thousand people clapped or cheered or screamed, "Go Arnie, go" or "You're the man, you can do it". Arnie started off with a quick hook and took five to my four. I turned in 38, two over, dropped a shot at the almost impossible 10th but had a birdie at the quite unplayable 11th, with the water right into the green on the left and the green lightning fast towards it. Two pars followed on the 12th and 13th and I hit a good drive up the 14th. A nine iron was almost perfect but just short, pitched on the front edge and spun back down the swale thirty yards short. The big scoreboard behind the green showed me as 2 over and Palmer 8 over.

It took me four more to get down and I three putted the 16th and 17th to be round in 78. What an experience to play with Jack Nicklaus on Tuesday and Arnold Palmer on Thursday and discover that I could keep my concentration and my nerve. This was the most wonderful thing to find out about myself and I could recommend it to any young aspiring golfer. It's open to everybody; all you have to do is win the 'Amateur' and your invitation will be in the post! "

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Back to earth now:

Richard Dorman, won the Bell's Junior PGA Championship in 1984 at Shandon Park with a round of 74. He then went on to win the Daily Express National Boys Championship at Malone with an excellent score of 75. Next he travelled to Sotogrande in Spain with a British Boys Team, and completed an excellent year by coming 7th in the National Finals at Gleneagles. Richard was selected to represent Ulster in the Interprovincial Championships in 1994. He is one of our current top players and has represented the Club in the Senior Cup, Barton Shield and Belfast and District Cup Teams.

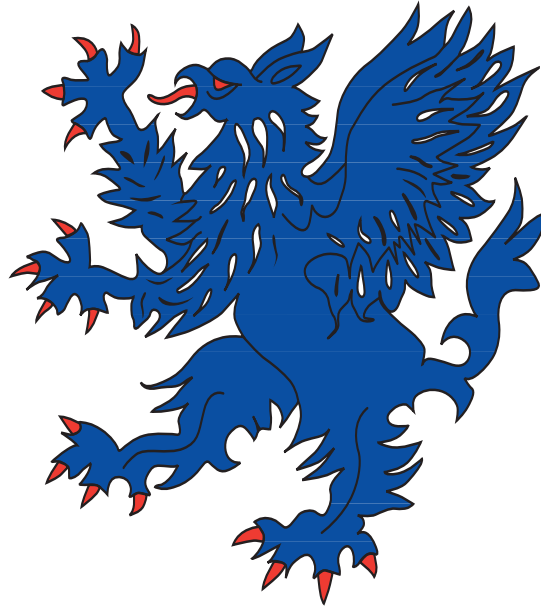
Gary McAllister, is the only Bangor member to date to have won the Ulster Youth's Championship, which he did in 1988 at Belvoir Park, playing brilliant golf. He is another of our leading players and has represented the Club in the Senior Cup, Barton Shield, Belfast and District Cup and Mixed Foursomes Teams.

Mark McMurray, had an exceptional year in 2002 winning the Stephenson Cup, two monthly medals, one in May and one in July, scoring 65 gross on both occasions. In June, August and September in other competitions he won best gross prize. Mark is only the second Bangor member in recent times to achieve a handicap of +1.

These Things Actually Happened.

A fourball were putting on the 4th green one stormy December day. One player had just struck a long putt upwind while another tended the pin. An exceptionally strong gust blew the pin tender's cap off and everyone watched fascinated as it travelled for some yards horizontally, then settled gently on the approaching ball. When everyone except the man putting had stopped laughing, the occurrence was deemed to be "rub of the green".

Chapter Eight



The Post War Years
1940 - 1960, and 1960 - 1980

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

1940 - 1960.

Just as they had done during the First World War, the Ministry of Agriculture brought in a Compulsory Tillage Order in the autumn of 1940. This time 18 acres were to be ploughed up for growing food crops. Council selected the far end of the course beyond Pope's Lane and took the 13th green, 14th hole and 15th tee out of play. However, shortening some holes, re-arranging others and creating a new short hole left the course at 17 holes.

| Player <u>R. YOUNG</u> | | | | | | | | | | Handicap | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|------|----------------|-------|--------------------|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|------|--|--|--|--|
| Competition | | | | | | | | | | Date <u>1/6/41</u> | | | | | | | | | |
| Hole | Yards | Men's B. or Bogey | Score | 18' Cup Stroke | Net Score | 18' Cup | G.M. | Hole | Yards | Men's B. or Bogey | Score | 18' Cup Stroke | Net Score | 18' Cup | G.M. | | | | |
| 1 | 304 | 4 | 4 | 10 | | | | 10 | 400 | 6 | 4 | 7 | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 428 | 5 | 4 | 4 | | | | 11 | 400 | 6 | 4 | 8 | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 317 | 4 | 3 | 15 | | | | 12 | 395 | 4 | 3 | 8 | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 400 | 5 | 2 | 8 | | | | 13 | 398 | 4 | 5 | 17 | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 400 | 5 | 5 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 180 | 3 | 3 | 18 | | | | 14 | 80 | 3 | 4 | 14 | | | | | | | |
| 7 | 374 | 4 | 3 | 15 | | | | 15 | 190 | 3 | 2 | 11 | | | | | | | |
| 8 | 180 | 3 | 1 | 8 | | | | 16 | 410 | 6 | 5 | 8 | | | | | | | |
| 9 | 410 | 6 | 5 | 12 | | | | 17 | 340 | 4 | 4 | 9 | | | | | | | |
| 2948 37 | | | | | | | | 3398 31 37 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holes won _____ | | | | | | | | In _____ 51 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holes lost _____ | | | | | | | | Out _____ 30 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Result _____ | | | | | | | | Gross _____ 52 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Player's Signature _____ | | | | | | | | H'Cap. _____ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scorer <u>R. McIlroy</u> | | | | | | | | Net _____ | | | | | | | | | | | |

Richard Young, son of the late Bertie Young, provided the score-card printed above showing the seventeen hole course measurement and bogey in play during the Second World War. Not only is the score-card itself of historic interest but also Bertie's remarkable score which included an albatross at the 4th hole and a hole-in-one at the 8th hole (currently our 7th hole).

Other signs of war were anti-invasion steel posts driven into the second fairway and the erection, by order of the War Office, of a "Pillbox" gun post near the fifth tee. Trees and bushes nearby were cut down to give a clear field of fire. They grew again eventually, and the pillbox is still there; mellowed by time and serene looking, it is now used as a store by the Greenkeepers. The local Air Raid Precautions (A.R.P) Post No 6 applied to use the Council Room for their Tuesday evening meetings, and the clubhouse windows were blacked out. There was an air raid shelter built on Club ground, at the end of Broadway near Williamson's Lane. Like the rest of the air raid shelters in Bangor, it was eventually demolished some years after the war was over. Perhaps of more immediate concern to members was the shortage of whiskey. Scotch was rationed and for sale only to members, at a higher price than Irish. Fuel was rationed too of course, but the Club benefited from a convenient arrangement with the R.A.F. The local Air Training Corps used the hilly section of the course for launching gliders on Sunday mornings, and the Club tractor, with Greenkeeper Ross Boyd driving, was used to retrieve them and tow them back up the hill, whereupon the tractor became a "Fordson Retrieving Vehicle" and was thus entitled to a Service fuel allowance and supply of spare parts.

The usual Club competitions were as a general rule not held during wartime, because of the difficulty in getting enough entries, but if any were held, then the proceeds went to war charities, e.g. R.A.F. Comforts Fund, Red Cross or the like, which also benefitted from the proceeds of snooker competitions.

Chapter Eight - The Post War Years.

The following autumn, an additional five acres of the course were requisitioned for cultivation. All this land lay more or less where the Ring Road is now, beyond the 14th, and so didn't really affect the course, except that a Local Rule stated that a ball falling on cultivated land could not be retrieved.

The Second World War differed from the first in that Germany now had long range bombers capable of reaching Belfast, and at Easter 1941 they did just that. In one of the biggest air raids the Province ever suffered the main target was presumably Harland and Wolff's shipyard and Belfast docks, but bombs fell all over Bangor, and some landed on the course. A stick of bombs fell diagonally across Hazeldene, and the 18th, 1st, and 2nd, fairways. The resulting explosions shook the clubhouse and among other damage, sent shrapnel fragments through the picture of "The 36th Ulster Division's Attack on the Somme", presented in 1918. Although the picture glass was replaced, the holes in the picture were never repaired and a brass plate was fixed on to the frame to tell the story. The Professional's hut was also damaged, as was the Gent's locker room. Those who lost their clubs were unfortunate as they were hard to replace in wartime, as were balls.

A landmine also fell on the 1st fairway. These massive bombs had fuses that could be set for up to 72 hours, and this one was. It ticked for four days before exploding at 4am, but the soft ground meant that it did little damage. The course was closed however.

Other Clubs had local rules to deal with situations like this. Play could continue outside the taped "Safe

distance", for instance, and "a player whose stroke is disturbed by machine-gun fire or explosion may play again without penalty".

As in the previous war, members on active service were made temporary Honorary Members, their subs were waived for the duration of the war, and all H.M.

Roll of Honour

BANGOR GOLF CLUB

Members who served in His Majesty's Forces,
during the War 1939-1945.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|------|-----------|------|
| Atty. S.S. Boydell | Marine W.D. 1940 | 8192 | Young, R. | 8118 |
| Wick J.W. Anderson | W.D. 1939 | 8123 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8124 | | |
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| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8184 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8185 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8186 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8187 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8188 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8189 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8190 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8191 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8192 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8193 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8194 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8195 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8196 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8197 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8198 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8199 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8200 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8201 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8202 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 8203 | | |
| Wick J.J. Reid | W.D. 1939 | 82 | | |

* Note the Supreme Council

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Forces were allowed to use the links free of charge. By 1943 that courtesy had to be extended to U.S. Forces, as large numbers of American servicemen became based in Northern Ireland. Council had to report at the 1943 A.G.M. that the first two members had been killed in action, and that two members had been decorated for gallantry. Major Morris McKee was awarded the OBE, and Lieutenant F.B. Bramwell received the DSC. In all, 70 members served with H.M. forces. Their names are listed on the memorial in the front hall. Council also voted to send "Airgraph" letters of good wishes to all Club members serving with the armed forces overseas, and a copy of the "*Spectator*" to those serving in the British Isles.

There is an interesting photograph of the clubhouse taken in 1944 by an RAF photo-reconnaissance aircraft (photo right). It shows a well maintained but strangely bare course with no cars at all in the car park because of petrol rationing. The old clubhouse is just visible in the top left hand corner to the left of the Tonic Cinema, and what was the old course on the Bangor side of Broadway has been dug up for "Dig for Victory" vegetable plots. The new clubhouse appears exactly as it was built in 1934, with John Hamill's Professional's shop on the right hand side of the car park near the flagpole.

The social programme continued throughout the war with dances and whist drives, but all proceeds went to war charities and by 1945 the total donated was £2,200, spread among over thirty charities, no mean sum for the times. This included the proceeds of an Exhibition Match played in August 1944, between four Club Professionals, Fred Daly, Joe McCartney, John Hamill and



Spitfire photo, 1944.
(photograph courtesy of Lt. (A) George Boyd)

Pat Sawey for prizes donated by Gordon Stephenson, and another in July 1945 when Club member Jack McAuley and Professional Sid Fairweather – formerly of Malone Golf Club and now of Clandeboyne, played Club member Eddie McDade and the Club Professional John Hamill, for prizes donated by Herbert Tyrrell. Though some sponsorship was obtained for these matches, no admission charge was made to see them, and they were immensely popular.

Chapter Eight - The Post War Years.

By 1945 with the end of the war in sight, Council could contemplate some course improvements. The well-known Edinburgh Golf Architect Mr. MacKenzie-Ross was consulted and he advised changes in the layout of several holes. In all, six new greens were to be constructed and the firm of Suttons of Reading carried out this and the other work. Some of these greens were still under hay, but Council was confident that a return to the pre-war playing of inter-club and G.U.I. competitions would take place in 1946. Council's post war aim was not only to restore the course to its previous condition, but also to improve it, make it more interesting and a better test of golf. Sadly the supply of spirits to the bar showed no such signs of improvement. Gin was now rationed, no spirits were to be served before 9.30 each evening and 4.30 on Saturday afternoons, and members were rationed to two half glasses of Scotch per evening. Austerity and rationing of certain foodstuffs of course carried on until the early 1950's. Another memento of the war was allowed to remain. The army offered to demolish the "Pill box" at the top of the Fourth Hill as it was no longer needed by the military, but Council voted to retain it, thus becoming eligible for a payment of £40.



Pill Box.

On a lighter note, the redoubtable Fred Daly won the British Open in August 1947 and a number of Clubs,

including Bangor, moved to honour him with Honorary membership.

The playing of the Ulster Professional Championships at Bangor in August 1948 shows that Council's strategy with regard to the refurbishment of the course had succeeded. Sid Fairweather (Clandeboyne), beat Club Professional, John Hamill in the semi-finals, and then went on to win the Championship. All the players commented on the excellent condition of the course and paid tribute to the work of John Boyd, the Greenkeeper. One of the competitors, J. McLachlan from Royal County Down, set up a new Professional course record of 68 in one of the qualifying rounds

1948 was noted as the Club's best to date for revenue, nevertheless the accounts showed a loss for the year and Council reluctantly proposed a rise in subs. As an example they quoted the annual sub at some neighbouring Clubs as six guineas (£6.30). Full members of Bangor paid four guineas (£4.20) at this time. The overspend was due to increased wages for staff, and additional expenditure on machinery, fertiliser and repairs. Wages in all sectors of employment had of course risen after the war. Subs were in fact raised at the 1949 AGM, but only to 5 guineas (£5.25) for Full Members, and 3 guineas (£3.15) for Lady Associates.

In 1949 also, the east front of the clubhouse, i.e. the side facing the course, had to be replastered. This had at least partly been caused by enemy action and so some compensation was received from the War Damage Commission. Photos taken during the Ulster Professional Championships clearly show this damage. On the sub-

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Ulster Professional Golfers' Championship, 1948. 2nd Green.

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ject of the Club staff, many members may not realise that up until the end of the 1950's there were "Live in" staff in the clubhouse. From 1947 until 1959, the Crothers family: Steward, Housekeeper, and their two children, lived in a flat upstairs. At one time there were as many as five maids or waitresses also living upstairs, sharing a bedroom to the right of the old billiard room. Some older members may remember May Donaghy, most professional of all the waitresses, with her white collars and cuffs well starched. Beryl Crothers has written an interesting account of growing up in Bangor Golf Clubhouse, and it is printed here as Appendix Three. This year also (1949), a wooden hut was bought and sited beside the Professional's shop, initially to house additional lockers, but it eventually became a trolley shed. The flagpole already mentioned that stood at the northern end of the clubhouse, had survived the war, but the yardarm had to be renewed. Mr Slater, the proprietor of Slater's famous boatyard at Ballyholme was employed to rig it. Somewhat disappointingly he reported that he could not find a ladder long enough to enable him to rig flag halliards to the top; you would somehow expect him to have shinned up there. The help of the Fire Brigade was enlisted eventually.

Club teams had success in 1949, winning the Ulster Cup for the fourth time, beating Fortwilliam, and in the Barton Shield where Bangor won the Ulster Pennant for the first time, and went on to defeat Limerick in the All Ireland semi-finals, but lost to Sutton Golf Club in the final at Galway.

Bertie Young set up a new amateur record for the course of 72, but only three months later Eddie McDade broke it with a remarkable 67.



*Ulster Cup Winners, 1949.
W. McMillan, J. Ellis, J. Neill, E.J. Taylor;
A.N. Trimble, T. McIlwaine, F. Goldstein.*

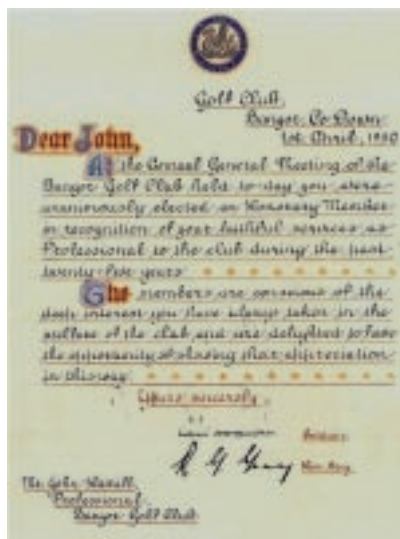
Norman Drew, winner of the Ulster Boys' Championship in 1949, came from Balmoral to join the Club as a Junior member in November of that year and then won the North of Ireland Amateur Championship at Portrush the following year. The rest of his amateur golfing career can be found in Chapter Seven, "Some Notable Members". Talking of Juniors, there is an interesting newspaper report of Juveniles Day at Bangor Golf Club in 1949; among the prize winners were Gordon Tinsley and Bryan Blaikie.

In 1950, Standard scratch for the Bangor course was reduced from 73 to 71, and although the Club Teams brought home no silverware, yet they gave a good ac-

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count of themselves. Bangor returned the best score in a qualifying round of the Senior Cup. Sadly, the popular 1949 Captain, Mr. W. Aiken died in office early in 1950, the first Captain to do so. His successor was Mr W.H. McMillan, who almost immediately had to move to London for business reasons and felt obliged to resign, leaving his Vice-Captain, Mr S.D. Neill with an extended period in office.

Out of the blue, a member of the public, a Mr. T.A. Kinning from Lisbellaw presented the Club with the silver headed club that had been presented to F.B. Newett on the opening of the links in 1903. Unfortunately this important souvenir has since been lost.



John Hamill's Testimonial.

John Hamill was elected an Honorary Member at the 1950 AGM in consideration of his 25 years of faithful service and the interest that he had always taken in the welfare of the Club. The minutes say that the members greeted the result of this vote with hearty applause, and then presented him with an illuminated testimonial. Not at all connected with this event, but

thought important enough to be reported in the AGM Report was: "Telephonic communication has been established between the Bar, the Billiard Room and the Ladies Room". We did live in a different time then.



All Ireland Pennant.

1951, as well as being the year of the Festival of Britain, was another good year for Club Teams. Bangor won the All Ireland Barton Shield for the first time, beating Galway in the semi-final, and going on to defeat Limerick in the final at Little Island, Cork Golf Club, to become the Club's first All Ireland Champions.



*Barton Shield All Ireland Champions, 1951.
E.C. McDade, N.V. Drew, R. Young, W.K. Brown.*

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G.J. Stephenson (Jnr.) playing with John Hamill at Knock, won the Christie Flag, also for the first time, and John Hamill had the additional honour of being appointed Captain of the Irish Professional Golfers Association. These wins were celebrated by a special dinner held in the Clubhouse at which both the Barton Shield Team and Christie Flag winners were guests of honour and were presented with cuff links.

1952 was a very good year for Norman Drew. Now aged 20, Norman won the Irish Open Amateur championship in June. For the first time in the history of Bangor Golf Club a member was Irish Champion. The Ladies Branch honoured him with the presentation of an Omega watch. Playing with Eddie McDade, at Bangor, Norman also helped to retain the Christie Flag for Bangor the second year running.

G.V. Acheson retired in December 1952. Club Captain in 1933, he served as Honorary Secretary from 1935 to 1943 and was appointed Secretary in 1944 in succession to Joe Hurst. "Vic" Acheson was another dedicated man. Every Saturday afternoon, after he had finished work for the day, he would sit outside the Secretary's office between the hours of 1 and 2 o'clock, so as to be available to any member who wished to speak to him. His dedication was rewarded by Honorary membership at the A.G.M. the following year.

Gary Love won the Boys' Championship in 1952 and was presented with the customary pair of gold cufflinks, suitably inscribed.

Council now started to give their attention to preparations for marking the coming "Golden Jubilee Year",

the 50th year of the Club's history. Perhaps coincidentally, the Captain initiated enquiries into obtaining a Royal Warrant for the Club, but nothing more was done it appears; however Past Captain and member of Council, Herbert Tyrrell, presented a new Club flag. A week of competitions for members during July, and a "Jubilee Dinner" celebrated the Anniversary. The Boys Championship was played over the course during August, and Bangor's "A" Team won the Belfast and District Cup.



Belfast and District Cup Winners, 1953.

*G. Balmer, W. McMillan, J. Neill, G. Love, W.K. Brown;
R. Young, J. Lorimer (Captain), G. Stephenson (Jnr.);
J.G. Edwards, E.C. McDade.*

For his outstanding achievements in golf - among other things he won the North of Ireland Championship, the East of Ireland Championship and the Irish Open Championship all in the same year (1952) and played in the Walker Cup in 1953, Norman Drew was made an

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Honorary member in 1954. Among other events that year, Norman and Jack Kissock played an exhibition match at Carnalea against Fred Daly and Eric Brown.

The Bangor greens however, were giving cause for concern and were the topic of conversation in 1954. They were reported as having suffered a severe setback. The dreaded "Thatch" had struck and the Sports Turf Research Institute was consulted, for the first time but not for the last. Four years later it could be reported that the greens were much improved, partly perhaps because a piped water system had been installed by then.

In November 1955 Bangor Tourist Development Association asked if the Club would join them in discussions with Carnalea and Clandeboyne Golf Clubs, with a view to setting up a possible combined Golf Week. This was the beginning of Bangor Open Golf Week. In this popular event, which commenced in 1956 and continued until 2001, Bangor Golf Club, Carnalea Golf Club



Captain's Day 50th Anniversary, 1953.

and Clandeboyne Golf Club combined, in conjunction with the G.U.I (Ulster Branch), Irish Professional Golfers Association, and Irish Ladies' Golfing Union (Northern Executive), to hold a series of competitions, mens, ladies, and mixed, throughout the week, on one course or another. Entry was open, not



Golf Week, Starters Tent.

only to members of the three Clubs, but also to members of recognised Golf Clubs. Indeed, during the 1980's there was a party of German golfers, and no doubt others as well, who used to come over regularly to play in Open Week. Often there were subsidiary competitions on one of the other courses on the same day, and the third course was "Free", or at any rate could be played at a nominal charge. It meant that for one week in the year members could enjoy a game at one of these other courses for a nominal entry fee. Sponsors were Bangor Borough Council, Bangor Tourist Development Association and others arranged by the three Clubs themselves. The event was hugely popular and there was fierce competition for starting times, some people queuing for hours before the sheets were put up. Entries for the like of the "Bangor Bell" competition were eagerly sought after, and at the end of the week, the prize giving, which was rotated between the three clubhouses, was well attended. The Mayor of Bangor, Councillor F. C. Tughan, accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, opened the first Bangor Open Golf Week on 20th August, 1956.

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By 1957 Bangor Golf Club had a membership of 761, and was listed among the clubs worldwide with the largest membership. Daily greenfees were 4/6d (22.5p), although this went up to ten shillings (50p) on a Saturday. The advertisement for the Royal Hotel in the "*Bangor Tourist Guide*" for 1956 lists seven Golf Clubs within 6 miles, all with first class facilities. In addition to golf, bathing, tennis, bowls and archery were all available in the town.



Old Club Badges.

The Club badge was redesigned in 1957. Since the very first days it has always been a griffon, or gryphon, in one form or another. It has taken various forms, heraldically speaking. On this occasion it was raised from "Couchant" - or lying down - to "Proper," or "Rampant" - standing up - although both versions were in use until 1960. There are various theories as to why the griffon should have been chosen as the Club emblem,

but perhaps it was because it is supposed to be a symbol of strength, agility and watchfulness, certainly useful attributes in a golfer. Yet another design appeared in 1959 and became the familiar badge we see today on the blazers of Captains and Past Captains.

The Rotary Club of Bangor was granted the use of the dining facilities of the Club in November 1957 in order to hold their weekly luncheons. The arrangement continues to the present day and a plaque was erected in the entrance to the Club in the year 2002 to commemorate it. Many Rotarians are also members of course.

Norman Drew played in the Ryder Cup in October 1959 at El Dorado, U.S.A, and had a famous battle with Doug Ford. Four down in the match at one time, Norman fought back to all square at the 35th hole. The final green was surrounded by water and Ford played his second shot short. Norman took out a three wood, found the green, and sank the 30 foot eagle putt to win. While in Atlanta, Norman met the legendary Bobby Jones, winner of the "Grand Slam", that is the "Open" and the Amateur Open on both sides of the Atlantic in the same year, 1930 in his case. On this same trip, the aeroplane in which the British team were travelling hit turbulence and dropped four thousand feet like a stone. They all survived, and promptly founded a Club, known as the "Long Drop Club".

Noel Tims won the Ulster Boys' Championship at Warrenpoint in 1959, defeating Brian Kissock in an all-Bangor final. He was presented with the customary suitably inscribed cufflinks, along with Alan McDade who had won the same Championship in 1957.

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Prior to 1959 the Ladies had their room at the south end of the clubhouse, where it is today, and the men had their room, ie. the bar, at the north end. In between was the dining room, parquet floored and formal with its white cloth covered tables, but that was the only place where the sexes could meet and mingle, and then only at mealtimes. But now there was a proposal that a "Mixed Lounge" be created, that is to say that Ladies be allowed into the bar, on certain occasions. This was passed by a large majority. It was also proposed and seconded at the 1959 AGM that the Club bar be opened on Sundays. Again this proposal was passed by a large majority, but could not be implemented until the following year, as it required a change in the Club Rules.



John Boyd and grandson Chris with new mower, early 1950's.

1960-1980.

In November 1960, notification was received from Bangor Borough Council that a new dual carriageway ring road was to pass through club land in the vicinity of the 14th hole. This news came as a bombshell to Council, already preoccupied with proposals from the Borough Council to widen and straighten Broadway. Not to mention the possibility of housing development on the section of Williamson's Lane now known as Fairfield Road. Faced with the possibility of the loss of perhaps eleven acres of the course, Council reacted in two ways. Negotiations were opened with a neighbouring farmer for the purchase of his farm consisting of approximately 16 acres lying next to the 13th fairway. However, hearing that there was the possibility of purchasing some 200 acres of ground belonging to the Dufferin and Ava Estate at Clandeboye, more or less on the site of the present Blackwood Course, Council also commissioned a survey of this ground by a firm of Golf Course Architects. The opinion of this firm was very positive in favour, and as the farmer, Mr Bryant, apparently could not make up his mind whether to sell or not, Council decided to call a Special General Meeting to put the proposal to move to the Clandeboye site before the members. A specially printed leaflet was circulated clearly setting out the case for moving, but at the meeting held on the 19th May, 1961, the members directed Council to abandon the scheme and to announce to the Press that, "The Club property is not for sale". When, eventually, maps of the line of the proposed new road became available, and it was realised that the course could be redesigned without materially altering either its length or character, the purchase of Bryant's farm was not proceeded with. In the end, only three and one quarter acres

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Polar Bears Winter Golf Society - Past Presidents, 1997.

*Standing L to R: J. McCloskey, G. Fox, B. Blaikie, S. Dodds, B. Morgan, H. Dornan, W. Thompson, R. Kane, R. Davis, J. Hanna
K. Duncan, R. Donald, J. Hamill, A. McDade, J. Peden, T. Taylor;
Seated L to R: T. Fox, A. Hewitt, D. Hillen, P. Davison (President), J. McKinty, I. Alexander, B. Shipp (N/A C. Burrowes).*

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were lost, cut off by the new road. One casualty of this rearrangement of the course was the proposal to build a bowling green, which was not proceeded with.

An important formation in the late 1950's was the "Polar Bears" Society. Formed from a stalwart band of golfers willing to play golf on Sundays in winter, they were perhaps given the "cold shoulder" at first by Council who, even in the late 1950's did not countenance "official" Sunday play. However they persevered and due mainly to the persuasive powers of member and Past President, Phil Davidson, Council formally authorised Sunday play and the Society was inaugurated in 1959. Official recognition as a Society was however another matter and it was 1962 before this was achieved and Mr. Joe Burke elected as the first President. A formal group portrait, taken by young and enthusiastic "Polar Bear" member, one Ian Alexander, records this day. However, it was 1967 before the Society had official permission to display their trophy in the Club Trophy showcase. The Polar Bears play from October until March, rain or shine, and there is an equivalent Ladies' Society, The Penguins, who do the same, except they play only nine holes. The year 2003 will see the 42nd Polar Bear President in office and, all being well, some of the original members still on the course. The trophy, by the way is modelled on the Fox's Glacier Mint bear. In 1960 the annual subscription for the Society was £1, which would have bought four pints of Guinness and four packets of cigarettes. The sub. of £10 in 2003 would buy two pints and one pack of cigarettes. Incidentally, a box of four balls, individually wrapped, would have set you back one guinea (£1.05) in 1960.

The Juvenile Association was formed in 1960 under the direction of Clifford Stanley, Convenor of the Match Committee. Various officials were appointed with the aim of formalising the interest the Club has taken in its younger players since the very first years. This interest continues to the present day, and the list of those members who have lent a hand to manage, coach, encourage and generally ferry about the younger players is long indeed. The Club owes all these members a debt of gratitude for the time and effort that all of them have put in over the years. Their reward is in seeing the number of young people enjoying the course, and their success is measured by the list of young Bangor members who have gone on to great things in golf.

Among other notable events in 1961 was the decision of Council to allow Ladies to use the Lounge Bar **every** evening.

1961 also marked the start of the Archdeacon Quin Cup. George Quin, then Rector of Bangor Parish Church, used to play golf with Jack Pollin and Billy Feherty, his Churchwarden. Rev. Quin asked Billy Feherty to organise a competition for Bangor Parishioners, Jack Pollin presented a cup and the first competition was played in May 1961. The competition became popular and was soon opened to all persuasions, becoming known as the Ecumenical Trophy. It was played at first on a Thursday, when the Club would be bright with bunting and flags. There was always a great atmosphere in the Club that day, which continued into the evening prize giving and dinner. The entrance fee in the early days was 2/6d (12.5p) which included ei-



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ther a golfer's fry or salad. Always a popular member, George Quin, later Bishop Quin, was made an Honorary Member in 1970 in recognition of his ecumenical services to the wider community. After the Bishop's death, his son Max continued his father's association with the cup by sponsoring the main prize, and incidentally flying in from Bermuda to be at the Club on the day. But the importance of the day diminished and in 1990, the Quin Cup became just one of the normal Saturday competitions.

Up to this time (1961), various small committees had run the Club but now Council decided to simplify and amalgamate these into two - House and Golf, with an Executive or Management Committee composed of the Captain and other Officers of the Club. In more recent times the convenors of "House" and "Golf" have joined what is now know as the Finance and Management Committee, and thus the arrangement has stood the test of time.



Christy O'Connor.

Bangor welcomed the Irish Professional Golf Association Championship to the Club for the first time in August 1962, a ringing endorsement of the course, which would have been rigorously inspected beforehand. Most of the big names in Irish Professional golf were there, among them, Christy O'Connor, Harry Bradshaw, Norman Drew (then playing out of the Ralston Club in Scotland), and Fred Daly. In his

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38/1
Date: 29th AUGUST 1962 Competition: I.R.P.G.A. PROFESSIONAL GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP STANLEY CUP 71

Player: C. O'CONNOR Handicap: P.H. Stroke Received:

| Hole | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | Total | Net Score | Pos. |
|-----------|----|----|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|-----------|------|
| IN | 4 | 18 | 430 | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | | |
| OUT | 8 | 11 | 318 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | | |
| TOTAL | 12 | 29 | 748 | 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 7 | | |
| NET SCORE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 62 | | |

STROKE INDEX: Stroke is taken at those Holes opposite which the index figure is equal to or less than the total handicap allowance.

Five Nine-hole Matches the Index is as under—

1st Nine: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Stroke: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2nd Nine: 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

Stroke: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

IN: 1801 36 31

OUT: 3684 36 31

TOTAL: 6086 72 62

NET SCORE:

WON HALVED LOST PTS.

Marker's Signature: *W. Morris*

Player's Signature: *Christy O'Connor*

Christie O'Connor's Record Score Card, 1962.

message of welcome, the Club Captain, Clifford Stanley said, "The fairways are not too narrow, the rough is not too rough, the boundaries are not too accessible and the greens are as true as we can make them". Christy O'Connor certainly found this to be true. His score of 62 was his own personal best in a Championship, and broke the Professional course record, held at the time by Fred Daly. His card, and other record-breaking cards are on display in the Clubhouse. Incidentally, total prize money for this event amounted to over £600, noted as being the highest amount ever obtained for this Championship. Some was raised by sponsorship, notably from the G.U.I. and the Bangor Club, but some came from an

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exhibition match played at Bangor on the 14th August, 1962, for which the four Professionals who played, among them Norman Drew, gave their services free. You could have bought a matching set of clubs at that time for just over £22, and good balls were 4/- (20p) each. A three course lunch in the clubhouse would set you back 5/6d. (27.5p), and a bottle of Guinness to go with it? . . . 6p. This was the first of four big crowd pulling Tournaments to be played over the Bangor course during the next twelve years; the others being the Jeyes (1965), the Club Orange (1969) and the Benson and Hedges (1974).

However, there is a feature of our course that gives rise to complaint and that it is the 4th hill, or “Thrombosis Hill” as it is sometimes known, and possibly the 10th hill as well. With a view to eliminating play up these hills, the course was partly re-arranged in 1962. Play commenced from the present 10th tee and holes 1 to 5 followed our present back nine to the 14th, then holes 6 to 9 as currently played completed the outward nine. The 10th hole was played from our present 1st tee, and the 11th was the present 2nd, but then the 12th was a pitch of 138 yards uphill and described as “a very tricky shot requiring accurate judgement as to length. The slightly uphill terrain, the small plantation on the right, the bunker and solitary yew tree on the left and the close proximity of serious difficulties over the green, make this a hole of unusual interest”. The tee for this hole was close to the boundary of the course and behind the tee that is sometimes used as winter tee for the present 3rd hole. The green was directly behind the present 4th green and the yew tree referred to is still there today. The 13th was the present 5th hole, and the 14th was a short par 4 of 275 yards played from the current 15th tee to a green in the middle of the fairway at the top of the hill. The 15th was



Captain's Day, 1962.

then a par 3 of 133 yards played from the copse of trees between the present 5th and 15th fairways across the valley to the current 15th green. The 16th was played to our present 3rd green from a tee forward of the current front tee. You then played the 17th back up the hill to an armchair green, since filled in, cut into the hillside about a third of the way up the hill on the present 16th fairway. The tee for the 18th was on a ridge of the present 16th fairway and the hole was played to the present 18th green. It was a par 5 of 522 yards and was described as “the longest hole on the course and dog legged to the left. This is the place to hit the ball far and straight. The plantation of trees round which the fairway curves gently need not concern anyone but the ‘hooker’. The double tiered green is overlooked by the clubhouse”. Those who knew it describe this as a “horrible hole”. The new arrangement was also supposed to give a better balance of nines, but perhaps partly because of that description of the 18th, it didn't last and the course reverted back to its original form after only one year. During this period and mainly at the insistence of Gordon Stephenson, an extensive programme of tree planting round the Club boundary was undertaken, the benefits of which are clear today.

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As a result of the re-arrangement, the course had to be measured yet again, and Standard Scratch, by order of the GUI, applied from the Medal Tees. This had the effect of lowering Standard Scratch to 70.

Club members playing well in 1964 included Alan McDade who reached the final in the Irish Amateur Close Championship, and was selected for the Ulster Interprovincial Team. Also Billy McGimpsey and Hugh Greer who won the "*Belfast Telegraph*" Foursomes played at Royal Belfast, in the first year that this competition was played. Max Hadden, Past Captain of Royal Belfast Golf Club and Chairman of the Ulster Branch GUI, presented the trophy.



Mixed Lounge, 1964.

The first modernisations since the clubhouse was built were now carried out. As well as improved oil fired central heating, work was done on the ventilation and electrical systems. Structural alterations, which were completed during 1964, included an extension to the

north wing in order create space for a Members' Bar opening off the Mixed Lounge and incidentally to provide additional locker space as well as new toilets and showers for the (male) members. Lockers were moved in from outside, and the wooden shed became a trolley store.

Despite continuing worries about "Thatch", the Jeyes Pro-Am was played at Bangor in June 1965, for the first time ever in Ireland. Captain of Bangor was Brian Neill, and in his welcome, he speaks of the event as the biggest tournament ever to come to Ulster. Open to members of the Professional Golfers Association, the Irish PGA, and to amateurs with a handicap of 2 and under, the Tournament was played over 72 holes and three days. Prize money totalled £3,000, and there were players from as far away as the U.S.A. and South Africa. Many famous names played over the Bangor links, Tony Jacklin and Peter Aliss among others. Contemporary photographs show Bangor's course crowded with spectators and with scaffolding towers for film and television cameras at strategic points. Bangor members W.G.C. (Gordon) Tinsley and D.B. (Bryan) Blaikie, ac-



The Jeyes Tournament, 1965.

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quitted themselves with great distinction to become first and second amateurs in the Jeyes.

Also played at Bangor in August of that year (1965) were the Ulster Boys Championship and the *"Belfast Telegraph"* Foursomes.

Billiards and Snooker.

Since 1904 when Miss Connor had presented a table, billiards had played an important role in the social life of the Club, especially during the 1920's and 30's when the achievements of Joe Davis caught the imagination of the public. The importance of the game can be understood when it is realised that when the new clubhouse was opened in 1935, the best room in the whole building – now the restaurant - was allocated to billiards. Unfortunately heavy curtains more often than not shut out the magnificent panoramic views of the course from those first floor windows. This room was so large and the game so popular that a second table was purchased in 1936. Snooker became more popular than billiards during the 1940's and the tables were converted. However, it was not until 1961 that a Snooker Section was officially formed under the auspices of House Committee, with a view to competing in the newly formed Belfast and District Golf Clubs Snooker League. Originally more of a social evening with supper provided by the host club, competition gradually became keener and keener as the popularity of the sport on television increased. At its peak, the league consisted of 16 clubs, each fielding "A", "B", and "C" teams. Bangor entered a team for the first time in 1965 and came very close to winning at the first attempt.



Starters Chalet.

During 1966, presumably as a result of television coverage of American golf, the term "Bogey" that had been used since the very early days of golf in the British Isles, was changed officially to "Par". Bogey now came to mean one stroke over Par. Another sign of emerging modernity was the building of a new Starters Hut, or "Starters Chalet" as the official description has it, beside the first tee. Previous to this, cards had been issued and collected in the old Pro's hut, unchanged since the 1930s, at the far side of the car park, where the Ladies trolley store is now.

Alan McDade, with a score of 69, had the distinction of being the only player in 1966 to return a score of less than the new Standard Scratch of 70. No wonder he regained his place on the Ulster Team the following year.

Chapter Eight - The Post War Years.

Total membership exceeded 1,000 for the first time in 1968. Council had put a ceiling on playing membership in 1967 as the popularity of golf was increasing.

The land for the new ring road was vested in 1968, leaving some 3.5 acres isolated on the far side of the road. Frank Penninck, the noted Golf Course Architect was commissioned to re-design the course, and the firm of Stuttts who had constructed the course in 1934 was retained to carry out the work. At the same time large ar-

reas of the interior of the course were planted with trees and an extensive scheme of drainage work was put in hand. This has been continued over the years, mostly by the grounds staff, and certainly paid dividends in the very wet winter of 2000/2001 when the course was very rarely closed despite being flooded on numerous occasions.

John Boyd (Senior) the Head Greenkeeper retired in 1968 after 48 years service. In a tribute to him Council referred to his "tireless service" and spoke of his high



Belfast and District Cup Team, 1970.

*N.D. Woods, J.G. Neill, C.R. Mullan, W.I.D. Sanderson, N.M. Tims;
B.J.S. Kissock, J.A. McDade, R. Pollock (Captain), R.H. McGimpsey, D.B. Blaikie.*

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sense of duty and unfailing courtesy. John Mooney was appointed in his place, and he too would carry on the tradition of long and faithful service. Ross Boyd, brother of John carried on working on the course until the 1970's, when he too retired. There was still another John Boyd, son of John Boyd Senior, in the service of the Club on the ground staff for quite a few years, and even in the year 2002, he and his brother Claney could still be seen walking on the course at the end of a summer evening.

In 1968 also, members Oscar Madden and Joe Burke won the BBC T.V. Matchplay competition.

By this time the subs had been raised to £13 for a full member and £10 for a Lady Associate. Ernie Jones, Club Professional since the retirement of John Hamill in 1963, was elected Captain of the Irish Professional Golfers Association, the second Bangor Professional to be so honoured.

The post ring road Penninck re-designed course was reopened on the 9th May, 1969. The Captain, Billy Sloan, drove the first ball in traditional manner and the boy who retrieved it received the also traditional £1. An Exhibition Match between Club members Gordon Tinsley, Brian Kissonock, Alan McDade and Club Professional Ernie Jones marked the event. The course was ready in time for the Ulster Professional Championship. Sponsored that year by the firm of Canttell & Cochrane, Club Orange, it was the third big event to be staged on the Bangor course in the 1960's, and although some big names were there, Fred Daly, Norman Drew and Eddie Polland for instance, it was not on the same scale as the "Jeyes" event of 1965. The Mayor of Bangor, Mr R.V.

Campbell opened the proceedings, in the rain, and gave out the prizes. Ernie Jones, Club Professional, made a speech in his capacity of Captain of the IPGA. Contemporary photographs show the course once again crowded with spectators, but no towers for film cameras. Those photos also show a strangely bare course with open country behind the 7th tee.

After a seventeen year gap the Belfast and District Cup came back to Bangor in 1970 when a team captained by Hal McGimpsey beat Royal Belfast in the final. Bangor team member Roy Mullan stood in for Alan McDade who had been taken ill, and had a notable win over Michael Hoey.

Hal McGimpsey, Garth's father, was Club Captain in 1971. No mean striker of the ball himself, he won the "Bangor Bell" that year, playing with Ernie Jones.

Ernie Jones and Bryan Blaikie won the Christie Flag in 1972, and Garth McGimpsey was selected for the Irish Boys Team for the second time.

The AGM report for 1973 puts the year down as being "rather indifferent for Club Teams", but the young Billy Pope won the Ulster Boys' Championship at Royal Belfast. Even if it was an indifferent year for Club Teams, Council put ambitious proposals forward for improvements to the clubhouse. As they said, the building was substantially unchanged since 1935 and no longer met modern standards in many respects. Members initially gave the new proposals, which included squash courts, a cautious welcome, but in the end decided not to proceed.

Chapter Eight - The Post War Years.

At this time the Clandeboy Club were holding very successful open mens' foursomes competitions and it was Bryan Blaikie's idea that our Club could do the same. He approached Des Hillen who said, "Make it mixed and I will sponsor it". Internal sponsorship was still a fairly novel concept in those days, and Council decreed strictly no advertising on the course, however the "Ava Mixed Foursomes" became a reality in 1973 and is still a very popular feature in the club calendar, though since 1989 the Dunlop Building Group has sponsored them. Ernie Jones won the Ulster Professional Championship in 1974 but left the Professional's job at Bangor in mid 1975, only to reappear on the Bangor links to beat Norman Drew by three shots in the Gallaher Gold Bond Pro-Am.

By 1974 new Honours Boards were needed for the Jordan Shield, Oneida Trophy and Stephenson Cup. However, proposals for Squash courts were not proceeded with. A new, state of the art automatic watering system was installed, and the "Big Ball" i.e. the American size, 1.68 ins. diameter, became compulsory in competitions. Playing in the May Monthly Medal, Roy Mullan reduced the Amateur Record for the re-measured course to 69, and Brian Kissock won the North of Ireland Amateur Championship.

The Benson and Hedges Trophy was played at Bangor in June 1974. Among the Irish Professionals to be seen on the links was Norman Drew, then Professional at Malone and Captain that year of the Irish Professional Golfers Association.

Brian Kissock won the North of Ireland Championship for the second time in 1976 and a Bangor team repre-



*Benson & Hedges Pro-Am Tournament, 1974.
N. Drew, Mrs. P. Connelly (Ladies' Captain), J. Duddy,
Gallaher R. McC. Smyth (Captain, 1973).*

senting all handicaps, won the Carlsberg Trophy. Originally a competition for members of Club Councils, but by this time open to all members, the Carlsberg six-a-side Inter-Club Tournament consisted of qualifying rounds and then a draw for matchplay elimination. The final was played at Belvoir and Bangor's team won the trophy and a trip to Copenhagen. I believe a tour of the famous brewery was included.

There was an agreement negotiated with Holywood and Donaghadee Clubs in 1977, for the sharing of and interchange of equipment. This sensible arrangement

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avoided three neighbouring Clubs having to purchase identical and very expensive equipment that is basically only used once or twice per year. Specifically the Club obtained the use of a topsoil shredding machine for the preparation of top dressing for the greens.



Some of the Carlsberg Trophy winning Team, 1976.

Mr. Gattrell of the Sports Turf Research Council was called in 1977 to advise on the elimination of “Thatch” in the greens, which was still a problem. Part of his research involved taking deep core samples from the greens, and among other things he discovered a layer of solid pig manure some inches down that had not decomposed. Legend has it that in distant times one of the members of Council had a pig farm.

That year’s Captain (1977), Billy Feherty, playing with Professional David Jones, won the All Ireland Pro/Captain Foursomes at Milltown. Club members Des Hillen and Alan McDade were also to the fore, having won the Jordan Shield at Bangor, they were entered for the *Daily Mail* Foursomes. They then proceeded to win the All Ireland final played at Royal County Down, and represented Ireland in the National final at Woodhall Spa, England.

Ernie Lemon, who will be remembered with affection by many members, was appointed Bar Manager in 1977 and continued in that position until he retired in 1998. Unfailingly courteous, highly efficient, and scrupulously honest he was a great asset to the Club.

The following year (1978) was the 75th Anniversary of the Club. W.R. (Roddie) James was the Captain and oversaw the production of a 75th Anniversary booklet, now quite scarce. Mary O’Fee, Mayor of



*Daily Mail Foursomes
Des Hillen, Alan McDade.*

Bangor, opened the celebrations with the ceremonial hoisting of the blue and gold club flag. Morris McKee, the oldest surviving Past Captain, then drove a ball off the first tee. Morris had of course also driven the first ball at the opening of the new course in 1935, at the request of Lady Craigavon. Then followed an Anniversary Luncheon attended by many notable Club members, Past Captains, Council members and their wives. Altogether there was a complete week of competitions and various festivities to mark 75 years of a Club which, to quote a contemporary report, “Has made a brilliant contribution to the game in Ulster”. One of the highlights of the celebrations was a Pro Am. in which many of Ireland’s leading Professional golfers took part. Once again Christie O’Connor (Sen.) broke the course record with a score of 66.

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Alan McDade won the Royal Co. Down Scratch Cup in 1979, but as the 1970's drew to a close, Bangor's teams were there or thereabouts but with no success.



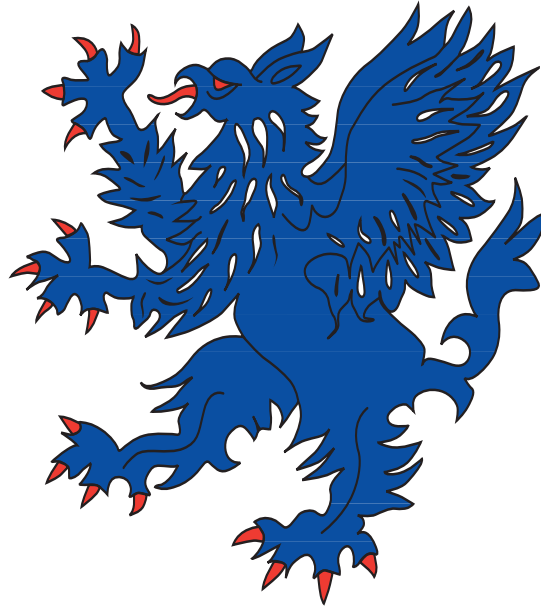
75th Anniversary, 1978.

R. James (Captain), C. O'Connor, B. Blaikie, A. McDade.

These Things Actually Happened.

A golfer was playing his tee shot from the elevated Medal tee at the 16th straight into the wind one very stormy day. He sliced it a little, the wind coming straight from Carrickfergus caught it, and he played his second from the 12th tee.

Chapter Nine



The 20th Century Closes

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In the 1980's the tremendous expansion of the town of Bangor began to have an effect on the course. From a Second World War population of 6,500, the town had grown to become home to nearly 50,000 people. Where once the further boundaries of the course had been in open countryside, now newly built houses nearly surrounded it. One sensitive area was the 12th hole. There were complaints from some of the people who had built

those houses overlooking the course that balls were landing in gardens and there was risk of injury or litigation, or both. Council was forced to consider realigning the hole and sought advice from the Club Professional, David Jones who was now becoming known as a golf course architect, as to the possibility of moving the green away from the course boundary.



Belfast and District Cup Winners, 1980.

*N. Woods, M. McAuley, I. Sanderson, E. Sterrett, B. Kearney, B. Blaikie;
B. Kissock, G. McGimpsey, D. Hillen (Team Captain), A. Hewitt (Captain), A. McDade, S. Irvine, B. Wilson.*

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The Club now had some very fine players and, welded into teams, they started to bring back some silverware. After a gap of ten years, Bangor won the Belfast and District Cup for the fifth time in 1980. Watched by the largest Bangor gallery for years, a 6½ to 1½ victory at home gave Des Hillen's powerful team a decisive nine games to five win over Clondeboy.

Inside the clubhouse, thanks to T.V. programmes like "Pot Black", the game of snooker was now becoming very popular. Interest in the Club had risen to such an extent that a Snooker Section was formed this year (1980) and Bangor could now field three teams, including a Youth Team, in all sections of the league. The Snooker Section play in the Snooker Leagues' own Golf Society outing - the "Green Grass."



All Ireland Senior Cup Winning Team, 1981.

*N. Woods, G. McGimpsey, B. Kissock, A. McDade, E. Sterrett, B. Kearney;
B. Blaikie, D. Hillen (Team Captain), G. Henderson (Captain), B. Wilson.*

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During 1981 Johnny Mooney and his team battled on with the drainage of the course, and completed the construction of the new elevated 16th tee, affectionately known as Kissock's Folly, made necessary by the constant need to lengthen the course. Modern clubs and modern balls had made the 16th green reachable, by some, in two shots from the lower tee.

1981 was some year for golf at Bangor. For the first time in Club history Bangor won the Senior Cup. The team, captained by Des Hillen and with Garth McGimpsey, Bertie Wilson, Brian Kissock, Alan McDade and Nigel Woods playing in the final, beat Douglas Golf Club, Cork to win the All Ireland final at Grange, Dublin. Once again the team was well supported as over one hundred Bangor members made the round trip to watch the nail biting final. The President of the G.U.I. presented the massive silver cup, and at the celebration dinner hosted by Club Captain Geoffrey Henderson, it was announced that Brian Kissock had been selected to represent Ulster in a two-man team to compete in the Zaire Open (Central Africa). Not to be outdone, the Belfast and District Cup Team brought that cup back to Bangor for the second year in succession, and less than 48 hours later, five years after they had been runners up in 1976, the same combination of Ted Guthrie and Ian Alexander beat Malone to win the "*Belfast Telegraph*" Inter-Club Foursomes in horrendous weather on Clandeboy's Dufferin course. Seventeen years had passed since Hugh Greer and Billy McGimpsey won it in 1964. To mark the winning treble for Bangor Golf Club, the Mayor of North Down, Alderman Albert Magee, hosted a reception for team members and presented a plaque to the Club. The Ladies Section were

not left out in this year of achievement - playing in an Irish Ladies' Golfing Union competition in County Cavan, Mrs. Pat Campton brought home a gold All Ireland medal.

Buoyed up by triumph in the Senior Cup, Council entered a three-man team to represent Bangor for the first time in the European Club Cup, to be played at Aloha, near Marbella in Spain, a notably tight and tough course. Garth McGimpsey, Bertie Wilson and Brian Kissock, who had just returned from Zaire, were selected to play for the premier trophy in Club golf in November 1981. Champions of nineteen countries were competing for this cup and Bangor were doing well until the third day when, as the saying has it, "the wheels came off". Still, they managed to finish a creditable fourth overall against top class international opposition. Club Captain Geoffrey Henderson's verdict on the trip was, "no prizes, but lots of fun".

These things don't often come out right, but they did for Bryan Blaikie on Captain's Day that same year. Bryan had been part of the six man Senior Cup squad, but did not play in the five man finals team. However, to make up for that disappointment he won the Captain's Prize in 1981, beating Garth McGimpsey by one point. To cap this fantastic year of achievements for the Club, David Jones won the Irish National Championship and entered the top 60 in the European ratings. Needless to say, Captain Geoffrey Henderson hosted another grand celebration dinner with many distinguished guests, among them former Open Champion Fred Daly, to round off an outstanding year's golf in proper style.

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In 1982, David Jones was having so much success in Tournament Golf that he asked to be released from his contract as Professional. This was granted and Norman Drew came in his place, taking over early in 1983.

Another professional in the news was member Billy Feherty's son David. Irish Professional Champion in 1980 and 1981, David Feherty had honed his game to near concert pitch in America during 1982 and now looked like being in the running for a place on the Ryder Cup Team.

Away from the course, running a major golf club had by now become an important and demanding job, little different to running a successful business in terms of finance. Bearing in mind the continuing programme of improvements in the furnishings, decoration and facilities of the clubhouse and the ever increasing burden of legislation and regulation in the fields of employment, public liability, hygiene, and health and safety, it was becoming clear that a more professional approach to management was needed, and so, in 1982 the first professional General Manager was appointed and a computer system was installed. Initially used in connection with handicapping and competitions, the computer would eventually play a major part in running the business affairs of the Club. It seemed that the old image of the blazer clad, pipe smoking Secretary at the end of the bar had, some would say sadly, gone forever.

Now that the course was almost completely surrounded by newly built houses, intrusions onto the course were becoming a real problem. Two rights of way run across the course - Popes Lane crosses the 6th, 13th

and 15th fairways and a continuation of Williamson's Lane runs from the Greenkeepers' hut, crossing in front of the 5th tee, to the houses bordering the 11th fairway. The Club did try to restrict access to these lanes during the 1960's but were unsuccessful due to public protests, and the Club's boundaries remain completely unenforceable. As if to emphasise this, 300 newly planted trees were vandalised in the spring of 1982. Perhaps because of golf's perceived elitist image, a certain sec-



Snowbound, Williamson's Lane Christmas Card.

tion of the population seem to get pleasure from destroying, not only trees, flags and rakes etc., but also greens and fairways. Even the watering system has not been immune from vandalism.

Despite these troubles, the All Ireland Mixed Foursomes semi finals and finals were played over the course in 1982, the first time that Bangor had hosted an All Ireland event, and nothing but the highest praise was re-

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ceived from all quarters for the high standard of the course, facilities and arrangements. The extensive programme of deep aeration, scarifying, tining and top dressing was starting to have an effect.

Further success in GUI competitions came in 1983 when Bangor's team, captained by Jack Kissock, won the Belfast and District Cup for the third time in four years after a hard fought game with Clandeboye. The Senior Cup team did well too, winning the Ulster section, only to be beaten at a tie hole in the All-Ireland semi-final at Newcastle. With Garth McGimpsey representing the Club at International level and Brian



*European Club Cup-Aloha, 1984.
B. Kissock, G. McGimpsey, B. Wilson, J. Kissock (Team Captain).*

Kissock and Bertie Wilson (who was Bangor's only scratch player under the revised G.U.I. handicapping system in 1983), representing the Club at Provincial level, the AGM report for 1983 states that "With the addition of Alan McDade and Nigel Woods, these five would make a squad capable of winning any trophy in Irish Golf".

Garth McGimpsey represented Great Britain and Ireland in India and Zaire in 1983, and also played on the winning Ireland team in the European Championships in France. After that it is nearly an anti-climax to say that both he and Bertie Wilson played for Down. Surely these were vintage days for golf at Bangor.

1984 was another good year for golf. A team captained by Jack Kissock won the Senior Cup, beating Lahinch at Tramore. The same three-man squad as in 1981, McGimpsey, Kissock and Wilson, were selected from the winning team to represent the Club once again at Aloha in Spain in the European Club Cup. This time they came in second equal, one shot behind West Germany. Garth McGimpsey won the Individual Trophy.



Alan McDade at Tramore, 1984.

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The Nixdorf Pro Am was played at Bangor in 1984, as was the *"Belfast Telegraph"* Foursomes and the Irish Youths Championships, Bertie Wilson being the Junior Ulster team Captain. Alan McDade was elected an Ulster Selector in 1984 and remained in that position along with Bertie Wilson until 1986. They were both re-elected in 1987 and continued to serve together in these posi-

tions until Alan McDade was elevated to Captain of the Ulster Senior Team in 1989. Under his captaincy the Senior Team won the Interprovincial Championship the following year, 1990, and repeated this feat again in 1991. Bryan Blaikie was also elected to the Provincial Council of the Ulster Branch G.U.I. in 1985 giving Bangor three representatives at the G.U.I. for the next six years. Bryan



Hal McGimpsey and son Garth at Royal Dornoch, 1985, with the Amateur Championship Cup.

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became Convenor of Junior Golf in Ulster in 1990 and also an Irish Selector at Junior and Boys levels.

In June 1985 Garth went to Royal Dornoch where he won the Amateur Championship in its centenary year. Garth was only the fourth Irishman ever to win this and his name joined those of fellow countrymen, Jimmy Bruen, Sam McCready and J.B. Carr on the trophy. Also on the trophy is the name of the legendary Bobby Jones, and those of other icons of amateur golf. As a result of this win he was invited to play in the Masters at Augusta the following year, the first Ulsterman ever to be so invited. In July 1985 Garth played in the Open at Royal Sandwich, but did not make the cut. However he did go on to America to make his first appearance in the Walker Cup. To cap a fantastic year Garth represented Great Britain and Ireland against the Rest of the World in the Simon Bolivar Cup at Caracas. In recognition of



Garth McGimpsey & Lilian Behan, 1985.

these magnificent achievements, the G.U.I. honoured Garth with a dinner at Malone Golf Club, when he was presented with an oil painting of himself on the tee at Royal Dornoch. Bangor elected him an Honorary member at the AGM, the following year (1986). Coincidentally with Garth winning the Amateur Championship that year (1985), in a unique double, Lilian Behan of the Curragh Golf Club won the Ladies Amateur Championship. This was the first time ever for both Amateur Championship trophies to be on this side of the Irish Sea, and the two players were brought together for a splendid photograph with John Neill, Bangor Club Captain.

Bangor's teams were also doing well; a team captained by Ted Guthrie won the Ulster Section of the Pierce Purcell Shield, beating Masserene at Shandon Park in 1985. The Bangor team had a bit of assistance on this occasion from a Masserene supporter's dog. With the score at two matches each, the deciding match was coming up to the 17th. Bangor team member Bill Moore's approach shot was a bit too strong, but it hit a dog at the back of the green and bounced back sufficiently to get a "Half". The hole was salvaged and the match was won. Apparently the dog was undamaged. Bangor went on to play in the semi-finals of the All Ireland, but were beaten by Adare Manor at Kilkenny. At least the team got their bronze All Ireland medals. As Brendan Edwards told Ken McKee, "If you give them a good rub they look like gold". Showing that Garth McGimpsey was by no means Bangor's only golfer, Richard Dorman won the "*Daily Express*" National Golf Championship at Malone with a round of 75. He then went on to play with a British Boys' Team in Sotogrande, Spain. Rich-

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ard also won the Bells Junior PGA Championship at Shandon with a round of 74, and finished 7th in the National Finals at Gleneagles.

1985 was the official 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Polar Bears who, together with the Ladies' Society, the Penguins, have been bringing life to the Club on what would otherwise be dull winter Sundays.

Plans were approved for perhaps the biggest reorganisation of the clubhouse since 1935. Having been approved in principle two years earlier, many long hours were spent on the plans by Council and the professional team of architects before they were finally implemented. Perhaps inevitably cost exceeded what was originally envisaged, resulting in a Special General Meeting in November 1985 when members authorised additional expenditure of £50,000.



*Pierce Purcell Shield - Ulster Champions, 1985.
B. Irwin, W. Elliott, M. McMoran, A. Shaw, J. Marshall,
M. Ledlie, T. Millar;
S. Duffin, R. Cromie, B. Moore, J. Neill (Captain), T. Guthrie,
P. Watson, K. McKee.*



Fred Daly with Roy Mullan on Captain's Day, 1986.

During 1986 work was finally put in hand to realign the troublesome twelfth green and the job was given to the well-known local Course Architect Tom McAuley. At the same time as realigning the hole away from the course boundary, he took the opportunity to put in a long sloping green with the possibility of many pin positions, so that it can be a short pitch hole in winter, or a fairly long par three in summer, requiring accuracy. With its green set between twin mounds to the left, a long bunker to the right, and backed by mature woods, the 12th is today one of the most attractive holes on the course.

In 1986 also the opportunity finally arrived to sell the ground that had lain isolated on the far side of the Ring Road since 1969. Up until this time there had been no access by road to this parcel of land and it had been useless for building, but now development had reached near to it and planning permission became possible.

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Work that had commenced in 1985 progressed during the year on the clubhouse alterations, although the clubhouse functioned, as nearly normally as possible in the circumstances, and by the 6th September, 1986 it was possible to hold an Official Opening of the clubhouse extension. A Juvenile Competition with supper and a disco on Friday and a Foursomes Competition on the Saturday marked the occasion. Food was served all day in the function room and a dance followed which was the highlight of the year. There was Big Band music and it was nearly impossible to get on the floor.

Altogether £313,000 had been spent on the clubhouse. The biggest change was to create a magnificent 30's style art-deco dining room and cocktail bar upstairs in what had been the billiard room. The snooker players themselves moved the snooker tables downstairs incidentally, to a newly-created snooker room. Building outward enlarged the main function room, and this created not only a sunny seating recess downstairs, but also a beautiful balcony upstairs, leading off the dining room. The Men's locker room was extended, as was the Men's bar, and the Ladies' Rooms were refurbished. In addition to all this, the main entrance was re-modelled, creating an atrium style foyer, and new Admin. Offices and a Committee Room were added. The kitchens also were not forgotten and much-needed stores and a catering office were added. An additional £30,000 was spent on furnishings, carpets and equipment, and the result was a superb clubhouse.

Perhaps not unconnected with this, membership rose in 1987 to a total of 975, and full membership had to be frozen because of the numbers wishing to get a competition starting time on Saturdays.

Johnny Mooney, the indomitable Head Greenkeeper returned to work after a hip operation and drove about the course in his Lada. That in itself was a tribute to the efforts of his team on the drainage of the course. In recognition of those efforts, he was made Course Manager and a Head Greenkeeper appointed under him.

Individual performances continued to delight the members in 1987. Garth McGimpsey played on the Irish Team that won the Triple Crown, and Brian Kissock won all four of his matches in the Interprovincial Championships.

The land on the far side of the Ring Road was at last sold, bringing in a very respectable £211,999, although the cash was not in fact received until July 1988. Despite the possibility of some funds coming in from the sale of the land, subs for 1988 were raised at the 1987 A.G.M. to £230 for Full Members and £142 for Lady Associates, an increase of 15% on the last year and of around 38% over the previous three years.

Bangor won the Ulster Section of the Senior Cup in style beating Castlerock at Malone in August 1988. Headlines in a local paper mention the "Veteran" pair of Alan McDade and Brian Kissock as having a "Birdie Blitz," but the team headed by Garth McGimpsey were defeated in the semi-finals of the All Ireland at Little Island, Cork the following month. Another Bangor team was having some success in The Vauxhall Team Classic. They finished a creditable third in the All-Ireland finals at Warrenpoint. Second were Tramore, winners in 1987, but in first place were Warrenpoint Golf Club on their home turf.

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A different kind of tribute flowed from the eloquent pen of Charlie Burrowes in the 1988 AGM report. Eddie Bolster, Secretary/Manager since 1984 and a fixture of the Club for far longer, had retired. No mean artist with words, Charlie was nevertheless sincere when he described Eddie as "Quite simply a gentleman".

Three years after the main clubhouse improvements, the turn of the mixed lounge came for refurbishment, and the firm of Richmond left it more or less as we see it

today. The Ladies Committee had taken a very active interest in the decoration of the clubhouse and in recognition of what had been achieved, they received the thanks of Council in writing.

1989 was another good year for golf. A Bangor team captained by Lloyd Morgan won the Ulster section of the Barton Shield, and the Jimmy Bruen Foursomes Team under Team Captain Roy Mullan won the All Ireland final at Woodbrook, defeating Waterford by 3



*Ulster Youth's Open Championship, 1988.
Gary McAllister receiving the trophy from Ian Bamford.*

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matches to 2 in a memorable final, notable for sportsmanship on both sides. This was the first time that a handicap squad from Bangor Golf Club had been successful in an All Ireland final. The previous day Bangor had a notable win in the semi-finals against Westport. That evening about fifty Bangor supporters and team members dined in the Woodbrook Clubhouse, and later on the Woodbrook Club Captain hosted a social evening at which the Bangor squad showed that it was not only

on the field of golf that they could hold their own. Songs, stories and recitations helped the losing team to “drown their sorrows” late into the night, thus sowing the seeds of an association between Bangor and Westport that was formalised into a twinning arrangement as part of the GUI’s Centenary Initiative in 1991. Not to be outdone on the field of golf, the Ladies’ Senior Cup team reached the finals of the Ulster section.



Jimmy Bruen All Ireland Champions, 1989.

*H. Armstrong, D. Cull, B. Skelton, J. Whittle, P. Davidson, T. Fergie, D. Cooke, W. Thompson, K. Duncan;
J. Paisley, P. Feherty, M. Boyd, J. Kissock (Captain), R. Mullan (Team Captain), N. Porter, G. Yarr.*

Not in picture: N. Lavelle.

Chapter Nine - The 20th Century Closes.

Garth McGimpsey was a member of the 1989 Great Britain and Ireland team that won the Walker Cup at Peach Tree, Atlanta. This was the first time that the cup had been taken away from the Americans on their own soil, and only the third time since 1922 that the cup had been wrested from their grasp. Garth won one of his two foursomes matches and halved the other, but was narrowly beaten in the singles. In addition to this, Garth achieved his 100th Cap for Ireland.

Gary McAllister represented Ulster in the Junior Interprovincial Team and made a magnificent contribution towards their success in winning the Championship.

Ronnie and Catherine Craythorne completed their first year as Club Caterers. These were the years of Bangor Golf Club's unparalleled popularity as an eating-place. The Club House was packed daily for lunch and bar snacks and you needed to book well in advance for the restaurant.

The Annual Report for 1990 warns of pressure on the course due to the increasing number of active players. No longer could members roll up to the first tee at any time and expect to tee off immediately.

Council had commissioned a report on the long-term viability of the present course, bearing in mind intrusions, vandalism and damage to adjacent properties. The odd ball sliced or hooked outside the Club boundaries now had a chance of hitting a conservatory, or a double-glazed window, not to mention a child in a garden. The report was to look into the possibility of selling off

a part, or indeed all, of the course, and acquiring land elsewhere. Prepared by Donald Steel, the eminent golf course architect, it focussed attention on the Club's boundaries and suggested some improvements in layout, but came to no dramatic conclusions. As had happened in the 1960's, it was thought too radical to move the entire course.

Member Peter Barry lowered the amateur course record to 66.



David Feherty (with father Billy), Ireland Team Captain, Winners of the Dunhill Cup at St. Andrews, 1990.

Plans had been drawn up for an extension to the Mens' Bar and a new combined Professional's shop and Starters hut at the first tee. Building of these would start in 1991, but in the meantime, in November 1990, the wooden trolley shed that had done such sterling serv-

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ice since 1948 but had now become an eyesore, was finally demolished.

Garth McGimpsey played in the Walker Cup for the third time in 1991, and David Feherty played in the Ryder Cup. This coincidence probably made Bangor Golf Club unique in world club golf terms. In recognition of David's golfing achievements he was made an Honorary Member in October the same year.

Standard timesheets were introduced for the first time because of demand for tee-off slots on Saturdays. This introduced a custom, fondly remembered by many, of queuing up in the Men's locker room. Hot, cramped and uncomfortable, at least it fostered a bit of solidarity among the members who agreed that there must be a better way. There was - future queues took place in the comfort of the function room in front of the large screen T.V. Even later, a ballot for times was introduced, making queuing, hopefully, a thing of the past.

The course was once again re-measured because some work had been done on the medal tees with a view to making the course longer. One notable construction was a raised tee built for the 6th hole. Set into the trees on the far side of the 14th fairway and with sides formed of concrete blocks, it was known by some as "The Garage". In play it was seen to be dangerous and was used only once in competition. Never scenic, in subsequent years it became an eyesore and was finally removed altogether.

Due to the untiring efforts of a number of people who enthusiastically ran the Junior Section, four Juniors attained single figure handicaps and became eligi-

ble to play in the Mens' Competitions. From the very first year of existence of the Club there has always been interest in the younger players. Over the years many people, too many to name here, have taken on the job of fostering the talent of the future. The Club owes these people an enormous debt for their encouragement and coaching and shepherding of young players to matches. Their reward is to see so many young people using the links, and then going on to success in competitive golf. Bangor produced a Youth Team in 1996 that finished runners-up in the Ulster Section of the Irish Clubs Youth Championship, Michael Jones and Johnny McMorran having the second best scores in the Ulster Youth sides.

The Rules and Byelaws of the Club were revised for only the sixth time since 1904, and approved at a Special General Meeting in October 1991. There is no obvious connection, but the playing of the Vice Captain's Tankard that year caused some slight controversy. The competition was played over thirty-six holes, and several players who had done rather well in the first round found their handicaps had been cut for the second round.

Although much money had been spent, very successfully, on the extension and modernisation of the clubhouse, this is not to say that there were not some "teething troubles" and the function room on rainy days boasted a colourful array of plastic buckets. The new Pro's shop at the first tee was, however, voted a resounding success, as was the new "Back bar" extension. Both were designed to harmonise with the existing building.

The 1992 Vauxhall Team Classic Team, after a fine run, reached the finals at Chepstow. In 1992 also the

pairing of John Whittle and Ted Guthrie, having qualified at Bangor, went on to win the Ulster final of the Famous Grouse Shotgun Foursomes, played at Lisburn. Bangor members Brian Hood and Geoff Collins had also qualified the previous year, and came second in the Grand Final. Now, Whittle and Guthrie, playing in the Vauxhall at Chepstow, had to make a dash for the airport to get up to Edinburgh to take part in the Famous Grouse Grand Final along with three other Irish regional finalists, at the Home of Golf, St. Andrews, Scotland. As part of their trip they stayed in a hotel overlooking the famous 17th Road hole, and had a tour of the Royal and Ancient Clubhouse and Museum of Golf. After a gala dinner it was an early start the following morning. Standing rather nervously on their first tee and waiting for the shotgun start, the pair of them had leisure to contemplate the famous St. Andrews Old Course pot bunkers and massive greens. John Whittle says, "The atmosphere at St. Andrews was really awe inspiring. As the "Dunhill" was to be played at the end of that week the grandstands were already erected and the course was in superb condition. The knowledge of the caddies is most impressive and they can instruct you how to place a shot so as to miss the worst bunkers." Be that as it may, our team did find one of those bunkers and the "Famous Grouse" trophy was not destined to come back to Bangor. However a smaller replica did, to remind them of what was possibly the experience of a lifetime.

Alan Mc Dade completed his third and final year as Captain of the Ulster Senior Team and narrowly failed to make a hat trick of Interprovincial match wins.

A note in the AGM report says that the Winter League ran with "Teutonic efficiency". Well, it always does, and



Ted Guthrie and John Whittle at St. Andrews representing Northern Ireland in the Famous Grouse Competition, 1992.

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the Winter League Dinner with the witty and irrepressible Jack McCloskey as Master of Ceremonies has always been one of the best nights in the Men's social calendar. The Winter League was started in 1984 and originally sponsored by Bass Ireland, whose trophy is still played for. Latterly sponsorship has been shared with Sammy Mellon, the Car Dealers. The Mellons are always represented at the top table and two of the latest model cars grace the front entrance.

A series of hot, dry summers led in 1992 to a search for a possible source of water on the course and a hydrological survey was undertaken, but no geological feature was found that would justify the expense of drilling. There is an old domestic well that was used by Williamson's farm, near the present green keeper's sheds, and another near the lane across the fifth fairway, but they would not produce enough water for our needs.

Social Events were a big success during 1992. The House Convenor reported that he had never seen a bigger crowd in the Clubhouse than on New Year's Eve. Lady members took a big part in decorating the clubhouse for social events during the nineties. The team of Maureen Ross, June Richards and Sandra Ablett created some memorable settings for events like the Halloween Dances.

Bryan Blaikie captained the Irish Youths Team in 1990, 1991 and 1992. In 1991 his team gained a creditable second place in the European Championship in Helsinki.

After many years of service and of pride and interest in the course, Johnny Mooney retired in 1993. Coin-

centally, the Club's long association with the Sports Turf Research Institute was terminated as despite several major programmes of work on the greens, Council finally decided that their advice seemed not to be getting results. Another Greens Consultant was appointed who "brought a new spirit of pragmatism to course management", to quote from the 1993 Annual Report. Concern about the Club's greens had been evident since 1931 when the Greens Research Committee of the GUI was first consulted. Overseeing this work was newly appointed Course Manager, Graham Wylie. Newly appointed also was Roy Skillen who joined Norman Drew as Assistant Professional in 1993. His bright and cheerful disposition soon made him popular, especially with the younger players.

Since the late 1960's of course due to "The Troubles", the clubhouse doors had been kept locked for security. Now "Swipe cards" were introduced for entry into the clubhouse, and lost keys became a thing of the past. These cards were also to be used in the computer for entry into competitions, and eventually as debit cards for the purchase of food and drink.

The Ladies had the only golf team success in 1993, winning the Smurfit All Ireland Junior Girls Competition. This was only the third time in 19 years that it had been won by an Ulster team. There was, however, another good year socially in the clubhouse, with a series of professional entertainments as well as the usual functions, all organised by the House Committee.

In 1994, to comply with Health and Safety regulations, the old green keepers' shed at the top of the fourth

hill, vintage 1935, was demolished to make way for a new and splendid construction. In order to show members what their money had bought, it was officially opened in the spring of 1995, with refreshments served to members during their Saturday round. This was a very popular proceeding. As golfers came off the 15th green they were directed into the new shed where the Greens' Staff were assembled. All the machinery was laid out for inspection, an impromptu bar had been set up and there were small eats. A relaxed air was noticeable on the 16th tee and there were at least a couple of air shots. The general feeling was that it should be done more often, as indeed it has been since. Many members are really interested in what the Greens' Staff are up to, and how they achieve it.

Due to a successful appeal by various clubs against the manner in which VAT (Value Added Tax) was levied, Bangor Golf Club became due for a refund from the Taxman. It was the intention of Council to retain this windfall for the benefit of the Club, and subscriptions had accordingly for some time been increased only in line with inflation, then running at about 4.5% per year. There was a Special General Meeting on Tuesday 13th December 1994, to explain the financial position of the Club and to outline Council's proposals for the use of the money. The motion before the meeting being, "to consider, and if thought fit, that Council be authorised to retain the refund of VAT; such monies to be used for the benefit of members". Honorary Treasurer Raymond Kane gave an excellent presentation of the financial position of the Club to a packed meeting with the aid of an overhead projector. There was a fair amount of feeling among members that this was their money and

should be returned to them individually. However the presentation must have impressed the members because the voting on the motion by a show of hands was 74 in favour and 68 against. However, the Captain was not happy with the accuracy of the result and ordered a "Lobby" vote. Everyone was to leave the room and to re-enter through different doors, the "Ayes" and "Noes" to be counted as they came in by scrutineers appointed for the purpose. This produced a count of 75 in favour and 67 against. Still not satisfied the Captain ordered a secret ballot, which was hastily improvised while the members took refreshment next door. On a secret ballot the result was 62 in favour and 70 against, the motion therefore being lost. There must be a moral there somewhere. It required a further EGM in September 1995 to persuade the members to let Council use the windfall to reduce indebtedness and to finance further projected capital expenditure.

During 1995 the course continued to improve as Graham Wylie built on Johnny Mooney's foundation and attracted praise from the Northern Ireland Green Keepers Association. The greens especially, they noted, had "a putting surface the like of which has not been seen for many years". The opinion of members was that the overall presentation made the course a joy to play.

Raymond Bell and Michael Ross won the "*Belfast Telegraph*" Foursomes for Bangor in August 1995. Playing at Kirkistown on a typical County Down summer day of strong winds and grey skies, Bell and 18 year-old Ross always looked like winners, but it was Michael's devastating putting that really carried the day. To quote a contemporary report, he made putting look

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as easy as “tossing soap into a bathtub”. This was Raymond Bell’s second major prize that week, and Michael Ross had won the Captain’s Prize at Bangor in June that year, but was too young to qualify for the prize. No wonder his handicap fell from 9 to 5.7.



*Belfast Telegraph Foursomes, 1995.
H. McLeese (Team Captain), C. Burrowes (Captain);
R. Bell, M. Ross*

Clearly seeing the way ahead, the Secretary/Manager of Kirkistown, David Ryan left to come to Bangor. His first meeting in our Club incidentally was the S.G.M. of September 1995, a fairly spirited affair dealing with VAT, expenditure and the financial position of the Club, it provided a lively introduction to the Club.

For the second year running Garth McGimpsey was individually unbeaten in the Interprovincials and Home Internationals, and was selected by Ulster Branch G.U.I as Team Captain of the Ulster Youth Teams.

Having left the European Tour in favour of the American Tour, and with some success, David Feherty now commenced the commentating on golf for U.S. television at which he is so successful. In 1996 he was to take a “Sabbatical” from Tour golf to concentrate on commentary work and this subsequently became his main occupation.

1996 was notable at Bangor for the inauguration of the “Open Tourism Golf Challenge”. More usually known as “Tourism Week”, this took place in the month of August and was the result of co-operation between Bangor Golf Club, North Down Borough Council and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. Specifically designed to attract and welcome “golfing tourists”, with their wives and families to North Down, this was the biggest ever promotion for a local Club in North Down. Sponsorship was obtained from a wide variety of sources and entries poured in. For the relatively modest entry fee for non-members of £50 for men and £30 for ladies to cover the whole week, including entry to the evening cabaret, there was a very imaginative and action packed week of golf events, including events for both men and lady players in any combination. Prizes were offered to the value of £4,000, the sun shone, for most of the time anyway, the course and the clubhouse pulsed with life, there were social events every evening and the large marquee on the putting green gave the whole place a festive atmosphere. The magazine *“Irish Golf International”* said in October 1996, “The Open Tour-

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Clubhouse Marquee during tourism week, 1996.

ism Golf Challenge organised by Bangor Golf Club has proved an outstanding success. Golfers from all over Ireland and further afield have had the opportunity to test their skills on a golf course which was in immaculate condition". The whole event reflected great credit on the organising committee, Tournament Director John Gavin, and all connected with the presentation both of the course and clubhouse.



Tourism Week, 1996.

David Peel entered a team for the "Mail on Sunday" Foursomes, which had not been done before and they had some success in the Northern Ireland section.

At various times a good few members have had holes in one at one or other of Bangor's four par threes, but in November 1997, Honorary Secretary John Gavin holed out in one at the par **four** third - 300 yards off the Green markers. All right, maybe there was a following wind, but still...



John Gavin.

The "Social Supplement" was introduced in June 1998. Described as "a gentle lever" to get people to come into the clubhouse and support the caterers and bar. This system had been tried with success in other clubs, notably Royal Belfast. In simple terms, members were required to lodge £50 into Club funds, which then registered as a credit on their swipe cards and could be spent at will. Money unspent by the following June became the property of the Club. After some initial reaction the system became well accepted. The card is a handy way to pay for a drink and there is a certain amount of discount.

On the morning of 11th June 1998 snow covered the course for two hours, but later the course re-opened for play. Every trace was gone. On enquiry the Meteorological Office denied that snow had fallen. Officially it was not snow; it was "Soft hail". The snow kept off fortunately while Bangor hosted the semi-finals and finals of the Irish Mixed Foursomes and our Junior Team won glory for the Club, bringing home the Norman Drew Trophy.

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*Ford Club Golfers Home Internationals, 1998.
The San Roque Club Spain.*



*1999: San Roque Club, Spain.
K. Duncan (Captain), G. Galbraith, D. Graham.*

Honorary Secretary John Gavin was in the news again in 1998, qualifying for a place in the eight-man team representing Northern Ireland and led by non-playing Team Captain David Jones in the Ford sponsored Club Golfers' Home Internationals Final at the beautiful San Roque Golf Club in Spain. There was a record breaking entry that year with over 1000 clubs from Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland competing, and only 32 players can qualify out of the 150,000 or so who enter. With executive style travel all the way this was definitely an experience of how the other half lives. Also off to San Roque in October of the following year was Club Captain Ken Duncan with Bangor members Gary Galbraith and David Graham who had qualified for the Grand Final of the "Smirnoff Shoot Out." The sponsors, Gilbeys, invite the Club Captain to play with the qualifiers as a three-man team and two days of play in the sun produced an aggregate score that got third place for Bangor.

Back to the weather - there was torrential rain on Monday 2nd November, 1998 and the 13th fairway flooded due to a blocked drain which carries water from the course under the new houses to the left of the fairway. The water became so deep that the grounds staff had to get a boat to try and unblock the drain. As far as can be ascertained, that is the only time a boat has appeared on Bangor Golf Course.

Charlie Burrowes, Captain of Bangor's J.B. Carr Veterans Team writes: "During the 1990's competition golf at Bangor suffered a bit of a slump, with no major trophies being won by any team except the "Belfast Telegraph" Foursomes. At the same time golf emphases were also changing and those players of over 50 years of age, then those over 55, and finally those over the age

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of 60 began to find and to create many opportunities of playing inter-club golf in a friendly, but serious way. Veterans Leagues were formed all over Ulster and Bangor joined the Belfast and North Down League in 1992. A distinct buzz could be heard in clubhouses throughout the Province as these Seniors, locally denigrated as "Wrinklies" came to the fore. In 1996, Woodenbridge Golf Club, Co Wicklow, together with Irish Amateur Champion J.B. Carr, inaugurated a national trophy for over-60's, and by 1999, 130 clubs were taking part. It was a "Staged " competition from County to Provincial and finally to National level; for five pairs playing "Greensomes" format. Bangor did not join until 1997, but then promptly won the Co. Down section in three

successive years. At the third attempt in 1999, the team beat Port Salon to become Ulster Champions, but were defeated in the National Finals at Woodenbridge. The popularity and standard of Veterans' Golf are both due to several causes. The participants are fitter and probably healthier than in years gone by, they are aided by technological progress in golfing equipment and, once organised are capable of playing more than merely casual golf. They also play more competitions at more and more different courses. In a word, Veterans' Golf has seriously caught on and could be said to be the golfing phenomenon of the 1990's and is likely only to get better as the age profile of Club membership increases and people increasingly retire younger. This is not to



Course Under Water, 1998: 13th Fairway.

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J.B. Carr Ulster Champions, 1999.

*R. James, W. Malcolm, N. Lavelle, R. Donald, T. Guthrie, J. Gavin, B. Blaikie;
B. Skelton, H. Dornan, C. Burrowes (Team Captain), K. Duncan (Captain), B. Morgan, I. Sanderson.*

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say that Juvenile golf is not important; today's Juniors, are after all, tomorrow's Veterans. Bangor has in 1998 at last won the Norman Drew Ulster Youth Trophy, and with the dedicated care and fostering that they receive at Bangor our Juniors are beginning to prosper." Perhaps that is as good a word as any on which to close the Twentieth Century.

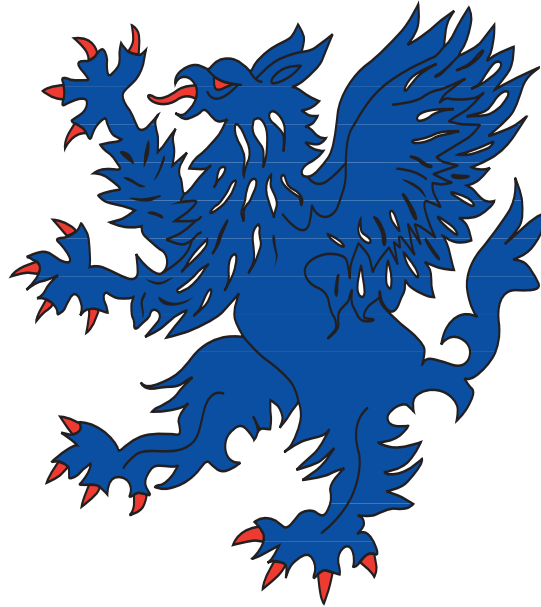


*Norman Drew Trophy Winners, 1998.
R. Majury, M. Sterrett, S. Addy, A. Caulfield, J. McLaughlin,
R. McTernan, G. Yarr, C. Hamilton, A. Posner.*

These things actually happened.

A solitary early morning player lost a ball in the trees to the right of the second fairway. After searching for a while he came out of the trees to find that his electric trolley was not where he had left it. Seeing no sign of it anywhere, he made his way back to the Pro's shop and furiously reported that someone had stolen his trolley. Later that day his trolley was discovered intact in the trees to the left of the 10th fairway. Not properly switched off, it had made its own leisurely way right across the course.

Chapter Ten



The 21st Century

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The new century, and Millennium, started in good style with a particularly splendid new weathercock on the clubhouse roof in the shape of the Club's Griffon emblem. This replaced the model that had fascinated generations of golfers, as no matter how often it was fixed, it invariably took up a tilt in one direction or another. Also a Griffon, this was itself a replacement of the origi-

nal 1935 version, variously described as representing "Old Father Time" or "Father Neptune". We are assured that the latest one will not tilt.

The clubhouse was the setting in February 2000 for the launch of the "Kingdom of Down" golf tournament. Open to all golfers, male and female who are members



Ulster Cup Winners, 2000.

*E. Skinner, J. Donegan, D. McMeekin, R. Brown, G. Edge, G. Parker, M. Currie,
M. Davis, S. Brown (Team Captain), L. Morgan (Captain), P. Davidson, E. Sterrett.*

of an affiliated club and sponsored by Local Councils in County Down, it is designed to attract golfers from abroad. Promoted widely throughout the country and across the water, it is played over Bangor and two other local courses during the month of May. In 2002, the top 150 competitors had the opportunity to play Royal County Down on the final day.

David Jones re-designed the 17th during the winter of 1999 – 2000, and it was re-opened in April 2000 by Lloyd Morgan, Club Captain, driving the first ball in traditional style. Ian Harrison, Course Manager in 2002, states that photos of the course taken in the nineteen sixties show some signs of James Braid's work still intact. This is shown in the flowing lines of the bunkers with their high backs. Today, the 6th hole particularly, which used to be called "Braid's Original" on the scorecard, shows some evidence of Braid's work still in the "swales", or hollows between the green and the bunkers on the right. Everything Braid did was characterised by flowing lines, or "movement", but over the years a lot of his work on the Bangor course has been lost or overlaid by changing ideas. Ian Harrison is an admirer of Braid and his ideal would be to restore our course to something that Braid would recognise. Ian regards the work of David Jones on the 17th as pure Braid.

Club Captain, Lloyd Morgan had another duty in early June 2000 when the "Quin Cup" was played as a major Club competition for the last time, forty years after it's inauguration. All three of Bishop Quin's children were present in the clubhouse on this occasion, Max and Charles also played the course with the Club Captain.

On the evening of Wednesday 16th August 2000 at about seven thirty in the evening there was a severe thunderstorm. It got so dark that lights were put on in the clubhouse. Lightning flashes lit the sky and the rain was so torrential that visibility from the clubhouse windows was limited to just beyond the 18th green. In a matter of minutes the 1st and 18th fairways flooded from tee to green so that they resembled rivers, and the putting greens were completely submerged. What grass could be seen was white with hail, and water cascaded down from the 18th green like a waterfall. Some players were still coming in from playing in Tourism Week Competitions. For a while they bravely struggled on, but eventually marked their balls and came in. The course was declared closed, but twenty minutes after the rain ceased, the sun came out and play resumed as if nothing had happened. A tribute surely to all those years of work on course drainage.

In the field of Team Golf the undoubted highlight of the year was the winning of the Ulster Cup for the first time since 1949 by Sam Brown's strong team who, after a seven – nil home win, beat Moyola Park at Moyola in September 2000. Described as an inspirational Captain, Sam Brown had picked a young, ten strong squad, six of whom had never played competitive GUI golf until then. Right through the tournament the team displayed a very high standard, with strength and depth throughout the whole team. Interestingly, only two players out of the squad were available to play in the Ulster Cup the following year, the others had their handicaps cut to single figures.

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Silverware for Bangor Golf Club had been scarce indeed for the last ten or so years and second only to this historic win would have to be the feat of the All Ireland Mixed Foursomes Team, captained by John Gavin and Carole Eadie. Having survived a tense tie-hole semi-final victory at Kirkistown which finished in the dark, they were beaten in the Ulster semi-final at Knock by a very strong Ballyclare team. Talking of “silverware”, Charlie Burrowes team having tied for first place in the Veterans League with Knock in 2000, won it outright in 2001. This is a local competition played between 14 clubs in North Down and Belfast. Besides having fun, they also raise money for various charities and in 2002 were able to donate £5,678. The Ladies Section won the Summer League, also in 2001, for the first time since 1969.

Following the tragic death of member Dr. Frank Harrington in January 2001, his family wished to commemorate his lifelong love of golf with a fitting memorial. As his work was in Brussels, Dr Harrington was also a member of a Belgian golf club, Golf Chateau La Tournette, situated just outside Brussels and officials of that Club visited Bangor in June that year with a view to setting up a twinning arrangement. Not only was this satisfactorily arranged but the Harrington family also presented the Dr. Frank Harrington International Memorial Trophy to be played for between teams representing the two clubs. The inaugural match was played in August and produced not only a win for Bangor but also a wonderful day enjoyed by hundreds that will be long remembered in the Club. Especially memorable were the magnificent cut glass trophies presented by the Harrington family, and Christy O'Connor Junior's arrival on the practice fairway in a helicopter.



Christy O'Connor Junior arrives in style.

That times do change is well illustrated in this year; - an Inaugural Harrington Trophy match was played, and for the first time since 1956 there was no Bangor Golf Week. Sadly, Clandeboyne Golf Club felt they could no longer participate and this popular event disappeared from the calendar, at least in its original form.

With the death this year (2001) of Hal McGimpsey, Past Captain and Trustee, Bangor lost a stalwart of the Club. He was most notable perhaps for the careful nurturing of his son Garth's progress in golf from the very beginning. A notable golfer himself, who played off 2 at his peak, and who represented the Club on all the senior teams, he was also unfailingly courteous to lesser golfers. In his memory Council introduced a “Golfer of the Year” award to commence in April 2002, to be known as the “Hal McGimpsey Memorial Trophy.” Based on points accumulated throughout the season in Club Competitions it is seen as a fitting tribute to one who will always be remembered as one of the “Giants” of the

Club. Garth incidentally once again lowered the course record to an impressive 64 in 2001.

On a lighter note, a “Jumble Sale” was held in the clubhouse during March 2001, for the benefit of the Children of Chernobyl, victims of the 1986 Russian atomic power station explosion. There have of course been many such charity events held in our clubhouse, Bar Manager Tracey Parker helped to raise £5,000 for an MRI scanner in 2002, but this was something special. Members of the public as well as club members were invited to bring in articles for sale, then to come in on Saturday and buy them back. Those who were accustomed at that time to take their Saturday lunch after golf in a nearly empty clubhouse were dazed by the numbers seated round about them. Staff were convincingly dressed as Russian peasants, indeed the Secretary/Manager, no doubt heavily influenced by the show “Fiddler on the Roof,” appeared dressed as a Rabbi. There was a group making music in one corner and all in all the day was one of animation and bustle and a great success. The response had been phenomenal. For a while the clubhouse resembled Aladdin’s cave, and on the day of the sale over £4,000 was raised for the cause.

Probably the highlight of the golfing year 2001 was the astonishing performance of Bangor’s Irish Mixed Foursomes team in the qualifying round (Ulster Section) at Clandeboye. Bangor didn’t just top their section, they sank the opposition completely with a record four card total of 255. All five cards returned were below the par for the course and Bangor’s discarded “worst” score was 66 net! Ulster Branch Secretary Brendan Edwards was moved to send a message to Team Captains John Gavin and Carole Eadie. It reads simply, “Some scoring”.

During 2001 various refurbishments of the Clubhouse took place. The Main Lounge had a makeover, the first since 1988, which left it feeling lighter and airier and displayed the Club’s historic team photographs to better advantage. Then it was the turn of the Men’s Locker Room when the lockers dating from before 1964, possibly even from 1935 were replaced with splendid new models. Several historic artefacts were uncovered when the old lockers were removed. Club members themselves did much of this work incidentally.

Talking of silverware again, Bangor Golf Club’s indoor bowlers won the North Down Indoor Bowling League Trophy in the winter season of 2001- 2002, beating the team that had won the trophy no less than nineteen times since it was first played for in 1967.

Just before Christmas 2001, the Club was electrified to hear that “The Royal and Ancient” had appointed Garth McGimpsey as Captain of the Great Britain and Ireland Walker Cup team, to be played in Bangor’s Centenary year, and also for the St. Andrews Trophy, to be played in Lausanne, Switzerland in August 2002.

The winter of 2001 – 2002 could be classified as the year of the humps, or as “Golf” would prefer to call them, “The Mounds”. As part of Council’s on-going programme of course improvements that had commenced in 1999, the second phase focussed on the first, the ninth and the eighteenth fairways. Council had long had it in mind to “tighten” the course. Their minds were perhaps focussed when in 1999 so many “Youths” playing in the National Competition were able to drive the first green. David Jones came up with the idea of grassy mounds sited just where a good drive would land, thus

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stopping a ball rolling on to the green and forcing the golfer to play a pitch shot. The opportunity was taken at the same time to eliminate some bunkers made redundant by modern equipment, and to introduce new ones. Head Greenkeeper Iain Harrison and his team put the work in hand and driving hired machinery dug 7,000 tonnes of soil out from a corner near the 13th green and transported it to the required sites. Pity that all this took place during the wettest months of January and February for over eighty years. Some damage to the course was inevitable and many heads were shaken. However after 9,000 square metres of turf were laid and had time to settle, things started to look better and by summer 2002 the mounds were starting to look as if they had always been there.

Secretary / Manager David Ryan started to produce a Club newsletter in 2002. Newsworthy items were mixed with Club gossip and in its pages we learnt not only about the "humps", but also about the rather secretive "Re-location Committee" which came to the conclusion once again that Bangor Golf Club was staying put for the foreseeable future. Always short of contributions from members it folded after five issues, sadly for many who eagerly read it.

As 2002 draws to a close, the course is now 6410 yards long, Standard Scratch is 71, and the fifth hole enjoys

the distinction of being one of the toughest holes in Ulster, at least according to the "*Sun*" newspaper. The genius of James Braid has left more than a legacy of greens with sloping edges to punish the erring shot. By a triumph of layout design he was able to fit into a relatively small hundred acre site a course that after nearly seventy years is still interesting enough to bring the best of golfers back again and again. We can still enjoy the views of Belfast Lough and Scrabo that he must have seen from the top of the hill near Williamson's farm, and though the course boundaries are restricted, yet it never feels crowded and those very restrictions mean that we should be able to enjoy Braid's course for many more years yet.

Bangor Golf Club's House and Golf Committees are now directing their efforts towards liaison with the Centenary Committee in order to organise the social and golf events with which we will celebrate our Club's first hundred years. A full programme of events has been planned for 2003, including tree planting, reciprocal visits with other Clubs celebrating their Centenaries in this year, a week of competitions for members, a Gala Ball, and the provision of Mourne granite markers at every tee. The compilers of this book now finish their task with some regret and wish Bangor Golf Club the same good fortune in the next hundred years as it has enjoyed in the last hundred.



The March of Time.

These Things Actually Happened.

A golfer had just played his second shot uphill on the 4th fairway. As he followed through, a ball hit the face of his club and rebounded back up the hill. A few moments later another golfer came through the trees on the right and asked if anyone had seen his ball. The reply was “it is back at the top of the hill”.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years



All Ireland Mixed Foursomes; Ulster Section Runners Up, 2000.

Jean Mc Killen (Ladies' Captain), Marie Fleming, Linda Bradshaw, Ann Reynolds, Kathy Cunningham, Lloyd Morgan (Captain), Gary McAllister, Jackie McMurty, Pamela Henry, Colin Mc Evoy, David Cunningham, Carol Eadie (Team Captain), David Graham, Raymond Bell, Michael Jones, Mark McMurray, John Gavin (Team Captain).

Appendix One - List of Club Officers 1903 to 2002.

| Year | Captain | Hon. Secretary | Hon. Treasurer | Year | Captain | Hon. Secretary | Hon. Treasurer |
|------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1903 | McConnell T E | Doran F C | Robinson W | 1953 | Lorimer J | McMillan D K | Smyth F R |
| 1904 | Doran F C | Sheppard J W | Moore Dr R L | 1954 | Scott G L | McMillan D K | Orr W J D |
| 1905 | Hollywood J | McClure J D | Miller J | 1955 | Smyth F R | McMillan D K | Orr W J D |
| 1906 | Christie J K | McClure J D | Miller J | 1956 | McCartney G | McMillan D K | Orr W J D |
| 1907 | Burns T R | McClure J D | Miller J | 1957 | Sanderson W A V | McMillan D K | Smyth F R |
| 1908 | Hutchinson D C | Harris J G | Miller J | 1958 | Neill Jack | McMillan D K | Smyth F R |
| 1909 | Hunter W F | Harris J G | Miller J | 1959 | Stephenson G J (Jun) | McCartney G | Smyth F R |
| 1910 | McMillan T W | Miller J | Hamilton T D | 1960 | Stevenson J A | McCartney G | Smyth F R |
| 1911 | Stanley J | Pollock W Jun | Logan R | 1961 | Smyth R C | McCartney G | Smyth F R |
| 1912 | Robinson W | MacDonagh Wm | Logan R | 1962 | Stanley J C | McCartney G | Smyth F R |
| 1913 | McMillan W J | Napier N J F | MacDowell J E | 1963 | McMillan D K | McCartney G | Smyth F R |
| 1914 | Kingan W S | Napier N J F | MacDowell J E | 1964 | Fetherston S B | McCartney G | McNeill E T |
| 1915 | McQuitty J | Hennessey T | Hennessey T | 1965 | Neill J B | McCartney G | McNeill E T |
| 1916 | Ingram J | Hennessey T | Hennessey T | 1966 | Ellison J P | Hamblly G E | Tinsley W G C |
| 1917 | Sheppard J W | Dunn T R | Warburton H | 1967 | McNeill E T | Smyth R McC | Tinsley W G C |
| 1918 | Sheppard J W | Dunn T R | Warburton H | 1968 | McGimpsey W S | Smyth R McC | Tinsley W G C |
| 1919 | Dunn T R | Shaw D | Warburton H | 1969 | Sloan W S | Smyth R McC | Tinsley W G C |
| 1920 | McCullough Wm | Milliken W G C | Douglas J | 1970 | Pollock R F | Chittick W H | Tinsley W G C |
| 1921 | Fetherstone S | Milliken W G C | Douglas J | 1971 | McGimpsey R H | Chittick W H | Dodds W S |
| 1922 | Hennessey T | Milliken W G C | Skilken H M | 1972 | Duignan Dr D | Chittick W H | Dodds W S |
| 1923 | Hollywood D | Milliken W G C | Skilken H M | 1973 | Smyth R McC | Chittick W H | Dodds W S |
| 1924 | Hollywood D | Milliken W G C | Skilken H M | 1974 | Lord H | Chittick W H | Dodds W S |
| 1925 | Scott A | Milliken W G C | Skilken H M | 1975 | Bell G Denby | Mullen C R | Lord H |
| 1926 | Wallace R | Milliken W G C | Skilken H M | 1976 | Hamilton S J | Mullen C R | Lord H |
| 1927 | Bell P S | Wilson D T | Skilken H M | 1977 | Feherty W T | Mullen C R | Lord H |
| 1928 | Malcolm W | Wilson D T | Skilken H M | 1978 | James W R | Mullen C R | Lord H |
| 1929 | Boyd F J | Wilson D T | Skilken H M | 1979 | Cameron S E | Mullen C R | Morgan M L M |
| 1930 | Jamison O | McKee J M | Magee W M | 1980 | Hewitt A H | Mullen C R | Morgan M L M |
| 1931 | Shepherd H F | McKee J M | Magee W M | 1981 | Henderson G T | Reid W D F | Morgan M L M |
| 1932 | Goodall G S | McKee J M | Magee W M | 1982 | Oriscoli J C | Reid W D F | Campton J D |
| 1933 | Acheson G V | McKee J M | Magee W M | 1983 | Dodds W S | Reid W D F | Campton J D |
| 1934 | Stephenson G J Sen | McKee J M | Magee W M | 1984 | Tate Dr D | Reid W D F | Ledlie M |
| 1935 | McKee J M | Acheson G V | Magee W M | 1985 | Neill J G | Reid W D F | Ledlie M |
| 1936 | Neill J F | Acheson G V | Magee W M | 1986 | Mullen C R | Reid W D F | Ledlie M |
| 1937 | Brice F J (JP) | Acheson G V | Magee W M | 1987 | Donald R S | Burrowes C I | Marshall J D |
| 1938 | Mullen W R | Acheson G V | Brice F J (JP) | 1988 | Hillen D P | Burrowes C I | Marshall J D |
| 1939 | Gray R G | Acheson G V | Smyth F R | 1989 | Kissock J C | Burrowes C I | Marshall J D |
| 1940 | Claney S M | Acheson G V | Smyth F R | 1990 | Ledlie M | Burrowes C I | Marshall J D |
| 1941 | Moore R M | Acheson G V | Smyth F R | 1991 | Thompson W A | Simpson T M A | Campton J D |
| 1942 | Young R | Acheson G V | Smyth F R | 1992 | Kissock B J S | Simpson T M A | Campton J D |
| 1943 | McKibbin A J | Acheson G V | Smyth F R | 1993 | Kane R F | Simpson T M A | Campton J D |
| 1944 | McKibbin A J | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 1994 | McKilken T B | Simpson T M A | Campton J D |
| 1945 | Magee W M | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 1995 | Burrowes C I | Simpson T M A | Drury D H |
| 1946 | Ellison W R | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 1996 | Blaikie D B | Simpson T M A | Kane R F |
| 1947 | Tynnell H | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 1997 | Alexander I A | Simpson T M A | Gillespie B R |
| 1948 | Orr W J D | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 1998 | Marshall J D | Gavin J W | Gillespie B R |
| 1949 | Aiken W | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 1999 | Duncan K E | Gavin J W | Edwards D |
| 1950 | McMillan W H | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 2000 | Morgan M L M | Whittle J M | Simpson T M A |
| 1951 | Neill S D | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 2001 | Davidson P B | Whittle J M | Simpson T M A |
| 1952 | O'Neill J B | Gray R G | Smyth F R | 2002 | Fox G | Morgan B A | Simpson T M A |

| Presidents | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1903 J K McMeekan | 1906 G Herbert Brown | 1909 (None) |
| 1904 J K McMeekan | 1907 G Herbert Brown | 1910 G Herbert Brown |
| 1905 G Herbert Brown | 1908 G Herbert Brown | |

(No President was elected in 1999 nor after 1999)

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Appendix Two - Honorary Members.

- 1903: Miss Connor – Outstanding services to Club
- 1903: W.J. McGeagh – Well known and popular Secretary of Royal Co. Down.
- 1903: Miss Gregg – ILGU Officer.
- 1903: Mrs. H.S. Taylor – ILGU Officer.
- 1911: Joseph Millar – Services to the Club: Hon. Treas./Hon Sec. 1905/1910.
- 1912: A.H. Craig – Irish Close Champion.
- 1912: H.E. Mellor and G.A. Moore - Representatives of the Belfast and County Down Railway (BCDR). Mutually beneficial agreement involving issue of “Golf Vouchers” for cheap travel and Greenfees.
- 1914: John McAvoy – No reason given.
- 1916: Canon Peacocke – Hard working member of Council for many years. Created Bishop of Derry and Raphoe that year.
- 1917: Harold Reade – Three times winner of Irish Close Championship.
- 1921: Lady Clanmorris - Landlord of most of the Club’s ground.
- 1921: W.D. Fennel – Hon. Treas. GUI. - together with, James Henderson – Hon. Sec. Ulster Branch GUI, during their terms of Office.
- 1923: Rt. Hon. Justice Brown – No reason given.
- 1925: Joseph Hurst – For the great work he had done for the Club, both as Conncil Member from 1903 until 1920 and later as full time Secretary.
- 1937: Miss Janie Smith. Exceptional service as Ladies Branch Hon. Secretary for 18 years.
- 1947: Robert Young (Snr.) – Past Captain, 33 years on Council, for special services to Club.
- 1948: Fred Daly – First Irishman to win British Open Championship (1947).

Appendix Two.

- 1950: John Hamill – Popular and successful Professional at Bangor for 25 years. He went on to serve for a further 13 years.
- 1952: David Hollywood – Past Captain in two successive years, 1923 and 1924. Trustee and member of Council for many years.
- 1953: C. V. (Vic) Acheson – Member for over forty years, Past Captain, Hon Sec. for nine years and also Secretary (Manager).
- 1954: Norman Vico Drew – Outstanding services to Amateur Golf and to the Club. Walker Cup player in 1953.
- 1959: R.G. Gray – Past Captain, member of Council for 27 years including 9 years as Hon. Sec., and also Secretary (Manager).
- 1961: J.B. Carr: - Outstanding services to Irish and British golf.
- 1970: Bishop Quin – Outstanding services in the field of Community Relations. Sponsored Quin Cup.
- 1985: Gordon J. Stephenson – Past Captain, Trustee, and member of Council for seventeen years. Particular interest in course improvement.
- 1985: Mrs. Claire O'Neill. Past Ladies Captain and Ladies President, Ladies Council for many years.
- 1986: Garth McGimpsey – Dedication to the game of golf and outstanding services to British and Irish Amateur golf. Amateur Champion in 1985. Always a fine ambassador for Bangor Golf Club.
- 1991: David Feherty – Outstanding performances in World Class Professional golf.
- 1993: Mrs Pat Devon. - Services to ILGU and Bangor as player and administrator. Past Ladies Captain, Ladies President and Council Member for many years.
- 1997: Ernie Jones - Services to Bangor Golf Club and Irish Professional Golfers Association.

Appendix Three.

My Golf Club Years; 1947 – 1959, by Beryl Leeke.

It was still winter in April 1947. My parents, James and Sally Crothers had taken the job of Steward and Stewardess of Bangor Golf Club and there was snow at the sides of the roads as we made our way from Banbridge. Home was a two bedroomed flat on the upper floor, next to the water tank. I went to sleep with the sound of the cistern filling and a light flashing at regular intervals across the bedroom ceiling. The light of course was the lighthouse on the Copeland Island, and it was to be what I missed most when we eventually left the Club in 1959.

Apart from my parents, the other staff were Ross Boyd, who worked as Barman in the evenings and Greenkeeper under his brother John during the day. John Boyd was Head Greenkeeper and his two sons Claney and John often caddied. Mrs Olive McConkey ran the bar. After her husband died, she remarried, becoming Mrs Pollock. She and Ross were still there when we left.

Almost as soon as we arrived the first of the other live-in staff arrived. These were the housemaid waitresses, mostly from Monaghan and far away places like Cookstown. There was a bevy of beauties; Pauline, Mary, Violet, Connie and May. May Donaghy was the most professional of all the waitresses, her white collars and cuffs were always well starched and she addressed my mother as "Madam". They lodged in the room to the right of the old Billiard Room, which eventually became mine when I got too old to share with my younger

brother. After a while day staff replaced the live-ins. Sadie Stewart and Cissie Dixon stayed for the remainder of our time at the Club. They became my confidantes as I perfected the art of make-up.

The kitchen was the nerve centre of domestic and private life. What private life? Meals were communal and the world could be watched from the kitchen window. All the comings and goings of the members could be seen. Especially watched for were the Ewings who would bring my brother and I a bar of chocolate at the weekends, all through the years of rationing. At the kitchen table I agonised for hours over my homework. Many times when I was really stuck George Hambly would be prevailed upon to come to my assistance.

The highlights of my year were the dances. New Year's Eve was formal. The Gents' lounge and dining room were cleared of furniture and the carpets taken up. Dance powder was applied to the floor and chairs lined the walls. Fires were lit in the grates at either end of the long room and Norman Brooks set up his quartet at the Gents' lounge end. We children were allowed to stay up late to witness the glittering occasion. It was absolutely enthralling to see the array of evening dresses and smell the "Blue Grass" and other well-loved fragrances worn by the ladies. My absolute favourite lady was Doreen Hepburn. I always waited for her to arrive, floating in like Cinderella in a cloud of tulle.

Supper was served in the Billiard room, laid out on the billiard tables. Sausage rolls and sandwiches, followed by fruit salad and Caproni's ice cream. The cakes were supplied by Patterson's bakery on Southwell Road.

Appendix Three.

My brother and I would be up early the next morning to look for half-crowns down the sides of the armchairs and we scored time after time.

One of my most vivid memories of living at Bangor Golf Club was that distinctive smell of freshly cut grass. Coming back from a trip into Bangor you could actually smell it at the Tonic cinema. In winter the sleighing on the fairway next to Beverly Hills was legend and when the "Bomb Crater" beside the thorn tree filled with water, the seagulls swam on it like a mini park pond. I remember the Juveniles appearing at the kitchen door looking for Coca-Cola or Club Orange. I would have taken the bar keys and fetched it for them if my parents were busy. Some of those same Juveniles went on to fame and fortune on golf courses all over the world. Those I recall best were, Alan McDade, the Hambly brothers, Gordon Tinsley, John Neill, Brendan Woods, Shaun Fyffe, Robert Douglas, the Devenny brothers, Terry Magowan, Bryan Blaikie, and Norman Drew. Vic Acheson retired as Secretary and Gerry Gray took over,

and the Club Professional was John Hamill. Another indelible memory is the mixture of smells of varnish and mouldering grass in the Professional's hut.

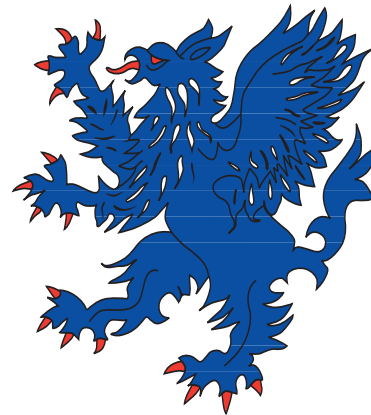
When Christmas comes around each year, my thoughts return to those lovely Christmases spent at Bangor Golf Club. We children were allowed, as a treat, to decorate the Tree, which stood in the hall at the turn of the stairs. You could get at the high parts by going up the stairs. Another special Christmas memory is looking out of the landing window to the Car Park where the Salvation Army played Carols under the gas lamp at the far end.

As a child and young person growing up with Bangor Golf Club as my home, I felt more privileged than deprived. After all, we had the largest front garden in Bangor. But in later years when I used to reminisce fondly about "The Golf Club Years", my mother did not share my sentiments. For her it was very hard work and long hours.

Ladies' Branch



1903



2003

*The History of the Ladies' Branch
from the Foundation of the Club in 1903*

Foreword and Acknowledgements

This account of the history of the Ladies' Section of Bangor Golf Club has been based on perusal of the Minute Books, with particular reference to the early years, up to about 1970, when the Club evolved into the form we are familiar with today. The post-2nd World War history involving the status of "Evening Players", etc is as I and other long-time members recall it. My thanks are due to the many members who patiently listened to my queries and supplied the information and clarifications required.

Above all, my thanks are due to Geoffrey Duncan and Maxwell Ledlie without whose computer and word processing skills this document could not have been produced in its present form.

The Club Historian, Jeremy Stanley, was constantly encouraging and provided the much-valued historical data.

Roy Mullan has worked hard and long to produce a photographic record of the century, and to re-produce photographs of the Lady Captains from some very poor original prints. The Ladies' Section owes him a considerable debt of gratitude.

Joan Stinson undertook the arduous task of going through one hundred years of Minutes and recording all Officers and Council members during that time (see Appendix 2).

Pat McCrystal and Carole Drury have been engaged in cataloguing the Ladies' photographs over the century, while Jean McKillen has worked hard to collect and file minutes of AGM's, Annual Reports, newspaper cuttings and any other historical data that has come to hand.

Now that a start has been made, it is to be hoped that the Ladies' Section will continue to keep records such as these in the future.

Paula Campbell

Bangor Golf Club – Ladies' Section

The inaugural meeting of Bangor Golf Club was held on 21st February, 1903 and within a matter of months the Ladies' Section was established - there follows a history of its development over the ensuing years.

4th May 1903. Formation of Ladies' Section

The Ladies' section was formed at a meeting in Bangor Town Hall. Despite atrocious weather there was a large attendance. Miss Connor presided and was elected Lady President, Miss MaGuire was elected Lady Captain and Miss MacDonagh Honorary Secretary. Also elected were ten Council members.

1st June 1903. First Council Meeting.

Business started briskly with decisions on quorum, rules, Club Colours (scarlet with pale navy blue piping), joining the Golfing Union and monthly medal competitions. Competitions were arranged for the winter season, the first Connor Cup being competed for in November and the Lady Captain's Prize, played on March 9, marking the end of the season.

20th June 1903. Opening Day, Ladies' Branch

The Ladies' Branch was officially opened on 20th June 1903. There was a spacious marquee erected at the entrance to the grounds where visitors and players were entertained to tea. The Club was formally opened by Miss Connor, who drove the first ball, and Mr John McMeekan J.P. (the Club President) on behalf of the Ladies presented her with a silver mounted walking stick in the shape of a golf club. An Open Stroke was then played.



Ladies' Council, 1904.

Neither Miss May Hezlet nor Miss Renee Adair of Portrush (among the leading lady golfers in the world at that time) were able to attend, but a scratch player from Hoylake, Miss Crowther, competed and won the best gross with a 96. It was a most successful day played in fine weather and received extensive Press coverage.

Miss Connor, O.B.E., J.P.

Miss Emily Connor died on 6th Jan 1932, and her obituary deals fully with her extraordinary philanthropic life and service to the people of Bangor. For example her wide interests and generous patronage included health (Connor Wing, Bangor Hospital and District Nurses in Bangor), education (Connor House School and Bangor Technical College), sport (swimming, bowling and football at Connor Park), politics (Ulster

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Women's Unionist Association) and religion (Bangor Parish Church).

The "*Spectator*" lithograph which appeared at this time shows Miss Connor in the prime of life but is of poor quality. Recently Mr Billy Gaw has supplied a photograph of Miss Connor presenting a Bowling Cup to his father, Mr Harry Gaw (at one time Editor of the "*Spectator*") which probably dates around 1930. Unfortunately, no other photographs of her have been found.



*Miss Connor
Ladies' President.*

Already interested in golf through her membership of Royal Belfast Golf Club, it was therefore natural that a person of her influence should play an important role in the formation of the new Bangor Golf Club in 1903. She chaired the formation meeting of the Ladies' Branch on 4th May, 1903 and was elected at that meeting as Lady President, a position she was to hold with few breaks until 1930.

On 19th December, 1903 she laid the foundation stone of the new clubhouse and, in May 1904, formally opened the premises, presenting a new billiard table (in use to this day). Among gifts of appreciation made to her on that day was a valuable ornate jewelled gold key which is presently held in the safe-keeping of the Club.

Upon the opening of the Club, Miss Connor immediately presented two magnificent Cups, one to the men's, and one to the Ladies' Section to be competed

for by match play. Later that year, Mr F. R. Lepper presented a silver sugar bowl to the Ladies' Section on condition that it be a second prize to Miss Connor's Cup, which explains the competition played to this day for the Connor Cup and Lepper Bowl.

The prizes are interesting for the Connor Cup Competition - £2.00 for winner and £1.00 for runner up - a very large sum in those days and more than sufficient to cover entrance fee and subscription for a year in 1903.

During her time in the Club Miss Connor presented many prizes, including ones for putting and for juveniles, but her main prize was competed for on a day of her choice and was known as Miss Connor's Prize which was the forerunner of what has become President's Day.

In her Will she left £300 to the Ladies' Section, which, after Death Duties, etc, became £250. This was invested in War Stock @ 5%. The interest earned funded a competition called "The Connor Prizes and Teas". A day was stipulated in the Competition List for the initial 9-hole match play stages and included afternoon tea for the players. This competition ran for many years until inflation, etc rendered it defunct.

Miss Connor was, of course, made an Honorary member of the Club.

Miss Emily MaGuire - First Lady Captain

Miss Emily MaGuire's address was "The Rectory, Bangor" and it is reasonable to assume that she was the daughter of the Rector, Dean MaGuire of Bangor Parish Church. In later years, after her father had died, the

address in the Minute Book is given as Ardmara House, Clifton Road (the beautiful old residence recently demolished amid much controversy).

Emily was a remarkable and most courageous woman as is borne out by this story recounted by her niece, Mrs Nancy Bleakly (nee Hadow). During the First World War as a Red Cross Nurse, Emily had many experiences overseas. At the ill-fated battle of the Dardanelles, in 1915, she found herself stranded behind enemy lines. Rather than be captured by the Turks, she escaped with a companion by walking over the mountains for 100 miles before finally reaching Salonika and safety in Greece. After the war she went to live in England and asked her relatives in Bangor to destroy all her letters and papers left there, thinking them to be of no interest. Her family now deeply regret the loss of what would have been a valuable record of that period.



Miss MaGuire
Ladies' Captain,
1903

Miss C MacDonagh - First Ladies' Secretary

Miss C. MacDonagh had the onerous task and responsible job of being the first Honorary Secretary of the Ladies' Section of the new Club, and apparently acquitted herself well in the many arrangements (including Catering) that were made for the opening day. However, as in all Clubs, there were others who felt that they just had to complain as an amusing letter from Miss MacDonagh to the Ladies' Council affirms. She writes in November 1903, to "Miss Connor and Ladies" complaining that a certain Mrs _____ for some time had been interfering with her in her Secretarial duties.

We quote, " Her interference takes the form of waiting for me in the Pavilion, and the moment I arrive - without allowing any time for the interchange of civilities or courtesies - speaking in a **loud menacing unladylike** manner, making charges, and **imperiously** giving orders. Her charges I have invariably shown to be **unfounded**, but still she appears to take pleasure in inventing new ones. These attacks are generally made in presence of the Professional and his assistant who have come to look upon these dramatic performances in the light of an amusement.

If I have done wrong or neglected any duty which I do not admit I am quite willing to answer any charges before the Ladies of this Council, but I deny Mrs _____ right as an individual member to call me to any account or to exercise any control over me. I had in an informal way on a recent occasion, expressed my intention to resign my position as Secy of the Club in consequence of these attacks, but I have been asked by so many friends not to treat these "pin pricks" so seriously, but to let the Council deal with them, that I have determined to reconsider my intention, so far as to say that if the Ladies' Council takes steps to protect me as their Secy (sic) from insult or interference from this member I shall continue to act for the remainder of the year. I conclude my statement by saying that, with this exception, I have experienced the kindest, most considerate, helpful and sympathetic treatment from every member of the Golf Club - Ladies and Gentlemen, from the Presidents to the smallest caddie on the Green."

Little wonder that Miss MacDonagh resigned after only one year in office!

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

First Handicaps - 1903

Maximum was 40, the Handicap Committee to carry out reductions at their discretion. By 1906, the handicap limit had been reduced to 28 by the ILGU. In 1926 it was raised to 36 and remained at that level until the recent increase to 45.

Early Competitions and Handicapping Procedures

Golf in 1903 was considered to be a winter game. The reason for this was that many parkland courses could not afford mowers, so that when the grass grew long in the summer play was not possible. Bangor soon acquired a mower and sheep to graze the land, and gradually summer golf became the norm.

One of the most interesting and earliest photographs in the Ladies' collection dates probably from c. 1912, and shows a group of ladies outside the old clubhouse uniformly dressed in long heavy skirts, blouses with stiff collars and either bow or long ties, and a variety of shapes of hats, some small and suitable for golf, others large and adorned with flowers! Golf must have been uncomfortable indeed with skirts trailing in the wet ground; the large hats were secured by tying scarves around them and under the chin. Regarding long skirts blowing in the wind and thus impeding the swing, Kath Stewart-Moore in her *"Royal Portrush Ladies' History"* tells us that a circle of elastic, known as a "Miss Higgins", was worn round the waist and pulled down over the skirt to secure it when the wind blew. Corsets, of course,



Group of Lady Golfers, 1912.

were “de rigueur” and remained so for many years – the writer remembers playing in the 1950’s on a very hot day with a well known elderly lady member who retired to one of the shelters then on the course and re-emerged waving her corsets.

The first competitions for 1903 were held over the winter months from November to March, and although the winter was very wet they were well supported. In 1905, the Lady Captain’s Prize for the 1904/5 season was held in February. Over the next few years, although a fixture card was arranged for the summer months, competitions were also held in the winter, with the Lady Captain’s Prize in February or March, marking the end of the season. In 1907 the Lady Captain’s Prize for the previous year was held in May. By 1913, however, a summer fixture list had evolved similar to ours today, with the Lady President’s Day in June and Lady Captain’s Day in July. Although a Monthly Stroke was always held plus two other stroke competitions for the ILGU Silver Medal, all other competitions were match play, including the Lady President’s, Lady Captain’s and the Captain of the Club’s prizes, in addition to the Connor Cup & Lepper Bowl and the McConnell Cup. Also there were many special prizes, frequently presented by the Men, which were also competed for by match play. The format was usually 9-hole matches and 18-hole finals or qualification by stroke play for a play off by match play. Apropos the latter, a “*Northern Whig*” article in 1904 commends this type of competition and states “*This form of competition has come very much into favour lately, and it has the advantage of testing the players in both phases of the game; a good medal player is not necessarily a good match player, and vice versa; but expert golfers*

should be able to distinguish themselves in either class and possess those qualities which are universally useful. Medal play is very much a matter of temperament and infinite patience is required by those who devote themselves to this branch of the game.”

There were initially only two Cup competitions - the Connor Cup & Lepper Bowl (played for in one competition) and the McConnell Cup. The latter Cup was competed for twice a year, in May and September, only becoming an annual fixture from 1929.

Handicaps were assessed by a Handicapping Committee of the Ladies’ Council. Both stroke and match play were taken into account. The winner of a match play competition had her handicap immediately reduced by two. In later years if a player won a match play competition and had not reduced her handicap before competing in a further match play competition, she had to start two down in the second match play.

The early fixture lists, apart from match plays and strokes, included competitions such as 9-hole and 18-hole eclectics; in addition, there was putting, approaching and putting, Club foursomes (partners drawn), all being match play. Mixed Foursomes were also held every year. In 1914 the first Flag competition was held and was called “Go-as-far-as-you-can”.

In 1919, the Lady President’s Prize was, unusually, a 27-hole Eclectic competition. One wonders how long it took to play 27 holes twice. By 1920 this competition had reverted to match play.

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The first mention of a Hidden-holes competition was 1920, and in 1923 a Bogey Points (Stableford today). The latter was not repeated until 1931 after which it became a popular competition.

By 1936, Summer Ringers were being held. Bring-a-Prize and Win-a-Prize was first held in 1939.

Mrs Paul, a member of long standing, presented a prize for the best gross score over the year in 1928, and continued to do so for some years, while Mrs Iris Stanley presented a prize for the three best gross scores in 1942.

There is the first mention of Captain v Secretary team match in 1937, and also Ladies v Gentlemen Team matches.

By 1939 the Lady Captain's and Lady President's Prizes had become one-day events, being either Bogey Points, Stroke or Flag, and have remained so ever since, with the exception of 1951, which was a qualifying stroke for match play event.

The first Veteran's competition was held in 1947, comprising a 9-hole stroke followed by tea.

Early Membership

Due to the huge interest in golf at the turn of the century it seemed that all the women of Bangor wished to play. Numbers were to be limited to 150 in the Ladies' Section. Ballots were held for membership, scrutineers were appointed and there were even cases of "black-beaning" (similar to black-balling), a practice that gave rise to much dispute and was soon abandoned. By the A.G.M. in March 1904, the membership count

was 125. Due, no doubt, to the extreme frustrations of the game, there were as many resignations as applications being dealt with by the Council at their meetings and around 1911 membership numbers in the Club generally were low. However they recovered by 1916, and in 1920, with 216 members (including juveniles) of the Ladies' Section, membership was closed until resignations etc. enabled it to re-open.

Clubhouse Accommodation

The room in the clubhouse allocated to the women was called the Ladies' Parlour and was furnished by the Ladies' Section at their own expense. It was here that Council meetings were held. It became clear, however, at a very early stage that the clubhouse itself was not large enough to accommodate both men and ladies and very soon there was talk of building a new clubhouse and locker accommodation for the women. Fund raising for this purpose went on for some years in the Ladies' Section. Around 1911 membership was badly down with Club finances poor, and any monies the women collected were now being lent to the Club. Meantime, a house at the entrance to the Course (94, Hamilton Road) had been rented in 1908 and was used as a Ladies' clubhouse and locker room, and to provide accommodation for the Steward, although in 1912 a Ladies' locker room was built adjoining their sitting room in the main clubhouse.

In 1909, at the AGM of the Club, a proposal, happily defeated, was made to exclude ladies from even entering the clubhouse. However many of the men members were generous to the Ladies' Section and presented competition prizes throughout the years.

Membership rocketed up again and by 1920 the new Ladies' clubhouse had been acquired. It was a wooden structure normally referred to as "The Hut" and was furnished by the ladies at their own expense. It was situated to the side and slightly behind the main clubhouse. These buildings were on the site now occupied by the Tonic Fold apartments. Purchased from the Belfast & County Down Railway Co. in 1920 and referred to by a long time member as an ex-Army hut, this was a pre-fabricated building built up on a brick base and had a wooden veranda and steps. The cost was £800. There was a main Ladies' clubroom which was large enough to accommodate the Club Annual General Meetings (until 1934). Juveniles also used the room, dances were held, and of course it was in constant use by card enthusiasts as the popularity of Bridge started to sweep the country. There was also a kitchen, locker room and toilet facilities. Only one photograph showing the front steps and veranda survives.

After the move to the present clubhouse in the mid-thirties it was dismantled, leaving only the main clubhouse which became a school (Aubrey House) and was then acquired by Bangor Grammar School for its Preparatory Department – Connor House - before finally being demolished in 1970.

The new clubhouse in Broadway was opened in 1935. The Ladies' Room today occupies a pleasant position beside the first tee. In the early 1990s, the adjoining locker room was renovated to provide a suitable changing room and the old Professional's shop converted to locker rooms.

1914-18 War

The Bangor women were by this time keen participants in the Inter-Club League matches, and the first mention of the war in the minutes is the cancellation by the ILGU of all fixtures for the year 1914. An Open Stroke was held in September 1914 (with lunch and tea) in aid of the Belgian Relief Fund and a collecting box was placed in the Ladies' room for sick and wounded soldiers at the Front. In 1915-16 the full competition list was cancelled save for the Lady Captain's, President's, Men's Captain's and a few other prizes, with Monthly Strokes remaining. Money collected went to Relief or War Funds. No challenge Cups were played.

By 1916 at least 10 members were serving in Red Cross military hospitals including two ex-Captains, Miss E. MaGuire (1903) and Miss E. K. Campbell (1906). In



Outside the Ladies Clubhouse, 1920.

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all, twelve members served in military hospitals during the war, and were granted honorary membership during this time. An Open Foursomes was held in 1916 with proceeds going to the "ILGU Bed for Serbian refugees". The cheque for £14.12.0 was the largest of any Club in Ireland. By 1917 all monies from competitions were going to the Red Cross which had a large deficit and of which Miss Connor was the Hon. Treasurer.

Use of the Course

Dissension often arose between the men and ladies especially with regard to the use of the men's tees called the "long tees". Tees were made half-way down the fairways for the ladies' use which, the better players said, made the course a joke and affected their play and their par. So the ladies were allowed to use the "long tees" only for competitions or if accompanied by a man. In addition the women were instructed never to strike off the men's tees with an iron club (which many of them frequently did). The situation was finally resolved in 1925 when the Club decided to abandon the short tees, and that in future all members should play off the same tees.

Another cause of dissension was evening play with Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings being barred to women, plus most of Saturdays and all Bank Holidays. By 1920 the female members who worked during the day found these rules most restrictive.

Par or Bogey of the Old Course

It is unclear exactly what this was initially but it seems to have been in the high eighties, falling to 83 in 1922. Miss D. Ferguson of the ILGU was asked to play

and assess the Course in February 1924, both from the "Long tees" and Ladies' tees, and gave her scores as 80 and 78. The bogey was finally decided then at 81 and 79. In 1925 the ILGU fixed the scratch score at 80, the "long tees" being at last now in general use, and then reduced it to 79.

Between the Wars - The Twenties and Thirties

By 1919 things were getting back to normal with a full fixture list arranged for the year. Membership was rising fast and by 1920 the Ladies had at last got their new clubhouse. Entries to the Monthly Stroke up to 7.30 p.m. were being received to enable business members to compete. The Minutes now reflect a new modern approach with more emphasis being placed on running competitions, necessity to return handicap cards and suitable handicapping procedures. In the early nineteen hundreds the women golfers in the Club were frequently young novices. Their lack of success in the Inter-Club matches of that time was put down to their youth and inexperience, as reported in one early Annual Report. The Club Professional's coaching and teaching, however, began to pay off – young talent came to the fore in the twenties and thirties culminating in victory for the "A" team and "C" team in the thirties, of which more later. In 1924 Bangor entered two teams in the new ILGU format of Intermediate team (handicap 10+) and Junior team (handicap 18+) - matches to be home and away. These teams then became the B's and the C's.

In 1924 Bangor hoped to host the Irish Ladies' Amateur Championship but it went to Castlerock instead. However, Bangor was successful in its bid to host the

Ulster Meeting, under the auspices of the Northern Executive of the ILGU on 1st, 2nd and 3rd April, 1924. The Duchess of Abercorn presented the Ulster and County Cups, and also the prizes provided by the Golfing Union and Bangor Ladies' Golf Club. Excellent photographs of this event survive, but no Bangor ladies figured in the prizes.

By 1929 the Ulster Meeting had become the Ulster Scratch Cup Meeting, and was to be played at Bangor in 1930. In preparation for the event the ladies requested that their clubhouse be repaired and redecorated and even spent £25 on the purchase of new chairs. The par of the course was now reduced to 78. Help was given to the Steward with the catering.

It was a large event comprising:

- 1st day - Qualifying Round for Ulster Scratch Cup
- 2nd day - County Matches with Stroke Competition for non-county players
- 3rd day - Semi-final and final of Scratch Cup, with Bogey competition for those players who failed to qualify.

There are no reports in the Minutes of Bangor ladies figuring successfully although there were now several very good low-handicap players in the Club.

Club Teams

At last, in 1931, an 'A' team, along with 'B' and 'C' teams, was entered for the league matches.

In 1932 the 'A' team won the Ulster section of the Senior Cup. The team was Miss Iris Hunter (later



Duchess of Abercorn presenting prizes at the Ulster Meeting of the ILGU, 1924.



*Ladies' Senior Cup Team, 1932.
Dr. Young, Iris Hunter, Vivien Morrison,
Mary Nicholson, Doris Young.*

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Stanley), Miss May Nicholson, Dr. M Young, Miss Doris Young (later to become Mrs McAuley and then Mrs Pollock) and Mrs Vivien Morrison.

The format was home and away matches, 5 players per side as now. The Bangor team played forty matches in all, and won thirty-one. The All-Ireland Finals were in Ballybunion, and the Bangor lady members travelled in force to support their team. The Ladies' Section paid the teams' rail fares, with £5 towards expenses coming from the Club. Bangor was beaten in the final, but the team stayed on to play in the Irish Ladies' Championship which followed the Senior Cup finals. Iris Hunter acquitted herself well – she qualified but was beaten in the first round of match play by a three on the eighteenth! A great time seemingly was had by all, and the trip to Ballybunion was talked about for many years. The 'A' team figured until 1936. In 1939 an 'A' team was entered but had to scratch due to difficulties in getting a team (doubtless because of marriage, birth of children, etc.). It was to be many years before Bangor fielded another 'A' team. The "C" team, however, continued to carry the banner for Bangor in the Thirties by winning their section of the League in 1933 and 1937.

Miss Janie Smith - Ladies' Honorary Secretary 1912 - 1916 and 1923 - 1936.

Janie Smith was the epitome of a Golf Club Honorary Secretary in the first part of the century. She was single and devoted to her duties. Dressed very severely in the manner of lady golf executives of the time, she always wore a suitable plain cloche-type hat, a white shirt, Club tie and plainly cut suit, with sensible flat shoes. She was knowledgeable on all golf matters and

instructed the juveniles on rules, etiquette, etc. She acted as Treasurer, organised the Annual Dances and attended ILGU meetings.

Those who remember her greatly respected her many talents and the fair and efficient manner with which she ran the Section.



*Miss J. Smith (left)
(Ladies' Hon. Sec.) with
Mrs. P. Claney (right)
(Ladies' Captain 1929)*

Finally in 1936 she pointed out that she was getting very tired, having served for four years pre-war and fourteen years continuously since 1923. In recognition of her services, she was made an Honorary Life Associate in 1937.



Iris Hunter in action at Ballybunion, 1932.

Lady Presidents, Lady Captains, etc

Miss Emily Connor was the first Lady President in 1903, and again held this office from 1908 to 1921 when she resigned due to illness. Mrs T W McMullan was then appointed Lady President and, presumably out of respect, Miss Connor was appointed Vice-President.

Her health restored, Miss Connor resumed the Presidency in 1924, with Mrs McMullan (to become Lady McMullan in 1929) as Vice-President. Lady McMullan resigned in 1930 and later died. Miss Connor resigned the Presidency in 1930, but remained as Vice-President to the new Lady President, Mrs R Russell. In 1932 Miss Connor died and thereafter the office of Lady Vice-President ceased, with Mrs Russell remaining Lady President until 1943.

In the early days of the Club, the Lady Captain was chosen by the Council at the beginning of the season, to serve the following year. Nowadays, however, the Past Lady Captains elect a Vice-Captain in time for her to serve a full year in the office of Vice-Captain before becoming Lady Captain. The first Lady Vice-Captain, Mrs S Claney, was appointed in 1928.

The Past Lady Presidents now elect the new Lady President prior to the Annual General Meeting at which she will take up office.

Mrs R Russell

Mrs Russell had been Captain in 1927 and succeeded Miss Connor as President in 1930. Her Presidency, which lasted for 14 years, included a further stint as Lady Captain in 1933. Very much in the mould of Miss Connor,

she was known for her philanthropic work in Bangor. Mrs Russell was a very popular and most generous Lady President of the Club.

Mrs W Strain

In the summer of 1969 the Ladies requested that Mrs W Strain, a Past Ladies' Captain (1932) and Lady President (1963 to 1966) who had given a lifetime of service to the Club, be made an Honorary Associate Member. The Men's Council replied that this could only be done at the Annual General Meeting to be held the following year, but offered Mrs Strain membership at £1 per year. This Mrs Strain was pleased to accept.

Social Activities

These were many and varied:

The Bridge Club - The Bridge Club was formed in 1923 and was hugely successful with many charity Bridge Drives being held. The enthusiasm for bridge has continued unabated over the years, in common with all Golf Clubs, and has been the main social activity in the Club for women of all ages.

The Badminton Club started in 1928 in the Carlton Hall. Membership was confined to around 30. This was an extremely popular winter pastime and continued in various venues for many years.

Mixed Foursomes, held usually on a Saturday afternoon, were greatly enjoyed - or nearly always! - and were followed by tea organised by the Ladies and the Steward.

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The Annual Dance commenced in 1928. It was held in Caproni's, and raised £50 for a new Ambulance for Bangor Hospital. This Dance continued for years and was the big event in the social life of the Club and of Bangor. It received extensive Press coverage, sometimes to the extent of describing the cut and colour of the ladies' dresses. The Ladies' Minutes give these details of arrangements for the 1938 dance, viz., "Plants for the hall from Mrs. Hadow, Council members to arrange tables, etc., pay-box to be manned, supper tickets to be given out, hostesses at suppers, ballots to be sold, Press to attend and novelty dances to be arranged." The ballot prizes were: (a) leg of mutton (Mawhinney's), (b) whisky (McKibben), (c) china (Ross), (d) book of tickets for Tonic Cinema, (e) passes for Adelphi Cinema. In addition, all Club members were to bring cakes for the supper. After all this, £60 was raised for Bangor Hospital.

New Clubhouse, New Course

By 1935, the present day course was in play and the new clubhouse opened. Miss Daisy Ferguson once more was pressed into service, and she assessed the scratch score at 76.

Second World War, 1939 - 1945

When War was declared in September 1939, all competitions for the remainder of the year were cancelled. In 1940 a full list was played with all proceeds going to War charities. Mrs. Claire O'Neill, who was Lady Captain at the time, was an indefatigable worker in the war effort, and in June invited Press photographers to her Lady Captain's Day in order to publicise the fund-raising activities of the Club. Imagine then the consternation when in the "*Northern Whig*" two photos appeared

side by side accompanied by an anonymous letter under the heading "Two Pictures":

"Sir, in your issue yesterday you published two pictures - one of 17 women grouped in golf rig-out on a golf course, the other of many women and children standing before a pile of war-scrap, in a Belfast working-class street. Is the burden and heat of the day to be bourne (sic) only by the poor? To my mind every golf course should be tilled. They display the idleness and indifference of people who should know better. Signed "All - In".

Phone calls were made to the paper's editor who promised to insert a paragraph stating that the purpose of all competitions held by the Ladies' Branch of the Bangor Golf Club was to raise funds for war charities.

Ladies' Honorary Handicap Secretary

The first Handicap Secretary was appointed in 1940. She was Miss Peggy Furey (later to become Mrs Strain and Lady Captain in 1961).

Bangor Canteen

Many womens' organisations combined to run the Bangor Forces Canteen, and the Golf Club women, anxious to help, were allocated the first and third Sundays of each month. They had to supply bread, and set up a canteen fund financed by members and fund-raising. By 1943 the numbers of military personnel in Bangor had greatly decreased but the canteen and the fundraising continued to the end of the war.

The Bangor ladies were also supportive of the many ill and convalescent soldiers billeted in Bangor during

the war. The Central School in Castle Street was a military hospital and the old Savoy Hotel housed convalescent personnel. The "walking wounded" were to be seen in the town, many with plaster casts on their arms or legs, with slings or on crutches. They wore blue uniforms and were known as "The Boys in Blue". Mindful of their loneliness, the ladies invited them, from time to time, to the Club for "parties" which consisted of a meal followed by musical entertainment or housey-housey (known as Bingo today).

Club Dances

The annual Club Dance in November 1940 was the beginning of the dances held in the clubhouse and finally became the Halloween Dance. So successful was the event that further dances were arranged for Boxing Night and St. Patrick's Day on the 17th March. All proceeds went to war charities. On VE day 1945 a victory dance was held. These dances were now set to continue over the decades.

A Juvenile's Dance for Juveniles and children of members was first held in 1945 under the supervision of the Ladies, and was a great social event.

Bridge

Charity Bridge Drives became the norm, also military whist. In 1945 the first duplicate Bridge evening was held.

Temporary loss of land

The Golf Course was reduced to 17 holes, part of it being ploughed for crops. Handicaps for competitions

were adjusted to reflect 17 holes. The true handicaps, however, approved by the ILGU were calculated on scores returned for the 9-hole "loop" played twice of which the scratch score was 78.

District Nursing Society

Miss Connor had been instrumental in setting up the District Nursing Society. There were two District Nurses working in Bangor when she died in 1932. The Bangor Golf Club ladies continued to support the work of the District Nurses for the "sick poor" of Bangor and held "sewing parties" each week when they sewed up cut-out garments for distribution by the nurses. Their efforts were greatly appreciated during the war. The Club's interest in this charity continued until quite recently, with clothes being collected and money donated annually.

Summary of War Years

The emphasis in the Club was on fundraising for various war charities. Between 1940 and February 1945, a total of £561.19.7 had been raised, all made up of small amounts from Club competitions, Bridge Drives, Club dances etc. Today this would have been perhaps £20,000!

The members enjoyed their golf but there were no Open Days or ILGU events. Card playing, especially bridge, was by far the most popular Club event, followed by the Club Dances.

The fundraising activities seemed endless but enjoyable in that all members were involved and their efforts were rewarded in 1945 by a letter from the Mayoress of Bangor, congratulating them on their efforts during the war years.

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There was however sadness due to the loss of sons, husbands and relatives in the war, and also the absence of loved ones serving for many years in the Forces. As men returned home, the number blinded in the war led to fundraising for St Dunstan's, and in October 1945 the ladies ran a big *Bring and Buy* sale and raised the large sum of £312 for this charity.

1945 to 1950

These were years of post-war austerity. Coupons were still required for clothes, and food shortages continued. For example, for an open Foursomes in 1949 the Stewardess could buy neither corned beef nor tinned meat for a salad. In the event the menu was soup, fish and chips, cheese and biscuits for the post-golf meal at a cost of three shillings (15 pence).

Golf

In this era the standard was low. There were two sections, "A" and "B", for competition purposes. The "A" section was handicap scratch to 28, and the "B" was 29 to 36. In 1949 the Club was asked to provide names of those up to handicap 15 for consideration for the County Down team, and only four members qualified – Mrs Doris McAuley (12), Mrs Iris Stanley (13), Mrs Pat Devon (13) and Mrs Beth Mullan (15).



Doris McAuley.

The first "Bring-a-Prize Win-a-Prize" was held in 1939 and by 1946 had become a fixture - prizes not to exceed two shillings (10p). The Captain v Secretary match at the end of the year was a five-a-side match. It was the social event of the year with a party after the golf, consisting of tea and some sort of musical entertainment. In later years there was an "end of season" party which was the forerunner of today's Annual Dinner – about which more later.

Business Girls

The Monthly Stroke was held open until the evening for working members to compete, but was never well supported, so a Ringer competition was held during May, June and July in which they could compete. In 1945 a concession was made to business girls by the Club that they could play on a Saturday after 3.30pm from 1st November to 28th February. As it was dark at 4.00pm for most of these months this was considered risible: however the rule lasted for many years.

The course during these years was being reconstructed and for a time only nine holes were in play. In 1947 the Standard Scratch was fixed at 77.

Bridge

Bridge remained the main social occupation. In 1947 the first November charity bridge afternoon was held with the Ladies providing afternoon tea, sandwiches, cakes, etc. This event has flourished over the years with increasing amounts of money being raised for the charity of the incumbent Lady Captain's choice.

Charities

Popular charities now being supported by Bring and Buy sales were Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and the Ulster Hospital Building Fund.

Finances

The Ladies' Financial Statement for 1946 is interesting when compared with some fifty years later.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| £21. 16. 1 | in the bank |
| 3. 17. 4 | cash in hand |
| 42. 15. 2 | furnishing fund |
| £68. 8. 7 | Total (with £5 vouchers not returned) |

There was no need as yet for an Honorary Treasurer.

1950 – 1960

Golf

By 1951 the course alterations and improvements were finalised, and the ILGU fixed the Ladies' S.S at 74. There were many restrictions on evening play which the women found irksome, particularly those unable to play during the day. The Section however strongly defended its rights to use of the course on the Tuesday competition day and wrote many letters of complaint to the Council regarding men "cutting in" on these days, thereby holding up play.

On one Tuesday afternoon three gentlemen wished to play golf. They observed the first and tenth tees were occupied by ladies, but saw that the fourth tee was free – there were no trees blocking their view in 1951! They proceeded to the fourth tee and played off, thereby hold-

ing up the competition ladies coming off the third green. A letter of complaint was written immediately by the Ladies to the Men's Council, eliciting the reply that the Ladies should not waste the Council's time "with frivolous complaints." The Ladies indignantly replied that this was not "a frivolous matter" and that Council's letter had been "most discourteous". The amusing thing about this incident is that one of the "culprits" was none other than the Secretary of the Club and it was to him that the Ladies' letter of complaint had been addressed. No apology appears to have been forthcoming.

There was also great concern at daisies on the course on competition days. For example, on a glorious Lady Captain's Day in June 1950, play was very slow on account of balls being lost among the daisies on the fairways. The Ladies always complained that the fairways were only cut for the men's competitions.

Evening Players

The nineteen fifties, with the war behind and rationing, shortages, etc ending, was a period of great socio-economic change. Education became the key for women's advancement and they entered all sorts of professions in growing numbers. The term "business girl" now gave way to "Career Woman"!

Gone too were the days of cheap domestic help in the home. The era of baby-sitters and nursery schools had arrived. Many young mothers and a growing band of working women now joined the Club, all clamouring to play in the competitions in the evening or in the mornings when the children were at school. The "old guard" in the Club, while acknowledging the need for

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young talent, were loathe to change the practice of many years of golf in the afternoon, followed by prize-giving, followed by bridge in the evening. This in fact was the situation then in all Golf Clubs in Ireland, with young women pushing for evening competitions and meeting with opposition from both the Ladies' and Men's Sections.

The Monthly Stroke, always open to "business girls" and teachers, now included young mothers with children under age three, and was very well supported. One competition in the month, however, was no longer enough for this group who became known as "The Evening Players". They were keen young players, their handicaps were constantly being reduced, and in fact many of them numbered among the best players in the Club. So they decided to run their own competitions (usually sweeps) on the remaining Tuesday evenings of the month. The Ladies' Section had now in effect split into two, a highly undesirable situation. In addition the AGM was traditionally held at 3pm in the afternoon which was a further source of grievance to the evening players who felt deprived of voting rights, etc.

Finally at the AGM in 1959, it was passed that all stroke competitions, excluding Lady Captain's and Lady President's days and match play competitions, be held open for the evening players including mothers of children up to six years old. In addition, the AGM was in future to be held in the evening. The flood gates had now opened and in the years that followed, morning competition play was introduced, the number of draws increased, and match play competitions were opened up to all. The modern Club as we now know it had been born.

In all fairness to the Ladies' Councils of the Fifties it must be said that many of them saw quite early that this was the way forward, and Bangor was one of the first Clubs in Northern Ireland (and certainly in this area) to open up their competitions in this way. This was in the face of quite stiff opposition from certain sections among the men who objected to women playing in the evenings at all.

Jubilee Week, 1953

A Jubilee Week to mark the Club's 50th anniversary was held from 11th to 18th July, opening with a Mixed Foursomes and Dance, and including special competitions for ladies and girls.

Table Tennis

Starting in 1952, table tennis was a popular pastime when the Ladies purchased a table and played for many years during the winter months once a week in the ladies' room.

Golf Week

This popular event started in 1956 and was a huge part of the Ladies' summer golfing calendar right up to 2001.

End-of-Season Party

In 1956 an End-of-Season party, with prize giving and concert, was held. In 1960 the entertainment was "Housey-housey" and in 1961 a mannequin parade. This event was the forerunner of today's Ladies' Annual Dinner which was first proposed in 1964. It was, however, not until the 1970's that the Annual Prize Giving and Dinner was held.



Juveniles, 1961.

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1960 – 1980

Competition Starting Times

The Sixties brought about the full implementation of the decision to open up the Tuesday competitions. Mothers of young children found it impossible to play in the afternoons until their children were about twelve, so the Ladies finally permitted mothers with children under twelve to play in the evening competitions. They were, however, aware that too many women using the course on a Tuesday night would greatly upset the more conservatively-minded men in the Club. The saving grace was the introduction of morning play on a Tuesday, open to all competitors; many young mothers now availed themselves of this starting time if possible, thus reducing the numbers playing in the evening.

Availability of the Course to the Ladies

The increasing number of evening players, particularly working women, now wished to have more access to the Course, but the men insisted that Lady Associates could only play during restricted hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The effect of this was quite a few women joined a second Club where hours were less restricted. This was quite financially feasible in the 1950's and 1960's as the annual subscription for Ladies was then only around seven guineas (£7.35).

Lady Captain's Day

This was now becoming an expensive day for the Lady Captain who provided Afternoon Tea for non-players and High Tea for daytime and evening players, as well as the Captain's Prize. As the years went on and

numbers playing increased, time sheets for both Lady Captain's and President's Days were introduced and the practice of providing meals for players was sensibly abandoned. All members now pay for their own Dinner in the evening.

Ladies' Honorary Handicap Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.

Although there had been a Handicap Secretary in the Ladies' Section since 1940, and the job had always entailed a great deal of work, the holder of the position, under the Club's Bye-Laws, had never been designated an Officer of the Ladies' Section. In 1980 it became necessary to appoint an Honorary Treasurer to deal with the increasingly complicated finances of the Section, and the Bye-Laws were finally amended to make both the Honorary Handicap Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer Officers.

Catering

Over the century there had always been a certain amount of criticism of the Stewards initially, and later the Caterers, by the members – mainly by the ladies. It was a courageous caterer indeed who entered any Golf Club as some ladies always felt that they could produce better food at half the price! The Ladies frequently wrote to the Men's Council complaining about food served at some function or other. In one instance, many years ago, the quality of the Boxing Night supper was the subject of a letter from the Ladies. The response from Council thanked the Ladies for their letter and, amusingly, stated that "due cognisance had been taken of the strictures contained therein".

The Ladies had no reply to this!

In modern times, the catering has become extremely professional, large dinners and functions are constantly being held, and the bar food is extremely popular with all sections of the Club.

Present Day Activities

Availability of the Course to the Ladies

After nearly a century of the course being closed to ladies on Monday and Wednesday evenings and curtailment of play from the first tee for a period on Friday evenings, the Men agreed in 2001 to the removal of all restrictions on availability of the course to Lady Associates with the exception of Wednesday evenings and until 4.00pm on Saturday afternoons. This was in return for an increase in annual subscriptions, Lady Associates now paying six-sevenths of the Full Member subscription.

Par and Standard Scratch of the Course

By the early Nineties it was felt that the ladies' course was too short and handicaps too low. A golf committee of the Ladies' Section therefore recommended, and it was agreed, that certain ladies' tees be moved back, thereby lengthening the course. In addition, two holes were reduced from par fives to par fours making the par and SSS the same at 72. The course's degree of difficulty and yardage now fulfils modern golf course standards, and the members' handicaps have become more realistic.

Golf Event – 2002 - ISLGA Close Championship

The Irish Senior Close Championship, under the auspices of the Irish Senior Ladies' Golfing Association, was held at Bangor on 1st and 2nd May, 2002 and attracted a large entry (circa eighty) of senior ladies, age 50 plus, from all over Ireland.

The format for the Championship was: Best Gross score over two days (36 holes), the winner receiving the Challenge Bowl. Included was competition for the Ardee Bowl for the best nett scores over two days (36 holes). There were also further gross and nett prizes for each day and for the two days of the competition. In this way players of all handicaps who were members of the Association were able to participate.

Competing were Mary McKenna (Donabate) of legendary amateur golf status (including Captaincy of the Curtis Cup team) and present holder of the Irish and British Senior championships, and Valerie Hassett (Ennis), past winner of the British Senior championship and runner-up in the U S Senior Ladies' championship.

The course was playing long on account of recent heavy rain, but its condition and presentation was the subject of much congratulation from the ladies, and Mary McKenna remarked that she had never played on better greens.

The Championship and Challenge Bowl were won by Mary McKenna with a 158 gross score and Valerie Hassett was runner-up on 161.

The best nett and winner of the Ardee Bowl was Kath Stewart-Moore with 152.

Sheila Burrowes of Bangor received the gross prize for the 70 plus category.

The buffet supper held in the Club at the end of the first day's play was greatly enjoyed and was a most successful event.

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At the prize giving on the second evening both the Captain of the Club (Gerry Fox) and the Lady Captain (Ivy McArthur) warmly welcomed all playing in the event, and the Captain presented a Club Plaque as a memento of the occasion to the Chairperson of the ISLGA, Valerie Hassett. The latter then thanked the Club for their efforts in making the Championship such a success. She particularly thanked David Ryan, Secretary / Manager of the Club and Roma English, Secretary of the Association, for their work and organisation over a period of months. She spoke in glowing terms of the golf course and congratulated the Head Greenkeeper, Ian Harrison, on its immaculate condition. Gifts were presented to both David Ryan and Ian Harrison as a token of the Association's appreciation.

Many of the competitors had never been to Bangor before, and were greatly impressed by the town and Bangor golf course and most appreciative of the hospitality extended to them by the members and the Club. It is to be hoped that further ladies' events such as this will be held in the future.

Juveniles

As in all Golf Clubs, the Ladies had always been to the fore in running the Juvenile Section. They ran Juvenile's Day and arranged food and evening entertainment such as Beetle Drives – in former times!

Over the years Cups were presented for both Senior and Junior Boys' and Girls' competitions. By 1960 the Men, anxious to encourage the youth of the Club, proposed a Youth Association which finally resulted in the appointment of Boys' and Girls' Captains. This practice has since ceased, but with the full co-operation of

the men's and ladies' sections, the juveniles have gone from strength to strength, with professional coaching, twice-weekly morning competitions and teams being entered in Junior golf events.

In 1990 the junior girls showed such promise that they were entered for the All-Ireland Girls Smurfit Trophy. Under the Captaincy of Paddy Connolly, they had by 1993 won the All-Ireland finals at Warrenpoint, bringing back to Bangor the Trophy and Green Pennant. The team was Barbara McDade, Claire Woods and Fiona Nivison. Noeline Coll then replaced Barbara McDade (who became over-age) and the team again in 1994 and 1995 won the Ulster Section of the competition, only to be beaten in the All-Ireland final in 1994 at Neenagh and in the semi-final at Mullingar in 1995.



*Smurfit Girls All Ireland Champions, 1993.
Miss B. McDade, Miss C. Woods, Miss F. Nivison,
Mrs P. Connolly, Miss N. Coll (Reserve).*

These girls having outgrown the team, there followed a lean period with few young girl players in the Club, but there are now about sixteen girls on the books, some with considerable potential. In 2002 a Smurfit team under the captaincy of Pauline Coll was once again entered in this popular competition, but was narrowly beaten in the quarter finals by Armagh. The team was Sarah Owens (age 14 – handicap 36), Katie Coll (age 17 – handicap 18) and Victoria Bradshaw (age 11 – handicap 22).

Of the Bangor girls competing in the Ulster Girls Championship at Shandon Park in June 2002 only Victoria qualified (second flight). Rachael Graham, however, was awarded the Murland Cup for the best nett score on the first day, while on the second day Sarah Owens, with 38 points, was in second place.

Victoria Bradshaw

For young Victoria Bradshaw, just turned twelve years of age in July, 2002 was surely the most remarkable golfing year ever of any girl in the Club. Her achievements over the year were formidable for one so young and are listed below:

2002 Club Season - Recorded Club Monthly Medal wins and placings consistently during the season thereby reducing her handicap from 22 to 17 by the end of the season, and winning the ILGU Pendant and Bronze medal.

13th April, 2002 - In the May Fitzgibbon Ulster Region Final at Hilton Golf Club, Templepatrick, Victoria and her partner (Levi Duncan from Belvoir Park Golf Club)



Victoria Bradshaw with Club Professional, Michael Bannon.

were the Ulster winners and went on to Greystones in Dublin for the All Ireland Final. Ulster came second having beaten Munster in the semi-final but lost to Connaught in the final.

25th June, 2002 - In the Weetabix Age Group Championship at Portumna Golf Club - won 6th place.

27th June, 2002 - Ulster Girls Championship at Shandon Park Golf Club - tied with Rachael Graham for the Best Nett and qualified for match play.

29th June, 2002 - Blackwood Golf Club/Belfast Telegraph Golfer of the Year - awarded the Professional's prize as the most promising girl.

15th to 19th July, 2002 - Lancome Irish Junior Close Championship at Athenry Golf Club - qualified for the match play, but was beaten in the first round.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

6th August, 2002 - At Galgorm Golf Club - played for Ulster Girls Under 15 team against the Galgorm Fred Daly Boy's team - the Girls won.

Wee Wonders Open Golf Championship - This championship originated at Foxhill Golf Club, Sunningdale under the auspices of the PGA to encourage golf among six to twelve year old boys and girls. It takes the form of qualifying events throughout Great Britain and Ireland for the Championship finals held at Foxhill in September each year.

After winning the Irish Section qualifying competition at Rosses Point on 29th July, 2002 in the age group 11 to 12 years, Victoria went on to win the final at Slieve Russell on 9th August, thereby qualifying for the overall finals at Foxhill Golf Club on the 8th September, 2002 where once again she was victorious in her age group.

The prize was to be a golfing trip to America in August 2003 but unfortunately Victoria will be over 13 by then so will not qualify. The winners of the various categories, however, were invited to the World Match Play tournament held at Wentworth in October, 2002 where Victoria met Padraig Harrington and Paul McGinley. She had lunch with Ernie Els, the winner of the event, and a coaching session with Andrew Coltart.

The boy and girl winners were featured in a Sky World of Golf programme, a video of which is in proud possession of Victoria's parents.

Victoria has now been selected for the Ulster Girls under 18 squad, and has commenced a winter training

and coaching programme which includes play over the Ulster championship courses.

Of great recent importance have been the Summer District competitions organised by the Ulster Junior Committee of the ILGU and in the North Down Section the Bangor girls have been featuring strongly.

Pauline Coll and Jill Owens of the Ladies' Branch have shown great commitment in running the Girls' section.

The North Down Friendly League

In the Fifties a proposal was made to form a friendly league among North Down Clubs. The handicap range was to be 19 – 36 (now 19 – 40). Its main purpose was to encourage social contacts among the various Clubs and to give those participating a chance to play on a team. So the Friendly League was born and has gone from strength to strength ever since. The format is that anyone wishing to play can enter her name, and an effort is made to change the teams for each match (played on a home and away basis), thus giving as many as possible the opportunity of competing. The League runs each Summer with 18-hole and each winter with 9-hole matches. A final day is held each year, the different Clubs taking it in turn to host a singles competition followed by a Dinner and prize-giving.

This is a most important part of the women's golfing activities in the Club. In existence now for some fifty years, its original aims have undoubtedly been realised as it certainly involves many players who would not otherwise have the opportunity to be team mem-

bers, and it has fostered many golfing friendships throughout the North Down area.

Senior Friendly Matches – A and B

Senior inter-Club matches involving Bangor and five other Clubs, all of whom enter Senior Cup teams, are played as four-balls during the Winter months with strokes only being given up to handicap 15. Each participating Club hosts, in turn, an end-of-season singles competition followed by lunch and prizes. The success of these matches, held now for nearly thirty years, has been such that a further friendly league for handicap 15 and over is now in place and has become equally popular.

Open Competitions

Over the years the Ladies have competed in the *"Daily Mail Foursomes,"* the Ulster Bank and the *"Mail on Sunday"* competitions, as well as numerous other events which have come and gone.

Great interest is taken in the All-Ireland Mixed Foursomes in which the Club plays every year with great enthusiasm but, alas as yet, only limited success. In 2000 there were high hopes of winning the Ulster final against Ballyclare at Knock but the team "fell at the final hurdle". Despite being leading qualifiers in the 2001 event they were narrowly beaten in the first round of match play by local rivals, Clandeboye, at the sixth tie hole of the deciding match.

Inter-Club Leagues

The Northern section of the Inter-Club League matches commence in the Spring, with the winners of each section competing in the All-Ireland finals. There are five sections at present (2002), each team comprising five players. The format is singles matches, played strictly in order of handicap, no shots being given. The sections are as follows:

A Section - This is a two-day event held at a neutral venue. Teams consist of two players with handicap 9 or under, three players with maximum handicap 12 and two reserves – maximum handicap 14.

B Section - Home and away matches on a knock-out basis with teams of five players with handicaps of 10 or higher.

Intermediate - As above but handicaps 15 or higher.

C Section - As above but handicaps 20 or higher.

D Section - As above but handicaps 27 or higher.

Due to the increasing number of new Clubs opening in the North, many of which wish to enter teams in various categories, these matches, commencing in early Spring, now are played all through the Summer until August.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years



Ladies' Senior Cup Team, 1989.

*J. Kissock (Captain), P. Connolly, V. James, S. Burrowes,
P. Campbell, K. Kelly (Ladies' Captain), M. McEvoy, G. Duignan.*

The "A" Team

It is, of course, the ambition of all Clubs to have a Senior team, and Bangor is no exception - keen competitors since 1968 (in modern times). The event attracts much interest among members and no Club has more enthusiastic (or partisan) supporters. The leading players were originally Deirdre Morton and Pat Devon, supported by Paddy Connolly, Paula Campbell, Marian Doran, Geraldine Duignan and Joan Stinson. Then Valerie James came to the fore in 1977 and of course Mandy McEvoy who has led since 1981.

An outstanding golfer and match player, Sheila Burrowes, has been a team member for many years. Sheila Kissock and Patricia Campton have been stalwarts for years and latterly have been joined by Mary Rose McGuigan and Pat Radcliffe.

The Senior ("A") team has on at least three occasions reached the Ulster finals, only to be beaten by the mighty Portrush – a team that used to comprise mainly of inter-provincial and international players. More recently Royal Portrush have been overtaken by the new stars in Royal County Down.

At one stage, a few years ago, the Bangor "A" team's average age was estimated by Paula Campbell to be 59.6 (excluding young Mandy) – a statistic that caused great amusement at the AGM at that time. It goes without saying that new young talent is required in the Club. Although there are signs of promising players now joining the Club, the pity is and always has been that excellent juvenile and junior girls frequently leave Bangor to study and work "across the water" and most of them make their lives elsewhere. Poppy Stewart (now Mrs Malton), a promising juvenile and junior in the sixties, has settled in Scotland, having played for the Edinburgh University team during her time there, and is now the Honorary Treasurer of the Ladies' Golfing Union of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The "B" Team

This team comprises very experienced players some of whom are also on the "A" team. Bangor always does well in this competition where the standard of golf is very high indeed but, despite playing matches all through the Summer, have as yet to win in the final stages.

The Intermediate Team

Excellent experienced players also make up the intermediate team. This is a new Section of the League in which Bangor has high hopes for future success.

"C" and "D" Teams

These teams have also played with great determination and have been forces to reckon with, but have not won through in modern times. Again the standard in these matches is high.

Lady Golfers of Note from 1960 Onwards

The outstanding Bangor women golfers of the 1920's and 1930's have already been dealt with, and they carried the flag for the Club for several decades. But during the Forties and Fifties the standard was low with difficulty being experienced in even raising a "B" team (Handicap 10 and over). By the end of the Fifties, however, and into the Sixties, due mainly to the influx of young blood into the Club and with the war years far behind, the standard rose appreciably. There were now many good golfers in the Club, with a few playing off single figure handicaps.

In 1961 there were only two women playing off single-figures (Mrs Pat Devon and Mrs Paula Campbell) but by 1968 the standard had risen so appreciably that "A", "B", "C" and "D" teams were entered in the Inter-Club leagues, and many good golfers were emerging. Over the next decades Bangor began to make a mark on Ulster ladies golf, led initially by Mrs Pat Devon.

Mrs Pat Devon

Pat has been a member for some sixty years, joining as a Juvenile in 1940. She showed great talent as a Juvenile, winning Cups and competitions, and as an Associate Member played to a consistently high standard, win-

ning Cups, etc to this very day. She and her partner have had great success in the Ava and Dunlop Mixed Foursomes, winning the Ava twice off handicaps of four and three (the lowest pairings ever in the Club).

Although she never won the Ulster Scratch Cup, she performed so well in this event that in 1972 she was made a member of the Ulster Ladies team. By 1974 she was Captain of that same team. She represented the Club on the Northern Executive of the ILGU for many years as Assistant Secretary, and also served as Ulster Tournament Secretary. She was a Selector for the Ulster Senior team and the Irish Junior and Senior teams. In 2001, in recognition of her services to Irish golf, she was appointed a Vice-President of the Northern Executive of the ILGU.

Apart from representing the Club so ably in the cause of Ulster golf, she has been a most enthusiastic and en-

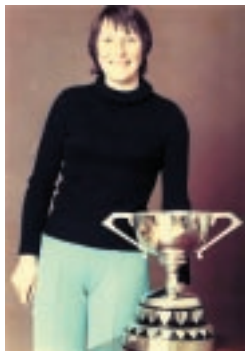


*Ladies Daily Mail Foursomes, 1972.
Mrs P. Devon (2nd left), Mrs. D. Morton (3rd left).*

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

ergetic Club member. She is a Past Ladies' Captain (1971), former Honorary Secretary and past Lady President, as well as playing on the "A" team for the most part of thirty years. In 1992, in recognition of her unique service to the Club and to golf, she was awarded the rare distinction of Honorary Membership of the Club.

Mrs Deirdre Morton



*Ulster Ladies
Scratch Cup, 1973.
Mrs. D. Morton*

Deirdre joined the Club in June 1965. Although a Juvenile member at one time, her big interest as a girl was in swimming at which she excelled, winning many Irish championships and being a member of the Commonwealth Games team, a team that incidentally also included Mary Peters.

After her marriage she re-directed her athletic talents to golf and, within a few years, was down to a single-figure handicap. By 1970 she had played in the Ulster Scratch Cup and was a semi-finalist in the Irish Ladies Championship.

In 1971 she was selected for the Ulster Ladies' team, in 1973 she won the Ulster Scratch Cup and in 1974 again played for Ulster. She teamed up with Pat Devon in the seventies to win the Northern Ireland section of the "Daily Mail" Foursomes and represented the Province in the finals at Blundell Sands, Lancashire.

In 1976 the Morton family left Bangor and resigned from the Club, to the great regret of all. Deirdre's talents have now been acquired by Royal Portrush!

Mrs Valerie James

In 1971 Valerie joined the Club as a beginner with a handicap of 36. By 1977 her handicap had reduced to 9, and she was the founder of the North Down Ladies' Golf Alliance which held its first competition at Bangor, returning there in March 2002 to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Valerie's reputation as a golfer and a member is formidable:

From 1979 to 1988 - Represented County Down in District matches each year and, at home, she won the Alex Potter Gross Trophy (three best gross competition scores over the year) each year since its inception in 1988.



Ulster Ladies' Team, 1982: Mrs. V. James (front row, third left).

Ladies' Branch.

1981 - Lady Captain

1982 - Handicap 4.

Beaten semi-finalist in the Ulster Scratch Cup (Deirdre Morton being the winner).

Qualified for the match play stage of the Irish Amateur Close Championship at Portrush (with a hole-in-one on the way) but beaten in the first round.

In August, a member of the Ulster team playing in the inter-Regionals at Athlone.

1987 - Captained the Ulster Ladies Inter-Pro team at Dundalk.

1988 - Captained the Ulster Ladies Inter-Pro team at Murvagh.

1996 to

2001 - Scratch Score Assessor for ILGU.

2000 - In August, over the new lengthened ladies course at Bangor, she established a new course record of 73 on Mrs Paddy Connolly's Lady President's Day.

2002 - Was selected to play for the Irish Senior Ladies team (under the aegis of the Irish Senior Ladies' Golf Association) versus the English Ladies Senior team at Moortown Golf Club, Leeds on 21st and 22nd October, when out of two matches she won one and halved the second, winning one and a half points for her side which was finally defeated by two points.

Valerie is a highly respected member, a leading player on the Senior team since 1977, and has served on the Ladies' Council for many years.

Mrs Mandy McEvoy (nee Hopper)

The hugely talented Mandy Hopper joined the Club as a girl in 1981 having already played on the Girl's Inter-Pro team at Enniscrone when Ulster won for the first time ever. Her golfing C.V. is impressive, and it should be noted that she was rarely beaten in any of her Ulster matches. Her record reads:



1981 - A member of the Junior Irish (under 18) team playing at Woodbridge, Suffolk. Here Mandy again performed well, halving her match with English opponent, Penny Grice, who later became British Open Champion. (Laura Davies played for England in this Championship).

1983 - In the 36 Top Players Tournament at Knock, sponsored by the Prudential, Mandy tied for 1st place. (Of interest is that Bangor players Bertie Wilson won the Senior's Competition and Peter Barry won the Boy's Junior Section).

Runner-up to Laura Bolton in the Intermediate Championship.

New course record holder – Gross 69 (Par 74); Handicap 4; 45 points in the Captain's (Stanley Dodds) prize for the Ladies.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

Handicap reduced to 2.

1983 to 1985

- Played for the Ulster Senior Ladies team.

By 1989 Mandy had become Mrs Mandy McEvoy. In the mid-nineties she had a serious operation from which she recovered well, and in 1996 she and husband Colin became the proud parents of triplets! Despite all this and when the children were only 18 months old, she entered the Irish Ladies Close Championship at Clandeboyne in 1998 and progressed to the semi-finals, beating Helen Jones and Allison Coffey – two ex-Irish champions – on the way.

In the semi-final she lost to the eventual winner, Lilian Behan, a re-instated amateur who, after winning the British Ladies Amateur Championship in 1985 (the same year that Garth McGimpsey became Amateur Champion), became a professional golfer for a number of years.

Over the years Mandy was selected to play for County Down in the District matches and, with the exception of 1995 and 1996, has headed the Bangor Senior Cup (“A”) team from 1981 to date. With her children now out of “babyhood”, Mandy is as enthusiastic and talented as ever, and hopes to have more time in the future to compete in open championships and continue her illustrious golfing career.

Mrs Paddy Connolly

Paddy has played an important and active role in the affairs of the Ladies’ Section since rejoining as a Lady Associate in 1962, having previously been a Juvenile

member. After serving on the Council in the sixties, she became Lady Captain in 1974. In 1979 she served as Honorary Handicap Secretary for one year and, in 1983, again undertook this onerous post – this time for 13 years. From 1999 to 2002 she was Lady President of the Club.

Her Club golfing career has been equally illustrious, having played on the “A” team for many long years (her lowest handicap was 5) and also on the “B” team. In addition she has, at different times, captained every team in the league matches including, latterly, the new Intermediate team.

In the late eighties and early nineties she was a member for six years, finally serving as Committee Chairperson, of the ILGU Northern Girl’s Committee whose responsibilities include girls’ events, coaching and the Inter-Provincial team.

Involved with the Club junior girls and particularly with the Smurfit teams, she steered the Smurfit girls to victory in 1993 when they won the All-Ireland title at Warrenpoint. In 1994 and 1995 her teams again won the Ulster section of this competition but were narrowly beaten in the finals.

Paddy also has had the honour of being Captain of the Ulster Ladies Golf Alliance for the year 1989/90.

Mrs Shelia Burrowes

Sheila, an Irish hockey international in her youth, has played consistently over many years to a low handicap, frequently in single figures. A member of the “A” team for over twenty years, she is a Past Lady Captain

and served on the Northern Executive of the ILGU from 1986 to 1990, after which she was elected to the Central Committee in Dublin, serving from 1991 to 1993 and being involved in the 1993 ILGU Centenary celebrations.

Mrs Marie Nivison

Marie deserves special mention for bringing the Ladies' Section into the computer world when she became Honorary Handicap Secretary in 1996, organising the introduction of computerised handicapping records. She retired from this post after three years to become Honorary Secretary of the ILGU, Northern District – a full time, unpaid job which she held for three years.

"The Flowers"



Mrs. Maisie Stevenson, Past Lady Captain (1958) and Bangor's oldest Lady member, being presented with a bouquet of flowers by Jean McKeown, Ladies' Captain in 1998.

Special mention must also be made of the floral art displays created over the years by many talented women members for special occasions such as Captain's Day, Lady Captain's and Lady President's Day, Christmas and other occasions that might arise, and of the work done generally throughout the year by the Flower Committee.

Members in General

It has not been possible to pick out and mention the many women who have given unstinted loyalty and devoted many long hours of hard work in the interests of Bangor Golf Club and its Ladies' Section. Those mentioned

above have been included on account of their outstanding golfing achievements and/or their service on the ILGU Northern Executive.

Over the years each Lady Captain, her Council and members have been involved in numerous fund raising events for a variety of causes (including Club and Section finances) - such as the aforementioned annual Bridge afternoons, mannequin parades, the Wine & Cheeses parties of the eighties, and recently (2001), assisting in the huge Jumble Sale and Dance which together raised around £7,000 for the Children of Chernobyl Sponsorship appeal in which Maureen Ross, June Richards and Sandra Ablett were primarily involved. These ladies have also over the years been involved in decorating the clubhouse for various social events and the Ladies' Section has been actively involved in organising and supporting the many social and golfing events run by the Club.



Chernobyl fundraising.

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

One of the most popular winter sporting activities is Indoor Bowls; a mixed team of men and lady members participate each week with great enthusiasm, and some success, in a friendly bowls league with other Golf Club teams in North Down. Mid-week quiz nights and Saturday evening Bingo sessions have also become popular winter entertainment for a large number of members.

Conclusion

The Ladies' Section of Bangor Golf Club has been blessed by its extremely hard-working and conscientious Officers and Councils and by the pleasant and friendly atmosphere that prevails today. New members and girl juveniles are welcomed and interest taken in their progress. Professional women are joining the Club in increasing numbers and their potential and golfing talents are appreciated and encouraged.

Today's Lady Captains and Lady Presidents are "hands-on", committed Officers and represent the Club admirably, both in Bangor and throughout the area. There is now cordial co-operation with the men, and mutual respect and understanding between both Sections. Everyone wishes the 2003 Centenary Captain of the Club - John Whittle, the Centenary Lady Captain - Beth Gillan and the Centenary Lady President - Mona Fox, a most successful, happy and memorable year.

Mrs Paula Campbell

Paula, the person responsible for compiling this history of the Ladies' Section of Bangor Golf Club, is very modest about her accomplishments in the golf world. The Ladies of the Club would like to pay tribute to her and recognise the hard work she has put into writing this account. She has, with insight and humour, read between the lines of the recorded minutes over the last 100 years. The result is what might be called "a good read". It is obvious that her work has been a labour of love.

Paula joined the Club in 1950 and within a very few years she was down to single figures, her lowest handicap being six. A doughty match player, she represented the Club on both the Senior team and B team for more than 30 years.

Mention has been made in this book of the inclusion of working girls and young mothers in competitions by extending the weekly competitions into the evening. It was Paula, together with Pat Devon and Kay Greer, who were to the forefront of the group who made this possible.

Paula served on the Ladies' Council and was Lady Captain in 1992. She was also Captain of the North Down Ladies' Golf Alliance in 2001 - the year of their 25th Anniversary.



Past Ladies' Captains. 1946 - 2000.

Front Row L-R: Pat Devon, Marjorie Stephenson, Maisie Stevenson, Jean McKillen, Maura Fox, Paddy Connolly, Dorothy Strain, Peggy Strain, Valerie Armstrong.

Centre Row: Iso Aiken, Ann Stevenson, Pat Williams, Geraldine Duignan, Dorothy Doggart, Valerie James, Maureen Cameron, Pat Campton, Margaret Blaikie, Mona Fox, Mariah Dornan.

Back Row: Jean McKeown, Helen Birch, Ann O'Hara, Sheila Kissock, Carol Drury, Joan Stinson, Paula Campbell, Margaret Malcolm, Pat McCrystal, Kath Kelly, Sheila Burrowes.

Appendix 'A'

Cups and Trophies in the Ladies' Section

The Connor Cup

The Connor Cup is the oldest trophy in Bangor Golf Club having been presented to the Ladies Section in 1903 by the late Miss Connor, JP, OBE. (She also presented a Cup to the Men). Miss Connor was associated with Bangor Golf Club from its inception in 1903. She was the first Lady President and held that office for a total of twenty years in the period 1903 to 1930.



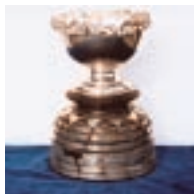
The Cup is competed for annually with 8 "A" and 8 "B" players qualifying in a stroke play competition for the match play stages in which the runner-up receives the Lepper Bowl.

The Lepper Bowl

The Lepper Bowl was presented to the Ladies Section in 1905 by Mr. F R Lepper as a prize for the runner-up in the Connor Cup match play competition - thus the competition has always been known as "the Connor Cup and Lepper Bowl".

The McConnell Cup

The McConnell Cup was presented in 1904 by the first Captain of the Club, Mr Thomas E McConnell, JP to be competed for in match play by Ladies with handicaps over 25. His wife was Lady Captain in 1910.



Challenge Putting Cup

This Cup dates back to 1919 and was presented by Miss Connor. It is engraved "Challenge Cup, Putting, President's Prize" and is competed for annually on the putting green by match play. In the early years it was suggested that as a certain lady had won it three times she should be entitled to keep it. Fortunately this suggestion did not meet with approval and the Putting Cup remains in the Club for annual competition.

Clanmorris Cup

The Clanmorris Cup was presented to the Club by Maude, the Lady Clanmorris, to be competed for annually by match play. The Clanmorris family home was in Bangor Castle (now the Town Hall) and Lady Clanmorris owned the land which Bangor Golf Club leased in 1903. Eventually, in 1921, the Club bought the land, Lady Clanmorris was elected an Honorary Member of the Club and she presented this Cup. In a stroke play qualifying competition, 32 competitors proceed to the match play stages.



Craigavon Cup

The new course on the south side of Broadway and the present Clubhouse were officially opened on 6th April, 1935 by Viscount Craigavon, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, in the presence of the Viscountess Craigavon, who was an accomplished golfer. A new

driver, specially made by the Club Professional (John Hamill), and suitably inscribed for the occasion, was offered to Lady Craigavon so that she could drive the first ball. However, she deferred to the Club Captain, Morris McKee, requesting him to "give it a whack". Two cups were presented to mark this auspicious event in the Club's history – one for the Men and one for the Ladies – the latter being competed for in match play format by 32 players qualifying in a stroke play competition.

Challenge Brooch

Presented in 1954 by Miss Renee Forsythe, a long-time Club member, originally playing with the "business girls". In later years she was a leading player among the "Evening Players". Any member could challenge the holder of the brooch to a match, the winner of which would continue to wear the brooch until losing to a challenger. Unfortunately this gold brooch has now disappeared.

Veteran's Cup

Presented in 1952 by Mrs Herbert Tyrrell (Lady Captain in 1945) and competed for annually by lady members over 50 years of age. This Cup is played for on Veteran's Day, usually over 12 holes stroke play, followed by afternoon tea provided by volunteer veteran members.

Jeanna McIntosh Plate

This prize was presented in 1965 by Mrs P Romer in memory of her mother, Mrs Jeanna McIntosh. This lady had enjoyed her membership of Bangor Golf Club so much that her daughter in England wished to present a

prize in her memory. The prize turned out to be a valuable silver plate and Mrs Romer agreed with the Club's suggestion that it be competed for annually. The format is a stroke play – Flag, which was Jeanna's favourite form of competition.

The Devon Trophy

Presented in 1970 by Mrs P Devon, a former Honorary Secretary of the Ladies Section, Past Lady Captain and Past Lady President, to be competed for by match play annually by Evening Players only. In due course entry was opened to all lady members with the proviso that if a competitor so wished a match must be played in the evening.

The Wells Trophy

Presented by Mrs Maureen Wells, during her Captaincy year in 1977, for match play competition between the Club teams, prior to their matches in the ILGU Leagues.

The Duignan Trophy

A Past Lady Captain, Past Lady President and former Honorary Handicap Secretary, Mrs Geraldine Duignan presented this trophy in 1979 for the Golfer of the Year – calculated on the aggregate of best net scores over certain designated stroke play competitions throughout the season.

Peggy Claney Tray

Peggy Claney was a member of the Club for a lifetime; she was Lady Captain in 1929 and Lady President from 1967 to 1970. Gordon and Brenda Claney, her son and daughter-in-law presented this trophy in her

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

memory in 1979 for an annual foursomes stroke play competition, the winners of which represent the Club in the Daily Mail Foursomes match play – Ulster Section.

Dorothy Doggart Salver

Presented by Mrs Dorothy Doggart in her year as Lady Captain (1980), this salver is competed for by Past Lady Captains in an annual 9-hole stroke play competition which is followed by the Past Captain's Dinner.

Claire O'Neill Salver

Presented in 1987 by Mrs Claire O'Neill for annual match play competition and confined to players with handicap of 31 and above. Claire was a member of the Club for over sixty years, a former Honorary Handicap Secretary, Past Lady Captain (1940) and Past Lady President (1976 – 1979). She was made an Honorary Lady Associate in 1985. Devoted to the Club and to golf generally, she stipulated the handicap restriction as she herself had never achieved a handicap below 31.

Anne O'Hara Trophy

Presented in 1988 by Mrs Anne O'Hara for a 9-hole foursomes match play competition, held weekly during the winter season, played for by teams and scored

by points. This popular competition has now evolved into a 4 ball - better ball format. Anne is a longtime member, keen golfer and Past Lady Captain (1996).

The Alex. Potter Trophies (Two)

Presented by his family on his death in 1988, the Alex. Potter Trophies are for the three best gross and three best nett stroke play scores in competitions counting towards the ILGU silver and bronze Medals over the season. Mr Potter's daughter, Patricia Campton, is an active Club member, a former Honorary Treasurer and Past Lady Captain (1983).

Muriel Moore Trophy

Presented in 1992 by Miss Muriel Moore for stroke play competition on a designated day and confined to serving members of the Ladies Council and Past Lady Captains. The competition is followed by the Past Captain's and Council Dinner. Miss Moore was Lady Captain in 1967.

Lady President's Salver

Presented in 1996 by the Ladies Section, this salver is won annually by the winner of the Lady Presidents Prize.

Appendix 'B'

Officers of the Ladies' Section - 1903 to 2003

| Year | President | Captain | Hon Sec | H/cap Sec | Hon Tres |
|------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1903 | Miss E J Connor | Miss M E MaGuire | Miss MacDonnagh | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1904 | Mrs J L Corbett | Miss A G Walters | Miss L K Campbell | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1905 | Mrs J L Corbett | Miss A G Walters | Miss L K Campbell | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1906 | Mrs J L Corbett | Miss L K Campbell | Miss M Aiken | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1907 | Mrs J L Corbett | Miss M Aiken | Miss E Campbell | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1908 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs W Hazley | Miss E Campbell | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1909 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs W Hazley | Miss E McCombe | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1910 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs T E McConnell | Miss E McCombe | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1911 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs W H Galway | Miss N Donnelly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1912 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs W Furey | Miss J A Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1913 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs D H Hutchinson | Miss J A Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1914 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs B Frew | Miss J A Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1915 | Miss E J Connor | Miss G Pepper | Miss J A Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1916 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs M Trimble | Miss M Dobbs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1917 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs M Trimble | Miss M Dobbs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1918 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs J Robinson | Mrs Spittle | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1919 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs J D Cousin | Mrs Purce | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1920 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs Chambers | Mrs W R Mercer | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1921 | Mrs T W McMullan | Mrs G Paul | Miss C Hughes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1922 | Mrs T W McMullan | Mrs W R Mercer | Miss C Hughes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1923 | Mrs T W McMullan | Mrs J Murray | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1924 | Miss E J Connor | Miss E Robinson | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1925 | Miss E J Connor | Miss D White | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1926 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs T D Morrison | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1927 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs R Russell | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1928 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs W Malcolm | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1929 | Miss E J Connor | Mrs S Claney | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1930 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs R G Gray | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1931 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs D Hollywood | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1932 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs W Strain | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1933 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs R Russell | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1934 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs J G Barbour | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1935 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs H Gaw | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1936 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs W Magee | Miss J Smith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1937 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs W R Mullen | Miss N Strain | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1938 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs F J Brice | Miss N Strain | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Bangor Golf Club One Hundred Years

| Year | President | Captain | Hon Sec | H/cap Sec | Hon Tres |
|------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|----------|
| 1939 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs R Walsh | Mrs A Crozier | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1940 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs J B O'Neill | Mrs A Crozier | Miss P Furey | ☐ |
| 1941 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs A Crozier | Miss P Furey | ☐ |
| 1942 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs J F Neill | Mrs O M Jenkins | Mrs T Strain | ☐ |
| 1943 | Mrs R Russell | Mrs G L Scott | Mrs O M Jenkins | Mrs T Strain | ☐ |
| 1944 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs R G McMurray | Mrs O M Jenkins | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1945 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs H Tyrrell | Mrs O M Jenkins | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1946 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs J R Walker | Mrs O M Jenkins | Mrs B Mullen | ☐ |
| 1947 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs O Jenkins | Mrs B Holland | Mrs B Mullen | ☐ |
| 1948 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs J A Lorimer | Mrs O Jenkins | Mrs B Mullen | ☐ |
| 1949 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs J A Lilley | Mrs O Jenkins | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1950 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs J Neill | Mrs O Jenkins | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1951 | Mrs W R Mullen | Mrs J H Hanna | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1952 | Mrs W A Magee | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs O Jenkins | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1953 | Mrs W A Magee | Mrs L R Ellison | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1954 | Mrs W A Magee | Mrs D K McMillan | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | |
| 1955 | Mrs W A Magee | Mrs B Balmer | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1956 | Mrs G L Scott | Mrs J C Stanley | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1957 | Mrs G L Scott | Mrs E M Aiken | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1958 | Mrs G L Scott | Mrs J A Stevenson | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1959 | Mrs E M Aiken | Mrs V Robertson | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1960 | Mrs E M Aiken | Mrs J Sherriff | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1961 | Mrs E M Aiken | Mrs H D Strain | Mrs W T Strain | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1962 | Mrs E M Aiken | Mrs B Mullen | Miss G Henderson | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1963 | Mrs H Strain | Mrs G J Stephenson | Miss G Henderson | Mrs J R Walker | ☐ |
| 1964 | Mrs H Strain | Mrs S B Fetherston | Miss G Henderson | Mrs F B Owens | ☐ |
| 1965 | Mrs H Strain | Mrs F Byers | Miss G Henderson | Mrs F B Owens | ☐ |
| 1966 | Mrs H Strain | Mrs W Pollock | Miss G Henderson | Mrs F B Owens | ☐ |
| 1967 | Mrs M Claney | Miss M Moore | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs F B Owens | ☐ |
| 1968 | Mrs M Claney | Mrs F Gorman | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs F B Owens | ☐ |
| 1969 | Mrs M Claney | Mrs V Taylor | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs C O'Neill | ☐ |
| 1970 | Mrs M Claney | Mrs R C Robinson | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs C O'Neill | ☐ |
| 1971 | Mrs J H Hanna | Mrs P Devon | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs C O'Neill | ☐ |
| 1972 | Mrs J H Hanna | Mrs I Aiken | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs C O'Neill | ☐ |
| 1973 | Mrs J H Hanna | Mrs A Stevenson | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs C O'Neill | ☐ |
| 1974 | Mrs J H Hanna | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs C O'Neill | ☐ |
| 1975 | Mrs J H Hanna | Mrs V Armstrong | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs C O'Neill | ☐ |
| 1976 | Mrs C O'Neill | Mrs A Hillen | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs G Duignan | ☐ |
| 1977 | Mrs C O'Neill | Mrs M Wells | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs G Duignan | ☐ |
| 1978 | Mrs C O'Neill | Mrs P Williamson | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs G Duignan | ☐ |

Appendix 'B'.

| Year | President | Captain | Hon Sec | H/cap Sec | Hon Tres |
|------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1979 | Mrs C O'Neill | Mrs G Duignan | Mrs M Kensett | Mrs P Connolly | □ |
| 1980 | Mrs F Gorman | Mrs D Doggart | Mrs P Devon | Mrs M Duffin | □ |
| 1981 | Mrs F Gorman | Mrs V James | Mrs P Devon | Mrs M Duffin | □ |
| 1982 | Mrs F Gorman | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Devon | Mrs M Duffin | Mrs P Williamson |
| 1983 | Mrs F Gorman | Mrs P Campton | Mrs P Devon | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Williamson |
| 1984 | Mrs F Gorman | Mrs M Blaikie | Mrs P Devon | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Williamson |
| 1985 | Mrs V Armstrong | Mrs Mona Fox | Mrs P Devon | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Williamson |
| 1986 | Mrs V Armstrong | Mrs M Doran | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Williamson |
| 1987 | Mrs V Armstrong | Mrs M Duffin | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1988 | Mrs V Armstrong | Mrs S Burrowes | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1989 | Mrs V Armstrong | Mrs K Kelly | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1990 | Mrs V Armstrong | Mrs P McCrystal | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1991 | Mrs G Duignan | Mrs M Malcolm | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1992 | Mrs G Duignan | Mrs P Campbell | Mrs M Cameron | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1993 | Mrs G Duignan | Miss J Stinson | Mrs M Blaikie | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1994 | Mrs G Duignan | Mrs C Drury | Mrs M Blaikie | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1995 | Mrs G Duignan | Mrs S Kissock | Mrs M Blaikie | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs P Campton |
| 1996 | Mrs P Devon | Mrs A O'Hara | Mrs M Blaikie | Mrs M Nivison | Mrs P Campton |
| 1997 | Mrs P Devon | Mrs H Birch | Mrs M Blaikie | Mrs M Nivison | Mrs C Eadie |
| 1998 | Mrs P Devon | Mrs J McKeown | Mrs P Radcliffe | Mrs M Nivison | Mrs C Eadie |
| 1999 | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs Maura Fox | Mrs P Radcliffe | Mrs M R McGuigan | Mrs C Eadie |
| 2000 | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs J McKillen | Mrs S Kissock | Mrs M R McGuigan | Mrs C Eadie |
| 2001 | Mrs P Connolly | Mrs J Dodds | Mrs S Kissock | Mrs M R McGuigan | Mrs C Eadie |
| 2002 | Mrs M Fox | Mrs I McArthur | Mrs S Kissock | Mrs M Doran | Mrs A Dorrian |

