

CADDIES IAN MORRIS

In the first half of the 20th century caddies were used by many members. Some had regular caddies, some employed schoolboys who they trained to be good caddies. Some like Graham Henderson used his chauffeur to carry his clubs.

There would be 30 caddies at Pollok on Saturday, some regulars, some men who had a regular, weekly job and caddied at weekends for pocket money. Also school boys for fags and sweets.

All caddies were under the control of "Potter" the caddie master.

Alex Potter knows all the members by name, guarded the front door with his life and made sure that the caddies behaved.

Some famous golfers learned their trade as caddies. Tom Morris, Jock Hutchison, JH Taylor, Harry Vardon, James Braid, Geo Duncan, Sandy Heard and Francis Weymit.

They all got the golf bug by caddying. Their duty was to carry clubs, the tee ball on a mound of sand, hold the flag stick.

On one occasion a local caddie at St Andrews was asked by a visitor if he had ever carried for any famous men. "Lots of them", Mr AJ Balfour regularly, and had a very close acquaintance with him. The amused golfer asked him exactly what he meant by a 'Close acquaintance' 'Joost this' said the caddie 'I am weering a pair o' Mr Balfours' troosers.'

The senior caddie at Pollok was Old Andrew, a lovely old man who always said, 'Good shot sir' no matter where the ball went or didn't.

Andrew was employed by Frank McDonald of McDonald Bros. Biscuit manufacturers famous for their (Penguin Biscuits). Only two people at Pollock had Savile Row clothes, one was Frank, the other 'Old Andrew', but when Andrew wore his cashmere coat you couldn't see his hands or feet.

In his latter year Frank bought Andrew a caddy card (the first seen at Pollok). When unable to walk the course. Andrew came to Pollok most days, went to the shops in Pollokshaws for Mrs McKenzie in return for lunch in the kitchen.

Most had a good sense of humour. Lee Trevino who caddied as a boy tells the tale of the St Andrews caddy working for a man who got so upset with his game, threw down his club and said he was going to drown himself in the sea. Go ahead said the caddy "You couldna keep your heid doon long enough anyway!"

Many had a good relationship with their employer who not only paid them but gave them cast off clothes, food at Christmas and gave friendly advice to them and their children.

Peter Malarkey

Peter was the best caddie at Pollok.

In great demand at local pro and amateur competitions in the area. When not caddying, Peter was to be found swimming in the cart at the 14th where he supplemented his income by collecting golf balls which he sold back to the original owner. When buying a good ball from peter, you sometimes wonder if it came from the cart or some other members bag.

Donald Cameron, who won the Glasgow Championship in 1949 told of how Peter helped him at the 17th in the second round.

Donald had played a 7 irons in the morning and feeling a bit tired in the afternoon asked Peter for a 6 iron. The immediate reply was " Take yir seeven and hit it like F***." Donald gave him an extra bonus for that expert advice.

John Ashcroft was another regular.

John Took over from Potter on his day off. An honest man but not a great caddie, got all the clubs mixed up and was not ~~tr~~ated with attending the flag.

"A knowed a lot of farmers", said John.

"An the farmers is good golfers"

"It's the scything ye see".

The last regular caddie at Pollok was 'Alfie'. He caddied for Jimmy McCann (Diamond Jim) during the week, and for Raymond Bainbridge at weekends.

Jimmy required Alfie to bring his clubs from the boot of his Rolls Royce, also to tee the ball up and recover it from the hole.

Raymond was told by Alfie that he was a professional caddie (He once caddied at a pro-am). One day when only 125 yards from the hole Alfies advice was yer offy hooken them the day, take yer four iron.

In time, Alfie, like Old Andrew was errand boy for the McTaggarts in return for lunch in the kitchen.

Some school boys came during the Summer holidays but employment laws discouraged members from employing them in case of accident.

Old Andrews caddy cart was ironically the end of an era.