

As It Lies

## Design And Build

By Jim Walker

Now that we are a few years into the Twenty-first century, it seems the only person not connected with golf-course design is



Jim Walker

Footjoy's "Sign Boy." Don't get me wrong, there are some players who design very good courses: Nicklaus, Palmer, Player, and Weiskopf to

name a few. However, when the USGA and PGA go looking for courses to host their championships, the old masters of design seem to be very prevalent.

Ever wonder why certain courses seem to be better than others and why you remember great holes on those courses and that you never seem to tire of playing them? If you checked, do not be surprised to see names like C.B. Macdonald, Seth Raynor, A. W. Tillinghast, Donald Ross, William S. Flynn, Alister Mackenzie, Robert Trent Jones, Dick Wilson, or Pete Dye as the architect of record. Playing on a course designed by these men and others like them is heaven on earth.

We all know golf began in Scotland on a course called St. Andrews around 1415 or so. What most don't know is that until 1848, when the first recognized designer - Allan Robertson - created the double greens and the "road hole," did the golf course become basically what it is today. Robertson is also credited with designing Carnoustie. Others of the early designers include Willie and Jamie Dunn, the Park brothers and of course "Old Tom Morris." Morris, who was an apprentice of Robertson, is responsible for Muirfield, Prestwick and redesigns of Carnoustie and St. Andrews. Old Tom's name will be popping up several more times in this article.

Willie Park, Jr. was the first to move dirt around to create hazards. His works include Sunningdale in England and

Olympia Fields in Chicago.

H.S. Colt was the first to build courses inland. This construction required the removal of trees and underbrush. He built nearly 100 courses in England between 1910 and 1940 and worked with Alister Mackenzie. He also worked with Donald Ross in the United States.

Ross is recognized as the father of modern architecture. He studied with Old Tom Morris before coming to America in 1899. Between 1912 until 1948, he built more than 450 courses in 29 states and six foreign countries. His great works include Oak Hill, Pinehurst, Seminole, Broadmoor, Oakland Hills, Scioto, and Aronimink. Between 1919 and 1926, six of the eight U.S. Opens were played on his courses.

A. W. Tillinghast was an American who spent time in Scotland discussing design with - you guessed it - Old Tom. His designs include Balustrol, the Black, Blue and Red Courses at Bethpage, and Winged Foot. A millionaire who went broke during the Depression, he left the business and wasn't rediscovered until 1974 when someone noticed the USGA had selected four of his courses to host championships that year.

William S. Flynn began his career in 1909 assisting Hugh Wilson to complete Merion. He went on to design or redesign some of the greatest courses in the country. Flynn, a hard-drinking Irishman, joined Howard Toomey to create Boca Raton Hotel, Indian Creek, Cherry Hills, Philadelphia C.C. and a complete redesign of Shinnecock Hills. He experimented with many different types of turfgrass, taught at Penn State, and did turfgrass research.

We have to throw George Crump in here despite the fact that he designed only one course. If you're going to build just one course, then Pine Valley will do nicely, thank you. Crump died after 14 holes had been completed on what is considered the best course in the world. The final four holes were completed by Hugh Wilson, C. H. Alison and H. S. Colt.

Alister MacKenzie designed more than 100 courses in the U.S. and eight foreign countries. Between 1911 and 1934 he designed and built Cypress Point, Augusta National, and worked with Bobby Jones, H.S. Colt, C.H. Alison and

Perry Maxwell.

The last of the old-school designers is Tom Bendelow with more than 400 courses in 30 different states and five Canadian Provinces. There are two gems in Florida: Dubsdread and Palma Ceia as well as three courses at Medinah. More importantly, he brought quality golf to many small towns and cities in the U.S.

Robert Trent Jones is without a doubt the granddaddy of them all. His career spanned from 1930 until 1991. In that time he built more than 450 courses in 42 states and 23 foreign countries. He also redesigned countless other courses which had been selected to host major championships. A Cornell graduate, his best courses include The Dunes, Old Watson, Shady Oaks, Bellerive, Dorado Beach, and Cotton Bay Club.

Louis S. (Dick) Wilson began his career in 1925 assisting William S. Flynn redesign Merion. He also assisted Flynn with the redesign of Shinnecock Hills. Wilson continued with Flynn when he came to Florida to supervise construction of Indian Creek on Miami Beach. During that time, he became friends with Mr. and Mrs. Paul Dye and their son Pete.

Enough said?

Wilson masterpieces include Moon Valley, La Costa, Bay Hill (original design), Doral Blue Course, Cog Hill, Desoto Lakes, NCR of Dayton, Pinetree, and Meadow Brook. He also spawned the careers of Joe Lee, Robert Von Hagge, and Bob Simmons.

Last but certainly not least is the only architect whose courses can be burned down because of his extensive use of wooden planks and railroad ties. Greatly influenced by Scottish design, Pete Dye has produced a multitude of great courses including Teeth of the Dog, The Golf Club, Harbour Town, TPC at Sawgrass, PGA West, Kiawah Island, Kingsmill, Crooked Stick, Mission Hills and Amelia Island.

Of course there are many other wonderful courses in this world, designed by creative architects. This is just a short list of the first two generations of designers and who influenced whom in the past 150 years. Most of the men mentioned built courses in Florida. You should seek out these wonderful courses and play them.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Symbolic Flag Pole Topper



Joel,

I am sending you a photo of an osprey perched on our flag pole at Black Diamond Ranch taken the week that Jack Harrell, Sr. passed away. I flew the flag at half staff that week in memory of Mr. Harrell. The osprey landed on the pole as I was driving by, and I just happened to have my camera. I have to tell you, I had goose bumps as I was taking the picture. It was very symbolic to me. I don't think this would necessarily be appropriate for the Florida Green photo contest, but I thought you might appreciate the photo. I have shared copies with the Harrell family.

John Cunningham, GCS  
Black Diamond Ranch

Thanks indeed for sharing the story and photo with all of us who knew Mr. Harrell. I'd like to think he is still keeping an eye on us along with all our other friends who have bid us farewell this past year.

By Joel Jackson, CGCS