

**future plans at Moray**

**tee up links with the past**

**24th March 2016** – For the first time in over 40 years, **Moray Golf Club** has engaged a golf course architect to help develop a blueprint for the future of its celebrated golf courses. The decision to commission an audit of both 18-hole golf courses continuesa precedent established at the renowned club of working with golf’s finest designers.

Swan Golf Designs will be the latest name to join a series of eminent golf course architects who have left their mark on the beautiful stretch of links that overlooks the Moray Firth. The club’s Old Course, for example with its revetted bunkers and undulating fairways, was laid out by Old Tom Morris in 1889. The tighter New Course was fashioned by three times Open Champion Henry Cotton whose preference for precision resulted in a shorter but equally testing route.

“Moray Golf Club has been associated with a number of legendary names in golf course architecture,” explained John Thomson, captain of Moray Golf Club which will host the qualifier for the 2016 Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open. “When the decision was made to create a masterplan that would enhance the already great holes we have at Moray, it was important to continue that precedent. That’s why we called on Swan Golf Designs.”

In a fortuitous family coincidence, Thomson’s father, Farquhar, assisted Henry Cotton during the initial design-and-build phase of the second 18-hole golf course at Moray. His central role was duly recognised when he was asked to hit the inaugural tee shot to open the New Course in 1979.

Swan Golf Designs was borne out of the successful collaboration between consultant golf course engineer Alex Swan and Henry Cotton. The duo worked with Thomson’s father on Moray’s New Course development during the 1970s. Today, the business thrives under the stewardship of Alex’s son Howard and grandson William.

“I am delighted to be going back as a second generation Swan,” commented Howard Swan. “It is great to be going back to represent the old man and to continue the family tradition. I had the good fortune of working with my dad for 20 years before he died in 1984, so it is always nice to go back to a club where he has worked. It is quite emotional to think that the old boy was here before me.”

The family connections aren’t the only thing to excite the celebrated golf course architect about the Moray project. “As a golf destination, Moray Golf Club is immensely important,” Swan noted. “It was laid out originally by Old Tom Morris in 1889, who was then at St Andrews. It is traditional links land of great proportion which has hosted some serious championships over the years. It is a golf club of some calibre.”

Moray Golf Club, which will host the 94th Scottish Student Sport Golf Championship and the 79th Scottish Student Sport Golf Team Championships in March and April, is one of the most treasured links layouts in Scotland and is placed number 34 in *Golf World’s* Top 100 Scottish golf courses. The Club has earned its championship links status by proudly hosting events such as The Northern Open, Scottish stroke play and amateur championships and Home Internationals.

“This is a hugely important step for Moray Golf Club and for the development of the New Course in particular as it approaches its 40th anniversary in 2019,” Thomson noted. “Moray is a special place, especially for lovers of traditional links golf. We want to make our courses relevant and challenging now and in the future.”

He continued: “The benefits of this project are many fold including developing a courses policy document, the planning of a work schedule and the forward planning of budgets for the next few years. That is the basis on which we set out on this journey and with the invaluable input of Swan Golf Designs we intend to complete it with carefully considered improvements that will enhance rather than alter the courses at Moray.”

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**Notes to editors:**

**About Moray Golf Club**

1) Founded in 1889, Moray Golf Club is situated in Lossiemouth, Moray, Scotland. The club has two 18-hole courses appropriately called the Old Course and the New Course.

2) A classic layout designed by Old Tom Morris, the Old Course is one of the finest links courses in Scotland with one of the most memorable closing holes you’ll find in golf. At 6,572 yards, it has a par of 71. It is No 34 in Golf World’s Top 100 Scottish Courses (2015).

3) The tighter New Course was masterminded by Henry Cotton, whose preference for precision golf can be seen in the shorter layout and smaller greens. At 6,068 yards and a par of 70, it is every bit as challenging as the Old Course.

4) For more information about Moray Golf Club, visit [www.moraygolf.co.uk](http://www.moraygolf.co.uk)

5) For more information about Swan Golf Designs, visit www.swangolfdesigns.com

For further quotes, interview opportunities and images, contact the Moray Golf Club press office at yvonne@thewordassociation.biz or call Yvonne Alexander on:

Office: +44 (0) 1337 858 807

Out of hours: +44 (0) 7976 369 260



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