

Carnegie Clark (1881 - 1959) is considered to be the father of professional golf in Australia, being instrumental in founding the PGA of Australia, the first to use and introduce the Vardon grip to the nation, as well as the first to play with the 'Haskell' rubber wound golf ball. In 1924, Clark, widely known as 'Neg', became the first 'big' money winner in the country when he won The Sun £500 Tournament at Royal Sydney. Clark was a fine teacher and a course designer of some repute, having laid out many courses in New South Wales and Queensland over a long and distinguished career

Scotland

Carnegie Clark was born in Carnoustie, Scotland on the 27th July 1881, the son of a fisherman and he learnt his golfing skills as a caddie on that town's famous links, taking up the game at the age of ten. Following on from his success as a schoolboy golfer, Clark was apprenticed to clubmaker Robert Simpson at the age of fifteen and here he was taught clubmaking and repair skills during the 12 hour work days. At seventeen, Carnegie lost to Dan Soutar in the Dalhousie Cup, however, he would turn the tables on Soutar many times over their numerous battles to come. He became one of the Carnoustie '300' - golf professionals and clubmakers who ventured out to different parts of the world to promote the game and secure their livelihoods.

His unusual first name came from his mother's maiden name - she was the sister of Andrew Carnegie of Carnegie Hall and US Steel fame, perhaps one of the richest men that ever lived. In 1900 it was estimated that he had over US\$100 million in the bank - a very tidy sum.

A new country

Clark figured his opportunities in Carnoustie would be limited and decided to emigrate to Australia, arriving in Sydney during 1902 to fulfil a twelve month contract with McMillan, Deery & Co Ltd's Sydney Sports Store at 252 George Street, Sydney. During his tenure here, Clark undertook what was to become known as his 'Northern Tour'. Visiting Tamworth, Armidale, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Warwick, Toowoomba, Ipswich, Brisbane, Casino, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Kempsey, Taree and Newcastle, 'Neg' promoted the game, gave tuition and obtained orders for golf clubs and balls.

Holdsworth MacPherson Stores obtained his signature on a twelve month contract to take effect upon his completion of the then current deal. They were importers of golf equipment and were keen for Clark to establish a golf ball and clubmaking factory for them. He was replaced at McMillan, Deery & Co Ltd by JL 'Jock' Hutchison of St Andrews, with whom Clark designed the new course for the Australian Golf Club in 1903-05. Hutchison later left Australia for the United States, where he was successful as a player, winning the USPGA championship in 1920 and the British Open in 1921. He was long remembered as one of the two 'starters' at the US Masters, with Freddie McLeod.

Clark arranged employment for his Carnoustie colleague Dan Soutar to work as a carpenter at the new organisation and cabled him to continue on to Sydney when Dan was originally heading for South Africa in 1903. James Herd Scott was travelling with Soutar and he also continued on to Sydney where he obtained the position as Manager/Greenkeeper of the Blue Mountains golf course.

Royal Sydney days

Once 'Neg' had completed his contract at Holdsworth's, he was approached to accept the position as professional at the Royal Sydney Golf Club's Bondi course. Although J Victor East already held the job as professional at Royal Sydney, 'Neg' was secured in July 1904 at £1 per week - double East's salary - supposedly with neither man having seniority - so it is little wonder that East departed shortly thereafter!

Dan Soutar turned professional at the end of 1904 and joined Neg at Royal Sydney as co-professionals, although

this did not last long as Dan headed off on his own to Marrickville Golf Club in 1907, a course that he had designed.

Clark was granted six months leave of absence during 1926 to represent Australia in tournaments in Great Britain including the Open Championship at Royal Lytham and St. Annes that was won by Bobby Jones. The Club opened a subscription for him and raised the sum of £450, and Carnegie wrote to thank the Club for its generosity and that he would uphold the Club's honour both on and off the field. Neg's son, Hastings, took charge of the Pro Shop at the Royal Sydney Golf Club during his absences and later became professional at Bowral Golf Club, where he remained for over fifty years.

When 'Neg' sought a month's leave from the Royal Sydney Golf Club in 1929, stating his health had been poor for some 18 months, he and Alice visited Tasmania. Whilst in Hobart, he had an attack of appendicitis which required the removal of his appendix and he was away from the Club for two months.

Another reason he sought extended leave was so that he could consider his position. He had seen a senior official of the Club in a compromising situation with one of the waitresses. Friction between the two men became so intense, that 'Neg' tendered his resignation on the 1st October 1930 and later the official resigned as well. The Club provided him with a final subscription of £83.

Beyond Royal Sydney

Late in 1930, Clark was appointed professional at Avondale Golf Club where he remained for five years. Earlier, 'Neg', his brother Walter who was professional at Killara Golf Club

and James H Scott (known as 'Jas'), who had just returned to Sydney after nearly two decades as professional at the Adelaide/Royal Adelaide Golf Club, opened a golf store together in Elizabeth Street (near King Street), Sydney in 1925. 'Jas' acted as Manager, although it is known both the Clark brothers visited the store on, perhaps, too many occasions in the eyes of their employers at Royal Sydney and Killara. Clark Bros. & Scott remained open for business until its closure in 1930 due to the effects of the depression.

After his retirement at the age of 55, Carnegie continued to be active, making clubs in the old workshop at his Newcastle Street, Rose Bay home and giving tuition to pupils in his backyard. From this grew the golf equipment business that still bears his name today, although the family relinquished their interests in the 1980's.

Playing career

'Neg' compiled an impressive record as a player in Australia. He was small in stature but solidly built and played in a buttoned up jacket and tie with studded boots - in later days the jacket was replaced by a cardigan. He was renowned for his iron play, especially the mashie-niblick, and it was said that he could land the ball on the green with backspin so that it sat like 'a poached egg'. The May 6, 1905 issue of 'Australasian Golf Illustrated' described Clark and his swing:

"Clark is short but stockily built, and his game is marked for its freedom and ease, particularly in his wooden play. He swings rather slower and somewhat longer than most professionals, and makes utmost use of his right shoulder in a follow-on that conspicuously assists in his distance."

Clark demonstrates his swing - note how far down the shaft he is gripping his iron.



Left: Clark the teacher, and centre: A group of professionals at the Botany Championship of 1904 included Gil Martin of the Australian Golf Club seated at right, and in front JL 'Jock' Hutchison of Massey, Harris & Co. Hutchison and Martin teamed up with Clark to design the Australian's new Kensington Course.

In his first year in Australia he won the 1902 Botany Competition, later to become the professional Championship and in 1904, finished in fourth place as the leading professional behind three amateurs in Hon. Michael Scott, H R Hyland and Dan Soutar. Clark won his first Australian Open Championship in 1906 at Royal Sydney, shooting 322 with Dan Soutar in the runner-up position, the first of five consecutive second places for the burly Scot. Clark's first prize of £10 went towards paying for his wedding to Miss Alice Fullarton who was previously one of the clubhouse staff at Royal Sydney. Clark's play impressed all observers, a contemporary account advising, "he appeared to feel no responsibility, playing with a coolness and steadiness of a practice round, and quite oblivious of the presence and applause of the crowd."

Clark won again in 1910 by a whopping 11 shot margin with a score of 306 at Royal Adelaide and in 1911 saw off Fred Popplewell by a single stroke to win once more over his beloved Royal Sydney links. He was still very competitive in the early 1920's, as shown by his runner-up placing behind Alex Russell in the 1924 Australian Open at Royal Melbourne. Clark also won the Australian PGA Championship in 1908. The Australian Golfers Handbook of 1960 suggests that 'Neg' also won the Australian PGA Championship in 1904, 1905, 1907, 1909 and 1912, however, the records held by the PGA suggest Dan Soutar won the 1905 and 1907 Championships and that no records exist for 1909 and 1912.

The 1924 *The Sun* £500 Tournament at Royal Sydney was at the time Australia's richest ever professional purse. It was a match play event and Carnegie was up against his younger

brother Walter in the 36 hole match play final. Al Howard, golf professional and architect describes the finale:

"Neg and his younger brother Walter were all square at the 36th. And so once more down the fateful first went the brothers Clark and this time at the 37th, Neg's putt for a win gave up the ghost at a most opportune moment for him and laid itself down as a 'dead stymie' in the path of Walter's putt. And what may you well ask is a 'dead stymie'? In brief, the stymie rule and its more fatal relation the 'dead stymie' became extinct some fifty years ago. The rule applied to match play events and the golf ball putted by player A (Neg) stymied or completely blocked the line of the putt of player B (Walter). It was a case of 'no stymie' should the balls be closer than six inches. To determine this measurement scorecards of that period had printed on them 'this card measures six inches across'. However, should the distance separating the two balls exceed six inches, then the stymie was said to be 'laid'.

The dreaded 'dead stymie' occurred in this match when Neg missed his putt for a birdie three but in doing so completely blocked Walter's putt for a birdie three and a win. The ironic twist to this 'dead stymie' was that Walter, with a short putt to win the Sun £500, attempted to chip over Neg's ball, but in the ensuing 'knock on' it was Neg's ball that rolled into the cup for a birdie three. Renowned sports cartoonist of the day, cricketer Arthur Mailey, profiled Neg gazing into outer space murmuring 'Alas - my poor brother'."

Al Howard also described some of Carnegie's playing exploits: "One brilliant highlight in a long career was Carnegie's 66 in a match at Ballarat in 1907. That score in that

period was equal to breaking the magical 60 today and it lowered the previous course record by seven shots."

Clark's Ballarat Open final round of 66 included no less than eight threes, five of them on the back nine which he covered in 32. He considered it the best round of his career, while Dan Soutar wrote that, "Clark played a game he might never do again in a hundred years and won easily. I do not begrudge him his win as he played a game that would win every time and he could have beaten pretty well anybody."

Howard also records that, "Carnegie is credited with introducing the Vardon grip to Australian golfers in 1905, but interestingly it was the second time around for Neg. His first efforts at the Vardon overlap resulted in a loss of form and all sorts of slices. Failure likewise attended Carnegie's first tests in 1903 with the new fangled rubber wound golf ball. Probably trying to give it his best shot, Neg promptly hooked it into a nearby lake and thus established the precedent whereby all new balls automatically go to water. Dan Soutar and to a lesser extent Carnegie, introduced Australian golfers to the famous "Carnoustie Dip", a mannerism copied, but seldom perfected by their disciples. The 'dip' action, a downward drop of the knees coming in to the shot, enabled them to 'pick' the ball off from closely mown or tight lies."

Teaching

Carnegie was a fine and respected teacher with the necessary patience to instruct beginners. Clark's teaching philosophy was fairly straightforward: "Golf can be made the simplest game in the world and I do not agree that the average golfer needs to practice all the time to play a reasonable game. Once his swing is grooved, he will always be

able to play a fairly good game. I have taught many people to become good golfers, and the old adage of 'keep your eye on the ball' was one that I soon learned had flaws. You can still move your head and keep your eye on the ball. So I told my pupils to play with the chin - concentrate on its position and half your troubles are over."

In May of 1905, 'Australasian Golf Illustrated' reported that: "Since coming to Australia, Clark has been in great demand, and his pupils, mainly on the Sydney suburban courses, have made great advances in acquiring style and resultant ability, which, without such professional instruction could have been attained in no other way."

PGA of Australia

Carnegie Clark and Dan Soutar were instrumental in establishing the Professional Golfer's Association of Australia. Its first meeting in 1911 was held in Carnegie's pro shop at Royal Sydney, sited to the left of the first tee. By this time the Scottish born professionals were being joined by home grown ones and the PGA became dedicated to furthering tournament opportunities and proper training for its members. Carnegie also fought strongly for improved conditions for professionals with their employer clubs, and at Royal Sydney, Clark endured a number of battles to allow him the right to sell golf balls, teach members' children and to get a fair retainer. In 1921 he was on a base retainer of £75 at Royal Sydney, while his counterpart at Royal Melbourne was on £106 per year. This no doubt gave Carnegie the drive to increase his income by other means, through clubmaking, lessons and course design.

Family

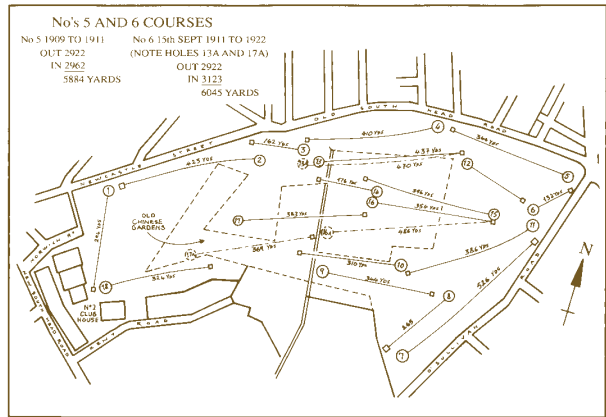
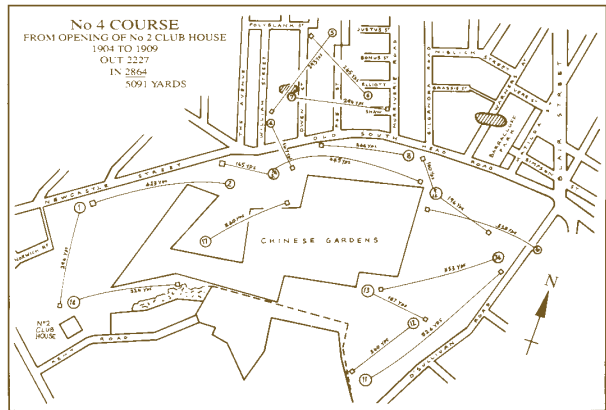
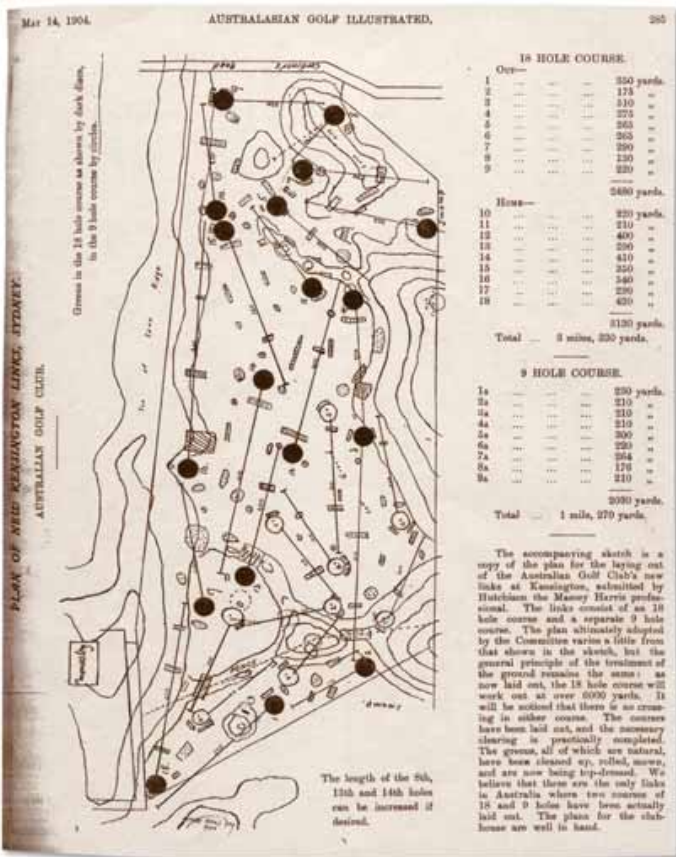
'Neg' married Alice Fullerton shortly after his first Australian Open triumph of 1906 and they lived in a cottage named 'Keith', located at 45 Newcastle Street, Rose Bay where they raised two daughters - Jesse and Nancy, and three sons - Hastings, Carnegie Jr. and Keith. The house was an easy walk to the golf course, described by Al Howard as "but a short niblick left of the 1st green. The well worn track that meanders through the old paper barks left of the first fairway was first blazed by young Neg when he was appointed

to Royal Sydney in 1904 and in fair weather and foul he trod that path for the next twenty seven years." It was close to the Rose Bay Hotel as well, where 'Neg' would ensconce himself at 5pm each day to enjoy a beer or two, sitting in the same chair for close to 50 years.

Neg eventually brought his entire family out to Australia - father, mother, brothers and sisters. Neg's brothers John (known as 'Jack'), Reginald (known as 'Reg') and Walter (known as 'Watty') departed

Carnoustie bound for Sydney, sadly Jack and Reg were killed in the First World War. His sons Hastings and Keith became professional golfers, with Keith working at Avondale GC after the Second World War, while Hastings Clark was the long time professional at Bowral Golf Club. Carnegie Jr., who commenced the club manufacturing business 'Carnegie Clark and Sons', was a good amateur player and his son Peter is President of CPM Golf Corporation based in Manila, Philippines.

Carnegie passed away on 3rd February 1959 at the age of 78. Sadly, immediately after Carnegie's passing, his wife Alice burned all the records of his life - diaries, newspaper articles, letters and anything she could lay her hands on. His sons were horrified by her actions and a good deal of unique golf history was lost forever. Carnegie Jr. and Keith operated the clubmaking business from a shed in their father's backyard and continued here after Carnegie's death up until 1980 when their mother died.



Above: Page from 'Australasian Golf Illustrated' of May 1904, showing Hutchison's plan for the Australian Golf Club's two new courses.



Above: A natural bunker on the Kensington Links of the Australian Golf Club as recorded in 1905. The course was laid out by Carnegie Clark, Gil Martin and Jock Hutchison.



Above: Layouts of Royal Sydney's courses 4, 5 and 6 laid out by Carnegie Clark.

Left: Carnegie (centre with his brother Walter on the first tee at Royal Sydney, scene of their dramatic playoff in 1924.

Designs

'Neg' was requested to design his first course in Australia shortly after his arrival. It was a nine hole course for the **Blue Mountains Golf Club** - now known as Leura Golf Club, and was opened for play in November 1902. Other requests for designs were soon forthcoming.

A course for the **Honourable Company of Parramatta Golfers** (the name no doubt unashamedly adopted from the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers) was laid out in Parramatta Park by Carnegie in 1902. The Club received permission from the park trustees to lay out a course with the greens fenced off, but no play was allowed on Sundays. The park featured natural waterways that ran from north to south and they were used by Clark to such advantage in the layout that bunkering was considered unnecessary. Interestingly, the course only sported 17 holes, with the 2nd hole that returned to the clubhouse being played twice. By 1935 the Club had ceased to exist.

The Australian Golf Club was formed in 1882 and is recognised as the oldest club in the country still in existence. When the Club could not extend the lease of the property at Botany where their course was sited, a new parcel of sandy ground was purchased at Kensington for £60 an acre. Clark later lamented the loss of the Botany layout, describing it as *"easily the best links in Australia at that time."* Gilbert Martin had been appointed professional at the Australian's Botany course in 1902 having started at the Club as Willie Hunter's assistant 1899, and in February 1904 he approached both Carnegie Clark and J.L. 'Jock' Hutchison to assist him in designing this new layout for his club. The trio submitted plans for an 18 hole course of over 6,000 yards, together with a ladies 9-holer of over 2,000 yards. After some minor adjustments, their plans were approved by the Club and work commenced, with the new layout open for play in early 1905. It was reported in 1904 that all 27 holes had been laid out without the need for any crossing of holes, which was obviously quite commonplace at this time.

Both Hutchison and Clark expressed the view that their new Kensington links would be superior to the old Botany layout.

Clark was approached by the **Cooma Golf Club** in 1903 to design them an 18 hole course. The property bounded the Cooma Creek and no doubt Carnegie used the creek as a distinctive hazard for many of its holes, as he had done at Parramatta. The sand greens were only 18 feet (6 metres) in diameter, making a difficult target to hit and these were fenced off with post and rail fencing to keep the horses and cattle at bay that grazed on the common. The Club moved after WW2 to a new course laid out by Clark's old Carnoustie colleague, James Herd Scott.

As a designer, Carnegie Clark will be primarily remembered for the design work he undertook at his beloved **Royal Sydney**. The course had many incarnations in its early days as various land parcels were obtained and others sold off. This involved Carnegie designing no less than three distinct layouts for the Club, the No. 4 course in 1904, the No. 5 course in 1909 and the No. 6 course in 1911. The course extent gradually moved south over this time, from Bondi into Rose Bay, with the greatest change being the acquisition of the market garden land that was farmed by Chinese immigrants and known as the Chinese Gardens. This allowed the expansion of the No. 6 course up to a length of 6045 yards (5500 metres) from the 5091 yards of the No. 4 course (4625 metres). In 1905 *'Australasian Golf Illustrated'* reported that Dan Soutar assisted Clark in laying out the courses at Royal Sydney:

"Latterly he has been, with Soutar, put in charge of the Rose Bay links, and his advice and attention will doubtless help materially in the completion of the two courses that the Royal Sydney Club has so auspiciously begun."

In the Southern Highlands of NSW, Carnegie designed the **Moss Vale Golf Club's** new course in 1904 for a fee of £11-3-00, and gave lessons while he was there for three shillings and sixpence.

Liverpool Golf Club asked Clark to design them a 9 hole course in 1904 on the eastern bank of the George's River.

In 1903 Clark journeyed north to Queensland and laid out a new course for the **Brisbane Golf Club** at Yeerongpilly that opened in May of 1904. This 18 holer was at the time the first course considered to be 'full length' in Queensland. Scots were prominent in the Brisbane GC, like many others in the early days of golf in this country, and this no doubt had an influence on their decision to employ the Carnoustie man to design their new layout. Dr Mackenzie later prepared a redesign of the Yeerongpilly course during his famous Australian visit of 1926, although the Club was not particularly enamoured with his advice and implemented little of his ideas.

While in Queensland in 1903, Carnegie also advised the Ipswich Golf Club to convert their unsatisfactory 'chipped' greens (a form that was later superseded by oiled sand greens on most country courses) to couch grass. **Tamworth Golf Club** (1906), **Moree Golf Club** (1907), and **Moore Park Golf Club's** first 9 holes (1913), were all designed by Clark. At Moore Park, Carnegie was approached by the Deputy Town Clerk of Sydney to inspect the site with a view to building a 9 hole course where the working man could play the game. This was a passion for Carnegie and he later said that, *"All work done by me for Moore Park was free as it was my sincere wish that golf be given the chance it so richly deserved."* The course opened in May 1913 and was soon attracting around 1350 rounds per week. Clark extended the course to 18 holes in 1922.

His designing activities were halted due to the First World War and it was not until 1920 that he recommenced design work by laying out the **Queensland Golf Club's** first 6 holes in 1920 (later to become Royal Queensland). The course was later extended to 18 and the Club also took advice from Dr Mackenzie in 1926.

Clark kept busy with a number of new courses in New South Wales, including the **West Wyalong Golf Club's** first 9 holes (1920), **Port Macquarie Golf Club** (1921), **Mittagong Golf Club** (1924), **Dubbo Golf Club** (1925-6), returning in 1926 to West Wyalong to design their additional 9 holes.

The GA7 feature on Dan Soutar describes the design that Soutar undertook in conjunction with his good friend Carnegie Clark for the **Pymble Golf Club** in 1925. Soutar also prepared a site report for the New South Wales Golf Club on its planned course at La Perouse, however, as the site had moved slightly the Club required another design. Soutar was apparently unavailable and so Carnegie Clark and 'Jas' Scott were engaged to prepare the design that appeared in the company's prospectus in March 1926. This was an opportunity missed for Clark and Scott, as their design never eventuated. Once the Club had heard from Royal Melbourne that Dr Mackenzie was available for consultation in late 1926, they engaged him to review their plans for the new course. One can only wonder what a Clark and Scott design over that wonderful La Perouse terrain would have been like.

In the late 1920's and early 1930's golf course construction in Australia virtually ceased due to the economic effects of the Depression. It wasn't until the mid 1930's that Clark's design work recommenced, with a redesign of the second nine of the **Inverell Golf Club's** course in 1934. **Walcha Golf Club** was designed by Carnegie in 1937, and he followed this with a layout for the **Coffs Harbour Golf Club's** first 9 holes in 1938-39.

It has also been established that 'Neg' designed the **Waratah Golf Club's** layout in Newcastle, the **Kempsey Golf Club's** layout and the **Bowral Golf Club's** second 9 holes although some suggest he had designed the entire course. After the Second World War, Clark designed a new 18 hole course for the **Bowral Country Golf Club** in the Southern Highlands in 1948-49.

The Man and his Legacy

Carnegie Clark was described by his grandson Peter as being a genuinely kind old man who loved children and being with them. Peter and his cousin Joanne spent a lot of time with their grandfather in the 1950's and he recalls Carnegie giving him golf lessons and urging him to play golf.

Carnegie was the first of the Carnoustie professionals to emigrate to Australia and these men imparted their love of golf, made clubs, taught the game and laid out courses wherever they went. Clark may not be remembered as the most outstanding golf course designer in Australia, but he laid out many competent courses over the course of his career. He will, though, be primarily recalled as a disciple of golf who spread the 'good news' about this great game to many Australians - and you cannot ask more of a golfer than that.

Al Howard's words provide a fitting epitaph for Carnegie Clark and his life's journey in the service of golf:

"In 1926 Fred Popplewell, Harry Sinclair, Tommy Howard and Carnegie made a pilgrimage to the British Open and his beloved Carnoustie. That was where it all began for young Neg as a wee laddie in the 19th Century and in 1959, nigh to the first green at Royal Sydney, was where it all ended for that Grand Old Man of Golf."

by John Scarth and Neil Crafter



Clark as the elder statesman.

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Above: Jock Hutchison in 1921, the year of his British Open victory, and Jock Hutchison in action - he was from St Andrews and spent some years in Australia as a professional, combining with Clark and Martin to design the Australian's new course. He left Australia for the US and had a successful playing career, winning the 1920 USPGA and the 1921 British Open. Below: Jock (left) and Freddie Macleod were popular starters at The Masters for many years, and Jock in his older days.



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