GOLF AT THE HEART OF PORTRUSH

Spreading the Word of Golf

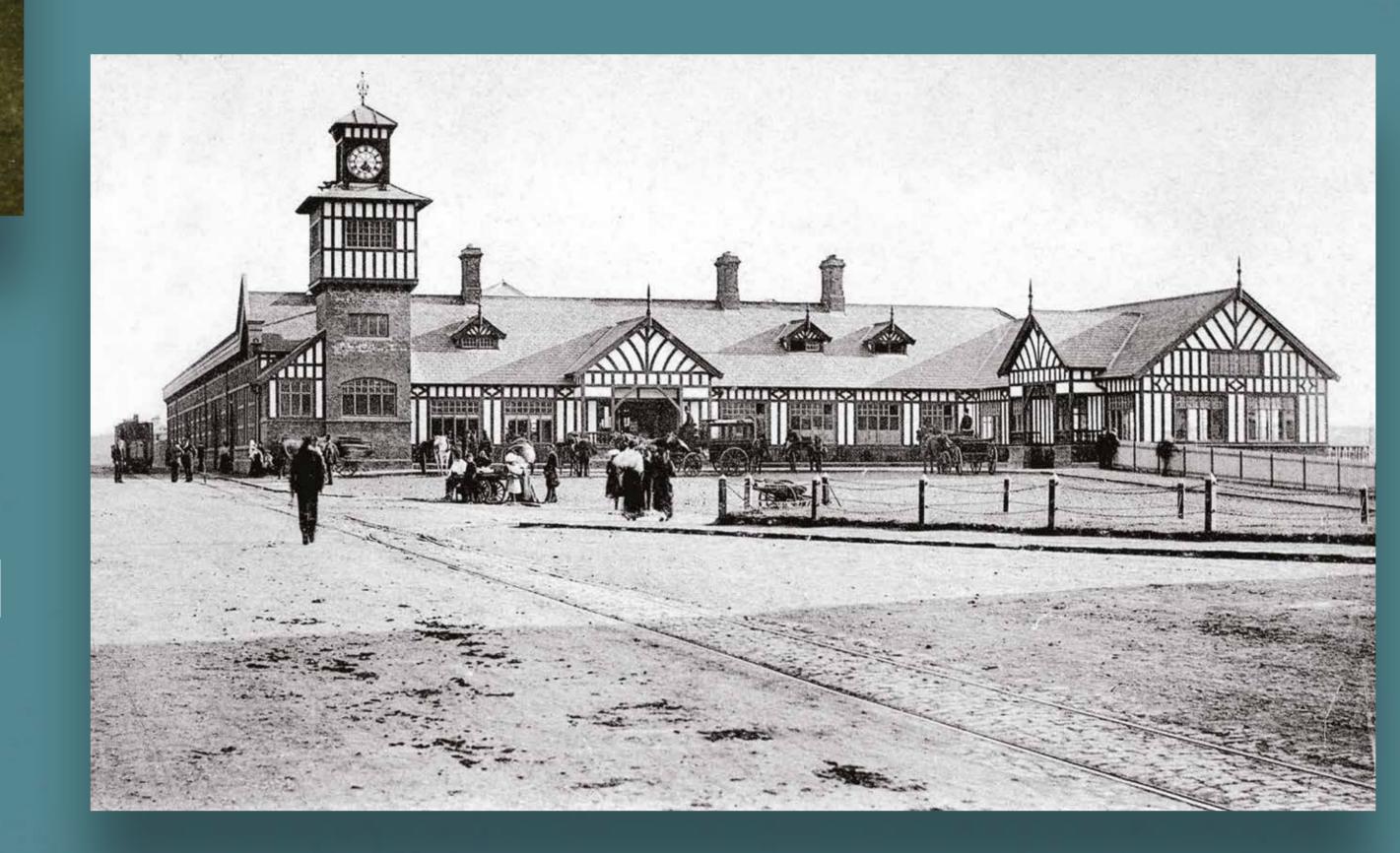


Steam train on railway tracks.

Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Portrush began to grow in popularity and became renowned for its air and sea baths, a popular Victorian health trend. Many visitors also came to Portrush by the regular passenger boat service building is still in use today and elements of the original features can still be seen within the current commercial premises. from Glasgow.

Railways unleashed a hunger for travel in the 19th Century and helped to spread the 'word of golf'. The travelling golfer was seduced with reduced fares Portrush in 1855 brought many changes and suddenly this remote coastal town became more accessible.

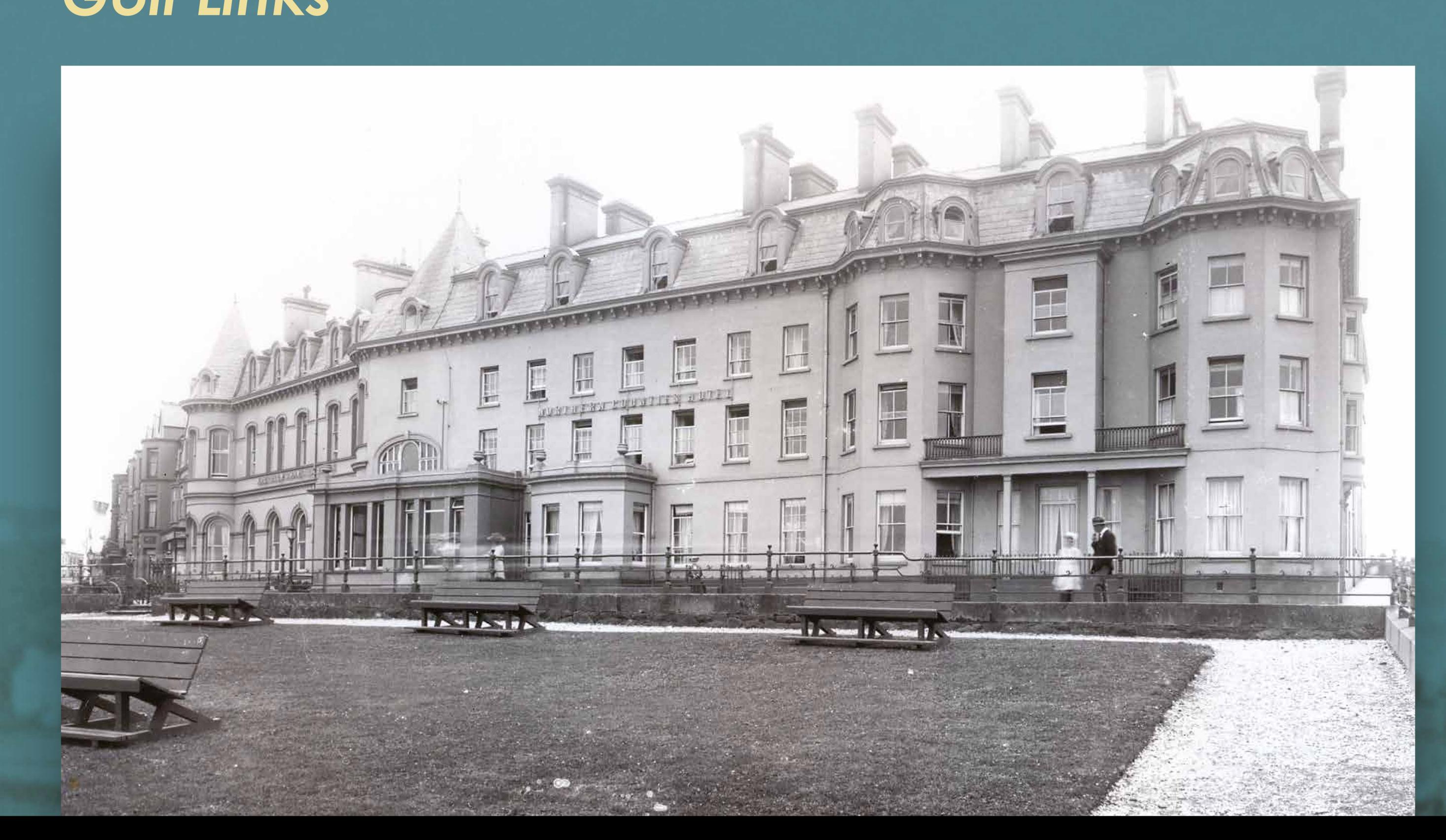


Half timbered 'mock' Tudor style train station at Portrush designed by Berkeley Deane Wise completed in 1893. Much of the original Courtesy of John Moore

Green with Envy

With its wild landscape of linksland Portrush was perfect for golf. The Belfast News Letter on Monday April 2, 1888 reported that a new green had been laid at Portrush and it was in close proximity to the Railway Station. This added to the towns many attractions as a tourist destination and the golfer would now no longer need to travel across the water to play the ancient game.

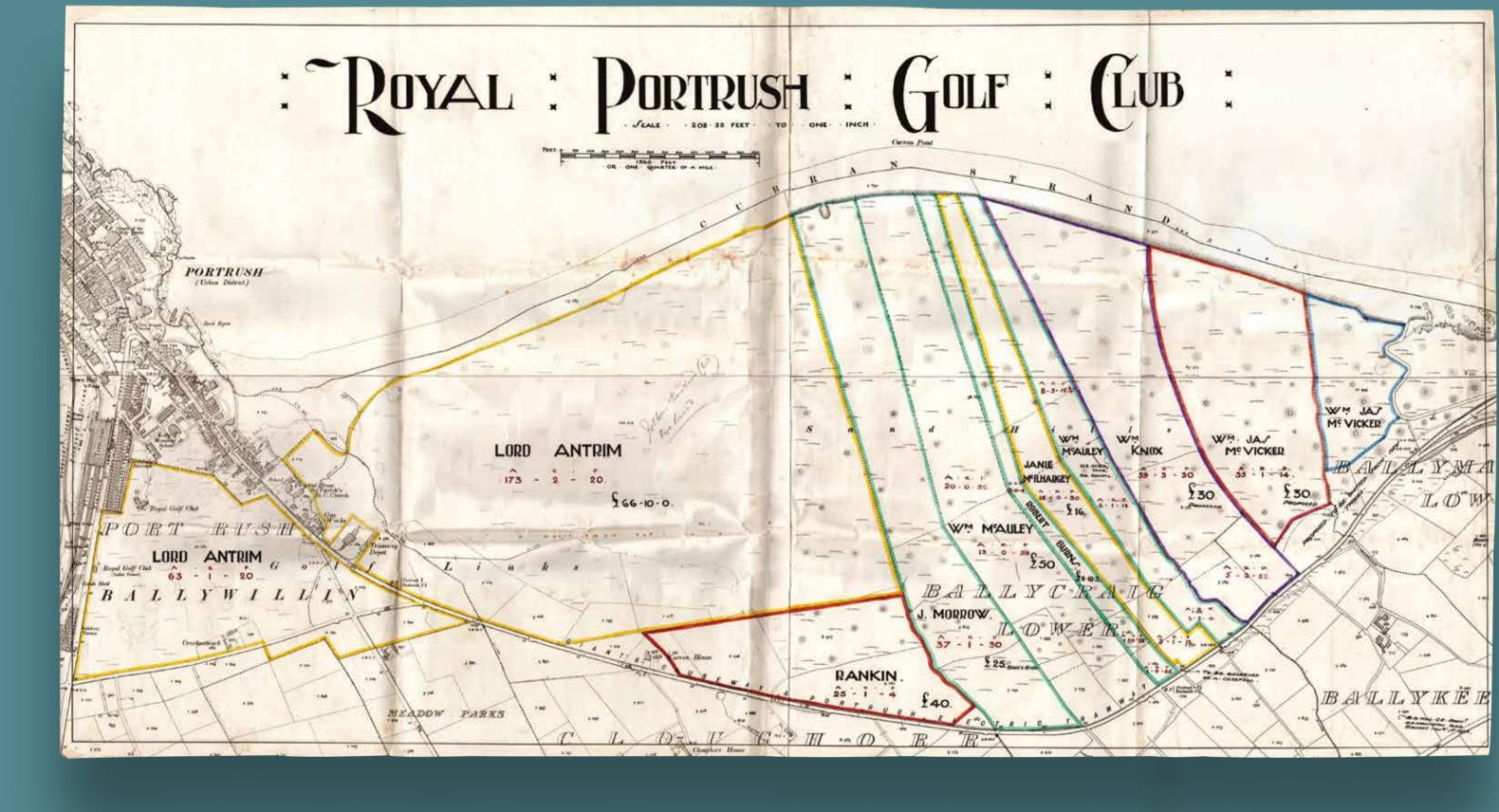
Golf Links



Original members of the County Golf Club on the official opening 12 May, 1888. Courtesy of Royal Portrush Golf Club

Join the Club

In May 1888 the first golf club in Portrush had its official opening and was called 'The County Golf Club'. Members from the Royal Belfast Golf Club travelled by train to inaugurate the opening of the new golf club. Local newspapers reported how local residents stared in amazement at the golfers as they played the game resplendent in their red coats.



The historic golf links of Royal Portrush Golf Club including the area known as the Triangle which lay at the heart of Portrush. Courtesy of PRONI

Portrush became renowned for its 'good golf'. The Triangle was part of the original course that lay in the heart of Portrush and you can still walk across part of this historic section, adjacent to the Dunluce Centre. After Old Tom Morris, legendary golfer and green keeper at St. Andrews, came to Portrush in 1889 to play an exhibition match against golf professional Alec Day Morris, he recommended alterations to the course. By 1890 an eighteen hole course had been laid together with a 9 hole ladies course.

Seal of approval

The St Andrews

of Ireland



Masters of the Club

John Aitken was official club and ball-maker at Royal Portrush until 1905. Aitken patented several golf balls; 'The Aitken', 'The Clan' and 'The Portrush and clubmaker in 1926 and remained until



Metal club head made by Master Club and Ball maker John Aitken. Aitken had a workshop in the second club house.

Courtesy Albert Rhodich

Historic Landscapes

Harry Colt was a legendary golf course designer and was commissioned by Royal Portrush to draw up a new scheme which was formally opened in 1933. Royal Portrush now consisted of two courses with the original old 'Triangle' section abandoned. It was not until 1942 that the links received the names by which we know them today; 'The Dunluce Course' and 'The 'Valley Course'.

It was said that Colt had built a monument more enduring than brass and he was so satisfied with the results that he lent his name to the 6th hole. Today this historic landscape is carefully managed and maintained by Royal Portrush to ensure its preservation for future generations.

Rathmore Golf Club: Built by the Players for the Players

Prior to the founding of Rathmore Golf Club golfers from Portrush were known as The Town Players or Resident Players, known locally as the Privileged Players. With support from Royal Portrush a new club was formed in 1947 called Rathmore Golf Club. The founding fathers of Rathmore had a determination to make the game of golf accessible.

As Rathmore Golf Club grew in numbers a site was acquired for the building of a clubhouse. Members gave their trade and expertise voluntarily while others donated building materials. The new clubhouse was opened in 1953.



A 'Portrush Lily' ball made by John Aitken.

Courtesy of Royal Portrush Golf Club

Harry Colt famous golf course designer. Courtesy of Royal Portrush Golf Club

