



Clockwise from top right:

Jane McElligott, third left, presented the Donald Ross clubs to Historylinks curator Lynne Mahoney, second left. Also in the picture, from left, are Brian Munro, who has a family link to Donald Ross, Professor David Bell, a member of the Dornoch Heritage Society board of trustees and Alison Davies, co-chairperson of the board.

Donald Ross as a young man. He emigrated from Dornoch to America in 1899 at the age of 27.

The clubs are engraved with Donald Ross's name.

Donald Ross in his older years. He died in 1948.

Sculptor David Annand (left) and Professor David Bell, past captain of Royal Dornoch, pictured with the clay model of the statue of Highland icons Donald Ross and John Sutherland, which will feature at the entrance to the new clubhouse.



Ross clubs donated to museum

THE great-niece of the legendary Dornoch-born golf course designer Donald Ross has donated five of his clubs to the town's Historylinks Museum.

Jane McElligott, who is from Canada, presented the three irons and two woods to museum curator Lynne Mahoney when she visited Dornoch this week, accompanied by her cousins.

The presentation took place on Tuesday outside the former family home of Donald Ross at 3 St Gilbert Street, where a blue plaque commemorates his connection to the building.

Donald Ross, who was born in 1872, was the first professional at Dornoch Golf Club before moving to the United States in 1899, at the age of 27. He died in 1948.

He was hugely influential in the development of golf in the United States, designing and improving more than 400 courses, with Pinehurst No 2 widely regarded as his masterpiece.

Jane is the granddaughter of Donald Ross's sister, Jane Calder. Her father, Donnie Calder, grew up in Dornoch and emigrated to Canada with his wife in 1951. Jane recalled how the Donald Ross clubs came to be in her family.

"When my parents moved to Canada, they had no family, but Donald Ross's daughter, Lilian, lived a couple of hundred miles away. She and my father became close," she said. "My father visited her in New Hampshire from Montreal once, and she took him up to the barn. There was a pile of clubs lying there. She said they were her father's clubs and that he could take as many as he wanted."

"They have been in the family ever since and have been all over the place, including Geneva when I lived there. I thought about what I could do with them. I could have sold them, but I really did not want to do that. I wanted them to be somewhere they could be enjoyed."

She added: "I am so pleased to share these clubs with Historylinks Museum and with Dornoch, a place that was so close to Donald Ross's heart all his life. He would be so glad to know they are here now, as is the whole family."

The clubs are expected to be displayed in a golf exhibition room created by Historylinks to showcase Dornoch's golfing heritage and notable figures from the past 100 years.

Curator Lynne Mahoney said: "We are absolutely thrilled that Jane has given such an important collection of Donald Ross's clubs to Historylinks. We know that locals and visitors will enjoy seeing these original pieces in our museum and that they will shed even more light on his amazing life story."

Royal Dornoch Golf Club has commissioned Scots sculptor David Annand to create bronze statues of Donald Ross and also of John Sutherland, who served the club as club secretary for nearly 60 years.

The statues will be installed at the entrance to the club's new eco-friendly £13.9 million clubhouse, due to open in December.

Royal Dornoch's general manager Neil Hampton: "Royal Dornoch is delighted that we will have more items belonging to Donald Ross back here in Dornoch. Having the clubs and other artefacts on display in the museum will give a deeper understanding of his approach to golf course architecture."