

2018 Moderator's Golf Tournament



Royal Dornoch Golf Club
in support of
Dornoch Cathedral

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Foreword

Welcome to the 2018 Moderator's Golf Tournament. I am delighted you have chosen to spend a couple of days with us in Dornoch to enjoy some golf and fellowship in support of our Cathedral.

Dornoch Cathedral and Royal Dornoch Golf Club enjoy a close relationship and in 2016 I wrote a series of thoughts about each hole on the Championship Course. Golf is a spiritual exercise and these thoughts were not designed to provide you with the perfect excuse to go golfing instead of to worship, but offer an opportunity to help your game be a more complete experience as you begin a round that exercises body, mind and spirit.

You may know that as Moderator my theme this year is "Walking Alongside People", and what better way to walk alongside others than a game of golf? The Royal Dornoch Golf courses will test the games of players of every level, but remember it is in the end a game and it is meant to be fun.

We hope you will have enjoyed your day on the links and the memories this book will have helped to capture. And thank you for your generous support of Dornoch Cathedral.

Susan Brown



The Right Reverend Susan Brown
Moderator of the Church of Scotland &
Chaplain to the Queen



Brief History

Dornoch Cathedral and Royal Dornoch Golf Club are two of the most recognised and prominent institutions in the burgh of Dornoch and while both draw a large number of visitors each year, they are more important as mainstays of community life in Dornoch.

The Cathedral origins date to 1224 when Gilbert de Moravia, Bishop of Caithness began construction of the Cathedral at his own expense. The first services were held in the Cathedral in 1239 and the original tower and transepts are believed to have been completed around the time of Gilbert's death in 1245. Based on archeological evidence, the nave was not completed for some 200 years after the rest of the building. Originally a Catholic church, the Dornoch Cathedral has been a Presbyterian parish church since 1689. While the Church of Scotland has no bishops, the Dornoch Cathedral retains its title as such due to its history.

During the nearly 800 years of its existence the Cathedral has endured several burnings and destructions and subsequent restorations. The most significant restoration, completed in 1837 and financed by the Duchess-Countess of Sutherland, brought the building to its current configuration. In the 1920's, a renovation to remove the Victorian plaster and lathe from the interior to reveal the original underlying stonework was undertaken leaving us with what we see today. The magnificent stained glass adorning the cathedral windows has all been installed since 1900.

Royal Dornoch Golf Club was established in 1877 although the Club and Dornoch in 2016 celebrated 400 years of golf being played on the links of Dornoch. Considered one of the top golf courses in the world, Royal Dornoch always provides a tough but fair test of a golfer's skill. The course lies largely on common good land which is enjoyed by not only golfers, but walkers and nature lovers on a daily basis. It boasts stunning views in every direction and is home to a richly biodiverse population of plants and animals.

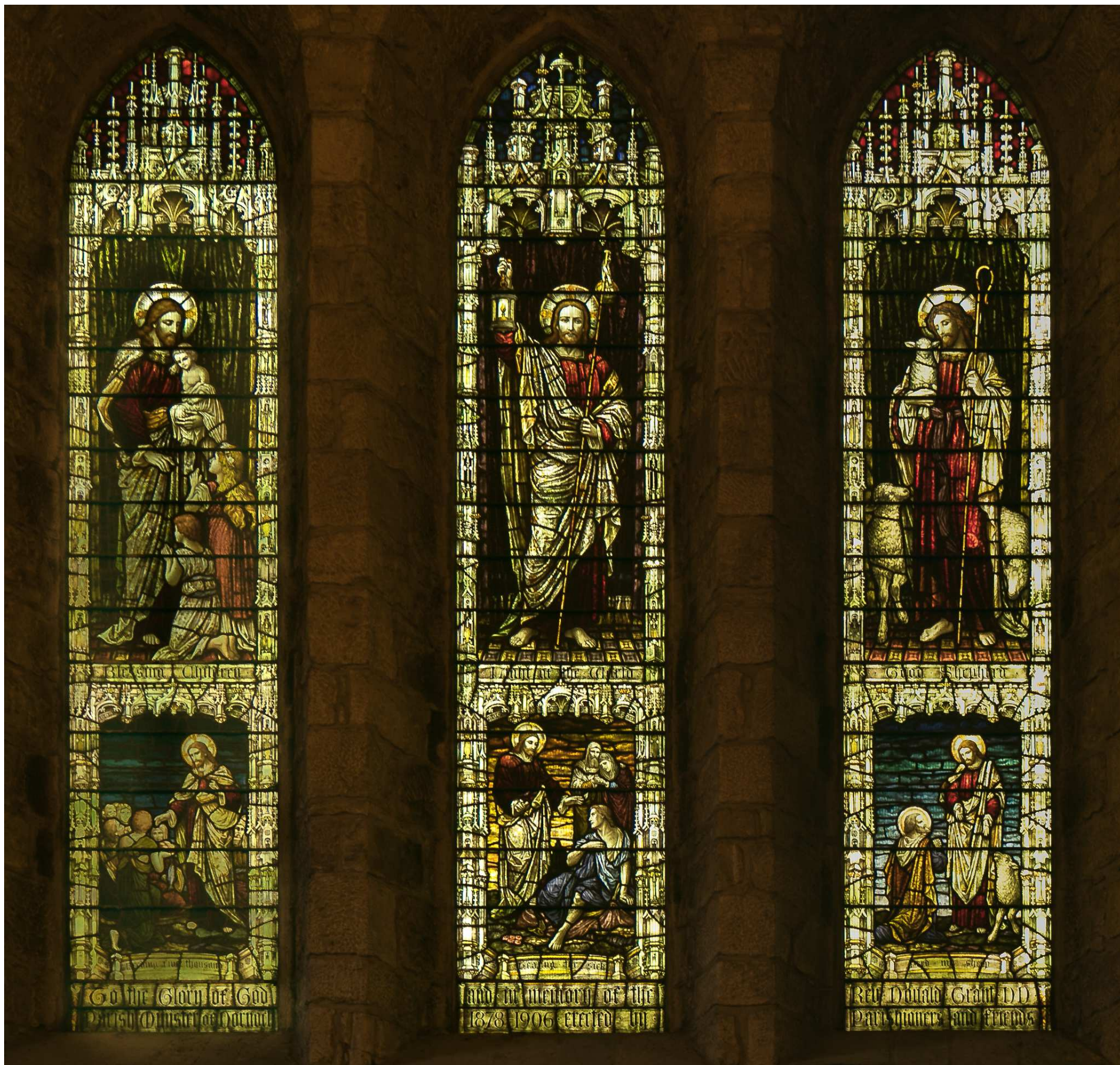
Dornoch, the Cathedral and Royal Dornoch Golf Club are inextricably linked. All derive benefit from the existence of the others for visitors and residents alike. Dornoch is a special place and your presence here to participate in the golf tournament to benefit Dornoch Cathedral means you have woven yourselves into the tapestry that is the history of Dornoch.

Dornoch Cathedral















Royal Dornoch Golf Club



#1

In the beginning...draw breath and enjoy the clean score card and all the possibilities that lie ahead. Choose now to take one step at a at time and enjoy what that step holds.



#2

Small is beautiful – and testing. One word can build up or knock down. How can the little words we speak be more encouraging?



#3

The course opens up before you. Sea, hills, sweeping fairways. Pause to admire the natural beauty around you and appreciate what the Creator and humans can do together.



#4

The fairway slopes seaward and takes your ball with it. What are the things that pull you from the path you should be taking?



#5

Looking down from on high, think about a highlight in your life. As you walk to your tee shot, tell your partner what for you, is one of the moments you have felt most 'blessed'.



#6

Be warned! A bunker with a magnetic draw awaits you. Choose your club carefully and think of the choices you have made in life. You have to live with the consequences!



#7

*A wide and straight fairway greets you. Yes, this hole is Stroke Index 2...
Sometimes it is when life appears straightforward that we find ourselves surprised
by troubles. Who is it you turn to at such times? Now turn round and look behind
you. Be stunned by the view...*



#8

Focus on Embo Pier in the distance – but don't forget the drop! A reminder for people of faith that they have NOT to be so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly use! Keep your eyes open to who and what's around you.



#9

Stand for a moment and listen. What can you hear? Soak up the sound and let it re-energise you as you approach halfway.



#10

Fuaran is Gaelic for a well or spring. Did you notice it? You passed a little river that otters tumble down in the early morning. Now you are at the halfway house – take (or buy) a drink and think of the simple joy of being refreshed.



#11

A long hole with the chance of a seat at the end! How important is rest and relaxation? Be at peace – no matter the score!



#12

A path crossed the fairway. Remember and share with your partner, how the path of your life crossed with a significant other in your life. Think of how wonderful is the gift of love.



#13

Run up to the top of the dune behind the Tee and look out over the sea and beach. Psalm 46 talks of roaring seas and shaking mountains, but whether the sea is wild or calm, think of the beauty and fragility of the natural world. How can we enjoy it and take care for it?



#14

Rough, no bunkers but a double dog-leg. For many this is Royal Dornoch's signature hole. Let the challenge excite – and rise to it. Life is too short not to have times when you push yourself to your limits...



#15

The easiest hole on the course – if you play it well! Select your club and know as you do that this hole, like life, is what you make it.



#16

Onwards and upwards! From sea level at the tee take yourself over to the bench at the left of the green and enjoy the panorama. It puts your golf into perspective and brings to mind Psalm 8 which talks of all God has made and asks the question – what is mankind, that you are mindful of them?



#17

From the heights to the depths! But you emerge onto a green that's big and welcoming. As you head for the final hole, you meet those only just beginning their round. Wish them well as you continue to the 18th Tee.



#18

As you prepare to tee off, think of the number of people in the last 400 years who have stood where you are. Regardless of your round, be grateful for the energy to play and for the company and the scenery. Take a deep breath. Swing slow and true and give thanks for the exercise of body, mind and spirit.







About the Author

Ashley Rose is a photographer who lives most of the year in Dornoch. An avid and accomplished golfer, she is a member of Royal Dornoch Golf Club and involved in activities of the Cathedral and the community. American by birth, Ashley finds Dornoch and the Highlands of Scotland more home than any of the many places she has lived over the years

Ashley is currently enrolled in an MA Photography course in Falmouth University. This is her second book. Her first, 19 Sutherland Bridges, was published in May of 2018.

This book was conceived as a limited edition to commemorate the 2018 Moderator's Golf Tournament and The Right Reverend Susan Brown's year as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Both the Cathedral and the Golf Club are important fixtures and are among the oldest institutions in the burgh of Dornoch. It is only fitting to celebrate them together in this publication.

Ashley Rose is versatile photographer, though she specialises in photographing the natural world and human interactions within that world. More of her work and links to her blog can be found at *chasingthewildlife.com*.





Credits and References

A Brief History of Dornoch Cathedral, Ian Ross-Harper, History Links Trust

Hole by Hole Inspirations, Susan Brown, 2016

Royal Dornoch Championship Course Guide, Royal Dornoch Golf Club

All Photography and text by Ashley Rose.

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