Comments by The Stanley Thompson Society in Response to V. Petch Sept. 23, 2014 Report

The Stanley Thompson Society directors have reviewed the report "Minaki Lodge Golf Course Assessment", dated Sept. 23, 2014 . This brief report provides comment on and needed corrections to some statements made therein.

Our report will use the page and paragraph number of the 2014 report so that readers can easily locate the offending statements.

Page 1, 2nd paragraph,

Petch says,

"--- is believed to have been designed by golf course architect Stanley Thompson in 1924.

"There is some indication that Thompson may have been involved in the design--"

"It is possible that he was consulted by CN as they proceeded to develop the property.”

STS Comment:

It is the position of the Stanley Thompson Society that Stanley Thompson designed the Minaki Golf Course.

A few references;

Barclay's "Toronto Terror " states that it was built between 1924 and 1925.

The "Canadian Golfer" reported in the May, 1924 issue that" Mr. Stanley Thompson, golf architect, Toronto, left this month to lay out a new course for the Canadian National Railways at Ma(i)naki "---.

In the Dec. 1924 issue, "--- Golf is now added. It has been talked of for years, but the roughness of the terrain available seemed to present insurmountable difficulties. However, golf was regarded as indispensable so an expert was called in for consultation.  Mr. Stanley Thompson, of Toronto, was selected and after going over the property reported, quite to the surprise of many, that a very good nine-hole course could be put in and that with proper handling, it could be ready in one year's time. A quick decision was reached to go ahead and work was commenced about the middle of May. --- All the work was done under the supervision of Mr. Stanley Thompson, the Golf Architect, and his staff---". The writer of this article visited the site on Oct. 7,1924 and reported " the entire course was green with a fine catch of grass---".

"The official opening of the CNR course at Minaki Inn was marked by an invitation tournament---" as reported in the July 1925 issue. The opening of the 1930 season on June 14, described in a June article noted " On this course, where the greens are well trapped, but the bunkers not exceptionally severe, only twice has par ( 33 for 9 holes) been broken, once by a professional, the other time by one who was many times champion of Canada ".

Page 1, last paragraph.

**Petch says,** “It is apparent that the Stanley Thompson Society, which was founded by Stanley Thompson...”

**STS Comment:**

The Stanley Thompson Society was **NOT** founded by Stanley Thompson. It was founded in 1989 by a small group of individuals who understood the importance of his work to our golfing heritage, the need to educate the golfing public with respect to his work, and to provide assistance in the preservation, conservation and restoration of his courses. These are reasons why his courses across Canada consistently rank in the top 100 with several in the top 10.

**Petch says,** “... or lost their status because of redesigns or development of additional holes,”

**STS Comment:**

The Stanley Thompson Society is not aware of any such courses losing their ‘status.’

Which courses have lost their status and who says so?

**Petch says,** “Kenora ... is no longer considered a Stanley Thompson Golf Course”,

**STS Comment:**

The Stanley Thompson Society considers Kenora a Stanley Thompson Golf Course.

Who considers that the Kenora GC is no longer a Stanley Thompson course? Thompson prepared a drawing of the first nine holes for the club dated May, 1923. These holes were essentially incorporated intact into the 1988 18-hole layout done by Bob Moote, the only remaining Stanley Thompson associate.

Page 2, 1st paragraph.

**STS Comment:**

The Stanley Thompson Society reiterates that the Minaki Golf Course is a nine hole Stanley Thompson design.

All holes of the Minaki golf course are still visible in the landscape and can be essentially restored, and therefore it is still considered by the Society as a Thompson course. Available historic pictures of the golf holes, aided by 1951 stereo-pair air photographs, can be used to create a sympathetic restoration.

Page 4, 2nd paragraph

**Petch says,** “The Minaki Golf Course has undergone cumulative and irreversible changes---”
**STS Comment:**

Frankly, this statement is wrong and misleading. The course can be restored to its original appearance, aided by the tools available, as previously noted. The question is whether a complete restoration would be cost effective.

The Society knows that Thompson did the design and construction of this course, as previously noted. The restoration of vistas can be easily done with the help of tree clearing. It is possible that poor past maintenance and management practices have altered the visual impact of the course but Thompson's terms of reference must also be considered along with the fact that this was to be a resort course. The fact that topsoil was brought in to cover the Precambrian rocks meant that bunkers had to be shallow and mounding was expensive.

Page 4, 3rd paragraph

**Petch says," Changes... that have occurred at Stanley Thompson golf courses have resulted in loss of status."**,

**STS Comment:**

The Stanley Thompson Society is not aware of any such instances.

What authority issues loss of status notice to Stanley Thompson courses who allegedly change his design principles and which ones have been so affected?

Pages 7-13, **Petch comments about golf holes.**

**STS Comment:**

The author of the Sept. 23, 2014 report does not appear to understand that a given golf hole does not need or require that all design principles be used in its design.

Page 14, 4th paragraph

**Petch says,"--- is purported to have been designed by Stanley Thompson in 1924---",**

**STS Comment:**

As stated previously, this course was designed and constructed by Stanley Thompson and his crew in 1924 and opened for play on June 14, 1925.

Page 15, 3rd and 4th paragraphs,

--**Petch says,"there have been too many changes over the years to suggest that this may be a Stanley Thompson Golf Course."**,  

**STS Comment:**
The Society knows that this is a Stanley Thompson golf course and can prove it. The currently available records can be used to restore this golf course to its original appearance. Many golf courses across the country have successfully used similar records to achieve Stanley Thompson's original visual impact and shot values, including Capilano, Banff, Jasper, Westmount, Dundas Valley, Thornhill, Summit, Highlands Links and Montebello. None of these courses have been commemorated by the federal or provincial governments as outstanding examples of his architecture, nor has any other course in Canada. It is beyond government mandate. Recognition as heritage landscapes is initiated by the clubs or the local municipality.

The golf course can be essentially restored to its original cultural heritage landscape values.