

MOLLY GOURLAY O.B.E.

Surrey ladies' golf had been so much the centre of Molly Gourlay's life that prior to her death in 1989 Molly asked that one of her trophies be put to good use in the county. The SLCGA instigated the Molly Gourlay Award.

The Committee stipulated that this would be awarded annually to the lady who has made the most outstanding achievement within the County. This could be for outstanding golfing achievements, or alternatively, for an outstanding contribution to county administration. The trophy is only awarded when the Committee decide there is a suitable recipient. A list of previous winners is shown below.

The trophy is a replica of the French Open Championship Trophy which Molly won in 1923 at Chantilly. She won the title again in 1928 and 1929.

Molly was awarded her first England cap in 1923 and continued to be selected to play for England until 1934. Molly had the distinction of playing in the first Curtis Cup in 1932 and again in 1934. She won the Belgium Championship in 1925 and 1926 and the English Ladies' Amateur Championship in 1926 and 1929. She won the Swedish Ladies' Amateur Championship in 1932 and 1936 and reached the final in 1939.

Molly was a member at Camberley Heath and Sunningdale Ladies. In 1923, the first year she won a County Championship, her father H B Gourlay presented a Challenge Cup and asked that the names of the County Champions since the end of the First World War to be engraved on it. Molly's name appeared 7 times. 1923, 1926, 1927, 1931, 1933, 1934, 1938.

Molly's wartime efforts were as remarkable as her peace time efforts on behalf of her county. She joined the ATS at the outbreak of hostilities, became a Lieutenant Colonel in 1943 and was awarded the OBE for outstanding leadership.

Molly was elected Captain of Surrey in 1926, 1933, and 1954. In 1947 she succeeded Eleanor Helme as President of SLCGA and remained in that position until 1964. In addition, Molly became Chairman of ELGA in 1954 and then Chairman of the LGU from 1957 - 1960. Later, she became President of ELGA from 1963-1965.

Molly was highly respected throughout her long and distinguished playing and administrative career. On occasion she could be somewhat intimidating, especially to a young nervous player! But she always gave the Surrey Girls her whole hearted support and encouragement. Knowing the Rules of Golf and the etiquette of the game were high on her list of priorities. Her knowledge of the rules was renowned and her advice of 'if in doubt play the ball as it lies' were words of wisdom from a golfing legend.

MOLLY GOURLAY AWARD PREVIOUS WINNERS

1990 Kate Burton	1998 Not Awarded	2006 Not Awarded	2014 Julia Brook
1991 Jill Thornhill	1999 Kerry Knowles	2007 Not Awarded	2015 Jill Thornhill
1992 Betty Clarke	2000 Rebecca Prout	2008 Ellis Keenan	2016 Alison Taylor
1993 Sandy Lambert	2001 Not Awarded	2009 Not Awarded	2017 Ann Gems
1994 Junior County Team	2002 Kerry Knowles	2010 Not Awarded	2018 Not Awarded
1995 Joan Rothschild	2003 Libby Hagdrup	2011 Lisa McGowan	2019 Scynthia Larsen
1996 Lisa McGowan	2004 Not Awarded	2012 Inci Mehmet	
1997 County Team	2005 Lisa McGowan	2013 Annabel Dimmock	