

Evidence shows wrong man got credit for Jefferson Park course design

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Thomas Bendelow has often been called the Johnny Appleseed of golf in America, having designed over 600 courses in North America.

But, contrary to popular belief, Bendelow does not appear to have dropped one of his seeds at Seattle's Jefferson Park Golf Course, which celebrates its 100th birthday May 12.

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Johnstone, from Scotland, was the head pro at Seattle Golf Club in Seattle and designed that course, which opened in 1907, with the help of John Ball.

Matt Amundsen, director of operations for Premier Golf, which runs the course for the city, conceded there is "growing evidence" Bendelow didn't design the course.

Among the most telling items Pool discovered was a 1914 Spalding Golf Guide that mentions Johnstone as the designer of Jefferson Park, a course that would be opening in Seattle. The editor of that Spalding Golf Guide was Bendelow.

The evidence Pool found was significant enough that he recently received an email from Stuart Bendelow, the grandson of Thomas and a golf historian himself, who said it was now clear that Johnstone was the designer of Jefferson Park.

As part of the centennial celebration, the Northwest Hickory Players are hosting a hickory club event May 9 starting at noon at the course. The public is invited, and rental hickory sets will be available.

Seattle Parks and Recreation is having a ribbon-cutting event May 16 at 10:30 a.m., followed by an 18-hole golf tournament, other golf activities, music, giveaways and light refreshments.

The community is invited to enter a free putting contest and get a quick golf lesson.