

DeKalb History Center

Historic DeKalb Courthouse  
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Decatur GA 30030

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The Difference Golf Makes

The following content was taken from an interview conducted with Linton Hopkins about golf, his personal philosophies, and his new book *East Lake: Where Bobby Learned to Play*. Marissa Howard, our Programs and Membership Coordinator, conducted the interview.

Beginnings

After retiring as a neurologist, Dr. Linton Hopkins turned again to writing; he needed a passion-project that was as intense as his work had been, and for him this became golf. Twenty-five years ago, Hopkins wrote a book detailing the exact movements Bobby Jones performed while playing in a particular round of golf. The hole observed was the twelfth hole of a casual game, and it was Jones’ worst round to date. That round was documented in newspapers the next day, detailing every move and every stroke.

Dr. Hopkins, an admirer of small details, wrote his first book with the desire to transport readers back in time as if they were watching Bobby Jones play. He believes we

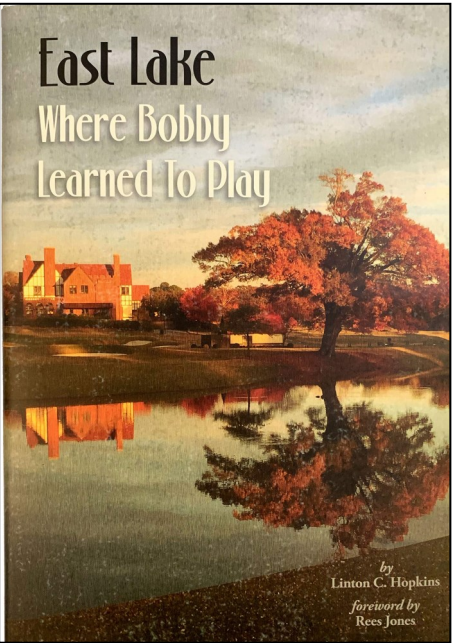
learn history through the details of people’s lives and was fascinated by the story of what Bobby did on the twelfth hole. When he read that Jones hit a niblick on

that shot, he “almost fainted” because he knew the ground Jones was talking about. Dr. Hopkins thought, “That’s what I want to know, and that’s what most people want to know about history.”

On comparing the first out-of-print book to the second book

This revised version of the book has new content, especially regarding the amateur golfer Alexa Stirling. Dr. Hopkins is still searching for an in-depth narrative of Stirling going through a round of golf like he found for Bobby Jones. The closest thing he could find was an *Atlanta Journal* interview where she provides a general recap of her games (how many shots on a particular hole, etc.). “But you’re not with her on every stroke of one single round.” Dr. Hopkins even traveled to Toronto, Canada, to delve into *Golf Canada’s* archives and found great material to include on Stirling. Hopkins also

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Times of DeKalb

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interviewed her 90-year-old daughter, who had a family history written by her sister.

Another difference between the books is the new book’s inclusion of Tom Cousins’ restoration of the East Lake Golf Club and the revitalization of the surrounding community. Despite expert opinions that it would not work, Cousins brought in the top 100 U. S. corporations to help accomplish his vision, not just breathing new life into the deteriorating golf club and course but also bringing the community along with it. This included his efforts for the dramatic improvement of housing and education in the surrounding neighborhood. “[Cousins had] this idea, which is so pure and so natural and so right that if you hear him talk about it, you cannot help but understand that it’s the right way to go.” Cousins believed that a single individual or group of like-minded individuals could accomplish this transformation more effectively and efficiently than could the government with its complex multi-agency approach.

***On Alexa Stirling***

When thinking about what to include in his new book, Dr. Hopkins remembered reading about Alexa Stirling and her remarkable story. Stirling (1897-1977) was an American-Canadian amateur golfer. She was born in Atlanta and lived on Alston Drive, across from the Atlanta

Athletic Club, which has now become the East Lake Golf Club. Stirling won the U. S. Women’s Amateur golf championships in 1916, 1919, and 1920. She also won the Canadian Women’s Amateur title in 1920 and 1934. She was a longtime friend and mentor to Bobby Jones.

Stirling’s father, Alexander Stirling, taught her to play. Her mother and sisters played golf as well, and she grew up surrounded by the sport. Not only was she a great golfer, but she was also a violinist, car mechanic, carpenter, plumber, and a good cook; and she also sold bonds on Wall Street!

Hopkins observed that it wasn’t common for women of Stirling’s time to play golf competitively or professionally, which made her life



*Bobby Jones and Alexa Stirling, circa 1923*

Get up close and personal with the Historic DeKalb Courthouse on this behind the scenes tour! The current Historic DeKalb Courthouse, originally built in 1898

## In Memorium Fred Turner

### Join \* Renew \* Give

All funds received through memberships directly support the preservation of DeKalb County history and are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Your generous contribution to the DeKalb History Center will provide you with a year-long membership, which includes our quarterly newsletter to keep you informed on all our activities. We hope that you will join our team by either renewing your membership or joining as a first-time supporter.

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**Supporter Levels**

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\_\_\_ Contributor—\$250

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Please mail this form with your contribution to: DeKalb History Center, 101 East Court Square, Decatur GA 30030



Upcoming Events

AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
<p><b>Hops: Druid Hills with Jennifer J. Richardson and Sue Sullivan</b></p> <p>August 6</p> <p>Learn about the history of Druid Hills and how it all began.</p> <p>6:00 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>Historic DeKalb Courthouse</p>	<p><b>SWAP-tember</b></p> <p>September 1-30</p> <p>Get member discounts at select museums and institutions!</p> <p>(For DHC members only)</p>	<p><b>Historic Decatur Architectural Walking Tours</b></p> <p>October 2, 5:30 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>October 9, 5:30 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>October 23, 12:00 - 1:30 pm</p> <p>October 30, 12:00 - 1:30 pm</p> <p>Take a walking tour through the surrounding historic neighborhoods of Decatur.</p> <p>Meet in the lobby of the Historic DeKalb Courthouse.</p>
<p><b>Historic Courthouse Tour</b></p> <p>August 13, August 27</p> <p>Discover the story of the courthouse and the history hidden within.</p> <p>12:00 - 1:00 pm</p> <p>Historic DeKalb Courthouse</p>	<p><b>Historic Courthouse Tour</b></p> <p>September 10</p> <p>12:00 - 1:00 pm</p> <p>Historic DeKalb Courthouse</p>	<p><b>Historic Courthouse Tour</b></p> <p>October 8</p> <p>12:00 - 1:00 pm</p> <p>Historic DeKalb Courthouse</p>
<p><b>Party with the Past</b></p> <p>August 15</p> <p>Come out and learn about Clarkston and how it got nicknamed “the Ellis Island of the South.”</p> <p>6:30 - 7:30 pm</p> <p>Clarkston Community Center</p>	<p><b>Lunch &amp; Learn: Chip Davidson</b></p> <p>September 17</p> <p>Stop in and listen in on Chip Davidson as he discusses the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve. Bring your lunch!</p> <p>12:00 - 1:00 pm</p> <p>Historic DeKalb Courthouse</p>	<p><b>History Quest</b></p> <p>October 15 - 18</p> <p>Our annual school program where students rotate through stations as they learn and engage with storytellers and historical figures.</p>
<p><b>Member Meet Up - White Bull</b></p> <p>August 20</p> <p>Free to attend and no need to RSVP, stop by and mingle with your fellow DHC members!</p> <p>5:30 - 6:30 pm</p> <p>White Bull</p>		<p><b>Hops: Prohibition in Atlanta</b></p> <p>October 23</p> <p>Discover Atlanta’s colorful Prohibition history with authors Mary Boyle and Ron Smith.</p> <p>6:00 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>Historic DeKalb Courthouse</p>
<p><b>Decatur Book Festival</b></p> <p>August 30 - September 1</p> <p>Celebrate your love of books with over 250 authors, poets, historians, scientists, journalists, and chefs. Make sure to visit the DHC booth!</p> <p>Sat. 10:00 am - 6:00 pm</p> <p>Sun. 12:00 - 6:00 pm</p> <p>Downtown Decatur</p>		<p><b>Pop Up Courthouse Tour - Spooky Edition</b></p> <p>October 29</p> <p>Our historic courthouse tour with a spooky twist!</p> <p>6:00 - 7:00 pm</p> <p>Historic DeKalb Courthouse</p>

even more compelling. He stated, “It was a poor era for women getting out alone, away from their husbands. Doing athletics wasn’t common.”

Stirling put it this way:

“Women, many of us, have the same obligation to support

others that men have. We are

trying to do work that one way

or the other will support our

children or our brothers’ children or

others that aren’t so fortunate.”

Stirling observed that most women golfers were more “timid” than she was. She attributed her strength to her carpentry and added that the power of golf helped give her the strong wrists and arms that she needed to play the violin. This fascinated Hopkins, who said, “One talent in the human brain helps the other. We don’t want to ignore the way writing might help your ability to learn or that art may help your color sense.”

The Dance of Golf

“The thing that golf has that medicine doesn’t have is wide-open Mother Nature. In the city today, we’re trapped—concrete, steel. And our yards give us some relief, but farms are very rare. I don’t have a second home. My dad had a hundred-acre farm that I loved to go to. But a golf course is not just a farm; it’s a



East Lake Golf Club

piece of land with structure. So you see these people going back and forth in these certain [patterns] like a dance. If you looked at it, like I have in my imagination, seeing everybody all at once, you see these people apparently doing random things. They know what they’re doing, so they’re doing it very deliberately. And looking at a foursome—two caddies and four golfers on a golf green—as they all approach the small, green area, everybody knows exactly what they’re going to do. It’s a dance. You can really see that when you have a brand-new caddie or a brand-new golfer. Have to tell them to shut up or move over here or spot his ball or hold the flag or all sorts of little rituals. So it is a dance, and it’s a meditation.”

The Future of Golf

Across the street from East Lake Golf Club is the Charlie Yates Public Golf Course. The Charlie Yates Course

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includes public access and programs for children, while the East Lake Course hosts programs for honor students and creates other incentives for academic excellence and good behavior. “So there are stories in the book of children acting out and doing the wrong thing in school, and they take away the privilege of golf. And so one of them was asked by his teacher, ‘You’ve suddenly gone from making D’s and F’s to making A’s and B’s and C’s.’ He [the student] said, ‘I want to play golf.’ I think we should be that way with life. If we

About the author

Linton C. Hopkins is a retired neurologist from Emory University, a long-time member of East Lake Golf Club, and a native of Atlanta. He began his journey with East Lake in 1989, where he started documenting stories he heard from Tommy Barnes and Charlie Yates.





## Archives Update

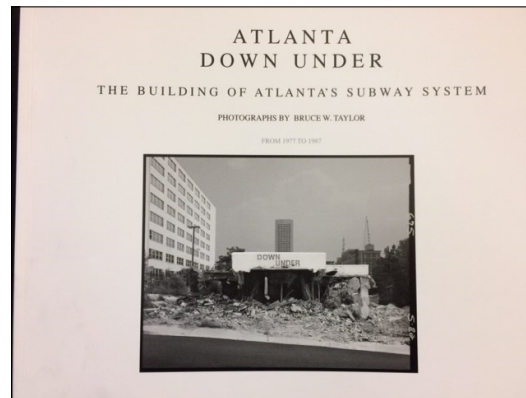
Greetings from the DHC archives! It's been a busy spring! We've received and processed a large collection from the Junior League of DeKalb County, as well as items from the DeKalb County Police Department and other collections. We encourage you to check out our website to see all the archival materials we have available for your special research project. From researchers with a personal interest to those involved in school projects to local authors and journalists, we invite history lovers of all kinds to the Archives to explore *your* DeKalb County history. We also want to *collect* historical printed material, so if you have unique DeKalb County items, such as photos or manuscripts, please consider donating them to the History Center. If you find yourself wanting to share your history with us but don't want to let go of the items forever, consider coming by and letting us scan copies for our collection. Please contact Jennifer Blomqvist at [blomqvist@dekalbhistory.org](mailto:blomqvist@dekalbhistory.org) for an appointment to do research or to donate your items. Thank you!



Items donated by the Decatur Junior League

### **MARTA at the DeKalb History Center**

June 30, 2019, marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MARTA's first rail service run! Make an appointment to come to the Archives to see this new addition to the collection, as well as other items related to the MARTA system and its evolution in DeKalb County.



Atlanta Down Under book located in our collection

### **We love our volunteers!**

We honored our volunteers in April with our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. If you are interested in volunteering with us, please email [blomqvist@dekalbhistory.org](mailto:blomqvist@dekalbhistory.org). There are many opportunities for volunteering, which include evening and weekend shifts: assisting with our large fundraising events, such as our yearly Annual Meeting and Silent Auction, working with school groups, becoming a tour guide, serving our patrons during big local events such as the Decatur Book Festival, and many more. We'd love to have you join us! ✦



Volunteers Nora and Lucy at this year's Dance Hall Decatur

## New Exhibit *Silk & Stitch* Opens

*Silk & Stitch: An Exploration of Embellishment in Fashion* is designed to take the visitor on a journey *back* through time, beginning in 1960 and ending in 1870. We selected pieces for this exhibit based on their embellishments and the way these decorative additions provide clues to the changes in fashion and the changing roles of women over 90 years.

As you walk through the exhibit, we ask that you pay special attention to the placement of the embellishment, the type of material used, and how additions alter the appearance of the piece. Before 1900, embellishments took a backseat to the structure of the garment. Large bustles and puffed out sleeves are examples of the structural trends that were prominent before the turn of the century. In the twentieth century, embellishments became the focus of the garments and would become centralized to a specific area for decoration.

Through emphasis on these details, this exhibit encourages greater thought about the changes in women's fashion in response to circumstances such as wartime rationing, women moving into the workforce, the desire for more comfortable clothing, and changing standards of modesty.

Without the generosity of our sponsors and donors, we would not have been able to create *Silk & Stitch: An Exploration of Embellishment in Fashion*. Dr. Charity Armstead, textile consultant for Silk & Stitch, was instrumental in bringing these outfits and their stories to life. We are proud to reveal and display these beautiful, one-of-a-kind garments and accessories for this exhibit. Special thank you to those who participated in the mannequin fundraiser and helped us add some fun to the exhibit!

Our opening night reception, held Thursday, July 11 included a costumed dance demonstration by Atlanta Historic Dance and light refreshments. In order to preserve these gorgeous and delicate textiles, this exhibit will only be open for one year. The museum is open Monday to Friday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Saturdays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, bring your friends! ✦



A few of the stunning garments featured in the exhibit



The opening reception of *Silk & Stitch*



Nameless the Mannequin encouraging adoptions for the Adopt a Mannequin campaign