

The History of Enmore Park Golf Club

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1906-1932 Cannington Park Golf Club

1906-1932 The actual formation of this club is still something of a mystery as to how it all started and who was involved with the course layout. It has been stated that Lord Arundel, Past President of the club, used to shoot in the gun butts at Cannington Park, then, when the golf club was formed, he used to assist in the early days of the course layout by picking up stones in buckets. He then joined the club at a later date. Dr. Grosett Colins, the Hon. Secretary, put the following advertisement in the papers:

"Considerable progress has been made with the greens at Cannington Park Golf Club and it is hoped that they will be open for play at the end of the month. Anyone desirous of joining the golf club, whether players or those wishing to learn the sport, will be heartily welcomed and are invited to communicate with the honorary secretary. Subscriptions are £1 1s for Gentlemen and 10s 6d for Ladies. A family ticket is available for £2 2s a year."

Cannington Park Golf Club was opened on Easter Monday, 1906. No club house was built at this time, but a cottage which still stands today, called Links Cottage, was the green keeper's. Golf equipment used to be left in a green shed in the garden. The land was rented from Mr. Berry, who was a local farmer at the time. In fact Mr. Berry, with his sporting interests, was the major factor in the formation of the club.

On May 3rd 1907 a match took place between Nether Stowey Golf Club and Cannington Park Golf Club. No other information is available about this match, but one does wonder how they travelled with their clubs from Nether Stowey to Cannington and back again.

Although only a nine hole course, distance 2,200 yards, with a bogey score of 38, the variety of play was outstanding; no two holes being alike. Four of the greens could be reached easily from the tee, but on the others there was ample scope for the long driver. The first green was known to be the best on the course; the second, with its close bunkers, was liable to catch a too-strong approach, while the third was a punch bowl type protected by natural banks and rough broken ground. The longest hole was the fourth, with the green guarded by a sand bunker and a steep bank, while the most sporting hole was undoubtedly the seventh, with a small green and the penalty of the quarry if there was any tendency to slice. Another deep quarry called for judgement at the eighth, but at the ninth all the hazards could be seen from the tee.

The course itself can still be seen by Cannington Quarry, although some of the course has been eroded away by the quarry. However, several holes are still visible. To cut the course and greens they used to use horse-drawn grass cutters and put leather shoes on the horses' hooves to save the greens, which had the reputation of being very fast. Edwin Knight was the green keeper and Dennis Knight became assistant green keeper in 1926. On match days they used wheelbarrows to clear the course of cow pats and sheep droppings. All the sand bins had to be filled up on each tee — in those days they didn't use tees as we do, instead they used to put the ball on a small pile of sand.

Competitions were held regularly, the Club Cup, Daniel Cup, Hospital Cup, Bouverie Cup, Bush Cup and Rainforth Cup being the chief awards. Blue has been quarried around the course. Mesolithic material was found in a cave and the hill had an Iron Age fort called Cynwir. It was also used during the Roman period and a fortress has been found at the side of the course, the remains of which are now in Taunton Museum.

1910

This year saw a change in the game of golf. The amateur champion played at Hoylake with the new ball called Zodiac; these balls cost 2/- each (10p). Spaldings of London were selling golf balls at the time for 30/- a dozen (£ 1.50).

1914-1918

Due to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, play had to cease until 1918 because the land was taken over and utilised for the grazing of mules for the military. All the land around Cannington Golf Club and the parks belonged to Lord Clifford. During the First World War they used to dig for a mineral called spar, which was used for explosives. The holes can still be seen.

May 1926

A special meeting of members of the Cannington Park Golf Club, was held at the Council Chambers at the Town Hall on a Tuesday evening regarding a proposed new pavilion, Mr. A. Berry presiding. The question of providing improved accommodation at the links was considered and it was decided by vote to take up the matter of erecting a new pavilion. It was felt that the proper place for the structure would be in the little park, where a view of several of the greens and tees and surrounding hills was obtainable. The cost of the proposed pavilion was roughly estimated at about £300 to £350, and it was left to the management committee to consider

the best means of raising the necessary capital.

The meeting generally favoured the issuing of debentures or bonds, whilst there was a further suggestion that life membership should be created with a subscription of £ 15. After the committee had considered the matter, a further meeting of the club would be held to receive their report. In the absence of the Hon. Secretary (Dr. Routh), the duties were carried out by Mr. Templeman. The committee decided that a series of debentures, not exceeding £400, earning interest at five per cent per annum, should be issued. The value of each debenture was £5. This was all passed at a meeting held on June 25th 1926. All the money required for the pavilion was, therefore, raised by this means.

September 1926

The following was extracted from the Bridgwater Mercury: "As the existing accommodation at the golf club was barely sufficient for the requirements of members, the pavilion is now under construction, which will be located in the field with the sixth and ninth greens. This was made possible by the courtesy of the club's landlord, Mr. Hubert Berry, who very kindly gave permission for the site desired. The building (erected by Messrs. Pollard) is now practically complete and the opening ceremony is to take place on Saturday October 2nd at 2pm, when the President, Mr. Alfred Berry, has consented to perform it. It is also hoped that the Mayor may lay aside some of his duties and give the club the honour of his presence. The course will be open to the public and after the ceremony a match will take place between the Captain's team and the Hon. Secretary's team."

October 2nd 1926

Again, this is an extract from the Bridgwater Mercury. "The opening of the new pavilion on this Saturday afternoon, when all the members of Cannington Park Golf Club became very happy in the possession of a handsome new pavilion. Members of the club were present in large numbers. The Mayor of Bridgwater, Councillor Walter Deacon, and Mr. Alfred Berry, golf club President opened the pavilion. It was well designed and commodious and just the type of structure to suit all the needs of the members. The pavilion has spacious rooms for ladies and gentlemen and a department in which each member has a locker for the storage of clubs. The club had excellent officials in Dr. R.H.F. Routh as Hon. Secretary and Mr. S. Rolfe as Hon. Treasurer and they, like all the members, were particularly pleased that the scheme of a pavilion had been brought to a successful completion. Mr. Alfred Berry, who was a founder member, performed the opening ceremony, stating that he had spent over 20 enjoyable years with this club, but he had no idea in those early days, when Lord Arundel of Wardour used to come there with a spade and endeavour to do something to make a golf course, that the Cannington Golf Club would reach the position it held today. Mr. T.S. Sully proposed the thanks to the Mayor and Mr. Berry, and it was also mentioned that this could lead to the formation of municipal links in Bridgwater. It was also stated that, had the rifle butts not been in existence, there would have been an 18 hole course instead of a nine hole course. The match then followed between teams captained by the Captain of the club and the Hon. Secretary respectively.

Captain's team: Sully, Green, Ware, Welland, Berny, Bird, Stevens, Sartell, Way, A. Wills, J.H. Berry, Barnes, Davis, Wyatt, Gedge and Meggs.

Secretary's team: Rolfe, Rauth, Templeman, Curtis, Cromie, Perrens, Eason, V. Trump, E.H. Bond, Marks, Cornish Snr., Byers, Smith, Cornish Jnr., Warran and Robinson.

The Captain's team won five and three."

Mr. Les Gibbs, who is still living at Cannington, aged 75, remembers being a caddie at the golf club at the age of 10. Among those he remembers caddying for were Mr. Wills and Mr. Welland, who paid him one old penny a hole, but Mr. Pickering used to give him 1s 6d (7½p in new money) for 18 holes and a cup of tea and a bun. He used to find the lost balls and sell them to the green keeper, Mr. Knight, for id each. He used to turn up at the golf club and just wait by the club house hoping that someone wanted a caddie. About six boys used to do this on a regular basis. When the club moved to Enmore he used to cycle to Enmore to caddie until he started work.

1929

Another item of historical interest was that this year saw the introduction of steel shafts instead of hickory, which was a big step forward in golf equipment. These new shafts were legalised by the Royal & Ancient Golf Club at St. Andrews for use in the rest of the golfing world. As early as 1894 a British patent was granted for the design of a solid steel shaft, but unfortunately the technology for the proper manufacture of the idea did not exist at the time and the idea was soon forgotten.

January 13th 1932

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Bridgwater. Due to the indisposition of the President, Mr F.H. Allen, JP, the chair was taken by the Captain of the Club, Mr. Welland. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. R.H.F. Routh reported the diminution in the number of visitors, being 610 as against 852 last year. This was largely due to the sodden state of the course and the need for cutting. Amongst other matters discussed during the year was the possible lengthening of the course, but this was found to be impossible. So the committee began to seek further accommodation elsewhere and this was eventually found at Enmore Park.

This matter was submitted to a Special General Meeting, which unanimously agreed to instruct their committee to take whatever steps were necessary to obtain the new site. The services of Colonel Kingdom, Hon. Secretary of the Burnham & Berrow Golf Club, were enlisted and he also obtained the help of the professional at Burnham & Berrow Golf Club and they pronounced the proposed site as eminently desirable.

After plans had been submitted, the work was entrusted to Messrs. Bradbeer and Gault of Burnham, who had now started on the

work and considerable progress had already been made. The report added that in the early part of the year Mr. G.A. Falk presented a silver bowl as a challenge cup and the first competition for the same was won by A. Barnes, the competition taking the form of a scratch one. A few weeks after this a referendum was taken to decide the form of competition for the Bush cups, but as the voting still showed a preference for a four-ball competition it was played off as such, the winners being Messrs. Byers and Van Trump. A cup for ladies presented by the Rev. L. Bush was also played for, the winner being Mrs. Archdall. The ladies also had a bimonthly spoon competition. For the Syndicate Cup Mr. S. Rolfe sent in the best returns for the monthly medals for the year and was awarded the cup. Other cup winners were: Club Cup, Mr. Bedale; Daniel Cup, Mr. Wore; Bouverie Cup, Mr. V. Crawford; Rainforth Cup, Byers and Wills. The committee were satisfied with the ministrations of Mrs. Knight in the canteen department and with the attention of their grounds man to the course. The election of President followed and there was a unanimous vote for Mr. F.H. Allen. Mr. Welland was elected Captain of the club with acclamation and the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Rolfe and Hon. Secretary, Mr. Routh, were re-elected.

The question of the installation of the telephone at the club was left to the committee. The question of the alteration of Rule 1 referring to the name of the club was then proceeded with, and after some discussion the meeting decided that the club should bear the name of "The Enmore Park Golf Club" in its new quarters. The committee had to conduct a vast amount of business involving the transfer of the club to Enmore Park. One of the difficulties was removing the club house from Cannington. Tenders were sent out and that of Mr. Ingram of Spaxton being the lowest, he was awarded the contract at a price of £143. The removal began on August 12th 1932 and by September 17th, according to contract, the transfer and replacement had been practically completed for the grand opening of the new course. So all the work and efforts of everyone was now concentrated on the big day of the official opening of Enmore Park Golf Club on Saturday, September 24th 1932 at 3pm.

Enmore Park Golf Club.

THE NEW COURSE

Will be formally OPENED on

SATURDAY, 24th SEPTEMBER, 1932

AT 3 P.M.

BY

R. P. Croom-Johnson, Esq.,
M.P.

A MATCH BETWEEN

A. R. BRADBEER & R. HORNE
Burnham-on-Sea. Weston-super-Mare.

will be played immediately after.

Members and others interested in Golf are invited to attend.

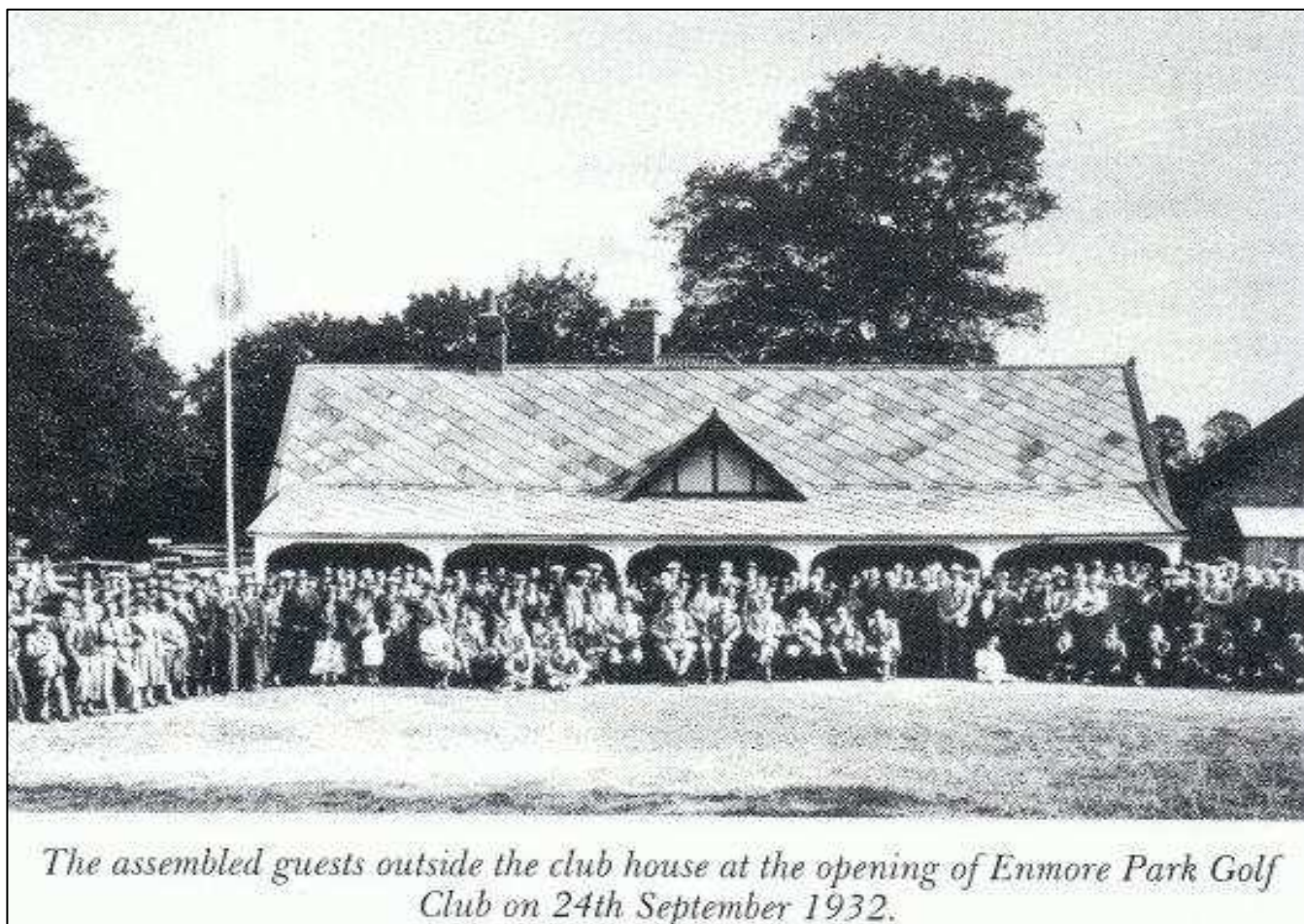
TEA WILL BE PROVIDED.

1932-1939 Enmore Park Golf Club

The Bridgwater Mercury reported the opening of the new golf course as follows: "Saturday 24th September 1932 was an important day in the long history of the Enmore Park (formerly Cannington) Golf Club as it signalled the opening of the club's new nine hole course in the park of Enmore Castle, the residence of Mr. H.H. Broadmead. Brilliant weather favoured the event and a company of several hundred golfing enthusiasts and others attended the opening ceremony, which was performed by Mr. R.P. Croom Johnson, K.C., M.P.

All present, whether golfers or otherwise, were charmed with the situation of the links; golfers will be able to appreciate the splendid layout of the course, which is in a most delightful spot. The land is undulating and there are no roads, stiles or barbed wire to negotiate as on the old links at Cannington. The length of the course is about 2,500 yards, which is longer as compared with Cannington. The old pavilion or club house looked almost as good as when first erected and now has a handsome fireplace to take the place of old oil stoves. A parking place for about 40 cars has been provided at the entrance to the course, with a neatly-designed house for the groundsman.

The links have taken some months to prepare and bring to as perfect a condition as possible. Many enthusiasts have thrown themselves with great energy into the carrying out of the scheme and bringing it to a successful issue. Mr. Broadmead granted a long lease of the land and has given the club the option of extending the course to one of 18 holes, should the financial position of the club at any time allow that to be done. The opening proceedings took place at 3 o'clock with the Mayor of Bridgwater (Councillor C. Bryer), Mr. Croom Johnson, M.P., the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress (Alderman and Mrs. F.O. Symons), the Mayor of Taunton (Councillor Mr. W.E. Maynard), Mr. H.H. Broadmead, Mr. F.H. Allen, J.P., the President of Enmore Park Golf Club." This must have been a very good move, because at Cannington the club could only hold the course on a yearly tenancy, and now they had acquired Enmore on a 21-year lease, with the option to extend the course to 18 holes. The Mayor of Bridgwater made a speech and asked Mr. R.P. Croom Johnson, M.P., to drive off the first ball. This ball was later mounted with a small silver plaque and a bird above it (it can be seen in the trophy cabinet). Mr. Croom Johnson did make a comment about Cannington, saying that he would miss the alpine climbing, and the rents and tears which used to send him to Bridgwater to the repairing tailor. This was also the day when the Mayor of Bridgwater kindly promised a cup, to be known as the Mayor's Cup to be competed for annually. An exhibition match then followed between Mr. A.R. Bradbeer, the golf professional from Burnham-on-Sea and Mr. R. Horne, the professional from Weston-super-Mare.



The assembled guests outside the club house at the opening of Enmore Park Golf Club on 24th September 1932.

January 1933

The first AGM of Enmore Park Golf Club took place in the council chambers at the Bridgwater Town Hall, with Mr. F.H. Allen, J.P., the President, occupying the chair. Mr. S. Rolfe, Hon. Treasurer, first presented the financial statement, which showed that the year commenced with a balance in hand of £37 16s. 11d. and the total income, including new debentures raised of £770, was £ 1,283 and the expenditure was £1,269 15s 2d. Mr. Rolfe stated that the costs of the construction of the new links at Enmore had been paid and they had also stood the racket of a double rent for the year at Enmore and Cannington, they had punctually paid the interest due to debenture holders, and they still had a balance of £ 13 4s. 10d, in hand. Total cost of construction was £788; of this amount £400 went in direct local labour, which had been a small help in the past year of deplorable unemployment. This total of £788 had been met almost entirely by the raising of the new debentures which, with the £150 from the old Cannington club, made the total debenture debt £920. The number of members stood at 131. The number of visitors had been 655, of whom 255 had played since the opening. Under the instructions of Bradbeer and Gault the greens had been treated with manures, sand and ashes, and the committee was assured that the efforts would become apparent during the year. The groundsman, Mr. Knight, had worked very hard on the new course with his two assistants, and further improvements to the course were being made in the shape of three new tees behind the sixth, seventh and eighth holes which would add about 30 yards to each hole. (This was the very first course layout, which was later changed.) Mr. J.D. Ware was proposed as Club Captain for the coming year.

January 1934

This was the first year for the AGM to be held in a new setting, with Mr. F.H. Allen, President, in the chair. It was with sincere

regret that the club learnt that Mr. Rolfe, who had acted as Hon. Treasurer for 12 years, was about to leave the town and, as a token of esteem and thanks, a silver tray was presented to him by the members. More than 1,100 visitors had paid for admission to the course, which was encouraging. The Rainforth Cup was handed over this year for the first time to players with handicaps of 15 and over to compete for. A Special General Meeting was called to consider the question of a motor mower. It had become apparent that the charge for horse hire, rolling, cutting etc., was going to become a heavy one and it was thought likely that a motor gang mower, if one could be procured, would be an economy in the end. A subscription list was opened which raised enough to secure a Ransomes gang mower and second-hand Chrysler car as a tractor, which was adapted for cutting, rolling and hauling. A shed was also erected for its storage. The name of D.A.R. Perry starts to appear in the competition results and it seems that he was an up and coming 24 handicapper.

The Club had not been idle in relation to improvements and alterations and changes were gradually being made in the approaches to the greens. Already those of the 5th, 4th and 3rd had been attended to and when time allowed others would also be seen to. (Once again, remember to take into consideration that this was the first course layout, which is completely different from what it is today, the course having been changed several times.) During the year a caddie shed had been erected adjacent to the motor shed, thereby dispensing with the crowd of small boys awaiting hire on the members' verandah. Only those boys whose characters were vouched for and whose names appeared on the notice board were to be employed. The fee was 9d. for 18 holes.

The course itself had been liberally treated with sulphate of iron, ammonia and sand, and when Messrs. Gault and Bradbeer went over the course, they expressed themselves as well pleased with the results already achieved. The old club house at Cannington was still held by a tenant, the rent of which was collected and paid to the Club by Mr. Duckworth, whose kindness in arranging all the details was greatly appreciated. One of the first duties of the new Handicapping Committee would be to examine all handicaps on the basis that any member whose score in the monthly medal had not at any time reached the scratch score might be raised two. The groundsman still continued to be as keen as the members to see that the course was kept in good condition and he and his nephew, Mr. Knight, had given of their best to this end. The committee had been able to dispense with the services of Mr. Addicott, who had been with them since the inception of the course, and the work was now carried on by two instead of three.

1934

Some discussion took place at the AGM as to whether the Captain should be elected for one year only or to be entitled to serve for two years running. Since the matter could not be decided upon at this meeting, due to notice not having been given to the members about a change of rules, it was agreed to defer same until the next annual meeting. The question of annual subscriptions was again considered, as was also the provision of Sunday teas, and these matters were left as instructions for the committee. The canteen department, though not now graced with Mrs. Knight's presence, had been well carried on by her understudy. In conclusion it was stated that the club would like once more to impress upon the members that the first duty of a golfer is to replace his divots, bearing in mind the old adage that it is easier to replace the turf than to returf the place. The Club regrets that in spite of repeated requests, a number of members still fail to replace divots. It is appreciated that generally this neglect is merely thoughtlessness, but unless more care is taken the club will be compelled to take drastic action and make an example of offenders.

1935

About 50 members of the Club attended the AGM held at the Bristol Arms Hotel on Tuesday February 6th. The financial statement was presented by Mr. Welland and showed a small profit for the year. He said the financial position was slightly better than the previous year. Another milestone had been reached and, looking back, the committee felt that the two years which had passed since the inauguration of the new course had proved its popularity among the members, and judging by the figures, its much greater interest to visitors. The number of new members elected during the year was 12, whilst there were about the same number of resignations. The total number of members on the roll was 112; this included family tickets as one member, so the actual number of playing members would have been more than this. During the year 1,010 visitors had visited the course, a result which was even better than the previous year. Several improvements were made during the year and the exterior of the Club premises had been painted without cost to the Club by two members of the committee. Mr. T.J. Sully was thanked for his trouble in attending the AGM of the S.G.U. on behalf of the Club. Owing to the large number of cups to be played for each year, the committee considered it wise to cut down the number of matches played, so that Pickeridge, Hutton and Vivary Park were the only matches played on a home and away basis. The discussion took place on a suggestion made at the previous AGM that the Captain should hold office for one year only. It was unanimously decided that this should be the rule, and that the same should apply to the Vice-Captain.

1936

Proposed extension of the course. The AGM was held in the Committee Rooms at the Town Hall, and before the meeting the chairman asked members to stand for a moment out of respect for the memory of the late King George V. The Hon. Treasurer's report showed that on the year's working there was a balance of £40. The Green Committee had also met on several occasions and had endeavoured to carry out the instructions given in the winter of 1934 by Mr. Hay of the Somerset Farm Institute. The greens themselves had been given a thorough course of treatment: Humus, meat and bone manure, iron and ammonia, worm killer and sand, all of which had been liberally bestowed upon them, and the same treatment was being repeated this year. Membership

stood at 126; there had been 14 new members, 11 gentlemen and three ladies, with nine resignations. During the year the telephone had been installed and although it was not, as yet, a paying concern, it had nevertheless proved of considerable advantage to many. The number of visitors had been 965, which was considered very satisfactory if the weather during the year was taken into account. The Captain's board was almost ready and would shortly be erected in the clubhouse.

One of the chief items of interest during the year had been a whisper that there was a possibility of the course being lengthened. It was a fact that the land had been offered to the committee, but after an exhaustive examination it was not found altogether suitable and recently the possible acquisition of other lands had been investigated. Mr. Welland had a meeting with Mr. Broadmead on the subject and, as a result, the committee could have the option of certain lands already inspected by them and which they considered suitable for the extension of the present course. Mr. Broadmead would retain the sheep-grazing rights. The committee was given instructions to look into the extension of the course to 18 holes and negotiate for a lease of such additional land as may be needed, provided that the Club had the right to sub-let until required. Also, before the extension was commenced, the existing nine holes should be reorganised, drained and perfected. It was decided to postpone the annual dinner due to the death of King George V.

In May 1936 a special meeting was held in the club house to discuss a recommendation of the committee to extend the present nine hole course. A resolution was proposed and seconded that the committee be authorised to negotiate for the necessary land to enable possession to be obtained in 1939 and there from to construct 18 holes. In the meantime, the committee be requested to proceed at once with the construction of such new holes as may be necessary to perfect the present nine hole course. The committee be empowered to proceed at once with 14 holes as the land becomes available.

January 1937

The AGM was held at the Bristol Arms Hotel. The Greens Committee had made several journeys to the land where the new part of the course was to be laid down and had endeavoured in every way to carry out the instructions given by Mr. W.D. Hay from the Somerset Farm Institute. In connection with the drainage and water supply to the club house Mr. Broadmead was contacted in the hope that if he considered it advisable to pay the same attention to the Memorial Hall and Knights Cottage, the whole scheme might be done at the same time and thus lighten the cost of construction to all parties. This was found to be possible and there was now a suitable drain to the ladies and gentlemen's lavatories and a constant supply of water to both. This would also enable the water to be obtained for the greens when necessary. The number of new members elected during the year was 25, while there were 12 resignations, which gave a total of 133 qualified to play as members. The telephone had been a considerable boon, although it still did not pay for its cost. One of the most satisfactory features of the year had been the increase in the number of visitors, the figures for the year being 1,077 compared with 965 the previous year.

By a piece of good fortune a second-hand Fordson tractor driven by paraffin had been acquired, to replace the Chrysler car, which was beginning to be expensive in repairs. The tractor needed a trailer, which was procured at low cost. Then, as the J.P. mowers were also getting onto their last legs, a Qualcast motor mower was acquired, which was doing good work and saving time. In connection with the extension of the course, considerable improvements had been effected by laying down drains to the 5th, 6th, 7th and 9th greens during the year. Mr. Knight was retained as groundsman, with his nephew, Dennis, as labourer and a lad had been taken on, due to the extra work laying the new greens.

1938

The AGM was held on February 2nd. The number of members elected during 1937 was 23, while the resignations had been 11, and the total membership now stood at 148. The tractor had been a source of endless expense and on one occasion, while in use, its paraffin boiler burst and during the time it was being repaired the old Chrysler car had to be reconditioned. The Qualcast motor mower had been a good investment and saved a great deal of time, and a second one was now in use.

The chief item of interest had been the opening of the three new holes, which had added a further 600 yards to the course. The new rules came into effect that non-playing gentlemen members may be admitted at an annual subscription of £2 2s. and ladies at an annual subscription of £ 1 1s. Such non-playing members would be permitted to play on payment of the usual green fees paid by visitors, which were 2s. 6d. on weekdays, and 3/- on Saturdays and Sundays. Also, persons residing outside an area of 25 miles from the club house be admitted as members of the club for a subscription of £2 2s. Owing to the extension of the course it was necessary to issue new score cards and to adapt the handicaps of all members to the standard scratch score. Members were now permitted to tee up on the course anywhere (except in a bunker); this was done to preserve the course while it was soft. It was also found necessary to build some sort of bridge to allow the Club's traffic to pass over the ditch across to Roughmoor.

1939

AGM, February 4th. Six years had elapsed since the course at Enmore was opened for play and each year seemed to show some definite material improvement and advances to the ultimate goal of 18 holes. In 1937 the course was extended by the alterations to the then 3rd, 4th and 5th holes, and in 1938, without any ceremony, five new holes were opened for play on Roughmoor, which as forecast in the previous year's report, had added considerably to the length of the course, and in July Messrs. W.L. Bate, the County Secretary, and Jutsum, the County champion, were kind enough to come over and assess the bogey or par score of the course, which they fixed at 71. The committee still had in view the acquisition of further land beyond Roughmoor to make an additional five holes which, however, might not be available for some time. The course itself had been improved; the 5th green had

been enlarged, the 14th widened by raising the edges of the bunkers, the 15th tee had been extended, while the new ladies' tee was now in use at the fifth hole.

There had been 863 visitors during the year, which was down on the previous year. The membership of the club stood at 148, with 13 resignations and 11 new members during the year.

The tractor mentioned in the previous report had been a source of infinite trouble and expense; a bad starter, costly in fuel and oil and liable to sudden stoppages. So the committee decided to dispose of it and in its place, after prolonged consideration and extensive demonstration, secured the one which was then in use and which was giving every satisfaction. The club had been able to obtain the services of a professional to give lessons. He was Jeffreys, formerly the professional at Weston-super-Mare and, according to the schedule posted at the club house, lessons were available to all members by writing personally to Jeffreys. The matches played over the past year were against Pickeridge, Yeovil, Wells, Burlescombe, Watchet, Langport and Vivary Park and all these matches were won.

Now that the five new greens had been completed the ground staff had been reduced and there were two whole-timers and one for three days a week. It was agreed to provide a 'complaints book' for the convenience of members, to be placed in the club house. The committee was requested to consider the terms of admission to the course for schoolboys and girls. The future of the Club looked uncertain because of the possibility of the outbreak of war. No one knew what was going to happen in the future with our country, with the game of golf, or our course.

1939-1945 The War Years

1939

After the declaration of World War II no one really knew the what was going to happen. From the experiences of what had happened during the First World War, could it be as bad, or would it be worse? Golf courses had been badly affected by the 1914-18 war; could it be that all the work that had been put into the course since 1932 was going to be of no avail in the future?

1940

The AGM was held at the Bristol Arms Hotel. Twenty-five years earlier the Club had found itself in a similar position, due to the outbreak of war. In 1914 play had been possible for only part of the time and subsequently, after requisition by the Government for grazing by mules, play became impossible altogether. In 1940 conditions were better, for play was still possible over 14 holes, in spite of alarms regarding the commandeering of the club house and a threat to plough up part of the land. Those fears had fortunately not become an eventuality and for the time being all was well, save for the diminished number of members due to the war. The present roll of members stood at 135. Visitors during 1939 dropped to 543.

The Greens Committee had followed the directions of the Green keepers' Research Assoc. and the services of one of the staff had been discontinued, leaving two men to attend 14 greens. The proposed land beyond Roughmoor called 'Sheepwash' had been inspected on several occasions and the new holes and greens pegged out, but owing to the outbreak of war no further action had been taken. The committee had decided not to make any concessions to fees paid by schoolchildren.

It was decided that a motion for the alteration of rule 17e to the effect that the Captain and Vice-Captain should hold office for the duration of the war and for six months after this should stand, leaving Mr. L.H. Palmer as Captain and Mr. H. Milton as Vice-Captain. The charge for non-playing members was changed from £2 2s. to £1 1s. One of our green keepers, Mr. Dennis Knight, was now in the RAF Regiment.

1941

A meeting was held in the offices of the Gas Company and the chair was taken by Mr. T.J. Sully, who deputised for Mr. H.H. Broadmead. The report showed a general falling off of membership, a smaller number of visitors and fewer entrants for Club competitions. The extraordinary general meeting was called in November to consider the Club's financial position. A unanimous vote was carried that each member should contribute something to reduce the deficit and so well was this taken up that the Treasurer was able to announce a bank surplus instead of the expected deficit.

The land on which the course was laid out was referred to by various names including Slopes, Sheepwash Park and Sudetenland. The Somerset War Agricultural Committee took over various acreages and put them to the plough, progressively reducing the course from 18 to 14 to nine and, in the end seven holes, as the war progressed. Throughout the war Mr. Knight senior and his wife performed the duties of steward and green keeper. By August the membership had fallen to 117 members and subscriptions were £84. Total income was £ 109, wages amounted to £38 and ground rent £46.

Various clubs had to introduce local golf rules to contend with war conditions, such as collecting bomb splinters to save damage to mowing machines, players could take cover during gunfire or while bombs were falling while playing competitions without penalty. Positions of known delayed-action bombs were marked by red and white flags.

A Ministry of Supply circular asked all clubs to save golf balls, tyres and rubber shoes for salvage in order to help the war effort. Dunlop increased the price of their top quality ball from 2/6d. (2½p) to 3/- (15p). The golf ball industry in general suffered during these years, as they were unable to acquire the necessary traditional materials. Wooden golf balls like the Fleetwood model were used by diehard golfers. The dot on the ball was an indicator necessary for the correct placement of the ball on the tee so that the grain of the wood would be oriented in the proper direction.

1942

Many difficulties were faced and the Club had to decide whether to close down until the war ended or try to keep going. By a vote the decision to keep going was carried and the members thereupon were immediately invited to contribute to a whip-round in order to clear the deficit. Sudetenland (i.e. the general areas of the present 6th, 13th and 14th holes) had been ploughed up without notice being correctly served and the club was seeking compensation at the rate of £5 per acre for the 22 acres. However, the claim had to be postponed until after the war under rules governing such activity.

1943

The price of tea was to be 6d. (2½p) of which 2d. was to go to the club. Financially the club was facing a deficit and special efforts were made to raise money. No matches with neighbouring clubs were possible because of petrol restrictions.

1944

This year saw the Club struggling to keep open and to make it pay its way. In response to an appeal from the Town Clerk the Club allowed members of the general public to use the course as part of the local 'Holidays at Home' week. Through all the difficulties of petrol and food rationing and most of the members serving in the forces at home and abroad the Club did manage to make a profit of £4 for the year.

1945

The Club extended its lease for a further seven years and also instituted an entrance fee of £2 2s. 0d. (£2.10p). Members returning from service with the forces were allowed free golf until the end of the war. The rate for caddies for 18 holes was to be 2/- (10p) and the course still consisted of only seven holes.

What a wonderful year this was, with the demise of Hitler and the end of the Second World War. Now the Club could look forward to rebuilding for the future, extending the course and rebuilding the lost years.

1946-1971

1946

Cup competitions and monthly spoon competitions were being revived and work was in progress to reinstate the course. Some German prisoners of war were used to assist in reconstructing the two holes necessary to bring the course back to nine holes.

1947

Mr. D. Perry was appointed Honorary Consulting Engineer, to advise on the upkeep of the machinery. One of his first jobs was to make and fit steel ribbed wheels to an Austin 12 which was then used as a tractor. The Hon. Secretary was instructed to contact Miss Manie to arrange a Ladies' Committee, so that a ladies' night could become a feature and, at their discretion, there could be mixed matches. Catering showed a profit of £13 for the year. On May 31st the course was reinstated to nine holes, the opening being performed by Gerald Wills, Esq. The entrance fee for competitions was established at 2s 6d (12½p)• Mr. Bradbeer from Burnham & Berrow kindly came to the club from time to time in order to coach members. Fixtures with nearby clubs were gradually restored. Messrs. G.S. Heaven and M. Milton presented a weather vane to the Club. It was erected on the top of the old club house, which stood until 1990.

1948

An approach was made to Mr. Ivor Yard of Highbridge to see if he would provide the services of a professional on Sundays, but the Club was still to retain the right to sell golf balls. Subscriptions were increased to £5 5s 0d for gentlemen and £3 3s 0d for ladies. Golf shoes were made available from Dunlop during that year.

1949

Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Knight took over the green keeper/steward's roles after he returned from serving in the RAF during the war. He was the obvious choice because of his experience with the course since 1932.

1950

The Captain, W.H. Van Trump, made an appeal at the AGM for more support for competitions, as there had been a lack of interest the previous year.

1952

The Ladies' Section declared that they were now financially self-sufficient and also that they proposed to hold monthly medals. Club membership stood at 98. The original lease of 21 years (from 1931) was now completed. The committee approved the purchase of 12 new glasses for the bar and overall the club made a financial loss on the year. This meant that the lease could not, at the time, be renewed.

1953

With Messrs. Ray Biddiscombe (Club Captain), W. Chard, M. Pearce, W.O. Coate, C.P. Staple, J.E. Smith and J.M.M. Richardson acting as guarantors, a new lease was negotiated. Club membership for the year showed a great increase to 149.

1954

As part of Broadmead Estate, the course and Croom Cottage were put up for sale by public auction. Letters were sent to all members, asking if they would consider putting up the necessary money. Only 40 members replied.

1955 The new owner of the land offered the course to the Club for £4,000, but the Club was unable to accept at the time.

1956

Sheep were allowed to graze on the course and, despite representations by the Club, a total of 73 mature trees were felled and the timber removed from the course by tractor, which pulled the felled trees across the course, leaving large gouges throughout the course. The committee increased the price of Watneys Draught to 1s 11d a pint (10p).



The original club house, This photograph was taken during the late 50s-early 60s.

1957

The Captain, P.R. Martin, held the first Captain's Day at the club. Mr. Ivor Yard resigned as Professional and was replaced by Mr. Edwards.

1958

Electricity was laid on to the club, which replaced the old gas supply. Green fees were 4/- (20p) per round. Subscriptions were increased to £7 7s 0d for gentlemen. D.J. Hockin joined the committee in April 1958 and the Lamb Cup was presented to the Club by Mr. and Mrs. R.M.S. Lamb. The winter league was inaugurated during 1958.

1959

Lionel Croad took over the combined role of steward and green keeper; whilst Dorothy helped him greatly, she was never a Club employee. The Club were asked for £100 per year in order that the sheep might be put elsewhere to graze. (It is said that C.W. (Danny) Lewis challenged the farmer, W. King, to resolve the matter over a game of cards in the club house — the outcome was that the sheep were moved to fresh pastures.) Mr. Ivor Yard returned as Club Professional to continue giving lessons to members. D.J. Hockin took on the job of Hon. Secretary before taking on the Captancy in the following year.

1960

Amongst the new committee members that year the name of P. Pensabene appeared. Negotiations were opened to buy the course and the asking price was £5,500. The deal was concluded at £5,250 by means of a loan from the bank. The guarantors on behalf of the Club were: G. Biddiscombe, R. H. Bird, C.J.E. Betty, W.W. Broomfield, J. Bryden, F.J. (Eric) Horton, W.A.J. Kinnersley, H. Parkes, C.W. (Dan) Lewis and P.R. Martin. A five day membership (Monday-Friday) was inaugurated, which added a further 40 members to the books. Two hundred trees were ordered for planting around the nine hole course. Mr. and Mrs. Boydell presented two silver cups to be named after their son, Edward. This is now known as the Edward Cup competition. In November Club members changed their golf clubs for spades and forks over one weekend, some 30 volunteers going forth on the Sunday morning and planting 220 trees of various kinds. There was certainly an enthusiastic 'army' at Enmore Park in those days under the inspired captaincy of D.J. (Doug) Hockin, and the fruits of their labours can now be seen.

1961

Subscriptions were increased to £9 9s 0d for gentlemen, £4 4s 0d for ladies and £11 11s 0d for family membership. A membership ceiling of 200 full members was implemented. Green fees were raised to 5/- (25p). This year saw the installation of the first fruit machine at the Club. An army hut was purchased from Gloucester in order to provide changing rooms. Following an advertisement placed in the Irish Independent by Mr. J. Kelly, the Club engaged John Cassidy as Professional. Our neighbours, Taunton & Pickeridge, lost their club house in a fire on Saturday February 26th and at 2am there was nothing left but a tangled mess of corrugated iron. The final settlement with the insurance company was £5,250 for the building.

1962

The army hut was erected and turned into changing rooms for ladies and gentlemen. The Ladies' Section held their first open day.

1963

Watering points were being installed so that sprinklers could be attached. Modifications and extensions to the club house were in progress.

1964

Lionel Croad became green keeper and vacated Croom Cottage. This was then taken over by Mr. and Mrs. Cox, who had taken over as steward and stewardess. The Leonard Cup was presented to the Club in remembrance of Leonard Nutt.

1965

The Club membership was 'full' at the agreed level of 200; in addition to which the Club had 40 five-day members. A new kitchen had been added to the club house and a programme of major course improvements was being undertaken, which brought the S.S. to 69.

1966

Messrs. Kinnersley and Pensabene won the County scratch foursomes. Membership was 158 and the ladies total stood at 43. New dining rooms were constructed under the supervision of Mr. Fred Turner.

1967

The Junior Section was inaugurated during this year. Michael Coles became Junior Champion of Somerset. There was a visit from some up-and-coming Professional golfers to take part in two exhibition matches; these were Tony Jacklin, Clive Clark, Harry Weetman, Hugh Boyle, Peter Green, George Will and Peter Townsend. Mr. Gilbert Burt won the Atlantic Trophy at Weston-super-Mare. The course was improving rapidly, thanks to the work of Lionel Croad and Ron Bird. The inaugural dinner for the Captain and past Captains took place in the new dining rooms. This dinner still takes place every year, with all the past Captains in attendance.



1968

This year the Club held its first competitions for juniors; there were four entries. This was the beginning of the Junior Section, which is now the envy of many clubs. With 200 full members and a waiting list of 50, the search for more land was on. Under the captaincy of Ray Williams the Somerset Bowl inter-club knockout was won by Enmore Park.

1969

Mr. D. Hockin had been made the President of the Somerset Golf Union. Land became available to the left of the then 3rd hole (now the 11th hole). In October, at a special EGM, it was announced that 60 acres of land had been purchased by Mr. Philip Pensabene, and the trustees D.J. Hockin, R.D. Merriman, C.J.E. Betty and Mr. M. Henderson were authorised to make a future purchase of the necessary land for the Club to eventually become the owners of an 18 hole golf course.

In 1969 businessman Mr. Philip Pensabene wanted to show his gratitude to the members of the little nine hole course where he had spent many happy hours of relaxation. He therefore lent the Club £73,000 to expand the course to 18 holes. Then 48 years old, Mr. Pensabene became the Club's most cosseted member, because if he died within seven years the gift would become subject to death duty! At the time he said: "I have warned everyone not to drive into me when I'm on the course, because they could be putting the club in financial difficulties".

Philip joined Enmore Park in 1948 and was the millionaire chairman of a firm in Bridgwater. The idea of the interest free loan to the Club of £73,000 was to enable them to buy the 62 acres of land and cover the cost of developing the course extension. The Club would repay the loan in annual instalments of £3,000 over 25 years. However, Philip could see that this would be a millstone around the neck of Enmore Park, particularly as they wanted to build a new club house, so he told the Club to accept the money as a gift. The course extension was, therefore, put into motion. Without this gesture, who knows what position the Club would be in today.

1970

Messrs. Hawtree & Co. (golf architects) were busy with the design and layout of the new course, including the watering system for the greens and the necessary land drains. In these extensive works our own Jim Ryder carried out all the survey work, establishing the levels for all aspects of the construction works. The earthworks and course preparation were carried out by Messrs. Dando & Dark, and by November all the greens were established. An appeal was made by the Captain, Charles Carr, regarding financial support on a voluntary basis to pay for the trees on the newly-laid-out 18 holes. Some 914 trees of different types and sizes were required and the sum that was hoped for was £1,500. With some 325 playing members at the time, £5 per head would cover this nicely. The county scratch foursomes were won for Enmore Park by W.A.J. Kinnersley and G.W. Burt.

1971

Douglas Hockin was elected Captain of the Club for a two-year period, which would span the transition from the nine to the 18 hole course. The role of Ronald Bird changed from being in charge of construction work to becoming the first full-time Secretary of the Club; in later years this job was expanded to that of Secretary-Manager. On the new part of the course the grass was growing at its own pace and members formed stone-picking parties in anticipation of the great day when the new course opened.

This year saw a lot of work and effort going into the new course extension. The timbers had arrived for the new boundary fence left of the 3rd and 4th holes. Two footbridges were now nearing completion: the Slicer's bridge at the 7th and the one on the 12th. Nine new greens had now been cut with the mechanical mower. With the postal strike now over the Club's report on work done on the new course was despatched to the Turf Research Council as requested.

The re-shaping of the 3rd and 4th fairways was now in hand and the tree-planting between the two fairways also progressing. Stone picking was now in operation on the 3rd, 4th, 16th and 17th fairways. In June Messrs Dando & Dark, contractors on the new course, were in a position to hand over and requested that the Club should now take over the maintenance of eight new greens. Mr. Fred Turner and his associate measured the course and arrived at the total of 6,431 yards, which would give S.S.S. 71. July saw the operation of watering the new greens, with water pressure being good enough for six greens at a time. August saw all the new greens being cut twice a week and they had all received their first application of top dressing. In November the committee were asked to submit any ideas for suitable names for each hole.

1972 - 1992

1972

May 16th was the date fixed for play to begin on the new 18 holes and it is of passing interest to note that the local police inspector, T.C. Lane, was the first man out and attached stickers to the flagsticks proclaiming: "T.C. Lane was here at 4.20am". At about 5am one C. (Kit) Barrington, a local solicitor, appeared on the course, followed shortly afterwards by the Chairman of the Competitions Committee — C.F. Carr — who was able to observe the law in pursuit of the law. Nigel Wixon, who until that time had been an assistant at Burnham & Berrow, became the Professional at Enmore Park from 6th June. Ronald Bird was elected Captain of the Somerset Captains' Society.

June 10th saw the official opening ceremony of the new course and its environs, performed by Sir Roger Hollis, who was the President of the Somerset Golf Union at the time.

1972 also saw the owners of Quantock Farm, Crowcombe, put in planning permission to develop the farm as an 18 hole golf course. This matter was dealt with by the Minister of the Environment. After an enquiry it was turned down.

Also, a proposed clay pigeon shoot at Castle Farm was sent for planning permission. An objection was lodged by the golf club, saying

"It is considered this would be an unwarrantable intrusion as regards noise both in an area of rural peace and the quiet of a golf course". Permission was refused on amenity and road safety grounds.

1973

In September the Captain, Mr. N.B. Johnson, reported that the portrait of the President, Mr. Philip Pensabene, was nearing completion and it was hoped that it would be presented during the cup presentation evening on 22nd November. (This portrait now hangs over the centre of the bar in the club house.) A gift from the Club, an onyx cigar casket, would also be presented to the President.

On 15th October Mr. Tom Graham, the new head greenkeeper, who came from Hayling Island, was welcomed by the Chairman of the Club, who said he hoped his stay at Enmore Park would be a long and pleasant one. Also, a survey had been done for the proposed pop-up water system, and a price of £9,428 had been quoted. This was considered and it was hoped to have it installed for the spring/summer of 1974.

An EGM was called in November regarding the increase of subs to £35 for gentlemen, £30 for ladies, £60 for families, £5 for juniors and £3 for social members. Entrance fee to be £40.

At the AGM the Club President, Mr. Philip Pensabene, announced that he had decided to present the Club with the new course so that future members could enjoy the game at Enmore and, freed from repayments, the Club could realign its financial resources towards continuing development. Needless to say Mr. Pensabene was elected a life member. We have him present with us for all time in the shape of the splendid portrait in oils which now hangs above the centre of the bar in the lounge.

The Club put forward an offer of £1,750 for 1.65 acres of adjoining land from Smocombe Farm, Enmore. The minimum price that the trustees would accept for this land was £5,000, so at the General Committee meeting it was considered that this asking price was much too high; therefore the Club was no longer interested in the purchase.

In March the Greens Committee stated that it would like to proceed with the reconstruction of the 9th green, the removal of the existing old 5th green, the old 6th tees, filling in a drain and bunker, at a cost of around £350.

A rough estimate for a new club house of £100,000 was given and considered to be well beyond the club's capabilities. It was thought that the club could reasonably finance a sum of £30,000 and this could possibly be financed and repaid over 15 years.

1974

At the AGM on 21st February it was announced that membership had almost reached the maximum figure of 550 full playing members. In March the stewardess stated that, due to increased costs, the price of match teas would have to be increased to 70 pence per person. In November Mr. Les Alison stated that, if agreed, he would separate the junior members and establish a separate notice board for them.

1975

At the AGM in February Mr. Lionel Croad and Mr. D.A.R. Perry, as longstanding servants of the Club, were made life members. The Captain, H. Ball, suggested that it was time the Professional had an official parking place in the car park. It was thought best a provision should be made for a new rule that the appointed Captain Elect should become the Vice-President of the Juniors to help with continuity. At the management meeting in March it was agreed that the Lady Captain should make a diplomatic approach to her lady members regarding their presence in the bar prior to 1.30pm on Sundays. In April, at a committee meeting, it was agreed that some sort of identification disc would be introduced in 1976. Further discussion took place concerning ladies in the bar prior to 1.30pm on Sundays, and it was agreed that this rule should be relaxed as much as possible.

On 15th May Les Alison referred to the increased number of junior members. At a recent meeting of the juniors it was considered that 80 might be the maximum number under the present system. A junior committee had been set up with the following officials: Paul Howlett, captain; Roderick Norman, secretary-treasurer; assisted by the committee: Graham Packer and Tracy Burton.

1976

It was the intention of the Competitions Committee to hold our first open meeting at Enmore. Subscriptions stood at £50 for gentlemen, £45 for ladies, £10 for juniors, and the entry fee was £50. Membership stood at: 357 gentlemen, 27 ladies, 96 juniors and 140 families. Mr. Yates considered it was time a minimum charge was made in respect of caddies and trolley-pullers on the course. Quite a few junior members were involved in this and their services should not be exploited. The cost of the proposed extension to the old club house was accepted. Messrs Stokes & Clarke Ltd. would build the extension at a cost of £21,704. At the EGM on 18th November the subscriptions were increased to: Gentlemen £58, ladies £50, family £100, juniors £15 and the entrance fee remained at £50. These recommendations were made because of continued inflation and the additional cost of club house extensions.

It was agreed that the lowest tender of £21,704 be accepted from Messrs Stokes & Clark Ltd. for the proposed old club house extension. It was announced in April that the new bridge forward of the 16th tee had now been completed. Also, a suggestion had been made to provide a direction marker at the rear of the 17th green. It was agreed that this would be done as soon as possible.

1977

It was accepted by committee to receive a 10 year interest-free loan from Whitbread for the sum of £5,000 for the extension of the new bar etc. At the AGM on 8th November Mr. Alison requested that Past Captains' pictures should be displayed in the club house. In October the extended old club house and facilities were opened by John Goodban, Esq., President of the English Golf Union and a

member of Saunton Golf Club in North Devon. Mr. Jim Ryder was also involved as Club Captain and motivated member of the Club in building the patio outside the new extension.



The official opening of the extended old club house on 15th October 1977.

Left to right: Fred Turner, Chairman; Jim Ryder, Club Captain; John W.D. Goodban, O.B.E., President of the English Golf Union; Doug Hockin, Treasurer.

1978

Membership was growing each year, largely because the course was proving to be a challenge and the figures were: playing members 339, ladies 26, family members 144, juniors 56.

1979

Mr. David Meredith, a member at Enmore Park, became the Somerset County Men's Champion during that year. The county second team had the services of two Enmore members as captain on its various outings, with either Bill Kinnersley or Gilbert Burt in charge and giving guidance and inspiration to the younger team members.

1981

Membership had continued to grow and it stood at: gentlemen, 410 (of whom 49 had a single figure handicap); family, 138 (69 x 2); ladies, 29 (there were 20 ladies in the silver division, two of whom had single figure handicaps); 577 full playing members; juniors 76; and social 37, making a total of 686.

1982

On 3rd October a year of hard work and careful preparation by Captain Tony Innalls and his committee Tom Pearce and Charles Carr was well rewarded by the most spectacular celebrity golf tournament ever held at Enmore Park Golf Club or in Somerset at the time. The event was the climax to the Club's golden jubilee celebrations, i.e. 50 years at Enmore Park. Money was to be raised for the Somerset and West Indies cricketer Viv Richards in his testimonial year, which attracted a staggering list of celebrities: Barry Took, Leslie Crowther, Jerry Stevens, Richard O'Sullivan, Johnny Briggs, Ed Stewart, Steve Coppel, Brian Greenhoff, Trevor Brooking, Mike Channon, Kevin Keegan, Jimmy Rimmer, Bobby Gould, John Bond, Ted Croker, Peter Roebuck, Dennis Breakwell, Ian Bothain, Brian Rose, Brian Langford and David Graveney to name but a few, played on this special day. Over £1,000 in prize money was up for grabs as well as the chance to win a £6,000 Renault car offered by Bridgwater Motor Company to anyone who

scored a hole in one on the seventh hole. More than 2,000 spectators enjoyed the feast of entertainment as a host of stars displayed considerable golfing skill in this mammoth celebrity tournament. The winner on the day was Viv Richards, playing off 24, who returned an impressive score of 43 points to take first prize, a magnificent set of crystal glasses and a decanter.

The old pond on the 9th used to get stagnant and smell in dry periods, so it was agreed at committee to make this pond smaller by filling it in with hard core and top soil to eliminate the worst penalty, as under the rules it was classed as fairway.

1983

The Management Committee had been considering the future of the Club and these were the options:

1. It was reported that there was to be a forthcoming sale of Castle Farm and 80 acres adjacent to the 3rd and 4th holes. It was known that Enmore Castle would be coming on the market and it was indicated that the club was interested. At a later date the owners of Enmore Castle let it be known to the Club that they were prepared to sell. As things worked out, nothing happened in these sales to affect the Club, as we did not have the money.
2. To pursue a ten year plan to develop a new club house on the old present site, with a new set of changing rooms for approximately £100,000 in phase one, and a new club house for £200,000 some years later in phase two. This could mean an increase in subscriptions of £20 to £25 a year.

1985

In January a resume of the possibilities for the club house development was published as follows:

"A sub-committee was established by the Management Committee early in 1983. to look into ways in which the club house (the old club house), the changing rooms and the amenities associated with these areas, could be developed for the future benefit of the club members. This long-term committee consisted of Mr. A.G. Innalls; Mr. J. Patterson; Mr. J.M. Sturge (Secretary-Manager) and the Club Captain.

The first investigation concerned the 1974 club house plan, which was approved but shelved when the cost estimate came out at £100,000. Mr. Stuckey was the designer and held the plans and in 1985, the estimated cost was about £300,000, which would appear to be out of the Club's reach. It is worth noting at this stage in the proceedings their attentions were diverted elsewhere by (i) the impending sale of Castle Farm, as this gave them fresh options and (ii) the owners of Enmore Castle let it be known to the club that they were prepared to sell. In the event the Club purchased neither of these properties due to lack of financial resources.

The Treasurer, Mr. J. Patterson, did an exercise based on 600 members and advised that to finance a £ 100,000 project direct from subscriptions there would need to be an increase of about £40 per annum for each member. At this point questions were asked whether or not we could build in the area where the old reserved car park spaces were. Such an area offered better possibilities, particularly being on level ground.

Additional car parking land was asked for and, as a result, the Club was offered 2.75 acres, which was subsequently purchased, allowing plenty of space for a car park and a practice ground.

In essence the long-term committee has done all it could at that time, since the Management Committee had committed themselves to £20,000 for the purchase and development of the practice ground alone. In the autumn the purchase of some five acres of land adjacent to the car park was concluded at a cost of £15,500. This was to be used for a practice area.

1986

A working party was set up and certain urgent repair work was carried out. The surveyor's report told the Club that so long as an annual maintenance programme was set up using timber preservatives and replacing obviously weak areas, then we should get another 10 to 15 years life out of the buildings.

The Secretary-Manager had reported to the committee that obtaining insurance cover for our buildings was now proving difficult. Many companies were declining to quote and the Club had to pay an additional £1,100 on the premium for the year. This situation was obviously one of concern for all the members.

1987

The EGM at Bridgwater Town Hall on 19th February was going to be a very important meeting regarding the golf club, as it would determine the future of the club house. It was the committee's considered opinion that it would be wrong to spend vast sums of money on what was in effect a wasting asset. It was essential that a new club house should be built.

A motion was carried by an overwhelming majority that the committee be empowered to build a new club house at a cost not to exceed £230,000.

1989

This year saw another purchase of land of 6.37 acres at a cost of £27,500, which now made the practice area over nine acres, one of the finest practice areas in the county.

July 24th was the date which had been fixed for the contractors, W.A. Forsey, to start work on the new club house. After all those years since 1973. it had now come true at a price of £369,000. With all the other sub-contractors, the total bill would be in the region of £417,694. Based on quoted figures and assuming that VAT could be reclaimed, the treasurer confirmed that there appeared to be no financial reasons why the project should not go ahead. Mr. A. E. Gotts, our Treasurer at the time, had put in

many hours of work to get this project off the ground. October 30th was a special day in the construction of the new club house as at 3pm on this day Mr. Philip Pensabene laid the foundation stone which can be seen at the side of the main entrance.



The laying of the foundation stone on 30th October 1989. Left to right: Mr. and Mrs. Pensabene, Mr. C. Carr, Chairman, Mrs K. Butler, Ladies' Captain.

1990

March 24th was a very special occasion with a visit from European Ryder Cup star Jose Maria Canizares. A match took place with his partner against the Club Captain, John Packer, and our professional, Nigel Wixon. Canizares won 3 and 2, finishing one over par at 72. On 5th August the English Golf Union President, Tony Hill, a member of Burnham & Berrow Golf Club, officially opened the new £450,000 club house at Enmore Park. The captains and presidents of every golf club in Somerset were invited to attend the ceremony. Also present was the chairman of Sedgemoor District Council, Councillor Mrs. Julie Hooper and the Mayor of Bridgwater, Mr. Mike Cresswell.



The opening of the new club house on 5th August 1990. Left to right: Tony Hill, President of the English Golf Union; Charles Carr, Club President, Bill Jennings, Somerset President and Club member; Tony Innalls, Ladies Captain Irene Perks and Club Captain John Packer

