

Early History of Discovery Bay (Chevy Chase) Golf Club, Port Townsend, WA

Established 1924, Course Opened 5-9-1925, Second Nine Opened 5-9-1997
Course Architect: 1925 - A. Vernon Macan; 1997 - Michael Asmundson

The Discovery Bay Golf Club, located seven miles outside of the town of Port Townsend, Washington, originally called the Port Townsend Chevy Chase Golf Club, opened for play on May 9, 1925. For nearly 80 years thereafter, it came to be known simply as Chevy Chase.

Golf was not new to Port Townsend in 1925. Twenty-one years earlier, in 1904, a group of residents formed the Port Townsend Golf Club, which had a small but enthusiastic membership. One of the pioneering golf clubs in the Pacific Northwest, its members competed against players from the Seattle, Tacoma, and Victoria golf clubs in numerous tournaments. Over time, however, the membership base proved to be too small to sustain the club and it dissolved around 1912.

While there is evidence to show that golf was being played at Fort Worden and Fort Flagler during the intervening years, it was not until some thirteen years later, that golf was again being played by residents of cities and towns in that part of the Olympic Peninsula. Following World War I, America experienced a golf renaissance, and the Pacific Northwest was no exception. A flurry of golf clubs formed in the Puget Sound region during the 1920s.

In 1924, Mary Chase, operating a summer resort with 500 acres of farmland overlooking Discovery Bay, saw an opportunity to capitalize on golf's popularity. Chase, step daughter of an early Port Townsend pioneer John F. Tukey, had inherited the property and an inn called the Saint's Rest Inn.



Saint's Rest Inn (later Chevy Chase Inn). Farm in the foreground became the golf grounds.

Port Townsend was a popular destination for vacationers from Seattle, Tacoma, and Victoria. Many of the visitors were from cities where golf had become widely popular. Chase renovated the inn into a summer destination resort, and no doubt heeding the advice of her visitors, converted the farmland into a nine-hole golf course. She renamed it the Chevy Chase Inn (combining her name with her family's origins in Cheviot Hills in England). The name has no connection to the more famous Chevy Chase Golf Club in Maryland.

The Port Townsend Chevy Chase Golf Club was formed by local residents and regular visitors from out of town. Notable among the list of members was George Welch, who was one of the original members of

the Port Townsend Golf Club in 1904, and who would soon lead a campaign to resurrect the that club in 1927. Welch served as the first president of the newly formed club.

The Port Townsend-Chevy Chase Golf Club, recently organized, will soon play on their course adjoining the Chevy Chase summer resort. The membership list will be increased to fifty. The charter list includes Mr. George Welch, Mr. Joshua Green, Mr. Walter Galbraith, Mr. William J. Buhler, Dr. Charles F. Kuhn, Dr. F. J. Delaney, Mr. John Siebenbaum, Jr., Captain Thomas H. Crang, Mr. E. Morris Starrett, Dr. Edgar S. Barnes, Mr. Edward B. Ivy, Mr. Floyd Sather, Mr. James G. McCurdy, Rev. F. B. Klein, Mr. N. C. Strong, Captain L. B. Hastings, Mr. Frederick J. Bailey, Mr. N. W. Raynor, Mr. M. C. Deleo, Mr. F. R. W. Stevens, Mr. W. H. Motley, Mr. James Coyne, Major J. Raymond Hurley, Dr. Albert Morrison, Mrs. Leonard T. Cutter, Mrs. John C. Pringle, Mrs. John E. Dobbs, Mrs. G. Barthrop, Miss Edith Delanty and Mr. J. W. Huston.

Seattle Daily Times 3-29-1925

To her credit, Mary Chase hired A. Vernon Macan, probably the pre-eminent golf architect in the Northwest at the time, to lay out the course. Macan had only recently completed work on Inglewood, Rainier, and Broadmoor Golf Clubs in Seattle and Fircrest Golf Club in Tacoma.

The Port Townsend Chevy Chase Golf Club opened for play on May 9, 1925:



Opening Day (photo courtesy of Discovery Bay Golf Club)

Jack Westland, top amateur player of the time and who would later go on to win the U. S. Amateur, was the guest of honor for the Club's opening day play. Players from nearby Port Angeles Golf Club, Fort Worden Golf Club, and Fort Flagler Golf Club joined the opening day competition.

**OLYMPIC PENINSULA
OPENS FIRST LINKS
AT PORT TOWNSEND**

THE Chevy Chase Golf & Country Club of Port Townsend opened its nine-hole course yesterday and almost its full membership of a hundred was out to attend the dedicatory competition. Jack Westland, Washington state and Seattle city champion, gave the proper touch to the occasion with his presence.

The Port Townsend course is from the design and construction of A. V. Macan. It is the first golf field on the Olympic Peninsula to come into use. Port Angeles will open its nine-hole course shortly.

Seattle Daily Times – May 10, 1925

Westland's Play Applauded.

The state golfing premier's form was perfect under the adverse condition of the course. It was also Mr. Westland's first purely exhibition match medal play. Mr. Boardman and Mr. Stuart were also initiated in exhibition play on the Chevy Chase course.

Westland's drives, straight as an arrow, accurate mashie shots and keen analysis of putting conditions on the rough temporary greens brought many rounds of applause. It is safe to say that Port Townsend golfers in the gallery received more instruction and inspiration during the champion's nine-hole round than in any other way in many months. Ben Boardman and Archie Stuart both rose to great form at times forcing Westland's play to the best to win holes.

The exhibition medal match play by holes in strokes:

Holes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Par	4	4	3	5	3	3	4	5	3-34
Westland	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	5	4-38
Boardman	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5-41
Stuart	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	4-45

Port Townsend Weekly Leader – May 15, 1925

The original clubhouse was located where the current Chevy Chase Beach Cabins, a popular destination resort, now sits, and in fact one of the cabins is named "The Clubhouse." The first hole was a 310 yards par 4, and required a tee shot across Cape George Road, no doubt requiring attentiveness on the part of players and motorists alike.

The first competition for the Club Championship was held in September, 1925 and won by Major C. K. Berle of Fort Worden.



Men's Club Championship Trophy



Women's Handicap Cup Trophy

The golf course has undergone numerous changes over the years, and few elements of Macan's design remain today. Originally laid out as a par 34, it was lengthened to a par 36 in later years.

REPLACE DIVOTS					SMOOTH SAND IN BUNKERS				
Hole	Yards	PAR Men	PAR Wom.	Hdc Str.	Hole	Yards	PAR Men	PAR Wom.	Hdc Str.
1	310	4	4	12	10	360	4	4	7
2	154	3	3	18	11	114	3	3	17
3	385	4	5	6	12	462	5	5	5
4	300	4	4	14	13	214	3	4	13
5	480	5	5	2	14	513	5	5	1
6	344	4	5	8	15	329	4	5	11
7	468	5	5	4	16	494	5	5	3
8	174	3	3	16	17	117	3	3	15
9	336	4	5	10	18	350	4	5	9
Out	2951	36	39		In	2953	36	39	
Scorer					Out	2951	36	39	
Attended					Ttl.	5904	72	78	
Date					Handicap				
					Net Score				

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Chevy Chase Golf Course Scorecard (probably late 1950s or 1960s)

The history of Chevy Chase Golf Club cannot be told without retelling the lore of stolen gold that may be buried on the golf course property. The story is told in the July 2, 1948 issue of the Seattle Daily Times:

Mary Chase, who operated the inn for a half century, heard the story from her stepfather, J. F. Tukey, who homesteaded the property in 1851.

Thirteen years later, a paymaster for a railroad being built in British Columbia absconded with the monthly payroll, some \$60,000 all in gold English sovereigns. He hired Indians from a village near Victoria to row him across the Strait of Juan de Fuca into Discovery Bay and put him ashore on the Tukey land.

Presently the paymaster went to the Tukey farmhouse, asked for a horse to ride into Port Townsend, and galloped away. At Port Townsend he boarded the night boat for Seattle. British Columbia authorities meantime sent a fast cutter to Port Townsend and offered a reward for catching the paymaster. The Seattle-bound vessel's captain, guessing he had the man aboard, headed for Victoria instead of Seattle and in no time the paymaster was in the custody of Canadian officials.

The man died in a jail cell, never telling what became of the gold. A detachment of Canadian soldiers went to Discovery Bay, searched the property but found no trace of the treasure.

Over the years, treasure hunters have searched the property to no avail. Yet, it may be buried where no one thought to look, and perhaps that errant drive will lead to that cache of gold.

Mary Chase sold the property to Philip Bailey in 1946. He and his descendents managed the resort and the golf course until 2004 when it was sold to Michael Asmundson, a golf course architect who had designed the second nine in 1997. Coincidentally, as the owners have said, the second nine (called the Forest Nine) opened exactly 72 years to the day after the opening of the first nine (called the Farm Nine).

The current owners have made plans to renovate some of the holes on the front nine. Obscured in the Club's history is Vernon Macan's work on the front nine and one hopes that the new owners will acknowledge Macan's contributions to the course.

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