

## Early History of Foster Golf Links, Tukwila, WA

Established 1925; Course Opened 2-13-1925; Second Nine Opened 1927  
Course Architect: George H. Eddy

Named after the town of Foster (in turn named after Joseph Foster, an early Washington pioneer), Foster Golf Links sits on the banks of the Duwamish River in what is now Tukwila, Washington. The golf course began as a dream of one man who sought to own and operate a golf course. His name was George Henry Eddy.



George H. Eddy (1878 - 1941)

Golf professional, golf architect, entrepreneur, inventor, Eddy was born in Zennor, Cornwall, England on May 23, 1878. He emigrated to America in 1910 at the age of 32. He first settled in Raleigh, North Carolina where he laid out several courses. He arrived in Oregon in 1914 and became the golf professional at a number of golf clubs including the Gearhart Golf Links and Illahee Country Club in 1914, Pendleton Country Club from 1916 - 1919, and Baker Country Club in 1920 - 1921. It was during this time, in 1914, that he laid out the second nine at Gearhart Golf Links (Oregonian 9-20-1914).

He moved to Renton, Washington in 1922 to become the golf professional at Earlington Golf Club where he would stay until 1924. Then Eddy took a bold and risky venture: he would build a new golf course in Foster and operate it with his wife.

Golf's popularity exploded during the 1920s following World War I and demand for more golf courses was high. In the Puget Sound area, golf clubs were being added at a rapid rate: Rainier opened for play in 1920, Inglewood in 1921, Fircrest in 1923, Glen Acres in 1924, and Broadmoor in 1924. And then there were Jefferson Park and Earlington Golf Club nearby. Even with golf's rapid growth, how could a new, fledgling golf course built and managed by husband and wife survive in competition with all these other clubs?

Yet it did. In 1924, against the advice of others, and mortgaged to the hilt, Eddy purchased a fifty acre tract of land on the Foster homestead on the banks of the Duwamish River. By September, 1924 Eddy began laying out a nine-hole course.

By February, 1925 the course, initially called the Maple Grove golf course, was ready for play. Constructed during the winter months, the course was undoubtedly rough. Yet the entire golfing community in the Puget Sound area turned out in support of George Eddy's creation.

## And a Hundred or So Will Enjoy the Hospitality of the George-Eddys at Maple Grove, Friday, February 13.

**H**OWDY, George, and you, too, Mrs. George; we wish you luck!"

Which will be the smart and proper thing to say when we all meet George H. Eddy and Mrs. George out at their Maple Grove golf course at the formal opening next Friday. For, besides being Friday, it is also the 13th of the month. So, the Eddys will probably need that luck sign hung on them.

But neither George nor Mrs. George are worried about Friday, the 13th. They signed the papers which gave them their golf course site on a Friday in September and planted the greens on a Friday.

From all accounts there is going to be quite a lot of howdy-doing at Maple Grove next Friday. Everybody is turning out to help the George Eddys put over their original idea—a one-family course, with George in charge outside and Mrs. George in charge inside, at the comfortable old home converted into a clubhouse.

George Abrams, at the Spalding store, is receiving the entries for the opening day's tournament. Bob Johnstone is looking after marshaling the professionals and Abrams the amateurs. The play will start at 10:30 a. m., and will consist of four-ballers, with medal scores counting in a sweepstakes.

George Eddy will do the starting and Mrs. George will pour. That is, there will be no entry fee, the golf being on George, while the sandwiches and coffee will be on Mrs. George.

Bon Stein, Lee Steil and Bob Johnstone, with a fourth man to be selected, will be the "show" four-baller of the day. There are forty-odd already signed up. There'll probably be a hundred by the time Mrs. George puts the coffee pot on.

The Maple Grove golf course is situated at Foster, in Duamish Valley, it is nine miles from the Totem Pole and lies along the Pacific Highway to Tacoma. Road signs tell where it is. It can be reached by automobile, motor bus, interurban or hoof.

Seattle Times — Feb. 8, 1925

On February 13, 1925, Foster Golf Links officially opened for play with a four-ball tournament. Governor Louis F. Hart launched the first tee shot. In the feature match, Walter Pursey, Inglewood Golf Club pro teamed up with amateur Lee Steil to defeat Robert Johnstone, Seattle Golf Club pro and amateur Bon Stein 1-up. Low score of the day was turned in by Pursey with a 72. Stein was low amateur with a 78.

Green fees were 50 cents for all day. The old Foster farm house was used as the club house. Mrs. Eddy did the cooking, and sold sandwiches. Thus began Eddys' one family business venture.



Foster Golf Links Clubhouse – circa 1930 (Courtesy of MOHAI)

Measuring 3100 yards for nine holes, the course was of standard length for the time. It boasted two of the longest holes on the Pacific coast: the No. 5 hole at 656 yards long, par 6, and the No. 7 hole at 598 yards, par 6. The holes were each split into two when the course expanded to 18 holes in 1927.

In 1927, Eddy purchased the adjoining property to bring the course to a full eighteen holes on 85 acres of land. Eddy believed a 6000 yard course could be laid out, although for most of its existence, the course operated between 5000 – 5500 yards.



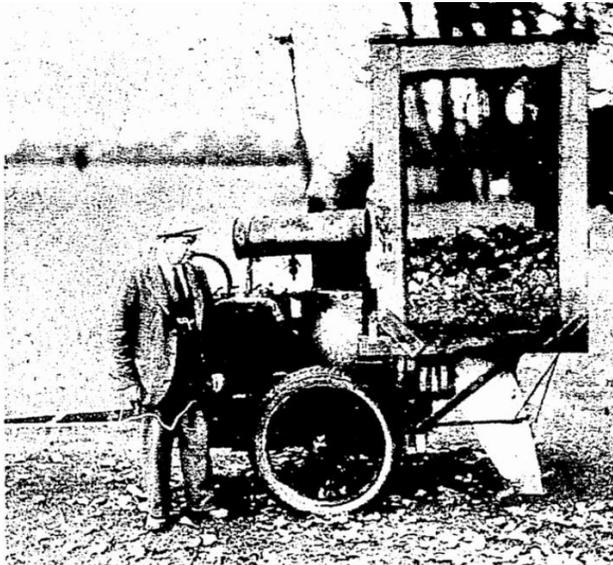
Aerial Map 1936



Aerial Map 2017

Somehow the course survived the Great Depression and the 1933 flood which nearly destroyed the golf course when the Duwamish River overran its banks. "It rained the entire month of December that year, and by Christmas Eve, the flooding Duwamish River had belched unbelievable quantities of debris on the course. Fairways, tees, and greens along its path were strewn with logs, pitted with holes and saturated with water and muck."

Ever resourceful, George Eddy took out patents on several golf equipments, including this "leaf vacuum machine" that he used on the Foster Golf Links.



George Eddy's "Leaf vacuum" Seattle Times 12-9-1934



George Eddy Mashie Niblick c.1925



Entrance to Foster Golf Links – c.1955



Foster Golf Links Aerial – c.1955

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Seattle Times - March 4, 1938 Advertisement

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Foster Golf Links Score Card – c.1955

George Eddy died in 1941 at the age of 63. His son, Robert Eddy, operated the course for some time until 1951 when he sold the golf course to Joe Aliment. Aliment had worked for George Eddy as caddie master and greens keeper since 1925.

In 1978 the City of Tukwila purchased the Foster Golf Links from Aliment brothers. Ceremony for the transfer of the property took place under the maple tree planted on July 4, 1873 by Joseph Foster, early pioneer. The tree still stands today in a dedicated area next to the parking lot.

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