

## Early History of Olympia Country and Golf Club, Olympia, WA

Established May 21, 1914; Course Relocated 1926; Second Nine Opened 1959  
Course Architects: 1914: Willie Leith; 1926: Walter Fovargue; 1959: Fred Federspiel



Olympia Country and Golf Club – circa 1926 (Courtesy of Washington State Historical Society)

While the signs at the Olympia Country and Golf Club in Olympia, Washington indicate the Club was established in 1926, the roots of golf in Olympia go back more than a quarter century earlier. There were six golf clubs in Washington State by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Tacoma Golf Club (1894), Country Club of Seattle (1896), Seattle Golf Club (1896), Spokane Country Club (1898), Walla Walla Golf Club (1898), and Olympia Golf Club (1899) were the pioneering clubs.

The 1899 course was located in Maple Park near the State Capitol campus. The April 23, 1899 issue of the *Morning Olympian* described the new organization: “Olympia has a Golf Club ... the first of its kind ever organized in Olympia. The links are in Maple Park, and the members have had them put in first class condition. Much enthusiasm is shown among its members.”

### WASHINGTON

#### OLYMPIA

**OLYMPIA GOLF CLUB.**—Half a mile from N. P. Railroad station, and accessible by street car. Organized, March 15, 1898. Entrance fee, \$25. Annual dues, \$10. Membership, 25. A nine-hole course. President, B. W. Allen; Vice-President, F. G. Deckebach; Secretary, C. G. Heifner, Olympia; Chairman of House Committee, C. S. Eaton, Olympia; Captain, G. W. Ingham; Treasurer, Dayton Williams. Governing Committee, C. G. Heifner, B. W. Allen, and C. S. Eaton. Greenkeeper, Hermon Struck.

Harper's Official Golf Guide 1901

While the directory shown above from the Harper's Golf Guide publication shows an 1898 date, this is likely an error. Based on local press coverage, the year should have shown as 1899. The specific location of the course was described as extending west of Capitol Way South between 18<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Streets.



Olympia Golf Club members at its first location at Maple Park near the Capitol grounds – c.1900

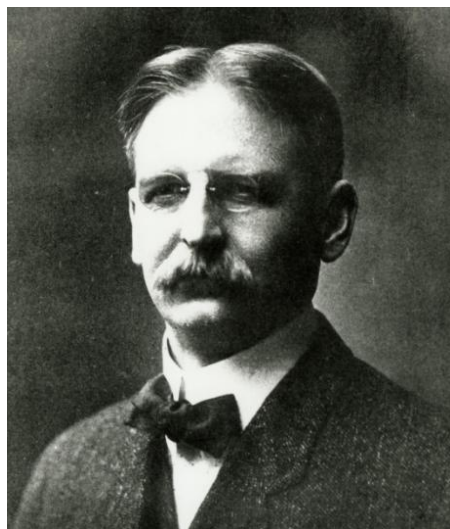


Olympia Golf Club members and caddies – c.1900

Membership totaled 25. Accounts of their activities are scarce, and while they may have been an enthusiastic group, it had too few members to sustain itself for long. Forced to abandon its course due to construction of new buildings on its site, the Club appears to have lasted only a couple of years. Some in this group made another attempt in 1904 when they tried to develop a six-hole course near the original site, but this effort too failed. Golf remained dormant in Olympia for the next ten years.

Then in 1914, following the U. S. Open win by Francis Ouimet at Brookline the previous fall, a resurgence in golf took place all across the country, including Olympia. A group of men and women met several times in early 1914 to organize the new Olympia Golf and Country Club. The club elected George W. Graham as its temporary president and began a membership drive. On May 21, 1914 the club organized itself with a charter membership of 93 which read like the Who's Who of State government: included among the membership were Governor Ernest Lister, Secretary of State Ithamar Howell, Assistant Attorney General Roy Campbell and eight Supreme Court Justices.

The Club elected Ithamar M. Howell as its first president. George W. Draham was named vice president, George G. Mills was treasurer and H. L. Whiting, secretary.



Ithamar M. Howell (1866 – 1920), First President of Olympia Golf & Country Club

*Ithamar Martindale Howell was born in 1866 in Iowa and arrived in Washington Territory in 1877. He attained the rank of Captain in the National Guard, and held several State government jobs before being appointed Washington's Secretary of State in 1909.*

*His tenure as the first president of Olympia Golf and Country Club was short, beginning with the club's founding in May, 1914 to year's end when State Auditor C. W. Clausen was elected club's second president in 1915.*

*Howell was a regular player at Olympia G&CC and played to a 15 handicap.*

*Howell died suddenly in 1920 at the age of 54 while in office serving out his term as Secretary of State.*

The Club secured a 160-acre tract of farm land on Chambers Prairie bordering Chambers Lake near Lacey. They hired Willie Leith, Scottish golf professional at Tacoma Country and Golf Club and his brother Sandy Leith as part-time instructors. A month later, the club hired its first full-time golf professional, Ray W. Ball.



William "Willie" Leith



Alexander "Sandy" Leith



Raymond W. Ball

**William "Willie" Leith (1891 – 1924)**

Willie Leith was born near Aberdeen, Scotland in 1891 and arrived in America in 1910, first settling in Minnesota during the summers and in Florida during the winters. He came to the Northwest to take the place of Jim Barnes at Tacoma Country and Golf Club in 1914. He was described as an "aeroplanist", motorboat enthusiast and a big game hunter.

**Alexander "Sandy" Leith (1893 – 1941)**

Younger brother to Willie, Sandy grew up caddying at courses near Aberdeen, Scotland. He followed his brother to America in 1912 at the age of 21 and was later hired as club professional at Lakeside Golf Club (now defunct) in Tacoma.

**Raymond W. Ball (1889 - 1977)**

Ray Ball was born in Minnesota but grew up in Seattle and served as caddie under Robert Johnstone, the club professional at the Seattle Golf Club. Prior to coming to Olympia, Ball had helped his father John Ball in the construction of the Grays Harbor Country Club, where the younger Ball served as its first golf professional in 1913. He would later return to Olympia to help his father construct the Olympia Country and Golf Club course at its current location at Butler's Cove.



Willie Leith, Sandy Leith, R.W. Ball hickory clubs, from the Martin Pool collection.

In short order Willie Leith laid out a rudimentary nine-hole course, and on June 28, 1914, mere five weeks after the founding of the Club, the course was formally opened. *The Morning Olympian* reported that "The golf fever has hit a number of members hard and they are taking advantage of every opportunity to take a spin out to the links and go a round." Nearly all were novice players.

This was truly pasture golf. As seen in this tongue in cheek account, sheep, goats, and cows helped maintain the course, and the players encountered rules questions not normally encountered today:

## Sheep, Goats and Cow Play Parts in Golf

In order to keep the grass down on the links of the Olympia Golf & Country club, it is announced that arrangements are being made with A. H. Chambers to have a band of sheep turned in on the course. These animals it is claimed will keep the foliage clipped close to the ground and will do no damage to the greens, while it is asserted that their presence will in no way bother the players.

Some one has suggested that the sheep may get the "goat" of an individual player or two while it is claimed that if all the political goats were turned loose out there that the flock could keep a much larger course in good condition.

*Morning Olympian* April 9, 1915

George Draham and Bob Blankenship are having a dispute now over the proper way to score a hole in which a cow played a prominent part. It is asserted that a wayward bovine in front of whom a golf ball stopped picked it up as part of her cud. The irate owner of the ball proceeded to hit the cow six times and she dropped the ball in the hole. Blankenship says the hole was made in seven, as each belt given the cow, said blows being delivered with a mashie, should be counted. Draham insists that the hole was made in one, the raps given bossy not to count as strokes. It may be necessary to appeal to Varden for a ruling unless Judge George E. Morris, Roy Campbell and R. E. Ball can decide the point.

On July 20, 1914 the golf professional R. W. Ball played the first official match of the Olympia Golf and Country Club against amateur Assistant Attorney General Roy Campbell, a member who had relocated from the Midwest and knew something about the game. Attended by a large throng of spectators, Campbell defeated Ball, described as "3 up". Campbell shot 84 to Ball's 87 for two loops around the nine-hole course.

Match play was the predominant form of competition during this time. Inter-club ("home and away") challenge matches were popular with both men and women club members. The women were particularly active in the club. In the early days of the Club, matches were played against the Lochburn Golf Club and Lakeside Golf Club, both in Tacoma and both now defunct as well as the Meadow Park Golf Club. Later, matches were arranged with clubs from Chehalis, Centralia, and Aberdeen. Yet later, matches were arranged with Fircrest, Rainier, Inglewood, and with clubs as far away as Bellingham and Yakima.

Matches were also arranged between the two Capital cities in Washington and Oregon, as State employees from Salem matched up against their counterparts in Olympia.

Not only were inter-club matches popular, intra-club matches were also common, and fierce, if not good-humored, rivalries developed. In 1922, the women challenged the men in a handicapped match, with the losing side buying dinner for the winner.

Men	Women
Mills ..... 8	Mrs. Yeager.....19
Gage ..... 8	Miss Partlow.....19
Griffin ..... 8	Mrs. Le Feber.....22
Partlow, H. W. 9	Mrs. Mills.....24
Hanson ..... 9	Mrs. Brackett.....26
Brackett ..... 9	Mrs. Redpath.....27
Partlow, K. L. 10	Mrs. Sticklin.....27
Sticklin .....10	Mrs. Aetzel.....31
Green .....10	Mrs. Ewald.....36
Jeffers, J. C. 12	Mrs. Pierce.....27
Lord .....15	Mrs. Wohleb.....38
Bloom .....15	Mrs. Shelley.....38
Shelley .....15	Mrs. Martin.....41
Clausen .....15	Mrs. Fultz.....42
Leghorn .....15	Mrs. Faulkner.....42
Martin .....18	Mrs. Lee.....43
Paris .....18	Mrs. Phillips.....45
Ingham .....20	Mrs. Whiting.....46
Baker .....30	Mrs. Jeffers.....56
Pierce .....30	Mrs. Hart.....56

Played in an August downpour, the men members defeated the women 33 – 17. In defeat, the women delivered this lament:

“Golf is a game in which fate hands you rotten weather. The team captains dole out equally poor handicaps. You fight for a score, like a shipwrecked sailor for a piece of driftwood – and then the men always win.”

The men responded with:

“Golf is a fine game. Women fight for a good handicap, battle gamely for a score, and then buy the men champions a good dinner.”

In the following, the Washington State Office of the Auditor issued a challenge to the Office of the Attorney General in a manner which could only have been written by accountants and lawyers:

## C. W. CLAUSEN DEFIES W. V. TANNER

\* \* \* \* \*

### Officials at Outs--Challenge Is Issued

To the Honorable W. V. Tanner:

Fore—The attention of the undersigned has been called to certain and sundry remarks purporting to emanate from the Temple of Justice, and particularly from that portion of the Temple of Justice wherein are situate the offices of the Attorney General, said remarks tending to lead un-informed persons to believe that the aforementioned Temple of Justice is the abiding place of a bunch of sharks in the Ancient and Honorable game of Golf.

Be it also known, that these certain and sundry remarks further purport to make light of and to hold up to scorn and derision the abilities of certain other wielders of the brassie and mashie, and in particular a certain bunch appertaining to and being a part of the force in the office of the

State Auditor, said office being situate in the Capitol Building.

In order that the falsity of these slanderous remarks, purporting to emanate from the Temple of Justice, be established and that the good name of the Capitol Building remain free of blemish, the undersigned, on behalf of himself and four others from his office, hereby offers and agrees to administer to the Honorable W. V. Tanner, and four others from the office of the Attorney General, a sound trimming at the Ancient and Honorable game of Golf, said trimming to take place on the Greens and Fairways of the Olympia Golf and Country club on the afternoon of July 14, 1917.

Having laid you a stymie on the 19th, with my trusty putter I hereby subscribe myself,

C. W. CLAUSEN.

The challenge was promptly accepted:

# Tanner Et Al Vs. Clausen Etc.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Case to Be Fought Out Loco Citato

No. 1.

### ANSWER AND ACCEPTANCE.

On the Golf Links of the Olympia Golf Club in and for the City of Olympia, Thurston County, Washington.

Slicer Clausen, Hooker Hartnett, Topper Jamieson, Mattor Shelley, Dubber Leghorn, Challengers, vs, Par Tanner, Birdie Fairbrook, Dogie Murphine, Dormie Christensen, Sty-mie Waterman, Challenged.

Come now the challenged above named and making their initial drive herein and for answer and acceptance deny, allege and approach as follows:

1. Teeing up, the challenged deny that the challengers maintain an office in the capitol building and allege on information and behalf that the only place of business of said challengers is on the above entitled golf links.

2. Taking a stance, and answering the Fore part of the challenge herein, challenged deny specifically that any slanderous remarks have emanated from that portion of the temple of justice wherein are situate the offices of the attorney general concerning the bunch of Dubs infesting the office of the state auditor and they allege that it would be impossible to slander the aforesaid Dubs as to their golfing ability.

3. Following through, the challenged state that they have no information sufficient to form a belief concerning

whether the capitol building of those abiding therein have a good name or are free from blemish and therefore deny same and brand it as a good lie.

4. And Sinking the Putt, the challenged emphatically deny that the challengers herein can trim the challenged, or any one else or anything at all, save and except the daily trimming they give the fairway on dubbed shots.

Wherefore, having fully answered, the challenged herein accept the challenge of said challengers and agree to a match to be played on the afternoon of Saturday the 14th day of July, A. D. 1917.

W. V. TANNER,  
For the Challenged.

The first round of this mighty golf tournament went to the players wearing the Clausen colors. They played rings around their opponents and forced Captain Tanner, of the legal team, to admit between sobs that "they licked us and licked us good." Mr. Tanner admitted that his team could win from the auditor's gang and another game has been arranged. Shelley will play with Clausen and Waterman will take sides with Tanner. The score yesterday:

Tanner, 2; Murphine, 1; Fairbrook, 0; Christensen, 0—Total 3.

Clausen, 1; Hartnett, 2; Jaminson, 3; Leghorn, 3—Total, 9.

By 1915, the lease on the Chambers property in Lacey was scheduled to expire. In addition, the Club struggled to maintain its membership. While they had a Golf Club, they were still missing the “Country” in Olympia Golf and Country Club and realized they needed to offer more than just golf to attract new members. They made an effort to find new land, but in the end, renegotiated the lease with an option to buy. In May, 1917, they did just that, but first they needed to establish themselves as a legal entity. Thus, on March 30, 1917, the Olympia Golf and Country Club was formally incorporated.

While some may argue that the date of incorporation determines the founding date of an organization, this is not true in most cases. Many organizations, including golf clubs, incorporate many years after their formation when it becomes necessary to conduct legal transactions.

From 1915 to 1919, the Club rebuilt its nine-hole course and improved its clubhouse operations. The club also undertook several membership drives. Men would pay a \$10 initiation fee (about \$325 today) with \$1 monthly dues, and unmarried women would pay \$5 initiation and 50 cent dues. But America was at war in Europe, and attention was drawn to war efforts at home rather than to country club activities.

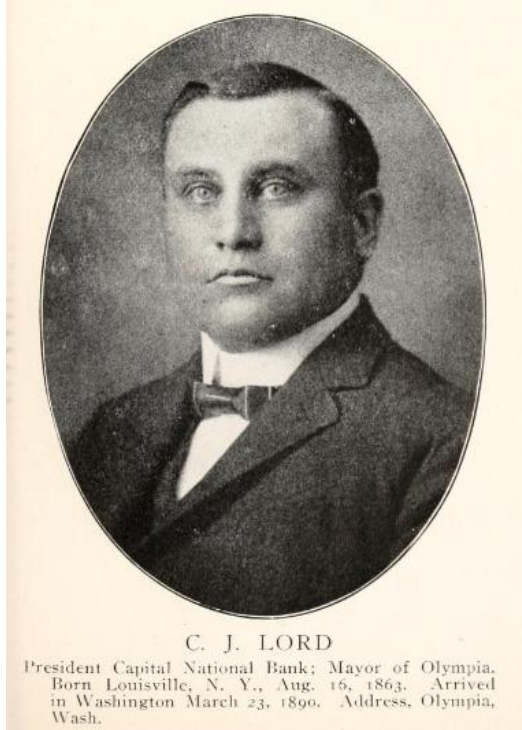
All that changed in 1920. First, the war was over and men and women found more leisure time. Secondly, the Club elected Clarence J. Lord as its President. Lord, a wealthy banker and a dynamic leader, led a resurgence in the Club. In what was to presage the Club’s move to its new location in 1926, Lord offered to donate the land on Tykles Cove in April, 1920. However, the Club declined his offer as they saw it as too great a financial burden to relocate the club at that time.

Nevertheless, Lord spent considerable amount of his own money to renovate the clubhouse and in other ways improve the operations of the Club. He also had a vision to relocate the course to a new location as quoted in the December 31, 1920 issue of the *Morning Olympian*:

Someday we are going to have a club down the bay on a large tract of nearly 200 acres which I have promised to donate when the time is ripe. It is the ideal location for the club which ours will someday grow to be, on the shores where yachting and motor boating can join with pleasures on the green. This will make our Olympia club one to draw people from all quarters to visit .... From these beginnings the accomplishments I see ahead will develop, possibly in five years time, but if not by then, certainly not long after.

In March, 1924, Butler’s Cove Land Company purchased 475 acres of undeveloped property at Butler’s Cove for \$37,075 (about \$750,000 in today’s dollars). Waterfront lots quickly sold, many to club members, as the excitement of a new golf course at the picturesque site grew to a fever pitch. From the proceeds, the Land Company donated 85 acres of the property to the club for the development of a nine-hole golf course. Eventually the club acquired additional property, enough to expand it to an eighteen-hole course in 1959.

Two years later in 1926, a nine-hole course would be opened for play, just as Lord envisioned.



Clarence J. Lord (1863 – 1937), Olympia C&GC trustee, president, and benefactor

*Clarence J. Lord was born in New York State in 1863 and moved to Washington in 1890. He opened the Capital National Bank in Olympia soon after his arrival. Lord served as the Mayor of Olympia from 1902-03.*

*Lord was involved in numerous civic affairs of Olympia and was a prominent, influential figure in the City's history. Described as the Club's "financial overseer and fund furnisher," Lord made possible the growth of Olympia C&GC in its early years.*

*An avid golfer, in addition to Olympia C&GC, Lord held memberships at Seattle Golf Club, Tacoma Golf Club, and Grays Harbor Golf Club.*

*Ever the benefactor, following his death in 1937, and upon the death of his wife Elizabeth, their magnificent mansion was donated to the State and served as the Capitol Museum for many years.*

The club sold off the property at the old course in Lacey in 1925. The old site was turned into a public course and became the Mountain View Golf Course. This course operated until 1963 when it was sold to developers to later become the Panorama City retirement community.

In 1925, Olympia Country and Golf Club hired Walter G. Fovargue (1882 – 1963) as its golf architect to lay out the new course. Fovargue grew up in Ohio and became a golf professional at the age of 17, one of the first American born golf professionals when virtually all the golf professionals in America in 1900 were Scots or Englishmen. Fovargue was one of original founders of the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) in 1916. He played in eleven U. S. Opens with his best finishes in 1906 and 1916 when he finished 13<sup>th</sup>.



Walter G. Fovargue (1882 – 1963)

*Fovargue later gave up his professional status and eventually ended up in Aberdeen, Washington where he accepted a job offered by W. J. Patterson, an influential businessman, managing a fuel company. He joined the Grays Harbor Country Club, and as an amateur, Fovargue competed in many tournaments, winning the Northwest Open in 1917.*

*He was also involved in golf architecture, travelling to Japan to lay out one of the country's first golf courses in 1924. He designed or renovated several courses in California, including Wawona Golf Course (1918) located in Yosemite National Park. The course still operates today. In addition to Olympia Country and Golf Club (1926), his Northwest designs include Willapa Harbor Golf Course (1926), Oaksridge Golf Course (1928) in Elma, as well as the redesign of the Grays Harbor Country Club.*

*He died in California in 1963 at the age of 80.*

With Fovargue's design in place, the club next hired John Ball, the father of Ray W. Ball, the club's first golf professional, to construct the course. The elder Ball was a prolific builder, having constructed the courses for Seattle Golf Club at its original location at Laurelhurst (1901) as well as its current location in Shoreline (1908). He became a golf course designer in his own right laying out the original nine-holes in Bellingham Country Club (1912), the Grays Harbor Golf Club (1912), and many others in the Pacific Northwest.

In January, 1926 the club elected George W. Draham as its president.



George W. Draham (1869 – 1957)

*George Draham was born in Maine in 1869. He moved to Shelton, Washington in the 1890s. He was president of the Olympia Oyster Investment Company. He served as the Mayor of Olympia from 1923-24.*

*Called the "Father of golf in Olympia", Draham had been at the forefront of the club's founding in 1914, serving as its temporary president until the club was formally established.*

*"Early history of golf in Olympia is linked closely to the name of Mr. Draham for it was while he was president of the Chamber of Commerce in 1914 that the club was fostered and given a start that has brought it to the present high position it holds in this city." (Morning Olympian 4-2-1926)*



George W. Draham (1955 photo)

*The Morning Olympian* paid him a tribute upon the club's new opening in 1926:

"George W. Draham, father of golf in Olympia, has seen one of his hopes realized with the opening of the Olympia Golf Club at its new Butler's Cove home. He is president of the club and members say it is fitting that he be their head at this time."

Draham would not live to see the opening of the second nine in 1959. He died in 1957 at the age of 88.

"Carved out of a forest," as pronounced by the *Seattle Times*, Olympia Golf and Country Club's new nine-hole course at Butler's Cove formally opened on May 15, 1926. Clarence J. Lord who, five years earlier, had foretold of this day had now been realized. Membership stood at 163.



Olympia Golf and Country Club 2nd Green – 1926 (Courtesy of Washington State Historical Society)



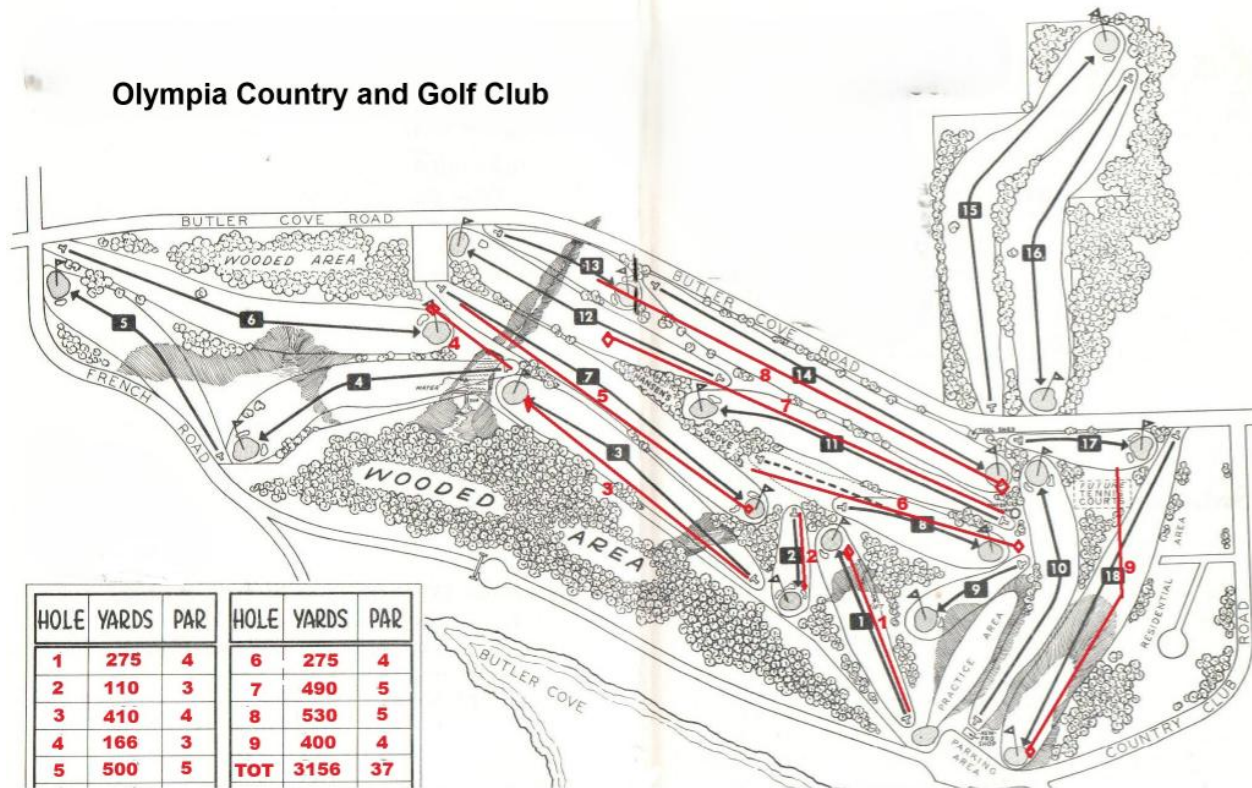
Olympia Country and Golf Club Clubhouse – 1926 (Courtesy of Washington State historical Society)

**OLYMPIA—OLYMPIA GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB.**

Estd. 1914. Holes—9. Length—3,205 yds. Par—37. Grass greens. Annual meeting, January. Pres., G. W. Draham; V. Pres., V. Baker; Sec. and Treas., Earle M. McCroskey, The Olympia National Bank; Chmn. Greens Com., O. C. Hanson; Professional, Walter Mitchell; Greenskeeper, Fred J. Payne. Mail address, P. O. Box 396. Three and one-half miles from city, reached by automobile. Visitors' charges—\$1.00 week days; Sundays and holidays, \$2.00. Sunday play permitted and caddies available.

The American Annual Golf Guide 1926

When opened the nine-hole course measured 3,156 yards, par 37. The following diagram shows in red the approximate routing of the holes in 1926. Holes 1 – 3 have remained substantially unchanged to today.



Approximate routing of the original nine holes from 1926 shown in red as super-imposed on the 1959 layout

As was customary at the time when a new course was opened, four leading players from the region were invited to play in a fourball competition. In the feature event, Mortie Dutra, Grays Harbor professional teamed up with Walter Fovargue to defeat Pacific Northwest's top amateurs Chuck Hunter and Jack Westland by the score of 3 and 2.

Members were enthusiastic about the new course and the future of the club appeared bright. They talked of expanding the course to 18 holes. The club calendar was full with golf tournaments and social activities. The club hired Walter Mitchell as its pro, soon followed by Harold Speer in 1927-28, then young English-born Willie Price in 1929-35.

Three short years after the club's move to Butler's Cove, however, events outside of Olympia had a profound effect on the future of the club. The stock market crashed in October, 1929 and it was beginning of the Great Depression. While the effects of the crash were not immediate, the club's slow decline began to reveal itself by 1931. The club membership declined, monthly dues were not being paid, and social functions were drastically reduced in numbers. It did not help that a new public course called Glengarry Golf Course (now defunct) had just opened near Mud Bay in Olympia. The Mountain View club was still operating at the club's old site in Lacey, drawing golfers away from Olympia Golf and Country Club.

By 1932, the club's finances were in dire straits. The course opened its doors to the public, a sure signal that the club was on a downward spiral.

**GOLFERS  
ATTENTION**

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**Announcing the Low  
Rate Prices at the  
Olympia Golf and  
Country Club**

The public is invited to play all day at **50¢** green fee; special rates given by month or year. Enjoy the finest course on Puget Sound at these new low prices.

*Morning Olympian 2-24-1934*

That same year, the club leased the course and clubhouse to pro Willie Price with his partner Harold Cahoon for a period of two years with option to buy. When it became clear that the club's finances were continuing their decline, it was put up for sale in 1935.

Led by club member, H. C. Brodie, a new organization called the Olympia Country and Golf Club filed for Articles of Incorporation. The change in name was subtle, simply reversing the "Country" and "Golf" but the consequences were long-lasting.

The course, clubhouse, and all its equipment were leased to the new Olympia Country and Golf Club for a period of two years with an option to buy for \$25,000.

A bright star emerged during the club's dark period when twenty-year old Marvin "Bud" Ward joined the club in 1933 and was its club champion that year. Ward is considered the finest golfer that Olympia has produced as he went on to win multiple regional and national titles in his illustrious career.



Marvin "Bud" Ward (1913-1968) with U.S Men's Amateur trophy

*Born in Elma, Washington in 1913, Bud Ward grew up an orphan, raised by his older sister in Lacey. At the age of 11 he was introduced to golf by his brother-in-law Ben Griffin and soon after Ward found a job as a caddie at Mountain View Golf Course. There, he quickly developed into a champion golfer.*

*He won the U.S. Amateur title in 1939 and 1941, and was a member of the Walker Cup Team in 1938 and 1947. His performance in the 1938 Walker Cup, held at St. Andrews, was historic. In his 36-hole singles match he defeated the British Amateur Champion Frank Pennink 12 and 11 and in the process broke the amateur course record with a six-under par 67.*

*He was twice Washington Open Champion, six-time Northwest Open Champion, two-time Washington State Amateur champion, and a PPGA Men's Amateur champion. He played in the Master's Tournament multiple times and competed against the country's greatest players.*

*In December, 1941, one week after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Ward enlisted as a private in the U. S. Army Air Corps, the precursor to the U.S. Air Force, and served four years attaining the rank of Captain. He died of cancer in 1968 in San Mateo, California at the age of 54. He was inducted into the Pacific Northwest Golf Hall of Fame in 1979 and the State of Washington Sports Hall of Fame in 1981.*

Among the women, Mrs. Ada Yeager and Mrs. H. C. (Maud) Brodie were considered the top women golfers at the club in the early years. They won multiple club championships between them. Maud Brodie set the course record in 1938 with a score of 82, which stood for many years. In 1942, Maud Brodie made the AP wires when she scored two hole-in-ones in the space of one month on the 114-yard second hole. As reported by the newspaper: "Mrs. H. C. Brodie was preparing to drive at the Olympia Country and Golf Club. Her caddie remarked casually: 'Watch this, Mrs. Brodie's going to make it in one.' She did. It was her second of the season." (*Capital Journal* 8-29-1942)

## GOLF CHAMPIONS AT OLYMPIA COUNTRY CLUB



Mrs. H. C. Brodie successfully defended herself in 36-hole championship play at the Olympia Country and Golf club Friday, defeating Mrs. Ellis Cook for the club championship and winning the crown for the third successive year. Pictured above, left to right, are Mrs. Brodie and Mrs. Cook. In the next twosome Mrs. Irving Lassen is pictured with Miss Betty Fultz who defeated the former in the first flight. Mrs. Henry Skog (extreme right) is pictured with Mrs. Smith Troy who won the match for the B division championship. Mrs. M. J. Long defeated Mrs. Charles Stickney in the B division third flight. Next Tuesday the club members will match play against par. —Picture by Staff Photographer.

Club Champion Mrs. H. C. (Maud) Brodie far left (*Morning Olympian* 9-24-1939)

The club limped on for several years. Unable to sustain itself for long, the club eventually sold all its holdings to Capitol Corporation in November, 1936 for \$18,000 (little over \$400,000 today). The clubhouse alone had cost \$25,000 to build just nine years earlier. With the purchase, the club became a private entity once again.

The club was not alone in experiencing the financial turmoil of the Depression. Many golf clubs across the country went bankrupt during this period. Pro's contracts were not renewed, club activities were

severely curtailed, and members helped out where they could. The club had to somehow hang on until the country began its recovery. Slot machines became a source of revenue. While it would be an exaggeration to say that slot machines saved Olympia C&GC, they certainly helped sustain it when the club needed it the most. These machines were prevalent at many of the private golf clubs in the Northwest until law enforcement began cracking down in the 1950s.

Signs that financial conditions at the club were improving began to appear in 1937. As membership levels began to rise, the club hired the popular Scottish-born James “Jimmy” Mason as its pro that same year. Mason was later called into service during World War II to work at the naval shipyard in Bremerton but continued to work at the club on a part-time basis through the end of the war.

In 1938, some of the original stakeholders, including George W. Draham, formed the Budd Land Company to buy back the club from Capitol Corporation. The deal was struck in April, 1938 and the new ownership decided to retain the name Olympia Country and Golf Club.

By 1940 the club had 387 members on its roster.

In 1942 the club hosted its first major tournament in its history, the Washington State Men’s Amateur Championship. Over 54 holes, Seattle Golf Club’s great amateur Harry Givan took the title with a score of 210. Fifty-nine year old Walter Fovargue returned to compete over the course which he had designed and made a creditable showing with a score of 246.

In 1950, the City of Olympia celebrated its centennial. As part of the week-long celebration, Olympia Country and Golf Club hosted its biggest tournament in its history to that point. Called the Centennial Open, it attracted the leading players in the Northwest to a 54-hole contest for a piece of the \$1000 purse. Charles “Chuck” Congdon, pro out of Tacoma Country and Golf Club and the leading player in the Northwest, took the first-place prize money of \$250, a significant payday for the time.

On May 16, 1951, the great Byron Nelson stopped at Butler’s Cove course on his tour of the Northwest. A large crowd followed as Nelson carved out a new course record 61 (33-28) going twice around on the nine-hole layout. Following the round he gave a clinic and charmed the fans with his Southern drawl and easy manner.

In 1957, the club hired Fred Federspiel (1895 – 1972) to design the second nine. Part-time golf architect and part-time greens superintendent from Oregon, Federspiel had laid out the highly acclaimed Royal Oaks Country Club course in Vancouver, Washington. Federspiel’s plan called for a re-design of the original nine, although holes 1-3 remained intact.

On July 18, 1959, the second nine was officially opened. Headlines proclaimed “Expansion Heralds New Era in Olympia Golf.” An enthusiastic crowd was on hand to watch the opening tee shots of the invited players.

# Olympia Country and Golf Club

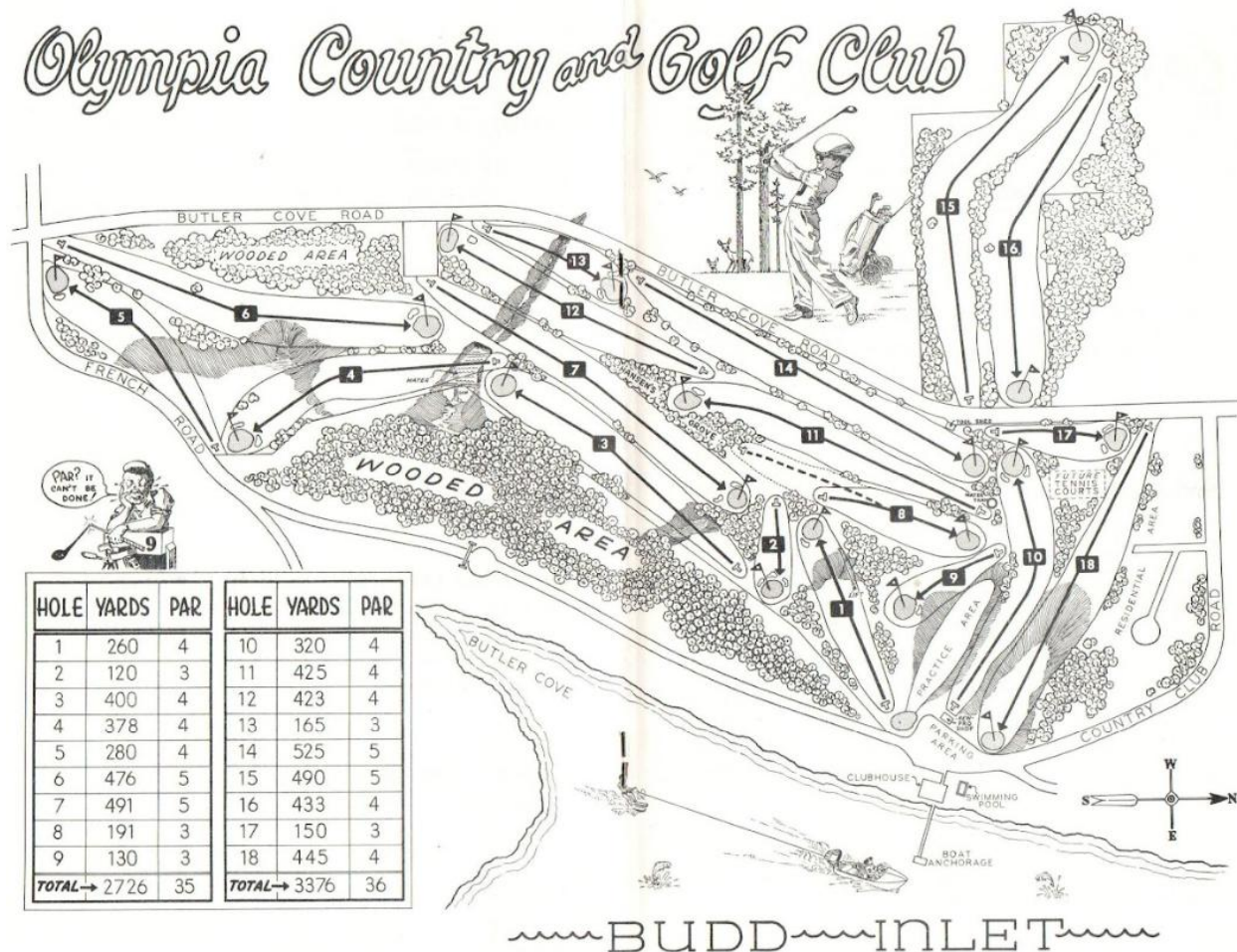


Diagram of the 18-Hole Layout in 1959. Remarkably, the routing of the holes has remained unchanged 67 years later. (Courtesy of Olympia Country and Golf Club)

As was the tradition at the time, the best men and women players in the region were invited to open play. The feature foursome included four professionals: Bud Ward, now the professional at Peninsula Golf Club in San Mateo, California; Chuck Congdon from Tacoma; Ken Tucker from Everett Country Club; and Fred Dornan, Olympia's own pro. When play was completed, Ward and Congdon tied for first, each shooting 71 on the new layout.

In the second group were the region's women stars: Mrs. Pat Lesser Harbottle from Tacoma, who shot 76; Mrs. Jack Baty from Fircrest with a 77; Miss Judy Hoetmer from Sandpoint with a 78, and Mrs. Dewey Busch from Rainier with an 83.

Ray Ball, now 70, who had constructed the Lacey course in 1914, and had assisted his father John Ball in the construction of the 1926 course, was on hand to watch the opening day ceremonies.

With the expansion of the course to eighteen holes, the club began to host more tournaments over the years. Future PGA Tour players who won at Olympia C&GC early in their careers included: Kermit Zarley in the 1962 Washington State Amateur; Ken Still in the 1966 Washington State Open; and Fred Couples in the 1978 Washington State Amateur.

As with many golf clubs, Olympia Country and Golf Club experienced its share of financial ups and downs during its long history. The period following what was called The Great Recession of 2008 was particularly difficult for the club as it faced possible forfeiture. In 2012, a benefactor came forward to save the club. That year, club member and philanthropist Dr. Angela Bowen purchased the club and all its land and property. She made substantial capital improvements at the club, including a new state-of-the-art clubhouse.



Dr. Angela J. Bowen (1932 – 2017)

*Angela J. Bowen was born in Mississippi in 1932. She graduated from the University of Washington Medical School in 1963. She became a leading figure in the field of endocrinology research and championed the cause of ethics in medical research and of patient rights.*

*Dr. Bowen had a long history of philanthropy, donating to numerous institutions in the area of medical research and education, as well as to projects promoting nature conservancy and open space.*

*She died in her Olympia home, a 20-acre nature preserve, on August 31, 2017 at the age of 84.*

Today, the club has a strong financial foundation and a growing and active membership. First timers on the course often describe it as quirky, but the more one plays the course, the more one becomes enamored by the beauty of its surroundings, and the unusual nature of some of its holes. Perhaps no hole exemplifies these qualities more than hole number 9, a daunting 140-yard par 3. One tees off from a high ridge to a green which sits on another ridge, over the top of the driving range which threatens to devour the errant tee shot. Yet, once on the green, one is rewarded with an unparalleled view of the shimmering waters of Butler's Cove, and beyond it the spectacular, snow-capped Mount Rainier.

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