

Special Research Project:

History of The Manasquan River Golf Club: 1922—2022

Jim Ham—Borough Historian



I would like to acknowledge the tremendous assistance of The Club in writing this history. Club COO Mike Zusack graciously allowed the Historical Society complete access to the Club's archives. Dara Brown, Jessica Mascali and Alexis McCarthy were of tremendous help in providing access to the Club's archives, answering questions and helping out at every turn. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Chris Farley's November, 1989 Chronicle of MRGC's History as a tremendous source of materials for this history.

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

CHARLES OSBORN FARM:

THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE MANASQUAN RIVER GOLF CLUB

The birthplace of the Club is the former farm of one of the earliest settlers in Brielle—the Osborn family.

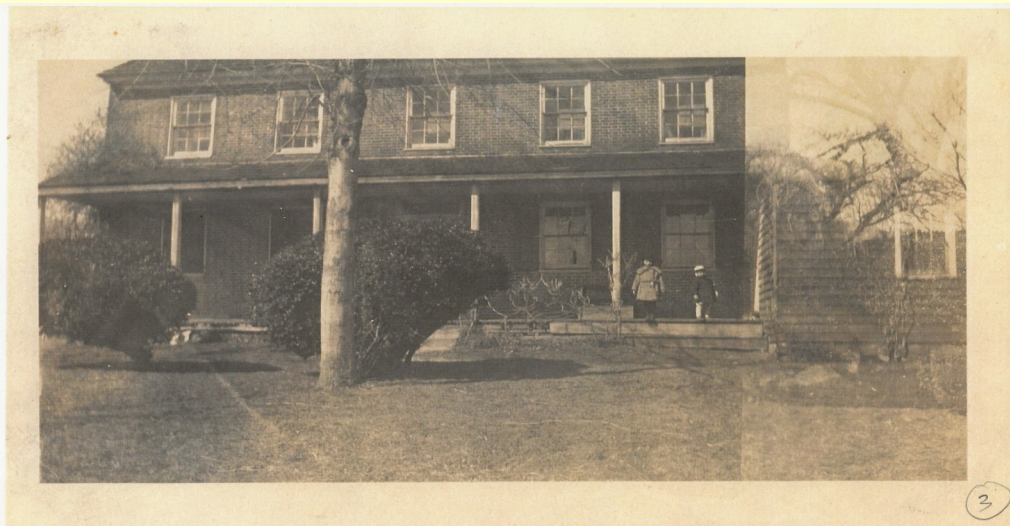
Samuel Osborn emigrated from England in the early 1700's; first settling in Long Island and then moved to what is now Brielle. He owned large tracts of land on both sides of the Manasquan River; one tract was a large farm located along the northern shore of the Manasquan River. The farm stretched on the west from current day Wall (west of the Rt.70 bridge) to its eastern terminus around the location of the Club's eighteenth tee. Samuel's farmhouse still exists as part of the restaurant, Harpoon Willys.

Samuel's son, Abraham Osborn served in the Revolutionary War. Around 1780, Abraham and his wife Elizabeth Allen built the brick house that is currently part of the Club. Abraham died in 1835 and was buried in a small graveyard that he established on his farm on Holly Hill Drive. Upon Abraham's death, his will divided the farm among his sons. One of his sons, Col. James Osborn and his son Charles Osborn owned the portion of the farm that was to become the Manasquan River Golf Club.

In the early 1920's, the Charles Osborn farm was rented and farmed for two and a half years by Steve and Grace Matthews. Their children, Camilla (Milly) and Clifford, are shown in the pictures on the following page. These pictures were taken in March 1922, just before the Club purchased the farm in September 1922.

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

CHARLES OSBORN FARM: MARCH 1922



The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

THE SEARCH FOR A NEW GOLF COURSE

The story of the Manasquan River Golf Club begins in the summer of 1922 with a \$1,000 deposit.

For several years, a large majority of the members of the Point Pleasant Golf Club (PPGC) had been dissatisfied with the club. Up until the fall of 1921 these members were willing to have the club remain at its Point Pleasant Beach location as long as improvements were made to the conditions of the course and that additional land could be purchased from the River and Ocean Front Land Company to extend the 9-hole course to 18 holes. When the Land Company would only offer the PPGC a short-term lease on the additional land, a group of members started looking for alternative sites to locate a new golf course.

During the fall of 1921, the search for a new location for the new golf course began in earnest. After inspecting several options, one location stood out...the Osborn farm on the north shore of the Manasquan River...almost directly across the river from the present site. Its 145 acres of rolling countryside and riverfront location made for a spectacular location for a new golf club with room for 18 holes. During the winter various meetings were held with Brielle residents who adjoined the property who welcomed and encouraged this new endeavor.

On June 26th, 1922, for a \$1,000 deposit, the group obtained a 3-month option to purchase the Osborn tract for \$60,000. The plan was to identify 200 shareholders who would each donate \$500 which would generate a total of \$100,000. This was the amount estimated to be sufficient to purchase the tract from the Osborn family, lay out the course, and make alterations to the club house and outbuildings.

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THE SEARCH FOR A NEW GOLF COURSE (Cont'd)

On September 8th, 1922, an organization then bearing the name “Manasquan River Golf and Country Club” filed its first registration certificate in the Monmouth County Clerk’s office in Freehold, New Jersey.

On September 8th, 1922 the Coast Star commented:

A large group of citizens of wealth and enterprise, all either summertime or permanent residents of a big community of coats resorts on the Jersey shore just south of Asbury Park, last night added the lovely little Borough of Brielle, to world of sports and country club life. The Manasquan River Golf and Country Club – destined, for many physical reasons, to be the best course on the coast – became an actuality at an enthusiastic meeting of subscribing shareholders in the new-born club, the meeting being held in the splendid country home of Mr. Edwin Isham, River Road, Brielle, NJ.

As the September 26th deadline to exercise the purchase option approached, the process to identify the requisite shareholders didn’t go smoothly. Three days before the expiration of the purchase option, the group was still \$10,000 short of the \$60,000 goal. A meeting was held at the Isham home on September 23rd, and after much discussion, no additional money was pledged. About 10:30pm, the group decided to adjourn and travel down to Bay Head to another member’s home. In the car on the way, Howard Folk persuaded Edwin Isham to pledge the remaining \$10,000 in exchange for a small parcel of land adjacent to his estate which he had been attempting to purchase without success. By the time they arrived in Bay Head, the agreement with Isham was finalized and announced to the reassembled group. The purchase agreement was successfully finalized on September 26th, 1922.

The new golf club was officially underway!

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club



Early pictures of the Club featuring the old
Osborn farmhouse

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

THE BEGINNING

On September 8th, 1922, the “Manasquan River Golf and Country Club” filed its first registration certificate. The Club was founded through the enduring and diligent efforts of it’s original Secretary, Howard Folk and its Officers, John Cattus-President, Edwin Isham-Vice President, T. Tasso Fischer-Treasurer, and Peter Backes, George Devoll, Bancroft Gherardi, E.F. Emerich, Matthew Marcellus and William Von Planck-Trustees.

This new corporation purchased the Charles Osborn farm, an area of approximately 145 acres of rolling hills and fertile pastures that sloped to about 1,800 feet of waterfront on the north shore of the Manasquan River. A wide gentle ridge, crossing from what is the 3rd tee through the 11th fairway, is reported to be the highest point on the eastern coastline from Atlantic Highlands to Florida, and is a familiar landmark called “Old Squan Highlands” by the old sea captains, as it commanded a panoramic view of both the river and the ocean. To the original purchase of land, an additional six acres located near today’s 1st green and 2nd fairway was later donated by Mr. Isham.

The first nine holes (now the back nine) were fashioned out of swampy lowlands along the river. On September 22nd, 1922, at a meeting held at the home of Edwin Isham, the trustees hired and instructed Mr. Robert White, the famous golf course architect, to proceed with the construction of the first nine holes of the new golf course so that it would be ready for play by May 30th, 1923. Mr. White completed the routing plan by November of 1922 with a course measuring 6,447 yards. With remarkable adherence to schedule, the new course opened to its members on Saturday, June 30th, 1923. The first nine holes were

(cont’d on page 22)

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

Course Architect—Robert White

Long, Long, Ago...

MRGC's Original Architect

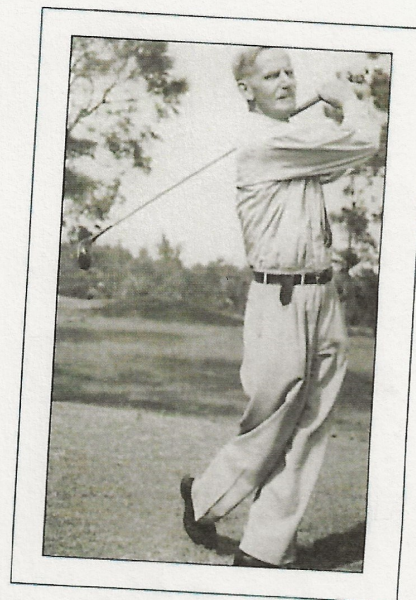
Robert W. White (born 1874) was born in St Andrews, Scotland and emigrated in 1894 to the United States to study agronomy. He worked as a professional and greenkeeper at several clubs including Shawnee Country Club in 1914. White helped many young men from the British Isles find work in the United States as golf professionals and greenkeepers. White served as president of the Western Professional Golfers' Association in 1908 and became the first president of the Professional Golfers' Association of America in 1916. He held the office through 1919. During his career he also designed a number of golf courses, many located in eastern Pennsylvania. White also was one of the founders of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

Robert White is MRGC's original course architect. The first nine holes of Manasquan River are actually today's back nine. They were fashioned from swampy lowlands along the river and opened for play on July 22, 1924. They were constructed at a cost of \$26,000.

In 1926, the second nine holes, the present front nine, were completed and opened for play. They were carved from the Scottish heather and laurel laden ravines and elevated hills overlooking the river.

Robert White's Selected works:

- Berkleigh Country Club, Kutztown, Pennsylvania
- Blue at East Potomac Public Golf Course - Public, Washington, D.C.
- Blue/Red at Buck Hill Falls Golf Club, Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania
- Glen Brook Country Club, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania
- Green Hills Golf Course, Birdsboro, Pennsylvania
- Harkers Hollow Golf Club, Phillipsburg, New Jersey
- Longue Vue Club, Verona, Pennsylvania
- Manasquan River Golf Club, Brielle, New Jersey
- Ocean Forest Country Club, also known as Pine Lakes Country Club, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996.[4]
- Red at East Potomac Public Golf Course, Washington, D.C.
- Red/White at Buck Hill Falls Golf Club, Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania
- Richmond County Country Club, Staten Island, New York
- Rockland Country Club, Sparkill, New York
- Shorehaven Golf Club, East Norwalk, Connecticut
- Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, Connecticut
- Skytop Lodge, Skytop, Pennsylvania
- Swamp Fox Golf Club, Greeleyville, South Carolina
- Water Gap Country Club, Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania
- White at East Potomac Public Golf Course, Washington, D.C.



The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club Course Architect- Robert White's Field Trip Report

Mount Vernon, N. Y.
July 21, 1922.

Bancroft Gherardi, Esq.
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—

I beg to report that after going over the grounds at Brielle I consider it splendidly adapted ~~for golf purposes.~~

It should be possible to lay out a first class eighteen hole course on the property, nine holes of which would be entirely on the cleared land, the other nine being almost entirely out through the woods.

The soil in general is quite good and there should be no difficulty in developing high class turf in a comparatively short time.

Should it be possible to start work this fall nine holes could be ready to play on by June 1st next.

I should say that for the construction of the nine holes on the cleared land including a water supply, Twenty-Eight Thousand Dollars would be an ample allowance. The nine to be built in the woods would cost about Ten Thousand Dollars more, less such salvage as could be got from the sale of the timber on it.

Respectfully submitted,
(Signed) Robert White

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club Aerial View of the Course in the 1920's



Original Course Designed by Robert White.
Aerial Photograph from the early 1930s.

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THE BEGINNING (Cont'd)

constructed at a cost of \$26,000. In 1926, the second nine holes, constructed at a cost of approximately \$45,000, were carved from Scotch heather and laurel-laden ravines and elevated forests overlooking the river, were opened for play. To save money, all the trees on the land were removed and cut into four-foot lengths and sold for firewood.

Mr. White's design of the golf course resulted in two nines that are starkly different from each other...one nine rolling, undulating hillsides and the other nine relatively flat parklands with the Manasquan River as a picturesque backdrop...the combination produces a very unique, challenging and beautiful eighteen holes of golf. The course is widely viewed as one of the top courses in New Jersey.

The first clubhouse was the Osborn farm homestead. This part of the building still stands and is the first section of the expanded facilities where the main entrance is now located. The first men's locker room was housed in a barn that was moved from Edwin Isham's property adjacent to the club property.

Interestingly, the original plans called for tennis courts and a large marina complex on the river. The latter never developed, although over the years construction of club facilities on the river has been periodically discussed. The tennis courts, which were situated near the bag room, were only temporarily maintained, and became what is now the practice range. When abandoned, the small tennis shack became the first pro-shop.

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Early pictures of the interior of the clubhouse...
the old Osborn farmhouse

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THE 1930' S: YEARS OF GROWTH & CHALLENGES

The early days of this young club were not without its challenges. With the onset of the Great Depression, the club began to struggle financially and gradually started moving into financial jeopardy. On August 29th, 1933, then President Bancroft Gherardi wrote to all members to call a special meeting because the Club was in default on taxes and interest on the first mortgage. A plea went out to all members in the Fall of 1933 asking if any members could subscribe to the needed cash amount of \$4,000 to pay the overdue indebtedness. Efforts to raise the needed capital were unsuccessful.

The Club was rescued by the generosity of the third Club President, Lee H. Bristol, Chairman of Bristol-Myers Company. Mr. Bristol agreed to underwrite all Club debts without accrual of interest until the club could, in 1935, reorganize as the Manasquan River Golf Club.

On March 4th of 1935, a Certificate of Incorporation was filed with the Secretary of State in Trenton. The corporation was formed “to conduct, maintain and operate a golf and country club and to acquire suitable grounds, buildings and equipment for the social intercourse of its members”. The first principal office was located at the corner of Union Lane and Ashley Avenue, which also served as the real estate office of Howard Folk, the Club’s Secretary and first registered agent. Interestingly, this small structure had been Brielle’s first free-standing post office and has been designated as a historical site by Brielle’s Union Landing Historical Society.

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THE 1930'S: YEARS OF GROWTH & CHALLENGES (Cont'd)

State records evidence that following recordation at 9:00am on March 13th in the Monmouth County Clerk's office, Secretary of State Thomas A. Mathis on March 14, 1935, filed and caused to be recorded a Certificate of Incorporation that brought into existence that which we now know as "the Club".

Manasquan River Golf Club

RIVER ROAD BRIELLE, NEW JERSEY



GOLF
—AT THE—
SEASHORE

Eighteen of the sportiest holes to be found on any golf course along the Jersey Shore. Clubhouse facilities which tho unpretentious, compare favorably with those of more costly clubs . . . These are among the advantages to be gained by yourself and members of your family at Manasquan River Golf Club. . . .

SEASON OF 1938 ANNUAL DUES \$50.00 <small>(Including Tax). Additional members of the family may have golf privileges on the basis of \$15.00 for the first golf privilege in any member family and \$10.00 for each additional golf privilege.</small>	Daily Green Fees (May throuout September.) \$1.25 Weekdays (if accompanied by member) \$1.50 Weekdays (if not accompanied by member) \$2 Sat., Sun., Hol. (if accompanied by member) \$2.50 Sat., Sun., Hol. (if not accompanied by mem.)
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MONTHLY, FORTNIGHTLY, WEEKLY RATES

VISITORS WELCOME

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

THE 1930'S: YEARS OF GROWTH & CHALLENGES (Cont'd)

By the 1930's with growing membership, remodeling of the old farmhouse and additional construction was required. The earliest construction was a large multi-purpose room with a cathedral ceiling, massive hand-hewn beams and a huge fireplace. It was used as a meeting place and dining room. Shortly thereafter, a barn belonging to Ed Isham was moved from his farm located in the area around Isham Circle and the second hole, to become the men's locker room and also appropriately called the "Hay Barn". To save money, the barn was converted into a suitable dressing facility through the painting and carpentry work of the members.



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The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club



The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

THE TRANSITION TO A MODERN, WORLD CLASS CLUB

As the country emerged from World War II, the Club again faced financial challenges, as the \$66,000 mortgage was confronted with foreclosure. Heirs of deceased shareholders were anxious to settle their estates and some members discussed selling the Club for real estate development. Once again, the members of the Club rose to the occasion.

In March 1946, a small group of members, headed by President John Howell including Lee H. Bristol and J. Dugold White, formed a syndicate to raise the necessary funds to refinance the mortgage. Through the energetic efforts of this syndicate, joined by Jack Folk, Louis Marron, Gerry Barnett, J. Elmer Pierce and others, ownership certificates were sold to new members to underwrite a new mortgage. By early 1947, these efforts had borne fruit. President Howell announced that membership had increased to 150 members and the overdue mortgage had been refinanced into a new, lower mortgage of \$50,000.

As the Club was establishing a sound financial foundation, wartime restrictions on food, liquor and travel were lifted. This in turn encouraged the pursuit of leisure activities and golf in particular. The club responded to this demand. In 1954, President John Ott, assisted by VP Dick Post and House Chairman Mort Hansen, led an effort to increase membership to over 300 members. New Bylaws were adopted and a new class of membership was approved – “Associate Member” – and added to the traditional “Owner Member” to bolster the membership drive. Visiting guests and golfers, impressed by the spirit of the membership and the beauty of the Club, were eager to join.

To support the Club’s growing membership, in 1953/54, a new bi-level Men’s locker room was built adjacent to the club house proper. The old “hay barn” was taken over by the growing membership of lady golfers. A new Mixed Grill Room with a handsome circular bar for drinks was built where members could get

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

THE TRANSITION TO A MODERN, WORLD CLASS CLUB

together for drinks, lunch or a game of cards after a round of golf. Despite its name, the Grill was not “mixed” until 5:00pm when ladies could join in the activities.

The 1960's brought many more improvements to the Club's facilities. In 1965, a new more spacious dining room replaced the old dining facilities. The old practice green was moved to its present location across the road to what had been the first tee. The front entranceway, with its porte-cochere, foyer and offices, was added in 1966. The ladies next moved out of “Mr. Isham's barn” into their present locker and restrooms in the refurbished living quarters of the old farmhouse and clubhouse. This last move allowed Club Pro Jack Beckett and his assistant John Cafone to move the Pro-shop into their new home in the just vacated Hay Barn.

In 1977, a separate brick faced building, with racks for 366 bags, was constructed which provided for a new more spacious Pro-shop. 1977 also saw the completion of a new, more roomy Men's Locker Room. Further remodeling of the Club occurred in 1986, when under George Smith's supervision, a new Men's Grill and Bar with luncheon facilities was created.

The 1990's continued to bring improvements to the Club. A major renovation project was completed during 1994-1995. The renovation project focused on the Dining Room, a New Tavern Room, a Ladies Locker room, and new Pro Shop. In 1995, the Club's golf course was restored by the famous golf course designer Ron Prichard. Sadly, in 2002 the old Haybarn, which had stood on the old Isham property since the 1700's, was demolished to make room for a new Pro Shop. In 2012-13, construction of the Riverview Grill, Patio and Terrace was completed, and in 2015-16 the golf course was again updated and redesigned by golf architect, Andrew Green, with the restoration project completed in 2019.

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

1946 Membership List

MEMBERSHIP LIST

July 15, 1946

Ownership

Bacon, Mrs. Ida B., 50 Glenwood Ave., Jersey City, N. J.
 Barnett, Mr. G. G., Jr., Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Bartoli, Joseph M., M.D., Ashley Ave., Brielle, N. J.
 Beck, Mr. W. A., 37 Howe St., Bay Head, N. J.
 Blades, Mr. William C., 1111 Sunset Drive, Asbury Park, N. J.
 Blair, Mr. W. Douglas, 221 River Ave., Point Pleasant, N. J.
 Bristol, Mr. Henry P., % Bristol-Meyer Co., 630 Fifth Ave., New York City
 Bristol, Mr. Lee H., 700 East Ave., Bay Head, N. J.
 Bush, Mr. Harvey M., 68 Fletcher Ave., Manasquan, N. J.
 Dresden, Dr. E. E., Orchard & Lincoln Aves., Point Pleasant, N. J.
 Edwards, Mr. Lawrence D., Washington Blvd., Sea Girt, N. J.
 Folk, Mr. Howard N., Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Folk, Mr. John H. II, Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Gardiner, Mr. Harry, 837 East Ave., Bay Head, N. J.
 Hager, Mr. Horace, 302 Philadelphia Blvd., Sea Girt, N. J.
 Hall, Mr. Harold T., Sea Girt, N. J.
 Hawes, Mr. M. C., Boston Blvd., Sea Girt, N. J.
 Henriksen Dr. J. Bruce, River Ave., Point Pleasant, N. J.
 Hopkins, Mr. C. M., % Stockton Hotel, Sea Girt, N. J.
 Howell, Mr. John D., Box 152, Manasquan, N. J.
 Jones, Mr. Richard H., Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Kocs, Mr. Edward, 713 Shadowlawn Drive, Westfield, N. J.
 Loblein, Mr. E. O., Niblick St., Point Pleasant, N. J.
 Loblein, Mrs. Helen M., Lincoln Ave., Point Pleasant, N. J.
 Marron, Mr. Louis E., Crescent Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Mettler, Mr. John W., % Interwoven Stocking Co., New Brunswick, N. J. (Mantoloking, N. J.)
 Meyers, Mr. Charles M., Atlantic Ave., Manasquan, N. J.
 Muller, Mrs. Harold D., 83 Clayton Ave., Bay Head, N. J.
 Newton, Mr. Frederick W., Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Nienstadt, Mr. Fred, 19 Fairview Ave., Bronxville Manor, Tuckahoe, N. Y.
 Oswald, Mr. Hugo, Brielle, N. J.
 Pearce, Mr. J. Elmer, Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Pearce, Mr. Owen C., 187 Main St., Manasquan, N. J.
 Pier, Mr. Raymond, 522 Arnold Ave., Point Pleasant, N. J.
 Potter, Mr. R. H., 81-15 Surrey Pl, Jamaica Estates, Long Island, N. Y.
 Ryno, Mr. H. Wilson, 1060 Broad St., Newark, N. J.
 Sanborne, Mr. Paul F., 417 Ocean Front, Bay Head, N. J.
 Sleeper, Mr. L. A., Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Strickland, Mr. Otis C., Bay Front, Mantoloking, N. J.
 Thomas, Mr. G. C., Jr., 757 East Ave., Bay Head, N. J.
 Van Arsdale, Mr. M. C., Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Van Nuys, Mr. James S., 57 Minerva Ave., Manasquan, N. J.
 Wade, Dr. J. E., 2267 Andrews Ave., New York City
 Walker, Mr. Alexander S., Brielle, N. J.
 Walsh, Mr. Edward J., 11 Wyndham Road, Scarsdale, N. Y.
 Watson, George L. (Col.), 223 Brooklyn Blvd., Sea Girt, N. J.
~~Watson, Mr. Leon A., River Road, Point Pleasant, N. J.~~
 White, Mr. J. D., 463 Main Ave., Bay Head, N. J.
 Williams, Mr. Harold E., 425 East Ave., Bay Head, N. J.
 Willson, Mr. Harvey, Union Lane, Box 161, Brielle, N. J.
 Wilde, Mr. Joseph S., Locust Rd., Brielle, N. J.
 Wilson, Mr. Lloyd R., Riverview Drive, Brielle, N. J.
 Witte, Dr. C. Norman, 422 River Ave., Point Pleasant, N. J.

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club



Above: Rose Crowley, M. Warner, Dot Van Buren & Halene Dwulet (L to R)



Left: Jack Folk II, Gerry Barnett, Frankie Hayes & Dr. R.H. Graham (L to R)

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

RICH HISTORY....BRIGHT FUTURE

As the Manasquan River Golf Club looks back on its Centennial, it is a proud history of Club spirit and stewardship. The Club has experienced its challenges over the years, but its dedicated and committed membership have risen to the occasion at each turn. The result has been a Club and a golf course that has gently evolved over the years and today stands as one of the pre-eminent private golf courses in New Jersey and the entire country.

Over the years, the Club has hosted numerous New Jersey State and US National events. The New Jersey State Amateur Title was played here in 1969, 1980 and 1993. The 42nd USGA National Junior Women's Championship was played at the Club in 1990. The MRGC hosted the NJPGA State Open in 2012. Finally, the Club hosted the New Jersey PGA Professional Championship in 2022....its centennial year.

The Club has had many notable members over the years whose marks endure to the present. The Club was established due to the diligent efforts of its early founders; Howard Folk, John Cattus, Edwin Isham. All played key roles during the Club's formation. It also owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to the financial support and guidance of Lee H. Bristol during its early formative years. Every Club has a great champion and Manasquan River Golf Club is no exception. Bob Riddle was Club Champion 17 times including an amazing 13 consecutive years.... what a tremendous competitor! What's a Club without a great Club Pro? "Mr. John", John Cafone, served as Club Pro from 1946 to 1981...35 years of instructing a generation of Club golfers on the finer points of the game. Sometimes a golf club is fortunate to include in its membership a family that plays the game at its highest levels. For MRGC, this is the Wall family. On the

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RICH HISTORY....BRIGHT FUTURE (Cont'd)

men's side, George V, Jeremy, Ethan and Jack Wall have combined to win the Men's Championship eleven times, while Carol and Sheila Wall have won the Women's Championship sixteen times. Combined, 27 Championships....quite impressive!

A historic location beautifully situated on the banks of the Manasquan River and the rolling hills of Brielle, strong financial stewardship over the years and a dedicated and spirited membership all combine to create a unique golf community. As Chris Farley stated in his Chronicle of MRGC's History, "Manasquan River Golf Club is, at its essence, a unique meeting place for people of many and diverse backgrounds and personalities, all with a common bond – a warm and friendly camaraderie nurtured by their love of a game from which the best of the human spirit is revitalized and sustained".

A bright future beckons.

Jim Ham

President, Union Landing Historical Society of Brielle

Brielle Borough Historian

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club Club Golf Pros Over the Years

Long, Long, Ago...

MRGC'S HISTORY... DID YOU KNOW????

by Patrick R. Housen

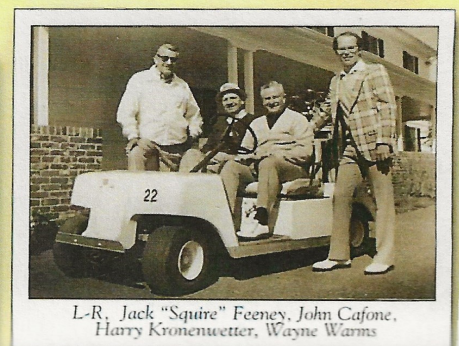
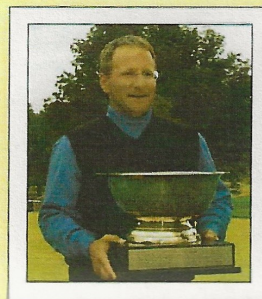
Manasquan River Golf Club has had only four Golf Professionals since World War II. While each of them have their own style and personality, they all are, and were, perfect ambassadors of MRGC. We have been very lucky and proud to have these four gentlemen represent our Club:

- **The Club Maker (1940's):** Jack Beckett was a famous golf club maker. Jack made clubs for the great Walter Hagen who was a Player Captain for the 1935 Ryder Cup at Ridgewood Country Club. Mr. Hagen was so pleased with the clubs made by Mr. Beckett that he wrote a personal letter to Jack thanking him for the clubs that helped lead his team to Ryder Cup victory.
- **The Club Pro (1945 – 1981):** John Cafone was the classic "Club Pro" at MRGC for 35 years. He was a Teacher & Club Maker. Mr. John was such a good teacher, that in the 1960's, he had his golf lessons published in Golf Digest. He was well-known for his teaching, "Throw your belt-buckle at the target".
- **The Originator (1978 – 1994):** Wayne Warms was one of the original founders of Junior Golf. Wayne launched the "Junior Masters" in 1981, which was hosted at MRGC for 13 years and attracted the best high school golfers in the Tri-State area. In 1995, Wayne also received the National PGA of Americas Junior Golf Leader Award. Wayne's impact on junior golf was so profound that the Director of the USGA, David Fay, stated "Wayne was a frontrunner of junior golf. Wayne was into junior golf, before junior golf was cool".
- **The Player (1994 – present):** In addition to being a great teacher, Brent Studer is the best playing Professional in our Club's history. Brent has won two NJ State PGA Championships in 1998 and 2008, was the NJ PGA Player of the Year in 2003, and played in the US Open at Oakmont in 1994.

All four gentlemen represent the best of being a PGA Golf Professional, and the best of Manasquan River Golf Club.

In addition to these four great Professionals, our earlier club Pros were:

- Charles H. Gardiner 1922 – 1934
- Art Straub & Walt Hankins mid 30's
- Dave Irons & Lou Holman late 30's
- Art Glashan early 40's



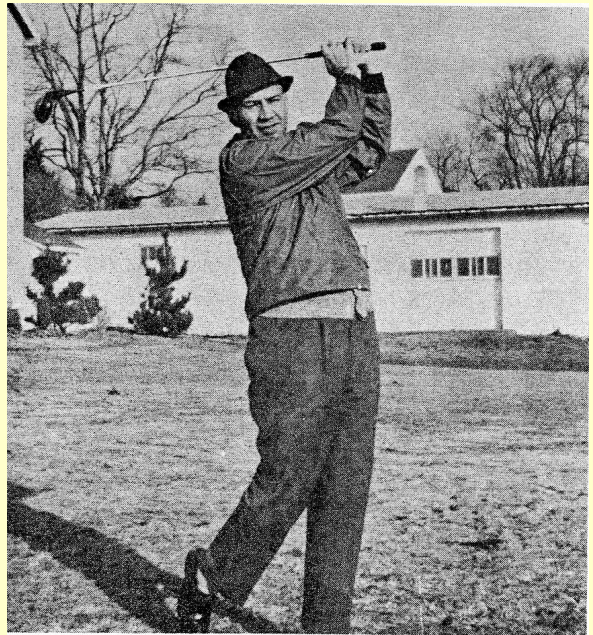
L-R, Jack "Squire" Feeney, John Cafone, Harry Kronenwetter, Wayne Warms

....and since 2015, Christopher Dymek has been the Golf Pro at the Club.

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John Cafone - MRGC Pro: 1946 - 1981

John Cafone was one of eleven children of Italian immigrants raised in Nutley, New Jersey. He got his start in golf caddying at the nearby Yountakah Golf Club as a youngster. John graduated from Nutley High School, where he was a letterman in football, basketball, and, naturally, golf. When World War II broke out, John courageously served our country throughout North Africa, the Middle East and Europe with memories of the invasion at Normandy Beach on D-Day. He returned from Europe with a Battlefield Commission, Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star, and numerous ribbons. A lucky golf club accompanied Lieutenant Cafone throughout the war. Local newspapers and the 'Stars and Stripes' (Military Publication) reported on the heroics of the five Cafone brothers' WW II military service.



"MR. JOHN"

After being decommissioned following the war, John joined the Manasquan River Golf Club in 1946. He married Rose Epolito in 1947, just weeks after the Blizzard of 1947. The newly married couple established their home on the Jersey Shore. John and Rose soon welcomed the arrival of their two children, Cathy and John, co-authors of this article.

During John's 37 years at the Club, he saw a great many changes. In 1946, when John joined, the Club only had 50 members and it faced many challenges. However, during John's years at the Club, he saw its membership steadily grow and become one of the pre-eminent golf clubs in the state. John was an extremely popular professional among his peers in New Jersey. He served as President of the State PGA Section for 1968-69-70 after five years as PGA Secretary and was

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

John Cafone - MRGC Pro: 1946 - 1981

voted Professional of the Year in New Jersey in 1967. John was awarded Monmouth University's Honorary Coach in 1967. He was also the "resident" pro on a cruise ship to the Caribbean in 1965 and 1966.... ironically, the cruise ship was one he sailed on as a troopship during World War II.

John was also known as a great innovator for the game of golf. He was instrumental in the formation of the Shore Winter Golf League (using brightly colored golf balls!), an early proponent of children's golf classes, and golf lessons and golf clubs crafted for persons with disabilities. However, John's unique talent was the lost art of handcrafting golf clubs. During a typical year, John and his friend Jack "Pop" Beckett would turn out 50 sets of woods and around 200 irons. Most of the work was done during the winter months when activity around the club slowed down. John was known throughout the state as one of New Jersey's premier clubmakers.

One of the highlights of John's career at the Club was when a crowd of over 150 people paid tribute to him on the occasion of his 30th anniversary at the club in 1976. The festivities included a 'best-ball of four' tournament followed by a gala dinner that was entertained by Hank Leonard, the long-time emcee for the Heisman Trophy awards dinner. However, the highlight of the day was an aerial banner towed above the course during play that read, "Happy Anniversary, John Cafone". What a fitting tribute to one of the most long serving and beloved members of the Manasquan River Golf Club.

Finally, it was with a sudden, tragic shock "Mr. John" untimely passed away on August 14th, 1981. Local radio and newspapers reported John's passing as "Much too soon to call it a day". The Club and the town of Brielle had lost a treasure.

By Catherine R. Cafone and John M. Cafone

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

John Cafone - MRGC Pro: 1946 - 1981



John with Vi
Graham, Marty Risley
and Dot Donovan
(L to R)

John with Rose
Crowley



John (right) with
William Crowley,
Wayne Warms and Jack
Feeney (L to R)

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

MRGC Men's Champions

1938..... Thomas Harper
 1939..... Thomas Lynch
 1940..... Hallsey Smith
 1941..... Edward Gants
 1942..... Not Contested
 1943..... Joseph Dacey
 1944-45..... Walter Tellier
 1946-58..... Robert Riddle
 1959..... J. Wolcott Brown, Jr
 1960-61..... Robert Riddle
 1962-64..J. Wolcott Brown, Sr
 1965..... Robert Riddle
 1966..... Robert Donovan
 1967..... Robert Strickland
 1968..... Everett Thompson, Jr
 1969..... Leon Dwulet, Jr
 1970..... Robert Riddle
 1971..... Robert Hansen
 1972-73..... Leon Dwulet, Jr
 1974-75..G Gerard Barnett, III
 1976..... Robert Hansen
 1977-79..G Gerard Barnett, III
 1980-82..... Robert Hansen
 1983..... Rock Gentile
 1984-87..... Robert Hansen

1988..... Gerald Puorro
 1989..... Richard Faas, Jr
 1990..... Thomas Hassel, Jr
 1991..... Donald Gaffney, Jr
 1992..... James Thompson, Sr
 1993-94.... Thomas Hassel, Jr
 1995..... George Wall, V
 1996..... G Gerard Barnett, III
 1997..... James Snyder
 1998-99.... Thomas Hassel, Jr
 2000..... G Gerard Barnett, III
 2001..... Thomas Hassel, Jr
 2002-07.. Christopher Housen
 2008..... Roderick Kerr, Jr
 2009..... James Noe
 2010..... Christopher Housen
 2011..... Jeremy Wall
 2012-13..... Ethan Wall
 2014..... Jeremy Wall
 2015-17..... Ethan Wall
 2018..... Jack Wall
 2019..... Christopher Farren
 2020..... Ethan Wall
 2021..... Jeremy Wall
 2022..Richard Fitzsimmons, Jr

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

Robert (Bob) J. Riddle



Bob Riddle: MRGC Club Champion Record 17 Years

What makes a champion?
The article on the following page,
written by long-time member Dr.
Richard Graham, hints at the answer.

The late Robert (Bob) J. Riddle, a Manasquan attorney and councilman, was club champion more than any other, winning 17 times, including a remarkable 13 times consecutively from 1946 through 1958, and as recently as 1970, spanning 25 years between his first and last title.

Bob began his golf career as a 13 year-old caddying and playing golf at MRGC. He was a graduate and four sport star at Manasquan High School. He then attended Peddie for two PG years, playing golf and multiple other sports, and then graduated from Princeton University where he pitched on the varsity baseball team and was the #2 on the varsity golf team.

Bob won the NJ State Pre-Seniors in 1965, however, his most prestigious accomplishment was winning the George Crump Memorial Invitational three times at Pine Valley Country Club – in 1947, 1951 and 1953 - against strong international fields on a extremely demanding course. Bob's other memorable accomplishment was scoring a hole-in-one with a #7 iron on the 130-yard 10th hole at Pine Valley Country Club.

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

Robert (Bob) J. Riddle (Cont'd)

MRGC History

"A Round of Golf with Bob Riddle"

Interview with Richard Graham

Growing up at MRGC, I had the opportunity to caddie for and play with Bob Riddle quite a bit. I'll never forget one match I played with him. It was just a regular Saturday match. My golfing partner that day was John Chubet, who went to Princeton with Bob Riddle. Chubet and Riddle were very good friends, but they enjoyed competing with each other. They actually played on the Princeton baseball team together. Chubet was very competitive, and although he never won the club championship, he would give Riddle, Wolcott Brown, and Dwulet a run for their money.

So one day, I'm teamed up with Chubet and we're playing Bob Riddle and Bill McCray. Chubet really wanted to beat Bob that day. We all played well (I shot a 76), and the match came down to the 18th hole all tied.

On the 18th hole everybody was in trouble except myself. I was on the green in two, the ball was below the pin, maybe 12 feet away; it was definitely a makeable birdie putt. Bob Riddle was in the sand trap in the front bunker, and that's when the bunkers were really deep and had menacing projecting lips.

Prior to Riddle hitting his shot out of the trap, he walked in and out of the bunker several times; looked at the slope of the green and the break to the cup. He found a spot on the green where he wanted to hit the ball. The bunker shot was so difficult most players would have been happy just to get out, but Riddle (the champ he was) wanted better. It was after Riddle studied the shot at length that he walked over to me and said, "Rich, you're a great guy, but I can't let you beat me". Chubet then said to Riddle, "Leave my partner alone. Just hit your damn shot. You're not going to beat us today."

So Bob hits his sand shot. It bounces on the green, takes a couple of little hops, rolls up, dead straight into the cup for a birdie three. UNBELIEVABLE!

I hit a really good putt, but it just hangs on the edge and it doesn't drop. We lost; and the amazing part is, Bob called his shot. He called it! I could not believe it.

I never beat Bob. I played him quite a few times; but I never beat him. However, I won a lot playing with him as my partner.

Bob was very engaging and personable. He would share his friendship with anyone in the club, regardless of their playing ability. He was a very special man. As a survivor of World War II and the D-Day invasion at Normandy, every day to him was special and you could tell by the gleam in his eyes and the strength in his smile.

[Bob Riddle won 17 MRGC Club Championships spanning four decades.]

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club MRGC Women's Champions

1948-50.....Jean Carlson
 1951-53.....Marty Risley
 1954.....Not Contested
 1955-57.....Maxine Tucker
 1958-59.....Betty Tyluki
 1960-63.....Dot Edwards
 1964.....Ginny Black
 1965.....Dot Edwards
 1966.....Betty Laupheimer
 1967.....Rose Crowley
 1968-74.....Dot VanBuren
 1975.....Helene Dwulet
 1976-77.....Janet Davis
 1978.....Carol DeStephan
 1979.....Carole Wall
 1980-81.....Janet Davis
 1982.....Carole Wall
 1983.....Carol DeStephan
 1984.....Janet Davis
 1985.....Carole Wall
 1986.....Carol DeStephan

1987.....Barbara Mason
 1988-90.....Carole Wall
 1991.....Barbara Mason
 1992.....Carole Wall
 1993.....Missy Mueller
 1994-95.....Carole Wall
 1996.....Sandra Mascia
 1997.....Carole Wall
 1998-99.....Carol DeStephan
 2000.....Lauren Mueller
 2001-03.....Sheila Wall
 2004.....Nora Kolmer
 2005-06.....Terri Kirk
 2007.....Sheila Wall
 2008.....Kathy O'Grady
 2009.....Sheila Wall
 2010.....Penny Garbarino
 2011.....Kathy O'Grady
 2012-17.....Christina Hall
 2018.....Sheila Wall
 2019-22.....Christina Hall

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

MRGC Present & Past Presidents

1922-31.....John V.A. Cattus
 1932-35....Bancroft Gherardi
 1936-45.....Lee H. Bristol
 1946-48.....John D. Howell
 1949-50....Otis C. Strickland
 1951.....James B. McAfee
 1952.....John H. Folk, II
 1953.....Munroe C. Hawes
 1954.....John H. Ott
 1955.....Richard Post, Sr.
 1956-58...Morten Hansen, Jr.
 1959-60.....Walter Fox
 1961-63.A. Eugene Wallwork
 1964-65.....John M. Hansen
 1966-67...George L. Edwards
 1968-69.....Edward L. Kirby
 1970-71.....George C. Smith
 1972-74.G. Gerard Barnett, Jr
 1974-75.....Harvie L. Sykes
 1975-77.....James J. Tully
 1977-79.....John S. Feeney, Jr

1979-81.....James Thompson
 1981-83.....Robert Sexton
 1983-85.....Paul Larsen, Sr
 1985-87.....Harold Schuman
 1987-89....William Dunbar, Jr
 1989-91.....Marcel Wagner, Jr
 1991-93.....James Clayton
 1993-95.....Robert Evans
 1995-97..G Gerard Barnett, III
 1997-99.....William Watts
 1999-01.....John Garbarino
 2001-03.....Richard Haines
 2003-05....Richard Graham, Jr
 2005-07.....Patrick Maroney
 2007-09.....Robert Hoffbauer
 2009-11.....Daniel Vitale
 2011-13.....David Matthews
 2013-15.....Theodore Bessler
 2015-17.....Gary Dahms
 2017-19.....Peter Gacos
 2019-21.....Edward McGlynn
 2021-Present.....Andrew Kelly

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club



MANASQUAN RIVER PAST PRESIDENTS

Past presidents of the Manasquan River Golf Club receive pins Saturday night at dinner-dance celebrating club's 50th anniversary. Left to right are: George L. Edwards; Edward L. Kirby; John H. Ott; John M. Hansen; Otis C. Strickland; Gerry Barnett Jr., the current president who presented the pins; John H. Folk, II, whose father Howard founded the club; A. Eugene Wallwork; George C. Smith; Morton M. Hansen Jr.; James B. Munroe (Press Photo) and Munroe C. Hawes.

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

A Celebrated Layout

Manasquan River a celebrated layout

By STEPHEN EDELSON

MANASQUAN — Built in 1922 by Robert White in rolling hills along the Manasquan River, the Manasquan River Golf Club has hosted several state Amateurs, including last year's, and was the host for a local qualifying tournament for the 1994 U.S. Open.

While the front side rambles through hilly, wooded terrain, most of the back nine is flat as it runs along the river.

No. 1, 320 yards, par 4 — A short dogleg left, a mid- to long-iron is all that's needed off the tee, which should clear the bunkers guarding the left corner, and be short enough to avoid the bunkers and woods straight out. A short iron comes into a small, two-tiered putting surface.

No. 2, 371 yards, par 4 — Plays much more difficult than it's length because the approach shot is hit up to a green that's on a plateau on a hill, with woods guarding it.

No. 3, 162 yards, par 3 — Downhill shot must clear a waste area to a green well protected by bunkers, that slopes steeply from back to front.

No. 4, 345 yards, par 4 — An iron is the club off the first tee, since if you hit it too far on this hole you'll find yourself in a fairway bunker, or worse. The second shot is a short iron into a green with traps on either side.

No. 5, 467 yards, par 5 — A nice long hook works perfectly on this short par 5, making it a good birdie opportunity.

No. 6, 209 yards, par 3 — A long iron or fairway wood is required over a waste area to green that has trees and sand all around.

No. 7, 594 yards, par 5 — The drive from a wooded area uphill to a fairway with trees down both sides. The second shot is blind and downhill, leaving just a short iron to a difficult green that slopes severely from back to front.

No. 8, 379 yards, par 4 — Back up the hill on the drive, the second shot is generally a mid-iron into a small green cut into the woods.

No. 9, 418 yards, par 4 — The important shot on this hole is the second. In most cases, the ball must land somewhere short of the green and have it roll up, particularly on a shot from the rough, otherwise you're likely to end up off the back edge.

TEE-TO-GREEN

Pro: Brent Studer
Yardage/par: 6,703/72
Course rating: 71.9
Slope: 125
Greens fees: Private

No. 10, 426 yards, par 4 — One heck of a way to start the back side. The drive is up a rather large hill, with an undulating fairway awaiting at the top. The second shot is a long-iron or fairway wood into a green well protected by woods and sand.

No. 11, 527 yards, par 5 — From the middle of this fairway at the top of the hill, a player is afforded a great view of the Manasquan River out to the ocean. As for the hole itself, it's reachable in two, with a long, downhill second shot.

No. 12, 357 yards, par 4 — The first of a group of very similar par 4s as you approach the river. All of these holes can play easier or more difficult, depending on the weather conditions.

No. 13, 419 yards, par 4 — Driving the ball well is imperative on this hole, or a player will be left with a long-iron to a very difficult green.

No. 14, 321 yards, par 4 — Heading back toward the river, this hole has trees and several fairway bunkers, but a long-iron off the tee is all you need. The green is small and well bunkered.

No. 15, 222 yards, par 3 — Can be the turning point in a match. A long-iron or fairway wood is the club with water guarding the entire left side of the hole. You can bail out right.

No. 16, 361 yards, par 4 — Heading back toward the river, the wind can change the way this hole plays dramatically. It can be anything from a wedge to a mid-iron, depending on conditions. As usual, trees border both sides of the fairway.

No. 17, 461 yards, par 4 — A difficult hole under any conditions, but if it's into the wind, watch out. A good drive is a must, with trees on both sides of the fairway. The second shot is a long-iron or fairway wood into a green protected by bunkers left and right.

No. 18, 334 yards, par 4 — Out of bounds to the left and trees to the right on this hole, where a long-iron or fairway wood should do the trick. The two-tiered green, which slopes quickly from back-to-front, is the protected by a large bunker in front.

The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club Course Layout after Redesign by Andrew Green in 2019

development of a Comprehensive Course Master Plan. The purpose was to identify and outline all golf improvements to the course next five to ten years. The intent was to redesign the course but to protect all the great attributes. Through the process a series of meetings and tours were made with a committee group of members. The result of this process is this document. On the following pages, a discussion of existing conditions and proposed improvements have been documented.



The History of The Manasquan River Golf Club

The Course





Union Landing Historical Society of Brielle

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Thank You!!!