



Joe Graffis 1895-1979

Golf lost a great friend when Joe Graffis died on February 16 in Venice, Fla.

Probably no one has done as much to promote the game and the business of golf as did the team of Joe and his brother Herb. Together, they founded GOLFDOM, the forerunner of this magazine, in 1927; they started GOLFING, a magazine for players that is now GOLF Magazine, in 1933; they organized the National Golf Foundation in 1936; they were instrumental in the beginnings of the Club Managers Association of America and the National Association of Greenkeepers (now the GCSAA); and the list goes on and on over the past half century.

Joe first got involved in golf publishing with the old Golfer's Magazine before he went to France as an ambulance driver in World War I. When he and Herb started GOLFDOM, and for the next 40 years or so, the more ebullient Herb wrote the copy and edited the magazine while the tall, soft-spoken Joe sold the advertising and managed the business side. While he and Herb were building a successful publishing business, Joe helped many others in golf along the way. In 1945, he was a founder of the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation, and he served for many years as president of the National Golf Foundation.

There have been many accolades for Joe Graffis. Together, he and Herb were presented the Richardson award of the Golf Writers Association of America in 1963, the USGA Green Section award in 1972, and the Donald Ross award of the American Society of Golf Course Architects in 1978. In 1975, the National Golf Foundation established the Joe Graffis Award for outstanding service in the educational advancement of golf.

Now Harvest Publishing Co., publisher of GOLF BUSINESS Magazine, has made the first contribution to establish the Graffis Fund to help support the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation.

Those of us in the golf business know, however, that Joe Graffis could never be honored or rewarded enough to pay back what he gave of himself. Without him, the world of golf would never have been as great as it is today.