

## A Glimpse of the Past...

by Lee C. Dieter, CGCS

### The Founding Members of Our Association

The first contact with the Department of Agriculture relating to golf turf was made by Walter S. Harben of Washington Golf and Country Club and Columbia Country Club in 1906. Interest in turf and requests for help came from C. B. MacDonald of the Chicago Golf Club and others.

The first of many articles on golf turf was published by Dr. Piper in January, 1913 and his book, "Turf For Golf Courses", was published in January, 1917. He and his co-author, Dr. Oakley, had established the Arlington Turf Gardens in the spring of 1916 on the site of the Pentagon south parking. They had been working with local green chairmen and greenkeepers. Dr. C. V. Piper and Dr. Russel Oakley were both members of Washington Golf & C. C. in those early years.

The green section staff were among the first to encourage the formation of the early associations of greenkeepers. The Mid-Atlantic was among the first to organize. O. B. Fitts was one of the first to write articles and speak at the annual meetings of the Green Section. He was in charge of the turf gardens from March, 1923 to February, 1928. O. B. Fitts and Robert Scott from Baltimore C. C. organized the first meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Greenkeepers.

"A meeting was held at the New Howard Hotel in Baltimore for the purpose of forming the Mid-Atlantic Association of Greenkeepers. A draft of the by-laws was presented by a committee composed of Robert Scott, W. E. Dunt and Reg Giddings and with a few revisions was accepted by the members unanimously. The members present were: O. B. Fitts (Columbia C. C.), Robert Scott (Baltimore C. C.), J. H. Links (Columbia C. C.), Richard Watson (Indian Springs C. C.), C. Maurery (Woodholm C. C.), T. Fisher (Burning Tree C. C.), R. Ward (C. C. Inc.), W. E. Dunt (Sherwood Forest Golf Club), R. Caltrider (Suburban C. C.), Richard Scott, (Rolling Road C. C.), R. T. Granger (Belle Haven C. C.), R. D. Giddings (Gibson Island Golf Club), C. Victor (East Potomac Golf Club), and K. Welton (U.S.G.A. Green Section). All of the above members paid dues of \$6.00. It was decided to hold the next meeting on January 7, 1929 at the Hamilton Hotel In Washington, D. C. The meeting was adjourned at 11 p.m." (Taken from the first minutes of the Association).

By the end of 1929 others who joined were Geo LeBrun, R. V. King, R. P. Hines, Mr. Gerlie, Harry Diffenbaugh (Clifton Park) David Edgar (Hillendale C. C.), Carrol Hitchcock (Green Spring Valley), W. Collins (Green Section), Dr. Montieth (Green Section), Dr. Brown (Green Chairman, Bannockburn), D. Thompson (Washington Golf & C. C.), Prof. Hillman, H. Haviland, J. G. Tilghman (Edgewood Golf Club), Rudy G. Wills (Harper C. C.), Mr. Armiger, Nathan Mather (Maryland C. C.), Major Davidson and Lt. Myers (Bolling Field). By January, 1930 the minutes state that there were 33 members. These were our charter members. When I joined the association in May of 1960, Mr. Gustin (Baltimore Toro), Dick Watson (Chevy Chase), O. B. Fitts (Burning Tree), R. D. Giddings (Gibson Island); Ruben Hines (Hines Turf Nursery) and Carrol Hitchcock (Woodholm C. C.) were still active members.

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