

THRU THE GREEN



August, 1997

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California

— Committed to Responsible Turfgrass Management —



The Way It Was

May 1933 - A group of members of the Northern California Greenkeepers' Association, together with representatives of golf course machinery, sprinklers, seed, etc., companies, at the Millbrae Golf Club near San Francisco. Left to right: Sam Smith (Millbrae), D.E. Graves of the H.V. Carter Company, Lee Salet (El Camino), Bob Anderson (Sequoyah), G. Buckner of the Buckner Manufacturing Company, Will Rogers (Contra Costa), H. Stahohann (Lake Merced), Louie Galleti (Claremont), E.W. Van Gorder (Stanford), T.D. McFarlane (California), Ed McEnroe (San Francisco), Dan Gormley (Sequoyah), Kenneth Cooper (Vallejo), Bob Dutton (Orinda), Earl Morrill (Berkeley), Gus Winton of the H.V. Carter Company, George Santana (San Jose), J.G. Creighton of the Economy Sprinkler Company, E. Davis of the Seven Vincent Company, E.T. Smith (Crystal Springs), G. F. Bishop of the Bishop Company, and Manuel Coelbo (Menlo).

Imagine the setting, for that is what an appreciation of history requires. Twenty men calling themselves greenskeepers sharing a passion and a vision for the profession they loved, gathered for the first time on **June 6, 1932**. The place was the Presidio Golf Club in San Francisco. It was there that Will Rogers was elected the temporary chairman of the Northern California Greenskeepers Association.

By July of the same year, a Board of Directors was in place, bylaws were passed and dues were set at 50¢ per month. Issues regarding public relations were already a concern as evidenced by the Board directing Ellis Van Gorder in September, to send a letter to Owen Marrick of the San

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Fort Ord's Theis To Host 65th Year Event

Our host, Leonard Theis knew it wasn't going to be easy when he accepted the position as Golf Course Superintendent at Fort Ord's Black Horse and Bayonet Courses last year. Both courses, which were purchased from the Army by the City of Seaside, and operated by BSL Golf Corp., were in need of a major renovation. Since Theis assumed his position late last fall, it has been one project after another, a challenge he readily accepts. Recently completed were the construction of cart paths and major tree work. Still to come are tee and bunker renovation and modifications to the irrigation systems. Theis doesn't anticipate being able to focus completely on "routine" maintenance of the courses until winter

when most of the projects will have been completed.

Most superintendents would shy away from hosting a monthly event with so much going on, but not Theis. He is looking forward to the event and the opportunity to play host at the GCSANC 65th Anniversary on August 11th.

A former Director for the GCSANC, Theis has spent most of his life on a golf course taking his first swings at the age of two. His father who served as the Golf Pro and Superintendent at a course in Ohio, introduced him to the game and he learned well, currently playing to a 4 handicap. Theis, who earned his

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65 Years — A Look Back

Letter Written and mailed to Green Chairman at the Clubs in Northern California

August 4, 1953

We take this means of informing you of the activities of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California, so that you will know of its purposes and objectives.

The Golf Course Superintendents Association is a cooperative organization for the collection, preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge, thereby effecting more efficient and economical maintenance of golf courses. To this end we meet the second Tuesday of each month at different courses. The host superintendent conducts the visitors on a tour of the course, explaining his practices and getting the views of the visiting superintendents.

We have a guest speaker at the luncheon meeting that follows the tour. These speakers are chosen for their background and reputations for knowledge on specific subjects that have to do with golf courses. The University of California Agricultural Extension Service has agreed to supply, upon request, a speaker on any subject that we would care to discuss at that particular time of the year.

In addition, we have a question box in which each member is asked to place one question. We ask them not to sign their questions. In this manner they do not feel that they have made an admission of ignorance, and the one who asked the question can debate the issue.

It is important that your superintendent attend these meetings. We need his experience and he in turn will benefit from the ideas of other superintendents. The most efficient man is one who admits he doesn't know all the answers but strives to learn new procedures.

Upon inquiry, we find that some superintendents have not been attending meetings because of expense involved (travel and lunch). We are sure that your club will benefit **many times over** the small expense outlay that is necessary for your superintendent to attend.

Won't you see to it that your superintendent is one of our regulars at these monthly meetings? Yours for more pleasurable golf through better maintenance practices.

Paul Paulsen, Secretary-Treasure
Golf Course Superintendents Association
of Northern California

The Way It Was (Cont'd)

courses. Later that year, Dr. Allister McKenzie was the featured speaker at Monterey Peninsula Golf Club. At the conclusion of the meeting all were invited to play golf.

And so it was that the Northern California Greenskeepers Association was born gaining in numbers and in strength each year, facing many of the same issues that confront us today. It is a history full of great accomplishments by great individuals who's dedication to the profession paved the way for the prominence we enjoy today. Follow me as we walk together through our rich past.

The Year was **1946**, the war had ended but many supplies such as equipment, fertilizer, seed and pesticides were in short supply. 2-4,D which had been invented in 1942 showed good promise as an herbicide. Bert Graves of the H.V. Carter Company was concentrating on the use of Weedicide a 2-4,D preparation. It was noted that the head greenskeeper and the Golf Professional should work closely together, "this should help the game a lot," it was said.

Two years later in **1948** a survey revealed that the salary range for superintendents was \$225 to \$450 per month.

1949 saw the introduction of the first aerifier for tees and greens. It was invented by Tom Mascaro.

In **1951** a letter was sent to Green Chairmen advising them that it would be beneficial for their superintendents to play golf twice a week. In **1953** a second letter was sent encouraging Green Chairmen to allow superintendents to attend monthly meetings. In the same year the name of the Association was changed to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California.

The use of 2-4,D saw its first challenge in **1955**

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Office Notes (Cont'd)

The board of directors meets monthly accepting membership based on the recommendation of the Membership Committee. Once the membership committee and Board of Directors have reviewed the application a letter of acknowledgment is mailed. This happens usually within a week of the board of directors meeting. The member's name is added to the mailing list. 'Thru the Green' and meeting notices are mailed. We have a 30 day waiting period before membership is finalized. This allows publication in "Thru the Green" of new members names before final acceptance. If anyone has objection to the individual being accepted into the Association this allows time to present the board of directors with objections to the membership. With the acknowledgment I mail a directory and promise to send the card, plaque and badge when provided by our suppliers.

Well, it does take some time for our suppliers to get our cards, badges and plaques finished. They won't just do two or three. We need to give them a minimum number before they process and that may take some time. The same is true for reorder on name badges when you change courses or businesses. We are adding an attestor letter for GCSAA for new Class A and Class B members who need to join GCSAA. /

The Hardest Thing (Cont'd)

are outside of a reasonable range is a waste of both time and money. Yes, the hardest thing to do is nothing at all, but sometimes it is what you must do under the circumstances be patient and wait until the growing environment becomes more favorable for germination and growth. /

Watson To Highlight 65 Year Program

Dr. James Watson, formerly of the Toro Company, will highlight the 65 Year Anniversary Meeting Program with an historical look at golf course maintenance and maintenance equipment. Watson, who served as an agronomist for the Toro Company has an impressive background in the turfgrass industry, earning his Ph.D. at Penn State University in 1950. His many accomplishments include extensive turfgrass research, as well as the authoring of numerous technical articles. His presentation will be a part of a two hour program which will also feature an historical perspective presented by Past Presidents, Cliff Wagoner (1959) (1965) (1967), Rich Lavine (1995) and Bob Hanna. Also slated for the morning program is recognition of all Past Presidents, as well as the presentation of honorary memberships to Walter Boysen and Paul Paulsen. Fifty year pins will be given to Paul Paulsen and Ed Silva. The days events will begin at 9:00 with a continental breakfast and an historical display of equipment and photographs.

The Way It Was (Cont'd)

restricting its use and requiring a permit.

GCSANC established its presence on a national level when Elmer Border was elected President of the GCSAA in 1959. Later that same year a motion was passed to consider requiring members to also be a member of the National.

Myrtle Wagoner joins the Association in 1960.

In 1961 a meeting was arranged among the Presidents of the Southern California Chapter, Northern California Chapter, Central Chapter, Hi-Lo Chapter and San Diego Chapter. They would call themselves the California Federation of Golf Course Superintendents.

Public relations was at the forefront again in 1964 when a list of sports writers were sent articles pertaining to the status of the golf Course Superintendents.

1965 saw the birth of the green blazers. Samples were presented to the board by Walter Boysen.

In 1967, GCSANC's very own Walter Boysen was elected as the president of the GCSAA.

The Tarp Program, a joint venture with NCGA received membership support in 1968.

1971 was a particularly noteworthy year. It was determined that badges

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Northern California Greenskeepers Association Charter Members

Will Rogers, Contra Costa CC
Sam Smith, Millbrae CC
Harold Sampson, Burlingame CC
Duncan McFarlane, California GC
Ellis Van Gorder, Stanford GC
Bob Dutton, Orinda CC
Kenneth Cooper, Vallejo GC
E.T. Smith, Crystal Springs GC
Lee Salter, El Camino GC
Bob Anderson, Sequoyah CC
Luis Galetti, Claremont CC

William Mayo, Presidio GC
Tom Nicoll, Los Gatos GC
Joe Mayo, Pebble Beach GC
Roy Hanna, Castlewood CC
Julius Lazzarini, Ingleside GC
Ed McEnroe, California GC
H. Stajohann, Lake Merced CC
Earl Morrill, Berkeley GC
George Santana, San Jose, CC
Manuel Coelho, Menlo CC
Dan Gormley, Sequoyah CC



The Way It Was (Cont'd)

April 18, 1950 Del Paso Country Club - Sacramento

would be provided to all members. A fine would be assessed for those who lost them (\$1.00) or failed to wear them (25¢). It was also noted that the GCSAA certification program was a reality. In October the layout and design for the newsletter was approved. The first of many Christmas parties was held at Rancho Cañada with a new format which included golf during the day and dinner in the evening.

In 1973, the Golf Course Superintendents Institute debuted with a five day event at Asilomar in Pacific Grove. Cliff Wagoner was elected president of the GCSAA and the Association established a dress code requiring a coat and tie at all meetings.

The annual awards were distributed for the first time in 1974. Winners were Cliff Wagoner, Superintendent of the Year, Gurmit Sandhu Excellence in Golf Turf and Joe Sheffield Merit Award.

1977 was a year to honor two long time members. Aubrey Babson a GCSANC since 1934 retired from La Rinconada CC. William Mayo charter member and host of the first meeting at the Presidio Golf Course on June 6, 1932 passed away in August.

The first Superintendent/Pro Tournament was held in 1978 at Sunol Valley CC. Paul Dias and Jim Ross finished first and

second respectively.

1979 saw the dissolution of the California Federation of Golf Course Superintendents and the retirement of Merle Russill after 24 years at Fort Ord.

A survey conducted in 1980 indicated that the average superintendent salary was \$21,665. Also that same year, the California Golf Course Superintendents Association was formed.

Walter Boysen retired from Sequoyah CC in 1983. Also Leonard Feliciano, a member since 1947 passed away.

The following year (1984) brought the passing of yet another of the Association's founding fathers, Ellis Van Gorder, who served as the President in 1935, 1952 and 1961.

1985 brought both joy and sadness. Cliff Wagoner received the Distinguished Service Award from the GCSAA, and long time Christmas party host, Rancho Cañada Superintendent and former boss, Larry Lloyd passed away. A perpetual trophy was established in his honor and awarded annually at the Christmas party. Later that year Cliff Wagoner retired from Del Rio CC where he had worked for 35 years.

September 1987 meeting was a tribute to Bill Davis who announced his retirement.

GCSANC and U.C. Cooperative Extension enter joint agreement to host the Golf Course Superintendents Institute. The event is scheduled at Spanish Bay in January, 1990.

1996 GCSANC signs affiliation agreement with GCSAA. Resulting bylaw changes requires dual membership effective July 1, 1997.

** This article written By Bob Costa, CGCS reflects a brief overview of the organization over the past 65 years. We wish to thank Cliff and Myrtle Wagoner for their contribution in compiling this historical information. We invite you to submit some memories of your own for print in future issues of Thru The Green.*

Did You Know?

It was reported in 1961 that pleas were made to the membership at virtually every meeting for the prompt return of the meeting registration notices and articles for the newsletter — some things never change.