

## Where Are They Today?

# CLEM McCANN

By Jack Kolb

This is not so much a story about an individual's impact on the golf industry as it is a story about three generations of Golf Course Managers. Our focus on Clement McCann would not be complete without bringing in the two generations who have followed him as "Groomers" of Golf Courses.

As a young man Clem McCann had aspirations of being a 9:00 to 5:00 worker in an office setting. Thus he attended and graduated from a business college and prepared to face the world. It did not take long to decide that paper shuffling and being bound to a desk was not going to satisfy his ambitions. A ready occupation for a young man with "work ethic" during the 1930's Depression was farming, so Clem turned to that. As he explains, the knowledge of business is never lost and indeed he did benefit from it in the everyday sales of dairy products and crops.

During the "Post War" years industry offered high hourly wages with weekends and holidays off. This was a luxury that farmers did not have. So the decision was made to leave farming to the enthusiasm of his young sons and Clem went to work for Northern Pump which was doing ordinance work for the military. In the 1960s with the Vietnam War becoming unpopular and activists lobbying against anyone who even worked for the war effort, Clem began to look for employment that was less irritating to the "Hippie" establishment.

In subsequent counseling with son Jerry McCann, who was now the primary stockholder of the farm, it was agreed that 75 acres of land would be removed from cultivation and turned into one of those "sophisticated pastures" called a golf course. Thus the first nine holes of what is now Daytona Golf Course opened in 1962. By 1964 a total of 150 acres and another nine holes were added for a total of 18 holes. As Jerry explains, "I was so poor after and during construction that I could not afford cash to pay my own father for his labor and help." Clem, like all dads, explains "that is what fathers are for!"

In the meantime, Clem McCann need "cash-flow." There was talk of a new golf course being developed in the Coon Rapids area. Ray Hall was working for the Coon Rapids Park Department and was in charge of construction. Ray introduced Clem to the construction contractor and because of Clem's previous construction experience he was made construction foreman. Before the Coon Rapids Golf Course (Bunker Hills) came into play, Ray Hall had moved on to a new job in Owatonna.

The man who best knew the irrigation system and every quirk of the new golf course was asked to stay on as the new Golf Course Superintendent of Bunker Hills. That



**FIVE McCANNs AND A HASBROUCK** — From left to right are Chris Hasbrouck, Bruce McCann, David McCann, Tom McCann, Clem McCann and Jerry McCann.

man was Clem McCann. Clem remained from 1966 until his retirement in 1978. Although retirement sounds like an inactive sedentary time in one's life, Clem could be seen for several years thereafter mowing fairways at Greenhaven Golf Course in Anoka.

Second generation McCanns in the Golf Industry include Jerry at Daytona Golf; Vince McCann, a one-time superintendent at Purple Hawk Country Club and presently superintendent at The Country Club in Bella Vista, Ark., and Bill McCann, a one-time golf course superintendent at Chominix Country Club and presently the Parks Coordinator for Anoka County Parks. Third generation superintendents include grandsons Tom McCann, who managed Daytona for a brief time and now is with Turf Supply Company; Bruce McCann, is general manager at Daytona and granddaughter Meg's husband, Chris Hasbrouck, course superintendent of Daytona.

Upon entering Clem McCann's office while at Bunker Hills Golf Course, one was aware of a collage of pictures and mementos that adorned his office wall. Clem, it seems, was a close personal friend of Lawrence Welk. Somehow they had struck up a friendship through golf. Clem and wife Margaret were guests of Welk's at Lawrence's Golf Resort in Escondido, Calif.

At the young age of 83 Clem is still very active and in good health; wife Margaret however does not share the good fortune of inherited "healthy genes" and is confined to a health care facility.