



Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER



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Belle Haven in October

by Jim Meier, CGCS

On October 13th, Jim Meier and Belle Haven Country Club will host our next monthly meeting. This may be the Mid-Atlantic Region but when you're talking Belle Haven, you're talking real southern history. Just for openers, 1000 (that's right, one zero zero zero) slaves are buried between the 4th green, 5th tee, 9th green, and 6th tee. The plantation house itself sat next to the springs to the left of the 5th fairway. The old plantation roads came in under the 4th green and between the 8th & 9th greens. The plantation itself ran all the way out to the island which is now in the middle of the Potomac. Springs come out of the ground during wet weather, which really makes my day. Prior to the plantation, the area was home to an Indian tribe.

During the Civil War, Union soldiers used the tombstones for practice and you can still find one of their bullets every now and then. Before proceeding into "new" Alexandria, trolley cars used to run where today's 17th tee is located and picked up passengers at a hotel that was once located on the site of the 3rd fairway/rough.

Belle Haven Country Club was built between 1924 and 1926. Originally constructed for the residents of Belle Haven Hill who worked in Alexandria, the course consisted of 9 holes and crossed both Fort Hunt and Belle Haven roads.

Members also had a hand in designing the greens and their handiwork shows in #2, 4, 5, 7, and 12. Records are spotty for the early years so it isn't always possible to identify who did what. For example, #1 was built 90 yards forward and #8 to the right. Rabbit & Sprigg did #10 and we can vouch that #'s 3, 9, 11, and the practice green have never been touched since construction. #3 is sinking and I feel for the cup cutter on #11 because it is common to have to chisel the plug out of the cutter.

The 13th and 16th holes were built from fill that came from the construction of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and Route #1. Part of the driving range and other landfill came from Crystal City

President's Message

Those of you who attended the last meeting know that the Mid-Atlantic has submitted my name to the G.C.S.A.A. nominating committee for consideration as a candidate for the national board. I'd like to thank our board and membership for their continued support. Please remember that this is an application only and does not guarantee my candidacy. The following is my statement that accompanied the application.

I would like to serve on the board of directors of The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America to fulfill one of my career goals. My ambition has always been to be a member of the board of directors of our Association and to go on to higher office if possible. This is but a small part of a much bigger commitment to our profession. I firmly believe that everyone should put some of themselves back into their profession, to help improve and advance it. My career has been even more satisfying because of my continued involvement in association activities. I feel that through this service I have helped advance our profession. I would like to follow through this commitment of service and feel that I can best do so on the national level.

I have a good background of activity in the Association to use in my capacity as a member of the board. I have attended the National meetings of our Association twenty-four of the past twenty-six years, and have served on four different committees for a total of eight years. I've visited the National Headquarters and had the opportunity to work with the staff on several occasions. The Certification Committee met twice at Lawrence to revise the standards for Certification, I was a member of the Committee both times.

I've been involved with the Association long enough to know where we've been and the direction our membership wants us to go. I would like to be a part of that growth as a board member and officer of our Association.

Lee Dieter, *President*



excavation. Ed Ault designed the 13th through the 16th holes as well as the 17th and 18th greens. The 18th green was sodded but others were built by a company from North Carolina.

Since 1980 the course has had Midiron sprigged on it. Lakes are being rocked, bunkers rebuilt, new irrigation installed, and Zoysia is being plugged on #3, 4, 5, 15 and 16 tees. The lower tee on #17 and #1 tee are new. In past years, the course would be totally submerged after every rain storm. Now things are getting better, since 1984, this only occurs once or twice a year when the tide is in and electricity off. Joe Emanuel and I used to see if I could close the course, now we are hardly ever closed.

In 1980 Belle Haven played 20,000-25,000 round of golf. In 1986 we were at 39,506 rounds, which I was told was still under by 2,000.

Greens are poa and bent and are cut

6-7 days per week dependent on activity. (This past July & August, they were cut 5 days a week.) Height this year is set at 1/8 to 5/32 inch dependent on time of year. Tees and collars are cut twice a week at 1/2 inch and fairways at 9/16 inch 2-3 times each week. We overseed annually with rye on the fairways and tees and bent (when we can get it) on the greens.

As you can see, Belle Haven has a strong history and it certainly seems that every person in the U.S. has had a hand in its design/construction. It is a challenge to maintain as well as to play. Its history and setting should make for a memorable day of golf and I welcome all members to come and enjoy!

Golf is available after 11 a.m. Carts are \$14 and lunch is available; dinner is \$18.50. Cash or charge to club applies.

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