



A Club Is Born

1898 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS

In September 1898, 35 distinguished citizens of West Chester, Pa., met at the home of Miss Margaret Walter. They agreed to organize the West Chester Golf & Country Club (WCG&CC) and elected officers of the new group.

The first Board of Governors was elected at the second meeting.

OFFICERS

Mr. Carrol Brinton Jacobs, President
 Dr. Charles R. Palmer, Vice President
 Miss Margaret Walter, Secretary
 Mr. Percy S. Darlington, Treasurer

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Mr. William Chalfant Jr.
 Mr. Benjamin W. Haines
 Miss Josephine Roberts
 Mr. Thomas W. Marshall
 Mr. Francis Jacobs

The first stewards, hired in 1899, at a monthly salary of \$25, were Mr. and Mrs. Glenmore Preston.

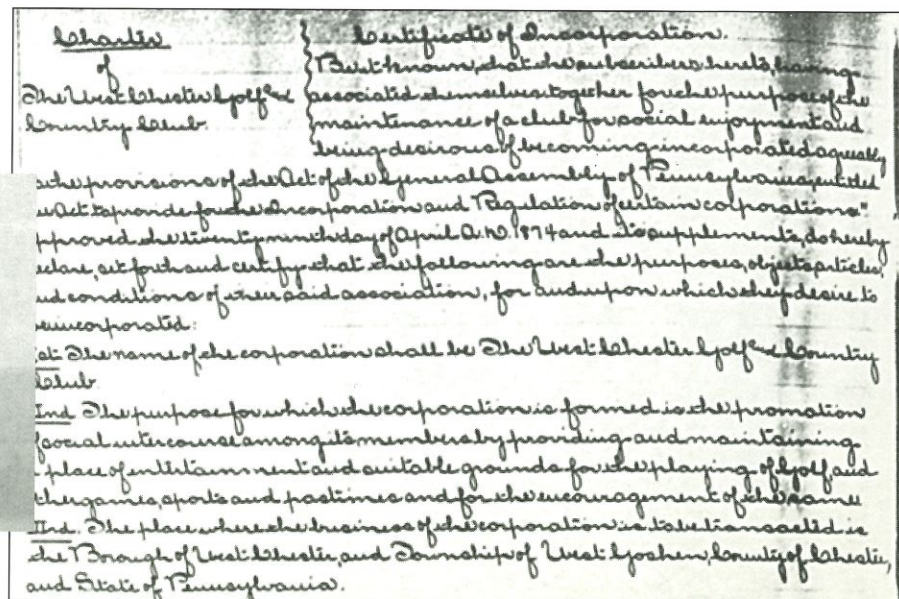
On May 2, 1900, the Club selected colors of golf pink and silver gray, but they haven't always been used.

The Club was chartered on June 4, 1900. The purpose of the Club was stated as, "the promotion of social intercourse among its members by providing and maintaining a place of entertainment and suitable grounds for the play-



Benjamin W. Haines was the grandfather of current member William B. Haines Jr.

ing of golf, and other games, sports and pastimes and for the encouragement of the same."



On May 30, 1900, the West Chester Golf and Country Club will hold two tournaments:--

*MEN'S SINGLES AT TEN O'CLOCK A. M.
 MIXED FOURSOMES AT TWO O'CLOCK P. M.*

An entrance fee of fifty cents will be charged for each entry. No entries received after 12 o'clock noon, May 29th, 1900. There will be a tea in the Club House in the afternoon and a dance in the evening, to which all members are invited.

CHARTER MEMBERS

We have documentation of local residents around the time of the Club's creation. The close of the 19th century was a memorable time in West Chester, since

social club called the West Chester Club.

E. Dallett Hemphill served on the Civic Parade Committee for West Chester's 100th birthday celebration. He ran a flour, feed and grain store at 9

Dr. Charles R. Palmer, with his office at 302 North High, lived at 300 North High. He was on the medical staff of the Chester County Hospital in 1899.

Miss Margaret Walter hosted the club's organizational meeting at 320 North High Street.

Other family members at the same address were Anna B., Frances H., Samuel M. and Sara Brinton.

Channing Way was a notary public who resided at 116 West Miner Street.

Others listed at the same

address were M.S. Way, in real estate and insurance and also a director of First National Bank of West Chester, and M. Warren Way, an attorney.

E. Dallett Hemphill,
 Wholesale and Retail Dealer in
GRAIN, FEED, COAL.
 WAREHOUSE—GAY AND P. R. R.
 OFFICE—9 NORTH HIGH ST., West Chester, Pa.

the borough celebrated its centennial in 1899. A centennial book entitled, *West Chester. . . Past and Present, Centennial Souvenir With Celebration Proceedings*, was published by the *Daily Local News* covering the years 1799 to 1899.

This book offers a glimpse into the daily lives of some of the West Chester Golf & Country Club organizers and early members. A directory of 1899 residents is included, so we can determine some members of the same household, although their specific relationship is not indicated.

William Chalfant Jr. was described as a receiver for Chester County G., T. & S. D. Co., located at 13 North High. His home was 506 North Church.

Mr. Percy S. Darlington's occupation was clerk. He shared a home in East Bradford with Isabel, an attorney and Richard of Darlington Seminary.

Mr. Benjamin W. Haines, notary and bank clerk, lived at 406 N. Church. He was also a board member of the

North High Street. In addition, he was a board member and vice president of the West Chester Club, a social club. Sharing his home at 220 West Gay Street were Clara; E. Dallett Jr., a law student; Eliza; and Rebecca.

Carrol Brinton Jacobs, an attorney, had his office at 5 West Gay. His home, 13 West Gay, housed these other family members — Florence B., Francis and Francis Jr., a medical student. Francis was on the board of the First National Bank of West Chester.

Mr. Thomas W. Marshall specialized in investments at 13 North High and lived on Virginia Ave. He served on the board of the National Bank of Chester County and on the Invitation and Reception Committee for the Centennial festivities.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK of WEST CHESTER.
 Capital, \$200,000. Surplus, \$51,000.
ALFRED P. REID, President.
M. S. WAY, Vice-President.
F. W. WOLLERTON, Cashier.
DIRECTORS.
WILLIAM CHALFANT,
FRANCIS JACOBS,
MARSHALL H. MATLACK,
S. E. NIVIN,
L. C. MOSES,
THOMAS PENNYPACKER,
A. P. REID,
B. S. WALTON,
M. S. WAY,
F. W. WOLLERTON.
 Boxes for Rent in Fire and Burglar Proof Vault at reasonable rates.

These ads appeared in West Chester. . . Past and Present, Centennial Souvenir With Centennial Proceedings, published in 1899 by the Daily Local News, and are reprinted with permission.



Flames Take the Clubhouse, But Not Members' Dreams

On January 23, 1911, the Club suffered a setback when fire destroyed the clubhouse. Starting in the morning in a locker room, the fire was so intense that even the concrete walls fell.

The nearest hydrant was frozen, and since the clubhouse was on a higher elevation, there wasn't much water pressure. Even with enough water, the building could not have been saved.

The janitor who discovered the fire, George Douglass, rescued the valuable silver plate and trophies and contents of the kitchen. Most of the furni-

ture was lost, including pool, billiard and card tables.

Firefighters saved the horse and automobile sheds, along with the new mower and groundskeeping equipment. But unfortunately, all that remained of the clubhouse was the large chimney. Members lost any clothing and equipment stored in Club lockers.

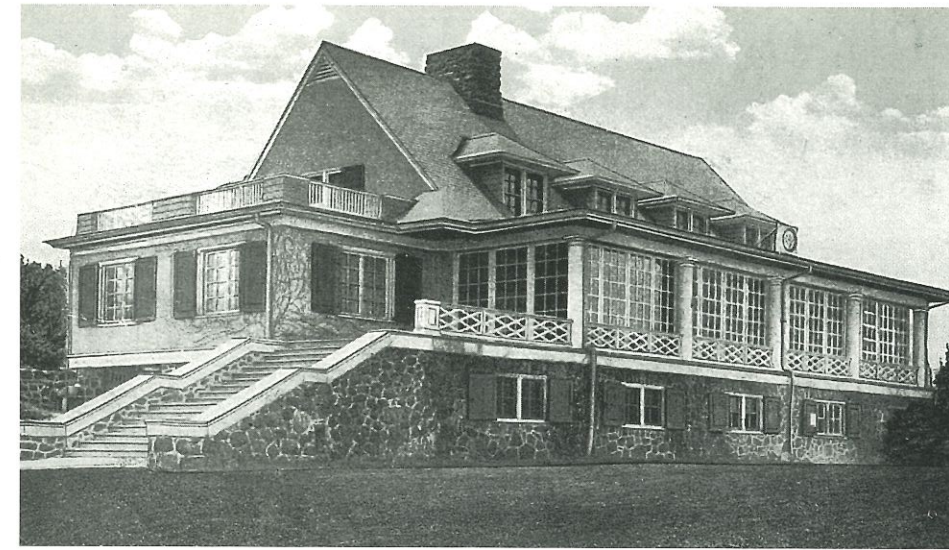
The loss was estimated at about \$15,000 plus \$5000 in contents.

Members' belongings, not reimbursed by insurance, were estimated at \$700 or \$800. A golf bag was worth between \$3.50 and \$10 at the time. Golf "sticks"

were valued at \$1.50 or \$2 and up. A bag usually contained six to 10 sticks, so the loss was "worth a pretty penny," according to a 1911 newspaper article.

Members decided that the clubhouse must be rebuilt, since it was such a focus of town social life. There were 210 members at the time.

The Club quickly found temporary quarters at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Francis H. Gheen, on the southwest corner of High and Biddle streets. This caused as little interruption as possible in planned social events, such as Saturday teas.



The rebuilt clubhouse

Rebuilding started with the lockers and shower baths, so the summer golfers and tennis players could use them. The new clubhouse, built on the same site, used timber again, covered with asbestos fireproof shingles and a stucco exterior. The foundation of the previous clubhouse was still largely intact.

During the rebuilding process, members considered a thick, tight wall on the north side to keep out the cold. The extra expense would be justified by lower coal bills. Comfort is important for a club, as a newspaper clipping noted, "... a club is wondrous comfortable as a lounging place during long evenings and rainy Sundays!"

One positive outcome of the fire was the first spark of interest in golf for many boys. The fire site attracted local boys to look for debris. The school even let some senior boys out of classes after the fire to help clean up. Boys claimed club heads as relics from the fire, put them on sticks and started playing their

own golf game. Who knows how many of these boys became enthusiastic golfers and members?

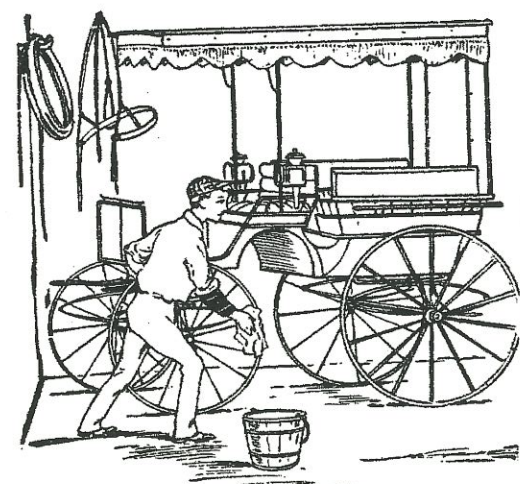
Fund-raising activities began. The metal in destroyed clubs and other items gathered was saved for the metal's value, to be put toward rebuilding. A musicale evening also helped raise money.

The new clubhouse opened Dec. 9, 1911 with a tea and music. Slightly larger than the former one, the new clubhouse had a wide, inviting porch along the north side. The porch

was furnished with rocking chairs and a railing to sit on. You could view the golf course and relax between dances at parties, in the coolness of the evening. It gave the clubhouse the feeling of an old-fashioned, exclusive seaside resort. "Golf widows" congregated there to discuss the latest news and enjoy the view.

By 1924, a new six-year lease was in place, to be renewed every two years after that. For the first two years, rent was \$500 per year. For the next four, it increased to \$800 plus taxes.

The summer of 1925 brought a rebuilding and remodeling of the open shed at the Club entrance. The enclosed east end was enlarged for the tool house. A new caddy house adjoined on the west end.



Copyright, 1897

Up to Date Pleasure Vehicles,

SUCH
AS

Buggies, Phaetons,
Gentlemen's
Road Wagons,
Moyer Banner Springs,
Carriages, Traps, etc.

Light and Heavy MILK WAGONS a specialty.

Auburn Farm Wagons, with Steel Axles and
Splay or Box Beds.

HARNESS. HARNESS. HARNESS.

Harness of every description, for all purposes.
You'll find all these at

FRANCIS H. GHEEN'S,

27 W. CHESTNUT ST., WEST CHESTER.

This ad appeared in West Chester...Past and Present, Centennial Souvenir With Centennial Proceedings, published in 1899 by the Daily Local News, and is reprinted with permission.

West Chester Golf and Country Club
JOSEPH F. HILL, Treas.
West Chester, Pa., APR 23 1915

M-r. Wilmer W. Hoopes,
West Chester, Pa.

To Club House Account			
" " " " in arrears			
" Dues Family, Member to MAY 1, 1916	\$ 35		
" Use of Locker '59 and 60		4	\$ 39
" Initiation Fee			

RECEIVED PAYMENT
APR 28 1915
WEST CHESTER,
GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB.

Members' House Checks will be returned to them with Receipted Bill (OVER)



100 Great Years of Social Life!

Members of the West Chester Golf & Country Club know how to have a good time! Between golf games and tennis matches and in the off-season, there have always been many other activities for members to enjoy.

For quiet times, card games are popular, whether it's a game of poker in the 19th Hole today or a round of bridge whist in the early 1900s.

Social events to raise money for the Club were common in the early years. A January 1908 "kitchen party" helped furnish the kitchen of the new clubhouse. In November 1908, more than 200 people attended a fund-raiser at Memorial Hall. Events included a bazaar, \$.50 supper, ice cream, soda fountain, toys for the children's Christmas, candies, domestic articles

and art items.

In 1909, bowling alleys were added to the Club, giving members another pastime. However, this opportunity was short-lived, as the alleys were not replaced after the 1911 fire.

The April 1913 bal masqué was the first of what became an annual event. Attendees danced the most "up-to-date" dances, such as the turkey trot, glide and dip.

The clubhouse was decorated with

Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa.

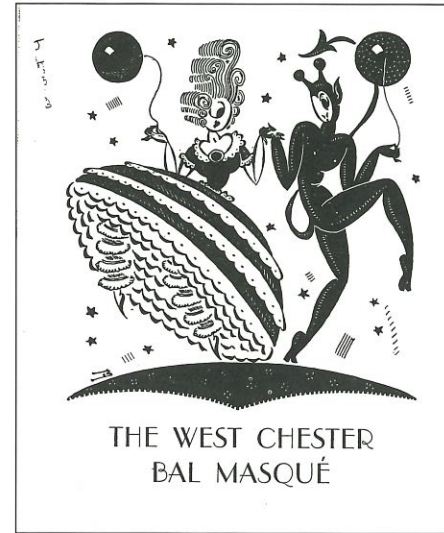


Enjoying a party at WCG&CC circa 1950 are an unidentified woman, Nell Butler, Eddie Wells and an unidentified woman.

spring flowers, palms and ferns. Guests' costumes ranged from amusing to grotesque, including Moorish maids, clowns, princesses, Spanish dancers, knights, jockeys, admirals and sailors. Dance committee members all dressed as chefs.

Two highlights of the evening were when confetti was released over the guests and the unmasking at midnight. The exclusive guest lists were reserved for celebrities and socialites.

Unfortunately, no detailed accounts of these parties exist. In 1920,



The Pleasure of
Mr Conway's
Company is Requested at
The West Chester Bal Masqué
Friday Evening June Sixth at Nine O'clock

PATRONESSES
Mrs. John S. Blaecher Mrs. A. G. Neville
Mrs. Edward G. Brinton Mrs. J. Parker Norris, Jr.
Mrs. Albert W. Hoopes Mrs. Lloyd B. Renshaw Mrs. Wm. E. Parke

the bal masqué resumed after a four-year absence.

During World War I, members focused more on helping the war effort. For example in 1916, women gathered at the Club to cut and roll bandages, make sponges, drains and various arti-

usually included a golf tournament, dinner, fireworks and dancing.

Member Mary Cornwell remembers as a child attending parties for the children of the Club on two or three holidays a year. Refreshments included childhood favorites of fruit punch, brick ice cream and cookies. Of course, couples have

The West Chester Golf and Country Club
invites you to the
New Year's Eve Party
Sunday, December 31, 1967
Social hour seven to eight
Dinner eight o'clock promptly
Dancing nine till one
\$8.50 per person
Reservations limited to 150 persons
Guests Limited
Phone: 696-0150
Rep by Sunday, Dec. 24

cles for the health care of soldiers.

When festivities resumed, the popular annual assembly was usually held around New Year's. Another common winter activity was sledding on the golf course.

During the 1930s for a time, there was a band every Saturday for listening pleasure and dancing.

Fourth of July festivities have

You are invited to a Treasure Hunt
Rain or Shine!
Starting from the golf Club at 7:30 on the evening of Oct. 16th.
The J.B. Grays
R.S.V.P.

always found a way to get together socially. According to a newspaper account, "More than one romance had its inception on sunny days out of doors 'while the caddy was over the hill.'"

THE JUNIOR DANCE COMMITTEE OF THE WEST CHESTER GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB
cordially invites you to attend

A "RECORD" HOP



on
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1958 — 7:30 to 9:00 P. M.

SUBSCRIPTION 50¢

Ages 10 thru 13



Girls must bring an escort.

R. S. V. P. by Sept. 14

OWEN 6-0150



Come to the Country Fair

Put on your straw bonnet and best calico, Bring your fancy box supper and your beau,
THE WEST CHESTER GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB
is where we meet,
To dance to a trio with a terrific beat.

The Social Hour's at seven,
The Auction's at eight.
We'll provide the money
To bid — for your date.

SATURDAY, JUNE 10th, 1961

\$4.00 Per Couple

R.S.V.P. — June 8th
OWen 6-0150

DANCING 9 - 12
(BILL O'BRIEN)

Invitations Courtesy of Chester County Historical Society



This Land Is Our Land: 1950s and 1960s

In the mid-1950s, Club membership was dwindling and the treasury was nearly empty. Building a swim-

ming pool that cost \$85,000 was the first step in revitalizing the Club. Plans called for a pool, complete with wading pool and bathhouse on the New Street side of the nine-hole golf course.

The property lease had been extended another 20 years to 1973, but members were hesitant to build a pool on land they did not own. Before investing in a pool in 1958, members wanted to purchase property or extend the lease, which was not possible at that

time. So the Club purchased 3-1/2 acres of land on the west side of the eighth fairway for \$14,500. This was part of the estate of Mr. William J. Young.

Financing came partially from raising initiation fees and dues. More bonds were issued to participate in the swimming club. A separate corporation, called the West Chester Country Club Pool, bought the land and built the pool. Pool members had to be WCG&CC members, although the organizations and governing boards were separate.

Ownership of the two corporations

consisted of 68 \$150 social bonds, 239 \$300 golf bonds and 170 \$200 pool bonds, with a pool loan of \$20,000.

The pool was proposed as L-shaped to separate swimmers from divers. The leg of the pool ranged in depth from 3-1/2 feet to 5 feet. The diving pool boasted two one-meter diving boards, and was 35 feet wide, with a depth of 12 feet. Plans for the semicircular wading pool called for a 20-foot diameter and a depth from 1 foot to 1-1/2 feet.

The pool officially opened June 22, 1959, with an appearance by Miss Pennsylvania, Miss Lois Janet Piercy.

However, the question still remained about owning the property where the Club stood. After looking at other possible sites, the Club wanted to purchase the grounds from the Taylor heirs. Some of the land the board rejected was developed into golf courses by others.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, all golf membership places were filled and there was a waiting list to join. Other golf clubs opening attracted some members away. Eventually, the older Taylor heirs influenced the younger ones to sell the property to the Club.

On July 13, 1965, the Club reached an agreement to buy the golf course property. The two non-profit cor-

Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa.



West Chester Golf and Country Club
West Chester, Pa.

October 28, 1965

To All Members of the
West Chester Golf and Country Club:

Your Board of Governors are happy to announce that the long awaited word from the Taylor heirs has been received, in the form of a binding Agreement of Sale whereby our Club is obligated to settle on January 15, 1966 for premises we have so long occupied under lease.

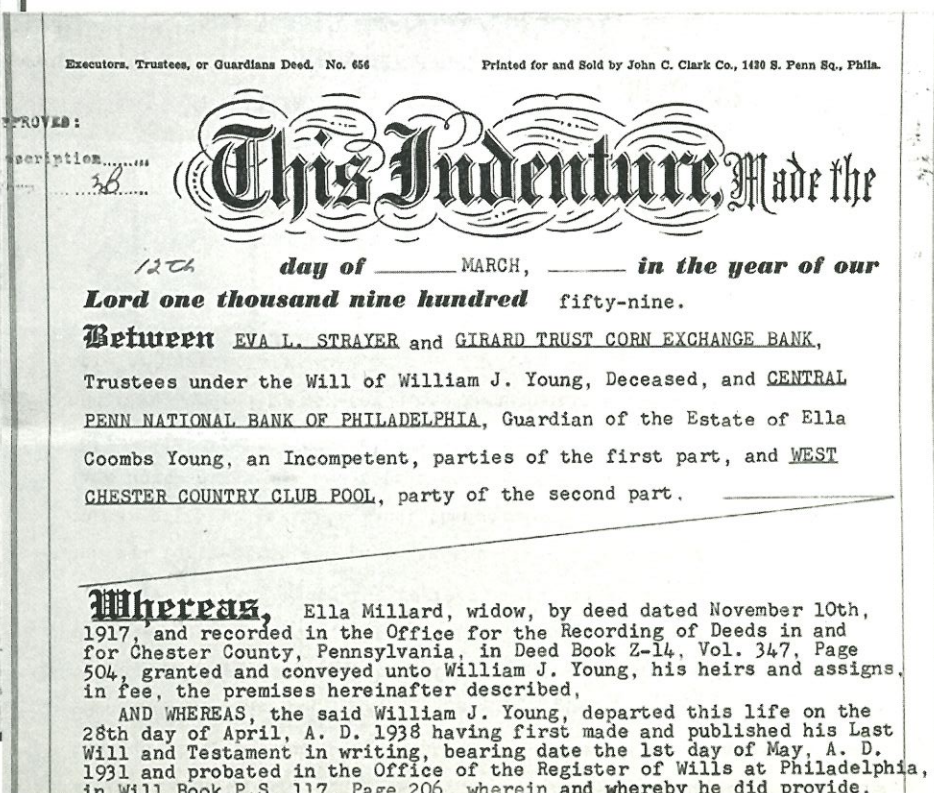
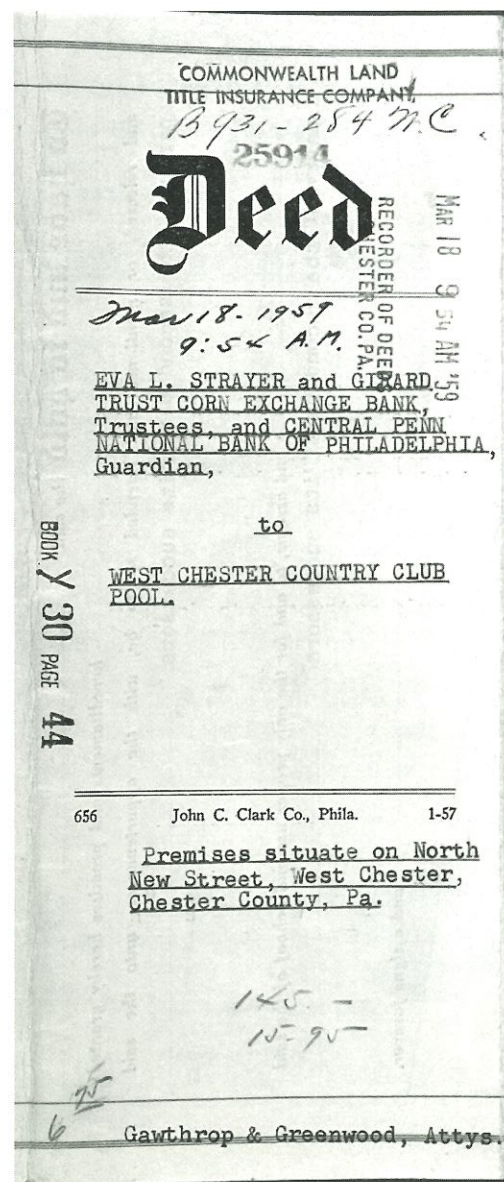
Many of the members have already signed obligations to pay amounts from \$100.00 to \$800.00, depending on the nature of their memberships, to meet the impending obligation. The cash pledged to date totals \$103,000.00. Obviously, we need more cash. The amount of mortgage and carrying charges for us all depends on the sum we raise for payment at settlement.

We do not want to receive any money from any member of the Club in 1965, so that the federal excise taxes for the year 1965, at the rate of twenty per cent, will not be imposed on your payments. We shall require the money, and will bill you for the amount that will then be due, on January 2, 1966.

The Club will issue in this case, as the Swimming Club did previously, refundable certificates in the face value of the amount you pay. We shall want the cash in hand on or before January 10, 1966, so that we can make settlement that week, the 15th being a Saturday. If you pay cash and surrender a Swim Club Bond, the refundable certificate will be in the total amount of cash and bond.

corporations (pool and golf) merged into West Chester Golf & Country Club, with

membership certificates set at \$300 or \$800. The deal was signed Feb. 17, 1966, exchanging 63.516 acres for \$200,000. The \$100,000 mortgage, through National Bank and Trust Company of Chester County in West Goshen, was paid in full on June 6, 1972. To pay the rest, membership certificates were increased to \$800.



Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa.



The Pink House and Other Original Buildings

When the Club moved onto its current site, there were three small houses along the west side of High Street — a log cabin, a stone house and a stone and frame house.

The three houses were “Dower House,” the “Pink” House and an old house not on the Club property that was restored by Arthur T. Parke Jr. All three faced Old Goshen Road. The Parke house is at 800 N. New Street, now known as the Spring House.

Before the Taylors came, Hoopes owned the northwest corner of West Chester. It is said that he built a house for each of his seven sons on his property. The Spring House, Dower House and the Pink House are three of these. The Pink House was later used as a tenant house by people who worked for Lowndes Taylor. There was still a tenant when the golf course was first built. One of the last residents, Ida Jane Ray, remembered that the fireplaces had finely carved mantelpieces.

Mr. Joseph Hergesheimer (1880 to 1954), a local author of several novels, was a member in 1922. He lived in Dower House. Some of

This old house was on the corner of High and Ashbridge streets, where the fourth tee now stands.

Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pa.



This house was still standing on the course circa 1950.

the descriptions of scenes and people in his novels reminded readers of West Chester, the Club and local people, not all flattering portrayals. Among his books were *Three Black Pennys*, *Cytherea*, *Foolscap Rose* and *Quiet Cities*, all set in Chester County and



available at the West Chester library. Dower House, now owned by William Knox, is at the southeast corner of the intersection of Old Goshen Road and High Street, across from the Pink House.

The 1924 lease had a provision that the Club “shall preserve uninjured the log house near High and Goshen.” This is the Pink House. The Club paid the Taylor heirs about \$5000 to release the Club from any liability regarding the building’s collapse.

After rotting, the wooden part of the house fell, so only the two stone walls on each end were left. A wind-



This wall is all that remains of the Pink House.

storm leveled one wall, so all that currently exists is one wall with fireplaces. Now “tuckpointed” for safety, the wall protects putters on the fourth green from drives coming off the fifth tee.



Women's Golf

The Women's Golf Association of Philadelphia had its first meeting in 1897 to establish team matches between four participating clubs — Philadelphia Country Club, Merion Cricket Club, Philadelphia Cricket Club and Belmont Golf Club (later to become Aronimink). West Chester joined the Association in 1903, and at the 10-year mark, there were 15 member clubs. Among the first team members from West Chester were Mrs. Benjamin W. (Linda, grandmother of current member Bill Haines) Haines, Miss May Darlington, Miss Florence Jacobs (later Mrs. J. Charles Murtagh) and Mary Worth (mother of our oldest living member, Mary Cornwell).

In 1905, a newspaper article noted that the women members were more active than the men, who were often busy with their work and didn't have time for matches.

The team played in the Inter Club Series until 1925, and left the Association for financial reasons during the Depression. Jane Chalfant was a member of the team at that time. In the early 1950s, she and Mary Cornwell were instrumental in reorganizing a team to play in the Philadelphia matches. After six years on the waiting list, West Chester was reinstated and over the years has advanced to the 11th cup. A second team was formed



Anne Price Hemphill Renwick was the women's golf champion 16 times from the 1910s through the 1930s. Sitting on the bench is Joseph Hergeshimer, prominent novelist and West Chester resident in the 1920s and 1930s.

in the early 1970s and is now in the 24th cup. There are now 88 clubs in the Association, with 150 teams participating in the Spring Team Matches.

Many members' children became excellent golfers. Miss Jane Chalfant, later women's champion, learned to play at a young age with an old

wooden club her father gave her. Although she couldn't play on the course, she practiced her swing wherever she could and watched the adults in action. A story told about her was that one day, she hit a ball off the number three tee toward the number three green. It landed on the green and rolled between her father's legs while he was putting! Even if it didn't happen exactly that way, Jane became an excellent golfer.

Another member well known for her golfing skills is Alice Gray, daughter of Jerome B. Gray and sister of Jane Jamison. She won the Pennsylvania women's amateur title in 1961 and 1963, then turned pro in 1968, becoming assistant to WCG&CC pro, Harry Hammond.

The Evening Bulletin PHILADELPHIA Friday, March 1, 1968

To Teach at West Chester CC

Alice Gray Turns Golf Pro

By JOE SCHWENDEMAN

Alice Gray, former two-time Pennsylvania amateur golf champion, has turned professional, she announced today.

The Merion GC and West Chester CC member will become an assistant to pro Harry Hammond at West Chester starting April 1.

"Alice will be a regular assistant pro," said Hammond, "and will have shop duties as well as teaching duties. She will be on my staff until Christmas."

Miss Gray, who has informed the U. S. Golf Association and the Women's Golf Association of Philadelphia of her professional intentions, explained her decision:

"Over the last couple of years I haven't been playing as

women's inter-club series as No. 1, 2 or 3 player.

"I'm going to miss Merion," said the 5-2, 110-pound Miss Gray, "and the team matches, as well as being runnerup in a lot of things. But now that I've made up my mind, I'm eager for the season to start."

Miss Gray has an application from the Ladies PGA, but is not sure if she will join the tour-oriented organization.

"I have no desire to join the tour," Miss Gray said. "Right now I just want to be a help to Harry Hammond and the ladies of West Chester."

Miss Gray is only the second district woman to turn pro in recent years. Patsy Hahn, of duPont CC, turned pro in 1963 and joined the ladies tour.

A back ailment sidelined

ALICE GRAY
New pro golfer . . .

Alice Gray in 1968



These 1964 ladies' team members are, from left, Mary Parke, Helen Welsh, Jane Chalfant, Bea Lochran, Mary Cornwell, Betty Strode, Alice Wingert, Gwen Haines, Jane Jamison, Jane Murtagh, Marge Campbell, Marian Highberger and Rae Lunn.



Clockwise from top left in this 1969 photo are Marge Campbell, Kirby Overton (pro), Mary Parke, Helen Welsh, Betty Strode, Rae Lunn, Mary Cornwell, Jane Jamison and Gwen Haines.

From left to right in this 1968 photo are Jane Jamison, Gwen Haines, Mary Cornwell, Helen Welsh, Mary Parke, Rae Lunn, Betty Strode and Betty Massengale. Golf pro Harry Hammond demonstrates a putt.



1971 mixed team members, front row, from left, are Gwen Haines, Betty Strode, Helen Welsh and Mary Parke. In the second row, from left, are Jane Murtagh, Gladys Woodward, Betty Sineath and Jane Jamison. Back row, from left, are Dinnie Smith, Marty Potter, Pat Rhodes, Emily Bullotta and Sally Veit.



Winners of the 12th cup in 1982 are first team members, from left, Jane Jamison, Mary Cornwell, Mae Hilbush, Gwen Haines, Connie Bompadre Sr., Connie Bompadre Jr. and Pat Rhodes. Missing are Betty Strode and Marty Potter.

This 1992 photo shows, front row kneeling, Gwen Haines, Pat Rhodes, Ella Kester, Barbara Fleming and Mickey



Longaker. Standing in back row are Connie Bompadre Jr., Connie Bompadre Sr., Louise Allen, Jane Jamison, Betty Strode, Pat Canfield, Mae Hilbush, Connie Happersett and Mary Painter. Not pictured are Jackie Winans, Mary Joan Pancoast, Shirley Jemison, Judy Benes and Thelma Cairns.