



A Brief History SUNNYBROOK GOLF CLUB

Incorporated in 1914, Sunnybrook was organized by six “crusaders” who defected from the Philadelphia Cricket Club in 1913. These six gentlemen were Samuel Y. Heebner, William Findlay Brown, George C. Thomas, Charles T. Cowperthwait, James A. Janney, Jr. and Joseph S. Clark.

The new group purchased the original Sunnybrook tract on July 7, 1913. This land was a farm lying between Mill Road and Haws Lane, west of Church Road in Flourtown. The founders of the new club were determined to have a small, proprietary golf club. They did not want a crowded course and the other problems associated with a large membership and “country club atmosphere.”

The charter for the club was finally procured March 7, 1914, and the Donald Ross designed course opened on Decoration Day, 1915. The old farmhouse located north of the beautiful 13th green served as the original clubhouse. One of the founders commented at this time, “never in our lives was a more congenial and convivial band of sports gathered on frequent occasions for merry parties.” A new and larger clubhouse was opened on Decoration Day, 1928. There followed many years of pleasant experiences at the same location.

In 1954, a combination of circumstances (not the least of which was the impending new Route 309 which obliterated the famous 5th green) caused the club to seek a new location.

A beautiful 135-acre site was found – the old William Disston farm, which was purchased in December 1954. The new course was designed by William Gordon and his son David. Earlier in his career, William had supervised course construction for Willie Parks, Jr. and Donald Ross. He started his own company shortly after Ross’s death and developed a national reputation with work such as Saucon Valley’s famed Grace Course. The course was first played June 16, 1956. In 2007, all 18 greens received an architectural upgrade under the direction of McDonald & Sons. Using the original green schematics by William Gordon from 1954, each green was meticulously brought back to its original form. The schematics are on display in the living room in the Clubhouse.

A new modern clubhouse was opened February 15, 1956 and in 2007 construction began on what is the current facility. The modern clubhouse from the 50’s received a full facelift that is extremely functional, elegant and keeping with the culture of the membership. Officially opened on June 6, 2008, the new Clubhouse and golf course have received many accolades from both members and guests.

Over the years, Sunnybrook has hosted the United States Golf Association Senior Men’s Amateur Championship (1971) and the USGA Ladies Amateur Championship (1978) as well as a number of local and state tournaments. Sunnybrook’s own annual Silver Putter Tournament is, of course, one of the area’s most famous tournaments.

Acknowledged to be one of the hardest courses in the area, Sunnybrook continues to test the mettle of its members and to afford them the privileges of a small club.