

**Westbrook**

**Country**

**Club**

# PREFACE

So often a little knowledge is somewhat dangerous, but that is how history began for Westbrook Country Club.

Knowledge gained from reading the original piles of documents, courthouse records, meeting minutes, and newspaper reports, and, of course, the documented recordings from Mr. Jack Dorr in 1986.

In its own way, the history of Westbrook provides a social commentary on life in Mansfield, Ohio, after the turn of the century. For that reason, certain facts about Mansfield in this area have been incorporated in this collection to provide a little perspective.

Mr. Jack Dorr dedicated his findings to anyone who ever served on the Board of Directors of the Westbrook Company or as it is known today, Westbrook Country Club. I personally would like to dedicate my findings to not only the President of the Club and the board who follows him, but also the members who have made the club's history what it is today.



# BEGINNING OF WESTBROOK

In 1867, a 26 year old Abram J. Heineman came to Mansfield from New York where he had been a horse buyer since he was fourteen years old. He continued his career in Mansfield and ultimately bought and shipped about 3,000 horses a year to New York City where they were used to pull wagons.

As success came to A.J., he began to acquire real estate including what is now known as North Lake Park. On April 1, 1901, A. J. Heineman leased 25 acres of that land to C. H. Voegele, J. E. Brown, F. T. Bristol, T. R. Barnes, B. A. Baxter, C. K. King, W. S. Upson, J. M. Dickson, and C. H. Keating.

This land, described as fields now being used as golf links, occupied an area bounded by North Lake Park, West Fourth Street, Rowland Avenue, and Westbrook Avenue. The three-year lease with a two-year option called for a lease payment of \$400.00 per year. The group had the right to erect buildings and remove it at lease end. Heineman had the right to use the driveway; however, he was responsible for keeping the driveway in good repair.

The group called their organization the Westbrook Outing Club and built a clubhouse facility near the end of what is presently Rae Avenue. The clubhouse was opened on June 22, 1901, with C. H. Voegele presiding at the lemonade bowl. About 200 attended the affair.

The first Westbrook Outing Club Golf Tournament was held on Wednesday, August 14, 1901. The ladies played once around the nine-hole track with the men going around twice. The Mansfield News reported several hundred spectators in the gallery. Miss Grace



Ingersoll took first prize on the ladies finals with a 62. Her prize was a "fine golf club." Julie Putnam won three golf balls for second place. The men's finals round were Rev. A. B. Putman who pitted against T. R. Barnes. With only three holes to go, Barnes conceded when a rainstorm came up. Barnes was a stroke down at the time having shot 101 to that point. First prize for the men was another "fine golf club" donated by the McGregor Company of Dayton, Ohio. Mr. Charles Ritter presented the prizes.

For those of you who are not familiar with the name Charles Ritter, Mr. Ritter opened an office supply store, which still remains in downtown Mansfield.

Mr. Heineman died in 1903, and the land was offered to the Outing Club; however, the officers decided that the site was too small for any future expansion. They decided to look around for another location. Heineman's brother, Simon, purchased the land from the family estate with the stipulation the Outing Club lease run through 1906. As the search for a new location progressed, a corporation was formed.

On October 30, 1906, C. H. Voegele, H. L. Reed, A. R. Carter, Hugh McFall, E. D. Baxter, J. M. Cook, S. A. Jennings, and William McE Weldon were named as subscribers of the articles of incorporation desiring for themselves their associates, successors, and assigns to become a body corporate, in accordance with the general corporate laws of the State of Ohio, under the name and style of The Westbrook Company, and with all the corporate rights, powers, privileges, and liabilities enjoyed under or imposed by such laws, did subscribe and acknowledge, as required by law, articles of incorporation as follows to wit:



The name of said corporation shall be the Westbrook Company. Said Corporation is to be located in Mansfield in Richland County, Ohio and its principal business there transacted. The capital stock of said corporation shall be thirty thousand dollars divided into three hundred shares of one hundred dollars each, of which two hundred shares shall be common stock and one hundred shall be preferred stock. The holders of the preferred shall be entitled to dividends at the rate of 5% payable yearly out of the surplus profits of the company each year in preference to all other stockholders, which dividends shall be cumulative; said preferred stock shall not be entitled to vote; but, shall be subject to redemption at the option of the company, at par, on any dividend date, in a manner to be provided in the by-laws.

The document was signed by the incorporators and notarized by R. W. Hartman. It was duly witnessed and filed with the Secretary of State on November 6, 1906. R. W. Hartman was a distinguished gentleman in the Mansfield area.

On November 17, 1906, the Westbrook Company held a subscription meeting, which took place at 8:00 p.m. at the Citizen's National Bank in Mansfield. Thirty-one subscriptions were sold that night. Thirty of the names are on a legible handwritten list, which is in the Club archives. Research in the Mansfield City Directory of 1906 indicates a broad section of community leaders at that time. They were as follows:

William McE Weldon - notary public; attorney

Robert Maxwell Jr. - President of R.B. Maxwell & Co.

John J. McIntyre - McIntyre & McVey Cigar Makers

Charles H. Voegele - President of Voegele & Dinning

Allen R. Carter - President of Carter & Mann Lumber Co.



Hugh McFall - Downtown Merchant  
Edwin Baxter - Superintendent of the Baxter Stove Co.  
S. Arthur Jennings - Cashier at Citizen's Bank  
Efflo B. Proctor - Associated with R. B. Maxwell & Co.  
Harry Orwig - Salesman  
Wilbur S. Upson - President of Upson Brothers Miners Co.  
Alfred T. Thorns - Traveling Salesman  
Wilson P. Spencer - Secretary of Voegele Dining Co.  
Jay N. Dirlan - Clerk  
Frank B. Black - President of Ohio Brass  
Edward W. Crouse - Traveling Salesman  
Harry S. Black - Treasurer of Ohio Brass  
James L. Lauck - Secretary of H. L. Reed Co.  
Stevenson E. Ward - Manager of Mansfield Telephone Co.  
Rufus A. Tracey - of Cook & Tracey, agents for Mansfield  
Mutual Fire Insurance Co.  
E. O. McClean - No information  
Donald A. Carpenter - Vice President of Humphrey's Mfg. Co.  
James E. Brown - President of Aultman & Taylor Machinery Co.  
Thomas R. Barnes - Secretary, Barnes Manufacturing Co.  
George W. Kensin - Dentist  
J. B. Dirlam - No information



Edgar C. Marshall - Marshalls & Reynolds Co.

Clayton C. Wagner - President of the Wagner Hardware

Reid Carpenter - Attorney

Following the subscription meeting, the Westbrook Company held its first formal corporation get - together. Charles Voegele was chosen as Chairman and E. B. Proctor was named secretary. Chairman Voegele appointed William McE Weldon to prepare a code of regulations. Fifteen directors were elected. Possibly the most important piece of business of the evening, R. W. Hartman, representing the heirs of Charles Twitchell, offered the Board a proposal to sell a piece of property known as the Twitchell Farm. The Board gave its approval to enter into a contract on the terms presented; and that was the beginning of Westbrook Country Club.

Not too much is known about Charles Twitchell except that he was successful and had been around awhile. His farm and orchards were in good shape. His tenant house was rather elaborate for the times. He farmed the area during the Civil War, as there is a record of him selling 70 acres of the farm in 1869.

Twitchell's date of death is not listed in archives; however, it is documented that he left half of the farm to a married daughter, Amy Houghton; a quarter to an unmarried daughter, Myra; and a quarter to Ella, the widow of Twitchell's brother.



## WESTBROOK IN THE EARLY 1900's

By deed, dated December 3, 1906, the Westbrook Company took possession of two parcels of land, one of 80 acres and the other of 90 acres. Total purchase price was \$14,025.00. The deal was consummated with \$4,675.00 in cash and six notes to daughter Amy Houghton. The sales agreement allowed the tenant farmer to harvest the wheat crop he had sown. Also involved was the right of way for an electric line conveyed by Amy to a M. J. Mandelbaum at an earlier date.

January 1907, a meeting at the Masonic Parlors, the Company Board closed out the Outing Club by purchasing the clubhouse and contents at North Lake Park for \$1,276.00. The Company also agreed to pay for any cash assets held by the old club. A caretaker was hired to look after the farm and yet-to-be-built golf course.

At this time, the Mansfield population was 24,000, and the city was described by the Chamber of Commerce as an ideal convention city. The Chamber was very excited about a new committee organized to attract more industries and families to the area. Mansfield had eight hotels, a modern sewage plant, and a garbage crematory that cost the city \$85,000.00 to build. The area was located by four steam railroads. Two telephone companies provided services to 4,680 subscribers. There were seventeen cigar factories that employed over 1,200 residents, and people were still talking about Lt. Lahmn's victory in the first International Balloon Race.

In October 1907, total assets of the Company were reported to be \$19,557.22. The Company also had an overdraft of \$54.79. Architect Vernon Redding submitted plans and specifications for a clubhouse. His cost estimate of \$20,000.00 was deemed too high and



he was asked to submit something a little more modest. On November 1, 1907, Redding came back with a cost reduction of \$2,500.00.

November 8, 1907, the Westbrook Country Club reviewed Redding's plans for the clubhouse and directed that the Westbrook Company proceed with construction provided that the plans included space to accommodate two billiard tables and one pool table.

In early 1908, the bid solicitation started for the construction work, and a committee was formed to investigate selling off some surplus real estate. Also approved was a preferred stock offering in the total amount of \$10,000.00. Vern Redding got his \$200.00 architect's fee in the form of preferred stock. A new lease on the ground occupied by the Sanford Cottages was written. A newspaper reported quoting Miss Josephine Cook, whose family was active in the Club, recalling children playing around the construction site and people riding the Crestline Interurban to a point near the hill. They would hike up the hill with baskets of food to be cooked in the little clubhouse kitchen.

Enough pictures of the old clubhouse exist today that it is not necessary to describe the exterior; however, a few words about the interior might be of interest in capturing the flavor, so to speak, of the time. One would arrive at the west end, get out of their automobile or carriage under the protection of the carriage porch, ascend four wooden steps to the porch, cross the porch, and enter into the main vestibule.

Cars and carriages would proceed to a parking lot, which was about where the golf carts are parked today. In these times, there were more carriages than cars because the weekly newspaper of 1908 indicated that less than 100 automobiles were registered in Mansfield.



Most of those vehicles registered belonged to Westbrook Country Club members.

As a sidelight, the old Outing Club site was divided into lots; and they were advertised in the Mansfield News Journal in July of 1908. Lots went for \$75.00 to \$475.00, one dollar down and \$.75 per week—no interest, no taxes, no mortgage, and no payments.

Memorial Day 1909, the new clubhouse was formally opened. Over 100 members and guests gathered for lunch. The crowd swelled to over 400 people for a four-course dinner, handicap golf tournament, putting contests, and fireworks. The Fisher's full orchestra was hired for entertainment and the club was decorated with snowballs and lilies of the valley.

The Mansfield Newspaper reported that everyone was impressed with the Club and many comments were received about the dining room being furnished in green, the reception area in blue, and the grillroom done in "mission" style. It was advertised as a big day! Four tennis courts full of people playing as were the croquet courts.

By January 1911, a committee was formed to investigate combining the Westbrook Company and the Westbrook Club. A decision was made to mortgage the property for \$10,000.00 at a rate not to exceed 5%. At this time, assets were as follows:

Golf Course	\$4000.00
Tennis Courts	\$1500.00
Croquet	\$ 200.00
Water Works	\$2500.00
Land	\$21,250.00
Grounds	\$1500.00
Driveway	\$1600.00



Auto Sheds	\$1500.00
Golf House	\$2300.00
Clubhouse Furnishings	\$5000.00
Clubhouse	\$26,900.00



# DONALD ROSS MEETS WESTBROOK

Mr. Donald Ross was born in 1872 in the north Scottish coastal town of Dornoch. There on crumpled dunes land, he grew up playing one of the world's purest links, the Royal Dornoch. As a young man, he took up "the keeping of the green." After a year of apprenticeship at St. Andrews under the tutelage of four-time British open champion "Old" Tom Morris, he returned to his native Dornoch. In those days, there was no rigid division of labor for golf professionals; so, Ross became adept not only at maintaining the grounds but also as a player and club maker.

He was of common stock, making an adequate if unspectacular living. But that all changed when an American professor on golf pilgrimage to the sport's holy land invited him to come to the New World to help spread the game's gospel. Ross immigrated to the United States from Scotland at age 27 in 1899 where he settled in Watertown, Massachusetts.

He was a golf pro & green's keeper at Oakley Country Club where he met the Tufts family. In case the name is unfamiliar to you, the Tufts were the soda fountain inventors. The Tufts persuaded Mr. Ross to move to North Carolina to the Sand hills just off U.S. Route 1 and the Boston - Miami rail line. The Tufts wanted Mr. Ross to build a course in a place called Pinehurst, to accommodate visitors from the North. Eventually, he designed and rebuilt four courses at the Pinehurst resort, none with more love and care than the No. 2 layout

In 1901, Ross constructed his first course; 18 holes for course #1 and 9 holes for course #2. Donald Ross, renowned architect and leading golf course architect, was so prolific that many of his courses



never were memorialized by Walter Hatch (Donald Ross's draftsman) or recorded by Ross historians.

Donald Ross was originally credited with 385 course designs, including Westbrook Country Club. His designs were recounted by the Donald Ross Society and his credits have grown to over 413 designs. Mr. Ross and Walter Hatch designed the Westbrook Golf Course; his original design layout is still in possession of the Club today, you can find it hanging in the Grill Room. The Donald Ross Society was created to preserve and study his work. In New England alone, Mr. Ross was credited with 87 golf course layouts, after helping found the American Society of Golf Course Architects in 1946 and serving as its first president.

Mr. Ross was the Golf Manager of Pinehurst Golf Course when he died in 1948 at age 76. When Donald Ross died, Mr. Hatch inherited most of Ross's records and notebooks. Upon Hatch's death, his family got rid of most everything pertinent to Ross & Hatch's work.



## WESTBROOK 1920's

During the golf course opening, Westbrook was in Mansfield News every time there was social event or golf outing. Mrs. Ruth Gorman had pictures of the course after it was completed and are currently in the Club archives.

The first Westbrook Invitational Tournament was held on July 11, 1928—125 golfers. Mansfield News headlines read, "This inaugural event was marred by rain and inclement weather". Only 45 golfers teed off and Mr. Burton Preston was the first champion of the Invitational Tournament.

Judging by newspaper stories in 1928 at the Mansfield Public Library, Westbrook was a very active social center in Mansfield, Ohio. It was evident that Westbrook Country Club was an integral part of activities that involved people and clubs around the Northern Ohio area. It was also evident that the local newspaper cared a lot about covering local news then.

It was October 3, 1928; the Ohio Senior's Golf Association was formed. Mr. Burton Preston was elected President, a post he held through 1936. T. R. Barnes was Chairman of the Tournament Committee. Distinguished members of the organization were listed as follows, Senator Robert Taft, the Honorable George White, the Honorable Frank Lausche, the Honorable J. A. Rhodes, Tris Speaker, and Luke Sewell.

The first tournament was held in September of 1929 at Westbrook, where it has been ever since, even through the war years. Mr. Burton Preston was the first champion.



## WESTBROOK 1930's

During the depression, the Club went through trials and tribulations. Numerous accounts were delinquent due to financial uncertainty and the number of delinquencies increased by 90% in 1931 and 1932. The membership stood its ground, with 362 members still active. By 1934 the economy was improving, at least for the membership. Dues increased for active members to \$75.00. In 1935 it was increased to \$88.50. By 1936 it jumped to \$92.85 and was raised to \$100.00 in 1937. On top of dues there was, in 1936, a war tax of \$9.30, a state tax of \$1.85, a prize fund levy of \$1.50, and a locker cost of \$5.00 for the year.

Records from 1937 reflect the first mention of Westbrook Country Club golf pro, J. G. Collins. All records from 1938, 1939, and 1940 were destroyed in the Clubhouse fire of 1941.



# WESTBROOK 1940's

## "THE YEAR OF THE FIRE"

The year was 1941; membership totals were 343 with 234 actives and 17 non-resident actives. Dues were \$33.34 per month. Locker rent was \$7.00. On May 28, 1941, at 3:45 p.m., Mrs. Jesse Wainwright noticed smoke and gave alarm to 130 ladies playing bridge in the living room. This bridge event was the first big social event of the season. The clubhouse had just been redecorated and the front lawns were just landscaped.

How the fire started is still a mystery. Some say the roof was ignited by sparks from a tar wagon used for making repairs to the driveway. Newspaper articles reported, "The fire got out of hand despite efforts made by Harry Rowan and William Ferguson Jr. to fight the massive fire with hand held extinguishers." All furniture, fixtures, all equipment, and most important all records were lost.

The original reporter for the newspaper did comment that, "A considerable quantity of liquor was saved for a brief time. \$441.00 in currency and \$61.82 in coin was also salvaged."

May 29, 1941, before the ashes were cold, a joint meeting of the Club and the Company was held at the Richland Trust Building. The decision was to send a "pep" letter to all members with their June statements. It was also decided to start a planning committee to rebuild as soon as possible.

By early August, architects Althouse & Jones had drawn up blueprints for a new clubhouse. On August 22, 1929, Mansfield Structural and Erecting Company submitted a bid for the structural



steel and ornamental ironwork. The quote was for \$5,359.00, which included three coal chutes and three doors. Weather vanes were to be quoted separately. The Parkinson Company put a bid of \$17,197.00 for plumbing, heating, ventilating, and mechanical. Zediker Masonry received the general construction contract with a bid of \$74,485.00. Richland Electric was awarded the electrical work contract with a bid of \$4,790.00. While construction was underway to rebuild the Westbrook Company, Club events were held at the Leland Hotel in downtown Mansfield.

The Club officially re-opened in July of 1942, which was a remarkable undertaking in the time span considering the wartime restrictions on building materials.

By 1942 nine members were in the service, this number grew to well over 30 by 1945. The wives and children had full club privileges by paying dues at the "Associate Rate". Even the famous Louis Broomfield became an active member in 1942.

1948 was known as the year of the woman. Ruth Dinkel became manager of the clubhouse at a salary of \$3200.00 per year, plus living quarters. Before she left in 1951, she made sure the board approved the purchasing of a piano from W. E. Jones Piano House, which was paid for in 29 payments of \$25.00. Just a few final notes on the forties, the Club made a profit of \$20,000.00 in 1949 but did not make a decision about renting a color television set due to the cost.



## WESTBROOK 1950's

The City of Mansfield inaugurated Westbrook Day in July of 1950. Monday food service was discontinued in the late 1950's due to a severe help shortage, not to mention giving the employees the day off. It also saved \$600.00 in wages and \$75.00 in employee meals. The saving probably was the paramount concern as the food & bar operation was budgeted to lose \$7,125.00.

Ruth Dinkel was interviewed by the board for the general manager position for Westbrook Country Club and was hired. She had some problems with the board and resigned a few months later. Mr. & Mrs. Sears of Alaska were hired in 1951 and quit within three weeks of reporting. Ruth was called back to her original position of general manager of the club. Also, in the late 1950's Louis Broomfield's membership was terminated for non-payment.

On May 6, 1950, 28 ladies heeded a call by Freda Springer and Lucille Shaw to form the Westbrook Country Club's Women's Senior Golf Association. The group was to be compromised of active and inactive golfers who had reached the halfway century mark and who were or had been members of the Westbrook Ladies Golf Association.

In 1952 after being called back to her managerial position, Ruth Dinkel's contract was not renewed; in turn, the board was on the lookout for a new manager. They found William B. Benedict of Springfield, Illinois. When deciding on Mr. Benedict, the board also decided to increase from 12 to 14 directors.

Also in 1952, the Club decided to implement a 15% service charge into affect. In late June, Mr. Benedict resigned due to health reasons;



and the board was again on the hunt for a new manager. They hired Mr. Beckerle of Hollywood, Florida, on an interim basis. In August, an employment contract was entered into with a Mr. Womelsdorf and Mr. Beckerle was relieved of his interim duties. No other information was found on Mr. Womelsdorf in the history records.

The board decided in 1953 to expand the Pro Shop and locker room area. The deciding bid came in at \$25,725.00 and was voted to start construction. A new entry was made from the Clubhouse to the locker area. The shoe cleaning area of today was an outside entrance prior to the addition, which is why there is a two step-down into the shoe cleaning area. The benches in the new section were handmade to match the old ones.

The closing of the 1950's was financially exciting if you like trauma! The Club finished the year \$19,000.00 in the hole. The food operation lost over \$12,000.00 with a food cost of 65%. The bar made \$27,000.00 even with a liquor cost of 38%. The liquor cost looks even worse when you consider that the Club bought \$5,000.00 worth of booze before the state raised the prices. The board voted on implementing a minimum for food & beverage, it was defeated 22 to 18.



## WESTBROOK 1960's & 1970's

In 1961, membership became a concern; it dropped from 560 to 438. A social committee was established and an overwhelming membership drive was initiated. At the annual meeting only 24 members attended. A lengthy report was given concerning the continuing need for members.

The dinner menu at the Club wasn't fancy in the 60's like Chef Tim's is today in 2005, but the prices were very reasonable.

Shrimp Cocktail	\$ .75
Herring	\$ .50
Strip Steak	\$4.00
Prime Rib	\$3.75
Fresh Pickerel	\$3.00
Fried Chicken	\$2.50
Beef Stew	\$2.50
Chopped Sirloin	\$1.75
Pies & Sundaes	\$ .35
Sherbet & Ice Cream	\$ .25
Fresh Peaches & Watermelon	\$ .45

1965 was not a good year for the Club. The fairways died due to lack of water pressure in the irrigation. (What would Mark Figurella have said?) Another well and one more pump got the fairways back in shape over time. As a matter of fact, so much in shape that a record number of golf games were played on the back nine tees, a record of 5,976 18-hole rounds of golf.



In the early 1970's, the Club lost to the IRS over an interpretation of exemptions to a 20% Federal Club Tax on initial fees. The Club was robbed of \$50.00 from the Grill Room Bar cash register. Evidently the thief wasn't too happy with the amount because he hurled the register through the big window.

The 70's were not as exciting as the previous years. The board passed the minimum monthly charge.

Dues were increased and a \$100.00 operating assessment was implemented. The Board also approved having snack food at the bars as a free snack. A new picture window was installed in the Male Room.

The thirteenth hole was relocated and a decent path constructed between number 12 and 13. A number of fairways were lost again due to a fungus. Number 1 tee was rebuilt and number 12 tee was enlarged.

In 1973 the boilers stopped and the replacement cost went to the tune of \$12,000.00. The water softener also had to be replaced for \$5,500.00, and the parking lot was paved at a cost of \$16,000.00. Additional expenses included the floor in the equipment barn, a tractor, a mower, an aerifier, a dump truck, and the main water line which totaled another \$38,700.00.

