



History of the Society 1967 -

The inaugural meeting was held at West Kent Golf Club, Downe, on 31st October 1967. For some time prior to that date the Society of West Kent Golf Club Captains, consisting of the Captain and Past Captains of the West Kent Golf Club, had been giving thought to the possibility of forming a Kent Golf Captains Society, similar to, but not in competition with, the Society of London Golf Captains.

In order to obtain views from other Clubs and provide an opportunity for open discussion of their suggestions, the West Kent Golf Club Captains invited the Captains of Clubs in Kent against which the West Kent Club played in competition or friendly matches, to be their guests at a meeting at West Kent.

Chislehurst Golf Club

Captains and Past Captains of the following Clubs attended the inaugural meeting:

Eltham Warren Golf Club

Knole Park Golf Club

Langley Park Golf Club

Rochester & Cobham Park Golf Club The Royal Blackheath Golf Club Sidcup Golf Club

Sundridge Park Golf Club

West Kent Golf Club

The name of the Society was decided upon and a steering committee formed as follows:

W.H. Brown, Sidcup Golf Club

J. Burns, Knole Park

F.A.W. Byron, Royal Blackheath

W.S. Dearman, Eltham Warren

R.C. Geddes, Langley Park

F.N. Hetherington, Sundridge Park

C.A.R. Lawrence, Chislehurst

J.V. Stark, West Kent

L.K. Wood, Rochester & Cobham Park

"In 1969 the posts of Captain and President were created. The first Captain was J V Stark and the first President was C E Leng. Both gentlemen gifted respective chains of office to the Society. Thereafter, each Captain has taken on the role of President in the following year."

H. Bardgett (Langley Park) accepted the post of Hon. Secretary but due to ill health asked to be relieved of the duty and W.E. Doole (West Kent) accepted the office. After ten very successful years during which time the Society grew to some 480 members he relinquished the position and P. Allocca took his place. Five years later and upon receiving an overseas posting, he was obliged to stand down and in 1982 the Secretaryship passed into the hands of J.G. Powell (Shooters Hill) under whose guidance the Society grew to over 700 members. He retired after 12 years in this office in 1994 and in recognition of his service was appointed Honorary Vice President of the Society. He was succeeded by I. N. Dunlop (Dartford) who retired in 2001 to be succeeded by D. L. Blackman (Mid Kent), who retired in 2008, and was succeeded by M. T. Odd (Barnehurst). Mike retired in 2014 and D.J. Honnor (Wrotham Heath) was appointed. David Honnor retired at the AGM in 2022 having served 8 years (1 year lost to Covid 19 Regulations) and during his tenure the Society was finally fully to modernisation and digital use with a well-supported Website and email communication. In 2022 Peter Morris (Eltham Warren) became our new and 9th secretary.

G. Melville (West Kent) accepted the post of Hon. Treasurer but within twelve months emigrated to New Zealand. F.W.G. Beaumont acted as Hon. Treasurer until October 1969 when he moved to Yorkshire and the office was then held by W.H. Brown (Sidcup) until 1981. He was succeeded by C.J.G. Wells (Sidcup) and then in 1983 by C. Cartwright (Dartford) who continued in office until he took up residence in the U.S.A. Leslie Needham (Langley Park) was elected Treasurer in 1986 and served for 10 years to 1996 when he was succeeded by Clive Horton (Bearsted). R.A.I. Dicketts (Lamberhurst) followed in 2005 and was temporarily replaced during his captaincy/presidency in 2009/10 by S. F. Knott (Shooters Hill). In 2012 M. Stephens (Bexleyheath) became our 10th treasurer. 2023 brought the retirement of Mike Stephens as he took on the office of Vice Captain. Once again R.A.I. Dicketts was installed as Treasurer.

The Society of West Kent Golf Club Captains presented the first competition prizes to the Society. The West Kent Salvagers were played for on the day of the inaugural meeting and were won by F.N. Hetherington and J.P. Stewart of Sundridge Park. In 1986 the Past Captains of Chislehurst Golf Club presented the Society with a salver to be played for annually at the Christmas Fayre, the only meeting for which a trophy had not previously been donated by a member club. In 1998 Sidcup Golf Club Past Captains, President and Captain presented the Sidcup Trophy which meant that all the founding fathers of the Society had now presented a trophy.

It was decided at the inaugural meeting that the Society should invite all Captains and Past Captains of all Golf Clubs in the County of Kent, with their own courses, to join.

Current membership is around 510 and 43 Clubs in the County are represented.

During 1977, in order to mark the Silver Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Society joined with kindred spirits from Gloucestershire, Hampshire, London, Oxfordshire and Sussex to compete annually for a prize to be known henceforth as

“The Jubilee Trophy.” Gloucestershire withdrew in 1979 and were replaced by Bedfordshire and from 1983 Essex also competed.

The Society marked the Millennium by introducing an annual match with the Society of Lady Captains of Kent Golf Clubs playing for a quite unique trophy, namely the Driver used by Sundridge Park’s second Professional Alf Padgham when he won the 1936 Open Championship at Hoylake.

On 7th October 2012, The Society launched its first website, Managed by T A Ralph (Cranbrook G.C.)

Our 2020 season was cancelled in its entirety due to the worldwide pandemic caused by a new virus named Covid-19. The principal officers remained in office for a further year.

Starting in the early eighties Honorary Life Membership has been awarded in recognition of outstanding services to the Society. To date 33 members have been given that accolade.

The Society actively assists disadvantaged & disabled children in the County of Kent.

Last reviewed: Aug 2023, T A Ralph.