



The Society of Kent Golf Captains

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History of the Society.

Founder: J.V. Stark (West Kent G.C.)

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.

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

Chislehurst Golf Club

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 G.C.

J. Burns, Knole Park G.C.

F.A.W. Byron, Royal Blackheath G.C.

W.S. Dearman, Eltham Warren G.C.

R.C. Geddes, Langley Park G.C.

F.N. Hetherington, Sundridge Park G.C.

C.A.R. Lawrence, Chislehurst G.C.

J.V. Stark, West Kent G.C.

L.K. Wood, Rochester & Cobham Park G.C.

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 (West Kent) 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 in turn retired in 2008, and was succeeded by M. T. Odd (Barnehurst). Mike Odd retired in 2014 and was succeeded by D. J. Honnor (Wrotham Heath). G. Melville (West Kent) accepted the post of Hon. Treasurer but within twelve months he 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. Dickets (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.

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.

Membership has been over 700 and is currently (2020) around 540 with 48 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 and we compete for the Driver used by the Sundridge Park Golf Club's second Professional Alf Padgham, when he won the 1936 Open Championship at Hoylake.

The Society launched its first website on the 12th October 2012, designed and 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 32 members have been given that accolade. To view a list of those member's access the link on the members page within the final (Blue Book) section.

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

Last amended: Dec 2020, T A Ralph.