

One of the oldest clubs in the country

Founded in 1894 County Longford is one of the oldest golf clubs in the country. The land for the nine-hole layout was provided at little more than nominal cost by the then Earl of Longford, and the members used a lean-to shed as the first clubhouse.

Originally the land was Townparks, for use by the Tenants of the Longford Estate for grazing animals. This necessitated the greens, such as they were, being protected by strong wiring. The fairways were pasture land, and tees had not begun to be elevated. On each tee was provided a cannister filled with sand, which was used to tee up the ball for driving.

Having originated in Scotland, the Royal and Ancient Game was, in 1900, still very much a novelty, but like all athletic activities it was to be organised and developed to a sport of world wide popularity. And so in Longford, from the most modest of beginnings, Golf became a most important and integral part of the sporting, social and even commercial and industrial life of the town and county.

Records for the first decade of the club's existence indicate that the course was in play only very irregularly, and membership was as low as 20.

In 1915 the Club had 44 members, including Lady members. Subscriptions were £1 for a man and 5/- for a lady. The caddy fee for nine holes was three

old pence. Handicaps were 50 and even more, for both men and women.

The Balance Sheet for the 1917 season shows that the club was in credit to the extent of £6-3-4d.

Peter Igoe was Club Captain in 1924 and it was he who was officiated at the opening of the first pavilion on the 30th October, 1924. In 1923, plans for this new Pavilion has been shelved at a special general meeting that had been convened. However, the drive and enthusiasm of Peter Igoe brought the new Pavilion planned to a reality the following year.

It was in 1930 that the lay-out of the course was revised, and it remained almost exactly the same until the early 1970's.

It is interesting to note than up to 1922 Ladies were treated as full members and had full voting rights at general meetings. Only in that year were full membership rights taken from them, and they were reduced to the status of associates.

The Club records show that in the early years many meetings were taken up with discussions about machinery for cutting of fairways and greens, and purchase of ponies and horses to draw these machines. Competitions were few and far between, and prizes ordinarily did not exceed £2 in value, even for the most major of competitions.