

WHEATLEY HILLS GOLF CLUB

"For Whom The Bell Tolls"

When the Island Golf Links became the private Garden City Golf Club in 1899, the Garden City Company allowed a group of residents to continue playing on a plot of land between Cathedral and Franklin Avenues. The new group called itself the Midland Golf Club, and its members built their own nine-hole course and clubhouse.

The Midland course lasted until 1907, when the land was taken back for residential development. But the Garden City Company created yet another public course, called Salisbury Links, a few blocks to the west, with the Midland golfers forming the nucleus.

Salisbury became popular—and congested. The Midland membership contemplated starting their own club, and although the idea was voted down, a splinter group formed Wheatley Hills in 1913.

Wheatley Hills leased a 100-acre farm and engaged Devereux Emmet to design an 18-hole course, which was completed by late 1914. A farmhouse became the clubhouse, and an old ship's bell, which had been used to signal the area's farm workers to meals and quitting time, was used to salute the club champion. It now sits to the side of the practice putting green, rung to signal the start of "shotgun" tournaments.

In 1931, the Northern State Parkway was built, cut-

ting across the eastern end of club property and destroying a few holes. Emmet and Alfred Tull built nine new holes, including six on the back side. (This was not the club's first run-in with a highway. In its early years, the property was bisected by the Long Island Motor Parkway, which divided the golf course into two nearly equal halves connected by a tunnel between the ninth green and tenth tee.)

Today, Wheatley Hills is a pretty parkland course with rolling tree-lined fairways and no water hazards. Most of the greens tilt back to front; some are tightly bunkered, others unprotected.

The par-four second hole plays down to a fairway then up a sharp rise to the green. Two bunkers left and one right flank the landing area for the approach, 25 yards short of the wide-open fall-away green.

The 16th drops into a glade guarded by a pair of bunkers on the right between 75 and 125 yards from home. The table-top green is protected across the front by a large bunker, with a small pot at the right entrance, a third bunker on the right side, and another pair in the bank behind the sloping putting surface.

The 1975 Met Amateur, played at Wheatley Hills, was won by Bill Britton. Now a touring professional, at that time Britton was a 19-year-old publinxer. Among the club champions is PGA Tour player George Burns.

The Club's history is closely tied to that of two men. Willie Klein was the golf professional from 1925-1957 and winner of three Long Island Opens, including the first two (1922-1923). Member Gene Francis was seven-time Long Island Amateur champion.

The Club's bell serenaded both on many occasions. ○



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East Williston, NY
YEAR FOUNDED: 1913

ARCHITECTS:
Devereux Emmet
Alfred Tull

COURSE OPENED: 1914

TEES	PAR	YARDAGE
Forward	74	5379
Middle	72	6366
Back	72	6822

TEES	COURSE RATING	SLOPE
Forward	71.6	125
Middle	71.1	129
Back	73.2	133



The dramatic 2nd hole