

Town of Greenburgh  
**ASSISTANT  
TOWN HISTORIANS**



———— felicia barber + riley wentzler ————

*“6,532 yards / 19 holes / 6,532 yards / 19 holes / how do you measure a golf course?”: Historic Knollwood Country Club*

*By: Riley Wentzler & Felicia Barber*



## *Knollwood Country Club*

Golf has often been described as a gentlemen's game and there are many golf courses in Greenburgh which will put a smile on many a gentleman's face including one which is 6,532 yards long (<https://www.kccclub.org/golf>). At this point, the obvious question a reader is probably asking is, "Ok, it's big, but why is it historic?" The answer to that question is two-fold. Its age and its membership.

Greenburgh has the oldest privately owned golf course in the same location in the U.S. (<https://www.kccclub.org/>) and it is located at 200 Knollwood Rd Ext, Elmsford, NY 10523. This is Knollwood Country Club (<https://www.kccclub.org/golf>). This 19-hole golf course (Personal Communication from Maria at Knollwood Country Club) was created in 1894 by Lawrence Van Etten (<https://www.kccclub.org/>). It was scheduled to be redesigned by A.W. Tillinghast in 1925. He was replaced by Seth Raynor. Unfortunately, Mr. Raynor passed away before the course's redesign was completed. Then his student, Charles Banks, took over and completed the first 18 holes in 1927 (<https://www.kccclub.org/golf>). The 19<sup>th</sup> hole was added a year later (Westchester

Magazine, September, 2019, p.22). At that time, the entire course was 5,300 yards long (<https://www.kccclub.org/>).

In 2016, Knollwood Country Club completed a restoration project extending the 10th tee and redesigning the 12th green and 13th tee complex which brought the course to its current yardage (<https://www.kccclub.org/golf>). Today it is 6,532 yards long (<https://www.kccclub.org/golf>) In addition to its age, Knollwood Country Club is historic because it has had two very famous members, Bobby Jones and Francis Ouimet (<https://www.kccclub.org/about-us/history>).



### **Bobby Jones (1902-1971):**

Robert Tyre Jones was born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1902. He studied law at Harvard University, however he is famous for his success in golf. He is famous because, in 1926, he was the first player to win both the U.S. National Open Championship and the British National Open Championship in the same year.

In addition to 1926, he won the U.S. National Open Championship again in 1929 and 1930. When he won again in 1930, he set another record by becoming the first person to win the U.S. National Amateur Championship and the U.S. National Open Championship in the same year. He also won the U.S. National Amateur Championship in: 1924, 1925, 1927, and 1928 (MICROSOFT ENCARTA, 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation). Apparently, it was also in 1928, that the 19<sup>th</sup> Hole was added to Knollwood Country Club, at his suggestion (Westchester Magazine, September, 2019, p.22). In 1934 he founded the Masters tournament. He died in 1971.

### **Francis Ouimet (1893-1967):**

Francis Ouimet was born on May 8th, 1893. His beginnings could not be more different from those of Bobby Jones, while Jones grew up in a wealthy family in Atlanta, Francis Ouimet grew up in a working-class family in Brookline, Massachusetts. His family home was directly across the street from the Brookline Country Club. He worked as a caddie at the club starting at age eleven. His older brother, Wilfred, was also a caddie. The two of them made a three-hole course in the back yard using tomato cans for holes. Not having much money, the two of them shared one golf club. Wilfred had borrowed their shared club from the country club across the street.

After many years of practice, Francis began competing in various amateur golf tournaments. In 1913, he won the Massachusetts State Amateur Tournament and so he decided to enter the U.S. National Open Championship. Once there, he shocked the world by beating four-time winner of the British Open, Harry Vardon, and reigning British Open champion Ted Ray, and thus winning the U.S. National Open Championship, at only twenty years of age (<http://www.worldgolfhalloffame.org/francis-ouimet/>)!! He later won the Massachusetts State Amateur Tournament again in: 1914, 1915, 1919, 1922, and 1925. In addition to these wins, he also won the U.S. National Amateur Championship in 1914 and 1931 (<http://www.worldgolfhalloffame.org/francis-ouimet/?tab=achievements>).

In conclusion there are many golf courses in Greenburgh. However not all of these are historic. What gives Knollwood Country Club its historic distinction is both its status as the oldest privately owned golf course in the same location in the U.S and the fame of some of its past members.



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<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5658/BROTHERLY-LOVE-RELIEF-AND-TRUTH--in-Greenburgh>
2. Greenburgh and The Arts (9/22/18)  
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5665/Greenburgh-AND-The--ARTS>
3. A Final Resting Place for "Man's Best Friend": The Peaceable Kingdom (9/29/18)  
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7. "The Disappearing Railroad Blues" in Greenburgh: The Fate of the Putnam Railroad Line and the old Putnam Trail (11/6/18)  
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**[Thousand-Words-Which-You-Never-Knew-The-Forgotten-Story-of-The-Seal-of-Greenburgh](#)**

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22. There is no church here, but “the brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated” this ground: The Story of The Little White Church Cemetery (4/27/19)  
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23. Irvington in Chains and our Process A History of Slavery in Irvington and A look at how Slices of History are made (and our interview with historian Robert Marchant) (5/11/2019)



<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5671/Irving-ton-in-Chains>

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30. A Tale of Two Towns: Greenburgh, NY, and Muncy, PA (8/23/ 2019)  
<https://www.greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5655/A-Tale-of-Two-Towns--Greenburgh-NY-and-Muncy-PA>

## About the Authors:

We are both Assistant Town Historians at Greenburgh Town Hall and we are engaged to be married and are currently looking for permanent employment.

### **Riley Wentzler:**

I was born and raised in a small rural town in central Pennsylvania. In high school, I took every honors course available including four years of Spanish. I received A's in all of them. I graduated third in my class of 146 students. This brought me to Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. Once there, I continued my trend of academic excellence. I graduated summa cum laude in Political Science with a minor in Spanish and a Master's in Communication Studies, with a G.P.A of 3.94. It was also there that I met my lovely fiancée, Felicia Barber. My Master's in Communication has promoted public speaking, teamwork, and customer service. My Political Science degree has developed my research skills using computer-based tools and provided me with experience using the Microsoft Office products. My minor in Spanish has facilitated my bilingual capabilities. During my internship at Greenburgh, I created the petition for the State Roads project using website tools. My diverse education and areas of interest have provided me with a wide range of skills. I look forward to finding a career opportunity in business or government. **To suggest a topic for next week's article, you can contact me at [assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com](mailto:assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com), or to help me find employment, you can contact me at [rjwentzler413@gmail.com](mailto:rjwentzler413@gmail.com)**

### **Felicia Barber:**

I was born in New York City and raised in Hartsdale, New York. I graduated from Ardsley High School. I recently earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. It was here that I met my fiancé, Riley Wentzler. As a result of my academic excellence, I won a scholarship every year. I learned and applied many graphic design skills to projects during my summer internships and at school. I am proficient in using Adobe graphic design applications including Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign. For my Identity/branding course at Edinboro, I created logos to appear on the tee-shirts of Physical Education majors. For a veteran's upcoming event, I used a typeface to focus the reader to the soldier in the poster. For the State Roads Legislative Campaign project, I created the embedded graphic-photo that accompanied the petition I am looking for a job to utilize my skills as a Graphic Designer in an agency, print shop, company or government **To suggest a topic for next week's article, you can contact me at [assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com](mailto:assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com). To learn more about my artwork or to help me find employment you can contact me at [feliciadbarber@gmail.com](mailto:feliciadbarber@gmail.com).**

## **Two Interviews with the authors:**

<https://riverjournalonline.com/around-town/a-love-of-history-and-each-other/13708/>

<https://wchs880.radio.com/articles/news/stories-main-street-couple-cerebral-palsy-brings-manytalents-town-greenburgh>

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