

## History

The club originated in the early 1920's when an ardent group of golfers from the Columbus Beach Club on Burt Lake decided to build a golf course. Land deeded from the F.E. Martin plat was combined with land owned by the association members and the Burt Lake Golf Club was formed. Construction began in 1922 and play began the following year.

The original course was short and narrow and the layout was different than we know today. The original club house stood close to number 2 tee with the only road to Oak Hill Cemetery running by it before turning left through the middle of the course toward the cemetery. The northern boundary was just north of number 4 green. Additional land was deeded in 1931 by William E. Weiss, the Club's first president and one of the original founders, and holes 3 and 4 were modified and lengthened. Later, more land was procured and holes 5 and 6 on the "original nine" were added. (These holes are now numbers 16 and 8 respectively.)

During the Depression and World War II era, the club fell on hard times, members were few and money was short. Still the Club survived, supported by dedicated and hard-working members notably Austin McElroy and William E. Weiss, Sr. After Weiss was tragically killed in Harbor Springs in 1942 as the result of an auto accident, McElroy sheperded the Club through some lean years.

After World War II, William E. Weiss, Jr. became active in the club. He served on the board for forty years as Trustee and as President from 1957 through 1974. During this time the club gradually grew in membership from 17 certificate members in the early 50's to over 120 in 1974. Many devoted people served the club during this time. In addition to Weiss, Harold French and George Wilsher, Club Managers; George Kaufman, Secretary; Austin McElroy, Rollie Dagwell and other Trustees contributed time, effort and money to the club. The club name was changed from the Burt Lake to Indian River Golf Club and incorporated in Ohio. Finally in 1982, Indian River was incorporated in Michigan.

Membership growth in the seventies, plus additional public play, created overcrowding on the little nine-hole course. The trustees longed for expansion to eighteen holes, but uncharacteristically, decided in 1976 the cost was too great to be managed. President Rollie Dagwell organized a golf course committee composed of 15-20 members to plan the expansion. Finally in 1983, a divided membership narrowly approved the expansion plan. The keystone was a gift of 66 acres of land donated by Herbert Link. The layout would provide Link's Development with golf course lots and create a great venue for dramatic golf holes. In addition to nine additional holes, the final plan called for major revisions to four existing holes, changing the existing layout dramatically.

Dominic Zullo became President in August of 1984 and led the club through the difficult expansion period. He served until August of 1991, becoming the second longest term President after William E. Weiss. Many people worked hard and long to complete the expansion. A few dedicated people contributed significant amounts of money to help complete the project. Without this support, the expansion would have been in danger of failing.

Despite the prospect of soon having a championship eighteen hole course, many members resigned in 1984 and 1985, leaving the club in dire financial straits. However, the club again survived. The new course gained popularity, additional members joined and green fee income increased. The club turned the corner in 1986. The hard work of many people had come to fruition. Indian River Golf Club members have one of the finest facilities to be found anywhere. The future looks bright and with continued solid leadership and member support, further improvements in our Club Facilities will become a reality. In 2011 a small group of members raised over \$95,000 from the membership for course improvements. The pond was added to hole 4, and the 17<sup>th</sup> green was moved and improved.