



# NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 1951

**"Being a husband is just like any other job;  
it's much easier if you like your boss".**

**Leo J. Burke.**

## A STRANGER IN OUR MIDST

Percival Updike Frostbottom attended the National Turf Conference at Chicago, January 29 — February 2, 1951. How he managed it is a mystery because nobody seemed to know who he was, where he was from, or how he got into all the meetings. Here comes Percy now. Let him tell it in his own words. "Well, you see I am a convention fan and a second one eyed Connolly you might say. I have attended a good many different types of pow wows all over this country. One day I was looking over the magazines in the Boston South Station when I over heard several guys talking about a Turf Convention in Chicago. Well now I am an old turf man myself, in fact, I was a pretty good jockey in my day. So I thought here's a convention I've never attended. The next thing I knew I was on the train headed for Chicago. In the smoker I ran into these same convention guys. Of course they didn't know who I was and I didn't tell 'em. But it didn't take me long to find out that these birds called themselves Greenkeepers. Now I have heard of gatekeepers, jailkeepers and beekeepers but I never heard of greenkeepers before. Imagine it, these guys were golf course grass doctors and what I know about a golf course you can put in the vest pocket of a humming bird. Was I taking a ride. But there was something about their sincerity and enthusiasm for their work that intrigued me. I says, what can I lose? Maybe I can learn something about this new language they were talking. Usually I could understand them but sometimes their talk seemed to be in code. 2 4 D, P. M. A. S., Tat-Select, Zoysia, Ph 5, C I, C 19. This was more than Greek to me. This was a language I'd never heard the likes of. So I thought I would take the buggy ride with them.

Our train engineer didn't seem to be in any hurry and his dilly-dallying finally became the topic of conversation with the passengers. Somebody said he had a dame in the cab with him and was parking where ever he felt like it. At that, time went pretty fast. These grass doctors though, had itchy feet and no sleep in them. From day coach, to smoker, to club car, to smoker, to day coach. Those good old day coaches with reclining seats where you are supposed to sleep. You fold your legs in a granny knot, get your body into a 45 degree angle and then try to figure what to do with your head. Well, we got there finally and what a frosty reception. Five below zero and going down. Old Jack Frost was sure feeling his oats. We didn't see him above ten at any time. One of the first characters I met in the Hotel Sherman was wisecracker Herb Graffis. When he came in one morning somebody asked him how cold it was, and he said, "Up to zero this morning. We're having a slight heat wave." What a guy.

When we got to the lobby I noticed somebody beckoning from the mezzanine and pointing to a sign that said N.G.S.A. More code stuff. That I learned stood for National Greenkeeping Super-

intendents Association. This was the place where they relieved you of your dough. The price was \$5.00 if you were a member of the organization or \$10.00 if you were'nt. Just about the cheapest registration I ever heard of at a convention. But of course, the cost never bothers me because I don't pay "nothin anyhow".

The first scheduled event was a reunion hour in the Bal-Tabarin Room. A swell joint with all kinds of tricky and varied indirect lighting effects. The drinks were on the house and that suited me. I'm not much of a drinking man but I always go in for the free stuff, so I tried them all. From that time on the special lighting system didn't seem to be working right, and I couldn't see the speakers platform. But I understand that National President Ray Gerber presented 25 year pins to the charter members, this being the 25th anniversary. They were beautiful pins and quite an honor to possess one.

The next morning the commercial exhibits were open for inspection. Then I really had my eyes opened. What these grass doctors have to know about would fill one of those Encyclopedia Americana's on display. I've seen machinery exhibits before and that's as far as it went. Machinery. These birds not only know about equipment of all types from soup to nuts but 101 things besides. Chemicals for diseases chemicals for insects, chemicals for weeds, chemicals for the soil, chemicals for the water, watering equipment, trees, flowers and on and on. Man, there's no end to the subjects. What do the people do on these golf courses that requires all this preparation, care and treatment? Do they know about all these things that are being done? And what do they know about the man who gets them done? It all seems to add up to a lot of dough and I gather that most of it has been spent for somebodies pleasure but they kind of forgot about paying the man who is in charge of all these goings on.

At least that's what I gathered from the first two speakers on the educational program, and they are outside observers. They get around too. Chick Evans, a former national amateur golf champ and Herb Graffis, editor of Golfdom. Chick said in closing, "That the greenkeeper is the heart of the whole game of golf and the press should pay more attention to these fellows and give them a better break". Herb Graffis, the wit, said "An excellent job has been done on improving greens and fairways but a poor job on the humans who are responsible for this improvement." O. J. Soer and Fred Grau, both experts and national travelers were big drawing cards because they have the latest facts and a way of presenting them clearly. There were many other speakers, golf course superintendents, agronomy experts and others, all with interesting subjects, but somebodies going to cut me off soon if I don't move along.

This whole thing looks like big business to me — deep stuff — technical stuff. That's why I am



deeply impressed with the men back of it all. Their quiet confidence, their genuineness, their modesty. Yes, their modesty. Maybe that's it. They are too modest. That may be keeping them in the shadows.

Just think of it. These fellows came from all over the country, Canada, and Honolulu to better themselves, to see and hear the latest about equipment and methods. I caught some of their names. There was Longtalk Mayo, and Bigboy O'Sullivan all the way from Honolulu. Longhorn Bowman from Texas, Prettyboy Johnson (The new National President) and Allswell Beresford — California, Noisy Boyd — Montana, Youguess Mendalhall — Kansas, Shakemup Dunlop and Good-looking Smith — Ohio, Talkumup Shields — Georgia, Baldy Weiss — Pennsylvania, One Price — Oklahoma, Honest Face Feser Minnesota etc. These are only a few of the 600. And then there was the Boston bunch who gave me the buggy ride. Whereishe Fuller, Fadeout Malone, Allswell Mosher, Freezup Darling, Seegar Anderson Oswald Farrant, Flyout Mitchell, and Hop a Long Cassidy.

With all these men coming from far and wide to your annual turf conference it looks to me as though your educational program is the most important feature of the whole thing. No stone should be left unturned to come up with something better and different every year. Why don't you place more responsibility on your affiliated associations for program ideas. Why not request every golf course superintendents association in the country to appoint a committee of three for the purpose of offering at least one good idea for your educational program. Then at your next annual meeting give an award of merit to the association with the best idea. Act on this now while the convention is fresh in everyones minds.

The wind-up of the conference, the final business meeting and election of officers gave me a tough time getting in but I finally found an unguarded entrance. Your action on changing your name to Golf Course Superintendents Association of America went through like greased lightning didn't it? I can see the need of making a change because Greenkeeper doesn't mean a thing to the general public. Certainly, with the diversified knowledge, experience and ability you fellows must have you are deserving of a title that everybody understands.

So you have to increase you dues? This may displeas some of the boys back home who didn't hear the reasons but the increased cost of everything will put you out of business if you stay in the red. It was a wise move to lay on the table that insurance problem until more complete information and data is available.

From my back seat I could see that you elected a good set of officers. William Johnson, president, Malcolm McLaren, vice president, and for directors, Frank Dinelli, John Abbott, and John Price. By the way, to aid all officers, I recom-

mend that you add to your library a book on Parliamentary Law so that proper procedure may be followed at all times. Well, I guess that is about all. It was a swell time and a nice bunch of fellows to be with. Maybe I will be seeing you at Columbus next year. Now to beat my way back to Boston."

Signed —PERCY

So long Percy old boy. Now back to the February 5, meeting of the Greenkeepers Club of New England held at the Hotel Bradford.

Preceding the business Meeting those present who attended the National Turf Conference at Chicago were asked to give their version of the trip. Comments were made by President Mosher, Clapper, Bill Mitchell, Cassidy, Farrant, and Darling.

At the business meeting an application for associate membership in the club was read from Percy L. Clark Jr., Meadow Brook Golf Club, Reading, Mass.

Proposed changes in the by-laws again received a lions share of attention in discussion, debate, heming and hawing. A final vote was taken on the following:

Change Article III paragraph f to read (Any member who has ceased to be employed in the work of Greenkeeping may be dropped as a member). Favorably voted.

Change Article VII paragraph b to read (a nominating committee of five) instead of (a nominating committee of three). Favorably voted.

Article I change the name of the club to "New England Greenkeeping Superintendents Association". This was voted down 17 to 7.

The following changes were proposed for action at the March meeting:

Article I change the name of the club to "New England Golf Course Superintendents Association."

Article IV paragraph b eliminate the words (who shall appoint three (3) members of the Board of the Directors to investigate the applicant).

Article VII paragraph (a) change first sentence to read, (The officers and trustees shall be regular members of the club in good standing and shall be elected to their various offices by vote of the club.)

Article VIII paragraph (a) change the last sentence to read, (It shall be his duty to pay all bills, only when accompanied by proper voucher).

Article IX paragraph (c) eliminate the word (special) and make a new paragraph (d) of the last sentence.

Article X add the words (at all meetings).

The question of changing the name of our club again resulted in an exchange of fire from both camps but was confined too much to sentry fire and not enough from the main body on an important engagement of this nature. Every individual should be requested to express his opinion for the benefit of the whole assembly. If you are bashful about speaking your mind take along some super charged pills to the next meeting. Force yourself to say what you think. Everytime you say anything at a meeting you will find it coming easier the next time. It is to your advantage as a Greenkeeper to become accustomed to expressing yourself in public. And there is no better place to start than among your associates and friends.

The proposal to change our name to "New England Golf Course Superintendents Association" was a close vote. Too close perhaps for such a momentous change. The editor believes that any change in the name should be practically unanimous regardless of what name is adopted. Otherwise we should stay with our original name with perhaps some minor change.

## AMHERST TURF CONFERENCE MAR. 8 & 9

Yes, its going to be entirely different from start to finish. A new approach to pertinent subjects. A fresh, wholesome atmosphere surrounding the entire program. You will enjoy it. You shouldn't miss it.

Likewise our next meeting, MONDAY, MAR. 5, AT THE WALTHAM FIELD STATION with a light lunch at 12:30.

This is going to be a QUESTION BOX SESSION. Something which has been talked about since it was suggested by Jack Counsell at the October meeting. Here is an opportunity for every member to bring his main problem before the meeting for general discussion. Put it in writing, by all means bring it in person. This is your chance to obtain a valuable service for yourself and your club. Also, an occasion for you to give something in return to your associates by stating your experience.

We will be seeing you at Waltham and at Amherst.

H. DARLING, Editor.