Bill Lewis

Bill Lewis was born in 1921, lived in the Price Hill area, and attended Carson Elementary and Western Hills High School.

His career started when his father, William M. Lewis, purchased in 1922 a 45-acre farm on Muddy Creek Road for $8100.00. A letter carrier for the post office, he thought this would be a nice place for Bill, his brother and 4 sisters to grow up. Not being a golfer or really knowing anything about golf, William nonetheless had a hunch in 1930 that a public golf course on his 45 acres would be a success (despite the Depression).

So in 1930, William cleared the land and both designed and constructed Woodland Golf Course, which opened in 1931. It’s first pro was “Aunt Kate” Brophy, wife of Ed Brophy (the pro at Western Hills Country Club). Fees were $1.00 for 18 holes, $1.25 on weekends. Here is where Bill Lewis began his golf career; he became a maintenance worker at age 10.

Bill learned all the ins and outs of golf course maintenance as well as learning how to play the game of golf. Bill because quite a golfer, playing on the Western Hills High School golf team in the late 30’s. He held the course record of 55 on the par 68 layout at Western Hills Country Club (5110 yards).

Bill’s career took a sudden turn when in 1943 he was drafted into the Army. Involved in D-Day, he served in France until wounded, losing a finger (which was replaced by a French surgeon with a toe!) and eventually sent back home.

After his service ended, Bill returned to Wooodland Golf Course where he served both as the Superintendent and pro, sharing duties with this brother Elmer.

Bill joined the GCSAA in 1960. He served as Secretary, Vice President, and was President for two year, 1969 and 1970. He was truly a huge part of a fast-growing, changing organization, along with men like Marion Mendenhall, Don Likes, Jim Glaser, and Pete Cahill, to name a few. He helped lead the organization and profession into a new modern age. He was also an active member of OTF.

In 1973 Woodland Golf Course was sold to the City of Cincinnati, and Bill retired from his duties as a Golf Course Superintendent to start his second career, that of a turf equipment salesman with Moon Equipment. Moon was the Cushman and Jacobsen dealer for our area, becoming Ohio Turf Equipment in 1981. Bill worked in sales until 1986 when he retired.

Bill always felt the greatest part of his job was all the friendships and bonds he formed with all the superintendents. When asked in an Enquirer article what it takes to be a Golf Course Superintendent, his reply was: “A Superintendent should major in agriculture, plant science, chemical science, meteorology, physiology, accounting, public relations, family relations, mechanical science, electrical and mechanical engineering, and juvenile delinquency, and above all he should be on

better than average speaking terms with the good Lord.”

Bill met his wife Ruth in high school at Western Hills. There were married in 1948 after Bill was done with his service in the Army. Bill and Ruth had two sons, William and Dave, and two daughters Diana and Marydale.

Bill was inducted into the GCGCSA Hall of Fame in 2022.