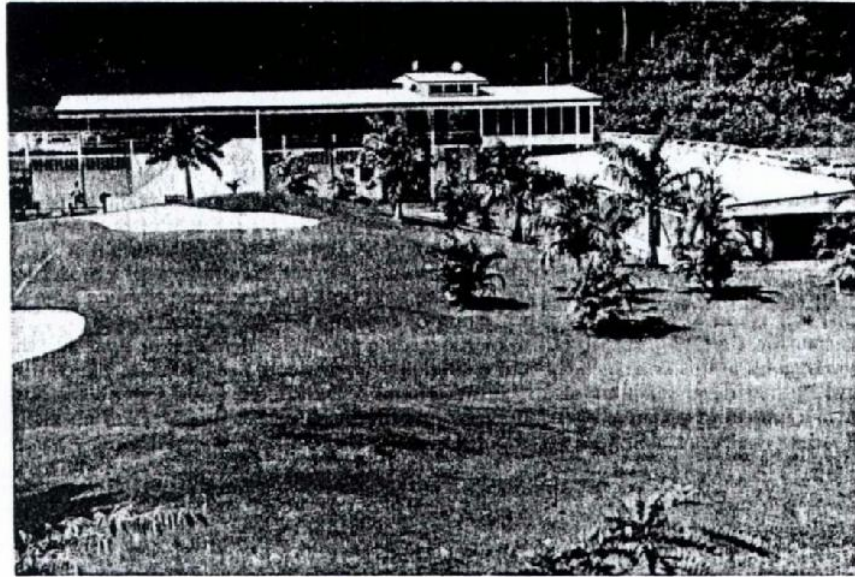


THE HISTORY OF  
ST. ANDREWS  
"FROM THE SAVANNAH  
TO MOKA"



ST. ANDREWS - MOKA

Thanks are due to Mr. Robert Sellier and Roy Rudder for much of the information supplied above. Bobby Sellier joined St. Andrews in the year 1919 - 57 years ago! It is indeed wonderful to see him still playing the Moka Course from time to time. His only complaint about the new course is that every hole he plays he finds the wind is against him. This of course is attributed to vagaries of the elements and has nothing whatever to do with advancing age. He is the only person who has played golf on all four St. Andrews courses - Savannah, St. James, Maraval and Moka.

#### HISTORY

Our golf Club may not be the oldest in the world - but it must surely be amongst the "Elders". Unfortunately, official written records only take us back to 1910, but it is authoritatively held that golf was played, and St. Andrew's Golf Club, Trinidad, existed before the turn of the century, somewhere in the late 1890. Without doubt, Scotland, and probably England, can boast of longer established Golf Clubs, but one wonders which other countries in the world can do so.

Records show that one of the leading lights in getting golf started in Trinidad, was a Mr. E.C. Wilson, who was from a wealthy Scottish family. He was the first recorded President of the Club - in 1910. Indeed there appears to have been a strong Scottish influence amongst founder members of the Club, and this, no doubt, had some influence on the choice of name - after "The Home of Golf" in Scotland, and today, the headquarters of the Royal & Ancient.

The first known Club House and 9 hole course was on the present Queen's Park Savannah. The Club house was the old "Stewards Box" and was probably on the same site as the present members stand. The upstairs was used as the Club House and Bar etc., and downstairs was used to house clubs etc. The caddy master at this time was one Drake, who was a real "Boss" and was a very strict disciplinarian. The first tee was on the North side of the present race track in front of the club house, and was, it appears, something of a double dogleg. The 1st green was to the North of the existing Cemetery, and the shortest way to the green with the second shot, was over the Cemetery. Records, in the form of Committee Minutes still in existence, show that after a while the cemetery was deemed to be out of bounds, since too many balls were falling short and causing damage to the head-stones. The second hole took one West and the green was opposite Q.R.C. The third went North up the line of Queen's Park West, and any good strong hook was liable to meet any vehicle or passer-by heading South full on. An even stronger hook would finish up in Whitehall or the Archbishop's parlour. The 4th and 5th winkled through "The Hollow" whilst the sixth green was just about opposite Governor General's residence. The 7th, 8th and 9th came South, with the final green by the Club House. An interesting course by any standards - if a bit flat.

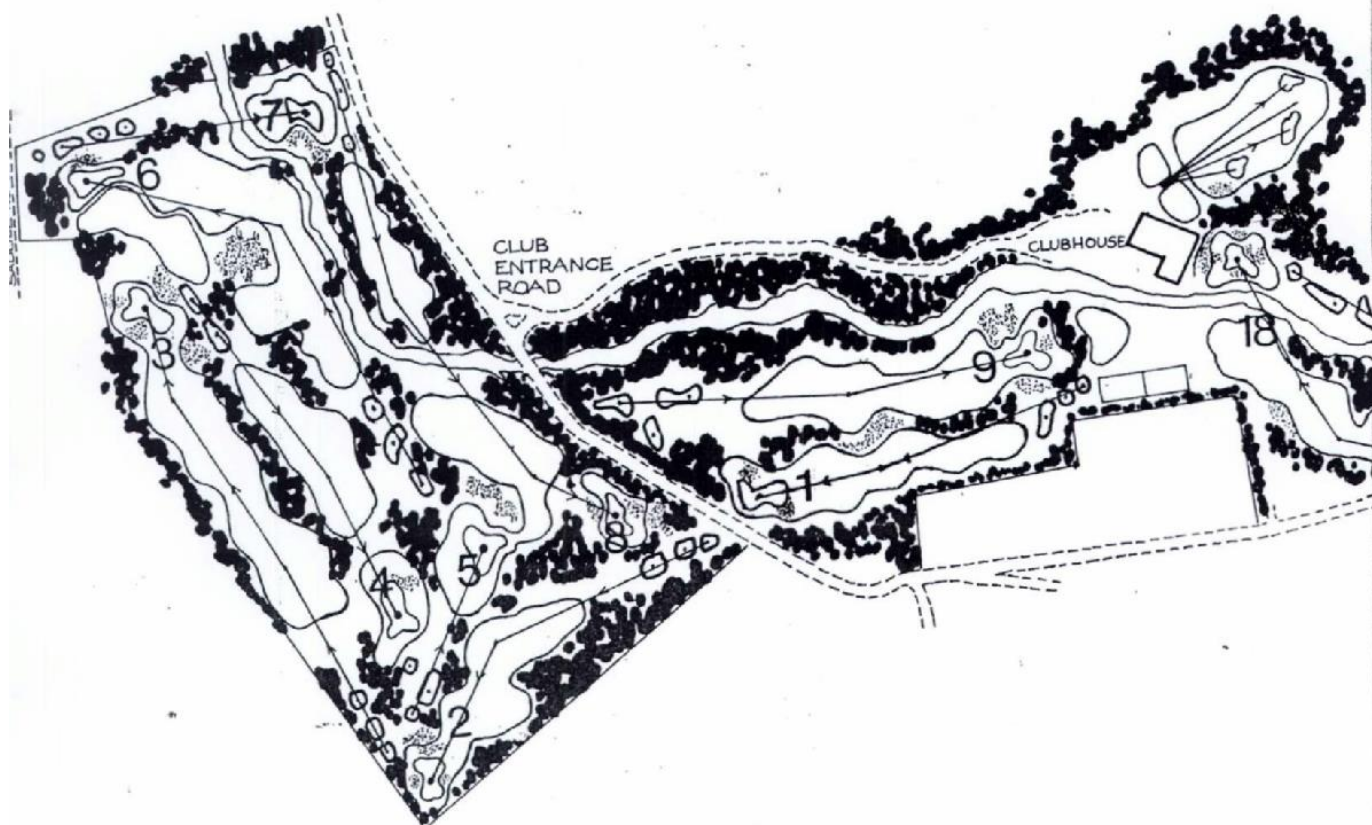
The annual rental for these facilities - including the Stewards Box, was \$100.00TT - the only condition being that the Club House had to be made available for race-goars during race meetings. There must, therefore, have been a very interesting "evacuation" every time a race meeting came up, and afterwards - a "re-possession". The main article for course maintenance at that time was a horse-drawn mower - the house having to be specially shod in order to minimise damage to the ground.

Around 1920/1921 it became clear that with the increasing number of football and cricket pitches being set up, it would shortly not be a proposition to play golf on the Savannah without loss of life, and an alternative site was sought. A possible area in the region of Diego Martin was considered, but eventually turned down because the Committee felt it was too far away, and

also because the tramcar routes across the area were deemed to be unfair hazards. Eventually, a site was obtained near the present St. James Barracks, A Club House was built just North of Serpentine Road. The 9 hole course laid out, worked its way over what is now the St. Mary's College Sports Ground. One of the holes ran parallel to the Serpentine Road whilst the second green was approximately where the College swimming pool now is. Rental for this area of 9 holes was 1/-(24£) per year. The most expensive golf balls were 60£ each, but good ones were also available at 24£. Golf started at St. James around 1923, but around 1932, Government indicated that they required the land and a further search started for an alternative site for a course. Perhaps one of the more notable landmarks in Trinidad Golf in general, and St. Andrew's Golf Club in particular during the St. James era, is that during the time there, a lad by the name of Fitzroy Rudder started working as a caddy.

No doubt after much fund raising activity, 96 acres of land was bought in Maraval from the de Boissiere family for the princely sum of \$16,000.00. Much of this was recovered very rapidly by the sale of building sites to the North West. Setting out nine hole courses on flat land such as the Savannah and St. James was one thing, but it was decided that a proposed eighteen holes over 96 acres was a different kettle of fish, and should warrant the guidance of a professional golf architect. Some drawings were made showing a few contours of the area and the next time Mr. George de Nobriga, who was then an active member, went to the U.K. he was asked to look into the possibility of engaging a golf architect. Funds, however, were limited. He was recommended to a certain Mr. Colt, who turned out to be the leading man in his field at that time, and therefore rather expensive Mr. Colt however, looked upon this as a challenge and said he had never before been asked to design a golf course 5,000 miles away on a piece of land he had never seen, and probably never would. He offered to do the job for nothing, but was eventually persuaded to accept 50 guineas as a token. He produced a fine plasticine model to scale, and on his return to Trinidad, Mr. de Nobriga and many other dedicated members set about following Mr. Colt's design to produce the eighteen hole course at Maraval, which

### THE NEW COURSE AT MOKA



eventually gave so much pleasure to golfers for nearly 40 years. The original construction, needless to say, was supervised throughout by the indispensable Roy Rudder, who by this time had been the Club Professional for many years.

The first nine holes South of Golf Course Road, were in play by 1935, and about a year later, the area to the North of the road was incorporated to make up the full 18 holes. A wonderfully compact course in a limited area which was indeed a tribute to the architect, who, incidentally, as far as is known, never did get to see the course! The "Old" Club House as present day golfers now call it, with its panoramic view over almost the entire course, was constructed for \$8,000.

However, one has to move with the times, and a few years ago it was decided that it was indeed time to find a new location for St. Andrew's. Interest in golf was increasing at a tremendous rate and the course and the club house facilities were becoming quite inadequate for the rapidly increasing membership. After much negotiation, a very suitable area was found at Moka in Northern Maraval, and plans were started for the next big move.

Now St. Andrew's Golf Club is at Moka - and how wonderful it is. A full Championship Course, designed by world renowned firm of Golf Course architects, Harris, Thompson, Wolveridge, Freem and Storm in a superb setting with a Clubhouse offering every facility to members and friends. Roy Rudder is still with us, and long may he remain so. He has now served the Club for over 50 years - for about 45 years of which he has been our Professional.

Indeed, St. Andrew's Golf Club has come a long way since the 1890's. Those of us who are fortunate enough to be members have every reason to be proud of our club, also to be grateful to those pioneers who started it over 75 years ago - to those dedicated people who through the intervening years have kept it going - and to those members of the present day who continue to give of their time and energy to ensure that the club continues in its wonderful tradition of years gone by.

### MAP AND SCORE CARD

