



# **Veterinary Laboratory Sports Club**



**60TH  
ANNIVERSARY**



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Membership Treasurer	Dr. I.S. Batey
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House Member	Dr. S.D. Byagagaire
Tennis Captain	Mr. K. Nguli
Greenkeeper	Mr. Amar S. Marwa
Indoor Captain	Mr. R. Runyenge

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## 60th Anniversary Celebrations Committee

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Mr. T. Njonjo  
Kuldeep Bhakoo  
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*Mr. Buggess Jr collection*

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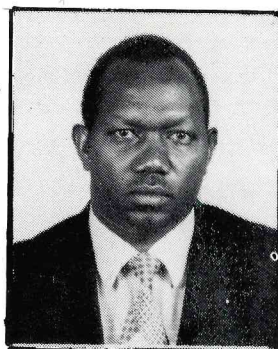
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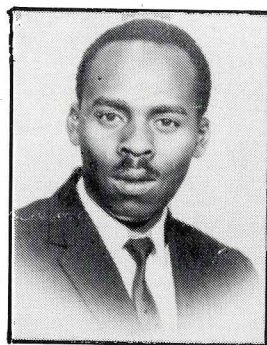
### CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The Sixtieth Anniversary of the Veterinary Laboratory Sports Club means that we are about to witness the 60th August since the club came into being in 1923. Formed to comfort the few colonial officers that worked around Kabete at that time two generations ago the Vet Lab Sports Club has blossomed over the years into one of the most cherished multiracial sporting and social organisation in Nairobi. Originally frequented only by Vets and their spouses the club membership represents almost every profession in Kenya.

We are not a big club either by way of numbers or even pennies. We have, however, a big "heart" and our harambee spirit has been the envy of many a club. It feels good to belong to a society that speaks with one voice when it comes to club matters.

Congratulations, dear members, and keep it up.

W. K. NGULO  
SEPTEMBER, 1983.



Mid year 1983 sees the publication of a very special Magazine which will go down in the history of Veterinary Laboratory Sports Club. The club is 60 years old and the commemorable Magazine is intended to portray the past and future developments from once a predominantly white community to a multinational atmosphere that exists between people of various ethnic groups living and enjoying the sporting facilities offered by our beloved Country Kenya.

I am most grateful to the Club Chairman, KGU Chairman the 1950, members to mention a few P.M, Wilson, Hazel Close, Philliper and Fred Kerr, Winifred Disney past and present Captains of the various gaming sections for their contributions in making this Magazine possible.

T. NJONJO  
CONVENOR—60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE.





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## DOWN MEMORY LANE— PETER MURRAY WILSON

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The Veterinary Laboratory Golf Course lies 9 miles North West of Nairobi, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile from the end of the Loresho Ridge Road, where the entrance to the course is to be found.

In the past the only all weather route from Nairobi was by Sclater's Road, now Waiyaki Way. The Loresho Ridge Road was not metalled until 1958, and then only as far as the Loresho Hotel, the rest being very rough murrum through coffee and quite impossible when wet.

From the Lower Kabete Road end the metal ceased at the Artificial Insemination Centre, and from there on Quarry Road up to the top of Loresho Ridge in wet weather was impassable, and always meant a round trip via Westlands to reach the course.

Quarry Road, now Kapenguria Road, was tarmaced lightly in 1962 when, as a County Councillor, I prevailed upon John Berry and Nigel Sinclair to support me, and this road, a very important link, was finally made up.

I remember a match against Karen in 1960 when a sudden shower left me at the bottom of Quarry Road looking up towards the golf course with no hope of reaching it. I eventually got there, very late, via Westlands. As it so happened Frank Thompson coming the other way missed the Loresho turn off at the top of the hill just as the rain fell, slid all the way down the hill, and followed me round through Westlands.

We had a very pleasant game behind the Club matches.

The course itself, with an attractive modern little Club House, officially opened on the 22nd July, 1977, extends to about 55 acres and lies in and on two sides of a valley. The altitude at the car park is about 6,150 feet with the highest point of the course at 6,300' on the 5th green.

It was intended, once upon a time, to extend the course to 18 holes by continuing West along the valley with the 18th green finishing across the road from the Old Club House. This really was a pipe dream, but it was one of the reasons for putting the Old Clubhouse where it is.

Now how did all this come about? This is when, and how, it all began. In 1910 a Veterinary Laboratory was set up at Kabete. In 1915 a Plant Research Station was also set up there. This Station in later years was moved to Muguga. A further two developments took place in 1924, the foundation of the Trade School at Upper Kabete, and the Teachers Training School, called Jean's School, now the K.I.A., at Lower Kabete.

This, then, was probably the beginnings of development at Upper and Lower Kabete.

In 1923 Eric Tilley, with two others, persuaded the powers that were at the Veterinary Laboratory to permit the making of golf course. This was granted, and 3 holes came into being that year, the 10th, 8th and old 9th, with a little thatched mushroom for a Banda. By 1924 nine holes had been laid out and the first match was played that year against Ruiru.

Eric Tilley lived at Fort Smith and was Captain of the Club in 1945. In the same year he was instrumental in getting the Old Clubhouse built entirely on a voluntary basis. Eric left Kenya after 40 years in September 1964. The Old Clubhouse was built where it is mainly for the convenience of Laboratory personnel, and to be near the tennis courts and the bowling





green.

The building was put up in 1945/46 by Arthur Jacobs but with the financial help of very many members and the names which are associated with this effort include Danks, Brotherstone, Whitfield, Light, Marttens, Palmer, Skinner, Jenkins et al.

As a result of this Clubhouse the golf section officially came into being and was recognised by the K.G.U., in 1946. The first Captain was Vernon van Someron.

To help with furniture, in 1948 Bar stools still with us, were presented by S.E. Piecy, D. North-Lewis, R.A. Hammond, A.G. Barnes, A. Webb, U.S.A., R.Q. Scammel, W. Carbenter, U.S.A., R. Skinner, and a very fine Mavuli Refectory table by Jerry Murawski, Johnny C. Alberts and Bob Squires, all of Caltex U.S.A., and all golfers at that.

Just as an aside, it is an interesting thought that the late Quintin Scammel's daughter Venessa, 25 years after her father donated a bar stool, married a Kabete member, John Bind.

In 1962, Jacobs Jumba, was given a face lift. The interior, with the use of timber, and black and white paint, and reproduction Windsor chairs and wrought iron, was made to look Elizabethan, and it did.

The Old Hole in the Wa', the bar in the end wall,—something straight out of the West of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, complete with mirror, bottles and all—was closed in, with many regrets, and a new bar built.

In many ways the Old Hole in the Wa' was a great feature for when you entered the lounge the first thing that came into view was a row of bottoms!

A very daunting sight to a new member, and even more so to an uninvited guest.

In 1946 the little stone Banda on the course was also built. This consisted of a verandah, a tea room, two loos and a wash up for tea, with a tractor shed and store to the gable.

This was demolished on the 26th August, 1971 to make way for the Veterinary Faculty. It was at this point in time that the idea of a course clubhouse took root.

The Architect, Dick Polkinghorne, very kindly prevailed on the contractors to build us a replacement banda, which they did by January 1972 on the site where the present Clubhouse now stands.

In 1946 there was probably the first of what would be many alterations to the course when Bob







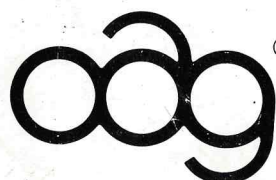
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Hammond, then D.V.S., gave permission for the 6th hole to be extended and turned into a dog-leg by taking some land off the paddock adjoining.

The all too evident gum trees were planted that year, without much thought to the size of their eventual crowns.

The site of the old 6th green can still be seen as a depression just before the Mugumo Tree to the right of the 6th.

By 1956, whilst the Club had a good membership, very little had been spent on the golf course and there was a marked inclination to spend little or nothing on it at all.

As a result, there was very little water on the greens despite two sources of supply and then, only by gravity. The machinery consisted of hand operated obsolete Kikuyu mowers, and how Joshua Obima coped with them, I will never understand. I have seen a 2 foot putt up to the hole and remain out supported by one blade of Kikuyu grass with half the ball overhanging the cup!

This management of Kikuyu grass gave Kikuyu greens a very bad name whereas when properly cut with a heavy motor mower, top dressed regularly and watered, they infact produce a putting and pitching surface as good as any, and certainly better than all in so far as cost of upkeep is concerned.

In 1958 Nigel Sinclair, who owned the coffee shamba to the left of the 5th fairway, built a dam in the Mathari River Valley with the dam wall practically opposite Farasi Way on the Lower Kabete Road. I obtained the wayleaves for the Dam and in return Sinclair gave us a connection to the 4th green. This was to have a far reaching effect in years to come. In August 1958, the 4th green was the only patch of green grass on the whole course.

At the same time Nigel planted the line of Nandi Flame along the coffee ride, and so all along the boundary of the 5th fairway, and thus the hole got its name, 'Flaming Trees'.

As it so happened 1958 was to be a year of decision for Kabete. In that year I played in the Sigona Open. On the following Monday Sigona greens were to be replanted by the late Ted Palmer who had relined the 6th fairway at Kabete in 1946, and had much to do with the course besides.

I got into conversation with Ted Palmer, the late Bobs Harries, of Thika, and the late Col. Errol Pearce-Fleming, our Greenkeeper. The talk was naturally of replanting greens and what with? During this conversation Bobs Harries said that he had some grass in his garden—he called it Uganda Bradley—which he was certain would make excellent greens but that he had failed to get anyone to use it. I asked if he would give us some, and he kindly agreed to do so. P-F said that on his next trip to Thika he would collect some, and so the matter ended, and did for 2 years, till one day in 1960 P-F arrived at the old Clubhouse with a bucket full of grass, and asked me what I wanted done with it.

It was planted in a disused earth bunker between the 4th and 5th fairways just above the short 4th tee. There it stayed until it had completely filled the earth bunker surface which was by the end of 1961. This story of a 'bucket of grass' will be continued later.

By this time the 4th green was practically unplayable as, due to a mistake, this had been planted with Mardi River and so it was decided, to replant the 4th.

I proceeded to do this with the very able assistance of one Jimmy





Izat, better known to-day as James Patterson Izat, Golf Course Architect and a man on personal terms with the great Arnold Palmer. Jimmy Izat has constructed golf courses in North America, Europe and Arabia and has a world wide organisation for this purpose. The grass for work in Arabia was taken from Closeburn Nursery.

The 4th green was completed by February, 1962 with an underground polythene sheet, polythene apron and an underground system of agricultural tiles. The only green of its kind in Kenya.

The putting surface was an outstanding success.

At this time—it is now hard to believe—that without agricultural tiles but with a polythene apron, sisal craft base 15" depth cultivation, fertilizers and planting, to reconstruct a green cost the vast sum of £25.

The next trick was to obtain permission to do another five greens in Uganda Bradley, leaving the 3rd, 7th and 8th in Kikuyu.

The difficulty, as always, was money, and where and how to find it. At this point in time Dickie Woolridge, the Deputy D.V.S., and Arthur Jenkins were very helpful, and to cut a very long story short, permission to continue was given.

This was greatly helped by the members voluntarily subscribing towards the cost, a process that went on until 17th January, 1968.

In 1968 the last course improvement fund raised shillings 4,980/- from 119 members of which there are still 16 in Nairobi and of those 10 are still members of the Club.

From February 1962 to the 11th April 1968, it was a constant battle but with perseverance and the willing and generous help received from all members a very great deal was done.

During that time what was accomplished was this:-

- (1) The 1st, 2nd, 5th, 6th and 9th greens in two stages, were widened and considerably lengthened, in most cases doubling the area—Kabete had the finest postage stamps greens on record! This was achieved by treating the completed 4th green as a nursery, and by lifting one third of the surface turf enough was obtained to plant out the other five greens. The 4th after top dressing, recovered quickly.
- (2) Fairways 3rd, 5th, 9th, 7th and 10th were realigned and in most cases narrowed considerably.
- (3) All tees were shuttered, squared and levelled. New tees being constructed at the 2nd, 5th, 8th, 17th and the 16th moved to a new alignment as it is now.
- (4) The water supply was connected to all greens except the 8th this had an independent supply—and non return valves were fitted where necessary.
- (5) A water pump was fitted, electricity connected all piping completed to greens, a 2000 gallon tank installed and the scheme capable of working 2 sprinklers under pressure, at a total cost of Shs. 6,434/-!

By the 5th May, 1967 I was able to write to the Secretary of the K.G.U.,—the late Tom Gilbert—informing him that the course had been extended by 267 yards to 6118 yards, the par to 72, and the SSS69.

In the same month, May, B.A.T. kindly printed our score cards for us and for the first time on any course in Kenya, the holes were named. B.A.T. repeated this kindness again in 1972.

Throughout this period trees were planted on the course and the





'Candle' Spectarbulus, Bombax Jacaranda, Nandi, Bottlebrush, and Italian Cypress seen today are the result.

New machinery was also purchased and the greens thereafter cut by 10 bladed powered Suffolks. A new Ransome Gang Mower Mark 12 was added, at a cost of £475, in July 1968. This was not the end of the story by any means. In September, 1975 the Members again voluntarily raised Shs. 4,850/- for the 'Mower Fund'.

The end result was satisfactory, in so far as greens and tees were concerned, and in 1968, in July of that year, the first Kabete Open Foursomes was held.

This has become an annual fixture and in 1969—when the greens were in possibly the finest condition ever—Bill Hopley, now Manager of Karen, was heard to

say on the 9th green, 'Don't give me a putter, give me a cue'.

In 1968, due to the proposed development of the Veterinary and Agricultural Faculties, there came a very definite threat to the course.

This threat was averted due to the efforts in particular of Phillip Ndegwa, now Governor of the Central Bank, and Joe Karanja, then vice chancellor of the University. To these gentlemen and to all who helped the members owe a very great debt of gratitude.

So back to the bucket of grass in 1960. In 1978 I was invited by the late Basheer-Ud-Deen to advise with the greens at Royal Nairobi. I realised that before very long that Club would have to undertake a reconstruction scheme of the greens for they had about as many grasses in them as Jacob's



10 - 20  
25  
15  
25  
75  
70  
3  
240  
600

# Salute to Sports

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Coat had colours. This infact has come to pass and nine greens, and the practice area, have been reconstructed.

With this in mind I telephoned Mr. Patel, of Closeburn Nursery, and asked him if he would be interested in starting a nursery with Uganda Bradley. Out of curiosity really he came to see me one Saturday morning and I took him up to Kabete. When Mr. Patel saw the grass he became quite excited and indentified it as Masindi. Masindi is a town in Western Uganda.

Mr. Patel said that Closeburn had lost this grass some years ago and asked where I had got it. I told him the story of the bucket full from the late Bobs Harrie's garden in 1960.

Mr. Patel went away with a square yard of turf and at Closeburn now there is an acre nursery.

It was with this grass that I replanted the greens at Royal Nairobi. It has also been sent to the Rift Valley Sports Club, it has resurfaced the cricket square of the Premier Club on Forest Road, and two gunny bags full were taken by John Douglas to Kampala to help with improvements to the course there. So some of the grass went home. The moral of the story? A bucket of grass goes a long way!

On the playing side it is perhaps as well to start with a mention of Course Records.

M.M. Little was the first too hold an official course record with 70 par 70. I held the unofficial record with 68. The official record being withheld because the 2nd tee markers were off the teeing ground.

After the course was extended by 267 yards in 1967 I gained an official course record with 70 par 72. This was on Thursday, 9th November, 1967.

The course was again realined in 1970/71—when the old 9th green and fairway was given up.

This meant a new green where the 9th green now is, and this, and a new fairway, was laid out and brought into play in 6 weeks.

The 1st and 10th tees were moved forward, and the par for each hole was reduced to 4, and so the par for the course once again become 70. For the course now, John Gathu holds the record with 69.

The first recorded outside win by the Club was the Windsor Cup at Kiambu in 1962. This was achieved by the late Ken Cowie and the writer by dint of some hair-raising putting. The meeting was attended by sixty or so, and of those there are still eight in Kenya to-day.

Since then the collection has increased and the list is;

1965 A.L. Shaw, the Uhuru Shield at Royal Nairobi.

1968 D.S. Suttie, the Highland Trophy, Naivasha.

1974 The Easter Tournament by Kabete Sigona.

1975 Teji Brar, the Nyali Open.

1979 Mohan and Balbir, the Windsor Cup again.

And here I feel it would not go amiss to recall a few of the live wires who have made Kabete what it is—Hazel and the late Hank Close, the late Nobby and Tessa Clarkson, Pat and the late Joy Collins, Ted Rickards, Edward Martin, Professor Ian McIntyre, the late George Smith, M.C.,—Charles Tyrell—Bruce Allen—Robbie Robson,—Tony Waight and Don Sutherland.

Silvia Waight, Ray Hemingway and Elizabeth, Peter Newling, Cameron and Maggie Dalglish, Mavis Watts, Frank Witley, Ron and Margaret Yates, Bill Cave, Jim Keppy, Dave and Barbie Evans, Titus Njonjo, Teji and Amrit Brar,





Ian and Marie Batey, Edgar D'Sa, Bill Gill and the irrepresible Babu Mangat, and so very, very many others.

And so on to some 'Swingers', that I feel should be recorded for posterity.

Out of the past come Ken Richardson, Dave Nicoll, the late Jack Shirley, Morris Elwell—Uganda and Tanganyika Amateur Champion in the same year—The Merttens, father and son, Bill Udall, Pip Jenkins, Ted Mackay, M.M. Little and the late Ken Cowie—a Muthaiga Club Champion.

More recently, Tony Shaw, David Burn, Dave Suttie, Peter Ngugi—Limuru' Muthaiga, and Kabete Club Championships and presently Vice-Chairman of Muthaiga—Stephen Mbugua, Nash Nyabinde who played for Kenya, and a great striker of the ball, taught by the same coach that taught the writer, the late Gordon Davidson, Teji Brar, Bill Cave, Balbir and Bal, Mohan Singh and Rajinder Kapila—now Vice-Captain Muthaiga.

Kabete seems to be the training ground for Muthaiga!

And now, John Gathu, and with a little help and encouragement, a future Kenya Amateur Champion.

And last but not least, the best footwork men on the short, Titus Njonjo and Dave Evans! Definetely Liverpool potential!

At Kabete course there are very many spectacular sights to be seen—the glorious sunsets, the shadows across the course at sundown, 'The Nandi Tree' in bloom and ablaze in the evening light, and the distant views—but perhaps the most spectacular of all is to stand on the 5th green on a clear evening in mid-October and look North back down the fairway.

To the left and to the right there are Nandi in Flame, and in the mid-distance the crowns of Jacaranda in full bloom and further, the blue grey haze of the Aberdare Mountains and beyond yet again, the peaks of Mount Kenya.

It is to the staff, my old friends Joshua Obima—he has been with the Club since 1955—Dummy alias Kubue Kamau, Goerge Kiarie, Wainaina, Stephano and all the others, that the credit must go for the condition in which the course is today and it is my sincere hope that this course will be preserved for generations to come.

It only remains for me to pay atribute to the memory of so many Members who did so much for Kabete and who are now no more. I think that this can best be expressed in the words of William Cory—'I wept as I remembered how often you and I, had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky'.







## REPORT ON THE GOLF CLUB HOUSE BY T. BRAR



In the early days the club had only a temporary timber hut where members used to be served with drinks only. For presentation and changing, the members and their guests used to drive to the old club house and there were mixed feelings by the members about putting up a club house on the golf course.

In 1974 feelings were high, the club was losing revenue, not well patronized because of the distance. A decision was made by the golf committee of putting up a house with all the facilities on Harambee basis. The committee then called for the services of Mr. Brar an architect by profession for Sketch Plans and the approval of the drawings took place in May, 1975.

The old changing rooms Cum Tractor Shed were demolished and the walls of the old tractor shed were incorporated in the New Club House. At the same time we saw the present New Tractor Shed built. The most important thing to remember is that the tender of M/s Industrial Decorators for Shs. 42,000 was accepted for the purpose of labour contract only and the golf development committee consisting of the following:

A.S. Chana, W. Brownbill, Mahesh Patel, J.S. Mburu, T. Njonjo, T. Brar, Hardial Singh, Balbir Singh, B. Mangat, P.S. Jandu, G. S. Sian, J. Lowe, K.G. Till, S.N. Murrery Wilson, J.L. Patel were to arrange for the initial supply of the building materials.

In August 1975 the construction was well in hand, the roof was completed in 1976. On July the 22nd, 1977 the Club was officially opened by the, then Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi Dr. J.N. Karanja. To the members and friends of V.L.S. Club, this Club was built from cash donations of 60,000/- and materials worth 300,000/-.

We would like to extend our thanks to all those wise gentlemen who made our life easier whereby members enjoy their drinks in a cosier brighter and comfortable atmosphere.

In 1982 the club saw another facelift when the men's changing rooms were further extended, also an extension to the ladies' changing rooms and a New Committee room.

The Club has plans of extending the present kitchen, constructing new staff quarters and a new verandah.



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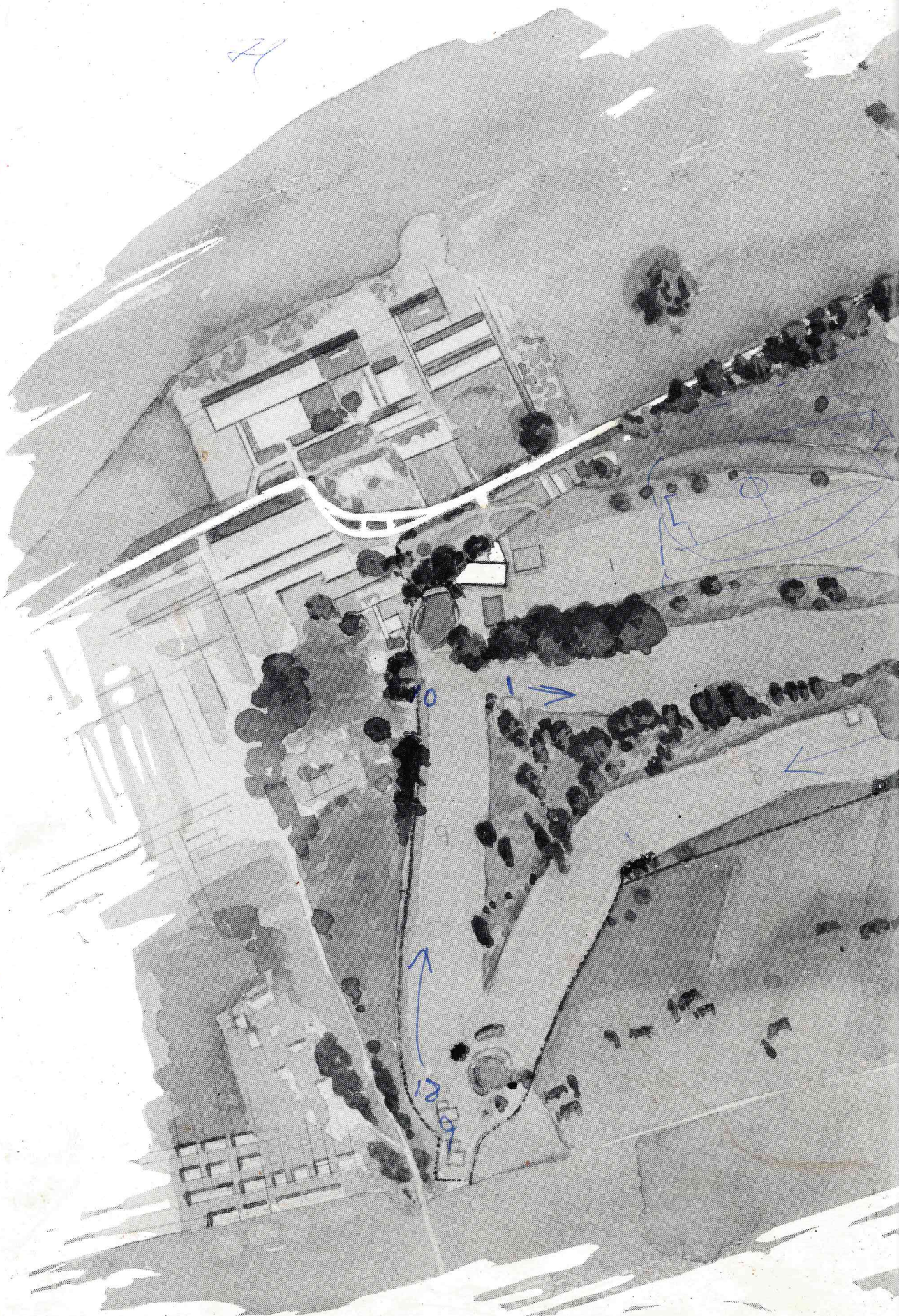




# AERIAL VIEW OF

71

Men	Par
1	4
2	4
3	4
4	3
5	4
6	4
7	3
8	5
9	4
35	
10	5
11	3
12	4
13	4
14	4
15	4
16	3
17	5
18	4







# THE GOLF COURSE







## MEMORIES OF THE CLUB BY HAZEL CLOSE

I have been asked for my memories of the Vet. Lab. Sports Club. These memories are of wonderful times and friendly people—just like it is today.

At that time the road from Loresho Ridge up to the Vet. Lab. and to Waiyaki Way (then Sclaters Road) was very different. From the turn, off Lower Kabete Road, one followed a very bad either dusty or muddy dirt road. From the beginning of the Ridge to where I now live which is about half way, there were NO houses except the Archers, the Tate's (now the Nigerian Embassy) and that of the manager of Loresho Estates—Bwana Burke. Most of it was covered with coffee. In our little enclave there were seven houses. From there one passed through the Sinclair's coffee farm up to the golf course and along to the old brick Clubhouse. Nigel Sinclair planted those lines and lines of lovely Nandi Flame trees which golfers can see today stretching the length of the boundary of the fifth and sixth holes.

The Veterinary Laboratories consisted of that old double storey brick building on the hill and some brick and stone staff houses. And, of course the clubhouse. The remains of the brick kiln can still be seen near the swamp in the Wellcome Institute grounds. When the rains made the road both to Upper and Lower Kabete Roads impassable, I used to drive through the swamp on a narrow brick track. It was quite hair-raising but I had to get to work.

The Vet. Lab. Sports Club was thriving in those days with tennis, bowls and golf sections. The majority of members were employed by the Veterinary Department—the only other members accepted had to live within a radius of a few miles.



The bowling green was on the opposite side of the road from the clubhouse. It was considered one of the best in Kenya and the Club had a very strong team which won many competitions around the country.

There was no golf clubhouse—only an open-sided shelter with a grass roof on the site of the present Small Animal Clinic—that is where the old ninth hole had its green. Later there was a wooden hut followed by a bigger wooden hut.

For some years we used the club socially and played tennis. Why did we start playing golf? The simple answer is that when we went up to the Club we used to sit and chat with the keen golfers. Conversation was fine for about five minutes but after that we were subjected to: "If only I had used my three wood instead of my four... When I was on the 6th. I could have had a birdie but... I could be a single handicap player if only the greens...". And so it went on. The winner sat smugly silent and we knew HE had used all the right clubs and got all the long putts!

Hole by hole we listened to in that first hour—people leaping off their barstools to demonstrate the grip,





the swing, the address. Unfortunately none ever seemed to have even a stick to demonstrate just how it all should be done. Mercifully after the first hour, the "if onlys" even tired them out. However, we then resolved to start playing this obviously fascinating game more frequently and more seriously. We had played friendly golf before in different places but what a handicap was, was quite a mystery to us. We just played straight whoever got the least strokes won the hole. I was asked, after one of these games what my score had been. I said innocently (after much counting back of holes), I think it was about "X". There was a complete hush and the men's captain said "but what is your handicap?" "I don't know". I replied, "what is a handicap?" Well that settled it and I was sent off forthwith to fill in my cards.

The golf course was very formidable in those years, especially for women. Standing on our tee on the 7th one could not see the green at all. Huge sodom apple bushes with horrendous thorns grew all over the hill. A missed tee shot was a disaster. In front of almost every tee, high, thick, impenetrable grass beoned one's ball. It took almost three shots to get out. But we then sent a saviour in 1960 in the form of Peter Murray-Wilson who whirled into action and made the course as lovely as it is today.

Peter planted hundreds of trees and cut back the really impossible rough. It made our golf so much more enjoyable. Because the course improved so much, it was then necessary to move back the ladies' tees so that a handicap gained at the VLSC would equal that of other longer courses. It was not a popular move amongst some, but those of us who struggled to win honour and glory

on other courses, were grateful. The only hole which I persuaded our honourable greenkeeper to change for us was the fourth. We used, before, to have to tee from the men's tee. This was a bit too much—200 yards uphill all the way. Hence the special ladies' tee which must be lucky as both Dorothy Horrocks, who was lady captain in 1974 and I, had a "hole in one" there. I had of course to do it during an open competition—every golfer knows what that means!

The men at the Club have always been particularly chivalrous. In the 50s and some of the 60s when the ladies' section was really very small, they allowed us to play in their monthly mugs (one had to be a 24 handicap or lower). No lady EVER won it—this is when I thought about that fourth tee.

The old brick building will always be *the* Club to me. We were somehow very fond of the old place with its black beams and cosy bar with the trophies shining in the background. The bowlers had their special corner on the right and the tennis players sat on the left and the golfers at the bar! Nobody believes me when I was there, there was a swimming pool. Yes—beyond the tennis courts a lovely algae-filled depression of about 20ft. by 20 ft filled with exciting tadpoles was there for the enjoyment of our dear little children.

Tennis was very much the thing when I first joined and we had some really good mix-in's in the afternoons and played various up-country clubs over week-ends. There were some really good players and the Vet Lab. made its mark in the tennis calendar as I am sure it does today.

The highlight of the year was the





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# Wellcome







New Year's Eve party (we had a large Scots membership!). The dance usually went on into the early hours—so early in fact, that pair of inimitable Scotsmen—Ian Mackenzie and Ian Cowie were once standing on the tee on New Year's Day at 8. a.m. ready to tee off complete in their black dinner jackets, white shirts and bow ties! I seem to remember that they had a very good *second nine*.

We used to have a wonderful caddies' competition too. Each member played with one of the caddies as a partner. One of the best of these was during "the Year of the Schoolmaster". In fact, I think they instigated this very enjoyable competition. One, Peter Newling was large with a huge black beard and the other Colin Hines small with a golden beard. I have some lovely photographs of this competition which are in my archives (before going to Press I hope I can find them).

My special friends over the years are the caddies. Some I have known since they were totos, James Jimmy Nganga especially, who was my partner in the caddie member competitions and whose putting style is most effective, I have never mastered yet. Dear Domi—the greatest finder of balls on any golf course in the world, Karanja—the greatest finder of mushrooms in all Kabete and Obima who, nowadays hacks my garden around the Club to pieces with the best intentions! And, of course many others who have put up with my erratic golf throughout the years.

Old members, like me, (not in age of course!) could not really see why we should have a new clubhouse but times were changing; new and dynamic forces came to the fore. One cannot but admire the wonderful

harambee spirit that, particularly our Asian members, put into the building of the new golf clubhouse. We were very reluctant to move from the old club but the Nineteenth Hole had become a reality and from then on there was no looking back for Vet. Lab golfers. Our new golf clubhouse was the envy of all the other clubs—built on trust, goodwill and generosity.

It got off to a flying start. New trophies were donated and many were the delightful evenings with films and dances accompanied with lovely Indian food beautifully prepared by members' wives.

Pride in our new clubhouse moved the ladies to start the first Invitation Meeting which has now become a popular event. It is significant that not only lady golfers help to give our visitors superb lunches and teas but other members as well. The men have never hesitated to help in this and other events. Their support has been invaluable.

I treasure my years of membership of the Vet. Lab. Sports Club and I also think we have the finest nine-hole course in the country. The lady captains who have followed me have, sometimes with great difficulties and inexperience done a wonderful job. Everyone of them has tried valiantly to keep our section alive. This is a Club where members REALLY CARE. Let it always be that way.



Cow  
boy



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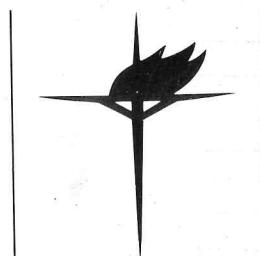


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## OUR CLUB BY A MEMBER

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An unfortunate misconception is held by many that golf is a rich man's game. This view perhaps arises from the substantial expenditure required to obtain clubs and pay membership dues, which is certainly high in relation to that required to start playing, say football. However, it is a fact that golf in Kenya, which twenty years ago was indeed the preserve of a largely expatriate elite, has now progressed very far towards becoming a people's sport. This trend is indeed in the proper tradition of the game in Scotland, the home of modern golf, where it is played by people of all shapes, sizes, stations and creeds, and here at Kabete we believe that our club is in the forefront of the development of Kenyan game into a genuinely popular sport.

Players, their course and their play during and after the game are the ingredients of a golf club, and the Vet. Lab. course at Kabete is favourably endowed in all respects. Among our brother members we have—one whose voice, if he has already finished playing, can be heard from the clubhouse verandah as we play the last three holes; two brothers, the short one known as Mr. Long and the long one known as Mr. Short; a father and son who took up the game in their fifties and teens respectively with games and temperaments as different as chalk and cheese, but who will happily play together in foursome events; a small but effective player whose score can be judged to within two strokes from his walk up the last fairway; and last, but not least, a popular member who genuinely does not seem to mind if he scores 120, and who must therefore be all but unique in the golfing world.

The course is short and only nine

holes, and may therefore find itself quickly dismissed by the sweet-swinging purist. Let him come and try our little course! It is possible to go out of bounds (sometimes on two sides) at nearly every hole, with the dreaded seventeenth being strategically placed for late sabotage of a good score. Trees abound and, though wananchi cut some of these for firewood, successive greenkeepers have carefully planted so as to provide both for their future needs and for ours. Never assume your work is done till you have holed out on the eighteenth without three-putting it in front of the drinkers on the verandah. In short, do not underestimate our little course; the last professional golfer I saw play it took 80! Physically and climatically it is particularly well endowed, draining as well if not better than any other Nairobi district course, and rarely if ever being affected by the swirling mists which bemuse golfers on some other upland courses. Wildlife includes cows and horses who sometimes trespass from the surrounding farm, loud-barking dogs (thankfully tethered) in the kennels beside the last green, and the occasional cobra.

As at all courses, our players range from experts through medium-range slicers and hookers to the downright hackers who are the greenkeeper's despair. But we have one player on the fringes of the Kenya team, and at the time of writing we still have the highest hopes, with one match remaining, of capturing the 1983 district league trophy. And the ladies must not be forgotten—we have one strong player whose length of drive can put many of our men to shame.

After the game, brotherhood is warm as most play the nineteenth





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*Members patronising the Club Bar.*

with vigour and skill. It is a happy time as we relax on the balcony under the creaking gum trees. As the Tusker begins to flow, loud commentaries from the watchful drinkers may greet the wretches who three-putt the eighteenth; perhaps Saint Andrew (if indeed he be the patron saint of golf) may turn in his grave at the breach of formal etiquette, but it is part of the Kabete scene, and only goes to emphasise the ancient golf rule that players should never three-putt. As the night sets in we move inside, and if the weather is wet or cold we huddle around the roaring logs, pushing our chairs away

from the leaks in the roof which we intend to mend before the next long rains.

A fine feature of our club is the generosity of the members. Thus our dinner dance sweepstake is always supplemented by substantial individual donations, our new concrete benches at the teeing grounds were all donated by members, and a member sent many truckloads of sand to fill our bunkers. Whether or not we win the Nairobi district league this year, we hope we will still be able to call ourselves the happiest friendliest club in town. Come visit us—we will welcome you.



*They come in all shapes and sizes.*



*The Stalwarts of the Club —  
The Late Fred Kerr and Jock Lawrie.*





## A NOTE FROM AN OLD FRIEND

MRS. DISNEY

First of all I would like to mention that, unlike my late husband Charles Disney, I have not the ability of a journalist, but I am happy indeed to give my "layman's" impression of my contact with the Veterinary Sports Club.

It dates back many years and I remember the main Club House which the golfers shared with the tennis players, the indoor games enthusiasts and the staunch supporters of the East African Breweries products!!!

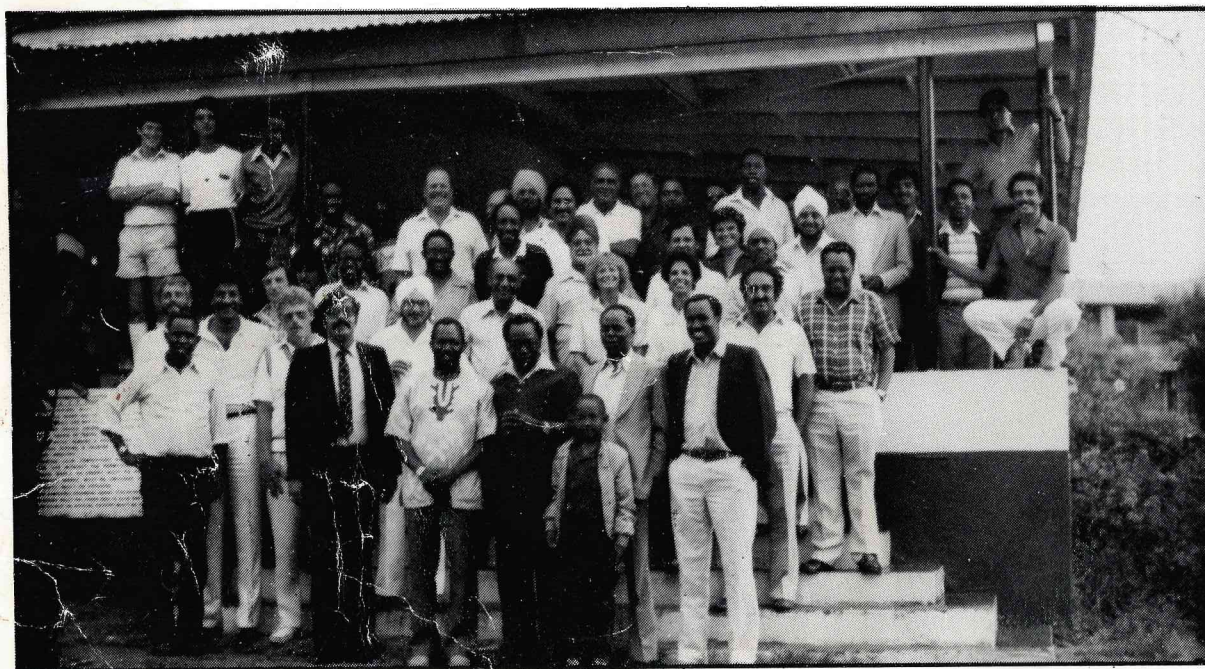
As the golf course was a considerable distance from the Club House, I recall the desire of the golfers to build their own accommodation adjacent to their nine-hole course—a practical decision—and this, if I remember correctly, was started toward the end of 1975, construction continuing through 1976 and finally completed and opened in 1977.

What impressed me so much was the financial and practical support and assistance forthcoming from

the members to realise their dream of accommodation at the site of the golf course. The design was utilitarian, giving an adequate lounge and bar (most essential) and changing rooms, all well designed, but especially commendable is the spacious verandah running along two sides of the building where visitors and players can sit and enjoy their refreshments whilst watching the golfers.

All tournaments were well-run and prizes very generous indeed. My husband and I were so well received whenever we came to cover the matches and I will never forget the excellent catering provided by the ladies and the overwhelming hospitality granted to us at all times. I still cherish the ashtray presented to my husband by members of the V.L.S.C. "in appreciation" in 1971.

My congratulations to the Veterinary sports Club on its 60th anniversary and may you all know many, many more years of happy sportsmanship.



*While sober at the Captain's Prize 1983.*

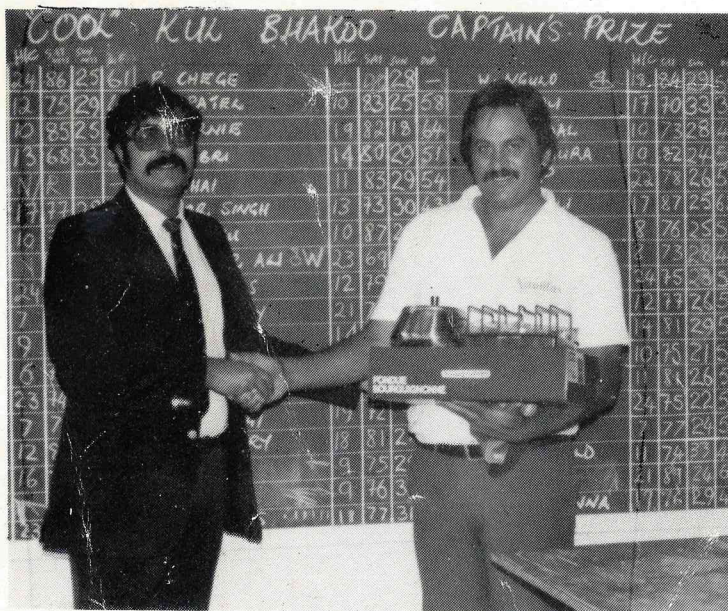


GOLF CAPTAINS MEN		LADY CAPTAINS		CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP		LADIES	
				MEN			
1946	V. G. VAN SOMEREN						
1947	W. B. C. DANKS						
1948	V. H. MERTTENS						
1949	J. G. BROTHERRSON						
1950	E. S. PALMER			1950	V. H. MERTTENS		
1951	E. S. PALMER			1951	V. H. MERTTENS		
	W. H. WALL						
1952	A. E. TALBOT			1952	V. H. MERTTENS		
1953	D. BRAITH WAITE			1953	W. E. TILLEY		
1954	G. P. GORDON			1954	G. P. GORDON		
1955	L. W. LIGHT			1955	S. W. WHITFIELD		
1956	S. W. WHITFIELD						
1957	M. TAYLOR			1957	E. MACKAY		
1958	C. J. B. TURRALL			1958	S. N. MURRY-WILSON		
1959	D. NICOL			1959	D. NICOL		
1960	J. SHIRLEY			1960	D. NICOL		
1961	B. E. PEARCE-FLEMING			1961	D. NICOL		
1962	S. N. MURRY-WILSON			1962	S. N. MURRY-WILSON		
1963	R. F. JOHNSTON			1963	J. RAMAGE		
1964	A. T. JENKINS			1964	S. N. MURRY-WILSON		
1965	S. N. MURRY-WILSON			1965	S. N. MURRY-WILSON		
	R. B. ALLEN						
1966	R. B. ALLEN	1966	H. CLOSE	1966	S. N. MURRY-WILSON		
1967	W. F. KERR	1967	H. CLOSE	1967	D. S. SUTTIE		
1968	C. DALGLEISH	1968	S. DURAND	1968	S. N. MURRY-WILSON		
1969	R. A. YATES	1969	A. USHER	1969	S. N. MURRY-WILSON		P. LEWIS
1970	W. G. ROBINSON	1970	K. KAPILA	1970	P. NGUGI		P. LEWIS
1971	R. A. YATES	1971	E. MACKENZIE	1971	D. R. BURN		I. LAWRIE
1972	F. WHITLEY	1972	I. LAWRIE	1972	P. NGUGI		S. KAPILA
1973	S. MANGAT	1973	L. ANDERSEN	1973	P. NGUGI		I. LAWRIE
1974	D. O. EVANS	1974	D. HORROCKS	1974	N. NYABINDE		M. HANEGRAAF
1975	MASHESH PATEL	1975	M. BARNES	1975	S. MBUGUA		H. CLOSE
1976	W. E. CAVE	1976	P. PACKWOOD	1976	H. JONES		D. HORROCKS
1977	T. S. BRAR	1977	T. HUSSEIN	1977	J. GATHU		M. HANEGRAAF
1978	T. NJONJO	1978	B. BIRCHER	1978	J. GATHU		T. HUSSEIN
1979	MEHARBAN SINGH	1979	M. SHERRY	1979	P. C. CHADHA		H. CLOSE
1980	EDGAR de SA	1980	ANN BIRNIE	1980	BAL SINGH		C. W. MWAURA
1981	PETER JAMES	1981	BARBARA DRETKE	1981	J. GATHU		C. W. MWAURA
1982	IAN BATEY	1982	BARBARA DRETKE	1982	J. GATHU		R. NALIKA
1983	KULDEEP BHAKOO	1983	MARIA BATEY	1983	K. DHALL		C. W. MWAURA

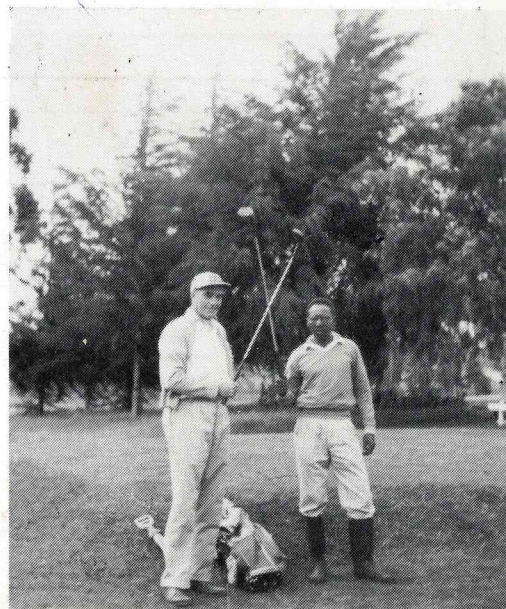




Past Golf Captains: Standing Left to Right — T. Njonjo, D.O. Evans, Babu Mangat, The Late Fred Kerr, Teji Brar, Meharban Singh, Sitting Left to Right — P. James, Ian Batey and Edgar D'Sa.

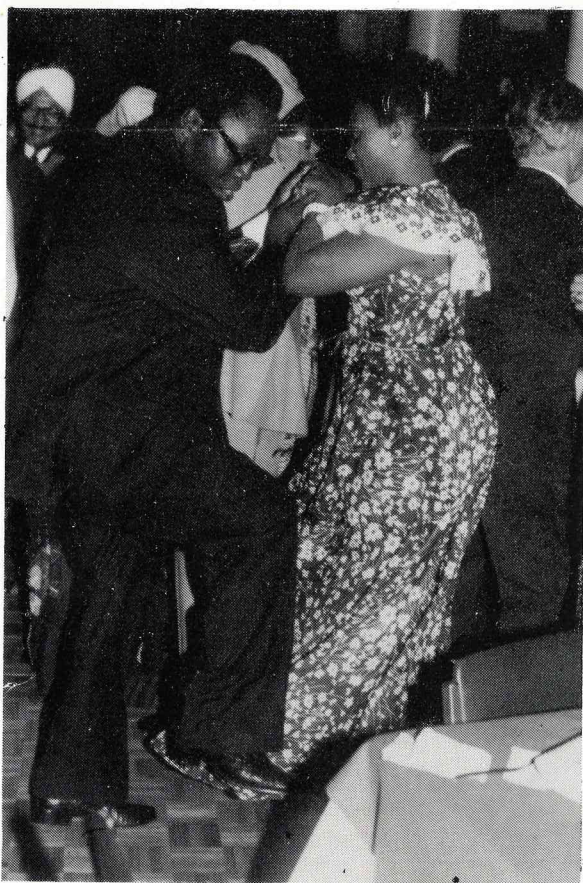


Kuldeep Bhakoo, Captain 1983 presenting the winner — Z. Ali — The Captain's Prize.

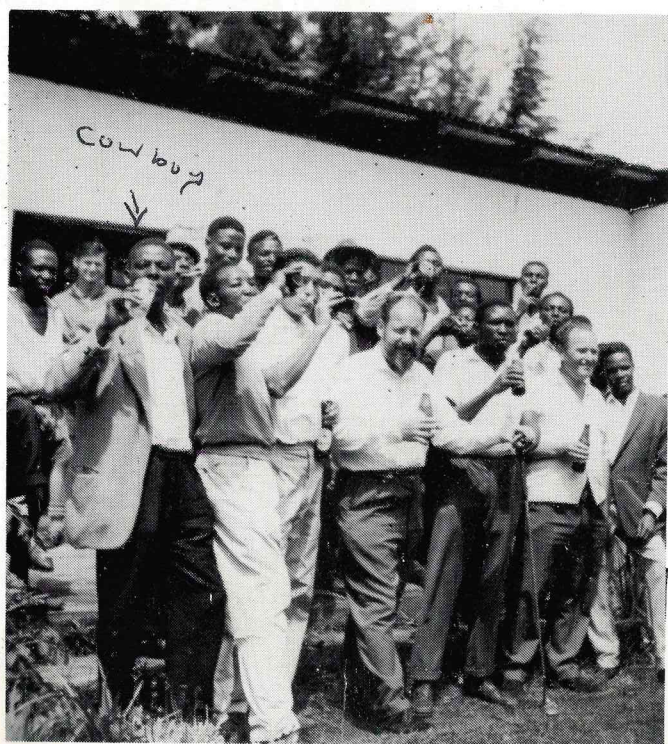


The Late Capt. Hank Close with ex-Caddymaster — Mbuti.

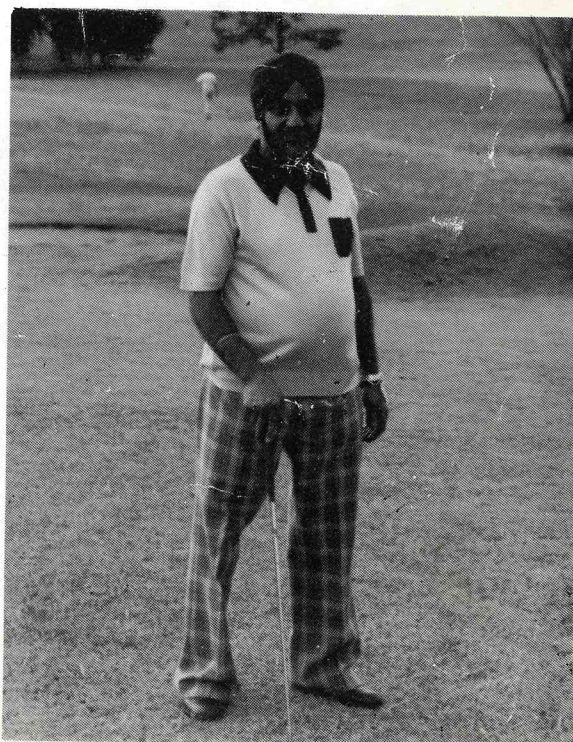




*The Vice-Chairman — Patrick Mwaura and Ian Batey — past Golf Captains following through at the 1982 Annual Dinner Dance.*



*Caddies Competition — 1963. Recognise anyone?!*



*The Late Pritam Sandu — a staunch supporter of the Golf Section.*

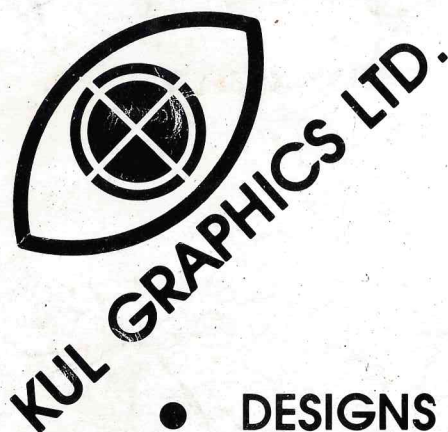




## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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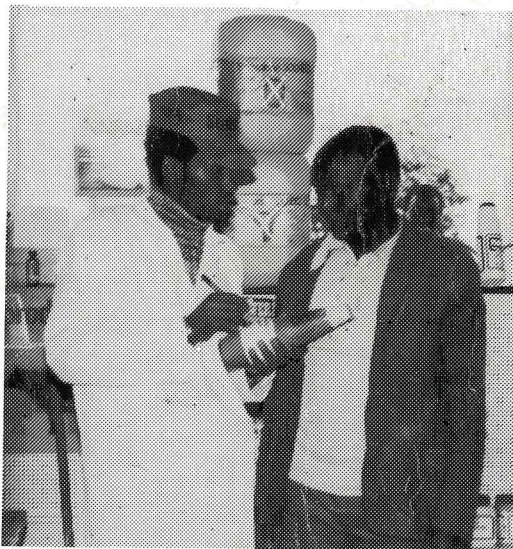
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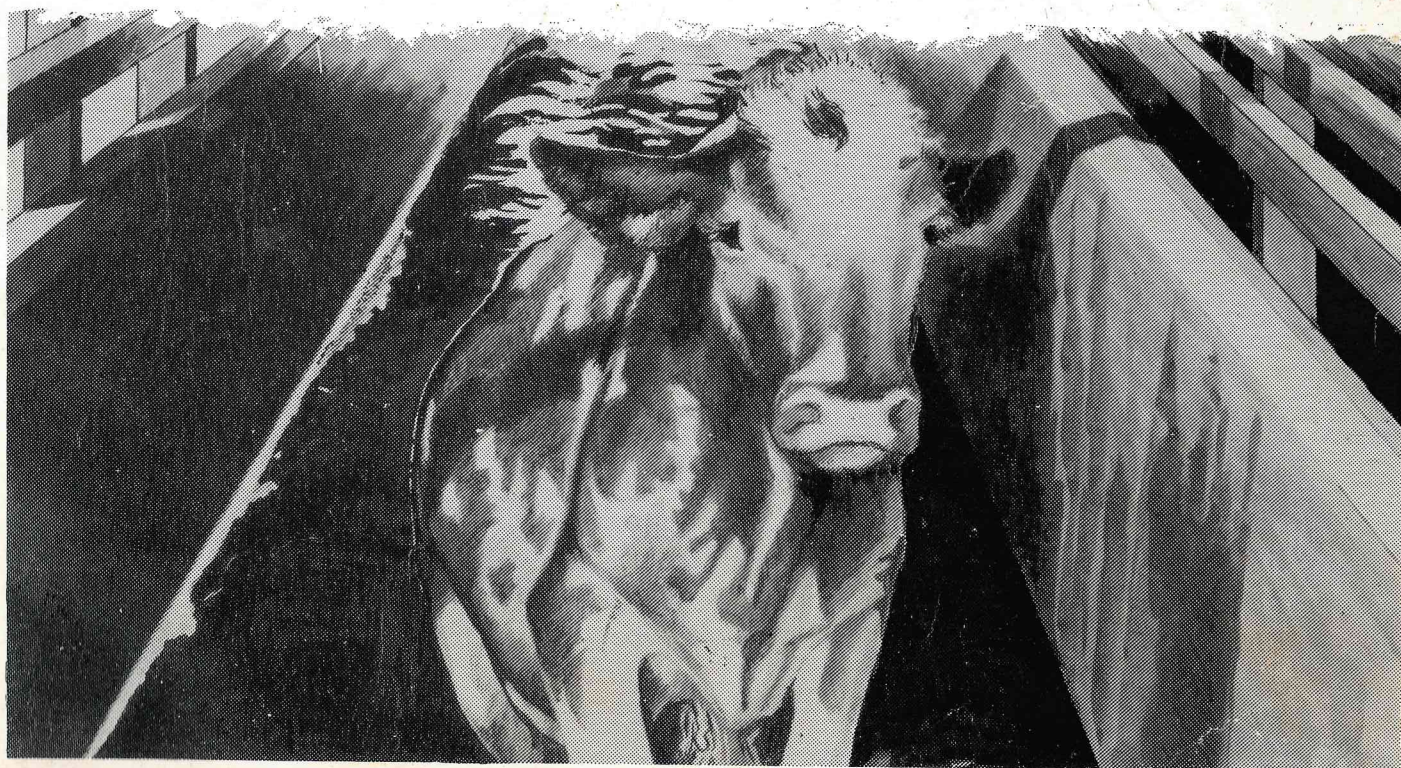
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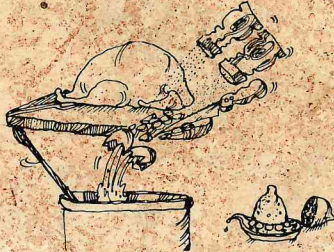




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3.



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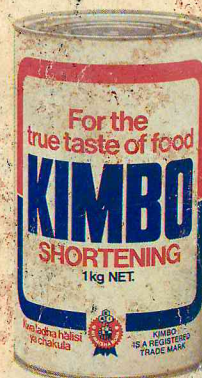


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