



Our

# Ridgewood Heritage

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Horses & Golf



# The Golf Course



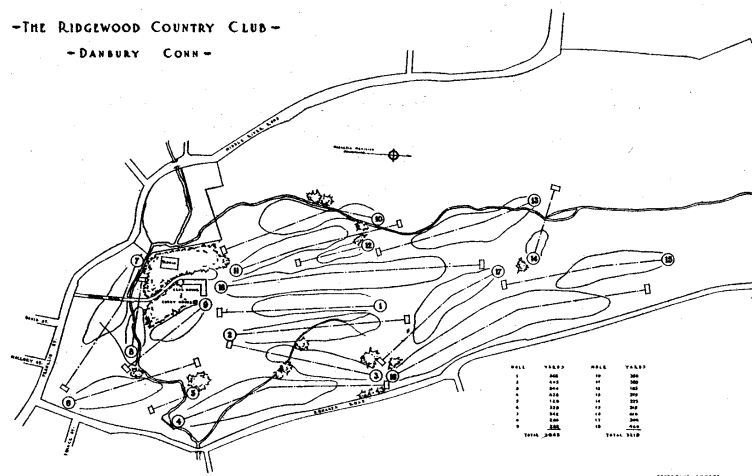
**Everaux Emmett**, was one of the most famous golf course architects at the time. His work includes Garden City CC, Riddell Bay in Bermuda, a number of classic courses in the Northeast, and the most notable, The Congressional Golf Club in Bethesda, MD. On its opening day in 1924, Congressional hosted President Calvin Coolidge, many diplomats, and an estimated 10,000 on-lookers.

The estimate for building 18 playable holes was \$1,000 a hole. But that total did not include the removal of the stone walls that covered the property like a spider web. Only those that crossed the fairways were slated for removal in the original estimate. The course's condition was a bit rough for the first few years, but as money became available, the stone walls were gradually removed using only crowbars, two horses and a stone boat. It was a job that took many years.

Nine holes — those that now comprise the second nine — opened for play in 1921. The other nine holes were completed in 1922. The back nine was played as the first nine until 1924, then changed to the second nine because it was longer by 300 yards and much harder to walk.

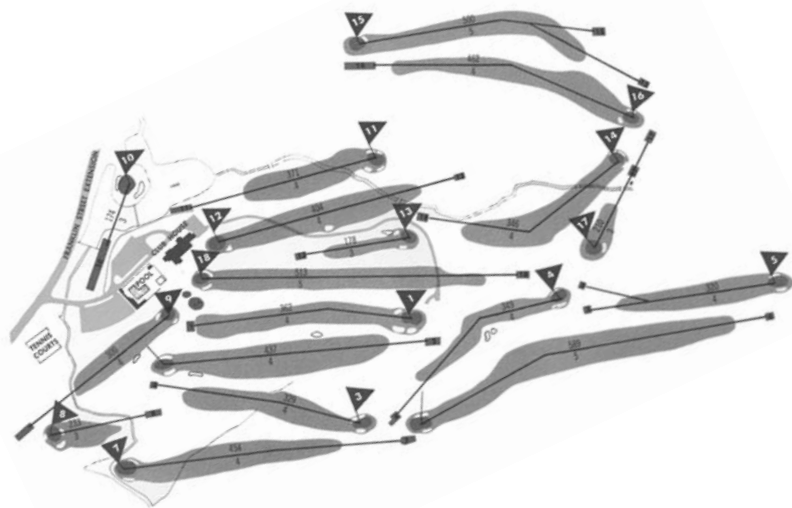
Members have watched many of golf's greatest stars play the Ridgewood, including Walter Hagen, Joe Kirkwood, Tommy Armour, Henry Ciuci, Johnny Farrell, Ken Green and Mark Calcavecchia. The legendary Gene Sarazen, who owned a home just 10 minutes away, spent many days each year at Ridgewood training for tournament play. Ridgewood Country Club hosted The Connecticut State Championship in 1995. The first LPGA tournament in Connecticut was held here in 1968. By 2003, \$250,000 was being generated annually by the Danbury Hospital Development fund.

-THE RIDGEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB-  
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“No high heeled shoes are to be worn by players, and all persons wearing high heeled shoes are to keep off of the Putting Greens at all times.”

— RCC Course Rule No. 2, 1922



It's easy to see why Ridgewood has attracted so many of the game's legends. The course's hills, dales, stretches of meadow and abrupt elevation changes provide the natural formations from which one of New England's most engaging 18-hole golf courses has been developed.

Every type of golf hole is found here: blind holes, demanding doglegs, water holes and more. All are configured to delight and challenge the weekend player and professional alike. Broad fairways with fast and true greens help offset strategically placed bunkers and natural hazards. The course is criss-crossed by a meandering stream of crystal-clear mountain water.

In the early 1960s, the routing of Interstate 84 forced a major redesign of the course and the creation of four new holes. The redesign by **Geoffrey Cornish** added the mark of another design great. Beginning his career with courses in Brewster and Groton, Cornish is now credited with some 250 courses around the world. In Massachusetts alone he has headed 80 designs/redesigns. At Ridgewood he created the club's beautiful and challenging signature hole, No.10. When he says, “It's the land, what God put there, that always inspires me,” we know he was thinking of Ridgewood.

The latest redesign by golf course architect **Roger Rulewich** began in 2002. The list of courses to his name includes the entire Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail in Alabama (at least 18 courses), the Applerock Course in Horseshoe Bay, Texas, Metedeconk National Golf Club in New Jersey, The Robert Trent Jones Golf Club (site of the 1994 and 1996 International Presidents Cup), and the famed No. 3 course at Medinah (site of three U.S. Opens and the 1999 PGA9 Championship). The latter features five new holes designed and remodeled by him.



# The Land of Ridgewood



his magnificent land and man's remarkable relationship with it through time has formed the unique heritage of The Ridgewood Country Club. Before these hills became home to the Ridgewood Stock Farm and now the Ridgewood Country Club, they sheltered the Indians that roamed them, fed the settlers who laid claim to them, and channeled the freedom war that roared through them.

Looking at the land today, one can easily imagine how it stirred the hearts of Samuel H. Rundle and William A. White as they viewed the parcel described as "the best grasslands and orchards in the town." Their vision ultimately led to the creation of the Ridgewood Stock Farm, a gathering place for interested horse breeders and spectators on the national and international levels.

Quartermaster, their prize-winning stallion, along with a half dozen of his pure black offspring led by stable boys in formal attire, won the grand prize at the Madison Square Garden Oval. The local newspaper reported that the presentation brought thousands of enthusiastic spectators to their feet.

Another Ridgewood Stock Farm stallion, Andante, was sold to the Emperor of Austria. "When Andante used to come down the track, he was a picture of power and grace of movement with his sturdy legs going in even tempo and the rest of his body poised in the true grace of a really great trotter," according to the Danbury newspaper.

Rundle and White made their mark in racing history and left their mark on the land: The discerning eye will find traces of foundations and bases of stone walls, and golf course construction always yields a horseshoe or two. The old half track of this internationally acclaimed stock farm can still be traced today. It sweeps around to the right of the first hole and, at the old maintenance facility, turns and comes back through the 13th green. The cart path/road at No. 13 is the actual track. It then takes a turn behind the 18th green, tying into the right-hand side of the first fairway.



During World War I, The Ridgewood Stock Farm fell on hard times. Simultaneously the booming Hat City of Danbury was fostering a new breed of the human variety: The Golf Enthusiast. A prominent resident, D.C. Brown, invited several established Danbury businessmen who were interested in golf to view suitable properties. The group examined sites as far away as Newtown and as far north as Candlewood Lake. The initial committee formed by Dr. Brown included Dr. H. Brownlee, A. E. Tweedy, Jim Biggs and George Green. As the dream was realized, several other men were invited: Harry McLachlan. Sr., F.H. Lee, George Tweedy, Arnold Turner, C.A. Mallory and C.S. McLean, with F.T. Joy serving as Chairman.

In marking the 20th anniversary of the club, one of the charter members described that first outing:

“One afternoon at the Danbury Club some of the boys were talking about a golf course. Most of us had been playing at a nine-hole layout on Deer Hill, established about 25 years before Ridgewood. There was never enough interest for members to support it and besides that we didn’t own the grounds. That old course did serve a purpose, though. It left a desire for golf in the community...One Sunday, we tramped over Clapboard Ridge and couldn’t find a layout that would be attractive. As we came down the west side and saw The Ridgewood Stock Farm, we exclaimed, ‘This is the place for a golf course!’ ...The committee’s report was made and rather enthusiastically accepted.”



The group bought the farm around 1920 and financed the purchase by offering 400 shares of stock at \$250 per share — a \$100,000 investment. Noted golf course architect Devereaux Emmett was contacted and after he endorsed the site, he was hired and began work on the “back nine.”

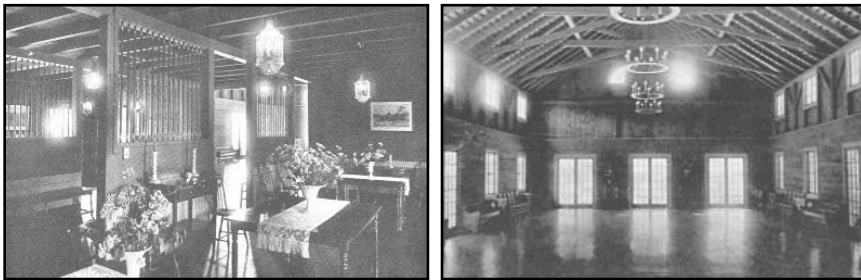
# The Clubhouse



he former horse stables, located between the present clubhouse and today's ninth green, was converted to become Ridgewood's first clubhouse.

The Danbury Evening News reported the opening of the clubhouse:

“The club house, which is prettily located in the center of an old orchard, consists of a main building 133 feet in length and 25 feet wide, and an “L” 100 feet long and 20 feet wide, both two stories high...Verandas surround the building...The Ballroom opens up on a terrace...The extreme north end of the main building is occupied by the lounge, beyond which a broad veranda overlooks the meadows and hills of the major part of the golf course...Standing in the ballroom or the lounge, there is an unobstructed view along the entire length of the building...In many respects, the atmosphere of the original building and its purposes has been retained, as in the dining rooms, where the former box stalls that were long occupied by the famous Quartermaster and other noted Ridgewood race horses have been retained in practically their original form, except for the removal of partitions, even to the iron bars in the stall fronts.”



The original clubhouse was destroyed by fire in 1961 and replaced with a comfortable, spacious, richly appointed building, that overlooks the pride of Ridgewood: a beautiful panorama of club property and the Connecticut countryside. The 1996 renovation was the work of Walter Ballard Associates of New York.

*Top Left:* The Orchard Barn before renovation.

*Middle Left:* Within the long rambling structure some of the stalls were converted into private dining rooms.

*Middle Right:* The Ballroom

*Bottom:* Ridgewood Country Club's original clubhouse.

DANBURY



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The Ridgewood  
Country Club  
INCORPORATED  
Danbury, Conn.



The  
RIDGEWOOD  
COUNTRY CLUB



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CHECKING COLUMN

THE  
RIDGEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB

WILL BE INFORMALLY OPENED TO  
MEMBERS ON SATURDAY, MAY 28TH, AT  
WHICH TIME NINE HOLES OF THE GOLF  
COURSE WILL BE READY FOR USE  
YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO  
ATTEND

FRED T. JOY, PRESIDENT  
GEO. F. GREEN, SECRETARY

DANBURY, CONN.

Gene Sarazen played the first exhibition here  
1922.

Walter Hagen and Joe Kirkwood played here 1922.

Hagen story about Sarazen.

Tommy Armour and Johnny Farrell -played 1922.

President George and I  
Broke the course



*Ridgewood*

COUNTRY CLUB

— est. 1920 —

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[www.ridgewoodcc.com](http://www.ridgewoodcc.com)

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