

Golf Historical Society

Los Angeles, California

St. Andrews Estates and Golf Course

by J.I.B. Jones

St. Andrews, York Mills, Toronto



St. Andrew's Golf Course and old Yonge Street 1940, with Yonge on the left and Bayview on the right

Forty years ago I was a student at St Andrew's Junior High School in the York Mills area of Toronto. Like many of my school friends, I thought the school was named after Saint Andrew, the Patron Saint of Scotland. I assumed that was because many of the original farmers in the area were Scottish, and Toronto had been a British loyalists haven in the late 18th and early 19th century's when Duncan Cameron, a retired British military officer, bought the land and settled there. Cameron helped to build the still standing St. John's church in 1840. His farm was bordered by Avondale (where I went to High School), York Mills, Bayview (where we lived), and Yonge Street (local pub). Cameron built his house called *Lindally*, on the north east corner of Old Yonge Street and Lower Links road.



St Andrew's clubhouse, **Lindally** (demolished)

In 1836 Cameron wrote in a letter that *"radical Yankees and other evil-disposed people have been very busy endeavoring to agitate and poison the mind of the people against the government"*.

It is said that in 1905 St. Andrew's College bought the Cameron land as the site for their new school, which they never built.

In 1926 the land was bought by the St. Andrews Estates syndicate, led by lawyer and insurance and mining businessman **Alexander Fasken**.

Golf course architect legend **Stanley Thompson** was hired to design a championship golf course. It was opened as one of the first pay-to-play golf courses in Canada, and Duncan Cameron's home was turned into the clubhouse. An old TTC street car was used as the caddy shack.



St. Andrew's Golf Course Caddy House

After the new eighteen-hole course opened in 1926, work began on a nine-hole par-3 course, that ran through the large creek bed behind St Andrews Jr High. In the 1970's, we students ran through the course on our cross-country runs. It was the first golf course that I golfed on, with just a 9-iron. We used to sneak on in the late afternoon light of summer.

St. Andrews Golf Club - 6,235 yards. Fee \$1.00 - Professional, Frank Lock (1927
USGA listing)



St. Andrew's Golf Course during the Canadian Open

The St. Andrews golf course was a huge success. It hosted the 1936 and 1937 **Canadian Open's**, which were won by **Lawson Little**, and **Lighthouse Harry Cooper** respectively. Many of the golden era's great golfers including **Sam Snead**, **Byron Nelson**, **Ben Hogan**, **Leo Diegel** and many others, walked the same ground where we walked and talked with our friends and lived with our families all those years ago. Fantastic!

Golf continued to be played at St. Andrews until the mid 1950's, when the course was bulldozed into the residential area that it still is today. The only memory of the classic golf course is in the street names; Foursome, Tournament, Links, Didrickson, Zaharius, Medalist, Masters, Fifeshire, The Links, and Lower Links.

St. Andrews Estates and Golf Course, York Mills, Ontario, July 2013
by J.I.B. Jones - Copyright 2013-14 J.I.B. Jones

email contact

**All photos and words Copyright 2013-14 J.I.B. Jones and the Golf Historical Society
Not to be reprinted without permission.**