

# Los Feliz Golf Course History

---

When Mr. & Mrs. Griffith Jenkins Griffith donated 3015 acres of their Los Feliz rancho to the city of Los Angeles for Griffith Park as a Christmas present in 1896, the eastern border was the old 1880's water canal. The canal came from the head-works at Rancho Providencia. The remains of the 1909 version of the canal, by then a cement pipe, still crosses the Wilson golf course today.



An early map of Rancho Los Felis, showing the canal and old path of the river.

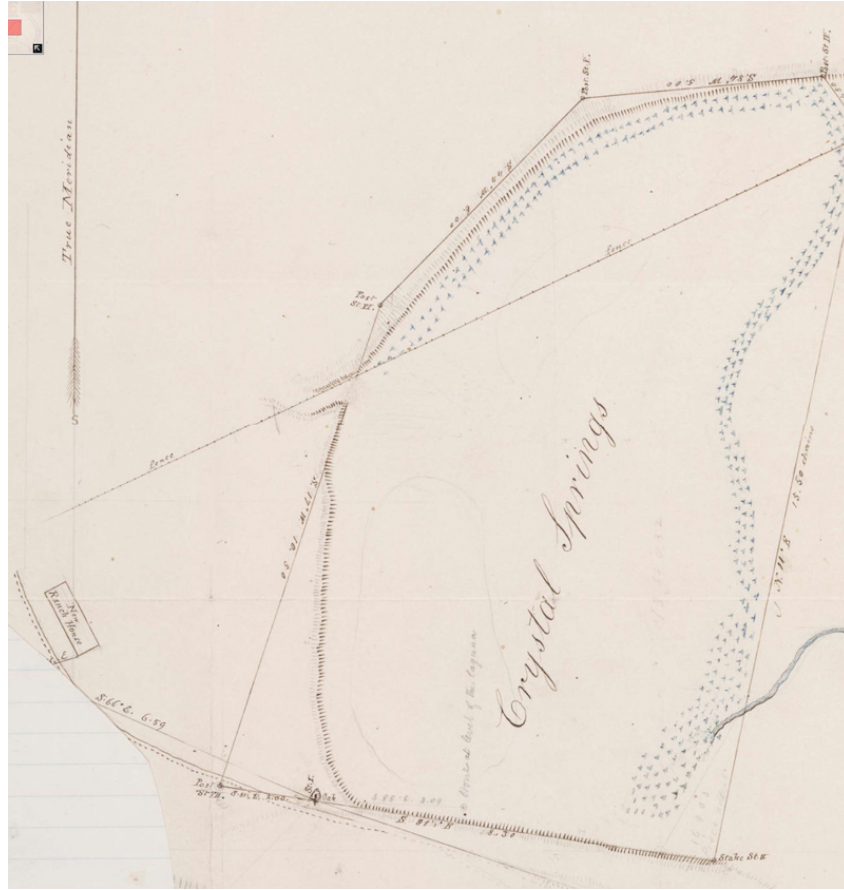
The land east of the canal, over the road, and down to the river, was the Griffith Reservation, where the Griffith's bred stallions, and farmed crops, and which was not part of the original park donation.

The area around Park Center, at the south end of the Griffith reservation, was leased to the Ostrich Farm, and to other amusements.

The first golf shop was also in Park Center, and was built to service Municipal Golf Links #1, which played along the canal boundary, when it opened in 1914.



Looking south, at Municipal Links #1, towards Park Center



The New Ranch House at the lower left is the current film office.

Crystal Springs was privately owned by the L.A. City Water Company, since 1868. It was swampy tularie covered land. Water was pumped out of the grey sand to the reservoir. A conduit joined the Griffith canal, and travelled by tunnel to Rowena reservoir, and eventually to downtown Los Angeles. This was the main water source for the city of Los Angeles until Owen's Valley water arrived after 1913.

The city bought the Crystal Springs Water Company in 1901, after years of legal wrangling, and continued to use Crystal Springs as part of the water supply.



Soon after the death of Griffith J. Griffith in 1919, his Griffith Reservation was sold to the city of Los Angeles, and added to the park. This allowed the Recreation department to build Harding and Wilson.



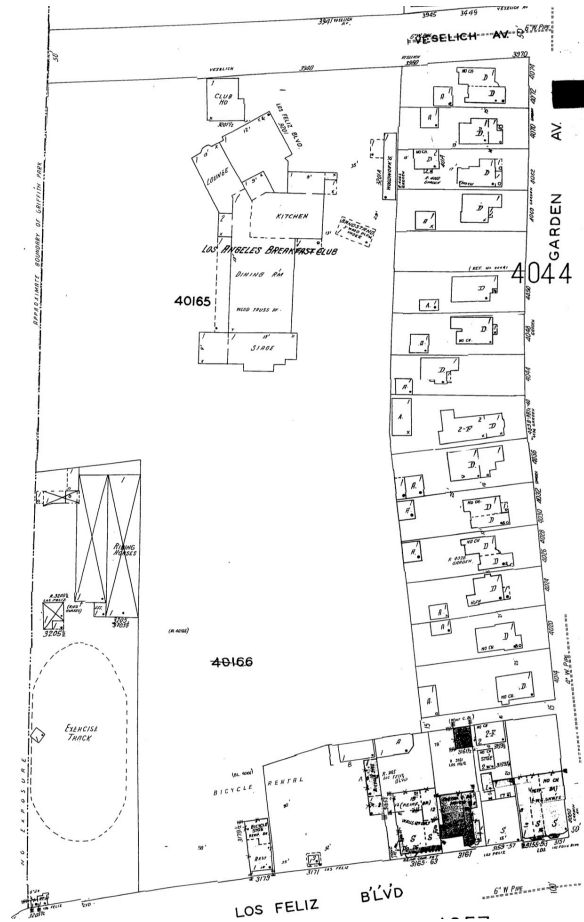
An October 1932 view of the wide Los Angeles River from Los Feliz bridge.  
The land on the right became Los Feliz golf course.



Late 1938, with the river channel under construction & reclaimed land on right.

Throughout the years, the flooding of the Los Angeles River during storms had caused devastation to property and life. Many sections of the river had had its banks reinforced, and straightened, since the rancho days. But, after the huge flood of March 1938, the river was permanently straightened and encased in cement.

The border of Griffith Park still follows the old path of the river, which was the boundary of the original Rancho Los Feliz.



1930's Sanborn Map of Breakfast Club, with future golf course land not marked.

Near Los Feliz Boulevard bridge, the river was moved to the west, creating new land that would become the Los Feliz driving range/golf course. Immediately on the east of the new land, was California Stables, a small horse farm with an exercise track. It had been there since the 1920's, until at least, 1966, when a pet lion, living at the stables, mauled a five-year-old girl, making sensational newspaper headlines! She survived!

Further east of the stable, was a bicycle rental shop, catering to visitors to Griffith Park, at about 3271 Los Feliz blvd.



The Los Angeles Breakfast Club's Los Feliz clubhouse

Today's apartment complex at 3201 Los Feliz Boulevard, was the site of the Los Angeles Breakfast Club's second clubhouse, which was built in 1937 at Veselich and Garden. The rambling California style clubhouse was sold and demolished in 1965, when the current apartments were built.

The Los Angeles Breakfast Club started at 3201 Riverside Drive in 1925, and moved to Los Feliz in 1937. Their original club house burned down in 1941, when it was being used as an auditorium and general meeting place. In 1965, the club moved back to their original Riverside Drive site, on a 50 year lease, where they built the current building at 3201 Riverside Drive, now owned by the city.



Los Feliz Pitch & Putt, stables, and Breakfast Club, December 1952

The Los Feliz Driving Range and club house were built in 1947. The Parks department filed for a building permit for the clubhouse/pro shop in September. The Los Feliz Driving Range opened over Christmas, 1947.



Critical materials, like water pipe, which are used in the construction of recreation facilities, including golf courses, were banned since 1950 and the Korean War. This halted golf course construction around the country, including both new William P. Bell designed golf courses in the Sepulveda Dam, after grading. Other plans were for a new 9-hole course at Lake Machado, a new 9-hole on the Los Angeles River between the cricket grounds and the Disney Studio.

In late summer of 1952, the National Production Authority, in Washington, began relaxing the metal water pipe ban, and with the increased income of the new Rancho golf course added to Griffith Park's four other golf courses, the work to build the Los Feliz Pitch & Putt, 3-Par, 9-hole course was completed by Christmas 1952. The driving range lights became the night lights for the 3-Par!



Los Feliz Golf Course Café in 1955



Paul Hahn in action!

The first professional was Paul Hahn, the trick shot artist, from Charleston, S.C., who was hired in 1948.

Hahn was replaced by 1925 So. Cal. PGA champion George Kerrigan, in 1949.



George Kerrigan in the 1920's