

# NEWS RELEASE

FOXBURG, PA

## **FOXBURG GOLF PRESERVATION, INC. ANNOUNCES PRESERVATION PROJECT AT FOXBURGCOURSE**

FOXBURG, PA – The Foxburg Golf Preservation, Inc. has announced a major preservation and restoration effort for the Foxburg golf course which opened for play in 1887.

The course, the oldest continually operated golf course in America, has hired Ron Forse of Forse Golf Design to prepare architectural plans to update the course while retaining its Victorian roots.

Concerned volunteers from across western Pennsylvania and the country formed Foxburg Golf Preservation, Inc. to help ensure the survival of this historic golf course. The group's goal is to raise \$1 million in donations to revive the course so it can continue to provide recreational, economic, social, environmental benefits to the Foxburg area and all residents of Western Pennsylvania in addition to preserving the historic course for posterity. An additional \$1 million endowment fund is planned to support youth, veteran and disabled golfer programming, equipment, technology and personnel.

Foxburg Golf Preservation, Inc. Board Director Gary Whittington, and former Foxburg Country Club board member Jeff Carr, announced a \$100,000 challenge match to encourage donations. The Carr-Whittington Challenge will match gifts greater than \$1000 from the fund. Mr. Whittington's spouse, Mary is an Emlenton, Pennsylvania native. They reside in Corpus Christi, Texas and are proud parents of Ryan, Ashley and Amanda. Jeff Carr, of The Woodlands, Texas, is a former Emlenton resident and multi-year Club Champion who, when residing in Emlenton, donated many hours toward the operation and maintenance of Foxburg Country Club and its historic course. Jeff, his wife Sue and daughter Karey all now reside in The Woodlands, Texas.

"Foxburg golf traces its rich history all the way back to St. Andrews in Scotland," said Andrew Rapp, chairman of Foxburg Golf Preservation. "Unfortunately, our course has fallen victim to the hands of time. And it has fallen upon us, those who

love the course and its historic significance, to do something about it. This is the reason we started The 1887 Project.”

The course is listed on the National Historic Registry of Historic Places and is home to the American Golf Hall of Fame and Museum.

The town of Foxburg, about 55 miles north of Pittsburgh, was once a busy marketplace with both the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad stopping in the town. But those once-thriving oil, lumber, gas and glass industries are long gone, and the region’s population and financial resources have slowly declined in recent decades. As a result, Foxburg Country Club simply has not been able to sustain consistent investment in the course’s historic original design, infrastructure, equipment and maintenance.

“The 1887 Project’s goal is to retain the historic traditions while updating facilities and features to meet the expectations of contemporary golfers,” Rapp said. “Doing so will provide additional golfing opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds and will attract visitors throughout the region. The village of Foxburg is becoming a sought-after destination for those who are seeking to escape the noise of city life. This renovation will further add to Foxburg’s appeal. The Foxburg Golf Course will be a throwback to Victorian era golf architecture, a rarity in today’s American golf course landscapes.”

Forse expects to oversee the restoration of several greens, tee boxes, bunkers, sand traps and fairways, plus additional historic architectural features on the nine-hole course’s 40 acres of playing surface.

The project hopes to upgrade things such as more modern and reliable turf equipment, fairway and green mowers, aeration equipment and a sprayer. The existing irrigation system, including the storage tank, pumps, distribution lines and automated master control system, will be replaced. “To do this right, we will upgrade the infrastructure of this old course. We also want to make sure we have the right equipment necessary to maintain the new playing surface,” Rapp added.

The course’s Scotland connection comes from its founder, Joseph Mickle Fox, a son of Philadelphia real estate and oil baron. Fox was a star cricket player for Philadelphia’s Merion Cricket Club, which traveled to Great Britain for a series of international matches. A stop in Edinburgh led Fox to visit St. Andrews, the home of golf. There, Fox met Old Tom Morris, the professional at the Old Course and

four-time British Open champion. Morris got Fox started in golf with some lessons on fundamentals and built him a set of left-handed clubs.

When Fox returned home to Foxburg, he laid out eight makeshift holes around the family mansion. Golf proved so popular that Fox had right-handed golf clubs shipped from Scotland for his friends. He created a five-hole course in a pasture beyond the estate, then expanded it to nine holes the next year and eventually donated the land to the town.

“Golf has been played in Foxburg for the last 135 years, but this is about more than dollars or golf,” said Forse, who led the successful renovation of the Bedford Springs golf course in Bedford, Pa. “It’s about preserving an important piece of history and building a prosperous future.”

Rapp concluded, “This can’t be done by any one of us alone. It will be done by all of us working together.”

If you would like to help contribute to the 1887 Project and the Restoration and Preservation of the Foxburg Golf Course, you can contact our organization by email at [contact@1887project.org](mailto:contact@1887project.org) or write to us at **The Foxburg Golf Preservation, Inc., The 1887 Project, PO Box 326, Foxburg, PA 16036**

Checks may be made out to The Foxburg Golf Preservation (EIN 85-4259726). We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and any contribution is 100% tax-deductible.

The Foxburg Golf Preservation and the Foxburg Country Club are currently working on additional details on final course design and legacy donations of significant amounts. Donors will have an opportunity to be a part of history!

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