



THE 1887 PROJECT

FOXBURG GOLF PRESERVATION

“Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Since April 2022, the official kick-off announcement of The 1887 Project, we have managed to accomplish quite a few tasks, many of which cannot be seen or provide much evidence of success or achievement. Rest assured, there has been success. There is momentum, and momentum requires force and energy. I wanted to take a minute to highlight “momentum and energy,” provide some insight into the Foxburg Golf Preservation’s Mission, and finally, provide an outlook into 2023 – 2024 from a Fundraising and Development perspective.

Momentum Requires Energy.

Between October 2021 and March 2022, Board Members of the Foxburg Golf Preservation (FGP) have engaged in multiple virtual planning meetings in preparation for the April 2022, 1887 Project Kick-off event. Led by the efforts of Mr. Bruce Whitehair and Mr. James W. Martin, FGP engaged in a massive effort with Edinboro University’s Center for Branding and Strategic Communication Team. This effort allowed us to create our theme, our image, style as well as help us put together our statement of support. This required resources and energy we did not have otherwise, and it gave us much needed momentum.

During that time, we organized a database of emails and contact info of individuals have visited the Foxburg Golf Course, collected a list of Media contacts in the local area and from a larger regional presence. We contacted a few media outlets at the national level as well. All said and done, we reached out to over 2,500 contacts with the announcement and news of The 1887 Project. On April 2, 2022, we raised \$26,000. We received recognition and reprint in most of the local news outlets, and we were reprinted in the Golf Course Industry online, Golf Digest and PGA.com online, to name a few. Mr. Gary Whittington and the late Mr. Jeff Carr announced a \$100,000 challenge match to Foxburg: **The Whittington-Carr Challenge** will match “dollar for dollar” any contribution made by local Foxburg and surrounding members of \$1,000 or more. Momentum.

From July to September 2022, FGP Board Member Mr. Bruce Whitehair began an application with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Grant Programs to seek some funding assistance due to the importance of the Foxburg Golf Course’s legacy for the state of Pennsylvania, the county and of course, to Foxburg. In October of 2022, FGP was awarded \$500,000 to be used for construction repairs, irrigation, and equipment. At

the same time, The Fownes Foundation generously awarded FGP a \$20,000 donation. In my mind, the year 2022 was a very historic year for our efforts towards the Foxburg Golf Course. The momentum of 2022 will carry us all into 2023 and 2024.

With the assistance of Mr. Steven Buzard, longtime Foxburg Country Club Board Director, FGP was able to acquire a potential interested donor to FGP and our Mission. Mr. Buzard provided the lead of a former Club member who essentially grew up playing on the Old Course during the 1960's. FGP contacted representatives of this local family, who are since displaced, and provided some background on our cause and our opportunities for Legacy Naming. In December 2022, this family donated \$15,000 in memory of their parents who were very much involved in Foxburg, the American Golf Hall of Fame and overseeing the Course. Soon, you will see this family's legacy memorialized on a newly restored bench on the course. Momentum requires only a little spark to produce something big.

Also, in late 2022, FGP formed a partnership with the Bridge Builders Foundation in Oil City and applied for a \$100,000 Historical and Museum Commission construction grant. Additionally, we have efforts underway to join their Estate Planning Seminars in the future.

The FGP Mission.

The FGP was planned and created in December of 2020 by a group of volunteers who believe in the importance of preserving The Foxburg Golf Course and its significance to the history of Western Pennsylvania and the game of Golf.

Mission Statement: The FGP's main and specific purpose is to preserve, protect and maintain America's oldest continuously operating golf course, the Foxburg Golf Course for the next generation. The Foxburg Golf Course was established in 1887 and is a National Landmark recognized by the United States National Park Service of the Department of Interior in 2007. The FGP recognizes the financial difficulties in maintaining such an historic landmark and will work in close coordination with the Foxburg Country Club, Inc. Board of Governors in the spirit of restoring, preserving and maintaining this historical landmark.

Source: FGP By-Laws, dated July 11, 2022

The Board of Directors of FGP believe this mission serves 3 core principles:

- 1) To ensure the Foxburg Golf Course remains "continuously open" to preserve the legacy of Foxburg.*
- 2) The establishment of **The 1887 Project** as a unique golf course restoration opportunity for the Historic Foxburg Golf Course.*
- 3) To establish a Foxburg Golf Course endowment, in perpetuity.*

Within FGP, we have established By-Laws, Policies and procedures that provide us the very operating framework to help us in our mission. We have fiduciary duties and responsibilities to the very people, organizations and donors who believe in our mission outlined above. We have an obligation to be stewards of generosity. In that spirit, we will operate and carry out our business in a very organized and planned manner ensuring that due diligence is followed every step of the way.

Recently, the FGP Annual Report was distributed. This report is an excellent breakdown of the energy, momentum and effort that has been put into our mission to date. Virtual collaboration, countless phone calls, visits to Foxburg and 10 FGP Board Members volunteering their time and energy to preserve the Nation’s oldest, continuously operating Golf Course. In addition, the FGP Board of Directors, have contributed **a total of \$33, 372** towards this mission! This amount does not include contributions made by Mr. Gary Whittington and the late Jeff Carr. I could not be prouder of the people, the spirit, and the passion of these determined professionals. We must remain focused on our goals, as well as our reality. Below is an estimated breakdown of those funding goals we are working very hard to achieve:

FGP Investment Strategy

PRESERVATION	RESTORATION	ENDOWMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INRASTRUCTURE • EQUIPMENT • TRAINING DEVELOPMENT <p style="text-align: center;">\$300,000 - \$500,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COURSE RENOVATION • CONSTRUCTION • SYSTEM UPGRADES <p style="text-align: center;">\$2 – \$2.5 MILLION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQUIPMENT UPKEEP • SPECIAL PROGRAMS • RETENTION • PRESERVATION <p style="text-align: center;">\$1,000,000 (minimum)</p>
Priority #1	Concurrent Priorities – Long Term Planning	

With nearly **\$710,000** raised to date (a one-year timespan!), we have much more work to do. Preliminary estimates for the Restoration Phase are an estimated \$2,500,000. FGP will ensure every dollar is spent with maximum due diligence without cutting any corners. We believe that investments for the Preservation Phase will offset Course Restoration expenditures. All funds saved during these first two competing priorities will be reinvested into the Endowment Phase.

With that said, we must be cautious that we are not pushing and pulling in opposite directions. FGP adheres to strict due diligence in planning, organization, and a strategic focus towards the end state. While the Development Team continues to raise funds, it will be

important to identify the donor's restricted and non-restricted use of all funds. The President and Treasurer shall allocate the funding strategy in accordance with the FGP Funding Goals and make recommendations to the FGP Board for discussion and adoption.

FGP Committee Reports

Our Development Committee is focused on outreach communication with current and prospective donors to the FGP Mission. Mr. Bruce Whitehair has engaged former Foxburg resident Mr. Robert Horton, currently of Indianapolis, Indiana. Mr. Horton's family lived along Harvey Road from 1935 to 1941. Mr. Horton relayed an account from 1940 where Foxburg Country Club member Mr. Irwin showed him how to swing a golf club, which Mr. Horton proudly states he is "still able do so." A few days after that golf lesson, Mr. Irwin shipped out to fight with the U.S. Army in Europe and was killed a few years later in the Battle of the Bulge (The Ardennes Offensive), Belgium, Germany. Mrs. Carol Meals (Irwin) is the daughter of the referenced Mr. Irwin. We connected Mr. Horton with the Meals family who still reside in the Foxburg area. Additionally, Mr. Horton has engaged several of his golf connections in the Indianapolis area for support of the FGP mission to preserve and restore the Foxburg Golf Course. Mr. Horton's efforts have raised over \$1,000 dollars. FGP formally appointed Mr. Horton as an official FGP Ambassador. Thank you, Mr. Horton. We hope to see you during the summer of 2023!

There are other stories of our Development Committee reconnecting families with familiarity to the Foxburg Golf Course. Brothers Ivan (Keith) and Eric (Joel) Bell grew up on the Foxburg Golf Course with their parents, the late Ivan and Margaret Bell of Parker, PA. Ivan and Eric made a very generous donation to FGP and are memorializing their parents in doing so with through our Memorial Bench Legacy option. FGP has 9 historic Tee Box benches. These benches are made of concrete and well over 100 years old. The restoration includes sandblasting, staining, and resealing. The seats are being replaced with steel reinforced bluestone. Bronze plaques with raised lettering will provide the memorial dedications written by each donor who selects this Legacy Naming option. The Bell Family bench will be placed on Tee Box #1 in June 2023.

Thanks to the generosity of so many since April 2022, FGP is currently involved in a few other activities to preserve the Golf Course. The St. Andrews / American Golf Hall of Fame Lantern is currently undergoing a restoration and is expected to be unveiled by June 2023. Lastly, we are providing expert Turf Management consulting services to Golf Course Staff. These initiatives will greatly enhance efficiencies, knowledge, and the overall Foxburg Golf experience. Lastly, our Planning Committee continues to work with renowned golf course architect, Mr. Ron Forse on the conceptual restoration improvement plan.

Economic Outlook: 2023 – 2024

Political instability. COVID-19. Unemployment. Inflation. High Interest Rates. The Monetary Policies of the Federal Reserve. GDP. We need not continue. The next 2 years will define the economy for the next 10 years. Regardless of whether you believe we are heading for a recession or not, the economy is contracting slowly. Time will tell. We must take this outlook into consideration with our stated goals. The idea of a full \$2.5 million dollar restoration will likely take more time than originally thought. With all the challenges we face, these strategic priorities must be at the top of our list:

- **Location** – Build a Brand and Golf Experience, and Market it.
- **Workforce Development** - Provide Turf Management Education and Professional Development.
- **Infrastructure** - Improve the Health of vital organs of the Old Course.
- **Equipment** – Invest in equipment that is efficient, effective and improves on costs.
- **Structures/Buildings** – Reinforce existing structures.
- **The Future** – Cultivate the next generation of golfers with a Junior Golf Program.

A collaborative Planning Committee is underway to ensure due diligence is executed and a spending plan is well-thought out, as well as executed properly. This Planning Committee is examining immediate needs right now and will soon begin addressing those areas. This will ensure that the 137 consecutive year is achieved. Patience, teamwork, and communication are critical. Currently, the golf course equipment industry is somewhat turned upside down. There are 2-3 year long waiting periods for new equipment. While there are sufficient funds to address a failing irrigation distribution system, there are other areas that require attention. These are not cheap projects and will require resourceful planning activities. It is important that we all understand this.

Despite all the adversity Foxburg has seen over several decades as well as whatever the next few years brings us, Foxburg has always persevered for One-Hundred and Thirty-Six Years (136) and counting. It is important that you understand the purpose of the FGP Mission and the reason for its very establishment. You can be a part of it in many ways. Momentum requires Energy, and Energy requires passion, volunteerism, and effort. We are dealing with a very fluid economic situation and a lot of unknown. However, what we have accomplished to date is nothing short of remarkable. We have momentum, but nothing happens without enthusiasm. On behalf of my fellow Board of Directors, THANK YOU!

Respectfully,

Andrew Rapp
President
The Foxburg Golf Preservation