

Ornamental Planting on Golf Grounds

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As golf courses are located with so much open space about them, they lend themselves especially well to the creation of beautiful pictures without interfering with the purposes for which they are established. The narrower, restricted reason for a golf course is to provide a place where the game of golf may be played with the greatest of skill that the individual is able to acquire. The broader reason is to provide a place in which health-giving recreation may be enjoyed to the fullest extent. If this latter reason is the one that is fundamental then the game of golf is merely the means to an end and there are other subordinate factors that contribute to the result desired. If the ultimate, broader reason for the existence of such clubs is fully recognized, then the need of beautiful surroundings for the fulfillment of this purpose will be appreciated.



The tree in the middle foreground hides too much of the front of this building. Without it the picture would be well framed

Good greens and fairways are essential to a good game of golf. Unkempt borders and surroundings in no way contribute to or detract from the requirements of the game itself. But they do materially affect the enjoyment of those playing and add to or detract from its health-giving qualities as they add to or detract from the enjoyment of those playing. This, then, is a reason for considering the surroundings of the course and the possibilities of adding to the enjoyment of the players by attractive and appropriate settings all along the course.

Such additional attractions should not unduly restrict the ground for the play for which the course is designed, nor should they provide

unwarranted or annoying hazards; but if in providing beauty, penalties for poor playing are to a limited extent also provided, it should add zest to the game as well as inspiration to the players.

A commanding location for the club house about which the play features may be naturally grouped, forms the essential backbone for developing satisfactory details. With this part of the scheme well designed there will be left three main sections in which ornamental plantings may be made to add to the appearance of the whole. The first of these areas is the approach side of the club house, including the immediate surroundings of the house and the road borders from the highway and usually the area between the club house and the main highway, although the latter is not included in this area if the club house is so located that there is some of the play area between the club house and the highway. The second area is that around the club house and other buildings not connected with the approach. The third area is the playgrounds themselves, or at least the borders of the various fairways, surroundings of the tennis courts, and other recreational features.



This building would be more attractive with some irregular plantings in place of the severe continuous hedge-like foreground. The trees make a graceful frame

The framing of the club house in foliage as seen from the approaches is of first importance. The foundation of such framing should be trees. If the front presented to the highway or the approach road, wherever the principal view is obtained, is so short that trees placed near each of the corners will cover nearly half of the front, this should be the first planting to be made. If, however, the club house presents a long face to those approaching, then the principal portion of it should be framed in this way and other units of it should

be selected for similar partial hiding, a total of nearly half of it being thus hidden and the balance being left fully open to view. The kinds of trees best adapted to such use are usually those native to the region. Sometimes part of them may be evergreens, but these must be used with care or they will unduly darken the rooms within and thus offset the attractiveness they produce in the picture as seen from the outside.

Next to trees the most important plants for use on the welcoming side of the grounds are shrubs. These need to be at the corners and beside the steps, and enough more so that about half the foundation line is hidden. The plantings should not be continuous. The plantings at the corners should ordinarily be the tallest, although if there is a marked change in the size or character of the club house at any point this may likewise be supplied both with tall-growing shrubs and a mass extending well into the lawn in front of the building. Where intermediate groups are used they should not be alike either in the kinds of plants that are used or in location. These plantings are primarily to bring variety and help the onlooker forget the severity of the architectural lines. The club house is an introduction to a bit of the country and so should in its immediate surroundings begin to suggest the informality that goes with open woodlands and fields.

Another important part of the introduction is the road from the highway to the club house. If the country is flat or there are other unfortunate conditions that have seemed to dictate that it is most appropriate to have the approach straight from the highway to the buildings, then usually the best method of planting the trees is in straight rows paralleling the drive. Often two narrow roads with a liberal turf area between can be provided, and the trees then may be set outside the roads, giving chance of an unbroken view of the entrance to the club house between two banks of foliage. Such an entrance needs to be from 125 to 200 feet wide, depending on the length and the kind of tree that will be used. A long drive of this type should be wider than a short one.

Where the approach road to the club house may be curved, irregular groups of trees so located that at many points the road is well shaded are usually more attractive than those planted at regular distances from the edge of the road and at fairly uniform distances apart. In group plantings many different kinds of trees may be used effectively, but in the straight-line planting only one sort of tree should be used.

In addition to the shrubs already suggested there should be some plantings where the approach road leaves the highway. Care must be used in selecting the plants for such groupings and in placing them, so that traffic hazards will not be created. By using low plants near the road so that a clear view of any approaching traffic may be secured and using taller plants farther back, attractive and safe combinations may be made.

A most important series of plantings must be arranged near the buildings so that conspicuous views of the service portions of the buildings will not be obtained. This will usually require some heavy mass plantings, preferably of evergreens. Another place that always needs screening but which seldom gets the attention it should have, is the parking area. This most necessary adjunct of a country club or golf club that is worthy of the name, all too frequently just happens instead of being carefully designed to be reasonably con-

venient and "hideable." There should be no general view of it either from the front door of the club house or from the highway. Possibly it would have been better to have said "entrance door" in this case, as the front door as a rule faces the grounds and is on the opposite side of the house from the one that is used when approaching. The general relationship of the house and its facings should be that so often found in old colonial homes built on the banks of our larger rivers—the entrance facing one way, the front the other.

The attractiveness of plantings may often be increased by adding some of the more sturdy and self-reliant of the herbaceous perennials to add a touch of color when the shrubs are out of flower. By sturdy and self-reliant is meant those that will thrive with little special attention. No plants will thrive without some attention from time to time, but many kinds will give satisfactory results with far less care than others. The extra care demanded by the less sturdy kinds is not warranted in the general plantings in connection with the setting of a club house. If it is desired to have plants requiring special care, they should be placed where they can be given the extra care with the least difficulty. Special gardens placed where they may be enjoyed from the front of the house are usually the most appropriate places for such plantings. Some of the perennials that can often be used to supplement the flowers of shrubs are the day lilies, August lilies, golden glow, named varieties of our wild asters, and rose mallows. Peonies and iris are good sturdy plants but come at a season when there is an abundance of bloom on the shrubs that are usually planted.

To better visualize the effect that may be produced by groups of shrubbery at important points about the building, it is often desirable to make trial plantings of castor beans for a season. These plants make a quick growth in warm weather when there is plenty of fertility and moisture in the soil. The expense of making such a demonstration is slight. The seed is cheap. The thorough preparation of the soil in the small areas needed for planting would not be great and would serve largely as a preparation for the permanent plantings that would undoubtedly follow a visual presentation of the effects that can be produced. Castor bean varieties vary in height from 4 or 5 feet to 20 feet or more, while the color of the foliage varies from a bright green to bronze and almost red. By selecting kinds of appropriate height and of different colors of foliage real pictures may be formed. This castor-bean demonstration will probably not be satisfactory in places where there are cool nights all summer, as these plants thrive best in warm weather. It would probably be disappointing in most of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Michigan, and Wisconsin, and in the northern part of New York. The seed should be planted so late that it will not come up until after all danger of frost is past. In a rich soil and with plenty of moisture the plants will grow very rapidly. The castor bean will grow wherever corn will grow well. Corn and sorghums may be planted with the beans for contrast and to heighten the effects; but these upright-growing plants would need to be planted in clumps adjacent to or even among the castor beans, and should not be scattered through—only two or three stalks at a place.

Most ornamental and shade trees are usually worth saving when only a few of their limbs are dead, but it is often advisable and less expensive to replace badly diseased trees with perfectly healthy ones.