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**Local Golf Course Has 120 Years Of History**



Teeing off toward Spofford Lake.

(Photo courtesy of Brian Jenkins)



Lakeside golfing at the original first tee box.

(Photo courtesy of Brian Jenkins)

Pine Grove Springs Golf Course in Spofford has seen many changes since its inception as part of the Pine Grove Springs Hotel back in 1900.

Back in the day, teams of oxen helped construct the layout of the nine holes, and there were holes on both sides of the current Route 9A. After a fire in the late 1960s, the hotel closed its doors for good. Golf enthusiasts did not want to lose access to the course. Local nonagenarian Bill Allen was instrumental in creating a shareholder group to buy and preserve the grounds as a recreational entity.

The original Pine Grove Springs Hotel was named for the natural springs on its property. Sometime in its history, the clubhouse took up residence in an old barn on the south side of Route 9A, and all golf holes are now on that same side, so having to hit shots across the road is no longer a potential peril.

The terrain that plays host to Pine Grove Springs Golf Course is hilly, with approximately 250 feet of elevation change between the first and third holes. The fairways are narrow and heavily wooded. It is not unfounded to think that if one plays well at Pine Grove Springs, one can play anywhere else with relative ease. There are water features, as well as rock outcroppings which may or may not give the player's

ball a "member's bounce."

Folks who spend the day have many chances to see wildlife. Sightings have included bald eagle, crow, fox, bobcat, fisher cat, deer, and the ubiquitous squirrel and chipmunk in addition to a variety of songbirds. Local legend tells of a moose years ago that had gotten its antlers entangled in a safety net by the first tee.

These days, management of Pine Grove Springs is performed by Bob Maibusch. Maibusch, a Certified Golf Course Superintendent and Master Greenkeeper, has over 30 years experience. With his crew, his focus has been to improve the quality of the turf on the course. Inside the clubhouse, friendly, knowledgeable staff greet golfers, assist them with food and beverage offerings, and give information about upcoming events or tournaments. The pro shop offers the basics golfers need, as well as logo items specific to Pine Grove Springs. Memberships are available, as are reduced "Twilight" rates available after 4 p.m., making an after work round something to look forward to. Pine Grove Springs can play host to outings and fundraisers of up to 60 golfers.

Golfers are invited to take some time this summer to get to know, or become reacquainted with, a local piece of history.

**In The 1960s**

The City of Keene sent eight tons of food and clothing to "Mississippi negroes" in 1966 to show its support of civil rights.

A new 24 hour service on cable television, Channel 12, was inaugurated in 1967 Keene, and Pauline Kendall, a Keene housewife, represented New Hampshire in the Mrs. America contest.

Changes to the area around this time included the renovations and widening of Main Street and The Common in Keene, as well as highway construction of the first overpass (on West Street).

**In The 1970s**

By 1970 the population in Keene was 20,467. During this decade, the Cheshire Hospital opened - replacing the old Elliot Hospital, and the Keene Clinic moved to its present location.

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