

## **Taoiseach Jack and his Muskerry days.**

The late and much revered Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, was Muskerry's esteemed President in 1970. Later, in a Muskerry G. C. publication marking the 'Cork 800 Year' celebrations, the holder of six All-Ireland medals in a row (five hurling and one football in the 1940s with his native Cork) had this to say on his association with the club.

I have some very happy memories of my membership of Muskerry, even if the quality of my golf did not contribute to them. I first joined the club in the early fifties just before I ceased my other sporting activities, hurling and football. As in the case of many of my friends, that great and loyal Muskerry man, Frank Casey, initially invited me to become a member. I was already a member of the Dail and, because of the job I had, I was obliged to reside in Dublin.

But I well remember how I looked forward to coming to Cork at weekends and especially when I had finished my 'clinic' I used to have a fourball appointment with Frank, Paddy O'Donovan and Jim Murray, who subsequently went to Mullingar. On many an occasion I kept them waiting as a result of the numbers attending my 'clinic' but they were always very patient and indulgent with me.

In the middle and late fifties, a recurrence of an old hurling injury limited my golfing activities considerably – apart altogether from the limitation public life imposed on me – but this is not an excuse to admit that I won little, if anything, in the course of my membership of Muskerry, nor, indeed, did I win anything in any other golf club either. There was one exception, in the early fifties I think, when I won a rather remote competition in Muskerry for which I suffered the usual loss of a stroke. That brought my handicap to 17 at which it has remained ever since.

I should mention, though, that Mairin, my wife, did much better with fewer opportunities. She won Jerry Ryan's President's Prize at Muskerry in 1954.

Perhaps some of the occasions I enjoyed best were the annual 'Lads' v 'Chaps' matches organised by Frank Casey and Jim McCarthy. Frank has gone to his reward and Jim resides in Dublin but I would hope some time that these matches involving players of gaelic games and rugby could be revived, although, perhaps, they would have less meaning now that the G.A.A. Ban has been abolished.

One thing I always felt about Muskerry was the great esprit de corps that existed amongst the members. This was not confined to the golf course or to the very happy socials we used to have after the various important events, e.g. President's and Captain's prize days, but it extended into daily life activities as well. Speaking of socials, the 'turn' I best remember was the 'Bold Gendarme' duet between Frank Casey and Bertie Dorgan, probably Muskerry's most consistent member, now sadly deceased.

I remember too when the trees were planted during the captaincy of the late Dr Paul Kenefick - they have enhanced considerably the beautiful terrain of Muskerry. The seed was literally sown by John A O'Shaughnessy of Dripsey. A few years earlier, he planted the couple of small plantations between the then 8<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> fairways.

It was a privilege for me to have been elected President of the club in 1970 but I'm afraid I was unable, because of Government commitments, to contribute much to that office. I am also very grateful to the members for having elected me an honorary life member. As such I find myself in the company of men like Mick Power and Larry McCarthy, though not for the same reason.