

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of property

historic name Municipal Golf Course

other names/site number Buncombe County Golf Course

2. Location

street & number 226 Fairway Drive not for publication N/A

city or town Asheville vicinity N/A

state North Carolina code NC county Buncombe code 021 zip code 28805

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jessie Brown SHPD 3/4/05
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

 entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the
National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the
National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain): _____

Municipal Golf Course
Name of Property

Buncombe County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>28</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>29</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Recreation and Culture Sub: sports facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Recreation and Culture Sub: sports facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: golf course

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

roof asphalt

walls granite

brick

other iron

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Municipal Golf Course
Name of Property

Buncombe County, North Carolina
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Landscape Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance

1927 - 1956

Significant Dates

1927

1956

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ross, Donald, landscape architect

Sayre, Christopher Gadsen, architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Western Office, Archives and History

Municipal Golf Course
Name of Property

Buncombe County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 129 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 364050 3938080
2 17 364250 3939000

Zone Easting Northing
3 17 363920 3938540
4 17 364290 3938150
X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sybil Argintar Bowers, Preservation Planning Consultant

organization Bowers Southeastern Preservation date December 6, 2004

street & number 166 Pearson Drive telephone (828) 253-1392

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28801

12. Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.) additional owners attached

name Buncombe County c/o Patricia Crisco, Manager

street & number 226 Fairway Drive telephone (828) 298-1867

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28805

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Summary

The Municipal Golf Course, designed by preeminent golf course architect Donald Ross, opened for play on May 21, 1927.¹ It is located in Asheville, Buncombe County, to the north of Highway 81 (River Road), with an entrance on the east (Kensington Road) and the west (Fairway Drive). To the south of the course, and across River Road, is the Swannanoa River and new commercial and residential development. To the west is also new commercial development and to the north and east is a portion of the early twentieth century suburb of Beverly Hills. The Municipal Golf Course, or “Muni” as it is often called, was designed in 1925, concurrently with the surrounding subdivision of Beverly Hills.²

The first nine holes of the course, the front nine, located on the south side of the course, are relatively flat with gently rolling hills and flat floodplain comprising the fairway. A fence runs along part of the southern edge of the front nine, following the River Road, with only a small separation between the course and the road. The majority of the front nine is separated from the road by a narrow grassy right-of-way. Deciduous and evergreen trees line the north and east edges of the front nine, and a row of newly planted pines line the southern edge along the River Road. In stark contrast, the second nine holes of the course, the back nine, is hilly, with the fairway consisting of steep hillsides interspersed with wooded areas. The back nine is surrounded by Beverly Hills, with the roads of the residential area closely following the edge of the fairways. Fairways on the back nine are integrated into the surrounding residential parcels so that the course and its adjacent houses have the appearance of an open park. The back nine is separated from the front nine by Fairway Drive.

The clubhouse and the maintenance sheds are located to the south and east of Fairway Drive. The nomination consists of one contributing site, the golf course, one contributing building, the clubhouse, and twenty-nine non-contributing buildings and structures. The clubhouse, while completed in 1927, was significantly altered after a fire in 1956, which destroyed the second story of the building. While this second story was replaced at the time with the current flat roof, the building still retains its architectural integrity on the main level. The remaining buildings and structures associated with the operation of the golf course were built after the period of significance.

¹ “City Dedicates Municipal Golf Course”, Asheville Citizen, 21 May 1927.

² Routing map of the course by Donald Ross is dated 1925 (courtesy of Tufts Archives, Pinehurst, North Carolina) and Buncombe County plat book records indicate that the original Beverly Hills layout was taking place in 1926. Panoramic photos from 1926, taken by Herbert Pelton, show the land for the front nine before the course was built, but with Fairway Drive in the Beverly Hills suburb already built.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

In addition to the golf course proper, two triangular-shaped residential areas are included in the nominated acreage. These non-contributing areas are “donut holes” within the golf course boundary, and they comprise only a very small portion of the Beverly Hills residential area surrounding the course. At this time, only the golf course itself is being evaluated for listing in the National Register, and the small residential areas are deemed non-contributing to the significance of the course itself. Their presence within the golf course nominated property does not adversely impact the integrity and significance of the historic golf course. They are shielded from the course by wooded areas and they do not obscure or obstruct any important landscape features of the original course design.

The northern small triangular area, enclosed by holes 12, 15, and 16, contains Edgewood Road, with three houses and one apartment building. The southern, larger triangular area, enclosed by holes 10, 11, 17, and 18, contains nineteen houses along Fairway Drive, Gladstone Road, and Stockbridge Place. These houses are not related to the historic significance of the golf course landscape design, and most of them were constructed after the end of the period of significance in 1956. The earliest house, at 25 Gladstone Road, is a Tudor Revival style house built in 1935. The remaining houses were built from 1950 to 1968 in Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split Level styles.

1. Municipal Golf Course. Contributing. 1927.

The Municipal Golf Course consists of a full eighteen holes, with the front nine (holes one through nine) located at the front or south side of the course in a floodplain of the Swannanoa River. The front nine run in an east-west direction, while the back nine (holes ten through eighteen) run in a more northeast-southwest direction. The flatter front nine has a more open appearance, with pine trees and hardwoods interspersed among the holes. The back nine, often considered by golfers as a separate more difficult course, closely follows the hilly terrain and is surrounded by the subdivision of Beverly Hills.³ Numerous hardwood trees and a narrowing of spaces mixed with more open terrain on the back nine of the course creates a challenging design. The back nine is what golfers consider to be the most unique feature of the course, closely following the natural terrain and providing numerous hazards and challenges to the golfer. The combination of the two very different parts of the course makes the Municipal Golf Course unique even among Ross designs. Beautiful views of the Swannanoa Mountains to the east are clearly visible from both sections of the course.

³ Buncombe County Plat Book 18, pp. 19-20, shows Beverly Hills in 1938 when it was subdivided again. While the roads were laid out as planned in 1926, only a handful of houses were built in the 1920s. It was subdivided several times after this with new lot layouts. The 1938 subdivision shows the close proximity of some of the back nine holes to the residential lots.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 3

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Statement of Integrity

When Donald Ross laid out the course in 1925, he originally planned for the first nine holes to be located where the rugged back nine are, and the second nine to be located where the flat front nine are. Typically, when a course is built, these numbers can change, and this is indeed, what happened at the Municipal Course.⁴ Ross' original holes one through nine are today holes ten through eighteen (the back nine). The original holes ten through eighteen correspond with today's holes one through nine (the front nine). This change in numbering, some minor alterations to the holes themselves, the filling in of a water hazard on the front nine in the 1940s, the addition of golf cart paths in the 1970s, and the construction of houses in the two residential areas surrounded by the course are the only changes to the course from its inception (see Exhibit A, the 1925 routing map of the course, and Exhibit B, the current course layout).

Ross' original layout for yardages and the current yardages of each of the holes follows:⁵

	Original yardage	Current yardage
Hole 1 (current Hole 10)	374 yards	284 yards
Hole 2 (current Hole 11)	366 yards	373 yards
Hole 3 (current Hole 12)	354 yards	342 yards
Hole 4 (current Hole 13)	348 yards	351 yards
Hole 5 (current Hole 14)	533 yards	496 yards
Hole 6 (current Hole 15)	215 yards	212 yards
Hole 7 (current Hole 16)	352 yards	333 yards
Hole 8 (current Hole 17)	485 yards	489 yards
Hole 9 (current Hole 18)	230 yards	221 yards
Hole 10 (current Hole 1)	389 yards	386 yards
Hole 11 (current Hole 2)	492 yards	482 yards
Hole 12 (current Hole 3)	261 yards	267 yards
Hole 13 (current Hole 4)	530 yards	532 yards
Hole 14 (current Hole 5)	411 yards	416 yards
Hole 15 (current Hole 6)	141 yards	174 yards
Hole 16 (current Hole 7)	400 yards	404 yards
Hole 17 (current Hole 8)	189 yards	188 yards
Hole 18 (current Hole 9)	433 yards	406 yards

⁴ Brake, Robbie. Current superintendent of Municipal Golf Course. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 4 March 2004.

⁵ Information taken from the 1925 routing map of the course and Ross' original sketch cards, courtesy of Tufts Archives, Pinehurst, North Carolina.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 4

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

As can be seen above, yardages from the back tee today have been slightly increased or decreased over the years by creating a new tee in order to keep the course playable and enjoyable for modern use. As with all historic landscapes, the grasses and other plant materials have been added or replaced through the years, always with the goal of keeping the course in good playable condition. On some of the shorter yardage holes, yardages were increased due to the fact that modern golf clubs are more advanced for longer drives. The most change has happened at the current Hole 10 (former Hole 1), in the 1970s, where the length of the hole was considerably shortened by ninety yards. Even with this and other minor yardage changes, the overall shape and layout of the holes has not been significantly altered from Ross' original design (see Exhibits A and B).⁶ Other minor changes through the years include replacement, slight relocation, or addition of some of the bunkers (traps) in the 1960s and 1970s; and filling in of the pond on the original Hole 13 (current Hole 4) and the creek running through the original Holes 16, 14, and 11 (current Holes 7, 5, and 2) in the 1940s. The course today has bent grass greens with Bermuda grass fairways and tees, modern-day improvements to the original grasses used on the course. Ross' original design intent remains, with relatively small greens, narrow fairways, and interesting doglegs, making the course one that requires skill and accuracy to master.

2. Clubhouse. Contributing. 1927, 1956.

The clubhouse today is a one-story building of pink granite with a flat roof. Dedicated May 14, 1927, one week before the course originally opened for play, the building, designed by architect Christopher Gadsden Sayre, originally was a handsome Tudor Revival-style one-and-one-half-story with a high hip slate roof punctuated by dormer windows.⁷ Beeler and Company of Asheville, North Carolina was granted the contract by the City of Asheville as the general contractor and Pumford & Pope were chosen as the plumbing contractors.⁸ The original building cost was \$37,839.00. At the time it was completed, the clubhouse was one of the most complete in the services it offered to golfers. It contained a restaurant, banquet hall, private dining room, lounge, and pro shop. Showers and lockers and living quarters for the manager were also part of the original plan. All furnishings for the main floor of the clubhouse were provided by Sam P. Burton & Son, Furniture and Interior Decorations, of Asheville.⁹ After a fire in 1956 destroyed the upper story, several courses of yellow brick were placed onto the remaining first story and capped by a flat roof. Today, the building retains its architectural integrity from the period of

⁶ Current yardages taken from the Scorecard information for the course. <http://GOLFCOURSE.com>: Scorecard: Buncombe County Municipal Golf Course.

⁷ Plaques remaining on the building give this as a date. The May 14, 1927 dedication plaque notes the Asheville Park Commission with E. C. Greene, Chairman; Chester Brown, and Dan W. Hill. An additional plaque notes the Asheville City Commission at the time, consisting of John H. Cathey, mayor; F. L. Conder, Commissioner of Public Works; and C. H. Bartlett, Commissioner of Public Safety.

⁸ City Archives, Minute Books, November 24, 1926.

⁹ Ad in Asheville Citizen, the day before the opening of the course. 20 May 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 5

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

significance, including these features on the first floor: the original front porch with granite posts and original multi-light metal frame casement windows. A parking lot is located to the west side of the clubhouse.

3. Picnic Shelter. Non-contributing. 1970s.

Simple one-story wood frame shelter structure with a gable roof and raised platform for picnic tables.

4. Cart Barn. Non-contributing. 2003.

Rectangular one-story pink concrete block building with a front-gable roof and vinyl siding in gable ends. Used for storage of golf carts.

5. Maintenance Shed. Non-contributing. 1970s.

Rectangular one-story frame building with metal siding, open on one side, and a shed roof. Used primarily for storage of landscape maintenance materials.

6. Maintenance Building. Non-contributing. 1970s.

Rectangular one-story frame building with metal siding and a low-pitched gable roof.

7. 10 Edgewood Road. James F. Bocock House. Non-contributing. 1964.

One-story Ranch style side-gable brick house, with areas of board and batten siding.

8. 12 Edgewood Road. Reverend Waldo F. Keeler House. Non-contributing. 1951.

One-story Minimal Traditional style side-gable house with vinyl siding and stone veneer.

9. 24 Edgewood Road. Joseph R. Gill House. Non-contributing. 1951.

One and one-half story Minimal Traditional style house with steep side gable roof and one and one-half story front-gable wing, all covered in vinyl and asbestos siding.

9a. Storage shed. Non-contributing. 1951.

One-story front-gable building with German siding.

9b. Storage shed. Non-contributing. 1951.

One-story front-gable building with German siding.

9c. Apartment. Non-contributing. ca. 1970.

One-and-one-half story side-gable building with masonite board siding.

10. 187 Fairway Drive. Bessie Tappen House. Non-contributing. 1960.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 6

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

One-story-plus-basement Split Level modern side-gable brick house with front-gable wing.

11. 191 Fairway Drive. House. Non-contributing. 1956.

One-story-plus-basement Split Level modern side-gable roof brick and masonite board house.

vacant lot to south

12. 195 Fairway Drive. Scott Beal House. Non-contributing. 1957.

One-story-plus-basement Split Level modern side-gable house with aluminum siding.

13. 199 Fairway Drive. Howard J. Runnion House. Non-contributing. 1956.

One-story Split Level modern side-gable brick house with two-story front gable wing.

14. 205 Fairway Drive. House. Non-contributing. 1958.

One-story-plus-basement Split Level modern front-gable house with vinyl siding.

15. 207 Fairway Drive. Herbert W. Kanouse House. Non-contributing. 1950.

One-story Minimal Traditional style side-gable roof house with rough-sawn lapped wood siding.

vacant lot to northwest of #16.

16. 8 Stockbridge Place. R. E. England House. Non-contributing. 1954.

One-story Minimal Traditional style side gable brick house with front interior end chimney.

17. 12 Stockbridge Place. William K. McLean House. Non-contributing. 1955.

One-story Minimal Traditional style side gable brick and masonite board house.

18. 16 Stockbridge Place. W. W. McPherson House. Non-contributing. 1954.

One-and-one-half-story Minimal Traditional style steep side-gable house with lapped wood siding and front interior end chimney.

19. 3 Stockbridge Place. House. Non-contributing. 1962.

One-story-plus-basement Ranch style side-gable house with masonite board siding.

20. 5 Stockbridge Place. H. Oliver Hoover House. Non-contributing. 1951.

One-story Minimal Traditional style side-gable house with weatherboard and stone veneer.

21. 7 Stockbridge Place. Paul F. Kando House. Non-contributing. 1968.

One-story-plus-basement Split Level modern hip roof house with brick veneer and wood siding.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 7

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

22. 4 Gladstone Road. Harry A. Lockemer House. Non-contributing. 1958.

One-story Minimal Traditional style side-gable house on large corner lot.

23. 6 Gladstone Road. Annice A. Tuner House. Non-contributing. 1950.

Two-story Minimal Traditional style front-gable roof house with stone veneer and weatherboard siding.

24. 8 Gladstone Road. William M. Whisnant House. Non-contributing. 1950.

One-story Minimal Traditional style side-gable weatherboard house with front gable roof wing.

25. 12 Gladstone Road. Wallace K. Grubman House. Non-contributing. 1961.

One-story Ranch style side-gable roof house with board and batten siding.

26. 16 Gladstone Road. House. Non-contributing. 1956.

One-story-plus-basement Ranch style side-gable roof house of stone veneer and masonite board siding.

27. 20 Gladstone Road. J. Franklin Phillips House. Non-contributing. 1950.

One-story Minimal Traditional style steep side-gable roof brick and masonite house.

28. 25 Gladstone Road. H. J. Romieux House. Non-contributing. 1935.

One-and-one-half-story Tudor Revival style half-timbered house with clipped gable roofline and multi-light casement windows.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 8

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Summary

The Municipal Golf Course, located on the east side of the city of Asheville, North Carolina, is locally significant as an intact example of a golf course designed by renowned golf course architect Donald Ross. It is typical in many ways of a Ross-designed course, but distinctive in that it is comprised of two very different terrains; the relatively level front nine and the rugged back nine holes. The course was built as the first municipal golf course in the state of North Carolina, being a public course from its inception with fees that made it affordable to the general community. The original granite clubhouse, designed in 1927 by Asheville architect Christopher Gadsden Sayre, still contributes to the nomination although its dormered roof burned in 1956 and was replaced by a flat roof. The Municipal Golf Course was also the first municipal course in the state to be racially integrated, on a limited basis at first, but moving to full integration beginning in 1954 when public courses were required by law to be integrated. Through the years, the course has been home to many famous amateur and professional golfers, some of which include Bobby Jones, Al Dowtin, J. C. Hyatt, Billy Gardenhight, and John Brooks Dendy. The Municipal Golf Course is nominated under Criterion C for landscape architecture and under Criterion A for its local significance in entertainment/recreation and black ethnic heritage of Asheville, North Carolina. The period of significance of the golf course dates from its opening in 1927 to 1956, acknowledging the important renovation of the clubhouse after the 1956 fire and its transition to an integrated golf course during the mid-1950s.

Historic Background

The land for the Municipal Golf Course was purchased by the City of Asheville on February 2, 1925 from the Malcragson Land Company. Even though there were four private courses in the city, this property was intended from the beginning for use as the city's public golf course, as noted in the deed. Provisions were made in the deed that if the land was used for any other purpose during the twenty years following the date of the deed, that the land would revert back to the seller.¹⁰ While not fully documented at the present time, it is likely that Malcragson Land Company was the developer of the original Beverly Hills subdivision which closely surrounds the golf course. The road system was laid out at the same time.¹¹ Apparently it was soon after this that the City of Asheville contracted with Donald Ross, preeminent golf course architect, to design the new golf course. Ross' routing map, which appeared in the Asheville Citizen

¹⁰ Buncombe County Deed Book 305, p. 398. It should also be noted that the course was always referred to as the Municipal Golf Course from its inception. Some confusion has arisen due to the fact that on the plat for Beverly Hills shown in their promotional brochure, it was called "Happy Valley Golf Course". This may have been the intent to call it this, but no other reference for this appears. There was a proposed course in nearby Kenilworth which was proposed but never built, also called Happy Valley, but the Municipal Golf Course, according to all other records and interviews with long-time golfers was never called by any other name.

¹¹ "Beverly Hills, the Master Suburb" promotional brochure.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

newspaper on December 27, 1925, shows the original layout of the course (see Exhibit A).¹² Ross' design notes were quite detailed, even though he only visited the site briefly. For example, his notes for Hole 2 (current Hole 11) indicated there was to be a "grass hollow all around the green, 3' deep and 12' wide." Hole 5 (current Hole 14) notes that the "undulation of C" [notation on his sketch] should be "2' high at edge of bunker, sloping gradually to center of green." Hole 6 (current Hole 15) notes "the hollow running diagonally across green 20' wide, 1'-6" deep, and drained towards the front." All of his notes indicated that the fairway areas were to be cleared of all trees and roots in preparation for seeding.¹³

Construction on the course proceeded all through 1926, along with the clubhouse. A newspaper article from the Asheville Citizen noted that construction had begun in late summer or early fall of 1925, under the direction of J. R. Brooks, a representative of Donald Ross. Brooks was formerly associated with the Plant Railway Company of Florida and had many years experience in the laying out of golf courses. This same article noted that the course was estimated to cost approximately \$60,000 and was to be "one of the finest courses in this section...to have all advantages of the most exclusive golfer's paradise."¹⁴ Mayor John Cathey of Asheville noted in this article that the golf course would assist Asheville in becoming one of the best known "tourist cities."¹⁵ Golfers in the Asheville area who could not afford the greens fees charged at many of the private golf clubs were excited to have a public course available at cost that is more reasonable. This article also notes that Commissioners were deciding at this point on the design for the clubhouse.¹⁶ Delays in construction of the course occurred soon after beginning, after J. R. Brooks met with F. L. Conder, with the city of Asheville, and the city engineers who built much of the course, and requested that Ross himself meet with them before further construction occurred. Ross had only visited the site briefly and was needed at this point to clarify some of his notes. It is not clear whether or not Ross actually came to Asheville, but construction continued behind schedule. These delays put off seeding of the course until the fall of 1926, with the opening taking place in May of 1927.

¹² There is no date on this plat other than 1925, but it appears that construction began in late summer or early fall of that year. The plan was not printed in the newspaper until December 1925.

¹³ Donald Ross' original sketch cards for the golf course.

¹⁴ "Asheville's Splendid New Municipal Golf Course," Asheville Citizen, 27 December 1925.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ "Construction of Asheville's Municipal Golf Course Has Been Started by Ross Expert." Undated article, likely from late summer or early fall of 1925, soon after Ross' plan was completed. It was noted the course would take approximately five months to build and was scheduled to open in the spring of 1926, but it did not open until 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 10

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

The clubhouse was formally dedicated on May 14, 1927, and the course officially opened for play on May 21, 1927.¹⁷ The Asheville Citizen, on May 20, 1927 featured several articles on the golf course, with photos of the course and the new clubhouse. At the time it opened, construction costs for the course and the clubhouse had well exceeded the estimate, costing the city over \$150,000. Fees at the opening of the course were fifty cents during the week and seventy-five cents on Sundays and holidays, set by the committee in charge of operation of the links.¹⁸ At the opening ceremonies, Mayor John H. Cathey of Asheville and Mayor Allen Coggins of the nearby Bee Tree community competed in the formal opening match, with Cathey winning.¹⁹ Joe Kirkwood, a noted professional golfer, played at the opening as part of a foursome of professional players, including Ray Cole, golf pro at the Municipal Course, and the golf pros from the Biltmore Forest and Asheville Country Clubs, Frank Clark and George Ayton. Kirkwood also delivered a speech and gave a demonstration on techniques of golf.²⁰

Ray Cole, the first golf pro hired by the City, lived at the course in the living quarters contained within the clubhouse. He offered lessons by appointment, was in charge of keeping the pro shop well stocked, and could also help with golf club repair. He served as golf pro until 1932 when Cecil Earp took over. J. Weldon Weir was manager of both the golf course and the nearby City Recreation Park beginning in 1932. Directory listings do not indicate how long he served in this capacity.²¹

Almost from its beginning, the Municipal Course operated in the red. The good intentions of keeping greens fees at an affordable rate also meant there was not enough money to maintain the course. As early as 1939, the city began entertaining ideas to lease the course. Plans were proposed to lease it to Kenneth J. Glenn, the course operator/manager.²² Glenn did lease the course for \$250/month, and he kept it operating as it always had, as a public course. At the time the lease was signed with the city, the revenues for the course had been only approximately

¹⁷ Plaque on clubhouse denotes the May 14, 1927 date. "Ready for Opening of Municipal Golf Course Saturday," Asheville Citizen, 20 May 1927, and ad in newspaper the same day announcing the grand opening ceremonies.

¹⁸ "Ready for Opening of Municipal Golf Course Saturday." This committee consisted of long-time golfer Henry Westall, M. V. Moore, and Carl Bainford.

¹⁹ "Only Municipal Course in State is Formally Opened as Cathey Defeats Coggins," Asheville Citizen, 22 May 1927.

²⁰ "Ready for Opening of Municipal Golf Course Saturday," and the grand opening ad for the course.

²¹ Asheville City Directories 1928-1932.

²² "City Plans to Lease Muni Golf Course", Asheville Citizen, 11 August 1939. There is no indication in city directories or this article when Glenn took over as manager.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 11

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

\$7000, with costs of over \$14,000.²³ Based upon the restrictions cited in the deed from Malcragson Land Company in 1925, the city was unable to actually sell the property for other uses until 1945.²⁴ The American Legion of Oteen did lease the course from the city from 1946-1949, but by keeping it affordable to the public was never able to turn a profit, and did not renew its lease after this time. On November 3, 1950, an offer to purchase the course for \$60,000 was presented to council by Silas G. Bernard, attorney for a client interested in the purchase. This proposal stated that only the front nine would remain and the rugged back nine would be developed for residential use. This offer never went through.²⁵

The residential subdivision of Beverly Hills was laid out around the golf course in 1926. Two small areas of the subdivision were completely enclosed by the course, and accessible by roads that cut between the fairways. Due to the severe collapse of Asheville's economy during the Depression of the late 1920s, only a handful of houses were built in the 1920s. The only house built in the areas surrounded by the golf course was the Romieux House at 25 Gladstone Road, constructed in 1935. Not until 1950 did construction recommence in these islands. From 1950 to 1968, nearly all of the lots were developed with Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split Level style houses. At this time, these residential resources are included in the nomination only by default, and they should be considered as noncontributing because the focus of the nomination is on the Municipal Golf Course itself.

In August of 1954, an offer to purchase the course was extended to the city by the Haw Creek Community Club. The offer was for \$75,000, even though the course had cost the city \$150,000 to build.²⁶ The city actively entertained this idea amid a great deal of controversy from the African American community in particular. The intent of the Community Club was to keep the course public, but that they would have the right to make their own usage regulations regarding the clubhouse. The African American community, represented by Ruben Dailey and Harold Epps at several council meetings, was deeply concerned that even though the course would remain public, that there would be more private restrictions put on the use of the clubhouse facilities.²⁷ Council insisted that the course operations would remain unchanged and went as far as officially

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Buncombe County Deed Book 305, p. 398. In this deed, it is stated that if the property was sold for any use other than a golf course that the land would revert to the seller, and the city would be responsible for paying a penalty fee per acre.

²⁵ City Archives Minute Books. November 3, 1950.

²⁶ City Archives, Minute Books, August 25, 1954.

²⁷ This was happening right after the African American community had just begun to be able to use the course as a truly integrated park after the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education and later public parks rulings. Likely the African American community felt the selling of the course was a way to get around this legislation so the course would no longer have to be completely public.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 12

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

advertising the course for sale to the highest bidder (which would have been the Haw Creek Community Club).²⁸ Soon after this, however, the city's legal staff withdrew the ads, stating that the legal complexities of it remaining as a public course would be difficult at best to document and guarantee for future use once it was out of the hands of the municipal government.²⁹ The issue was dropped, for a time. On November 8, 1956, an offer to purchase the "Upper Nine Holes" (the back nine) was presented to the city council by R. P. Booth & Company, Agents, for \$45,000. The intent at this point was to develop the back nine for use as a park and home sites.³⁰ This was heavily protested within the community at large. A formal petition to prevent the sale was presented to council on December 20, 1956, signed by the Haw Creek Lions Club, the American Legion at Oteen, the Beverly Hills Community Club, and the Haw Creek PTA. The sale did not go through, due to local protests.³¹ Since the late 1950s, the city of Asheville maintained ownership of the course but struggled to keep the "Muni" operating in the black. Due to the heavy usage of the course by student teams from the high schools, amateur and professional players, and large numbers of tournaments, the course was difficult and costly to maintain. On June 29, 1984, the course was sold to Buncombe County, who owns and maintains the course today with better financial success.³²

The Municipal Golf Course today remains as Asheville's only public course, and on busy days hundreds of golfers of all ages and backgrounds play the course. Daily greens fees range from ten to twenty dollars, with passes and individual or family memberships available for the more frequent players. It still hosts many tournaments including the Senior Games, and is in excellent condition. Development pressures on nearby Highway 81 have helped to unite the Beverly Hills neighborhood and local golfers to rally behind the Municipal Golf Course and recognize the importance of its preservation for future generations.

Entertainment/Recreation and Ethnic Heritage/Black Context

The 1927 Municipal Golf Course meets Criterion A for its significance as the first municipal golf course in North Carolina, and remained the only public course in the region throughout its period of significance, which ends in 1956. By the late 1920s, Asheville had become a center for entertainment and recreation in the North Carolina mountains.³³ The 1894 Asheville Country Club (now the Grove Park Inn Country Club) was the earliest of Asheville's golf courses, followed in the early to mid-1920s by three additional private courses, concluding with the public Municipal Golf Course in 1927. These private courses were the Biltmore Forest Country

²⁸ City Archives Minute Books. September 2, 1954.

²⁹ "Council Rescinds Action to Sell City Golf Course," *Asheville Citizen*, 9 September 1954.

³⁰ City Archives Minute Books. November 8, 1956.

³¹ City Archives Minute Books. December 20, 1956.

³² Buncombe County Deed Book 1359, p. 228.

³³ "Golf First Introduced Here Forty Years Ago."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 13

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Club (1922), Lakeview Park Golf Course (1924-1925), now the Country Club of Asheville; and the Malvern Hills Golf Course (April 1, 1927), all of which were built in conjunction with their surrounding neighborhoods. All of these, except Malvern Hills Golf Course, were designed or renovated by Donald Ross. In late 1920s promotional brochures, the Chamber of Commerce touted Asheville as a resort town, citing the large number of outstanding golf courses as some of its best offerings.³⁴

Golf as a sport in Asheville began with the founding of the private Asheville Country Club in 1894. The Asheville Country Club, although changing locations several times through its history, is the oldest country club in continuous operation in North Carolina.³⁵ Founded on November 26, 1894, the club started as the Swannanoa Hunt Club, later becoming the Swannanoa Country Club and golf links. One of the club's early clubhouses, no longer extant, was located on Battery Park Hill. Soon after the Hunt Club became a golf club, the clubhouse was moved to Merrimon Avenue in north Asheville. This clubhouse is also no longer extant.³⁶ The club later became the Asheville Country Club. In 1898 George Willis Pack, local developer, gave 100 acres of land at the base of Sunset Mountain, at the present location of the Grove Park Inn and Country Club, to the Asheville Country Club for a new nine-hole golf course, which was remodeled by Donald Ross in 1913.³⁷ A Chateausque style clubhouse was completed in 1926 and is still in existence. In 1978, the Asheville Country Club moved to the nearby Lakeview Park community, took over the Lakeview Park golf course, built a new clubhouse, and changed their name to the Country Club of Asheville. The former Asheville Country Club and course at Sunset Mountain was taken over by the Grove Park Inn and became the Grove Park Inn Country Club.³⁸

As early as 1902, in conjunction with Asheville's growing reputation as a resort community, golf was gaining in popularity as a sport for the wealthy. According to a 1902 article in Southland magazine, "golf has come to stay...it is a healthful amusement, suitable for all classes and conditions..."³⁹ Golf in Asheville not only attracted men, but there were many women golfers involved in the sport as well. Some of these included Sara Rumbough, Elizabeth Fitzgerald Forbes, Laura Carter, and Sarah Mills. While not as often in competitive play, many women played the courses for recreation when visiting Asheville with their families.

³⁴ "In the Land of the Sky" promotional brochures. Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. 1926-1928.

³⁵ The History of the Country Club of Asheville 1894-1994. Country Club of Asheville, 1994, p. 3.

³⁶ "Golf First Introduced Here Forty Years Ago," Asheville Citizen, 10 February 1935.

³⁷ Greenberg, Sue, and Jan Kahn. Asheville: A Postcard History, Volume I. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 1997, p. 87.

³⁸ "Photographs of Old Asheville Hanging in Akzona's Headquarters Building." Brochure produced by Akzona Corporation.

³⁹ Newspaper clipping files, North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, North Carolina. Southland magazine, 1902. Article untitled.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 14

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

When the “Muni” opened in 1927, Asheville became the first city in North and South Carolina to have a municipal course, and was the only city of its size to have five golf courses. The Municipal Golf Course, like all of the private clubs, included a state-of-the-art clubhouse and golf course. The reputation of the quality of all of these courses, Muni included, rapidly grew among the professionals, drawing golfers such as Walter Hagren, Joe Kirkwood, and Bobby Jones.⁴⁰ The Summer Invitational Tournament at the Asheville Country Club drew players from all over the Southeast, with both men’s and women’s teams.⁴¹ The Southern Golf Tournament, which took place at the Biltmore Forest Country Club, was another annual event.⁴² Many tournaments were played at all of the courses, often ending up at the Municipal Golf Course on the final day.

Along with the boom in commercial and residential construction of the 1920s in Asheville, many sports and recreation facilities were also built as part of the city’s five-year “Program of Progress,” initiated in 1924. Asheville not only supported these golf courses, but also in the 1920s was involved in the development of recreational facilities, which could have competed with the amenities offered in much larger towns. The city’s goal was to provide recreational facilities for the local population but also to continue to draw tourists, one of the biggest revenue sources then and now for the city.⁴³ At the time the golf course opened in 1927, many other recreational facilities had been completed. These included Recreation Park, located just across the river from the Municipal Golf Course, which included a lake, swimming pool, dance pavilion, and zoo; McCormick Field (1923), which brought minor league baseball to Asheville; Memorial Football Stadium (1923); and Aston and Montford public parks which included areas for both passive and active recreation, including swimming pools, tennis courts, and children’s playgrounds.⁴⁴ All of these facilities remain today, with the exception of the lake at Recreation Park, which was infilled in the 1950s.

By 1950, Asheville and western North Carolina were home to a dozen golf courses, a sport that could be played almost year-round.⁴⁵ In addition to the five courses in Asheville, by the middle of the twentieth century, the following courses were in the region: Linville (Linville Country Club), Waynesville (Waynesville Country Club), Morganton (Mimosa Country Club), Hendersonville (Hendersonville Country Club), Brevard (Brevard Country Club), Black Mountain (Black Mountain Country Club), and Tryon (Tryon Country Club and High Hampton

⁴⁰ “Ready for Opening of Municipal Golf Course Saturday,” Asheville Citizen, 20 May 1927.

⁴¹ “What’s Doing in Asheville’s World of Sports,” Southern Tourist, July 1926.

⁴² “With Southern Golf Tournament Players at Biltmore Forest,” Asheville Citizen, 16 June 1925.

⁴³ Opening day ad for the Municipal Golf Course, Asheville Citizen, 21 May 1927.

⁴⁴ Opening day ad for the Municipal Golf Course. Asheville Citizen, 21 May 1927.

⁴⁵ “Golf Has Been Popular Asheville Sport for More Than Fifty Years,” Asheville Citizen, 26 March 1950.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 15

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Inn).⁴⁶ Of the five courses in Asheville from this time period, only Malvern Hills is not still actively in use.⁴⁷

From its inception, Muni was built as a municipal golf course, open to the public for play at affordable prices. This made it a family club, with young and old playing and learning the course together. Many high school golf teams practiced at Muni through the years. Muni enabled the less wealthy citizens in the community to enjoy the game of golf at a reasonable cost, and integrated the game of golf between the races earlier than the private clubs. A number of highly skilled amateur and professional golfers played the Muni. One of the most notable was J. C. Hyatt (1923-2004), who played this course along with others from the 1930s until near the time of his death in January of 2004.⁴⁸ J. C. Hyatt, who worked for the city as manager of Memorial Football Stadium, worked at McCormick Field, and later worked for WLOS TV, was one of the top three amateur golfers on the East Coast. He was inducted into the Western North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame in May 1990. In his heyday, Hyatt beat professionals such as Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, and Gary Player. Hyatt, for personal reasons, never turned professional, but was widely known to have the skills far exceeding his amateur status. During his lifetime, Hyatt won over 200 amateur titles, including the Grand Slam of Asheville and multiple father-son and father-daughter tournaments.⁴⁹ Al Downtin, who began playing at Muni in the late 1930s, was also a notable player, winning his second Beaver Lake (Lake View Park) title in 1937.⁵⁰ Other local amateurs with excellent reputations included Henry Westall and Harry Ehle.⁵¹

The first municipal course in the state, Muni was also the first to be racially integrated, although on a limited basis. Members of the African American community, many of whom worked as caddies, had special days designated for their use, beginning with Mondays and later expanding to Tuesdays. According to Billy Gardenhight, noted African American golfer who grew up playing Muni beginning in the mid-1940s, even though many of his friends also caddied at the other private clubs, Muni was the only one where they were actually allowed to play.⁵² Up until the time of Muni, young African American boys interested in golf made their own "courses" in their neighborhoods, consisting of dirt putting areas and tin cans for holes. Working as a caddie at the many local golf courses was a welcome source of income for many African American

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Hyatt, Kathy. Daughter of J. C. Hyatt. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 12 May 2004; and Hyatt, J.C., Jr., son of J. C. Hyatt. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 18 May 2004.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ "Al Downtin Takes Second Straight Beaver Lake Title," Asheville Citizen, 2 August 1937.

⁵¹ "What's Doing in Asheville's World of Sports."

⁵² Gardenhight, Billy. Noted African American amateur and professional golfer. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 13 May 2004.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 16

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

families, and, through watching the players, children learned the tricks and techniques of the game of golf.⁵³

It was not until the landmark legislation of May 17, 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education*, which effectively ended the Jim Crow era of “separate but equal” public facilities, that play at the Municipal Golf Course began to be fully integrated. *Brown v. Board of Education* required integration of educational facilities, but this led quickly to passage of additional integration laws, including the ones that required public parks, of which Muni was one, to be fully integrated. Billy Gardenhight remembers the first time that he and some of his friends showed up to play the Muni after this legislation was passed, on a “non-designated” day. Despite the change in law, the acceptance of the African Americans on the course at the time was not looked upon favorably. Amid much ridicule and harassment, African Americans continued to play, and gradually the integration of the course became an accepted policy.⁵⁴ Since the 1950s legislation, some of the greatest amateur and pro golfers in the African American community have played this course, including Billy Gardenhight, John Brooks Dendy, Preacher Williams, Stick Williams, Tommy Lee Nance, Nathaniel “Gravy Train” Glover, Tom Crouch, Bud Dooley, Charles Colette, Charles “June” Lytle, James Wiley, Jake Hawthorn, Henry Hardy, William “Pencil Slim” Young, Ben Brewer, Harry Jeter, and H. Clifford “Dead-Eye” Eddington.⁵⁵ Three-time Negro National Champion (1932; 1935; and 1936) John Brooks Dendy was an Asheville native who began play at Muni on the designated caddie days. Billy Gardenhight began work as a caddie in 1945, at the age of eleven, first at the Biltmore Forest Country Club and then at the Asheville Country Club. He began work as a “locker boy” at Muni in 1947. Ernie Ballard, the golf pro at the course at the time, would let Billy and his friends play the course in the early morning hours, as long as they were off the course by 9 a.m. Billy Gardenhight began playing golf more seriously in the late 1940s, often shooting in the low ‘80’s. In 1948, John Brooks Dendy organized a caddie tournament, including several pros, and Billy Gardenhight won the Junior Division.⁵⁶ From 1954 to 1970, Gardenhight traveled the southeast on a pro circuit, but has remained in Asheville as an amateur player ever since 1970.⁵⁷

In 1960, the Skyview Golf Association Tournament was begun, with the goal of promoting the game of golf among African Americans and helping them to prepare for professional golf. The first year’s playing field in 1960 was comprised of fifty African American golfers. While sponsored primarily by the African American community, all years, beginning in 1961, included

⁵³ Gardenhight, Billy Eugene Peter. “African American Golf in Asheville,” unpublished paper, 2000.

⁵⁴ Gardenhight, Billy. Noted African American amateur and professional golfer. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 13 May 2004. Also “African American Golf in Asheville.”

⁵⁵ “African American Golf in Asheville.”

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 17

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

both African American and Caucasian players, with over 250 golfers participating by 1970.⁵⁸ The Skyview Tournament was important in helping fully integrate Muni, and it remains as one of the largest tournaments in the Southeast, with golfers coming from as far away as California, Michigan, Canada and Bermuda. Over the years, the Skyview has helped to raise funds for agencies throughout the community, including the Irene Wortham Center for mentally and physically disabled children; the Young Men's Institute (YMI), the historically black YMCA until integration in the 1970s; and Thoms Rehabilitation Hospital, a facility for mental and physical rehabilitation of individuals recovering from automobile accidents and surgery.⁵⁹

Landscape Architecture Context

The Asheville Municipal Golf Course meets Criterion C for its significance as a well-preserved representative example of a course designed by Donald Ross, preeminent golf course architect. Ross was born in Dornoch, Scotland in 1872, and grew up around the Scottish-founded game of golf, playing the game, maintaining the grounds, and making golf clubs. Part of his training in the world of golf included an apprenticeship at St. Andrews, Scotland, the golf center of the European world. Ross was asked to come to Boston, which he did in 1899, to help build and maintain the Oakley Golf Club there. In 1900, he began working as the golf professional for the Tufts family in Pinehurst, North Carolina, where he lived until his death in 1948. At Pinehurst, Ross designed his first golf courses, including his masterpiece, Course No. 2, designed in 1901 and re-designed in 1935. Beginning in 1903, Ross designed golf courses in New England, and his practice spread to the Midwest and down the Southeast. Ross had offices in Little Compton, Rhode Island; North Amherst, Massachusetts; and Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, but most of his work was done in Pinehurst, in a small cottage office there. He often designed his courses from topographic maps without actually visiting the sites more than once, creating sketch cards with detailed notes for the construction crews.⁶⁰ During his lifetime, Ross was responsible for transforming the landscape of the sports world perhaps more than any other designer. Over one hundred U. S. national championships have been played on his courses. Ross was the founder and first president in 1947 of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.⁶¹

Ross not only designed the Municipal Golf Course, but also was responsible for the design of several other golf courses in Asheville. These included Biltmore Forest Country Club (1922); the Lakeview Park course (1924 for the first nine holes; 1925 for the second nine holes, now the home of the Country Club of Asheville); and the Grove Park Inn (originally the home of the

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ A copy of Ross' sketch cards for the Municipal Course are included in the working file.

⁶¹ Klein, Bradley S. "Donald Ross: Golf Course Architect." CNN.SI.com-GOLFonline—Donald Ross—February 2004.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 18

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Asheville Country Club, renovated by Ross in 1913).⁶² Bobby Jones, famous professional golfer, visited Biltmore Forest Country Club on his honeymoon in the 1920s, and was struck by the beauty and challenge of the course.⁶³

A feature of Ross courses in the mountains was that they closely followed the natural terrain but were set in such a way as to take advantage of the magnificent mountain scenery. The Municipal Golf Course was no exception to this concept. From almost every vantage point within the course, the striking Swannanoa Mountains come into view. Typical, too, of Ross courses is the attention to detail and the design of the holes, fairway, and bunkers so as to make the course accessible to both the beginner and the more advanced golfer. Muni is likely the best example of this mix of challenges within one course, with the flat, easy sight lines of the front nine and the hilly, challenging terrain of the back nine.

In addition to his work in Asheville, Ross designed over 400 other courses throughout the country including many in North Carolina. Some of these include remodeling of all of the Pinehurst courses, most especially Pinehurst #2 in Pinehurst; Hope Valley Country Club in Durham; and Linville Golf Club in Linville, all of which were underway at the same time as the Asheville courses. Ross designed 700 courses in the United States, Canada, and Cuba throughout his career. Some of the more well-known ones include Brae Burn in Boston; Essex in Manchester, Massachusetts; Worcester in Worcester, Massachusetts; Plainfield in Plainfield, New Jersey; Seminole and Belleair in Florida; Aaronomia in Philadelphia; Oakland Hills in Birmingham, Michigan, near Detroit; and the Beverly, Calumet, Evanston, Northmoor, and Old Elm courses in the Chicago area. Ross was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1977 for his contributions to the sport of golf and in particular for the design of some of the most highly rated golf courses in the world.⁶⁴

Many of the early golf courses were parts of planned subdivisions. The park concept of design for subdivisions in the 1910s-1920s was popular across the country. It was not unusual to include amenities such as golf courses, open passive park areas, curvilinear streets, and tree-lined medians in order to lure homebuyers to suburban developments. This nationally popular design was certainly followed in Asheville, with developments such as Grove Park, Biltmore Forest, Lakeview Park, Malvern Hills, and Beverly Hills, all laid out in the 1910s-1920s, following these ideas. Asheville was unique, however, in that each of these developments included a golf course, most of which were designed by Donald Ross. All of these course designs followed Ross' basic concept of allowing the design to fall naturally within the existing topography and taking

⁶² "Golf Has Been Popular Asheville Sport for More Than Fifty Years," Asheville Citizen, 26 March 1950.

⁶³ "Donald Ross Designed Three of City's Four Golf Courses," Asheville Citizen, 27 July 1952.

⁶⁴ "World Golf Hall of Famer Profile: Donald Ross." <http://www.wgv.com/hof/members/dross.html>, 5/31/2004.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 19

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

advantage of the mountain views. The Municipal Course is unique in that it combines the natural terrain of two very different land areas -- a flat floodplain and a steep hillside -- within one golf course.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 20

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Major Bibliographical References

- "A Look at Muny," Asheville Times, 10 November 1970.
Asheville City Directories, 1928 – 1954.
"Asheville Country Club Tourney to Begin Monday August 17th," Asheville Citizen,
16 August 1937.
"Asheville's Splendid New Municipal Golf Course," Asheville Citizen,
27 December 1925.
"Beverly Hills, The Master Suburb." Development promotional brochure, 1926.
Brake, Robbie. Current Superintendent of Municipal Golf Course. Interview by
Sybil A. Bowers, 4 March 2004.
Buncombe County Deed Books.
Buncombe County Plat Books.
"Caddie Comeback," Carolina Fairways, Winter 2000.
"City Dedicates Municipal Golf Course," Asheville Citizen, 21 May 1927.
City of Asheville Archival Scrapbooks.
City of Asheville Minute Books, 1924-1954.
"City Plans to Lease Muni Golf Course," Asheville Citizen, 11 August 1939.
"Donald Ross Designed Three of City's Four Golf Courses," Asheville Citizen,
27 July 1952.
"Dowtin Plays Wilson for Title Today," Asheville Citizen, 1 August 1937.
"Fast Field Gathers for Golf Tournament Opening Tomorrow," Asheville Citizen,
15 June 1925.
"Four Ball Match Tees Off as Dedicatory Feature of New Course at Two O'Clock,"
Asheville Citizen, 21 May 1927.
Gardenhight, Billy Eugene Peter. "African American Golf in Asheville." Unpublished
Paper, 2000.
Gardenhight, Billy. Long-time amateur/professional golfer. Interview by
Sybil A. Bowers, 13 May 2004.
"Golf Came to Western North Carolina in Early 1895," Asheville Citizen-Times,
17 July 1960.
"Golf First Came to Western North Carolina in 1895," Asheville Citizen-Times,
26 January 1969.
"Golf First Introduced Here Forty Years Ago," Asheville Citizen, 10 February 1935.
"Golf Has Been Popular Asheville Sport for More Than Fifty Years," Asheville Citizen,
26 March 1950.
"Golfers Practice for Tourney at Biltmore Forest," Asheville Citizen, 7 August 1937.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 21

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

“Golfing Talent of South Ready for Qualifying Round of Title Contest at Biltmore Tomorrow,” Asheville Citizen, 15 June 1925.

“ ‘Gutta Percha’ Golf Played Here in 1890s,” Asheville Citizen-Times, 15 December 1983.

History of the Country Club of Asheville 1894-1994. Country Club of Asheville: Asheville, North Carolina, 1994.

Hyatt, J. C. Obituary, Asheville Citizen-Times, 12 January 2004.

Hyatt, J. C., Jr. Son of long-time amateur golfer, J. C. Hyatt. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 18 May 2004.

Hyatt, Kathy. Daughter of long-time amateur golfer, J. C. Hyatt. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 12 May 2004.

“In the Land of the Sky.” Promotional brochures. Chamber of Commerce: Asheville, North Carolina, 1926-1928.

LeCompte Postcard Collection. University of North Carolina at Asheville, Southern Highlands Research Center, Asheville, North Carolina.

North Carolina Collections. Photographs. Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, North Carolina.

“Only Municipal Course in State is Formally Opened as Cathey Defeats Coggins,” Asheville Citizen, 22 May 1927.

Pinkston, Sherwood. Owner of Golf Associates Scorecard, Inc. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 10 May 2004.

“Ready for Opening of Municipal Golf Course Saturday,” Asheville Times, 20 May 1927.

Routing map and sketch cards for Municipal Golf Course by Donald Ross. Tufts Archives, Pinehurst, North Carolina.

“Swannanoa Country Club Begun 1895,” Southland, May 1902.

“What’s Doing in Asheville’s World of Sports.” Southern Tourist. July 1926.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 22

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Geographical Data

UTMs - continued

Easting	Northing
5. 364080	3937650
6. 363740	3937530
7. 363500	3937600
8. 363700	3938100
9. 363720	3938840

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nomination is indicated on the county tax map, at a scale of 1" = 200'.
Buncombe County PIN 9658-16-83-8897.

Boundary Justification

The nomination boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Municipal Golf Course. It also encompasses two groupings of non-contributing houses and outbuildings built from the mid-1930s to ca. 1970 which cannot be excluded from the historic district as the historic golf course completely surrounds the two groupings. The two residential groupings are not associated with the significance of the historic landscape design.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Photos Page 23

Municipal Golf Course
Buncombe County North Carolina

Municipal Golf Course Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs, except where noted.

Name of Property: Municipal Golf Course
 226 Fairway Drive
 Asheville
 Buncombe County
 North Carolina

Photographer: Sybil Argintar Bowers
Date of photos: April 2004
Location of
original negatives: Division of Archives and History
 One Village Lane
 Asheville, North Carolina 28803

1. Looking southeast from near Hole 12 tee, rolling terrain of the back nine
2. Looking southeast to the front nine from Fairway Road.
3. Clubhouse, looking northwest.
4. Golf cart shed, view north.
5. Maintenance buildings, looking northeast.
6. Looking southwest towards the front nine.
7. Looking southwest along Fairway Drive, south of Hole 16.
8. Looking south towards Holes 17 and 18, the back nine.
9. Streetscape on Gladstone Road. 6 Gladstone Rd. at left, view to southwest.

