

DAVID GILL

(1919 - 1991)

BACKGROUND

A native of Keokuk, IA. Attended Iowa State, then graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Landscape Architecture in 1942. Served with distinction in the South Pacific theatre during World War II. After mustering out, was licensed as a civil engineer in Illinois. Went to work for golf architect Robert Bruce Harris in the late 1940s.

Opened his own design office in Illinois in 1950, but was stricken with polio in 1953. After a lengthy rehabilitation, resumed the practice of golf architecture on a full-time basis.

Was an avid student of old British architects and links courses. Trained several young people interested in the profession, including a son, Garrett Gill, Dean Bork and Steven Halberg.

Halberg assumed his practice when Gill died at age 72, in Hinsdale, IL, from complications following quadruple-bypass surgery.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

A protege of Robert Bruce Harris, David Gill adopted much of the design-for-maintenance philosophy of his mentor, including large multiple tees, huge greens and sweeping bunkers. But he modified it by adding more attractive shapes to his water hazards, bunkers and greens.

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS

Textbook routings that brought players back to the clubhouse every third or fourth hole. Often a dual-fairway hole around a water hazard, with alternate routes for the daring and the meek. A "Cape-type" dogleg par-5 where varying distances of water can be carried from the tee, depending upon one's nerve.