

Subject: Leila Parks Profile

Leila was born in Hayes on January 11th, 1922 but is not aware if that was at home or hospital. She was an only child.

Leila lived with her family with her grandmother in Greenford until she was about 5 years old. Her grandmother died when she was 3 years old and she remembers a conversation with her daddy.

"Daddy. Is Grandma down there in the ground? If so how can she be in heaven? Her father replied "Sunday School will explain that to you later" "Daddy, did you go to Sunday School? If you did, why can't you tell me?"

When she was 5, she went to a church school for one week only and was then "dumped in Ealing Hospital with diphtheria". When she was discharged the family had moved to a new house in Greenford Road opposite the Catholic Church. She lived there until she married Albert Parks on October 6th, 1956. Together they moved to a bungalow in Northolt near the Methodist Church where

she lived until she moved into Brackenbridge Care Home about 4 years ago.

Leila went to school at Costons and Stanhope and later to Ealing Central School in Northfields. Leila left school at 16 years old and first went to work at Hoovers where she became secretary to the Chief Inspector. After WW2 in 1946 she then went to work for the London Philharmonic Society Orchestra as secretary to the Director, arranging concerts, venues and programmes. She was there until 1953 and then went to work for the Chief Training Officer at the Prudential where she stayed until she retired in 1972 at the age of 50.

Leila has very fond memories of the times she was with the Orchestra. A good pianist herself, she played for them at some smaller concerts and locally for

Hoover's concerts. Sunday school and 'Bright Hour. During her time with the Orchestra, she met, communicated, and socialised with many famous musicians. Those she talks about quite spontaneously are 'Thomas Beecham, Sir Malcolm Sargent, George Solti, Leonard Bernstein, Solomon Cutner, Benjamin Britten and Rutland Broughton. Rutland Broughton always called her "my dear child "!

Her favourite pianist was Solomon, and she would sit beside him whilst he played "Completely enraptured" and transported by his skill. She was also blessed by being allowed to play on his Steinway piano.

When asked why and when she started playing golf, her reply was:

Albert and I wanted to be involved in some sport together. We tried hockey and tennis but were no good at either, Albert decided golf might be a good idea to try. Thus, it started, and we became "hooked". I started playing with Albert at Perivale Park Golf club in 1963 and I progressed to be captain in 1972 and 1973 whilst Albert was playing as a member. I was on the committee for 3 years and vice-captain in 1971, I believe it was the committee who voted and chose the captain rather than exceptional golf skills. Albert continued to play golf with Leila until he died in August 1996.

Leila remembers her name being on the Golf Club notice board both as a member and as captain. Sadly, all records of Perivale Park Golf Club were destroyed in a fire. The person Leila remembers most as helping her with her golf was a gentleman by the name of Ken Moss. He was an excellent teacher and taught her to be a good chipper'. She herself was known by Club members and especially one called Frank as the 'girl who always chipped the ball off the green into the hole'. In 1974 Leila moved away from Perivale Park Golf Club and became a member at West Middlesex Golf Club. Leila says this was partly because there was a major problem with Ealing Council in 1974 and they were not able to proceed as normal but she does not remember or wish to say more concerning this.

Leila was now a regular member at West Middlesex where she says "she never lost a match over a 3-year period". She did, however, continue to play at Perivale with Albert and also went to play again with Ken Moss and others. At this point, Leila mentioned another member at Perivale called Dot Mallard who was also captain at some point. This lady had a handicap of 3 (Wow!) whereas Leila's was 16 at the time.

Leila was also captain at West Middlesex for 1 year in 1981 and believes her name is still on the Captain's board there.

Leila continued to play golf until 2005 when she fell and fractured her pelvis which was treated at Ealing Hospital and has not played since.

That is until she visited

Perivale Park Golf Club this year (2021 at the age of 99 and a half) where James lent her a putter and a couple of balls and she potted several balls on the practice green. She was thrilled!

During her time as a golfer, Leila has played on many famous courses in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, her favourite courses include Gleneagles, St Andrews, Wentworth and Moor Park. She has played with and walked courses with many well known golfers and offered the following as best remembered:

Bing Crosby at Wentworth

Gary Player also at Wentworth of which she tells the following stories:

Gary Player's caddy was wearing an old pair of plimsolls, Gary asked him if he could wear a better pair of golf shoes. Gary took him to the Golf Pro's shop to buy him a pair. The shop is strewn with shoes and Gary says 'Haven't you got anything more expensive?

Gary had stroked a dog during a match and the dog owner rushed off to buy a pair of scissors. Then she clipped some hair off the dog. Why? She was going to frame it because Gary had stroked the dog.

Tiger Woods (Not sure where) but her comments 'He is better looking than I thought he was'

Henry Cooper at Ealing. Leila remembers I shall never forget him. I hit him on the side of his head with my golf ball when he emerged from the trees.

Seve Ballesteros at St Andrews. Apparently, Henry Cooper helped him to learn English.

Peter Alliss in several places. She has pictures with him but can't find them. When Leila was asked what she enjoyed most about playing golf she replied:

- a) the exercise
- b) the friendships made
- c) the beautiful surroundings and scenery at different courses
- d) the birds, particularly the wagtails at Wentworth
- e) Being successful despite having problems with trees on 6th hole at Perivale!
- f) just playing and enjoying the sport.

Anything else she remembers:

The number of holes in one she played

Never hitting a ball into the River Brent at Perivale

Winning bottles of wine and champagne

Being 4 holes down to a lady at Fulwell Golf course and making up the deficit on the next 4 holes by chipping into the hole from one bunker, a small brook and a pond.

The lady in question being very cross and saying "Do you make a habit of this? " and Leila replying, "Yes I do."

Finally, I have something else to remember and treasure from 2021.

A wonderful Sunday afternoon at the Captain's day at Perivale Park Golf Club where I was made to feel like a celebrity,

Thank you for chatting to me, I felt very special.

Thank you for the most amazing trophy you gave me to celebrate being captain all those years ago

Thank you to all who helped to arrange this for me, although I still really don't know why?