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MEDINAH COUNTRY CLUB

TOURNAMENTS

Ryder Cup
2012

PGA Championship
Tiger Woods – 1999, 2006

U. S. Opens
Cary Middlecoff – 1949
Lou Graham – 1975
Hale Irwin – 1990

U.S. Senior Open
Gary Player – 1988

Western Opens
Billy Casper – 1966
Jacky Cupit – 1962
Byron Nelson – 1939

Chicago Victory
Byron Nelson – 1946

Medinah Open
Harry “Lighthorse” Cooper
1935, 1930

Illinois Open
Harry “Lighthorse” Cooper
1933

Chicago Open
Gene Sarazen – 1937



Tom Bendelow

In the early 1920's a group of Shriners from Chicago's Medinah Temple had a dream to create a country retreat. Their goal was to build the best country club in North America with a 54-hole golf complex and a variety of other recreational activities. They selected several parcels of land in an area then known as Meacham's Grove, in northern DuPage County, which was once owned by the Meacham, Lawrence and Rosenwinkel families.

Tom Bendelow, a world-renowned golf course architect from Scotland, was retained to design the golf courses. In September of 1926, the Shriners enjoyed their first round of golf at Medinah on Course #1. Construction on Course #2 was completed a year later. Both of these courses have hosted a variety of amateur, professional, and Chicago District Golf Association events. Course #3, originally designed for Medinah's ladies, was completed in 1928. That original Bendelow layout only lasted for three years. A major redesign took place in the early 1930s.

While the golf courses were being constructed, Richard G. Schmid was hired to plan and design the clubhouse. Schmid had a flair for blending the classic lines of Byzantine, Oriental, Louis XIV, and Italian architecture characteristic of many Masonic structures. His design gave Medinah's clubhouse the taste, style, and elegance still evident today. Schmid's plans were carefully executed with Schmid Brothers Construction Company as general contractor. The Schmid Brothers (Otto, August, and Ernest) were Shriners and charter members of Medinah. The rotunda and murals were the work of another club member, Gustav A. Brand, a German-born artist. Shriners were familiar with Brand's work on the Chicago Medinah Temple and other historic sites.

In the late 1920s, Medinah had approximately 1,500 members. The onset of the Great Depression created great financial hardship. As many members withdrew, the club waived initiation fees, lowered dues, instituted fundraising events, launched golf tournaments, and soon thereafter eliminated the requirement that only Shriners could join Medinah. World War II brought more economic misfortune and the club's membership dropped far below capacity. Course #2 was closed, and for a time members helped maintain the other two courses. The end of the war brought slow but stable economic recovery, new hope, and gradual growth in the club's membership.