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## History of Glen Oak Country Club

Established 1911

Membership 275

*Condensed History* — (formerly Pickwick Country Club)

1909 — Going (bankrupt ... 1910 — Going (to receivers) ... 1911 GONE!

(to **Glen Oak Country Club**)

What almost became a subdivision in the Western suburbs of Chicago now stands as one of the finest, most picturesque Golf Clubs in the country.

Due to the untiring efforts of former officers of the defunct Pickwick Club who had the foresight and wisdom to retain this rolling, wooded acreage, Glen Oak Country Club is today an active, busy center of family entertainment — going strong 73 years after it was formed in 1911.

The original Pickwick Country Club was founded January 7, 1909 and was to include 130 acres of the McGarry farm with nine so-called fairways and greens which was purchased under option in 1911 for \$300 per acre.

The name, Glen Oak, was selected as being representative of both Glen Ellyn and Oak Park and became permanent when the official corporate papers for Glen Oak Country Club were approved on January 17, 1911 by then Illinois Secretary of State, James A. Rose.

However, the opulence of the Pickwick Club was not included in the purchase, and the newly formed Glen Oak Country Club "inherited" with the 130 acres the old house and barn for the clubhouse and lockers (with unheated shower water!) and all the debts, which meant a big headache.

Fortunately over the years, Glen Oak has been blessed with administrations and leaders who have been conscientious, energetic, capable and talented. Due to their untiring efforts, administrators have weathered the many years of financial stress and have met the problems, challenges and opportunities of their times most enthusiastically and efficiently.

It is impossible to realize the extent of personal sacrifice of time and effort so generously given by these administrators in their earnest, on-going endeavors to please the majority of members that includes a vast variety of temperaments.

1924 — The present clubhouse was constructed at a cost of \$207,000 including the landscaping. The first floor was composed of the present lounge, dining rooms, kitchen, grill room, mixed lounge and men's locker room. The second floor housed the ladies' locker room and 19 sleeping rooms (four with adjoining baths).

1924 — A fire destroyed the old clubhouse, which turned out to be a fortunate misfortune as the insurance settlement money

was used to purchase furniture for the new clubhouse.

In 1929 a statue was constructed which stands near the main clubhouse entrance in the pathway leading up to the parking area.

It is unique since at the time one of our most popular and capable caddies, nicknamed "Pinky" because of his complexion, was the model.

"Pinky" caddied many rounds for the pro at Glen Oak at that time, "Lighthorse" Harry Cooper, and the famous Dawson brothers, who were members of Glen Oak.

Two members donated the ensemble to the club. It is a work of art and stands as a mememto of the club spirit which helped to make Glen Oak one of today's outstanding Country Clubs.

Also of interest is that in the early 1920's, a Gun Club was organized and operated as a separate enterprise. In February, 1929 it was taken over by Glen Oak, and it became a part of the Glen Oak Country Club operation on April 18, 1945. In 1950 it was expanded and modernized to include bar and sanitary facilities, and in 1955 a new trap house was built. Today, it boasts one of the most modern gun club and accommodations in the area and also enjoys a Life Membership in the U.S. Skeet Shooting Association.

1939 — The swimming pool was built. It took only 70 days from the time ground was broken to the day it was open. The cost was \$27,500.

In 1922 the club purchased 22½ acres to the west and southwest for \$11,075 enabling them to improve the general layout of the course which is about the same layout today.

Two other major improvements to the golf course were: In 1966 we diked the east side of the golf course which paralleled the east branch of the DuPage River. This stopped us from being flooded many times during the season. In 1973 we installed an automatic water system for the whole golf course.

Glen Oak also enjoys the prestige of having hosted the Western Open Championship in 1915.

Superintendents at Glen Oak have been few, the first was a gentleman known now only as "Fernie" who was followed by David McIntosh, greenkeeper/professional. McIntosh served from the mid to late teens up to 1935 when Ray Gerber became the "greenkeeper". Ray served Glen Oak for 35 years when he retired in 1970. At that time he was given an honorary membership in the club and appointed as consultant for Fred Opperman who succeeded him. In 74 years there have been only 4 "Greenkeepers".



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