

# The Way We Were . . .

# And Still Are



Photos by Bill Ficht

The venerable clubhouse at Wheaton's Chicago Golf Club.

*Change is good. This has long been the mantra for the inexorable progression of things. As Americans, we extol the virtues of change, of progress. Still—how refreshing it is, every once in a while, to find a place where change is not the be-all, end-all. A place where change is even frowned upon. A place that still looks and feels today as it would if you were to enter a time machine and transport back 75 years.*

Chicago Golf Club in Wheaton is such a place. The virtual birthplace of golf in this country, Chicago Golf Club stands as an anachronism among today's golf courses.

Before you even step from the clubhouse to the golf course, the sense of being in another time is prevalent. The furnishings, the décor, the lack of air-conditioning, even the aroma suggest an earlier era. The golf course features none of today's modern trappings—no “back-drop trees” or artificial waterfalls; no holy boulders or lighted fountains. This is golf the way C. B. MacDonald

intended it to be when he designed the course back in 1894, and the way Seth Raynor intended it to be when he completed a redesign in 1921. Chicago Golf Club has been home to numerous championships, including three U.S. Opens and four U.S. Amateurs. Chicago was also host for the legendary 1928 Walker Cup matches, where the U. S. team, capitalizing on Bobby Jones' course record 66, thumped the British team 11-1. In August of 2005, the Walker Cup will make its long-awaited return to Chicago Golf Club; a similar outcome is expected!

The first 18-hole golf course in the United States, Chicago Golf Club is the place where John MacGregor—one of the founding fathers of MAGCS and GCSAA—plied his trade as greenkeeper. For that reason, we selected the timeless Chicago Golf Club as the setting for the “then” and “now” photographs gracing our front and back covers this issue. After all, Chicago Golf Club is the home course of the man who begat us.

To that end, we have many people to thank for the opportunity to photograph these hallowed grounds, among them, golf course


*(continued on page 30)*



Hole no. 2 at Chicago Golf Club holds true to the original Charles Blair MacDonald design.

superintendent Jon Jennings and his staff for their preparation; our models Frank Bucciferro and Ygnacio Hernandez (both employees of Chicago Golf Club); the very friendly and helpful folks at

Jaynesway Farms in Bartlett for sending Joy and her beautiful horse Ed; our photographer, Bill Ficht; and our contributing editor, John Gurke, for costume procurement and behind-the-scene logistics. We

hope you'll enjoy this glimpse back at the way we were, as well as the documentation of the way we are now. 

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