

## Charles "Charly" Erickson Our First MGCSA President



Over one hundred and one years ago Charles Erickson was hired from the Minneapolis Park Board to become the head greenskeeper at The Minikahda Club (1899). He was approximately 35 years of age when he began his tenure at Minikahda and there is little or no history on his expertise or employment with the Park Board. He was affectionately known as the "General" by the club membership.

By July 15 of that same year Charly had completed the first nine holes at Minikahda and an appropriate ceremony was performed as the first ball was driven from the number one tee by the club president.

Charly's work at Minikahda was a pioneering adventure. There were no consultants, a very small contingent of other greenskeepers to commiserate with and no agronomically educated salesmen. His philosophy then would be to recognize and solve problems "In House." Charly Erickson Charly Erickson was the first president of what is now

called "Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association" and was very active in its formation. A memorial plaque in honor of him was presented to "The Minikahda Club" by the Minnesota Greenskeepers Association." and resides in a prominent position on the course.

Charly Erickson suffered a broken hip and other injuries in a fall down the "Minikahda tool-house basement steps." He died from other causes one year later just short of his 78th birth date in 1942.

*(Editor's Note: A more complete story on Charly Erickson was printed in the Dec.-January 2002 issue of Hole Notes. The article was written by Jack Kolb.)*

## Traditions, Legends, Myths and Heroes

From the beginnings of recorded history, people from almost every culture throughout the world have created and enjoyed stick-and-ball games.

However, the precise origins of the modern game of golf have been obscured with the passage of time. While many Scots firmly maintain that golf evolved from a family of stick and ball game widely practiced throughout the British Isles during the Middle Ages, considerable evidence suggests that the game derived from stick-and-ball games that were played in France, Germany and the Low Countries.

We cannot be certain, however, that the game they played resembled modern golf - at least not until 1744, when the first known Rules of golf were composed by the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers in Scotland.

The game was played in America as early as the 1770's in Charleston, South Carolina, although it would not take a firm grip on American life until the 1880's.

The foundation of the United States Golf Association on December 22, 1894 marked the formal organization of American golf, establishing a centralized body to write the Rules, conduct national championships, and establish a national system of handicapping. The USGA also plays a prominent role as the game's historian in the United States, collecting, displaying and preserving artifacts and memorabilia at its Museum and Archives in Far Hills, New Jersey.

The History section of the USGA's Web site is dedicated to the long story of the game - to the people, places, events, and moments that make the game special.