

Shawnee Inn & Golf Resort

Historic Golf Course

History tells a great story about Shawnee's legendary golf course. Opened in 1911, highlighted by a perfect 18-hole golf course designed by first-time golf architect A.W. Tillinghast. It was not long before golf's biggest names began to call Shawnee home. Sam Snead was Shawnee's touring pro and Arnold Palmer met Winnie at the historic course as well.

The 1938 PGA Championship was held at Shawnee where Paul Runyan bested Snead. It is even rumored that the first whispers of the PGA took place on Shawnee's legendary fairways. All of these events and more centered on the undulating greens of The Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort.

In the late 1800's, a wealthy businessman, Charles Campbell Worthington, walked the beautiful land he had recently purchased. The breathtaking views, one-of-a-kind location and natural beauty were overwhelming. It was this walk that began his plans for what he would call The Buckwood Inn.

Part of CC Worthington's plan was to create a world-class golf course, a course that would be carved into the natural surroundings to compliment the splendor of this unique location. His choice was a close personal friend, AW Tillinghast.

In 1907, Tillinghast began to layout this challenging course. Tillinghast's trademark is to use the turf, sand and natural contours of the land in a devilish combination to demand the most from a golfer's intellect and abilities. In his career, a number of his most beautiful holes were the result of the struggle between man, dirt and rock. His design at Shawnee was no different.

Tillinghast's design of this famous island golf course may have been his very first, but definitely not his last. Tillinghast went on to design many famous course including; Wing Foot, Baltusrol, Beth Page Black, San Francisco Bay Club and others.

CC Worthington's dedication to the game of golf continued. In many ways the PGA may have actually had its origins at Shawnee. In 1911, the resort's owner, C.C. Worthington, staged a professional tournament to gain recognition for the sport. Shortly thereafter the PGA was formally founded and one of its first events was and still is the Shawnee Open.

Two-time defending US Open Champion John McDermott won the tournament in 1913. In 1938, Shawnee hosted the PGA Championship and our touring professional, Sam Snead, lost to Paul Runyan 8 and 7 - an interesting finish which is immortalized on film.

Virtually all the golf greats during the first half of the 20th Century played at Shawnee including Walter Hagen, Lawson Little, Long Jim Barnes and Johnny Farrell. In fact, six former Shawnee Open winners also hold U.S. Open titles.

In 1943, Fred Waring, a famous band leader bought the Buckwood Inn and renamed it the

Shawnee Inn. Mr. Waring was an enthusiastic golfer. Shawnee was the best of both worlds for him as he could enjoy his favorite game, golf, and continue to be active in the entertainment world.

Fred Waring had many celebrity friends that visited Shawnee including Bob Hope, Art Carney, George Goebel, Arnold Palmer, Lucille Ball, Ed Sullivan, Eddie Fisher, Perry Como, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, but none caught Waring's enthusiasm for golf like Jackie Gleason. In 1959, Jackie attempted his first game of golf scoring a 143. However, only 15 months later, with practice and lessons, Jackie Gleason shot an amazing 75. It was during the time of Fred Waring's ownership, that Bill Diddle, golf architect, helped turn Shawnee's 18 holes into 27.

Fred Waring continued Shawnee's legacy of golf championships when they hosted the 1967 NCAA Championships. Hale Irwin, one of golf's premier players, won that championship.

The golf history at Shawnee is rich. Returning to its roots in golf, Shawnee opened the Tillinghast Golf Academy; and its state-of-the-art golf practice facility. Sam Snead's Tavern opened near the academy adding a unique fine dining experience for the guests of the Inn.

Our Practice Facility includes a Driving Range, Putting Green, and the Tillinghast Chip 'n' Putt Course---all lit for night play. The 6 holes at the Chip 'n' Putt were originally modeled after the greens and bunkering from other famous Tillinghast designed golf courses including the San Francisco Golf Club, Winged Foot and Baltusrol.

To this day, the Shawnee Open is still a sanctioned point tournament for the Philadelphia Section PGA.