

## POTLATCH A. A. C. GOES TO TOWN

The Potlatch Amateur Athletic Club was constructed in 1916—a fitting monument to the genius of Max Williamson, who gave blood for the project, and to A. W. Laird, who saw eye to eye with him.

The club was organized in the year 1914, modeled after the Spokane Amateur Athletic Club, and E. G. McFee was engaged as the physical director. Early in the regime, constitution and by-laws were drawn.

The board consisted of five members, a president and secretary-treasurer, ex-officio members, and three others chosen by vote of the membership. Today, Floyd Morgan heads the board as president and "Hart" Hansen as secretary-treasurer. Other members of the present board are Roland Johnson, Carl Elsea and John Kinsella.

Boxing has been the main activity of the club since Ike Deeter, then physical director, discovered Pooch Petrogallo and brought him fame in collegiate circles in the nation.

Bob Eldred, one of Ike's former pupils, now physical director, is still keeping the manly art of self defense in the prints, with his star pupil, Vern Earling, who was good enough to get to Los Angeles this fall in the annual amateur bouts, which the Post Intelligencer sponsored in the Northwest.

The drawing of blood in a square circle has always interested the members of the club—and those who went before. Right after the Johnson-Jeffries fight back in 1910, a young fighter christened Victor McLagen set up training quarters in Potlatch for the express purpose of wrestling the heavyweight title away from Jack Johnson, the colored man.

Through the earlier years, baseball was the motivating force. When the town first started, baseball was the first game played. It was on one of those Sunday afternoons back in 1907 that Frederick Weyerhaeuser, the founder, while watching a game, told William Deary to build a ball park for the boys. Word got around to the players and fans and the game stopped immediately and work on the diamond commenced.

Again, it was baseball and its partner, indoor baseball, that paved the way for the first club.

The baseball crowd wanted to try the game the Spokesman was telling

about every Monday morning. There was a dandy place to play "indoor" underneath the old livery stable, the first floor being the theatre.

After much discussion, a group was formed, headed by Fred Gleave, then office manager of the Potlatch Lumber Company, and the first club was born. E. G. McFee was hired as physical director, an electric player piano and equipment to play the game of indoor baseball were purchased, and the club machinery was set up.

The club became the center of all athletic activity and social life and it was after a big holiday dance that it came to an untimely end by fire.



Christmas Tree at Potlatch.

Right away agitation started for a new club and Max Williamson, then president of the club, had many lengthy sessions with A. W. Laird about a new building. The campaign was fought on all fronts all over the town and in the office. Finally Max won his point and there was rejoicing in the town.

Plans for the structure were worked up and Matt Wilkinson was engaged to construct the building. The consideration in the contract was \$20,000. Finally, after a succession of days that seemed like years, the building was completed.

Equipment, furniture, rugs and all of the equipment that goes to make

up a first class athletic club were purchased and set up and the Potlatch Amateur Athletic Club was born again.

The dedicatory dance was one of the biggest social events of that time. Guests of the management came down from Spokane and A. W. Laird, general manager of the Potlatch Lumber Company, presented the "club" to the members. The acceptance was made by Max Williamson.

At that time the grounds were just a plowed field and the board turned its thoughts to landscaping the property. A lawn was built and a season or so later a tennis court was built on the west side. At that time it was one of the show places of the Inland Empire.

A few years later Mr. Laird wanted to make a gesture toward a memorial for William Deary, the first general manager. It was decided to bring two native granite boulders from Elk Butte. One stone weighed nine tons, the other twelve.

The Elk River woods department was commissioned to get them out to the railroad. This was done with caterpillars and plenty of men. They were placed on a flat car and transported to Potlatch.

The Bovill woods department then took the responsibility of placing them on the lawn. A bronze tablet was secured at Tiffany's in New York, bearing the inscription "To the Memory of William Deary" and placed on the upper boulder.

A. D. Decker, land agent, and professor of forestry, and Don Yates, also a forestry man, who was his assistant, were commissioned to transplant a monarch of the forest to the grounds of the Potlatch Amateur Athletic Club. After combing the forests until they found what they considered a likely specimen, they brought in a small tree and planted it—and, then, sat back to watch it grow. The results were disappointing, as the needles turned yellow and the tree began to droop.

After this unsuccessful attempt, the idea was conceived of bringing in a tree with a block of earth ten feet square around the roots. Accordingly, a box was built around the frozen earth encasing the roots of a beautifully symmetrical red fir and it was brought to Potlatch by means of caterpillars





The P. A. A. C. Club House

and transplanted to the gym lawn.

Again Decker and Yates rested on their laurels and watched it grow. The first Christmas a string of lights was bought for the tree. Each year, as the tree reached skyward, the lights were skimped more and more, until Christmas 1937, one hundred additional lights were added.

With those two improvements in the grounds, thoughts were turned to further beautifying the place and A. A. Segersten, then land agent, secured through the arboretum at the University of Idaho some young blue spruce and Russian olive trees, which have shown remarkable growth.

Over the years the P. A. A. C. teams have been able to hold up their heads in any company through the Inland Empire. The first baseball series back as far as 1912, with Bovill, a sister town, developed intense rivalry. In 1917, the Potlatch club commanded such a reputation in the Inland Empire that it was invited to Lewiston, Idaho, to participate in a Fourth of July celebration.

The committee in charge at Lewiston, aware of the strength of Potlatch, went as far afield as Portland, Oregon, for a team to meet this club. Potlatch won the game 8-2 and came home with about \$500.

Earlier still, there was so much baseball enthusiasm in Potlatch that, when a team from the American League and National League decided

to tour the country, coming through the Northwest into Spokane, the P. A. A. C. conceived the idea of inviting them down.

Max Williamson contacted the railway company having charge of their schedule and Potlatch was placed on the roster of towns that would be visited. The date was set for October 26, 1914, and plans were made locally to take care of them. The whole Inland Empire was canvassed. Tickets were made out and sent to the different towns. When the day arrived and the game started, there were over 2,000 people, at \$1 a head, in the stands and overflowing the bleachers. The baseball group and the Northern Pacific went out with \$333 and the club got the rest for their work.

With the beautiful tennis court and plenty of local fans, it was decided in 1918 to attempt the Idaho State Tennis Tournament. H. L. Pelan, traffic manager of the Potlatch Lumber Company, headed the "Get the State Tennis Tournament" committee and invited them to Potlatch.

After much wrangling among the various towns in Idaho, they gave it to Potlatch in 1919. High ranking tennis players were invited from all parts of the country to participate and the day finally arrived.

It was a gala week in Potlatch—and because it was such a week the tennis players responded with a brand of tennis that was hard to match. The

young fellow who won the tournament was ranked third by the U. S. Tennis Tournament Association the following year.

During this time the indoor baseball crowd developed teams through their departmental leagues. These teams became good enough to play the Spokane Amateur Athletic Club teams in Spokane. Through that period many games were played with the Spokane club and a godly share won by the local club.

In 1922 the club sponsored a big Fourth of July baseball celebration with a car thrown in as part of the attraction. Genesee was invited to play this game with Potlatch. Side bets of \$500 and gate receipts were the "plum" for the victor. The club won the game—and somebody from Genesee drew the car.

During that same year, the Potlatch baseball team was much talked of on the sports page. Sandpoint, having one of the best "nines" in the Inland Empire, and being also sponsored by the Weyerhaeuser group, began talk of a game with Potlatch. This game was played at Sandpoint, the P. A. A. C. winning 5-3.

About this time, or a little before, interest in baseball began to creep into the Potlatch High School, which resulted in the engagement of Rich Fox, just finishing his brilliant career at the University of Idaho, in basketball. Part of his duties was coaching the high school team.

He took seven or eight freshmen, who had never seen a basketball and taught them the game. They looked pretty good the first year, better the second, and still better the third, but, after that, Fox decided to go toocatello, and R. W. Horning, an experienced Y. M. C. A. man, was hired to direct the destinies of the club.

His duties also included coaching high school basketball and he took this team that Rich Fox had developed to the Lewiston tournament. The boys played six games in that affair and won them all. McGreal was placed at forward and made captain of the All Star Team, and teams were written about him and the rest of the team.

The boys came home to get ready for the State Tournament at Moscow, which was considered just a breeze for this bunch of giant killers. There was talk of sending them to Chicago.

During one of the conditioning warmups, McGreal was hurt so badly that he couldn't play at Moscow. In that series Rexburg was beaten but

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## Potlatch A. A. C.

Bancraft and Rupert managed wins over the Potlatch quintet.

In 1928 the Potlatch ball team was invited to join the Whitman County League and, after a season of play, came in the winners.

After the season was over, some of the former Potlatchers, who were working in Lewiston, began talking about a game with the Clearwater Timber Company team. After much talk back and forth, a series of games was arranged. It was decided to play one game at Potlatch and the other at Lewiston. If a third game was necessary to play, it was to be on a neutral field. Potlatch won both games before large crowds.

During the depression, after Ike Deeter had joined the staff of Washington State College, when things here were at the ebb tide, as a side issue—and for the good of the cause—Chuck Johnson, Paul Hall, Ed Anshutz and George Cunningham got behind club affairs and tried to keep them afloat.

A year ago the boxing contingent of the club started agitation for a full time director again. Feelers were put out to Louis August, coach of the University of Idaho.

Bob Eldred was chosen. Accordingly, Mr. Eldred took over the management in the early spring of 1937.

The activities for the past summer have included playground work during vacation, instruction in swimming, dances for members, classes in the gymnasium for men, women and children, and a boxing card every thirty days since fall. A share of the proceeds from these "smokers" has been turned over to worthy organizations in the community.

Looking back through the years, it was men like Max Williamson, David MacEachern, Otto Leuschel, Shelton Andrew, Don Yates, and now, Floyd Morgan, who have given this athletic association the success that it has enjoyed.

The P. A. A. C. sponsored a benefit play for the Potlatch Library on December 14 and 15. The title of the play is "From Coast to Coast."

That the people in Potlatch have the true holiday spirit is evidenced by the annual Red Cross membership roll recently completed here, when Potlatch went 25% over its quota. The anti-tuberculosis stamp sale now in progress is meeting with generous response.

## Clearwater Christmas Party Entertains 4,000 People

The 1937 Christmas party of the Clearwater Unit was held December 19 at 4 p. m., with nearly 4,000 people attending. The Christmas party is looked forward to by Lewiston employees' children with eagerness. Their personal meeting with Santa gives them a happy thrill. Also, entertainment has been provided at the party each year for the grown-ups.

This season the Christmas party committee, headed by Edgar F. Swartz, began planning the party several months before it was held. When the employees arrived for the party everything was in readiness. At the plant entrance the flag pole was decorated from top to bottom with colored lights. A small growing evergreen beside the flagpole was lighted, and two lighted Christmas trees were at each side of the gate.

The program was started under the huge Christmas tree in the planing mill by Chairman Swartz, who welcomed everyone. Mr. Billings spoke, wishing everyone a "Merry Christmas." Mr. Leuschel said "Merry Christmas" and wished that everyone have a prosperous year ahead. Mayor F. P. Lint of Clarkston and Mayor E. J. Bauman of Lewiston were introduced. Each spoke briefly.

While the American Legion Auxiliary Choir sang "Silent Night," lights were turned to a "Scene of Nativity." Three Wise Men on Camels slowly descended to the lowlands over which was a bright shining star. When they arrived at their destination, the star became invisible, and the Babe in the Manger was pictured with the Mother and the Wise Men. Domestic animals were shown standing in the bark-covered stable. After a moment the light in the stable was extinguished and the star relighted, starting the wise men on their journey again.

The safety sweepstakes drawing followed. Prizes helped to make 40 families more happy on Christmas.

"Jingle Bells" played over the loud speaker system, announced the arrival of Santa Claus. The many children of the employees passed by Santa to be wished a very Merry Christmas, and to get their package of toys and candy. Additional candy was given to the children of Drs. Braddock and Baldeck, and the Shell Oil Company.

Since the Christmas party idea was started in 1934 by superintendent of

shipping, Charles Clapp, it has continuously become a more important part of the lives of Potlatch employees. The party, sponsored by the Foreman's Council, was acclaimed to be a success again this year.

Chairman Swartz stated, "I wish to commend the work of George Schenfield, who painted the 'Scene of Nativity.' Without his efforts and those of many others the Christmas party would not have been possible."

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The Community Christmas tree in Potlatch this year is being sponsored by Robinson Post No. 81 of the American Legion. Last year about 1,200 children turned out. The committee, headed by J. E. Warner, anticipates a slight increase in the number to prepared for this year. The local business houses, lodges and clubs contribute freely to this project each holiday season.