

History of the Lake Chelan Yacht Club 1932 to 1980's

At a meeting held May 26, 1930 at the Totem, Pole Restaurant, North of Entiat on the Columbia River Highway, about 40 boating enthusiasts formed what is known as the "Lake Chelan Yacht Club", with Bruce McKinstry elected as the first Commodore.

Committees were appointed to draw up by-laws and get necessary data underway as a regularly organized yacht club.

In June 1931, George Miller was elected commodore. During this year a great deal was accomplished toward building docks in the various harbors up the lake.

The club was incorporated on July 7, 1932 with Jim Reed of Chelan elected commodore, and the time of the annual meeting changed to March. At this time the members felt they should secure property along the lake for proper quarters and purchased a mile of waterfront property above Granite Falls. The club acknowledged a debt of gratitude to Robert Vogler for making it possible for the club to acquire the Granite Falls property from Chelan Electric Company for the sum of \$500, so small an amount that it was considered a donation.

During the depression years our present club building was an open dance hall known as the Elmore Dance Pavilion. Hard times had forced the pavilion to close. Josh Green Sr. was in the Green-Davis Security Company in Seattle, who had a mortgage on the Elmore Property. This piece of property contained 30 acres of ground and 250 feet of waterfront and a building suitable to be made into a good club house. The club acknowledged a debt of gratitude to Andrew Kennedy for his help in the exchange of the Granite Falls property for the present Hollywood Beach property, and to the House and Grounds Committee, George F. Miller, C.C. Warren and A.A. Bousquet, who handled both transactions for the club with no money exchanged, one month later August 1932.

The story told was that two months after the trade, Mr. Green sent his manager to look over the property that the bank had acquired in the trade and he went back and told Mr. Green that in all fairness, the Yacht Club should have thrown a mountain goat in with the deal.

Charles C. Warren was elected Commodore for 1933. During that year the club grounds and buildings were greatly improved and a lighting plant installed on the club grounds. Dances were held every two weeks during the summer months for a fee of \$1.00 per couple. The membership of 200 was filled and fourteen applications for membership were on the waiting list. The initiation fee was \$7.50 and the annual dues were \$2.50. This was the first year of the Regatta and Harold Feil won the LCYC cup plus the Past Commodores Cup.

On March 5, 1934, R.J. Vogler was elected Commodore. During this year many notable achievements were accomplished. Log siding and windows were placed on the exterior of the clubhouse. Mr. Vogler stated that has to be done in order to protect the dance floor, which still had the original dance floor. A large room was added on the shore side of the club house. This room contains the large stone fireplace. Also this was the year the Lake Chelan annual book was started.

Under the direction of Commodore C. Neilson Nicholson in 1935, a large dock and log breakwater was installed in front of the club house. Benches were installed in the dance hall and the old road at the rear of the clubhouse was vacated and another plot of land

was acquired. Some members built their own cabins which were later torn down. Only the present Managers cabin was left intact and later improved a number of times. During these years, and even later, money was short and members donated materials to continue progress.

A.A. Bousquet was elected Commodore for the year 1936 and the walls and ceiling of the lounge room were finished in pecky pine. Lawn and shade trees were planted, pilings were driven with boom logs attached making a large compound for the boats in stormy weather. A new road was built into the clubhouse area.

In 1937, Mr. Dewey Webb was elected Commodore and many more noteworthy achievements were accomplished. A ladies restroom was built which is now our present store room. The concrete sidewalk to the club was installed. A concrete runway- 10 ft. wide and 60 ft. long was built with railroad tie tracks to pull boats out and to launch boats with trailers pulled by a cable winch. A new rowboat to serve as a lifeboat was purchased. The club house was painted for the first time with two coats of white paint and blue trim.

C.E. "Dad" Life was chosen Commodore for the year 1938 and had a program of betterments well under way when his untimely passing occurred. W.C. Penhallegon filled out the expired term. One of the improvements under "Dads" regime was the erection of the combined bathhouse and mens restroom. This is now our present men's and women's bathrooms. At the time of his passing he was actively engaged in negotiating with the county and federal officials in an effort to get the shore road from First Creek to Woodland Park relocated., and his efforts were rewarded with that being done. This is the present highway that we travel to the club, which was completed in 1939, under W.C. Penhallegon who was again chosen to act as Commodore for that year, The year 1939 also brought electricity to the club property by the mile long span of high power wires coming in across lake from the Washington Water Power sub-station.

Improvements and expansions have doubled and redoubled year by year with the election of each succeeding Commodore and the hearty cooperation of his committees and members with many projects done and redone over the years.

The year 1941 found the club house with a new roof and a floating dock. In 1941 the club installed a new water system, consisting of an automatic electric multiple stage pump. This system made water available for domestic purposes as well as for storage and lawn sprinkling.

In 1942 darkened clouds of war fell over the club and activities were greatly curtailed. The Coast Guard Auxiliary unit was organized by the Lake Chelan Yacht Club on April 8, 1942. Pleasure seekers on Lake Chelan became familiar with the boats of this flotilla in their battle gray color with the insignia of Coast Guard Auxiliary painted high on their bow., plying the waters on the lake on patrol duty - the eyes of the U.S. Coast Guard for sabotage and alien or espionage activities that may occur on this inland water. The men manning them were from the Lake Chelan Yacht Club who were members of the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve.

In the succeeding years the activities were at a standstill and therefore, no regular calendar of scheduled events could be maintained. In spite of this, the social activities continued, the membership was maintained and the buildings and grounds kept up. The 40's also found a new road to the club property and enlarged parking space completed. The year 1948 was a rugged year with record floods and rain, acres of drift on the lake

and for the first time in history the lake froze over so that the boats couldn't navigate the lake. The water was so cold that it would freeze when the lake was calm, even after the weather warmed.

In the 1950's the present concrete bulk head was built to replace the wood log bulkhead. Slips for moorage were installed along this area. A new dock out to the float ramp was installed, the the placing of tie-rods through the cub house to prevent any further bulging of the exterior walls, and the launching way was widened and extended towards the lake. Pilings under the club house were repaired or replaced.

In the 1960's several attempts were made for more moorage for boats. The club house got a new metal roof and the managers cabin received plumbing and paneling. The upper lots were leveled for boat storage and eventually the camper area was done. The present road into the club was built replacing the old road into the club. In 1962, water was put into the resident area, with the first cabin going up in 1964 when there was six original members. From there on, the number increased to 27 by 1966, with the first road filled and the second started. The new water system was installed in 1967 and the resident membership increased to 49. By 1969 the resident membership soared to 65 members and water was put on the third row.

By 1970 the resident membership reached an new high of 74 members and water to all lots was available for the first three rows. That year found the club with a new floating breakwater and moorage for 48 boats. The 1970's were filled with joy and sorrow because in the summer of 1973 the floating breakwater and moorage sank. Members were frantically cutting boats loose as the breakwater was going down. All boats were freed except one, which went to the bottom. This was later retrieved and revived. That same year the club had purchased 103 feet uplake from from the clubhouse which is our present swimming area and more parking space. The year 1975 found the Lake Chelan Yacht Club going to court as a result of the moorage sinking which was due to faulty design. The Yacht Club won the settlement January 30, 1975. The years 1975 and 1976 found the members again putting new lawn and landscaping in, painting the club house and the new phase of the new breakwater going in. By 1977 the new moorage was completed. Again in 1978 the membership was full for the second time in history.

The 1980's again found the members busy painting and this time, the managers cabin got the face lifting from rustic brown to white with blue trim and all the clubs buildings were completed in this nautical color. The new lawn in the swim area was completed, the road into the club was black -topped, and a 20,000 gallon water tank installed. The deck around the club house received a roof and new carpeting. The managers cabin received a new kitchen, bathroom and carpeting throughout. The road on the fourth row was improved and water lines were laid.

The club has stood the test of time, an economic depression, wars, storms, sinking of the moorage, court sessions, IRS audits, recession and continued the policies laid down in the early years of it's foundation- which stated the purpose- "an outlet for the boating enthusiasm and the exchange of good fellowship by boating enthusiasts".

Let not any of us forget, if it had not been for the foresight and enthusiasm of our past leaders, and dedicated working members, this club would not be here for our enjoyment and pleasure. Many years and many hours of labor by dedicated members have accomplished the results that we now all enjoy.

From a sprawling, crude lake dance hall in 1932, the Club House and grounds have evolved into a modern nautical resort with navy trimness and neatness. The club now boasts a full membership of 250 regular , social and family members., moorage for 90 boats: camping facilities: picnic and swim areas; and resident villa for 100 members.

We should all be honored and proud to be a member and a part of the Lake Chelan Yacht Club. By continuing to work together in the present and the future, our club will continue for generations to enjoy.

Jo Anne Polson 1985