

CORONADO SHUFFLEBOARD CLUB HISTORY

Written by Grace Gunn - November 15, 1962

President Whitehair has asked me to give our guests and members a short and vibrant history of this club. First thing considered was the source material to be employed. After consultation with the President and Treasurer Brent, it was decided to confine ourselves to the minutes and other records in the club's possession, and to such other solid and certain information as could be got from 2 of our first members, Mr. Earl Leiffer and Mr. Glyn Owens.

Pictures on the east wall of this building show the following as having been president: Glen Evy, William Creagh, John Bowen, William Allen, Frank Panewicz, Marvin Whitehair, Jack Bowman, William Ingram, Roy Hamilton, Carl Lindquist, Albert Baumberger.

Mr. Baumberger served the longest period as president and Mr. Panewicz the greatest length of years...10 as an officer having been Treasurer, Secretary, and President.

Now the sad fact is that the earliest minutes in our possession are dated 1946. We know that there are, or were, earlier minutes and perhaps a personal diary touching on the club's early affairs, but these are not among our papers. There were no signed minutes until Walter Miller was Secretary in 1949 and even at that time all things are not clear. Down the recorded years I have found much confusion and some borderline contradiction.

It has not been easy to confine the doings and developments of 25 years into a matter of 20 minutes. I have tried to show you the steady growth of this organization from what is described as a "hole in the ground east of the old Post Office," to the active outfit it is today. I want you to know how well these early members planned and how exhaustively they labored. And don't think that they did not have their worries and frustrations. They had plenty of both and at such times they reacted in a thoroughly human fashion. They were hard workers and big eaters and they said what they thought. They got up in meetings and they did something, or they tried to do something about what they did not like. I do not mean that they were in any sense petty minded or quarrelsome. They were instead big-hearted, energetic, red-blooded men and women. In short, they were the kind of people who have made our country great.

The first President, according to the pictures on the wall, was Mr. Glen Evy. He was a resident here in the 1930's, when this community was a city in its own right. He now lives in Holly Hill. There are conflicting reports as to whether Mr. Evy was ever Mayor, Vice Mayor or Acting Mayor of the City of Coronado Beach. But all agree on 3 things:: 1. He was a member of the City Commission in some capacity. 2. He was a forward-looking, lively-thinking individual – the kind of man who gets things done. 3. And he was, shall we say....the well-respected granddaddy of this shuffleboard club.

It is written in the photo case that Mr. Evy was the President from 1937 – 1941 and from this year of 1937 we get the notion that 1962 marks our 25th anniversary.

It seems to be true that in the very earliest days of our activities there was no actual organization with elected officers, dues, a roster of members, and a set of written rules. Everybody who was interested was welcome to work and play with the group. But, mind you, these early workers were steadily growing toward a recognized organization and **we now consider our beginnings to be as of 1937.**

Mr. Earl Leiffer tells me that he helped Mr. Evy select this so-called “hole in the ground” as the best city-owned location for the proposed shuffleboard courts. And on the day following this decision Uncle John Heskett, who later became our first Life Member, was on the job clearing the area. Mr. Evy was, in truth, a man who got things done. The club gave Uncle John Heskett a birthday dinner in April 1950. He was then 89 so he must have been 76 years old at the time he swung the first axe against the first tree on the first day of our beginnings.

Mr. Glyn Owens, now our fireman at the beachside station, and Mr. Hartford Taylor, a present Life Member, helped put in the first two courts. These were located near the street. Two more courts were added there later and in 1950 the 4 rear courts were built. Most of you remember when the “courts on the hill” were laid. For the record I will remark that we now have 16 courts.j

The first building is described as a “shack”. It was later moved onto the so-called “bank” and reconstructed into the present cue house. More and better cue lockers were built therein and eventually rest rooms were added.

The building we are now in, often called the Assembly Hall, in early records carries a date of 1945. This date I have heard disputed. This building was originally half its present size and was covered with corrugated metal. Cooking was done in a fireplace at the south end. Later the fireplace was torn out and the present kitchen added. Much work was done on this structure in 1950 – 51. It was enlarged, sided, painted, a ceiling added and still later it was covered with asbestos shingles.

Now I bid you remember that these courts, the bleachers, the cue house, this building, were mainly the product of the ambitious and the labor of the early members of this club. In this connection some names we should never forget are: L.E. Benham, Harry Bothwell, Hiram Penny, Morris and Glyn Owens (father and son), Earl Leiffer, Hartford Taylor and of course Uncle John Heskett and Mr. Glen Evy. These and other early members not only cut trees, shoveled sand and pounded nails, they also furnished a goodly supply of the money and material that went into the project.

We have a record of the donations to the 1950 – 51 building effort.

A constitution and by-laws were adopted in 1948 and these have been amended from time to time.

The first recorded contest with the club we now call Mainland was played in January 1949 and the Mainlanders beat us 15 games to 9. In 1949 some of

our members played in a Northern District Tournament at the Peabody Club in Daytona.

There is very little mention of trophies or trophy play in our records and even now it is not the practice of our court managers to report at our meetings who won what trophy. But we have had many trophies and there is much highly competitive play in this field.

In late 1952 the Directors thought it a good play to operate the club during the coming year, 1953, on the budget system. A responsible member was chosen to look into the spending record of 1951 as a possible guide to the "budgeteers." Then came that day, I told you of, when the "ham-dinner" contingent and the up and coming shufflers looked each other squarely in the eye and the shufflers said to the ham supper members, "How come?" For it was revealed that in 1951 the club had spent \$542.00 for dinners and only \$101 for shuffling activities.

The Budget Boys prepared a much leaner budget, dinnerwise, but it met with what the secretary of that day called "firm opposition." Too much money for dinners and too little money for shuffling, said the members, and figuratively speaking they dumped the proposed budget in the brook. A workable compromise was eventually reached and when things had cooled down a bit Charlie McDormick made a motion and the motion was that the club have a ham supper, and they did!

From that day forward we really got into our stride as a shuffleboard club. We have frequent friendly games with the clubs in our County group. We entertain a County Tournament yearly. Our players have entered various County and District meets and not infrequently have gained the winner's bracket in tough competition.

Material was given generously by the 3 local lumber firms and there were cash donations from other business people. Money in smaller amounts was given by the members. The list includes 4 members each of whom gave \$25, two of those \$25 donors are with us tonight. I am proud to do them honor: Mrs. Hannah Bonnet and Mrs. Rose Bothwell.

I venture the thought that there must have been a sharp solicitor among the members of that period for it is recorded that the bank donated \$50. The most that we can get out the bank today is a bundle of paper napkins.

During the presidency of Mr. Frank Penewicz (1951), the City took over these buildings and reimbursed the club to the tune of \$1,174.55 on October 1 of this year, 1962, the City took over the club and pattern is somewhat reversed. For now we reimburse the City to the tune of \$3 per member per year.

The main activity of our club for many years does not appear to have been shuffling. Indeed, I would say that shuffling was a minor activity and this thought is supported as follows: our first full membership list is recorded in 1949. In that year there were 270 members and only the 4 courts by the street. This is a ration of about 1 court to 76 members. At the close of our latest full season, Sept. 30, 1962 we had a membership of 371 and 16 courts, a ration of about 1 court to 23 members.

And speaking of this earliest roster, 1949, the following list then are members today, Nov. 15, 1962: Albert Baumberger, Rose Bothwell, Pearl Clarkson Sullivan, Harry Sullivan, Helen Eichmann, Earl Leiffer, S.O. Miller, Frank Panewicz, Hartford Taylor, Louise Ashdown, Mrs. Hannah Bonnet, Katie Dewalt, Merle and Olive Fleming.....14 in all.

Since so many of our 1949 and earlier members were not ardent shufflers, it may well be asked.....What did they do? I'm the gal that can tell you. Mostly they ATE!! I will have other, more important words on this subject later and you will learn