

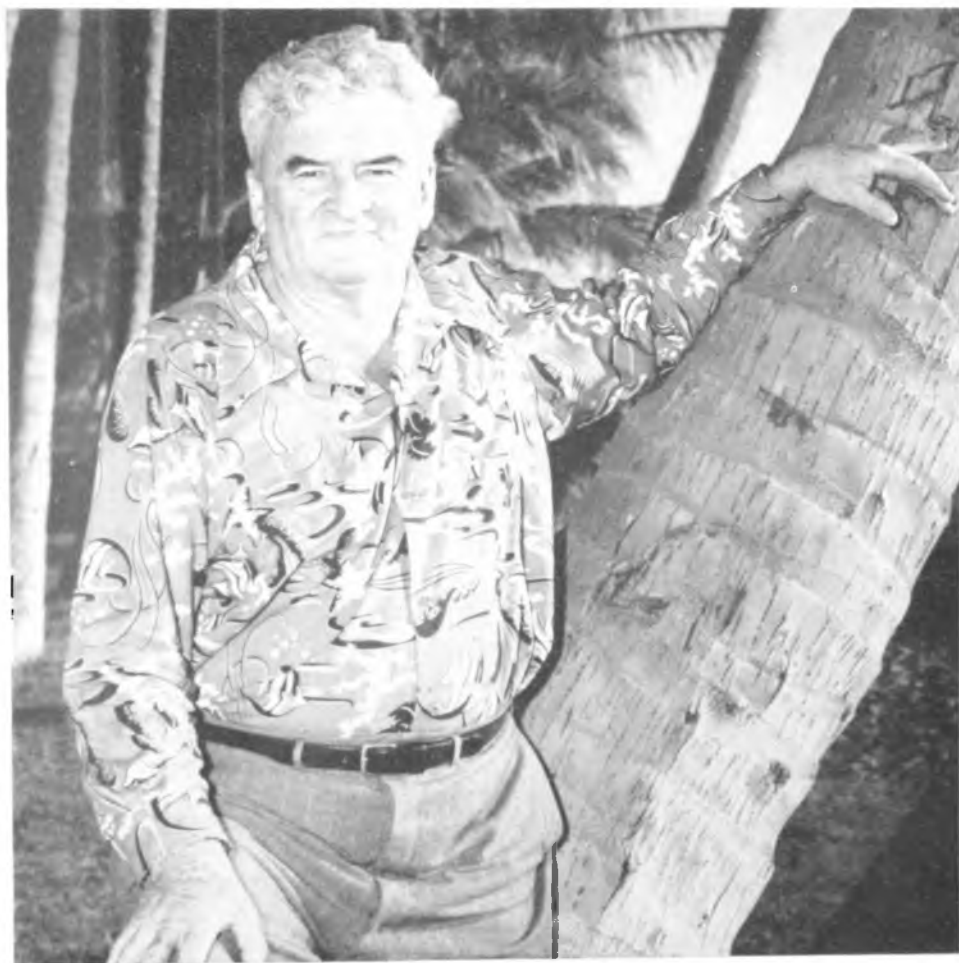


OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB

OCTOBER

FORECAST

1950



GEORGE D. "DAD" CENTER

"DAD" CENTER OF WAIKIKI

By Edwin North McClellan

George David Center—affectionately called "Dad" by his thousands of friends—has been—and is—one of the most valuable assets of Hawaii. He has evolved into a constructively unique and hospitable unit of distinctive *Hawaiiana*. "Dad" is among the first "ten in the Hawaiian Hall of Fame." He has always exercised his many efficient qualifications as an American citizen of Hawaii for the public good; but, he is best remembered for his devoted service in directing the youth of Hawaii along a path of happiness and usefulness.

BORN ON MAUI

"Dad" was born at Kipahulu (Maui) on Christmas Day in 1886 during the reign of King Kalakaua. On the death of Kalakaua, "Dad" became a subject of Queen Liliuokalani. Next, a citizen of the Provisional Government and Republic of Hawaii with Sanford Ballard Dole as President. The American Flag went up over Hawaii in July of 1898 and "Dad" became a citizen of the United States and the Territory of Hawaii. Educated in Hawaii and on the Mainland "Dad" distinguished himself as a schoolboy athlete in many sports.

In his active athletic days "Dad" represented the Myrtle Boat Club in swimming, rowing and other sports. During the past half-century "Dad" has been a swimmer, surfboarder, outrigger-canoeist (paddle and sail), body-surfer, fisherman, oarsman, yachtsman, volley-baller, golfer, basket-baller, soccerite, track-and-fielder, footballer and expert participant in other athletic activities.

MEMBER OF THE "OUTRIGGER CLUB" IN 1908.

"Dad" missed becoming a charter member of the Outrigger Canoe Club by only a few weeks after it came into being in April and May of 1908. I was on the Beach at Waikiki, in front of the Outrigger Canoe Club, in July of 1908 when "Dad" competed in the Big Surf Contest (board) as the U. S. Atlantic Fleet looked on. To even list the contests in which "Dad" Center represented the Outriggers

and the Myrtles would cover pages. He was a familiar figure on early Regatta Days in Honolulu Harbor and at Pearl Harbor when he rowed for the Myrtles; but he was even better known later as a representative of the Outrigger Club in many sports, particularly in surfing events sponsored by the Club. As early as Regatta Day of 1907 "Dad" was stroke of the Myrtle Freshman Crew which defeated the Healanis. On Regatta Day of 1909, "Dad" swung an efficient paddle (with Rusty Brown, Harry Steiner, Willy "Knut" Cottrell, Edmund Melanphy and Vincent "Zen" Genoves), in Prince Kuhio's canoe *Aa*, as it won the six-paddle canoe contest for the Outrigger Canoe Club. And while "Dad" had many early athletic thrills, I am sure one of his greatest was to captain the Maile-Ilima Soccer Team which won the championship of the Hawaiian Association Football League, in 1909.

OUTRIGGER CAPTAIN FOR MANY YEARS

"Dad" was Captain of the Outriggers from 1910 until about 1938. He represented the Club in about every sport it took part in. Captain, coach, active-athlete, manager and adviser, "Dad" served on the Board of Directors of the Outrigger Club for many years. He is as much a part of Waikiki and the Outrigger as is the Beach itself.

"Dad," who shares with Duke Kahana-moku the honor of being the Outrigger Club's "most honored member," realized that Duke was a "coming champ" about 1910. Not long ago "Dad" said to me, "I was swimming anchor on the Myrtles in a swimming relay race in Honolulu Harbor against the Healanis. Duke swam the final lap against me. Duke won by a touch. We knew then that we had a champion swimmer." And, on August 12, 1911—the day that Duke (of the *Hui Nalu*) broke world-records in Honolulu Harbor—"Dad" swam second to the Bronze Duke of Waikiki in the 220-yard race. "Dad" was one of those who, about 1911, organized the Hawaiian AAU.



FORECAST

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OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB

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AFFILIATED CLUBS

Arizona Club, Phoenix, Arizona.
Balboa Bay Club, Newport Harbor, California.
Club Del Mar, Santa Monica, California.
College Club of Seattle, Seattle, Washington.
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Old Pueblo Club, Tucson, Arizona.
San Diego Club, San Diego, California.
Santa Monica Swimming Club, Santa Monica, California.

Hilo Yacht Club, Hilo, Hawaii.
Kauai Yacht Club, Lihue, Kauai.

Carleton Club, Winnipeg, Canada.
South Yarra Club, Melbourne, Australia.
Tattersall's Club, Sydney, Australia.
Terminal City Club, Vancouver, Canada.
Waikiki Club, Lima, Peru.

Later, he served many years as its president, ending that service about 1939. "Dad" was swimming coach at Punahou for about thirty years. He also coached water polo teams of Hawaii.

"BUILDER OF CHAMPS"

The list is long of those whom "Dad" coached to championship caliber in swimming. The list is longer of those whom "Dad" encouraged in the same sports. Among the many are: Duke Paoa Kahanamoku, Samuel Alapai Kahana-moku, Clarence (Buster) Crabbe, Buddy Crabbe, Ludy Langer, Wild Bill Harris, Gay Harris, Pua and Warren Kealoha, Toots Minvielle, Clem Akina, Jr., Buck Kahele, Bill King, Art Powlison, Harold Hustace, Jimmy Hurd, Benton Wood, Ed Peterson, Bob Darnell, Bill Newport, Fred Reeder, C. Dudley Pratt, Dave Livingston, Marichen Wehslau Jackson, Lily Bowmer, May Forrest, Helen Moses Cassidy, Ruth Scudder, Olga Clarke, Janice Lovet Makinney, Mildred Slaght Hooper, Beatrice Newport, Kanny Ross, Cecily Cunha, Blanche Fernandes, Estel Cassidy, and many others.

Always in close contact with youth at Waikiki, "Dad" has aided thousands in aquatic beach sports, including among the many: Ronald Higgins, Edric Cooke, Ernest Cooke, Francis Bowers, Sonny Ruttman, Toots Minvielle, Sally Hale, Clarence Dyer, W. W. (Wild Bill) Harris, Gay Harris, Ainslie MacKenzie, Kenneth Makinney, Lorrin Thurston, Bob Burbank, Bouldin Burbank, Joe Stickney, Sam Poepoe and a throng of others.

AMERICAN OLYMPIC SWIMMING COACH

George David Center was selected to manage and coach the Hawaiian swimmers who were picked to go to the Mainland for the Olympic Trials at Chicago in July, 1920. Eight swimmers won the right to be members of the team to enter the trials. They were: Duke Paoa Kahanamoku, Ludy Langer, Warren and Pua Kealoha, William W. Harris, Jr., John Kelii, Harold (Stubby) Kruger and Helen Moses. They sailed from Honolulu in June of 1920. "Dad" likes to tell about this wonderful trip. "Duke was a bigger attraction than ever," "Dad" recently told me. "People demanded to see him at every place the train stopped—even at

small towns—so that Americans could have a glimpse of their famous world-champion. People would come right into the car and get Duke out of his bunk so they could get a peek at him.”

A seven-swimmer team emerged from the Chicago trials—Duke, Wild Bill Harris, Warren and Pua Kealoha, Ludy Langer, Stubby Kruger and Helen Moses. They sailed for Europe aboard the SS *Princess Matoika*. There is no space to describe the “Mutiny of the *Matoika*.” Among the 1,500 athletes parading before King Albert of Belgium, Cardinal Mercier, the clerical war-hero, and other world-known notables were “Dad” Center and his comrades. And “Dad” had been appointed coach of the entire American Swimming Team. The Hawaiian swimmers did splendidly. After shaking hands with King Albert and his Queen, “Dad” and his fellow Americans from Hawaii moved on to visit Brussels, Paris, London and other parts of the world. Receiving medals on their return to New York, the Hawaiian Team, on November 9, 1920, were greeted with a royal aloha welcome at Honolulu. During the team’s tour it took part in twenty-six contests and brought back fifty-nine medals and other trophies of their victories at Antwerp, Paris, London, New York, Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco and way-points. The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce honored the swimmers with a luncheon and each swimmer received a gold medal.

“DAD” VISITS JAPAN—PAN-PACIFIC OLYMPIAD OF SPORTS

In 1926, “Dad” led an Hawaiian Swimming Team to the Sesquicentennial at Philadelphia. (It was in January of this year that “Dad” lost his mother. His father had passed away in 1901.) This year George David Center coached and managed another swimming team that visited Japan. In the following year (1927), “Dad” was coach and manager of an American Swimming Team that journeyed to Nippon. In September of 1927 “Dad” Center left Honolulu (as the representative of the Pan-Pacific Union) to urge the organization of a Pan-Pacific Olympiad of Sports, with invitations from the Pan-Pacific Union to have the first meet held in Honolulu in 1929 or

1930. Before sailing, “Dad” told the Pan-Pacific Union:

“I believe in swimming as one of the greatest sports in the world and a great developer of mankind, and that is why I am interested in having as many of the countries on the Pacific get together every two years in an athletic contest like this, to develop our swimmers so that we can build up a team to represent Hawaii and America in the final Olympics every four years.”

It might be an excellent idea if the Outrigger Canoe Club in 1950 revived the 1927 proposal for a Pan-Pacific Olympiad of Sports.

“Dad” had much to do with the creation and dedication of the First World War Memorial (Natatorium) at Waikiki in 1927. Duke Kahanamoku returned from California for this dedication and declared, “I can see Dad Center’s hand in it,” and that “with such men as Dad Center and Harvy Chilton there is no reason why Hawaii should not hold a high place in the swimming world.”

“Dad” Center coached the Hawaiian swimmers who participated in the Olympic trials at Detroit in 1928. Only Buster Crabbe qualified for the American Team to compete at Amsterdam (Holland). Duke Kahanamoku did not try for the team.

“DAD’S” LIFE FILLED WITH MANY THINGS

There have been too many interesting features in Dad’s life to even list them. But most of them were very interesting and all were good for Hawaii. Seldom has any aquatic event occurred in Hawaii, during his lifetime, without “Dad” being on hand either as participant, coach, manager, official, adviser or friend of all. His friends laughed with him when a Samoan coconut crab was found in his refuse-can. They shared his pleasure when he held that swimming-class of about fifty at the Outrigger Canoe Club in 1928. They shared his disappointment at never having been able to accept any of the several invitations he received to visit Australia, and also when his strenuous efforts failed in 1932 to form “The Swimming Association.” They enjoyed his taming of his dingo “Skipper” after the dog returned from the war. And they were very much interested in “Dad’s”

motor-outrigger *Miss Feedol* that made a round-trip to Molokai in 1928.


ALOHAED MANY CELEBRITIES TO HAWAII

"Dad" has welcomed countless numbers of celebrated persons to Hawaii and particularly to Waikiki. They all ask for "Dad." We have room to mention only a few. "Dad" can tell you about Jack and Charmion London and their visits to Waikiki in 1907 and 1915-1916. Captain "Dad" Center of the Outrigger Canoe Club led his fleet of outriggers off Waikiki Beach to give an aloha salute to Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, aboard the battleship *New York* on August 20, 1919. Duke Paoa Kahanamoku was there. Three days later, "Dad" had all fourteen canoes of the Club and many surfboards on the Beach to entertain several hundred Navy and Leatherneck lads. "Dad" has a good yarn about helping Duke Kahanamoku teach the Prince of Wales to surfboard and outrigger-canoe, in 1920. "Dad" also took a prominent part in the grand welcome of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1934. The names of "Dad's" visiting friends are legion.

"Dad" Center and Mrs. Lily Anderson were married at Kuliouou in Waikiki in June of 1940 by his fellow Outrigger Henry Pratt Judd. His best man was Edric Cooke and E. E. Budge gave the bride away in marriage.

FRIEND AND TEACHER OF YOUTH

All his life "Dad" Center has been the friend and teacher of thousands of boys and girls of Hawaii—particularly those who wanted to learn how to swim and surf. You will find sport-pages of local newspapers and magazines frequently carrying items like this one in the *Star-Bulletin* of February 2, 1936: "Dad may be seen every day at the Outrigger Club, where he enjoys volley-ball and gives the kids a helping hand around the canoes and surfboards." On May 1, 1950, "Dad" after almost fifty years with Theo. H. Davies & Co., Ltd., retired with appropriate ceremonies, and so, he has more time to devote to his great hobby of helping youth on the Beach of Kings. Yes, George David Center, the Grand Old Man of Waikiki, veteran of many Regatta Days, Swimming Contests and



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Surfing Meets at Waikiki, keeps up his wonder-work of teaching the youth of Hawaii good sportsmanship and how to excel on the beach and in the water. This Dean of Athletes of the Outriggers is out there almost every day enjoying volley-ball and aquatic sports but mostly teaching the youngsters. Yes, "Dad" is a real American gentleman of Hawaii—unselfish, modest, efficient and hospitable. He has retired from business but "Dad" never will retire from helping those who want and need aid on the Beach at Waikiki.

APPLICANTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Below are listed applicants for membership in the OCC. It is each member's *duty* to make any objection to their membership if they have any cause for such objection. Contact Dr. Irving Blom by phone or by mail on or before October 10th stating your reasons for objections. Any such information will be treated as strictly confidential.

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Applicant	Sponsor	Second
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Cornelia Dutilli	Gay Harris	Barbara Dupints
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Howard Ferguson	Charles Klensthe	Hazel Taylor
Sadie Hunter	R. D. Fischer	I. B. Atherton
Samuel Olmsted	R. G. Rietow	H. C. Hansen
D. A. Sutherland	Wm. Sullivan	R. D. Fischer