

Outrigger Club, Successful In Weathering Crisis, Now Looks to Brighter Future

Development of New Facilities Opens Way For Larger Membership; First Unit of Building Program Almost Complete; New Bath Houses Now Being Used

DON WATSON'S COMMENT

BEFORE another month has passed, the Outrigger Canoe Club expects to have completed the first unit in a program of construction which will give it equipment little dreamed of in the early days of the organization.

Out of the crisis, brought about by the loss of a piece of land on which the bath houses formerly stood, is coming a bigger and better club. The gloom with which the organization faced the prospect last spring of raising the funds to provide the necessary facilities for its membership has passed away. Everything now is rosy.

A loyal membership which was willing to dig into its jeans and the generous cooperation of several of the big business houses and estates of Honolulu which see in this club an institution of value to the community, has put across a reorganization that is a notable contribution to the development of water sports in Hawaii.

The club is now entering upon the greatest period of its career. Back in the days when Alexander Hume Ford—believe it or not—used to ride a surfboard, the Outrigger Canoe Club consisted of a stretch of nice sand, a grass hut, a few surfboards, one or two canoes, and an enthusiastic bunch of youngsters. They little dreamed of the development some fifteen years would bring about.

Then there was that broad expanse of ocean. Dad Center tells us that when Lester Smith, the Olympic club swimmer, was informed what the dues of the club were, he almost refused to believe that an athletic organization of its kind could run so economically. And remarking about the many advantages which the members enjoyed, he added cryptically:

"And all of this ocean besides for just that! I think I'll have to move down here."

SMITH is but one of the notable sportsmen who has enjoyed the facilities of the Outrigger club. Through the efforts of Dad Center, the club has won a place of distinction in the swimming world and many of the world's greatest aquatic stars have enjoyed its hospitality.

There is, moreover, a group of youngsters which Dad is bringing along that will make its place in the realm of American and, maybe, international sport in days to come.

Dad is out there day after day and in his quiet way is carefully guiding the training of the boys—and girls, too—who will help to carry on Hawaii's fame for swimmers, first established by Duke Kahanamoku.

Center always has his eyes peeled for good prospects and he takes the youngsters as early as 14 years of age. Dad is always thinking of the future, and he knows the time to learn how to swim is before you have attained your growth.

THE Outrigger Canoe Club is now better equipped than ever before to continue its work of perpetuating and developing the water sports which used to be the pastime of chiefs.

Final work on the new bathhouse is now going on.

The men have already moved into their section of the new bath houses. A new system of lockers has been adopted.

The new bath houses are under the old pavilion which has been moved off of the beach and back onto the reclaimed land just off Kalakaua Ave. Before the Waikiki reclamation project went through this used to be a wide stream which sometimes flooded Waikiki with muddy water. Through the efforts of the Outrigger club it has been turned into solid land and where a pond once appeared, automobiles are now being parked and the club's new home stands.

The reclamation of this land alone was a project not to be scoffed at, and the addition of a reconstructed bath house marks an achievement which is a tribute to the enthusiasm of the organization.

The new bath houses have opened the way for an increase of several hundred in the membership of both the men's and women's organization. It is the club's expectation to have a membership of 1000 men and boys and 1000 women by next summer.

THE new facilities, coupled with the modest dues that are asked, have already begun to attract many persons who like a game of volleyball, a half hour of good exercise with a medicine ball out on the sand, and a dip in the ocean.

For the older folks and the families who like to take their supper at the beach there are the lanais with kitchen facilities where they can prepare with little trouble a light meal.

Of course the club lives for the sport of surf riding, but it comes nearer to furnishing an out-of-door gymnasium than any other organization in the city. It is building hundreds of broad shoulders and strong arms for Honolulu's boys.

One of the things which the new plan is providing is parking space for about 30 cars. By removing this many cars from the street, it is providing ample parking space for its membership on all but days when there are exceptional crowds.

A member of the Outrigger club can run down to the beach in his car, get his bathing suit and towel fresh from the laundry, go in for a swim, drop his bathing clothes in a basket and return the next day to find a dry bathing suit and clean towel waiting for him.

The removal of the old pavilion from the beach has done more than any other step within recent years to open up that section of the beach. There is more of the famous "Waikiki beach" in front of the Outrigger Canoe Club than there is at any point from Diamond Head to Gray's beach. It is a stretch of sand which makes people wish that all of the buildings along the shore had been set back at a reasonable distance from the water.

The new bath house is far enough away so that the picturesque lanais where so many members love to sit and watch the breakers come rolling in, are in comparative quiet and are out of the path of the bathers going to and from the water.

Mrs. Paul Withington, wife of Dr. Paul Withington, a member of the board of directors of the club, is now planning the planting of the new club grounds. Within a few months, the addition of some of the numerous attractive shrubs and trees which grow so well in Hawaii, will make the new layout of the club an altogether attractive addition to Kalakaua Ave.

BY the time the New Royal Hawaiian hotel is completed in January, 1927, the Outrigger Canoe Club hopes to have completed the additional improvements which will equip it to carry on with better facilities than ever before its very distinct work in the life of Honolulu.

It will be as uniquely Hawaiian as is possible and still provide all that is needed for those who love the out-of-doors life of Waikiki.