

Humboldt's  
shining hour  
in racing  
(see page 3)



# HUMBOLDT HISTORIAN

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The Humboldt County Historical Society

*CREADE'S*

*IN SAN FRANCISCO*

*MAY 17, 1911*



# Arthur Way: civic leader and racer

## Eureka-made boat wins SF trophy

by R. Chalmers Crichton

"Incidentally, in order that I may qualify myself as one knowledgeable of many changes, as Eureka has developed over the years, I might tell of my own background. I was born in Eureka on the 5th day of March, A.D. 1879. My birthplace was in the William Brett cottage located on the southwest corner of 5th and D streets. My mother's maiden name was Emily Pengilly Way and my father was Henry Way. Mother was a native of England where she lived and was a pupil teacher at Weymouth until she came to this country."

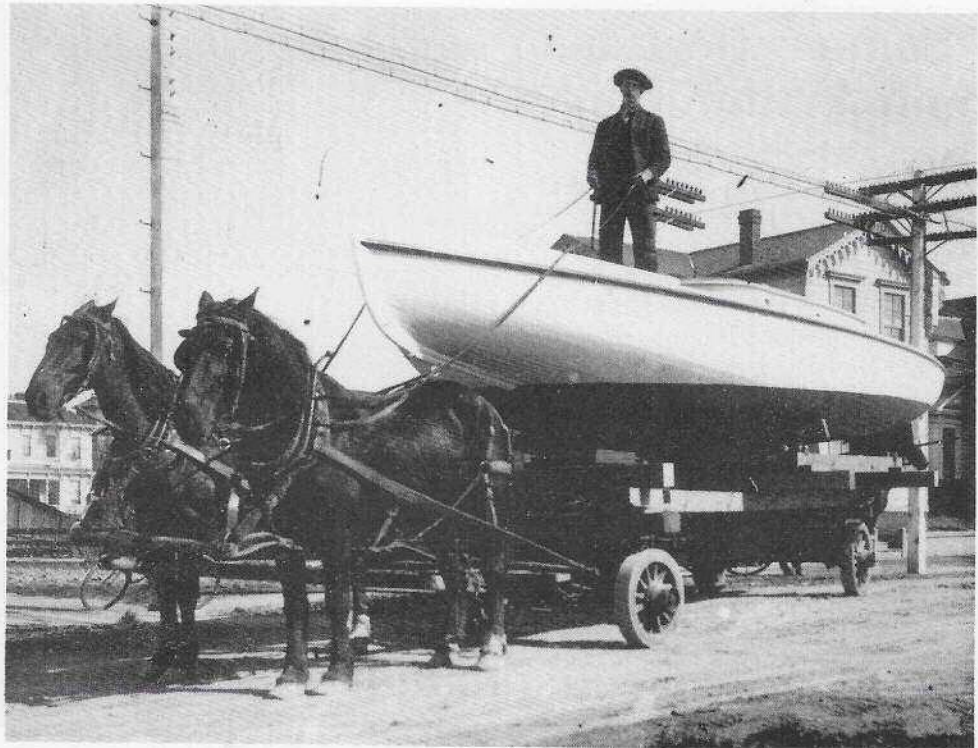
The above information is from the beginning notes for a talk that the late Arthur Way prepared many years ago. He had been called upon to speak before numerous groups including the Historical Society, meetings that were held in Eureka and at Mattole. I feel fortunate to have shared in reviewing these thoughts used in his preparation to entertain at a function the majority of us were unable to attend. Before looking at some of the details of the dynamic life of this Humboldt County citizen, finish reading his notations.

"My father had been a sailor on ships carrying the commerce of the world to many ports. After they established their home my mother continued teaching in her private school, an enterprise that turned out to be very successful. It was not too long before her graduates were turning out to be recognized leaders in state and municipal affairs.

"Our family loved at 5th and D streets for several years and later purchased a home at 6th and D streets. I recall that a one-block-move at that time was quite an effort. I was educated in the public schools of this city as were my sister, Alice, and my brother, Ernest.

"I have always been active in municipal affairs. I took part in dedicatory services for the Winship School building at the corner of Clark and E streets. This is now destroyed to make room for another city building (Municipal Auditorium).

"In the early days we kids used to swim in the millpond of McKay Mill at



Cochrane's Team and Dray hauled the Oreades from its building site to a launching in the bay at the foot of C Street. The driver in this 1908 photo is George Cochrane.—Photos Courtesy Dorothy Way

## Our cover

The victorious Oreades of Eureka is shown on May 17, 1913, on San Francisco Bay as it rounded the officiating vessel in the race that brought the yachting cup to Humboldt County. This fine action photo comes to us through the courtesy of Dorothy Way, daughter of Arthur Way, Skipper of the Oreades.

the foot of A street; this was true in winter or summer, it made no difference. We would go to the slab fire of the mill to get warm. When standing around this fire one time watching the slabs and edgings burn I noticed the large amount of sixteen-inch wood that was burning. I asked the mill foreman if I could salvage wood from the fire and sell it. He gave his permission so I went to work pulling wood out of the fire. I felt the wood was very salable, so went to work trying to snag more wood before the fire consumed it. The mill carpenter saw what I was trying to do so he made me a long pole with a sharp pike on one end so I could get the wood out of the fire more safely. I averaged about \$2 a day net profit. After doing this for a year, the mill began to salvage the wood and I was out of a job.

"I want to take time to make reference to the Melendy family's early day con-

nection with this city. In 1908 J.M. Melendy, father of Howard, our present city assessor, was police judge of the City of Eureka. His offices were located in the City Hall (3rd & G sts.). He resigned to become Justice of the Peace. You may be interested hearing that Judge Melendy had been preceded by Judge Rideout, who in turn had been preceded by Judge A.W. Hanna. The City Council appointed me to take his place as police judge. Upon the retirement of Judge Melendy as Justice of the Peace, the Board of Supervisors appointed me to take Melendy's place. I served in that capacity for eight years, my office was located on the east side of H Street between 2nd and 3rd streets.

"A bunch of us kids saw John Rogers hanged for the murder of Mr. Kimball. The hanging took place on the County Jail property at 2nd and K streets. However, I think Eureka has been constantly changing for the better.

"I remember when Ryan & Duff had a sawmill on the west end of Woodley Island. It was finally dismantled. I believe that transportation was the real problem. Rowboat was the method of going back and forth between the city and the island. It was only a short time until the Occidental Mill was built at the foot of A Street. My father worked there and so did I. This plant was owned by the J.J. Loggie interests. They operated a cookhouse that was located at 3rd and A

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## Some reflections on Arthur Way

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streets. Their fine meals, good coffee and doughnuts live on in my memory. The John Vance Mill and Lumber Co. had a sawmill and lumberyard at the foot of G Street on the waterfront. This plant was sold to the Hammond Lumber Co. of Missoula, Montana, and is now owned by the Georgia Pacific, some of whose large mills and holdings are at Samoa, across the bay from Eureka.

"Workers living in Eureka were transported back and forth by launches operated by the Coggeshall Launch Co. I remember when Mr. Dan Murphy owned Samoa. He built a fairly large swimming pool over there. We used to go over on Sunday afternoon or in the evenings to have a swim in the pool. We didn't do much swimming in the bay waters because of the stingarees which seem to live in and around the mudflats...

"The Dolbeer & Carson Lumber Co. mill located at the foot of M Street in Eureka has furnished employment to many of our citizens. The company owned its own ships for the transportation of lumber. This was before the railroad was built to reach the outside world. That mill is now totally demolished by the Simpson Lumber Co., whose operation in the lumber field is carried on by plants closer to the source of lumber supply. The old Carson family home has

been purchased by the Ingomar Club and is an asset to our community. It is one of the old showplaces of the county, more of such should be preserved for posterity.

"The Korbel Mill, which was owned by Jackson & Everding, is now owned by the Simpson Lumber Company. This is one of their main plants in the county. When Jackson & Everding operated the mill they used to haul their lumber over a self-owned, narrow-gauge railroad

that extended to the end of the (once existing) Arcata wharf. That long wharf was constructed by the firm to facilitate the shipment of lumber. That old trestle was about a half mile long and really served its purpose in getting lumber to the ships and to world markets.

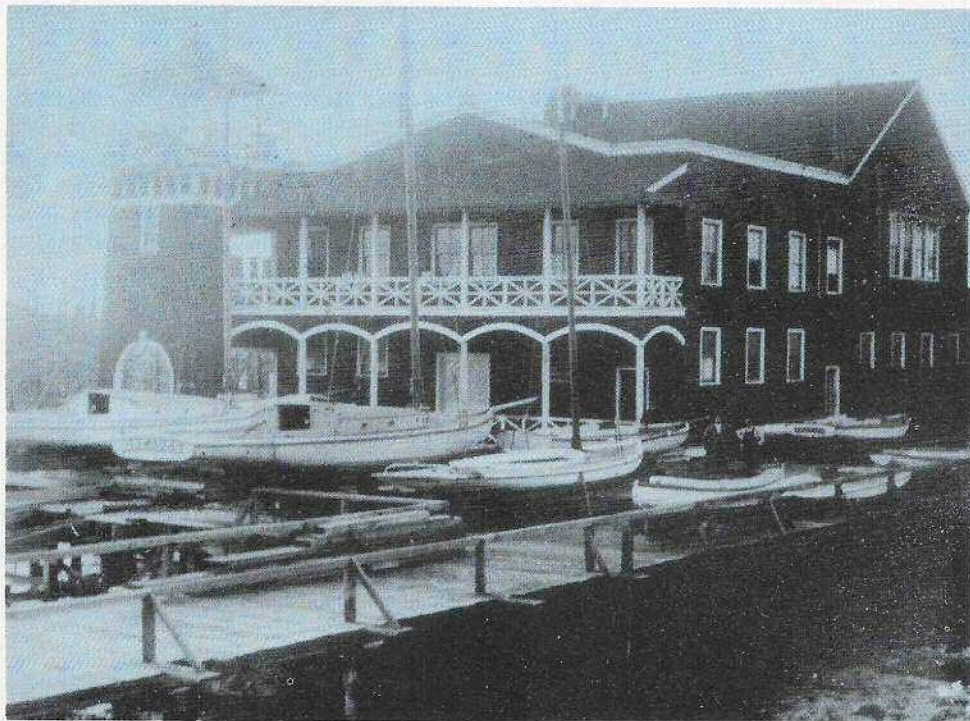
"In the early days there was a big fight on between the Eureka Railroad and the California & Northern Railway. The argument was over securing a franchise to operate a railroad between Eureka and Arcata. The Cal. & Northern built several sections of track but to no avail. The Eel River and Eureka (now the Southern Pacific) secured the franchise and still is operating Eureka to Arcata and to San Francisco and on east.

"Before the advent of the automobile, people who could afford it, kept their horses and buggies in the livery stable. There were many stables in business in Eureka where the animals were fed and housed and harness and buggies were cleaned and stored. I can still see Josiah Bell, J.W. Henderson and many others proudly driving out of the stables in their finely polished buggy or pheaton, heading up the street to get their wives or friends. I never felt envious at that time, but now it is different. Everyone is interested in having a Rolls Royce, Ford, Chevy, Chrysler, or what have you.

"Each livery stable occupied a space of at least a quarter block. There were Torrey's Stables at 2nd & H sts., Dolli-



The Oreades shows its speed in this run on San Francisco Bay.



The Oreades, tall-masted center boat, is shown tied up at the old Sequoia Yacht Club on Gunther Island.





Arthur Way, the winning skipper.—Neil Price collection

son Stables at the SE corner of 3rd & D sts. and across the street, directly behind the old Bank of Eureka, were the Quill Stables. At 2nd & D sts., occupying a quarter block, was the Cephas Acheson Stables. The Ricks Stable was on 4th St. west of F Street and at 4th & G sts. was the Laffey Ayres Stables occupying another quarter of that block. You can understand that this was a big industry even in a small city...

"I can visualize the First Congregational Church with its stately spire located at that time on the SW corner of 4th & G streets. Rev. Dougal MacDougal was the pastor. I was christened there as were my sister, Alice, and brother, Ernest. My father helped build the building and sang in the choir and my mother played the church organ.

"Eureka had a Chinatown where all the Chinese were living in their many hovels. This area was located in the district from about the alley between 4th and 5th streets and centering on E Street and 3rd street on the north. There had been a 'tong war' going on among the Chinese people when, by accident, one of the Eureka City councilmen, a Mr. Kendall, was shot and killed. Immediately a mass meeting was called by the citizens and it was decided that all Chinese would have to leave this area. A committee was formed and the people were herded up together and taken to the warehouse of the Pacific Coast Steamship Co. located on the wharf at the foot of C Street. They were held there while arrangements were made to ship them to San Francisco via ships of the P.C. S.S. Co., and this was done except for one employee of the Bair Ranch at Redwood Creek.



Look carefully and you will see a big crowd gathered in front of the Yacht Club to watch the sloop, Ruby S., a challenger from the San Francisco Yacht Club brought to Eureka aboard the S.S. Necasicum. The date was May 2, 1914, and the Ruby S. won the day, thus returning the racing cup to San Francisco. Earl Clark, skipper of the local defender, Cecelia, knew his 427 square feet of sail would be no match for the visitor's 835 square feet when wind conditions favored the greater sail surface. The victorious crewman sailed their craft home to San Francisco.—Photo from Neil Price Collection

"There was a huge tract of land bounded by A Street on the east, Summer Street on the south; the bay frontage on the north and on the west, along which the N.W.P. Railroad skirts. This was formerly a huge tract of marsh pasture land owned by H.D.P. Allen. He fenced the boundaries and rented pasture rights. I owned two cows and pastured them there. I milked them and sold to a group of select customers a quart of milk a day for \$2 per month delivered. I did very well at it. We played football on the location where McCarthy has their sales place (5th between A & Commercial) and I was nearly drowned by having been tackled by a Hoopa player and landing in this 'swimming hole.' What was pasture land is now part of thriving Eureka, an area where highway, streets, warehouses and automobile sales spots are located. It seems a drastic change but it is a long time since 1897...

"When I was mayor, the city had a streetcar system running along Second Street, out J to Harris Street, out E to Harris and thence to Sequoia Park and out California to Harris Street. It took the profit from the water system to pay the deficit incurred by the streetcar system. The people decided to junk the streetcars and this was done.

"The streets were made of dusty or muddy gravel, depending on the season of the year. The only person who was happy was John Vance who made money by bringing gravel from Eel River on

his railroad. The sidewalks were two-inch redwood planks, this made home industry for the mills. The streets of the business district were finally paved to get away from the continual expense of repairs...No streets were paved unless at least 65 percent of the property owners presented a signed petition to the City Council."

At the close of his memos were listed a few noted to talk about if there might be a little time still available. First he would tell of the first street changes, then about the Vance Lumber Mill and Yards. Other topics: O'Neil's Refreshment Stand and H.H. Buhne Ship Chandlery and Hardware (about their moves to Third & F and 8th and E streets), The Revere House, Haltner's Brewery, Baird Opera House and Vonsen's Feed Warehouse and Cement Headquarters.

Henry Way, father of Arthur, was a native of Bridgeport, England, educated in the naval school, served in the British navy several years and then, following a shipwreck in the South Atlantic, was cast away with others of the crew on the Falkland Islands in 1865. It was three years later that he came to Eureka via Canada and a short time in Washington. He joined the Ryan & Duff mill. When this later became the Occidental Mill we find that he was taking a leading part in securing a plant that was "adequate, modern and convenient." For thirty-eight years he remained with that organization in a key position be-

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# Humboldt Yacht Club's 50th year

by Neil (Bob) Price

Mayor James Rolph of San Francisco made frequent visits to Eureka during WWI to inspect his shipyard at Rolph (Fairhaven). It is reported that he had said to his son, who questioned the advisability of building sailing ships instead of steamers, "Sonny, as long as there's wind there will be sail."

Sail there has been on Humboldt Bay from the early days when sloops and small schooners plied the waters from Hookton, Southport, Bucksport, Eureka and Arcata, carrying passengers and freight, to the present day of sailing for pleasure and competition. Even before the first yacht club, the Sequoia Yacht and Boating Club, was organized at the turn of the century, workmen who crossed the bay daily often used a small sail on their rowboats or skiffs to ease the task of rowing. In addition, rental boats were used on weekends by the townspeople and many of these craft were equipped with a sail as well as oars.

Yacht clubs, like any organization, are only formed when enough people interested in the same pursuit band together. Thus it was with the Sequoia Yacht and Boating Club which began with 11 boat owners at the turn of the century and disbanded in 1925. The present Humboldt Yacht Club, known as the Eureka Boat Club at its founding in 1938, claimed some 15 boats, mixed power and sail.

Many articles have been written over



The first site of the Humboldt Yacht Club was at the foot of A Street in 1938.—Photos from Neil Price Collection

the years by historians interested in the history of the former club. One of these wrote that "this was a way of life that is gone forever." Well, hardly. This is the way of life, the racing, picnics, day sailing, motorboating, sociability, that is enjoyed by yacht clubs worldwide and has been a part of our own Humboldt Yacht Club for the past 50 years.

It was on a Sunday morning in early July, 1938, when a group, sunning themselves on a bench alongside Bill Dustin's boat shop at the foot of A Street, began to discuss the idea of forming a new boat club. Jerry Goyan and his wife, Lucille, were in favor of it but Bill was not, he having only recently seen the demise of a motorboat club which had been of short duration.

There were a number of Snipe-class sailboats and miscellaneous others which had been sailing on the bay for several years, some of them mooring in the Dustin shop area. Among them were a few inboard and outboard motorboats. In time, Bill agreed, with the result that on July 11, 1938, 22 people attended a meeting and the Eureka Boat Club was born. Dues of 25¢ each were collected.

At the following meeting, on July 18, the name of the club was changed to the Humboldt Boating Club to attract out of town members. With the addition of 10 more members the treasury grew to \$5.50. The burgee of the former motorboat club was adopted consisting of a blue and white triangle with a 5 point star. The first officers were Bert Pasco, Commodore; Norman Robertson, Vice Commodore; George Gregory, Secretary; and Bill Dustin, Port Captain. The annual dues were set at \$1.

Meanwhile, an area at the foot of A Street between the Signal dock and the McKay Mill property became available and this enthusiastic group began the work of driving pilings, bulkheading and restoring the existing building for use as a clubhouse. Donations of materials were received from several companies. One long piling carried a swinging arm that was used for hoisting boats from the water to the dock for storage or placement on trailers.

Although there were sailboats of other classes, the Snipe class predominated. This was a 15' boat, sloop rigged, that was inexpensively built at home.

## Arthur Way

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fore retiring.

Immediately upon his arrival to this county he united with the First Congregational Church of Eureka being one of the first eight charter members. His wife, Emma Pengilly, was born on the little Island of Jersey and was an experienced teacher. They were married April 3, 1877. She conducted her private school in Eureka for 25 years.

Arthur W. Way, one of their three children, was born March 5, 1879. His mother gave him his elementary school education. He mentioned playing ball in passing, but not many know that he was a star football and baseball player when he attended Winship High School. It

was some time after his graduation from Winship that he took up the study of law and passed the Bar examination.

Following his death the newspapers said, "There are not many who ever heard of the other Arthur W. Way—the intrepid sportsman, the athlete, the volunteer fireman, the attorney who for years fought for the causes of the Indians, the champion yachtman who for more than a half century set a record which has never been broken."

When he was 37 years of age, he accomplished an almost impossible task of salvaging most of the cargo, ship's gear, and equipment that was aboard the S.S. Bear, the wrecked steamer off Cape Mendocino on June 14, 1916.

The area is not readily accessible to-

day, but was almost impossible to reach at that time. Arthur and his crews built temporary roads and bridges and laid railroad ties down the beach placing them not more than four feet apart. They used the funnels from the Bear for culverts at several streams. It made for a rough bumpy road but served the purpose.

He sent to Switzerland for three narrow-gauge trucks to bring the salvage to Ferndale, and used 35 four-horse teams around the clock to accomplish the task which even the insurers felt couldn't be done. It was acclaimed at that time as the greatest engineering and salvage job of its kind in the world.

In the yacht *Oreades*, which he and William S. Clark built on Humboldt Bay with no previous knowledge of boat



The wide deck made it possible to have the boat down for mast repair or hull cleaning without shipping water into the cockpit.

By-laws and a few simple sailing rules were adopted. Since all of the skippers were novices they were more intent on avoiding collision than demanding "buoy room" or "Starboard tack." In the first inter-club competition, with the Clear Lake Yacht Club, our skippers didn't fare well. Time changed this.

The "Days of General Grant" celebration was held over the July 4th weekend of 1939. The yacht club was named sponsor for the activities on the bay which included rowing, sailboat and powerboat racing. The club held an open house during these events. On October 10 of the following year the name of the club was changed to the present Humboldt Yacht Club. Interclub racing began at this time between the Coos Bay Yacht Club and later the Eugene Yacht Club was included.

The original railroad depot included a tower upon which was mounted a large flagpole. When the tower was taken down the flagpole was given to the club. It was erected at the clubsite and served there until 1950. Finally the pole was loaned to the new College of the Redwoods which was temporarily located back of the high school. Later, after more storage in Eureka and Fairhaven, it was erected at the present clubsite. Due to stress against the building, it has again been put in storage.

When Commodore Harvey Harper took office in 1943, he found a Government-like financial situation with a \$78 debt and \$39 in the treasury! Members in arrears were asked to pay their dues! By this time the tenure of the club became very uncertain. The Ice Co. was

building, Way and an Eureka crew entered the San Francisco Bay Regatta. On that day, May 25, 1913, the San Francisco Yacht Club saw the visitors make a clean sweep, taking the perpetual trophy away. This was a trophy San Francisco Yacht Club had held for 34 years and one that had never left the San Francisco Bay area in its existence of 85 years. It is noteworthy what the newspapers said in their reporting of Art Way's achievement: "It is typical of the man that he always gave full credit to his crew for the astounding victory over the cream of the yacht fleet at San Francisco."

And so to keep faith, let us look at that crew of the Oreades: Art Way was Skipper, with him were, H.L. "Topsy" Ricks, William S. Clark, R.J. Kellen, Bernard



**The Humboldt Yacht Club building is shown being moved from A Street to the boat basin, its present location.**

planning to expand. The quest for another site began and was the business of several committees over the next 7 years.

After the war, activities picked up again with fleets of sailboats and hydroplanes. It was soon found that it would be necessary to devote a full day to each group in order to conduct satisfactory races. The North of Fourth Association and the Junior Chamber of Commerce took an interest in these activities and not only provided trophies but helped conduct the races.

A feature of the banquets which followed the interclub racing was the awarding of the sailor hat upon which was inscribed the word "BOOBY." the present holder would try it on several heads until finally fixing it upon the one deemed most guilty of error during the day. This writer "earned" this nefarious bonnet for reasons not reported herein. At present the club awards a large turtle for capsizes.

In August, 1948, the club purchased

B. Bartlett and William Kressman. All were members of the Eureka's Sequoia Yacht Club. Today the Humboldt Bay Maritime Museum has a display of some of Arthur W. Way's cups and memorabilia.

Before going to another subject, what was the background for this dramatic takeover? The story of the Oreades' origin is almost as fantastic as some of the other events in the Way saga.

It was two years before the great race. Way and his close friend, W.S. Clark, had heard of a beautiful yacht—a 35 footer which had won the Great Lakes Championship against supposedly superior craft.

They sent east to the Small Brothers for the plans, which cost them \$135—a whale of amount of money in those days. Neither one of them had ever built a

the former Chicago Bridge and Iron Co. office and watchtower building located at the foot of Washington Street. The Washington Street building was an ideal clubhouse complete with several rooms and an office. It was proposed to move it to city property just downbay from the Small Boat Basin. The Council members were in favor of this plan but the then City Attorney set conditions of rental and occupancy that would have turned away even a wealthy club. This land is still vacant and is now surrounded on the bay side with a concrete sidewalk.

This was a bitter disappointment as plans had already been made for the driving of pilings and moving of the building.

Work parties salvaged about half of the lumber and fixtures at the Washington Street site and then the job was finished by a salvager who took what remained. The club's share was stored at the foot of W Street where attrition took its toll before the opportunity came to use what remained.

On May 21, 1950, the Hammond Lumber Co. offered the use of the former Hammond summer home on the east shore of Big Lagoon. A fire had destroyed the cottage but a garage and woodshed remained intact. There was much to be done to clean up the property, clear the road to the pond and build outhouses and floats. Meanwhile the clubhouse at A Street had to be demolished. Rather than interrupt the effort at the lagoon by dividing the work force, word was passed around that any person who would help could keep what he or she salvaged. Strange cars and trailers appeared like magic and the premises were completely clean in two evenings!

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boat before.

Clark had a good-sized shed at his home at Whipple (14th) & C sts. When the plans arrived, Way rolled them open on the shed floor and Clark figured them out.

They started to work—on two vessels. Clark named his twin of Art's the "Calypso."

Only the mast and spars were farmed out, to be shaped from native Humboldt fir. The rest, Way and Clark did themselves. There was one hitch that was a cartoonist's classic: When their neat, trim crafts were completed, they were too big to get out of the shed. One end of the building had to be knocked out to release the boats.

Then they needed help so Cochrane's  
*(continued on page 8)*



## Yacht Club

(continued from page 7)

For the next several years the meetings were held in private homes. There was less sailing on the bay and few races. All of the spare time of the members went into improving the Big Lagoon camp site. The inter-club regattas were still held however. Hosts were the Eugene Yacht Club over the Memorial Day weekend, the Humboldt Yacht Club on July 4th and the Coos Bay Yacht Club during the Labor Day weekend. By 1957 this relationship had faded out primarily for the reason that each club featured boats of differing classes so that, other than the open class, there was no real competition.

It had seemed that after years of searching every nook and cranny of Humboldt Bay, every possible site for the Yacht Club had been explored but once again another possibility presented itself. This was a strip of private land adjacent to the Small Boat Basin jetty along the Little Slough. It was proposed to widen and deepen the channel with a mooring basin near the railroad right-of-way. The Selvage Co. had a large dragline on the site and all that was needed was the signing of the lease. At the meeting on March 10, 1952, it was learned that the owners had decided to use the property themselves so that scheme foundered.

In June, 1952, a large Navy barge, that had been damaged at sea, was moored at the Gillette Marine Ways. By this time the members had tired of being homeless on the bay. It was found that the Kaarte property next to Gillette's would be available for lease. It was acknowledged that, because of the



This is one of the earlier races held by the Humboldt Yacht Club at Big Lagoon.

distance around the bay via Arcata to travel, the strong tides, and the fact that the cruiser members would most likely drop out, that this was not the most desirable situation. However it was decided to purchase the barge, excavate a slot in the beach and float the barge in at high water. This was done with a good deal of jubilation, at least we would have a summer picnic site and storage building.

The lumber was trucked around the bay along with the flagpole and straightening of the barge house was done. The roadway was graded and covered with chips. A gateway was erected. As the summer wore on, not much more was done because most of the effort went into improving the Big Lagoon property.

At the meeting on December 13, 1953, it was learned that a 102-foot long pier, 20-feet wide and next to the original club site at A Street would be available at a rental of \$100 per year. The decision was made at once to accept this and proceed with bringing the lumber, etc., back from the barge and begin the construction of a clubhouse on the pier.

This was a slow process, all of the work having been done by the members, mostly on weekends. Other than the roof beams and plywood, the lumber that was salvaged from the Chicago Bridge and Iron Co. building was used. On January 14, 1957, the building was ready for the first meeting. Nick and Dorothy Morgan had the honor of dedicating the clubhouse. These two had given a great deal of their time, energies and money toward the welfare of the club over the years.

Predicted log racing became popular at this time with cruisers and outboards participating. The sailboat skippers helped by conducting the races. The sailing races were held at Big Lagoon due to lack of mooring facilities near the clubhouse. There was a continual round of activities including an open house each year with boat rides for the public.

In March, 1959, notice was given that the Ice Co. would be expanding again and that the club must vacate. On April 7, a 25-year lease was signed with the city for space just up-bay from the

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## Arthur Way

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dray came to move them to the foot of C Street where Mercer Fraser had a pile-driver. Its rigging was used to launch the two boats. The Way boat was christened, "Oreades" (named for a Greek sea nymph).

Then the fun began. The two fellows were the best of friends—anywhere except at the tiller. There writers said, they showed "tooth and fang." Way once recalling race experiences said, "I could beat her (the Calypso) by 14 seconds in seven miles every time." He had the "feel" and the "knowhow."

So after much local practice, the San Francisco race of May 25, 1913, was entered and arrangements were made

to ship the boat to San Francisco aboard the S.S. Vanguard.

The day of the race the last survivors in the eliminations were the two boats, the San Francisco yacht "Challenger" and Way's "Oreades."

Over a hundred boats were entered and there had been much more wind than they needed. It was nip-and-tuck in the stretch. They were on the last lap and rounding the stake boat. Under the strain of the terrific wind the turnbuckle holding the "Challenger's" bowsprit, which in turn held the mainmast guy, broke and down came mast and canvas.

On the "Oreades," at the same time, it called for every ounce of strength and every shred of experience. Kellen was the mainsheet man, and Bartlett han-

dled the jib and was in charge of the balloon spinnaker and water-sail, if needed. Now the whole object was to prevent the loss of her own sticks. Skipper Way controlled the tiller with an unbelievable smoothness and she breezed across the finish line—and to the championship—intact. San Francisco papers blazed the story across their front pages.

Arthur Way was very modest but at the same time ecstatic. He said, "Teamwork won it," and stuck with this remark for years and years after. However all present at the event attested to the superior seamanship of Arthur W. Way, skipper of the Oreades.

It is a fact there are other little-known "firsts" during his long career. An example, the first motor truck to reach



# Trinidad club marks 75th year

*Editor's note: The following article was compiled by Marilyn Westberg, Ann McCory and Beth Teig.*

It is often said that America's greatest resource is its people. With that in mind, it is not surprising that the Trinidad Civic Club, celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year, has had such a strong influence on the little coastal town of Trinidad. The small population and its comparative isolation, fostered an attitude of self-reliance among its members which contributed to the development of strong leadership skills in addressing the needs of the community and surrounding area. Those skills, combined with constant fund-raising efforts have enabled the club to contribute in a very practical way to projects not readily affordable by the city and, in addition, to facilitate programs of historical significance, beautification and cultural enrichment.

It was in February, 1913, that seven Trinidad women met and formed the Ladies Civic Club, later to be called the Trinidad Civic Club. Mrs. Walter F. (Mary) Dryden was elected as the club's first president with Mrs. George (Emma) Scott, Vice-President; Mrs. Hilda Ehreisen, Treasurer; and Mrs. Margaret McConnaha, Secretary. The ladies met in homes or other available places in town. The Constitution and By-Laws were passed on April 11, 1913.

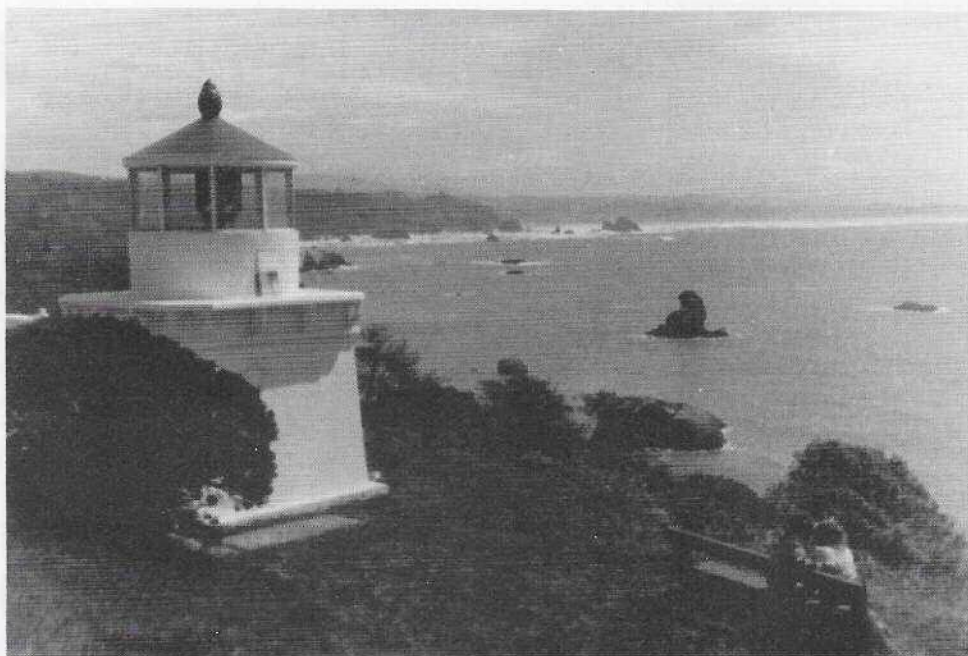
One of the group's first projects was raising money for the improvement of

Bridgeville was driven by Arthur W. Way.

Arthur is credited with being the key person on forming the Sequoia Yacht Club and constructing its spacious, imposing building on Gunther Island.

In 1916 Arthur Way purchased 30 some acres near the mouth of the Mattole River, southeast of Ferndale. There he initiated, and carried out each Fourth of July what developed into a huge celebration in honor of his small daughter, Dorothy. Today she still remembers the many big metal containers of ice cream that he transported for the event. He spent large sums for the picnic and fireworks. The celebration was free for all who would attend.

Now of course the Mattole Grange has been the sponsor of the Annual Fourth



**The picturesque Memorial Lighthouse is maintained by the Trinidad Civic Club as a memorial to those lost at sea.—Photo by Dr. Alfred J. Kana**

the Trinidad Cemetery, which had fallen into disrepair since its establishment in the 1850s. This has continued as an on-going project.

During that first summer the Town Trustees, anxious to build a town hall, asked the club members to help plan for a suitable building. Shortly thereafter, the Town Hall was built and it is still in use not only by the city government but by many organizations and the general public. The club actively participated in the original construction and has continued to contribute major funding for furnishings, modernization and maintenance. The first club meeting was held in the new facility in August of 1917.

Also during that summer the women were busy (along with other organizations) with the acquisition of a granite

cross to be placed on Trinidad Head at or near the site where Spanish explorers had anchored and placed a cross on June 9, 1775. September 9, 1917, was declared "Cross Day" for the dedication of the cross. The women received permission to use some boards from the old Occidental Hotel and barn to build tables and seats with the help of men and boys so they could serve lunch in the lower part of town. Over 200 visitors came that day. This was the first of many times that the men, husbands, sons and friends were called upon to help in projects.

Money raising projects in the early years consisted mainly of dances (masquerade, basket social, hard times or come as you are), sales of goodies such as ice cream, peanuts and baked goods,

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of July Celebrations and other picnics, dances, barbecues, etc. It was on October, 1961, that the Mattole Grange honored Arthur by having a "Way Day." Invitations were extended all over the country to have his friends attend the picnic. It was a time when speeches were heard from the late Frank P. Bellotti, as the main speaker and Martha B. Roscoe as M.C., but most important was the opportunity for people to express their appreciation and congratulations to Arthur, honoring him on his 82nd birthday. And some came to say thanks for the trucks he sent to flooded country in 1955 to help people or for personally planting fish in some streams long before the state took over or for the setting aside of Ferndale's streams for children's fishing only and he fostered many

other worthwhile projects. Yes, "Way Park" at Mattole is named in his honor.

For two terms he served the City of Eureka as its mayor. (Emily Jones succeeded him in that office.) Years later he entered the political arena of the State of California. He was sent to the California Assembly, from the First District in 1948 and after serving that year and 1949 he was selected for the State Senate where he served from 1950 to 1956.

Those who know, credit him with taking an active roll in highway development. He gave top priority to both the development of Highway 1 from San Francisco north to Oregon and the improvement of Redwood Highway. The

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# Final days of Holmes Lumber Co.

*Editor's note: This is the second of two articles on Holmes Eureka Lumber Company, incorporated on June 18, 1903.*

*by Stanley Parker*

Holmes Eureka's operations were about the same size as Dolbeer & Carson, their long-time, cross-town rival. But the two companies were quite different. Dolbeer & Carson was formal and paternal and organized. It was a very strong company financially. (It is probably wrong to call it a rival since it helped in the establishment of Holmes Eureka and saved it from bankruptcy in the Great Depression.) In contrast, Holmes Eureka frequently seemed to barely avert disaster and never was a rich company.

During the Great Depression, Holmes Eureka was forced to suspend production for nearly two and a half years, from February 6, 1931, until July 10, 1933. This was caused by the great industry-wide drop in sales in the late 1920's that did not reverse for some time. Its highest recorded inventory of lumber on hand was 26,498,000 feet board measure in late 1930, nearly a year's production for a mill whose daily production was in the 135,000 to 140,000 range.

Shipments continued during the period production was suspended, and the inventory had been substantially reduced by the time the plant was reopened in 1933. Average inventory over a long historical period from 1920 to 1952 was

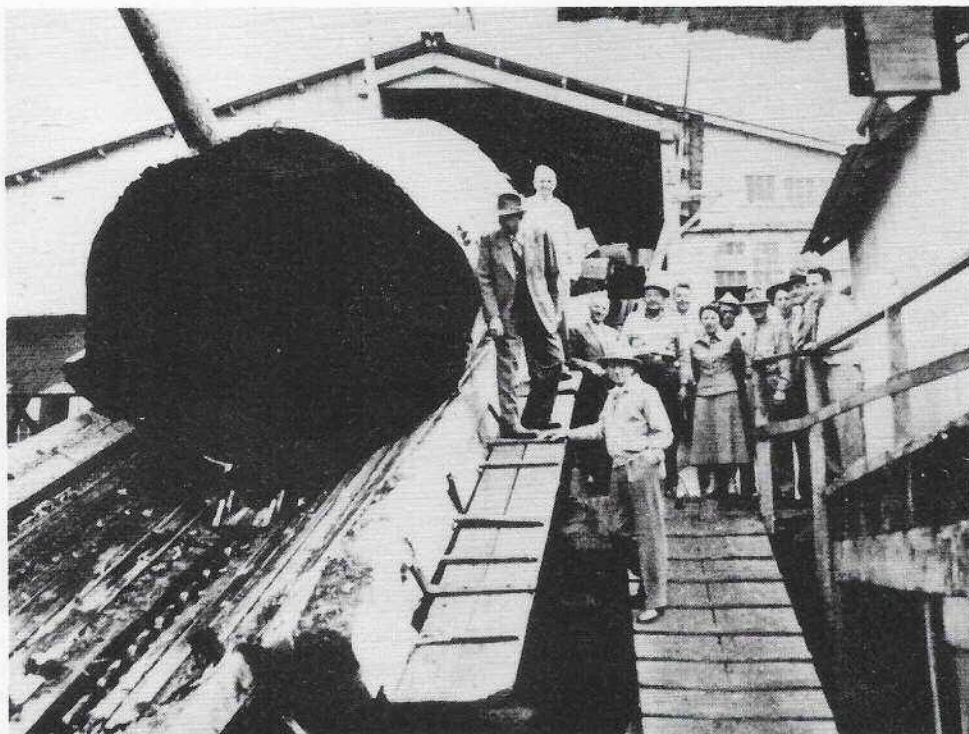
## Arthur Way

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Redwood Highway Association acknowledges that he was one of the earliest proponents for the shoreline highway and took an active roll in many matters of their Association.

Arthur Way and the late Richard Denboe are credited with starting the Annual Crab Feed still held in Sacramento by Humboldtters.

He was the founder and owner-operator of the former Redwood Empire Freight Lines and was the first to bring a refrigeration truck to the area. He operated several trucks regularly between San Francisco and Eureka. Way's Garage was located at 7th & D streets.



**Fred Holmes, in suit, front left, shows visitors a huge redwood log as it comes from the log pond to the mill at Holmes Eureka Lumber Co. The photo was taken in the 1940s.**

16,500,000 feet, which was high but necessary for an old growth redwood sawmill needing proper time for air-drying the production.

The decade of the 1930s was very hard on Holmes Eureka Lumber Company, including as it did the Great Depression, the 1935 L & SW strike and the beginning of harassment of management by stockholders and creditors who didn't seem to understand why their dividends had to be reduced or passed merely because there was no money, or why the notes should be extended. The one sympathetic creditor during this period was Dolbeer & Carson. This company did not press for collection of

amounts due them for timber cut by Holmes Eureka on their property behind Fortuna.

When the log source shifted from the south to the north in 1949, the mill was surprised to find the trucks bringing in about 25,000 feet of young growth redwood logs per day. Certainly management knew about the nature of the forest they were harvesting but they failed to inform the sawmill bosses. These logs produced lumber with characteristics different from the lumber produced from old growth logs. The annual growth rings were much further apart resulting in coarser grained lumber. Any other plant would have set them aside and had a special run of the sawmill for the young growth logs two or three times a month.

The Holmes Eureka mill superintendent, following the Holmes Eureka tradition of marching to a different drummer, elected to treat these young growth logs as if they were not different in any way from the regular logs. He knew he was playing a dangerous game, and decided to make sure nobody knew they existed except him and the sawmill crew, which he swore to secrecy. The young growth logs were always run through the sawmill as soon as they were unloaded and the lumber mixed with the balance of the day's production. This meant there was never a young growth log in the millpond or in the cold deck. When customers mentioned the

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In earlier years he was a partner in the auto sales firm known as Mercer-Way. Some of the autos they sold and serviced were Lozier, Chalmers, Flanders, Hupmobile and Studebaker and they also had International and Mack trucks.

When he was president of a men's club, known as "Knights of the Roundtable," he proposed they start a youth club, "perhaps at the high school, the men could act as advisors and direct the youths in looking for places to serve, etc." The club known as Excalibur came into being and the idea quickly caught on in other cities. This was the forerunner of the Interact and Key clubs sponsored by Rotary and Kiwanis service clubs today.

HH



## Yacht Club

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Wharfinger's office in the Small Boat Basin. Two weeks later the pilings were driven and the Johnson Co. moved the building along First Street squeezing between the lifeboats that marked the entrance to the Basin. After it was in place the members reinstalled the windows, put in the decking and built the steps. On June 8, 1959, it was ready for use and in this interval of 29 years has changed little except for normal upkeep.

The original fleet of Snipes have all but disappeared. These were replaced by the Kestrel, a slightly larger boat. These too have given way to a variety of larger craft capable of ocean travel. A feature during the summer is the race to Trinidad where the skippers and crew are hosted by Dr. and Mrs. Herman Iverson.

After some 35 years of improving and maintaining the Big Lagoon property the privilege of its use was lost when the State Parks purchased all of the shoreline of the lagoon. Permission has been

given, however, to use it during the annual Redwood Regatta in September.

The office of Commodore is no longer held exclusively by men. Sharon Becker kept a tight ship through 1979. Rene Richter served very capably for the two years 1982-83, followed by Tonja Rickman, 1986-87. Commodore Jeff Dickey will see the club through its 50th year. So many fine people have come and gone over the years, many having served as officers, that none should be singled out for special mention. There are no charter members in the club at the present time.

No one can predict what the future holds for the Humboldt Yacht Club. The present facilities have reached their limit and further, city officials may remove the clubhouse and floats on short notice. History does repeat itself!

Hopefully there will be fewer of the vexing problems that have beset the club during the past fifty years. It would seem that this peaceful organization has had more than its share. We do know and take faith in the prophetic words of Mayor Rolph who, so many years ago said, "Sonny, as long as there is wind there will be sail." **HH**

## Trinidad Club

(continued from page 10)

matter was resolved through the establishment of the Humboldt North Coast Land Trust.

Scholarships have been given to graduating seniors of McKinleyville High School for about 10 years. Depending on the amount of money available, the number of scholarships has ranged from two to 11 scholarships of \$500 each. Some years the scholarships have been \$1,000. These recipients often keep in touch, telling the club of their achievements, information of great interest to the members.

Children in the area are important to club members and so aid has been given to Boy Scouts, Bluebirds, Camp Fire Girls and summer recreation programs. The Trinidad Elementary School has been the recipient of many useful items

cowboy, and I dug him out. We broke one of his snowshoes in getting him out of the drift. From then on, Mel and I had to walk in our tracks and this somewhat slowed us down. He was big and strong, but his weight would cause him to sink deep sometimes.

Deep snow in open country erases all the landmarks. Fortunately, Wesley had traveled this trail many times so he

such as an electric scoreboard, musical instruments, encyclopedias and visual aids. The club has enjoyed many musical performances by the students.

Many donations to charitable and public organizations, such as the local food banks, Special Olympics, Lions Club Eye Clinic, Redwoods United "P" Street pre-school, KEET-TV, Redwoods United Workshop, Hospice of Humboldt, Humboldt Area Foundation, Humboldt North Coast Land Trust, Trinidad Community Choir, Trinidad Museum Society, Lifelines for Trinidad citizens and Humboldt State University Marine Laboratory. The latest project is financial and volunteer help to the 4-H Therapy Riding for Access to Independence (4-H T.R.A.I.L.S.) which is equestrian therapy for developmentally disabled young people. The Trinidad Civic Club members are extremely proud of their collective efforts and results.

was able to lead us in the right direction. After reaching the top of the mountain we still had several miles to travel before dropping down toward the Iaqua Ranch. It was dark and cold, but beautiful with a full moon shining on the deep snow. An owl perched on some oak tree kept hooting. It seemed an eternity before we reached the tree where it was located. We were walking across pas-

## In Memory

*Recently deceased members of the Historical Society:*

**ROSALIE JOHNSON**, a native of Basin, Wyoming, died March 28, 1988, in Vallejo, Calif., where she had been residing for 29 years.

She was 66 years of age and had been a homemaker all her adult life. Rosalie was a member of the Vallejo Trailer Club.

Surviving her are her husband, Ernest Johnson of Vallejo and her brother, Al Dobbs, also a resident of Vallejo, Calif.

**VIRA WOOD**, a native of California and a long-time resident of the San Francisco Bay area, died in Berkeley, Calif., on April 22, 1988. She was 79 years of age at the time of her death.

Vira was the wife of the late Lewis K. Wood, III, who was grandson of Lewis K. Wood of the Greg party, an early explorer group, and one of the founders of Union.

She is survived by two daughters and a son: Lora Anderson of Vacaville, Joelyn Ryan of Danville and Lewis K. Wood, IV, of Bishop. She also leaves 11 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

Her memberships included: Native Daughters of the Golden West, Northbrae Women's Club, Etude and Federated Women's Club. She was past president of N.A.B.A. and U.C. Mother's Club.

She had a deep interest in Humboldt County history and had been a member of the Humboldt County Historical Society for many years. She loved to travel and her enthusiasm for nearly everything she did was infectious to those she encountered.

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*Material was gathered for this article from a number of sources including "The Belles of Trinidad" compiled by Sybil Jamieson from club minutes. This booklet may be purchased from a club member for \$5.*

*The public is invited to help celebrate the club's 75th Anniversary at an open house at the Trinidad City Hall and club rooms on September 18. A program will be presented at 1 p.m. There will be displays and refreshments.* **HH**

tures where six inches of fence posts were showing.

It was 10 p.m. when we arrived, very tired but safe. Two days later we were able to go out horseback riding on top of the crusted snow, so I started out at 3 a.m. so I could lead the horses back before the crust became soft. I rode one horse and led three tailed together. I had plenty of trouble, but made it. **HH**