

THE CRONIN STORY IS THE DOLPHIN STORY

James J. Cronin was born in San Francisco on August 17, 1868, nine years before his kid brother, the Dolphin Swimming and Boating Club. But they grew up together. This is a brief history of both; for a biography of either is in many respects that of the other. Old Timers' Nite on August 14, 1954, will celebrate Jimmie's 86th birthday and a lifetime of active devotion to the welfare of the Club.

In 1877, the Dolphin Club was organized at a meeting in the home of John Weiland of the old Weiland Brewery. Membership was originally limited to 50; but the fine reputation and popularity of the Club caused the quota to be later successively raised to 75; then to 100, 125, 200 and finally, to the present quota of 300. Today there are 253 Dolphins, which includes 187 regular members, and 66 life members who have enjoyed membership for 25 years or longer. A list of the life members and the periods of their membership is in this issue. The original clubhouse was located at the foot of Jones Street in what was known as Shelter Cove or Mrs. Kelly's Cove, which extended from approximately Powell Street to Leavenworth Street. In the Cove were also Mrs. Kelly's public bathhouse (where she rented towels and swimming suits for a dip in the Cove), the Lurline Athletic Club and the Triton Club.

JIMMIE'S SCHOOL, BUSINESS AND FAMILY LIFE

Jim attended Hamilton Grammar School, Boys High and Commerce High School in San Francisco. While in school, he arose at 3:30 a.m. to deliver a Chronicle route in a two-wheeled one-horse sulky. He developed his wind for future Dolphin activities by running alongside his horse for a mile or two of his route. After school he owned and served on saddle horse a route for the old S.F. Report. When this newspaper folded, Jimmie enjoyed a brief career as a page boy in the California Senate. After graduation from Commerce High he began his life work in the sugar refining industry. At school Jim had acquired quite a reputation as a champion lightning calculator; and began work in a clerical position requiring much mental computing which he devoured with relish. He was recognized as tireless, efficient, willing and energetic; and steadily moved upward in the firm until, after 54 years of capable, productive and loyal service he was retired in 1949 from the position of Shipping Director of Western Sugar Refinery at the age of 72. Throughout his long working career he fitted his Dolphin Club activities into his daily work life; and since retirement has devoted himself practically exclusively to the affairs of the Club.

James and his boyhood companion and school mate, Charlie (Pop) Farrell, another Dolphin "great", together joined the Dolphin Club on the same day, May 20, 1891, after they had waited a long period for the membership quota (which was then always filled) to open up. Jim was then 22 years old and he has now been a member for over 63 years. About that time Jimmie also was a member of the Olympic Club, Hibernians, Foresters and Corinthian Yacht Club (he and two other Dolphins, Ed Sullivan and Charlie Farrell, owning the champion racing and pleasure yacht "Ceres"). Jim was married at age 30 to his childhood sweetheart, Sarah Kelly; and soon after that happy event he decided to concentrate his outside

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interests and energies on the Dolphin Club and resigned from all of the others. So for 54 years of happy wedded life, Jimmie's wife, two sons (James, Jr., and John, - both Dolphin life members) and daughter Evelyn, have always been certain of Jim's whereabouts.

CLUBHOUSE MOVED TO SUCCESSIVELY WORSE LOCATIONS

About 1902, development of the Shelter Cove area caused the Dolphin Club to move to the foot of Van Ness Avenue. Here the Dolphins enjoyed ideal weather and water conditions. But in 1925 the extension and improvement of Van Ness Avenue forced removal of the clubhouse to the foot of Polk Street, which location was somewhat less sheltered but was still fairly good. But even this site was later to be denied; for construction of the Aquatic Park building (now known as the Maritime Museum) again forced us to move in 1938, to the present location at the foot of Hyde Street. This location is generally recognized as the most exposed part of the cove, the wind and ground swells being particularly unfavorable to the encouragement of rowing - either competitive or for pleasure. It was an express condition upon which the Dolphin Club agreed with the City authorities that its clubhouse be moved to Hyde Street that this site should be only temporary until a more suitable location could be selected. It might be here noted that the Dolphin Club, through Charlie Farrell, originated the proposal that San Francisco should acquire and develop its own aquatic park.

DRIVE NOW ON TO MOVE BACK TO WEST END OF COVE

This "temporary" site has now been occupied for over 15 years. There is now a more suitable location possible available on the Van Ness Avenue end of the Cove, north of and adjacent to the site occupied by the Sea Scouts. Moving the clubhouse back to that end of the Cove will be a tremendous stimulus to the future of the Dolphin Club - not only in the interest of rowing, but also swimming, more pleasant sunbathing, and the general welfare of the Club. This is a huge undertaking and there are many obstacles. It has been talked about for many years; but the present Board of Directors is now actively working on this most urgent and important project; and with the backing of the full membership they feel confident that there is a good prospect of its successful achievement. A resolution expressing approval of this objective by the general membership will be circulated at the Old Timers Dinner. The Board will need all the help and cooperation that members jointly or individually can offer or suggest. Think about it!

ROWING ACTIVITIES

From the beginning of Jimmie's membership he was constantly interested, and actively participated in, just about everything the Dolphin Club had to offer--rowing, swimming, handball, sunbathing, social affairs, good fellowship and club officering.

There was, in the early days, spirited competition between the Dolphin Club, Triton Club, Pioneer Rowing Club, South End Rowing Club, Ariel Rowing Club and Alameda Boating Club. Throughout the years, some of these clubs have vanished and others have come upon the scene. The Dolphins have turned out many winning 4-oared

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