



The Dolphin Swimming and Boating Club



CENTENNIAL

1877 - 1977

100 Years in San Francisco

**Opening Address by F. C. Staib, *Financial Secretary*
on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary
THE DOLPHIN SWIMMING AND BOATING CLUB
San Francisco
1877 - 1927**

The Dolphin Club owes its existence to the enthusiasm of four young men of aquatic inclinations. It was in August 1877 that these young men, inspired by a fondness for the water, organized the Dolphin Swimming and Boating Club.

The aims and objects of the club were to improve its members in the arts of swimming and boating, and to cultivate social intercourse among them.

The popularity of the sports fostered by the club brought within its fold John Wieland, Herman W. Wieland, Adolph G. Wieland, Edward C. Kalben, Fred M. Deucher, Emil Kehrlein, Val Kehrlein, Joe Kehrlein, P. Kehrlein, Edward Bornemann, J. Higgins, G. Baratz, Thomas T. Fraser, Ernest F. Lutgens, Adolph Prinz, and Albert C. Rothkopf.

These gentlemen were among its charter members and membership was limited to twenty five. A house of small dimensions and devoid of architectural beauty, situated on a sand hill, was the humble home of its pioneer members.

In the year 1880 the growing membership of the club and the progressive spirit of those at its head, caused the purchase of a four-oared barge and the construction of a new boat house at the water's edge on Montgomery Avenue and Beach Street.

The racing career of the Dolphins began auspiciously: they having won their maiden race, the honors of which were augmented by the winning of a handsome silver cup — the gift of Robert Tobin.

In 1881 the club enlarged the sphere of its aims and objects by giving an excursion, which was attended with such social success as to warrant repetition each year.

From 1880 to 1886 the club increased its membership until it was found necessary, owing to its limited accommodations, to limit the membership to fifty.

In 1887 the club added to its fleet of boats the largest and handsomest pleasure barge on the Pacific Coast, which was named "JOHN WIELAND" in honor of a friend and charter member of the club. This barge is still in commission and in good order after forty years use.

In 1888 the club incorporated under the laws of the State of California.

In 1890 the increased inactivity of the older members due to twelve years of devotion to the king of sports, suggested the infusion of new life into the club.

With the introduction of new members came renewed activity as a result of which what promised to be the finest boat house on the Coast, when completed, was erected in the winter of 1895, at the foot of Van Ness Avenue, at a cost of \$1800. This is the present house now moved in August 1927 to the foot of Polk Street and situated temporarily in the proposed site of The Aquatic Park.

Today, besides swimming and boating as originally planned, the club now has a Solarium on the roof for sun bathers, hot and cold showers, exercising machines, etc. And in the annex, two hand ball courts with spectators gallery, said to be the best on the Coast; and a fleet of more four-oared barges and shells, single skiffs, canoes and pleasure boats than all other clubs on the Bay combined.

The Annual Run and Dip in the Ocean Beach on New Year's and the Annual Swim across the Golden Gate were first staged by this club.

Membership is now 260. Life members (25 years or over), 12.

The finances were never better than they are today, and everything under its roof is owned and paid for.