

YMCA of Southwest Washington

YMCA Its History, Its Building and Its People

Let us be aware that any history starts before recorded time...that where this YMCA now stands,

Here the Cowlitz Tribe once lived...peaceful and quiet among the fir and the fern...amid the bear, the cougar and deer...on the banks of their river, nestling at the foot of scared Mt. Coffin telling through the centuries the ancient legends of snow-capped St. Helen's and its strange apelike creatures and Spirit Lake and the souls of warriors and maids.

Here, up the Columbia once paddled Lewis, Clark and Sacajawea leading explorers to the Pacific.

Here northward to the Prairie was an early mission called St. Mary's, here passed upriver Simmons and Bush on the way to Tumwater and the establishment of American rights to the Territory. Here once camped Frenchmen, voyagers of the Hudson Bay Company. Here, on this ground, old Monticello village once stood surrounded by farms and cabins of early settlers...pioneers who came west for a new future and a new life...Here a historic Charter was signed.

In this sparsely populated, obscure corner of the northwest, among the trout streams and the rivers and the forest, next to a nineteenth century logging town named Kelso, A dream was about to be born.

Now a dream has to begin somewhere...But strangely, it didn't begin in this pastoral spot, surrounded by mountains and rivers and trees. Instead it began back East in a turbulent city in a lumber company office by a quiet man who didn't look like a dreamer named Robert Alexander Long.

R. A. Long..at seventy-two...seemed too old to be a Jason looking for a 'golden fleece'. Why wasn't he content to have built a fortune out of lumber and to live on his estate and be a solid, sedate industrialist, clipping coupons and chairing the board, especially since he had reached retirement age?

This was not just a 'lumber baron' dreaming of past profit and loss...counting the beads of success. This was a visionary...with all the fire and stubbornness and gambling spirit of youth, meshed with the skill and power and experience of age, off on his quest, his challenge...his dream.

He was going to create a city...where none had been. He was going to build a community...almost utopian in concept. It would have industry and homes and churches and schools. It would have shops and parks; a hotel, a library and a YMCA. It would begin in the roaring twenties and it would succeed and its name would be Longview...And it would be

planned and beautiful and unique...and it would not be a monument to paper, pulp and timber; nor a memorial to one man and his empire...but a community for people...in which to work and live and grow. And that was 1923. And in that time and this place the YMCA story begins.

That first January, 1923, Longview was mostly plans, blueprints, rain, mud and hope.

The Y Community Center in the 500 block of Oregon Way was temporary, ramshackle, drafty and crowded. It was also messy, unattractive, busy, popular and vibrant. This was where the embryo community came, played, relaxed. This was the hub...the center...where the action was. There was the first YMCA, managed by a Y Secretary names U. S. Duncan who had served in France during the recent World War and who had been on the State YMCA staff of Oregon.

Here in this one frame building was also the Post Office, a general store, City Hall and even the Fire Department. Here Church and Sunday school met, meetings were held, clubs (social, civic and fraternal) organized. Here mail was distributed, money orders cashed, groceries sold, billiards and checkers played, potlucks held, people met their friends, children go into everything, everybody watched the picture show...Mark Pickford, Doug Fairbanks and Charley Chaplin and sang at Community Sings.

Here were the people building Longview...living in dormitories, tarpaper and wooden shacks and overcrowded, inadequate apartments.

But they, like R. A. Long, were caught in the web of a dream...the dream to build a community. It was rainy and cold and depressing during that late winter but it was coming along. The town was on its way.

They all worked together that spring...it was hard, it was discouraging, it was never-ending, it was back-breaking...it was wonderful!

By the end of April, the ground had been leveled at 15th and Douglas. There some day would be the new YMCA. Meanwhile, a Managing Committee, chaired by John McClelland, Sr. began to plan for the program of the new Y, while supervising the activities still bustling along in the old building. (For the times, it was a very progressive Y Committee...it had a WOMAN on it!

By July, Hotel Monticello was finally finished and with red, white and blue bunting, speeches, and signs of relief, the city of Longview became real, official and out of the dram stage.

And all summer and fall, the Y Community Center progressed...it was stimulating, it was maddening, it was hopeless, it was fantastic. Plans were revised...blueprints altered...equipment late...wiring and tubing and sinks strewn around. Specifications had to be redone...the estimated cost seemed to be rising. Small boys were constantly underfoot, playing sidewalk engineers (although as yet, there were no sidewalks). R. A. Long wrote gentle but continuous letters with suggestions from Kansas City, and S.M. Morris somehow implemented them. (besides supervising the rest of the town's planning simultaneously.)

There were the Fire Chief, the City Engineer, the State Inspector, the roofers, the concrete men, the painters, the plumbing suppliers, ad infinitum...so many factors to be considered...safety and aesthetics and building codes.

Nerves frayed...there were gentlemanly arguments over 'should we do it this way'...or that'...with the contractors, the architect, the staff, the committee. Building Camelot takes magic, midnight oil, lots of patience and money!

The crisis period was here...the shower heads were wrong...the trucks couldn't unload in the mud...where to drain the swimming pool?...the auditorium seats hadn't arrived...and the costs were spiraling.

It would never be done on time! The deadlines couldn't be met! It was already November and the dedication had been set for December...too much yet undone...too far to go yet! It was impossible!

Yet, on December 17, 1923...the Community YMCA was dedicated. Open at last...ready to begin its new chapter of service the Longview.

Here it was...Arch Torbett, Architect and the Y Committee and staff and S.M. Morris and Vandercook and J. D. Tennant and all the rest had brought another segment of R. A. Long's dream into reality.

Here it was...A YMCA unlike any other Y in the country...not a tall square brick box so popular in YMCA circles most places. Here it was...the only early Tudor building in town...in fact, the only early Tudor YMCA anywhere (even England where the Y began).

Impressive, huge, imposing...yet friendly and welcoming with its French doors and windows and peaked log trim and sloping, gabled roof and wrought iron balconies.

The community toured it that gray winter day...entered the main door into the Lobby with its offices, soda fountain, main desk and Men's Lounge with reading room and billiard tables. Warmed itself at the natural stone fireplace in the Boy's Lounge with game tables and its own private entrance.

There was the Swimming Pool with diving board and trapeze...and a gigantic skylight over it...the Men and Boy's Locker Rooms and even a Bowling Alley.

Upstairs on the second floor, planned for women and girls with Dressing Rooms, Lounge, and a huge Meeting Room with folding doors and Kitchen for pot-lucks, socials and meetings. And almost a revolutionary touch for the twenties in a YMCA, an office for a Women's Director for this Community Y had been planned from the beginning for the total family...including women and girls...unlike other Young Men's Christian Associations elsewhere.

Now way downstairs to the Basement...with Laundry, furnace, and a Woodworking Shop for the boys.

And then to the most unusual feature of all...the wing of the Auditorium with six-hundred seats, orchestra pit, stage, with its proscenium arch decorated with plaster heads of youth, dressing rooms beneath the stage, balcony, check room, lounge, projection booth, ticket office...and as all YMCA's had, traditionally in those days, a Barber Shop with separate entrance...with an elegant touch...leaded windows over the Auditorium doorway.

It was a great day...a proud day...Longview had its YMCA...and it didn't matter so much that the beautiful building was still surrounded by piles of sand...mud...(the landscaping hadn't been done yet!)...or that there weren't shelves nor closets for storage...or that there wasn't a flag for the flagpole...(the American Legion would soon present one.) or that the exterior paint job made the whole building resemble an austere prison (according to R. A. Long) or that the plans had forgotten a coal bin...resulting in coal being dumped outside...(the furnace was causing a little problem of its own burning five tons of coal in its first three days of operation)...or that the lovely Tudor sloping roof was leaking like a sieve or that...

Most importantly, the budgeted building cost an estimated \$75,000.00, had in reality become \$166,000! Mr. Long's YMCA dream and gift to the community had cost over double his original figure. He was still subsidized an exterior re-painting project...and the new Community YMCA no longer looked like a penitentiary.

But a building, unique...functional...pleasing in design though it may be, is, after all, only a building is soulless if people do not utilize it...and make it live.

Longview had a YMCA Building but whether or not it would serve the community and its needs depended now on...leadership, program and dedication.

Mr. Long's generous gift of a building had been the beginning...but whether that gift would grow into an integral part of the community would depend no longer on a dream...but on work, effort and imagination of people. Whether the YMCA would truly serve Longview for a year...or twenty-five...or even fifty...would be judged on service...not just an architectural design.

So Longview launched its early Tudor Community Y...for the rest of the decade, however, it would be program and not architectural design which would make the Y a center of civic, social, spiritual and recreational activity.

By 1924, the Young Men's Christian Association had been officially chartered with its first Board of Directors including: B. H. Smith, President, W. F. Arnett, Vice-President, George West, Treasurer, and H. L. Millspaugh, Secretary. R. A. Long served as an active member of the Board (from Kansas City) for many years. The Board of Trustees was: John McClelland, Sr., S.M. Morris, J. D. Tennant, R. F. Morse, M. C. Allen and C. B. Trotter. And 1925 brought incorporation to the Association.

From the day the Y opened its doors, its city-wide activities had impact on the community...The huge Annual Father-Son Banquet in the Gym...The May Day Festival (organized by Gladys Thorpe, Women's Director) held at Jefferson Square...complete with Maypole and Queen...The Boys and Girls Hobby Shows, displaying woodwork skills and a pet parade (John McClelland,

Jr. won a prize for a birdhouse.) Ladies in black bloomers and middy blouses did exercises in the Gym, while basketball, (which the YMCA had invented at Springfield College in the 19th Century) softball, and volleyball teams of men began to garner a few trophies...Little girls could take French, music, or dance (ballet or tap) lessons. Citizenship classes for those seeking naturalization were held at the Y...In 1924, 31 local organizations and groups used the Y...for meetings or organizations as varied as C. I. O. Woodworkers to the Chamber of Commerce...Churches, Sunday Schools...the Longview Women's Club, the Young Democrats, the patriotic organizations, Republican County Convention...The Girls Scouts, Campfire Girls, 4-H,...The P. T. A. met here along with choirs, the Symphony Orchestra and the City Band...The animal lovers came...the Saddle Club and the Cowlitz Valley Rabbit Breeders...There were art shows, recitals, variety shows, (one featured S. M. Morris, K. T. Myklebust, Les Eddy, John Hill, Ed Gerbert, Cliff Hadley.)

There were the Flappers who danced to "Singing in the Rain" (incidentally the Y roof still leaked a lot)...Movies, weddings receptions, pot-lucks, bridge parties, baptisms, school and community plays, assemblies, and revivals. (The only known group to be refused space was the Ku Klux Klan busy elsewhere in the community burning fiery crosses on the hills!)

All this in addition to an ongoing Y program...the twenties weren't all that old-fashioned...Learn-To-Swim_ campaign...Hi-Y organized (Bill Sailors, Wendell Judd among the members of the first Club at Kessler) Y Girl Reserves with the annual balls in the ballroom of the Tennant's Rutherglen...The Friendly Indians and Pioneer Clubs for boys. There were boxing and wrestling matches, bowling tournaments and smokers for the men. (Once a terrible tempest in the teapot occurred over whether women should be allowed to attend...(For a month, Women's Memberships were cancelled over this issue, but reinstated with full rights after a special board meeting!)

By 1929, the Y was an integral part of the Community...busy with clubs, classes, the development of a permanent Camp at Spirit Lake...The YMCA had by now, 1,039 members...an enlarged staff (C. R. Nutter, General Secretary; E. B. White, Physical Director, Mrs. C. H. Paul, Women's and Girls Director, and Ab Offer, Boy's work and Camp Director.) The times were good...the budget strong...enthusiasm high. The building was ready for major remodeling and a face-lift (that roof still leaked!)

All this was rudely interrupted by the 1929 Crash...and without warning, the Depression began. For the next few years, not only was there no remodeling, but the very existence of the Y itself was threatened...While the country whistled optimistically, "Happy Days are Here Again", Longview and the Y shared the 'tighten the belt' and retrenching crises of the times. "For Rent or Sale" signs in empty fields and building in Longview appeared everywhere...cutbacks on the staff at the Y...These were gray, gloomy years for the Community.

And in 1934...when the Board stood for a moments silence in memory of R. A. Long, who had died at 84...they knew that an era had ended. The dreamer who visualized, and brought into being this city, was gone...Such dreamers don't happen often! It is said he had invested most of his fortune, and all of his heart into Longview and its development...its churches, schools,

library, hotel, industry and YMCA. It is also said he had no regrets...There are also those who said this was paternalism...if so, it was a unique paternalism...asking and giving of the best of a Community.

The YMCA, the entire Community had lost a friend and a leader. But unlike many visionaries, he had built with his dream, a foundation strong enough to rise to the challenges and problems of 'hard times'. The greatest heritage he left was a city...a community structures to stand on its feet and survive...The youthful days of the golden era of the "Roaring Twenties" were gone...leaving in its stead the gut reality of the "Turbulent Thirties".

The remainder of the thirties consisted of economy, effort...and in spite of everything extension of program.

Camp flourished with additional permanent buildings...the hospital, the lodge, and more cabins. Pat Schneider, in addition to securing sponsorships for general Y memberships for children and families hard-hit by the depression, led a campaign for Camperships for kids in need so they too could go to Spirit Lake Y Camp...She and Bertine Wilcox had pioneered for women as they both became members of the Y Board (elsewhere in Y's...women didn't even hold memberships!) Wilbur Arnett, President from 1927-1932, had made another record in long-time board service to the Y...The Y participated (through Roy Fleming, its General Secretary) in the active Country Welfare Board...so necessary during the deprived years of the '30's.

Bob Wertheimer, as President and R. A. A. Smith, Treasurer, led the Y during the latter years of the Depression to finally balance the budget...yet at least repair the roof...once more...and maintain program standards as well.

By the end of the decade...the YMCA was on its feet again and ready for the 40's...But the 40's didn't quite work out the way in which they were expected...Pearl Harbor in 1941 brought World War II...And the YMCA adapted its course to the War years.

The Bowling Alleys disappeared, the Barber Shop closed, and most revolutionary of all...The fabulous Auditorium was finally ready for retirement. The acceleration of the war effort, women going into defense work and service men by the hundreds passing through town necessitated new and innovative program, and new facilities to match.

The Auditorium was converted in 1944 to an auxiliary gym...predominately to serve teen-age youth...the Y Hi-Jack Club counted its members in the thousands and thus the coed teen program came into existence.

In the year 1946 Kelso organized a YMCA and operated as a separate organization, with a program for youth in the schools and continued to use the Longview Y pool for classes for swimming.

The special events for servicemen and large dances and parties of the Hi-Jacks utilized the new gym to capacity. By the end of the forties, the balcony was removed, (thanks to Art Flegel and the JCs) the barber shop was a Boys Hi-Y meeting room, as were the dressing rooms beneath

the stage. Clark McAllister, Physical Director, sparked a most active program in his field...His women's Volleyball team won first place in the Regional Tournaments year after year, with Wanda Wells, June Cope, Doris Vaugh, Iona Kerbaugh, Betty Fulford, Edna McAllister also playing in the Nationals in Seattle.

Volleyball, fencing, tennis and handball were the 'in' sports along with perennial swimming...In the Youth department, Maxine Proffit, as a lay leader, spearheaded the formation of the Tri-Hi-Y...and instigated the important citizenship training programs for youth – The YMCA Youth and Government. The over 50 club was organized for retirees...city-wide Halloween Parties for kids were held. A Y's men's club and Phalanx Club for Young Men both flourished.

By now the Fabulous 50's were at hand...and while later labeled "the Silent Generation" – much happened to argue this point, with our imaginative and creative Y program...A major building remodeling program of \$60,000 was held...resulting in the Barber Shop meeting room becoming a lunch room, office and meeting space expanded, with Judson Klingberg as President and Dick McMorran, General Secretary, leading the effort.

All through the fifties, membership, program and creativity grew: A Newcomers Club, Great Books Seminar, Weekly Y Radio programs, "To Meet Your New Neighbor", A Young Adult Social Club, Christian Y Co-ed Camps...Women and Men's Volleyball teams took championships. Chet Bartlett became the Youth Director, and the traditional programs of Tri-Hi-Y, Hi-Y, Youth and Government, and Physical Fitness expanded. A new and unique program began with twelve kids...the First Handicapped Swimming Program for youngsters...This was done in coordination with the Longview Jr. Women's Club, which was awarded the State Grand Prize for Community Service by Sears Roebuck Foundation for this project. Harold H. Horne, became the Executive Director following a seven year tour of duty for the YMCA in India...All in all it had been a great decade...except the building was showing its age again as it advanced toward the sixties...and, would you believe the roof still LEAKED! And Leaked.

The soaring sixties arrived...bringing new programs to the YMCA...Camp Adventure, Day camp; and Camp Goodytymes...(an enrichment program to enrich the lives of the handicapped child)...A new Lodge for Spirit Lake Y camp...and a far-reaching building fund drive for a tremendous renovation of the 40 year old building.

Meeting room space was at a premium; the kitchen was outmoded; the upstairs all-purpose room outdated; the auxiliary gym in dismal shape...In general, it was time to evaluate the building and decide whether to remodel or start all over again...(And that roof still leaked!)

When the final decision was made to preserve the historic early Longview Community YMCA building, the next question was whether or not to modernize the exterior,...Again, historic preservation won, and the Early Tudor façade was maintained, although the separate entrances to the Fireside Room and Craft Shop were eliminated. The main entrance was moved and changed in style.

An overwhelming effort was made to raise \$350,000 for the building campaign, chaired by Art Flegel. The final result – a modernization and remodeling program in two phases – 1967 and 1970. The second phase drive as for \$180,000.

The first phase, with Nick Nichols, chairman of the Building committee, designing the building plan for remodeling, resulted in the remodeling the gymnasium, (removing the old balcony) and the Fireside Room – preserving the exposed timbers of the ceiling and the original Fireplace...A gift of the Amos Peters Family made the refurbishing of the Fireside room possible...The wrought iron YMCA Triangle (a symbol of the Association) was contributed by the Marc Girardot family in memory of their son...Long since abandoned as the Boys Lounge, the Fireside room is now used for board and committee meetings, youth gatherings and training sessions, receptions, teas, conferences and public events.

The main lobby has a new look entirely...with the main reception area, the Executive Director's and other offices. The Game room (a gift of the Jr. Service League), is off the lobby...The Multi-Purpose Gym finally had the 1922 stage removed and the weight room I its place...The craft room and snack bar were renovated from the old craft shop area. This entire wing was renovated during the second phase of the building program (1970 – \$180,000)...This also includes a new Chapel, (a gift of Dr. Wendell and Dr. Neal Kirkpatrick families) with an electric organ (contributed by the Art Flegel family)...The Chapel is used for personal meditation, youth worship services, Week of Prayer, the day camp and Camp Goodtymes devotions.

The Library in this wing is used for staff and small group meetings, the Y staff professional library and the records and archives of the Association...(including a collection of the Y's Golden Tapes – oral history by early Y members and staff of program development.) The hallway between the Library and Chapel is a Gallery of Y's personalities – portraits of leaders, members and staff who over the fifty year span have made unique contributions to the Y.

The Monticello room in this wing is in the area where once were the old balcony and projection booth of the Auditorium. This is used now for meetings and a Day Nursery for participant's children.

The Upstairs lobby, a gift of Mrs. K. T. Henderson, Sr. and E. Kenneth Henderson, has the Aquatic Office (once the women's lounge). In this area is the present Special Services office where the General Secretary's office and library was in the forties...The Special Service Division houses it's Director, the Rap Room (Spirit Lake Room) and further down the hall is the office of the Youth and Camp Director in the St. Helen's Room.

The large Cascade Room still serves as a large meeting room, seating up to 150, for meetings, banquets, conferences, club programs and has a completely modernized kitchen attached. (A donation of International Paper Co.)...The large attic, the upper part of the old balcony is used for storage.

Downstairs again, one sees the new Training pool, used for Handicap program, Tot and Water-baby aquatics, and other specialized swimming programs. Beside it, the newly

rehabilitated original swimming pool...with new exits and equipment...the Physical Directors office, Men and Boys Locker rooms close by. The most recent addition to the building is the second Handball Court (\$14,000) added in 1973. The architect for the 1967-70 building remodeling was Larry Rice. The outside changes included the parking lot and landscaping. (a gift of Mrs. Hutch)

A major modernization of this scope did not impede new Y program from development. During the early sixties, Camp and Club Goodtypes, an enrichment program for handicapped youngsters was established. The Christmas Caravan of Homes was another innovative feature of this department, as is the continuous Operation Waterbug Aquatic program.

The Camp had a major addition of a huge chalet-style Lodge at its Spirit Lake site, and several new cabins. An L. C. C. college credit course for leadership of the program of camping activities.

It should be remembered that Steve Wilcox Sr. was President of the Board during 1966 – the planning period of the Building Fund Drive and Don Lowe during the second phase planning. Don Packard was President during the actual building construction.

The ninth grade parties for youngsters were begun after the building opened again. Family and Marriage courses were sponsored...(although these had begun as early as the thirties.) A busy craft program evolved for women and children, including collage, tole painting, flower arrangements of many types, and many other arts and craft techniques.

Another “youthful” innovation was Ron St. Jean, a high school student, being nominated and elected to the Board...By the seventies, other major programs started...keeping in tune with new Community needs...the Rap-line program, Legal Aid assistance and Family communication project – all extremely community service oriented, and new segments of the Special Service department.

The Camp was finally named – (after almost half a century!) Camp Loowit – (the Indian name for Mt. St. Helens – meaning Princess) Indian Princesses joined the Indian Guides in the Youth program. The 3 B's (Basketball-Bible-Breakfast) for boys – and a series of Physical Fitness Testing established by the Physical Department, along with new intensity in the Handball area. Pre-school programs began with a Kinder-gym program.

The Y Aquatic division – long leaders in the Northwest – in training and development of a swimming program instigated Mother-tot and Water Baby classes, and John Starr continued his volunteer leadership begun in the '50's of a championship series of youth Swim Teams – aided by an active parents club.

Other first of which the Y is proud: Ethel Kirkpatrick became the first women President of the Board in 1970, and in the same year the Longview Y and the Kelso Y consolidated to again become one Association – THE YMCA OF SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON – with two centers, one in each city. In 1972 a major job was taken on by a Y Task Force, chaired by Dr. Dallas

Dedrick, to study the YMCA and evaluate its present program and finally, to recommend goals and direction for the next five years.

How does a community look at a half century of Y service?

How does a community regard a fifty year old Early Tudor YMCA?

How does a Young Men's Christian Association count its successes...after all these decades?

One can only pause at the Golden Anniversary for a city – for a YMCA, and remember R. A. Long's original dream, and recall a ramshackle temporary Community Y – which was then a hub of the beginning Longview. One can only look around at a modern, unique YMCA – still pioneering in new programs to meet modern and every-changing needs of people in this community.

And never forget R. A. Long's words,

"If there is to develop here a great city...

a city that will be pointed out as model and ideal

...the great motive power behind it will be the

Spirit of faith, loyalty and enthusiasm in the

Hearts and minds of the people who call it home."

The YMCA believes it has lived up to R. A. Long's challenge to the Community – fostered by those same people who built a new city – almost utopian concept.

The YMCA hopes it has contributed a half century of service to its community – guided by the Young Men's Christian Association purpose:

"The Young Men's Christian Association we regard as

being in its essential genius a worldwide fellowship

united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the

purpose of developing Christian personality and

building a Christian society."

The YMCA of Southwest Washington believes it still serves as a hub for the community – not being just an Early Tudor Building – beautiful and historic through it may be (although the roof still leaks) but because it is ever alive, aware and alert to the people-needs of the community.

This is the challenge and the impetus...and an extension of R. A. Long's dream...for the next half century.

Betty Horne, Historian

The YMCA continues R. A. Long's dream of growing with the people's needs in the community.

Hal Horne, Executive Director for 25 years, retired in 1975. Robert Rosi, Associate General Director was the interim Executive Director in 1975-1976. Jack Schaff from a Texas YMCA was hired to be the new Executive Director in 1976. Jack Schaff was here two years and died of cancer in 1978. Roland (Lanny) Couvillon was hired from Long Beach, California YMCA to take over the position.

In keeping with the times our Physical Director, Pete Davin, saw the need to start a Youth Basketball League for boys and girls. Pat Hahka, Aquatic Director started Kids Night Out program with many volunteers. They usually had 100-150 kids each month. They would work on values, learn new skills such as fencing, gymnastics, racquetball, swimming and more.

In the late 1970's the YMCA again broke ground to add 3 additional racquetball/handball courts to the existing two. The YMCA got a loan for **\$250,000**. Racquetball was a booming sport during the 70's and 80's with many tournaments and fun for members. The courts were added when C. C. Bridgewater was president and Lanny Couvillon, was Executive Director.

Programs for teens were implemented...Bike trips through the San Juan Islands in the summer, and trips to Disneyland during Spring Break.

Camp at Spirit Lake added a new boat house and craft cabin thanks to a grant from the Weyerhaeuser Foundation.

The eruption of Mount St. Helens totally changed much of the landscape of this area, in 1980, and brought with it the destruction of our beloved YMCA Camp Loowit. Camp Loowit was covered in 200 feet of mud and ash destroying the entire camp. The YMCA received a check from the Insurance Company for \$750,000.

The Board of Directors became almost divided on what they would do with the money they received from the insurance. Some wanted to use it to start a new resident camp and others wanted to do improvements on the 57 year old YMCA building. There were a few rough years in the early 80's. A camp site was picked out on Yale Lake and **\$250,000** was put into a generator and well...But the lease from International Paper Company was very high...And the board was debating on whether or not to continue.

Robert Brower became the Executive Director in 1983. He was instrumental in leading the Board toward improvements on the YMCA. He showed how the YMCA could not support a resident camp at this time and needed to concentrate on the local YMCA.

Better times arrived in the mid-1980's through the early 1990's...During this time the Y undertook and successfully completed the largest Capital improvement project in its history...\$2,000,000 was raised by committed volunteers and the Y was blessed with a new 6-lane swimming pool, Men's and Women's locker and shower rooms, Parking Lot, and sparkling new Entrance and Lobby. Just a few of the key leaders in the campaign were: Ted Palin and Cathy Berwind, Co-chairs of the campaign, Dan Evans, John Westervelt, Ron Tienhaara, Joan LeMieux, Lloyd Naylor, Helen Smith, Ted Natt, Dr. Charles and Betty Buck, Henry Reents and Steve Wilcox Jr. Joan Landau was president 1988-1990 and John Westervelt was president 1990-1991. The new addition opened in January 1992 with Ron Tienhaara, president. The Chamber of Commerce did a ribbon cutting ceremony to kick off the opening and open house.

The campaign was successful because of members and businesses of the community's support, Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, Fred Meyers Foundation, Longview Rotary Club, NORPAC, Health Care Foundation, Collins Holding Company, Ted Natt Family, R.A.A. & Helen Smith Family, Art & Flo Flegel Estate, Forest Foundation, J & S Foundation, J. H. Kelly, Lakeside Industries, Longview Fibre, John M. McClelland, Pacific Fibre Products, SeaFirst Foundation, Wollenberg Foundation, U. S. Bank, Valley Rentals Inc., The Bon Marche, Richard Wollenberg, Morris Wolters, Security Pacific Bank, Ted Palin, Pacific Fibre Products, Pacific First Federal, Internal Medicine Clinic, Kaiser Permanente, First Interstate Bank, Columbia Ford, Burlington Northern Foundation, and Bud Clary Chevrolet.

In 1990 Sanford (Sandy) Mosier was hired as Executive Director from Port Angeles YMCA.

He had the Hallway into the Cascade Room and the St. Helens room taken out and enlarged the Cascade Room which was being used as the weight room.

Robert Brower returned to this YMCA in 1991 as CEO (Executive Director) from North Carolina. During this time a new roof was put on the YMCA. FINALLY, after 69 years the Y's roof no longer leaks!

Robert Shrumm joined this YMCA in 1994 as CEO (Executive Director). Bob came from Ontario, Canada. Bob was able to convince the board to do a Parade of Playhomes. We had construction companies volunteer to build playhomes (4) and raffled them off at the Three Rivers Mall during the Christmas season. This was very successful for the three years.

In 1996 the YMCA filled in the old pool area and opened a new weight room center...Nautilus, Free Weights and Cardio Equipment. This area really enhanced the YMCA and brought in new members. Brian Magnuson and Grace Golden, Health & Fitness Director were the power behind the construction of the weight center. The Cascade room went back to being used as a meeting and training room.

In 1997 the YMCA added a Game Room for youth and teens. This area has computers, board games, ping pong, foosball, bumper pool, darts, a place to do homework and/or just hang out.

This area is always staffed when open and adults are not allowed in the game room. Thanks to the APEX Foundation the Y was able to do install heating and cooling system in the old part of the Y, buy a used bus, and do repairs on plumbing. This enabled us to get rid of the Old Boiler.

During this time we added on connecting hallway to 4 individual changing rooms, a mechanical room, laundry room, office and building for the coming new activity pool. The connecting hallway is also to (hopefully) a future a new gymnasium. This project was funded by the APEX Foundation.

Patrick Foley donated his island (Goat Island) on Silverlake to the YMCA. The board was excited as this could be a good place to have a Day Camp and possibly more in the future. But, after trying to obtain permits we were told by the State Health Department that we could not permit children to swim in the lake and would not be able to have water.

Roosevelt Smith Jr. joined this YMCA as CEO in 2001. He was the YMCA's Youth Sports and Camp Director.

The warm water pool was finally shut down and the Y was able to build a new Activity pool in 2003 which was larger than the existing warm water pool. The pool is adjacent to the main pool and has a river run for fun and exercise. This area also supports a separate warm water pool.

This project cost \$650,000. This was made possible from the Bridges Estate and APEX Foundation. Leaders of this project were Chris Searing, Gene Guttormsen, Peter Isaacson, John Jabusch, Dale Lemmons and others.

Programs like Youth Sports, Outdoor Adventure Day Camp, Swimming Lessons, Swim Team, Tumbleweeds Preschool, and Game Room are still going strong.

The board is trying to sell Goat Island to a private individual who would be able to obtain permits. (2005).

The roof is leaking again!

The board members are working on a project to fill in the old warm water pool and expand the weight room...adding more cardio equipment. (2005)

Through all the communities' ups and downs the Y has remained strong. Much of this credit is due to the outstanding volunteer leadership who has been committed to making sure the Y fulfills its Christian mission to this area...Making sure "no one is turned away who cannot afford to pay for the Y's membership or program services.

Other major projects the board is looking toward is adding a gymnasium with an indoor track, and figuring out ways to make the older part of the facility more cost efficient to operate.

With challenges comes the opportunity to grow and change. Certainly change and growth have become trademarks of the YMCA. We will meet the challenge!

The Y still serves as a hub for the community, it is ever alive, aware and alert to the people needs of the area. This is **THE CHALLENGE** for the next 82 Years!