

"RAISE PRESTIGE" IS AIM OF MANAGERS

By HERB GRAFFIS

AT ITS tenth annual convention, held at the New York Waldorf-Astoria, January 13-16, the Club Managers Assn. of America took a new lease on life. For the past few seasons, interest in the national association had been diminishing despite a slight increase in membership from the depression low figure.

The reason was fairly obvious. Club managers were paying their national association dues and convention expenses out of their own pockets with the thought of getting something that would improve operations and financial conditions at their own clubs. However, so many clubs made sharp pay cuts that were not restored to managers when the depression waned and annual statements showed black again, that many managers had neither money nor lively incentive to bring to their clubs the benefits of national organization work.

Furthermore, the enforcement of hamburger-stand operating policies at numerous clubs reduced the job from the former status of serving discriminating people in a distinctive manner to work that could be handled by a Greek, a gas burner and a skillet.

Now it appears that those clubs where high operating standards in the house were maintained have not only weathered the depression well but have bounced back to enviable membership and financial positions and other clubs are beginning to see the wisdom of expert operating policies.

The renaissance of good living has dawned, putting club managers in the important spot of leadership if clubs are to discharge their function in this social development.

Talks Go Big;

More Time Next Year

It was around that point that most of the significant activities of the convention revolved. Experts in various phases of service and operation spoke to the managers at an education session that will be doubled in time at the 1937 convention according to an unanimous vote taken at the conclusion of the educational conference.

A. O. Eberhart, former governor of Minnesota, spoke on the national housing act, advising managers their clubs can

borrow as high as \$50,000 for house construction or rehabilitation under the provisions of the act. Lucius Boomer, president, Waldorf-Astoria, told of the plan and operations of the hotel. Managers inspected the hotel as part of their convention work. Boomer mentioned the effect of taxes on modern hotel location and construction. Women determine the social standing of the hotel, hence the Waldorf's new location on the edge of the society residential district. That reference clicked with club managers who are making strong play to women's business because of the social prestige developed for the club.

Plain Foods

Never Cloy Palates

Boomer related that rich foods soon got tiresome to a hotel's permanent guests so simple foods, simply prepared now are the keynote of cuisine for guests who live steadily at the Waldorf. He expressed the opinion that an American cuisine is being developed and that in this developing trend the woman cook deserves great consideration.

New York hotels have a seasonal business almost as bad as that of the country clubs, Boomer said. The luxury metropolitan hotels are almost empty in the summer. He told of the idiosyncracies of the permanent guests being recorded for guidance of chefs and waiters and spoke of numerous other details employed to make each guest feel and receive an individual character of service.

Boomer said that he didn't believe in secrecy concerning figures and confirmed this statement by recital of many items. Construction of the wine cellar with its \$125,000 inventory and details of service kitchen location and operation were given by the Waldorf-Astoria boss. He put in a strong plug for aluminum chairs, telling how they facilitated operating with minimum of labor.

When the managers sat down for their

education session pencils and pads were supplied to each man and women present. Several managers talking over this stunt after the conference agreed on a guess that the notes taken during the conference would figure in a minimum saving of \$75,000 at clubs this year and an inestimable sum in improved operation.

Louis Toth of Horwath and Horwath, club and hotel accounting authorities, emphasized handling of club figures on an uniform basis to permit comparison of operations. Even though figures are merely a summary and do not tell the complete picture, clubs for the most part are denying themselves vast opportunities for more efficient operation by not adopting a standardized accounting system such as the hotels have. The system the managers' association had worked out for country clubs is in use at only a few clubs and in the meanwhile club officials and managers have practically no means of comparing their financial scores, remarked Toth. He pointed out that the present lack of clarity and uniformity is penalizing many managers; officials, lacking data for accurate comparisons, are inclined to compare figures in a manner that often shows to the advantage of the club having the least accurate accounting system.

Toth commented that the basic policy of clubs is not to show a profit but to give members most for their money.

He spoke in detail about the effect the Social Security act would have on club payroll accounting, especially concerning employees' meals, rooms and tips. State figures of 25c a meal and 40c a day or \$2.50 a week for room in New York and \$1 a day for meals and \$3 a week for room in Massachusetts were cited. There was a lively discussion about various details of accounting required by the legislation, among the subjects mentioned being affidavits from employees on tips and caddie exemption. Clubs are not exempt from the social security act as they were from the NRA.

Build Bars to Stand Abuse

J. Noonan, Liquid Carbonic Corp., told of the tendency to skimp on bar construction after making the bar pretty. He strongly advocated construction to withstand abuse and in this connection urged stainless steel. He told of the wastes in handling draft beer, which he termed a treacherous beverage so far as sales

OFFICERS CLUB MANAGERS' ASS'N

Pres.: Fred Wood, Denver (Colo.) AC
Secy.: J. Fred Smith, University Club,
Columbus, O.

Treas.: Russell Miller, Medinah (Ill.) CC

V-Pres., 1 year:

I. R. Fish, Wampanoag CC, West Hartford, Conn.

J. A. McGoogin, Youngstown (O.) Club
Kenneth McLeod, Olympic Club, San Francisco, Calif.

Elmer Reis, Colonial CC, Memphis, Tenn.
Paul Tamsen, Fenimore CC, White Plains, N.Y.

Directors, 2 years:

H. J. Foerster, Columbus (O.) AC
William Norcross, Essex County CC,
West Orange, N.J.

Directors, 3 years:

Tom Jones, Harvard Club, Boston, Mass.
Frank H. Murray, Ravisloe CC, Homewood, Ill.

profits are concerned. In the discussion that followed Noonan's remarks it developed that clubs were having troubles with varnish finishes on bars. He recommended an oil finish.

Gives Tips on Glassware

H. D. Dewar, Federal Glass Co., said the trend in glassware is away from the colored stuff. Five and ten cent store sales have killed complete color. New glassware is colored either in the stem or bowl. Standardization of design is a current trend. Etched and monogrammed glassware is coming back strong especially at the class clubs. "Sham" glasses to cut down amount of liquor served are reducing breakage. Other breakage-reduction tips from Dewar were to buy glasses that don't nest, reduce stems wherever possible without sacrifice of class, and buy glassware with heavier feet.

Glassware washing equipment with very few exceptions is unsatisfactory according to managers' discussion following Dewar's talk. Dewar admitted the washing equipment made business for him. He said that many large hotels figured a 33% annual replacement on glassware. Bartenders' careless handling of glasses is a big factor in the glassware business, according to the dope handed out by managers.

A businesslike conception of the work of the interior decorator was given conference attendants by a stalwart, hard-looking guy named Raymond Anthony Court. Court, who looks like he could out-punch Joe Louis, was introduced by Fred

Crawford of the Pendennis club, Louisville.

Court read a spiel about the functions of the interior decorator in coordinating the exterior and interior appearance and in blending the proper combinations of floor covering, furniture, drapery, lighting fixtures, etc. When Court started answering questions the managers kept him busy. He endorsed washable wall coverings for extensive use around clubs.

Court went into some simple arithmetic to demonstrate the fallacy of "buy it wholesale". He pointed out that a club doesn't decorate every year and for that reason, among many others, the practice of buying at a discount from friends or members isn't an urgent or advisable risk for the sake of economy.

He counseled clubs to decorate to a plan even though the plan might take several years before it was entirely in effect. He told of having taken as long as five years to complete the decoration of a single room by keeping purchases from running too strong in any one short period. He made a great case for the good judgment and economy involved in hiring an expert interior decorator for a fee ranging from 8% to 12% of the investment required and getting the club decorated authoritatively.

Linen Expert Gives Service Hints

R. F. Beech, Wm. Liddell Co., in speaking on linens said that damasks rather than linens was the correct term for the materials in use at clubs. Weight has absolutely nothing to do with quality, he told the managers. Three times the normal requirement is the inventory for longest wear. Keep linens stored in a cool place, he advised. For laundering, sort linens so the slightly soiled material doesn't get the severe treatment required by stained damasks. Average grade damask stands from 200 to 300 launderings, Beech said. Linen outwears cotton of the same construction two to one, he declared. In response to several questions Beech answered that he thought alcohol in beverages had no especially destructive effect on linen damasks.

G. L. Wenzel, president of the American Menu Maker Co., advised the managers to make up menus so they meant something in describing the items and gave evidence of the managers' and chef's reputation and care.

Wenzel and his associate, E. Van Guilder,

an artist in the mechanical preparation of menus, gave in considerable detail, plans for menus making distinct and effective appeals.

Harold Ross, publicity director of the Indianapolis Athletic club, winner of first prize in the annual contest on club publicity, spoke of the value of a club having a competent press agent to make complete and timely use of newspapers, club magazines and all other outlets for favorable publicity. He related many instances of definite effect on club membership solicitation. He cited cases showing how club publicity is not only a primary need of the club but of the manager. Drawing on other fields for examples of friend- and business-developing publicity campaigns Ross showed clearly that a competent managed publicity campaign was essential to a well operated popular club. Peter Hausen, manager of the Edgewater CC (Chicago district) was given the trophy for the best country club publicity exhibit, prior to the Ross address. A lively debate, with no decision reached, followed the Ross talk. The main subject of the debate was whether or not club publicity should be enclosed in bill mailings.

Wine Sales Should Be Pushed

The concluding talk of the educational conference was the most inspiring, soundest business talk ever heard at any of the ten annual conventions of the club managers. That verdict was passed by the managers who listened to G. Selmer Fougner, wine editor of the New York Sun. Fougner declared that wine definitely is coming back among worthwhile people and that club managers as educators in good living must accept a responsibility in educating "worthwhile people" to the epicurean delights and temperance qualities of wine.

The shoe-stringers and ex-bootleggers who rushed in with lousy wine after repeal set wine drinking back, Fougner said, but a contributing factor in delaying the acceptance of wine was the complicated publicity put out by the wine interests. "Fish without this wine and fowl without that wine, etc." as social sins set forth too complicated and forbidding a formula to attract patrons, but that has been the publicity keynote of the vintners, Fougner pointed out. The complex rules don't stand up, he asserted. He advocated simplification of the club wine list to a French cordial, a burgundy, sweet and dry white

wines, champagne, rhine, moselle, port and sherry. He said 12 good wines were adequate for a club wine list. He strongly boosted American wines, saying that 6 American brands of table wines were better than French table wines. However, he did say that American port and sherry were manifestly impossible. The old practice of serving many wines was for big dinners and gala events and followed the policy of starting with a light wine and getting into the heavier wines. A glass of sherry, according to Fougner, goes with anything, but not with everything.

Fougner, who is editor of a famed newspaper syndicated column on wines, said that the sane foreign practice of serving a table wine for lunch and then corking what remains and serving it for dinner, is entirely in keeping with the educated use of wine. American wines from California, Ohio or Western New York, or foreign wines, all from reputable, established sources, deserve a prominent place in service at clubs that maintain memberships and living standards of the highest type, said this expert.

Club managers hold the fate of wine for the next decade in their hands, declared Fougner, who added, "Let wine die out and temperance and moderation be set back, and the entire liquor industry dies out."

Fred Wood, manager of the Denver (Colo.) AC, was elected president of the association by acclamation when Wm. Norcross, manager of the Essex County (N.J.) CC, withdrew as a candidate. Norcross and the eastern managers cheerfully retired from the contest to vigorously endorse Wood in order that there be no grounds for the suspicion that any sectional interests were anxious to rule the association's affairs.

There were the political preliminaries that usually figure at any convention of club department heads. Greenkeepers and pros share this comic relief with the club managers. It's all light and laughable of course but it seems the fellows can't help themselves. They see ludicrous politics in elections at their own clubs and get the hunch to act just as intense and as foolish as club members in minor-league electioneering. The unlucky guy is always the one who wins in an association or club election but no one except this all-seeing master-mind, your reporter, sees this clearly. Otherwise club and association elections most of the time would go under the heading of entertainment features.

Omaha Pro Blazes Trail for Pro Winter Income

L. P. JOHNSON, able, active pro of the Park dept., Omaha, Nebr., has been demonstrating that golf in public high schools not only is an eagerly received extension of school athletic work but has an important bearing on the pro income of the future.

This winter Johnson is teaching golf to 2,600 boys and girls in five Omaha high schools. More than 60% of the youngsters have never had golf clubs in their hands before.

Johnson spends a day a week at each school and teaches eight classes a day. It has been necessary to limit the classes as there are many more applicants for lessons than he can handle. He has an interesting plan for introducing golf in high schools that he says he can inaugurate on a basis that will be satisfactory to the school boards, the pupils and the pros. His plan involves a salary of \$80 a month for the pro during the introductory period and after the plan has definitely proved itself at the schools, the usual physical instructor's salary, which he mentions as around \$175 a month.

Johnson's report that 60% of the Omaha high school youngsters had never played golf before compares interestingly with the findings of Tom Walsh, golf director of the Chicago Park district, during the first year of an energetic campaign to develop juvenile golf at the Chicago public courses. Walsh found that almost 75% of the kids hadn't played before.

McGonigill and Bradley Contribute to End Caddie Shortage

CHARLES PATRICK MCGONIGILL now is doing the squawking around the household of the James McGonigills of Dallas, Tex., having taken over the No. 1 spot from his old man on the date of his (Charles Patrick's) arrival on this sphere, December 31, 1935. Papa is the Hagen company Texas salesman.

A first born, a boy, checked in with the Kent Bradleys on January 15. In a way it is a break for the happy young mother that the daddy is greenkeeper at the Pasaic County GC as it is easy for any greenkeeper to shove the nozzle of the 4 A.M. bottle into the infant's maw when starting the day's work and take care of the midnight change of linen when quitting the round of toil.