

of the wharf by Max Bohm, wielder of the whitewash brush.

"A remarkable work of art, incidentally, is this broad streak laid down upon the boards of Knowles Wharf by the distinguished decorator of the Longyear's music room. You would know in an instant that it had been made by a great artist and not by an artisan painter. Its abhorrence of rigid straightness, the many subtle nuances of surface where the whitewash lies here thick, there thin as gossamer; the spots and spatters which make a transition between the bright path and the dull grey background; the subtle "lost and found" of the contours . . . these are landmarks or hallmarks or earmarks of the execution of the true artist, intolerant of the mechanical exactitude of architects, engineers and housepainters."

Hawthorne Skipper

Charles W. Hawthorne was elected the new Skipper in 1917. During the week of September 13, 1917, rumors were circulating in Provincetown that the ambassador from Bulgaria or Brazil and his entourage were to visit the town. The day he was expected Railroad Wharf was unusually crowded when the Steamer "Dorothy Bradford" pulled alongside. After bowing and scraping and much conversation in European tongues, the visitors came ashore, got into carriages and were driven about town by a committee of Beachcombers in plug hats and Prince Albert coats. The parade ended at none other than the Old Hulk on Knowles Wharf and the editor of the Provincetown Advocate, "too downy a bird to be caught by all this chaff" merely stated that Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Griffley, sculptors, arrived on the steamer, were met by Mr. Charles Hawthorne and a committee of Beachcombers in costume and were presented with an enormous key to the city.

In 1918, the Beachcombers moved into their present home at the foot of Bangs Street and gave a show called the "Streets of Bagdad." Year after year, the membership produced a musical or a play or vaudeville until 1921 when the authors and producers of these shows declined honors and got the club to change its course with a costume ball. Ever since that time, with the exception of the depression years and a few years intervening during and after the Second War, the Beachcombers have managed to get a stunning event organized during July or August. Costumes were always of the highest quality, with much time consumed by participants in creating original designs and character to compete for prizes. The parade included many fine paintings. Throughout, the Beach-

combers Ball has brought Provincetown additional nationwide attention and fame.

During the Beachcombers' early years, a disastrous gale in which nineteen families of fishermen became fatherless, took place. The Beachcombers started a subscription with \$185, and Harry Campbell became treasurer of a statewide fund which reached a \$25,000 goal to care for the destitute families.

Almost Homeless

In 1927, a violent storm kicked the bones of the Old Hulk so badly that it required considerable repair. The Hulk was on an old, weak wharf and the essential piling was so damaged that it threatened to cast the building off. With the proceeds from the previous Costume Ball, the building was moved and placed in its present site, at a right angle to its original orientation and a new bulkhead was built. Last year, the threat once again loomed and the bulkhead was reconstructed during the Fall and Winter with funds from the successful costume ball at the Provincetown Inn.

The list of members and guests who have been part of the Beachcombers world is indeed impressive. It includes: W. P. Paxton, painter; Eugene O'Neill, playwright; W. H. W. Bicknell, master etcher; Jim Gaul, writer; George Elmer Browne, painter; Harry Kemp, poet; E. A. Webster, cartoonist; Harry Campbell, artist; Charles W. Hawthorne, painter; Gerrit Beneker, humanitarian; Felix Mahoney, Washington cartoonist; Max Bohm, painter; Edwin H. Dickinson, painter; Morgan Dennis, artist; Coulton Waugh, painter; John Whorf, painter; Jo Hawthorne, conductor; Henry Hensche, painter; I. H. Caliga, painter; Bretagne Windust, Broadway director; Dr. Harvey Gaul, composer; Edwin M. Robinson, editor and literary critic; Charles R. Darby, painter, and William F. Boogar, sculptor.

Continuing their traditional Beachcomber merriment, this coming Saturday afternoon a Costume Ball parade will be held beginning at the Old Hulk and following a route west toward the Provincetown Inn and the marker commemorating the First Landing Place of the Pilgrims, thence easterly along Bradford Street to the beginning of the town, returning to Bangs Street on Commercial. The parade will be televised on Channel 4 to serve as a reminder for the big event of July 29.



Beachcombers Skippers' Table - Summer 1946

Left to right:

Rabbi Samuel L. Therman of St. Louis

George Palmer, Stage Mgr. for Edward Everett Horton

Dr. Frederick S. Hammett

Harry Kemp

Ted Robinson of Cleveland Plain Dealer (Seated at other end)

Don Witherstine

Edward Everett Horton

Bruce McKain

Elmer Greensfeldar

Jere Snader (facing camera)

STANDING: VOLLIAN BURR RANN.