

Polish Club



POLISH CLUB COLLECTION

This photo was taken the day the Polish Club opened, May 6, 1916. Later, the club added a second story and extended the building's

length. The structure next door, once a cigar store, is now an apartment building.

Poles

Continued from Page 2

very relieved to be here," said Norkoski, whose grandfather arrived in Chicago from Poland in 1910 and then came to the Harbor five years later. "Life in Poland was difficult. My grandfather was a peasant, which meant they grew enough food to try to stay alive."

Sitting in the club's second-floor trustees' meeting room,

its walls covered with yellowed photographs and pen-and-ink drawings of significant Polish-Americans, 86-year-old Leonard Dombroski recalled some of his fondest memories as a youth spent in the cavernous building.

Today as the old customs and accents have been diluted by assimilation, the club has lost much of its ethnic flavor, but in the first 30 years of this century the Poles filled the

club with native music and dance.

Dombroski's father, the club's first president, played the tuba in the Polish marching band.

But some of Dombroski's most vivid memories are of the theatrical productions club members staged in the early 1900s.

The actors typically spoke Polish and the plays often dealt with the tragedy and

triumph of war, Dombroski recalled.

However, the octogenarian grew up speaking English, and so he was mostly unable to follow the plot's twists and turns.

But as Dombroski explained, his only part was one that didn't require a subtle understanding of Polish.

"I played the part of a wounded soldier in one production," he said. "I was

lying around the stage and moaning as hard as I could."

Theater and music weren't the only forms of entertainment at the Polish Club.

To while away the hours, the younger men would sometimes spend the afternoons sparring with one another.

One of the more popular stories around the club these days is of how Dombroski, a more than fair boxer during

See POLES, Page 4

(360) 532-7402



Bill Sell
Trucking & Excavating

DUMP TRUCKING - HEAVY EQUIPMENT RENTAL - SEWAGE SYSTEMS
LAND FILL - GRAVEL - TOPSOIL - BARK - CULVERT

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
REG. #223-01-BI-LL-ST-E205DD

P.O. BOX 559
ABERDEEN, WA 98520

Congratulations!!
We're Proud To Be
A Part Of Your History!

BEST'S HEATING AND
AIR CONDITIONING

"Our product is your comfort ... Guaranteed!"

360-532-8892 • 1-800-339-2378

Contractor Registration# BESTSHA073L4