

City Beat

There are eight million stories in my albums. This is one of them...

In the 1880s, San Diego was experiencing a land boom. With the influx of people and tremendous increase in trade there was a great need for “a place to meet and talk over town affairs.” As a result of this need, a group of community leaders formulated plans to facilitate and accommodate the social needs of the business sector of the city. On May 26, 1887, Articles of Incorporation for the Cuyamaca Club were filed.

The first home of the Cuyamaca Club was at Fifth Avenue and G Street. A committee was appointed, and formed the Cuyamaca Building Association “for the purpose of buying real estate and building and furnishing a house suitable for the use of the Cuyamaca Club and to pay a reasonable rent for it....” the Cuyamaca Building Association purchased a suitable lot on D Street between Sixth and Seventh.

“On the evening of August 14, 1888, the Cuyamaca Club opened its beautiful new club for an inauguration reception which included refreshments and dancing....” Plans for the popular exclusive club seemed to have expanded with its rapid success which required additional fiscal demands. More social activities were organized in an attempt to hold the interest of the members and maintain the prestige of the club within the community.

By 1909, the club had outgrown that location and moved to the top floor of the new Union Building, now called the Central Federal Building, on Broadway between Second and Third Avenues. This was to be the club’s home for the next fifty-four years.

In 1919, bowing to pressure, the club’s all male membership decided to open its doors to women with the establishment of a “ladies annex.”

The club continues today, providing the same outstanding service to its members that its founding members envisioned. While the ownership of the club has changed, its basic function, philosophy and importance remain the same.

