

Brief History (1925 - 1932)

Written by J. C. Douglas September/1997

The Omaha Camera Club (OCC) was formed on February 2, 1925, to promote the art and technique of photography. At the end of its first year, the club had about 100 members. J. E. Brill was a shutterbug with a simple objective -- bring a few co-workers together and talk cameras for an hour or so! The elected officers in 1925 were the following gentlemen:

- J. E. Brill - President
- John Tite - Vice President
- Roy LaRue - Treasurer
- William F. Murdeu - Secretary

The Omaha South Side Library, at 23rd & "N" Street is where the club conducted their first two meetings. Mr. Brill was chosen chairman. The club adopted a Constitution and on the first Monday of each month they agreed to have regular monthly meetings. The membership dues at this time were fixed at \$2.00 per year, payable semi-annually.

In the first two months, the Omaha Camera Club would meet at the South Side Library, and the meetings from April 1925 to December 1931 were held in Room 316 at the Y. M. C. A. Building. Starting in January 1932 the meeting location was held in the club room at the Omaha Athletic Club Building. In 1927, the Omaha Camera Club had a membership in the Associated Camera Club of America. The yearly dues for this membership was \$5.00. In this same year, the club appointed a Print Director, a Publicity Director, and a Board of Directors.

In 1928, a club member made a motion to have talks, demonstrations, and outside speakers to help educate the incoming new members and help stimulate the older club members! This motion passed, and the club today, continues to help educate the incoming new members and helps stimulate new interests for the older members.

In 1928, the club passed a motion to purchase a Lantern Slide Projector. The cost of this camera was \$58.40. To compensate the cameras costs, the board passed a one time special assessment fee of fifty cents per member. All members were allowed to use the projector if they took good care of it and returned the projector to the chairman after each use! In this same year, two club members donated and presented the club with a screen to be used with the lantern slide projector.

In the beginning of 1929, the club treasurer had an ending balance of \$43.49! In early 1929, a motion was passed to purchase a coffee pot and a frying pan. The cost of the coffee pot was \$2.39, and the cost of the frying pan was \$1.69, giving a total of \$4.08! Instead of deducting this amount from the club's treasury, the club taxed each member a fee of twenty-five cents to compensate for the two purchases.

In February of 1930, the club elected and appointed the following director and nine chairmen: Custodian of Lantern, Education, Exhibition, House, Interchange Director, Lantern Slide, Membership, Outing, Program, and Publicity.

In the early years of the Omaha Camera Club, the club members could participate in what they called "Interchange Salons". Different camera clubs would enter a certain number of prints, and then the prints were judged by several appointed print judges. The print sizes that were entered into competition were in the following two sizes: "14x18" and "16x20".

Some of the locations of these interchange salons were: Akron, Pittsburgh, Boston City, Portland, Kodak Park, Fort Dearborn, Oregon, and Los Angeles. In these competitive events, some club members generally placed between 16th to 21st. The club members also participated in annual print exhibits. Other camera clubs were invited to participate in these print exhibitions.

In the early years of the Omaha Camera Club, the club members also took many field trips. Some of these trips were to Blair, Fremont, Lincoln, and Nebraska City. The club also had annual picnics with their families and club members.