

A decorative border with a double-line inner edge and a single-line outer edge, featuring ornate, curved corner designs.

VII.
HISTORY

NOKOMIS

The women's club was legendary,
Formed during the pioneer days.
Through it the ladies were allowed
To take part in the history of a new-born town
Growing in the woods.

Doing good works provided the noble purpose
Required for grudging tolerance and recognition
From the male powers that be.
All women knew this.

Their real need was for connection
To each other in a difficult life.
A place and time however brief
To make friends.

Church work gave some a chance to mingle.
The Ladies Aid did good works
But only with one faith and under watchful eyes.
A select Sunday group.

A diverse club that met each month on a Friday noon
Meant a stolen hour from solemn duties
At washboards, treadle sewing machines, wood-burning stoves,
Feeding chickens, children,
And hungry men.

It meant an hour to talk, to laugh, to exchange ideas.
At least the ideas women were allowed to have.
And don't forget—to do good works.
Who could fault books for a library, and scholarships?
No man would dare.

Over time, there were never enough books.
The best and brightest always needed scholarships.
The women learned to appreciate
Their own value.

The town outgrew the woods—became a city.
The women thrived on friendship—and good works.
And the club survived
A HUNDRED YEARS!

--Eileen McCoskrie
2007

HISTORY OF NOKOMIS CLUB

On Wednesday June 3, 1909 small group of women met at the home of Mrs. W. B. Williams and organized the Nokomis Club. Of these women Mrs. W. B. Williams lives in Corning, Cal., Mrs. John Larson in Kirkland, Wash. and Mrs. William Forrester in Redmond. Mrs. Forrester is still a member of the club.

The club met every two weeks when first organized, on Thursday. The regular meeting day now is the last Friday of every month with "pot luck" lunch at one o'clock P. M. On through the years we find the club growing in membership and always lending a helping hand wherever needed, helping the church, school, and needy families.

An interesting item in Feb. 1912—the club sponsored a dance, total receipts \$104.50—net proceeds were \$31.94. Nowadays if net proceeds are not 50% we feel badly.

Early in 1914 the Nokomis Club donated \$140 to the building of the gymnasium on the old school grounds now a city park. In the month of Feb. 1915 the club installed a drinking fountain on the old school grounds costing \$61.50. In March 1916 a donation of \$20 for the High School Athletic Association. In July 1917 a donation of \$50 to the Red Cross. In May 1918 the club paid \$125 for clearing of land on old school grounds. In the years of 1919 and 1920 we find in going through the minutes many meetings held with only from 8 to 11 members present. From Feb. 1921 to June 1921 the club held no meetings due to Red Cross Home Nursing classes. In 1922 the club furnished the hospital room at the new school building at a cost of \$50. In July 1922 the dues were raised to 25¢ a month and a 50¢ initiation fee which is still effective.

Due to the loss of a minute book the history of Nokomis club from here on—very little can be said. In 1927 the Club ladies served meals at a three day Grange Fair held on the old school grounds. About \$350 was cleared.

After that we started talking library which did materialize and which we are real proud but you learn all about that in the history of the library. Another big job was a carnival and chicken dinner in Oct. 1929. We cleared something over \$200.

On January 20, 1936 a special meeting was called to talk about building our present club house. At the Jan. 31st meeting it was voted to go ahead. The club house was completed on October 1927. Our first meeting held there with Mrs. Skjarstad as hostess was in Nov. At that time a corporation was formed with Mrs. A. N. Brown, Mrs. A. Ottini and Mrs. C. W. Huffman as trustees. This same month the trustees signed a mortgage for \$1200 for this building. The first payment was made in May 1938 and at the present writing three years from that date the mortgage is only \$300.

The Club Ladies filled the need of the community when they built the house as it is now the most popular meeting place in the community. It is furnished with tables, benches, chairs to seat 100 persons. There is a large oil heater and a big fireplace. The kitchen is fully equipped with the necessary dishes, silverware, and cooking utensils to serve a 100. These things are paid for.

We have earned our money by giving and serving dinners, rentals for our club house and a donation of \$100 a year from the town of Redmond. Harmony among our members and co-operation in all our undertakings is the keynote of our success.

Lena Ottini
(1941)

NOKOMIS CLUB HISTORICAL SUMMARY 1909-2009

With large distances and dense forests separating residences, Redmond pioneer women in the early 1900's desired alleviation of their loneliness and enhancement of their social and intellectual lives. Creation of an organized association provided the opportunity to join together with other compatible women who shared mutual interests. The formation of a new Redmond organization attracted Mabel Adams, Rene Adams, Hattie Forrester, Lenna Huffman, and May Huffman, who answered the invitation of Jennie Williams to meet at her home on June 3, 1909.

The agenda addressed during the initial meeting of the group determined the name, officers, and by-laws. The women designated the new organization The Nokomis Club of Redmond, Washington—an appellation derived from the character of Nokomis, Hiawatha's grandmother, in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*. The officers selected at the meeting were May Huffman, Commander-in-Chief; Jennie Williams, Chief; Lenna Huffman, Clerk; Hattie Forrester, Banker; Rene Adams, Advocate; and Mabel Adams, Attendant. They wrote by-laws that said "only those of good moral character may become members of the club", and decided that "two negatives bars any person from membership". Dues were determined to be 10¢ per meeting, and an initiation fee of 25¢ was charged with the funds to be used for any purpose determined by the majority of the members.

Meetings were held on Thursday every two weeks, and when the club met on June 17, Jennie Sikes was accepted as the seventh charter member. The meeting plan specified the hostess prepare and present a biography of the poet studied at that meeting, and the members would deliver a quotation or recitation of the poet. John Greenleaf Whittier was the first poet studied, and during the ensuing year poets Longfellow, Byron, Burns, and Tennyson were discussed. Additions to the meeting format were instituted and included the reading of Bible passages at the beginning of the meeting by the Advocate, and a "for the good of the order" segment that presented readings by members from various literary sources.

Several modifications occurred as the ladies continued to meet. One major change in November 1909 shifted the meeting day to Friday every two weeks which was eventually revised to every three weeks because of a lack of attendance. By January 1910 the members felt that a social function should be held each month that celebrated a member's birthday during that month—a decision that encouraged the celebration of other milestones, and the following March members decided they wanted to add entertainment in the programs. Also during January of 1910, the members declared the purpose of the club was to be a social organization.

Earlier that January the ladies had paid the insurance for the Methodist Church which cost \$30 (\$654.60 in 2010 dollars) only to discover two weeks later that their donation had not been spent on insurance. As a result, the by-laws were amended to read, "Club entirely independent of church, and any money raised is to be used for any other purpose than for church." The club then focused their service activities on the provision of clothing at Christmas for homeless and abandoned children at the Des Moines Industrial Home. Another priority was the recruitment of new members, and a committee was appointed to visit homes within the community to extend an invitation to potential members to attend one club meeting. The members of this committee were reappointed every six weeks.

In order to raise funds for club projects, dances were planned with the first one occurring on February 10, 1912 that made \$27 (\$589.14 in 2010 dollars). Another favorite method of raising funds was to sponsor card parties. The first club card party was held on November 7, 1912 in the old school building, but the revenues were not recorded. Utilizing these two methods of fundraising, the club made enough money to assist the school, and was able to install a water fountain for \$61.37 (\$1,339 in 2010 dollars), donate \$18 (\$392.76 in 2010 dollars) to the school

athletic association, credit \$125 (\$2,727.50 in 2010 dollars) toward the construction of a new gymnasium, and for the sum of \$75 (\$1,636.50 in 2010 dollars) hired out the clearing of trees, stumps, and rubbish from the old school grounds.

Occupied with planning dances, holding card parties, and supporting the school, members became distracted from the study of literature, but in September 1915 they decided to return to reading for an hour during the meeting with two readers each reading for one-half hour. The first book selected for reading in the new format was *The Goodly Fellowship* by Rachel Schauffler.

The Spanish Influenza epidemic that began in 1918 interfered with the burgeoning club activities, and caused the cancellation of several meetings, a decrease in the membership roll, and prevented holding dances and card parties. Even though the members persevered in meeting, the few activities that took place were personal assistance to a family in need in 1920 and instruction in home nursing for the membership in 1921. Instituted in July 1920 was the tradition of having a family picnic in July when the first picnic was held at Cottage Lake. The customary July picnic at a local park or garden continued until 1971.

Following the flu epidemic, club activities and projects gradually began to return to normal, and the club continued its contribution to the school. They furnished a nurse's room at the high school in 1922 for \$49.50 (\$980.10 in 2010 dollars), made a \$25 (\$495 in 2010 dollars) donation in 1923 for new stage curtains, paid the outstanding balance of \$29.21 (\$578.36 in 2010 dollars) on the school piano in 1925, and donated a Hawthorne tree for planting on the school grounds in 1926. The club also initiated a new project of preparing suppers for community center card parties in September 1923.

Members found by June 1926 that they had raised a substantial amount of money, and sought a project to make advantageous use of these funds. Discussed as potential projects were the establishment of a library, which had first been discussed in 1922, or assisting in orthopedic work. It was determined that either choice necessitated planning for further fundraising. The opportunity for an ideal money making project occurred in September when a three-day Grange Fair was held on all three floors of the old school located on the present site of Anderson Park. Nokomis served dinner, and charged 50¢ per dinner plate and 10¢ per dessert. They raised \$252.75 (\$5,068 in 2010 dollars). The following February Royal Neighbors requested that Nokomis serve a banquet dinner, and paid 65¢ per plate for a dinner menu of roast or chicken, potatoes, vegetable, salad, rolls, pickles, dessert, and coffee

Flush with cash, in March 1927 the club held a vote by secret ballot to determine which project to undertake. The outcome favored the library, and a committee was appointed to find a suitable location. The committee reported in April that Mr. Herman Reed's 2-room building on the west side of Leary Way immediately north of Redmond Trading Company (Half Price Books in 2011) was a suitable site, and the executive committee signed a lease with Reed on June 25. Reed agreed to begin the yearly lease in September if the front of the building was painted by the club. Husbands donated their labor in order for the club to afford signage. Committees were appointed to paint, paper, decorate, drape, furnish, and clean the building, and still other groups were appointed to catalogue, sort, and purchase books. The community was canvassed for book donations, and organizations were asked to contribute as well.

The Library opened on October 29, 1927, and was open during the hours of 2-5 pm Wednesday and Saturday and 7-9 pm Tuesday and Thursday evening. Initially there were 500 books on the shelf, and during the first month 567 books were loaned on 95 library cards. A Library Board of Control was established in December that gave responsibility for library management to four club members elected with staggered terms. By September 1929, the Library needed more space to accommodate the expanded number of books, and it was decided to move to the large room of the Grand Central Hotel on the northeast corner of Leary Way and Cleveland

Street. The Library gained 300 more volumes shortly after the move when the Washington State Traveling Library arrived in October. Also expanded were the hours of operation: 7-8:30 pm Tuesday and Thursday, 12-4 pm Wednesday, and 2-4 pm Saturday.

Fundraising events during this period included a play that earned \$125 (\$2,516 in 2010 dollars), a minstrel show made \$57.80 (\$1,164 in 2010 dollars), and a carnival raised \$297.81 (\$5,995 in 2010 dollars). Lesser money makers were several card parties, a couple of dances, and regular dinner service for the Men's Club.

A successful strategy was devised during 1928 that ensured all members would equally share in activity preparation and money making tasks when the membership was divided into three permanent committees with each committee assigned projects in rotation. Club interests focused not only on making money, but also on current events and culture. The club meetings were informational and entertaining, and followed a pattern: a speaker discussed various topics such as school issues and funding, politics, home economics, handicrafts, art and music, gardening, travel destinations, or women's club federation issues followed by a business meeting with musical entertainment at the close of the gathering. The traditional lunch was held either before or after the meeting, and was allotted two hours with the remainder of the meeting also two hours in length. It was a four-hour Nokomis Friday afternoon.

The club belonged to the Federation of Women's Clubs for a span of 67 years—from 1928 to 1995. This affiliation allowed the club to have access to greater resources that furthered skill development, expanded rights, and increased abilities applicable to resolution of community, state and national challenges. Members regularly took advantage of the training and programs offered at district and state conventions.

There was substantial sentiment by 1932 toward construction of a library building as the Library at the Grand Central Hotel became problematic. Chief Counsel (President) Mabel Johnson gave an inspirational talk at the beginning of 1932 advocating construction of Nokomis' own library building, which was approved after a thorough financial review indicated the club would be able to build without going into debt. Club member Irene Brown and her husband, Alfred N. Brown, donated a parcel of land for the building. Irene also chaired the Building Committee, who estimated the cost to be \$400.55, but the actual cost was just \$19.58 more at \$420.13 (\$8,520.24 in 2010 dollars). A non-profit corporation was established with a Board of Trustees, Lena Ottini, Irene Brown, and Ada Huffman, designated to oversee Library operations.

The first Redmond Library built for that purpose was dedicated on February 12, 1933, and opened for business on March 1, 1933. The hours were: 7-8:30 pm Tuesday and Thursday, 11:30 am-4 pm Wednesday, and 2-4 pm Saturday. Circulation figures for 1934 show that a total of 8,957 items were checked out from the Library. It remained in this location until January 1953—a period of twenty years.

Along with the increase in club activities, demand for membership in Nokomis also grew, and by 1934 the Constitution was amended to increase the membership roll from 35 to 40 members. The Constitution also provided, "after the club quota of 40 is filled, all applications shall be placed on a waiting list and proposed by secretary for membership as soon as vacancy occurs in order of application." Membership was still subject to the original by-laws and each member had to be voted into the club, but as the club matured this requirement was removed. Membership in the senior club became an issue 1958, but was resolved with one to two new members joining at each meeting. The average attendance at each meeting was 20 until the turn of the 21st Century.

Junior Nokomis formed in 1934 as a means of training younger women, who as they matured would become Senior Nokomis members. Advised by Senior Nokomis members, the activities the junior club undertook were quite different but complimentary to the community service nature of the senior club. Invitations to meetings as well as events sponsored by either club

were often extended and reciprocated. The membership of Junior Nokomis had dwindled by 1985 when the remaining members joined the senior group.

Three years after the Library opened, the club felt an addition to the Library that would serve as a social hall and could be rented to individuals, clubs, and other organizations would be of benefit to the club and the community. The project was overwhelmingly approved in January of 1936, and property was purchased adjacent to the Library from the Browns for \$50. The new hall was designed to accommodate service for 100 people, and was inaugurated at the Businessmen's Dinner served on Tuesday, November 2, 1937. Called *The Clubhouse*, the first Nokomis meeting was held there on the last Friday of November, the 26th in 1937. In order to finance the addition, the club members did not hesitate to take out a loan of \$1,200 which was paid by November 27, 1942.

The facilities of the new social hall allowed the club to expand its dinner service to other clubs, and besides the Men's Club, the Businessmen's Club and the Schoolmen's Club became regular customers. Dances and card parties were held less often than they had been earlier, so rental fees derived from social hall use by individuals and other organizations became the major source of income.

In 1942 King County voters approved the collection of up to 50¢ per \$1,000 assessed property valuation to establish and operate the Rural King County Library District. Cities and towns could also contract with the library district for services. It was not until the August 30, 1946, meeting of Nokomis that two staff members, Miss McDowell and Miss Sealoff, from the King County Public Library, spoke on the activities of the library and the benefits to rural communities and small towns. The September meeting saw Mrs. Nelson, a member of the Board of Trustees, King County Public Library, explain the library situation in Fall City and Snoqualmie and give details on how the library has worked with those two communities. At the October meeting the club took action to sign up with the King County Public Library for one year. Because the library district was funded with tax funds, the Town Council on December 4, 1946, agreed to enter into a contract to affiliate with the Rural King County Library District for library purposes to begin on January 1, 1947.

All books were turned over to the library district with the exception of the memorial books, and when the Library opened in January, the first paid Librarian was Mamie Orr, a long-standing Nokomis member. She reported at the January meeting that during the month 1,098 books were checked out and 278 library cards issued. By January 1948 Nokomis requested the library district continue to operate the Redmond Library for another three years while the club continued to furnish the building to the Town of Redmond for library purposes for a rental of \$100 per year—a sum that was paid only for the year 1947.

Since the club no longer had operational responsibilities for the Library, members took a more leisurely attitude toward fundraising to meet expenses. A Ways and Means Committee was appointed to seek other methods of raising funds rather than just sole reliance on rental fees because regular dinner service and magazine sales were discontinued by the end of 1948. A party luncheon took place, a "Luncheon Is Served" event was held, and the club decided to form a blanket club. These projects were successful in defraying building maintenance expenses of: an addition of a concrete porch, a fan for the oil stove, two new electric stoves and requisite electrical rewiring, hot water heater, new roofing, heater, oil barrel and pump for the Library, new flooring in the Clubhouse, and foundation repair of the Clubhouse. But by March 1952 members were ready to explore the sale of the building, and appointed Irene Brown to contact the Town Council. Irene reported that this initial effort was stymied, but the Town Council did budget \$250 for water, heating fuel, and lights for 1953. However in October, the club received notice that it was in fact illegal for the town to pay for utilities, and further stated that a fuel line and wiring must be

disconnected from the Library by “October I, 1953” despite the fact there was no fuel line or additional wiring on the Library premises.

In the meantime, the Library had experienced significant growth, and with a circulation of 14,268 items needed more space. Mamie Orr, Librarian, directed the move into the Clubhouse at the end of December 1952, and the Library opened in January 1953 with a choice of 6,000 books available to readers. The hours of operation were expanded to: 7-9 pm Monday, 2-5 pm and 7-9 pm Tuesday and Thursday, and 11 am-4 pm Saturday.

Since the Library was now contracted by the Town to Rural King County Library District, the Corporation of Redmond Public Library with Library Trustees as executive decision makers was obsolete. In April of 1954 the corporate entity became the Nokomis Club of Redmond. This change empowered the club to functionally make legal decisions and hold title to the Library-Clubhouse property.

Purchase of the Library-Clubhouse was still under consideration by the Town Council. In an October 1955 meeting with the council, it was found that the club did not have a clear title to the Library-Clubhouse property, and the following month another meeting was held to determine the procedure and documents needed to obtain clear title. According to the Town Council, the most practical solution would be to give the Town of Redmond clear title to the property with the provision that the town maintains the building and grounds, and the property shall always be retained for club, library, and civic purposes. If the building should be inadequate and a new building erected on the premises, the same provisions shall apply.

The club countered with a resolution in December that stated the club accepts the resolutions, but changes them to: “The premises are not be sold or exchangeable at any time, but is to be kept always as a memorial to the Nokomis Club women, and this particular property shall be retained exclusively for club, library, community assembly, and other civic purposes and let it be stated that the kitchen equipment is the property of Nokomis club and is not included in the deed. If another building is erected, the same provisions will apply. Immediate repairs are also demanded.” The club rejected the proposed arrangement with the town.

A special meeting was held with the Town Council in December 1957 to resolve the title issue. Lena Ottini presented the summation during the special meeting recounting that the deed to the Nokomis property was given to the Town of Redmond in order to obtain Work Progress Administration (WPA) assistance in construction of the building since no private organizations could employ WPA labor. It was understood that when the work was completed, the property clear of the mortgage would revert to the Nokomis club. Instead, a 99-year lease was signed with the Town of Redmond because Judge Reil ruled that it was legally impossible to change the deed when Trustees Lena Ottini, Irene Brown, and Ada Huffman presented their case before him. In the meantime the Town of Redmond had no record of a deed, or a deed in their possession. Since the trustees did sign a lease, the title is clouded.

Nokomis President Dorothea Trippett reported that in a similar situation with a ladies club in Enumclaw, the situation was resolved by instituting a friendly lawsuit with the city. The club voted to bring a lawsuit in order to obtain a clear title, and it was understood that the club would accept the final decision of the attorneys. Finally, in March 1958 clear title to the club property was regained.

While the building sale and ownership was under investigation, President Trippett noted in the September 1955 meeting that any organization should have a goal or a special purpose other than merely a social club. She requested suggestions, but none were forthcoming. Rental fees were the chief revenue source, but a couple of dinners were served, and a card party and bake sale held. Members were asked to make out-of-pocket donations when insurance came due and pay the \$250 fee incurred when sewer service was extended to the building. Once again the club proposed the

town should pay for heat, water, electricity, and janitorial services in return for free use of the Library although the club in 1954 had requested the town pay \$600 per year in rent. No resolution of this issue is noted, nor is revenue from the town recorded in the income column of the club ledgers.

The highlight of 1959 was the 50th anniversary of the Nokomis Club. Fifty people attended the celebration on June 3rd, and enjoyed the Library and Clubhouse decorated in yellow roses. Refreshments were served complimented by a cake decorated in club colors of purple and gold. Additional social events were shared with other clubs on a reciprocal basis. Nokomis had entertained the Bellevue Women's Club since 1941, but that exchange lapsed in 1952. Beginning in 1947 the Kirkland Women's Club met with Nokomis twice each year—an exchange that lasted until 1991.

Nokomis members participated in an exemplary cleanup of their property that included repairing and painting the building exterior and placement of lawn and flower beds after installation of the city sewer in 1960. Inspired by their example, Redmond held a clean-up, fix-up, paint-up campaign called "Scrub the Hub" to prepare for visitors to the Seattle World's Fair "Century 21 Exposition" that opened in April 1962. Because the initial work party scheduled on May 21, 1961 had a small turnout, "Scrub the Hub" Chairman, Marguerite "Perky" Johnson, recruited Nokomis President Jessie Norman and President-elect Audrey Johnson to co-chair the Public Relations Committee. It was their job to make personal contacts with the 15 organizations plus additional influential individuals to promote a larger turnout that would effectively improve the appearance of the community. The clean-up, fix-up, and paint-up work occurred over two more days, July 29 and August 12, and had 200 participants. Assisted by Nokomis members, Jessie Norman and Audrey Johnson planned the meals, supervised preparation, and meal service for the workers on both days.

The move of the Library into the Clubhouse enabled it to supply its readership with an expansion to 17,000 volumes by 1964, but the growth also required more space to shelve the books. Provision of adequate space was achieved when the Library relocated to 16425 NE 80th Street in May. After 37 years, Nokomis no longer had any responsibility for the Library, but a committee of members was formed who chose to work at the new location. The club continued for several years to sponsor the open house held at the Library each year during National Library Week.

Nokomis continued donations to the charitable causes of the Rainier School in Buckley and Eastside Handicappers. The club began regular monthly donations of arts and craft supplies to the Lake Washington Special Education Center, and members baked birthday cakes for the children at the Echo Glen juvenile detention facility. Members also collected contributions in support of the Federation of Women's Clubs projects in Korea and Japan. Fundraising activities that supported these projects were three Tupperware parties, sales of fruitcakes each November and December, and sales of stationery notes with a Washington State motif.

Late in 1970 the club received notice that they no longer had tax exempt status because the library had moved from its premises in 1964. The county assessor assessed the property at \$19,200, and charged three years of back taxes totaling \$1,830.97. Although there was substantial controversy, it was decided to sell the property. The Chamber of Commerce had in January 1968 rented space in the old library portion of the building, and prepared a proposal to buy the property. The terms they presented were: give \$2,000 to the club, an undetermined number of payments "as the chamber is able to do" to a scholarship fund, and the club is to have the use of the building whenever it doesn't interfere with the plans of the Chamber.

The club appointed a committee to meet with an attorney concerning the potential building sale. The terms recommended by the committee to the membership were: the Chamber will pay the outstanding property taxes of approximately \$1,800, the Chamber will pay \$300 per year for the next 15 years into a scholarship fund administered by the Nokomis Club, and Nokomis is allowed to

use the premises as a meeting place on the last Friday of each month for 15 years. These requirements were approved by the club membership, and the deed and severance papers were signed in February 1972, but a revision was required in October 1973 because the Chamber had to borrow in order to pay the taxes and improvements to the Nokomis building. The Nokomis officers signed the revised agreement and placed it in a safety deposit box.

The Scholarship Committee was established in 1975 to determine the criteria for earning the scholarship, and to select a recipient from among the applicants. The first scholarship was awarded to Diane Hancock in celebration of the bicentennial of the founding of the United States. Presentation of a scholarship each year to a graduate of Redmond High School continues to the present time and is an important club function.

Projects undertaken in celebration of the bicentennial were determined through the suggestions of the Federation of Women's Club Ways and Means Committee, and consisted of sales of commemorative plates, phoenix pins and pendants, and "Brite" stationery notes. The stationery notes proved to be a very popular moneymaker. The club participated in the tree planting program, another of the federation projects. Nokomis gathered several dogwood trees, trees of heaven, two firs, and one cedar that were donated to the City of Redmond and planted in Farrell-McWhirter Park and Marymoor Park by the Parks and Recreation Department. Federation members altogether planted over 2,000 trees nationwide by the end of 1976.

During the fall of 1975, the Redmond Park and Recreation Department cited personnel and financial requirements needed to stimulate expansion of the activities of senior citizens. Included in fundraising for senior citizen projects, Nokomis joined other civic clubs in money making efforts. Nokomis contributed the dessert, apple crisp, to a community-wide dinner to benefit seniors that was held in November. Eventually a federally funded program, the Senior Citizen Saver Program, was introduced that provided home repairs, fire alarm installation, a postal alert program, and emergency taxicab program. Crime prevention for senior citizens was the subject of a talk by a Redmond police officer at a Nokomis meeting. By 1986 the club decided to assist in furnishing the Senior Center projected to be built on the Sammamish River near the city hall. When the Senior Center opened in 1990, Nokomis had donated over \$2,000 toward the furnishings.

Busy with needle and thread, Jenny Bryden and her committee, Hazel Johnson, Mildred Streeter, and Hazel Kerwin, constructed a quilt with a motif of Redmond buildings that was raffled in order to raise money for the scholarship fund. The quilt was completed in time to be displayed at GI Van's Restaurant in November 1984, and during the spring of 1985 it was shown at Bud's Café, Martinizing Cleaners, and Seattle Trust Bank. The sale of raffle tickets benefited the scholarship fund by collecting \$1,818, and when the drawing was held at Derby Days 1985, the quilt was won by the daughter of a Nokomis member.

Besides the scholarship, other charitable causes continued to attract support from the club. Steps at the Chamber of Commerce building were repaired with a \$100 contribution. Avondale Lutheran Church received donations earmarked for food and clothing for two families and for Christmas food baskets. Other charities receiving funds or commodities were Custom Industries, Gordon Hauck School, YWCA Family Village in Redmond, and Eastside Domestic Violence. Starting in 1985 through 1995 a monthly out-of-pocket collection was taken that annually netted between \$150 and \$500 for the Food Bank. The club also supported the Redmond Library with donations for the purpose of purchasing essential books as a memorial to a departed member. Each memorial book has a bookplate that is placed inside the front cover with the name of the member in whose memory the book was given.

Space in the library provided storage for club documents, but in 1992 the library requested removal of the Nokomis records and threatened to discard them. The club liaison to the library, Audrey Gorlick, hastened to the library to retrieve the documents. She collected the records, and

sorted through items including complete minutes and attendance records beginning in 1909, financial ledgers, photographs, newspaper clippings of club activities, yearly club programs, and other assorted club related items. These documents were initially donated to Marymoor Museum in 1997, but when the museum closed the club records were sent to the Eastside Heritage Center where they remain carefully archived but available for research.

After 58 years of meetings in The Clubhouse, the club had to seek another location for its monthly last Friday-of-the-month meeting since the large space was being converted into offices during remodeling necessitated by the increased responsibilities of the Chamber of Commerce. The September 1995 meeting of the club was the last meeting held in The Clubhouse which exceeded by eight years the original 15 year meeting agreement with the Chamber. The club met for a few years in the Library, and then decided that it would be a good idea to find a suitable restaurant. Tony Roma's on Redmond Way adjacent to Wendy's provided a good location until it closed in October 2005. The club moved its Friday lunch to the Family Pancake House, but in November 2007 meetings changed to a large private dining room at Emerald Heights which has proved to be very satisfactory.

Also coming to an end was the fundraising project of the sale of dishcloths ordered from Sangamon Mills. The dishcloths were first sold in 1948, and provided a good supplemental income until they were sold out in 2001 by Marian Curry, who had managed the project for several years. Donations became the primary source of income for the scholarship which is the sole club project. By 2004 contributions to the scholarship fund totaled \$1,451.17, and that same year Audrey Gorlick's grand-nephew, Richard Hersh, a resident of Southern California, gave \$10,000 to ensure scholarships would be awarded for several years. During the centennial anniversary of the club in 2009, \$2,460 was raised, and a December sale of raffle tickets for a Christmas Gift Basket brought in an additional \$1,100 for the Audrey Gorlick Memorial Scholarship.

The 2009 centennial celebration marked an important milestone in the history of the club. The continued relationship with the library is an important element of club activities, and club members commemorated the centennial with the donation of a glass sculpture constructed from an archived 1932 photograph of members converted into a glass sculpture by John Tapert. The sculpture, entitled "Women of Vision" in recognition of their efforts to establish, operate, fund, and house the library, is located at the east entrance of the Redmond Regional Library at 15990 NE 85th Street. The project was financed primarily by a donation from Mary Kay Hallman with an additional sum from Clare "Amo" Marr.

An important contribution to the 2009 centennial celebration is the poem, "Nokomis" written by Eileen McCoskrie, a well known local journalist and mother of club member, RuthAnn McCoskrie. The last stanza of the poem concludes:

"The town outgrew the woods—became a city.
The women thrived on friendship—and good works.
And the club survived
A HUNDRED YEARS!"

May all of the Nokomis Club members continue their sisterhood—and benevolence in their community service—throughout the 21st Century.

by Alexa Munoz
August 2011

*Coming together is the beginning,
Staying together is cooperation,
Working together is success.*

~ Nokomis Program 1937-38