

Lambeau Field: Paid Off and Paying Off

By MARY OLSZEWSKI
Press-Gazette Staff Writer

Green Bay voters in 1966 agreed they wanted \$500,000 in municipal bonds sold to construct a professional football stadium.

By the time the mortgage on Lambeau Field was paid, the city had been forced to take \$533,000 from its general tax fund to pay those bonds.

"Voters expected tax funds to be used when they voted for the referendum because city officials had no idea how much income to expect from concessions and parking," says Brown County Judge Clarence Nier, who was city attorney at the time of the 1966 referendum. He has been president of the Stadium Commission since it was formed in 1967.

Today, the lot and stadium the bonds bought are worth well in excess of \$5 million, based on an insurance appraisal and recent real estate sales. The increase in value is due to over \$4 million in improvements paid for solely by the Green Bay Packer Corporation.

And it's all the property of the City of Green Bay.

Officially, the last mortgage payment was made by city Comptroller Rudy Reinhard on Feb. 21, 1977. At a ceremony in May, the mortgage was burned by current and former city and Packer officials.

For 21 years, from 1951 to 1977, Green Bay made annual principal and interest payments on the original bond issue. In 1967, the city made an advance interest payment of \$18,664, no principal was due until the following year.

But the mortgage's burning did not signal the end of the financial link between the City of Green Bay and its Packers.

Long before May's ceremony, on Dec. 8, 1975, the Packers exercised their option to renew their lease for 25 more years. Their new rent is \$41,000 per year.

Originally the Packers paid \$30,000 annual rent. That was for four years. For the mortgage's last 15 years, the Packers paid \$35,000 annually.

Rent was based on the Packers agreement to pay half of the principal and interest on the bond issue. In all

Comptroller Rudy Reinhard was reluctant to say the city fared badly on the deal.

"You can't buy that kind of good will," he said of the city-team relationship.

Anyway, the stadium as it stands today contains improvements that taxpayers never had to pay for. Additions, like 24,000 seats, extra plumbing to handle the larger crowds, fireworks, the administration building and its addition plus improvements to the press box, were all paid for by the Packer corporation.

So even though the annual rent may seem low, much Packer money had gone into Lambeau Field. When the \$4 million worth of work is spread over the years, the annual Packer investment comes to \$168,000 per year, not including rent, according to Tom Miller, Packer business general manager.

According to a 1977 insurance appraisal, it would cost \$5.8 million today to replace the entire stadium — foundation, plumbing and all — according to city Insurance Administrator Ethel Phillips.

In addition, Richard Bouypuzgon, Packer corporation vice president since 1963, estimated the stadium's 50-acre lot could be worth as much as \$1.4 million on today's real estate market if sold as commercial property.

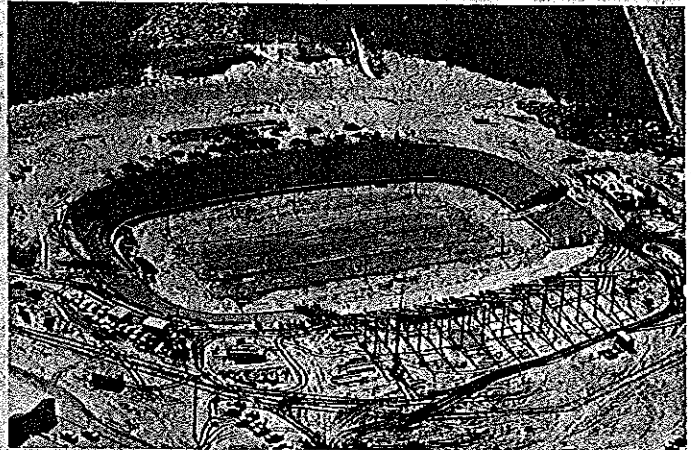
A parcel that size zoned for residential use could bring about \$650,000, according to local real estate appraiser Donald Swartz. He used recent residential real estate sales as a guide.

The city bought the lot from Victor and Florence Amundsen for \$73,500, according to Registrar of Deeds Gary De Byl. It was later conveyed to the city from the Town of Ashwaubenon.

However, an accurate appraisal of Lambeau Field's market value would require close comparison with other professional football stadiums, a task never undertaken only because the stadium's never been up for sale.

With the bonds paid off, the Packers' new \$41,000 rent will be shown as income in the budget of the Stadium Commission, according to Reinhard.

The Stadium Commission was



The beginning of what was to become Lambeau Field is constructed in the midst of a farm field in Ashwaubenon.

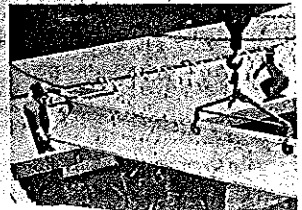
The Packers have made in \$51,000 toward resurfacing part of the parking lot. The City of Green Bay obtained a federal grant to pay for some resurfacing and the Packer's contribution provided new blacktop for the administration building.

The work slated for this year is complete, although the two bodies were only able to afford paving of

spent" by businesses that benefit indirectly.

Needless to say, anyone who's driven down any of Green Bay's main streets can see the team's impact on business names, at least. "Packerland" is the part of many firm's names. Others just use the team's green and gold colors to convey the message.

What would the motels, restaurants, bars, gas stations and their auxili-





John Okatchecum Displays a Finished Totem Pole

Totem Pole Carving Revived in Keshena

By WARREN GERDS

John Okatchecum is bringing back the symbol of another era — the Indian totem pole.

The woodcarver is making two poles as part of the refurbishing of the Woodland Bowl natural amphitheater at Keshena.

Okatchecum, who is best known by the name Jackie Booty, worked four weeks in making one of the poles — from designing carving to painting. The poles are different from one another.

Each of the figures on the poles represents a different clan of Menominee living in the

Keshena area. Among the clans are the third (Chief Keshena's) Bear, Turtle, Owl and Buffalo (Chief Okish's).

"The Menominees used to define their territory with totem poles before white people were here," explained Lonnie Tuller, artistic director of the Woodland Bowl.

"The troupe asked Jackie Booty to carve the poles as part of its effort to 're-establish the feeling for our culture,'" she said.

Jackie Booty is also carving the Woodland Bowl name for the entranceway of the amphitheater, where the Menominee pageant production "Spirit Rock" will be presented July 22 and 23.



Carving a Totem Pole is Exacting Work



Carver Begins With Outline of Figure



Painting Completes Figure on Pole