

Inland Empire Paper Co.

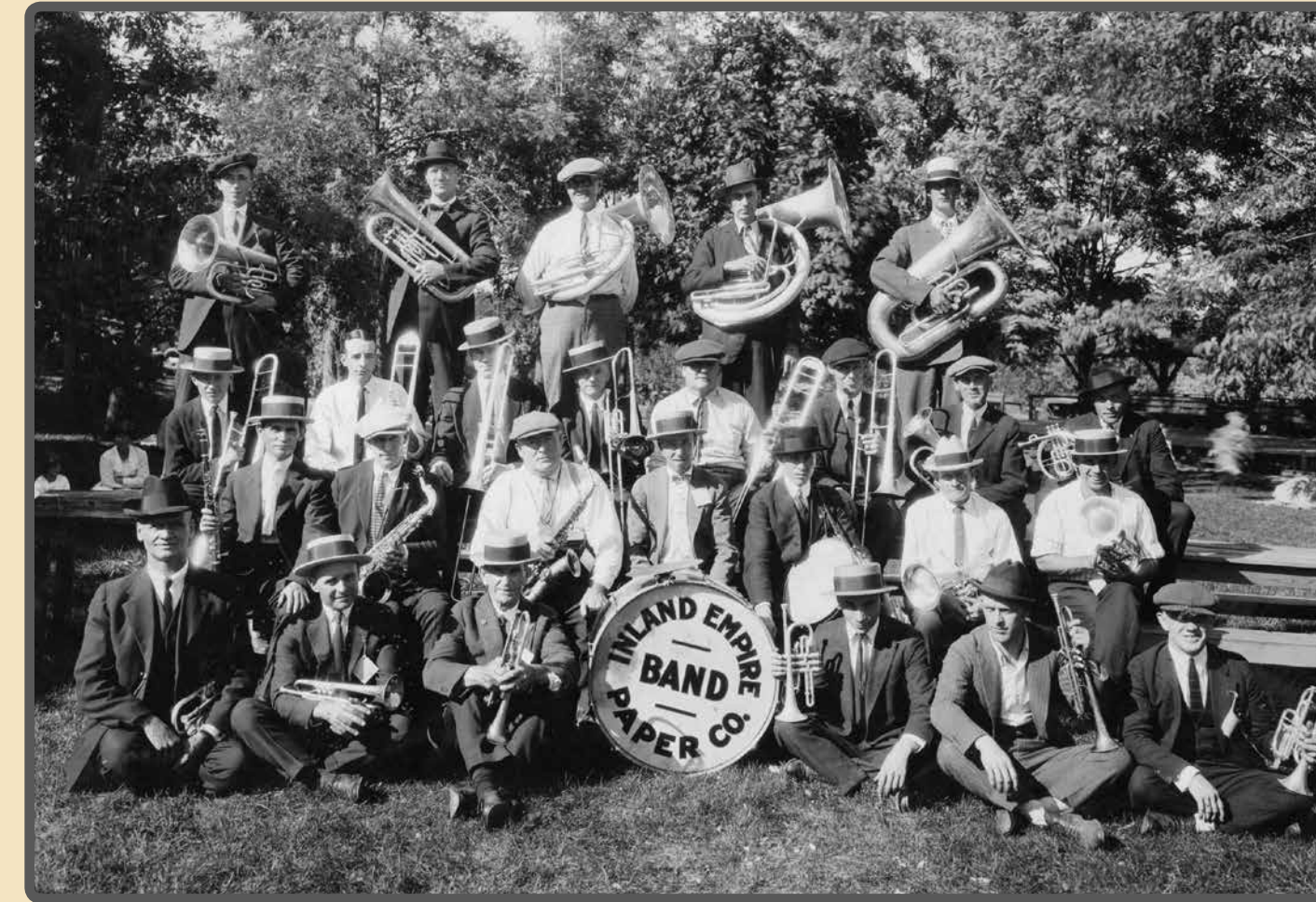


IEP Begins Production

In 1909, a land holding company purchased about 50 acres along the south side of the Spokane River for a paper mill. The river and nearby railroads made it an ideal location. Construction began in the fall of 1910 and the mill opened in the summer of 1911. The new mill soon manufactured 34 grades of paper including book, bond and writing paper in various colors.



Pool and bandstand, June, 1933



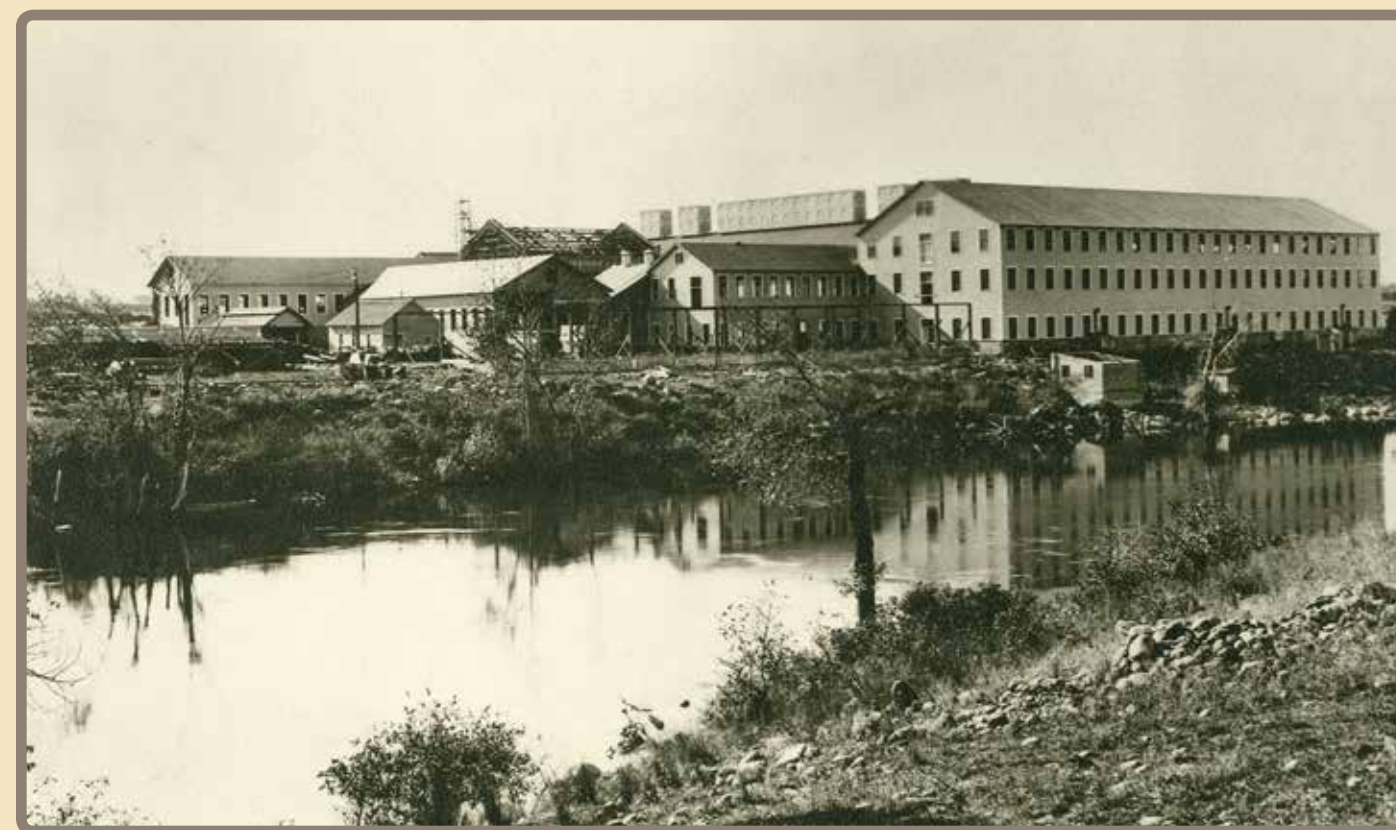
IEP "Papermakers Band" first performed in 1923

Early to Recycle

From the beginning of production in 1911, IEP included waste paper as a raw material. At the time, recovered paper improved production efficiency and solved "the evil of waste paper."

By 1974, it cost less to buy wood chips from saw mill waste than to make them and the log yard disappeared.

Today, IEP relies on both waste wood chips and recovered paper for raw materials.



Paper Mill circa 1911-1912

"Spokane Valley -- Industries (#06)." Spokane Public Library

IEP - A Community Hub

Originally, IEP developed its grounds as a community park. The company planted trees, constructed a pool and built a bandstand for its "Papermakers Band." The mill also sponsored a baseball team and built a diamond at Trent and Argonne. Early residents spoke of warm summer evenings enjoying music and the company of neighbors while children rolled on the grass. IEP also provided town services. They planted and tended street trees, provided water and firefighting equipment and maintained a town dump.



Perhaps a promotional parade float, circa 1916-1920



Log pile fire, September 7, 1957 Bray Collection



Paper Mill circa 1935

Forestry

In 1950 IEP purchased 14,000 acres of cutover forestland on the east slope of Mt. Spokane to grow trees. The science was new so IEP forester Jim Anderson experimented with tree species and planting practices. IEP opened the forestland to hunting, cross country skiing and hiking. Today the Forestry Dept. at IEP manages 117,000 acres of company-owned timberland in northeastern Washington and northern Idaho.

Resiliency

IEP has survived world wars, depressions, recessions, fire and pandemics. For over 110 years, the company has successfully met the challenges of evolving markets, regulations and technologies with determination and bold innovation.

Primary reference: Challenge and Change: Inland Empire Paper Company's First Century pub, 2011

Inferno

Just before noon on Saturday, September 7th, 1957 the mill whistle blew a frantic fire code. Off-shift workers rushed to the mill. Brush was in flames and log piles in IEP's large log yard were beginning to burn. By 2 PM, the old apple storage warehouse on Empire east of Argonne was burning. As the inferno burned into the night, around 1000 people arrived to fight the fires. Millwood residents came to the Masonic Hall and made coffee and sandwiches. Curious onlookers clogged the streets and an estimated 15 firetrucks from Fairchild, Civil Defence and Naval Supply had trouble getting through. Hot weather, dry grass and a seldom used steam locomotive were the likely causes. Nearly 8.5 million board feet of lumber were lost.