Golden Anniversary
Freeport Elks Lodge No. 1253
Souvenir Journal
February 22nd 1962
The Clubhouse
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The first home of Freeport Lodge, located at the corner of Merrick Road and Grove Street, formally opened on June 22nd, 1912.

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE 1253 B. P. O. E.

It was a balmy summer’s evening, August 26, 1911.

J. Huyler Ellison, James Hanse, George Morton Levy, Stephen P. Pettit, Franklin G. Hill, Archer B. Wallace and 25 other men whose names are writ large in Freeport’s scroll of honor met in Mechanics’ Hall, in the business section.

They discussed the topics of the day, they talked shop, they ate a homely meal and then they solemnly banded themselves together as Freeport Lodge of Elks, Number 1253.

Such was the humble beginning of that great community institution that is celebrating its Golden Anniversary here tonight.

Little did they know, those stalwarts of that brave little band, that they were serving as the strong pillars of the noble structure, both physically and spiritually, that is the Freeport Elks Club today.

Nor could they foresee the trials and difficulties, the disappointments and setbacks that would be theirs before the lodge could reach its present high status. But they would have dared, anyway, even if they did. They were that kind of men.

With them, to think was to act and they set about the task of finding, furnishing and financing their first clubhouse.

FIRST CLUBHOUSE BOUGHT

There were journeyings here and there, hastily called conferences and earnest debates before finally they decided on the old Charles L. Wallace residence at Grove Street and Merrick Road. Within a few months after organization (membership had
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The first home of Freeport Lodge with the new addition, which had its formal opening in the Fall of 1914.

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

already mounted to 144 by that time) they bought the building. The price tag read $11,000, of which $3,000 was made in a cash payment to clinch the bargain. The mortgage of $8,000 for the balance was wiped out in less than two years!

Throughout the winter months, the task of transforming the house to meet the lodge's needs was carried on apace and by June 1st of the following year it was opened to the rapidly growing membership. The formal opening, however, was not held until June 22nd.

An Elks chronicler of an earlier day waxed enthusiastic over the occasion. It was, to quote his account, "An opening that held sway for four full days -- an opening that brought thousands of visitors from all parts of Elkdom -- an opening that served dinners to 2,612 visitors on the first night -- an opening that broadcast the spirit and the hospitality of Freeport's baby lodge to Elkdom's farthest corners."

Undoubtedly, that was an opening.

Perhaps it might be well here to pause and recall the names of those doughty, old stalwarts, the officers and the charter members of the lodge who challenged fate and circumstance by embarking on such an undertaking on the proverbial shoe string.

THE FIRST OFFICERS

Here are the officers who stood shoulder to shoulder with Exalted Ruler Ellison:

Stephen P. Pettit, Leading Knight; Leo Fishel, Loyal Knight; Chester A. Fulton, Lecturing Knight; George Morton Levy, Secretary; Ernest S. Randall, Treasurer; Robert P. Weldon, Tiler; Edward P. Trayner, Smith Cox and George Fyfe, Trustees.

The number one membership card, a treasure much sought after (in a gentlemanly way, of course) was given to Stephen P. Pettit in
JOSEPH RUTKOSKI

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"When Your Spirits Are Low,
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2484 Merrick Road -:- Bellmore, New York
Winner of First Prize for Best Decorated Auto at Freeport's Annual Outing held at Karatsonyi's on Long Island Sound. George Bennett Smith, owner and driver of the car is shown at the wheel.

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

recognition of his services. The remainder of the charter membership cards, which are now framed and on permanent display in the anteroom to the lodge room, were distributed in the following order:


Time marches on; death takes up where time and life leave off -- how many of the old timers above do you recognize by name?

Some have passed on to the eternal lodge to meet the Grand Exalted Ruler of the Universe, others have retired from active fraternal life and still others have walked beyond the horizon to other fields, other pursuits.

The late Stephen P. Pettit was the second ruler of the lodge. Under his guidance, the mortgage was paid off, the membership list continued to lengthen and consequently, what at first had been considered spacious quarters began to be cramped. The lodge was suffering from growing pains.

ADDITION IS BUILT

More conferences, more debates, then another momentous decision: an addition was the only solution to the problem. Ground was broken for it on July 17, 1913, with Mr. Pettit turning the first spadeful.

Naturally, the addition brought new problems, new responsibilities, a new load of debt. These were passed on to Franklin G. Hill, who succeeded Mr. Pettit in the exalted ruler's chair.

His administration was memorable in that it witnessed the completion of the new wing and its formal opening, the growth of the membership beyond the 1,000 mark and the spread of the lodge's benevolences. But no picture is complete without shadows as well
-- IN MEMORY --

H. ALFRED VOLLMER

P.D.D.G.E.R., P.S.V.P.

P.E.R.

Exalted Ruler On Our
Silver Anniversary

1936 – 1937
Postmaster General. He attended as a past president of the New York State Elks Association. It was he who drafted the youthful Past Exalted Ruler, Peter Stephen Beck, as Vice-President of the New York State Elks Association during his incumbency as president, the previous year.

CLUBHOUSE DEDICATED

Perhaps the great occasion is best described by an eye witness, a reporter for The Nassau Daily Review who "covered" the affair. He wrote in part as follows:

"The most beautiful Elks Clubhouse in southeastern New York State is dedicated. It is located at Freeport. Freeport Lodge No. 1253 may well be proud of its new home -- its dream come true.

"These simple words spoken by District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Edward S. McGrath at the dedication dinner in the grill room of the new clubhouse last evening put in few words the spirit of the dedication ceremony, dinner and dance that followed that occupied Freeport Elks all yesterday afternoon and evening.

"Ceremonies really began yesterday morning with the raising of an American flag for the first time on the new staff, but did not get into full swing until 3 o'clock in the afternoon when the formal dedication was held in the new lodge room.

"Mr. McGrath officiated at the ritual, simple but impressive. Only Elks were admitted to the ceremony but with that limitation the lodge room was crowded with nearly 800 persons. Large delegations were present from Hempstead, Lynbrook, Patchogue, Queensboro, Brooklyn, New York No. 1, and smaller delegations came from as far as Chicago.

"Numerous speakers high in Elkdom were present and made short addresses. George M. Bird, Exalted Ruler of Freeport Lodge was first. Then followed James T. Hallinan, Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler; William T. Fitzsimmons of Albany, President of the New York State Elks Association; Charles Butler, Past Exalted Ruler of Patchogue Lodge; John Anderson, Exalted Ruler of Queensboro; Charles Ertz, Exalted Ruler of New York Lodge; Peter Seery, former Sheriff of Kings County and Past Exalted Ruler of Brooklyn Lodge; Fred Jenkins, Exalted Ruler of Glen Cove Lodge; Gustav H. Papenmeyer, Past Exalted Ruler of Freeport and Hempstead Lodges; Peter Stephen Beck, Past Exalted Ruler of Freeport Lodge, and Horace Sullivan, Exalted Ruler of Lynbrook Lodge.

"Toward the close of the dedication cere-
mony Exalted Ruler Sullivan presented Freeport, on behalf of the new Lynbrook Lodge, with a large silk American flag. Freeport returned by presenting District Deputy Exalted Ruler McGrath with a fitted leather travelling bag.

"While the afternoon ceremony was impressive, festivities were reserved for the dinner last evening and the dance that followed. At the dinner Worden E. Winne, Past Exalted Ruler and Chairman of the Entertainment Committee of Freeport Lodge, acted as toastmaster.

"Speakers at the dinner were for the most part the same who spoke at the dedication in the afternoon. At the table reserved for the speakers and special guests were Peter Seery, George Barrett, Past Exalted Ruler of Hoboken Lodge; James A. Farley, Chairman of the New York State Boxing Commission and Past President of the New York State Elks Association; Peter Stephen Beck, James T. Hallinan, J. Huyler Ellison, Past Exalted Ruler of Freeport Lodge; Edward S. McGrath, Worden E. Winne, Toastmaster; George M. Bird, Gustave H. Papenmeyer, William T. Fitzsimmons, John W. Anderson, Charles Ertz, William Walters, Past Exalted Ruler of Queensboro Lodge; Ben Weeks, Trustee of New York Lodge, No. 1; Charles Butler, and Samuel M. Levy.

"The man who probably came the longest distance to attend the ceremonies was Charles Armstrong, a member of Chicago Lodge No. 4. Mr. Armstrong has been an Elk for 50 years and is the only surviving member of the 58 who originally formed 'The Jolly Corks', the organization which later became known as the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

OVER 800 DINNERS SERVED

"Over 800 were served at the feast, the first to be held in the new club. The grill room was filled to overflowing, several tables having to be set up in the lobby adjoining.

"Dinner was followed by the dance in the new lodge room. The room, spacious enough for all ordinary festivities, was likewise crowded and it was not until late last night that enough room could be found on the floor for any flourishes in dancing.

"Fifty-four page souvenir programs, perhaps the most pretentious a Freeport organization has heretofore given out, were presented guests. The programs tell the history of 1253's inception 15 years ago, August 26, 1911, with 30 members, its rapid though healthy growth down to the present time.

"A large committee was responsible for the smoothness with which the ceremonies went off yesterday. At the head of this committee was Past Exalted Ruler Miles E. Brown. His assistants were: Past Exalted Rulers J. Huyler Ellison, Franklin G. Hill, George M. Levy, Archer B. Wallace, Leo Fishel, Clarence A. Edwards, Albin N. Johnson, Peter Stephen Beck, and Worden E. Winne; Ernest S. Randall, Joseph Laux, Christian E. Kern, Walter F. Hopper, David C. Krakaur, Edward A. Rice, Leo Baumann, A. J. Wilson, John J. Miller, George F. Murphy, William Pfanstiel, John J. Dixon, Louis H. Cohn, Charles Coffin, Arvid Larsen, Harry A. Curley and Paul F. Boggs."

"Thus the great day passed and the new clubhouse began its saga of service whose end even this generation, undoubtedly, will not see.

In the words of the oft-quoted old historian: "Here the reality stands, a thing of beauty of which Freeport is justly proud; a home of comfort and cheer and good will, with its doors flung wide in happy, cordial greetings to every true Elk wherever he may hail from."

'PETE' BECK COMES HOME

The homecoming of District Deputy Peter Stephen Beck featured the term of Arvid L. Larsen in 1928-1929. Held on February 28,
1929, it was undoubtedly the largest gathering in the history of the lodge, with more than 2,000 members and visiting brothers present. Brother Beck was presented with a check for $1,000, which he promptly turned over to the Social and Community Welfare Committee for the Good Health Clinic.

During the regime of the late F. Harold Loonam, $50,000 in bonds on the new clubhouse were retired and under his successor, Isadore Lewis, the membership continued to increase.

The steady growth reached its climax the next year when “Smiling Joe” Glynn was in the chair, 218 candidates being initiated at one meeting alone. During “Smiling Joe’s” time, too, the twentieth anniversary bazaar of the lodge was held under the chairmanship of Henry P. Vielbig. The pinch of the depression was making itself felt, but, nevertheless, the affair netted $12,000.

Lyman R. Young kept the lodge humming with activity while he was in the chair and William J. Murphy, who followed him, staged what is probably the most unique innovation in 1253’s history -- a flea circus! He had to take a lot of good-natured ribbing in connection with the show, but he had the last laugh because his original idea cleared $4,000.

While Judge George S. Johnson headed the list of officers, the first outdoor flag day services were held in the municipal stadium, with large delegations present from the Lynbrook, Hempstead, Glen Cove, and Great Neck lodges. The speaker was Dr. Russell Sherman of Westbury, county Americanism officer of the American Legion and noted orator.

Another large group of candidates, known as the Joseph T. Fanning class, was initiated under Herbert A. MacIlroy and during his term in 1935-1936 Grand Exalted Ruler James T. Hallinan paid an official visit to the lodge.

Preliminary preparations for this anniversary were made during his tenure, with Past Exalted Ruler and Past District Depu-
PER Richard A. Hungerford, Bro. Sidney Collins and Secretary Karl V. Anton load Christmas baskets into a station wagon loaned by the Air Force. Food, bought by the Elks, went to needy families in our district.

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

ty Peter Stephen Beck being named chairman.

Several events, in addition to tonight's, have already occurred to insure the remembrance of Exalted Ruler H. Alfred Vollmer's reign. Last November 11, Grand Exalted Ruler Dave Scholz, Governor of Florida, visited the club and presided at the first district initiation ever held in New York State. Candidates from the lodges of the old southeast district were welcomed into the order. The list of guests included Leo Rooehan of Saratoga Springs, president of the New York State Elks Association and the Exalted Rulers of many lodges in the metropolitan district.

Shortly thereafter, Ruler Vollmer and his brother officers took part in a ceremony out of which they evidently derived much pleasure; they burned a batch of outstanding bills that had finally been paid off.

Because of the limitations of space, this history has of necessity been obliged to confine itself mostly to the milestones that have marked the lodge's progress down through the years.

**FLAG AT SOUTH POLE**

On September 20, 1928, the lodge was host to Sergeant Benjamin Roth of the 61st Aero Squadron at Mitchel Field, a member of the club who was about to leave with Commander Richard E. Byrd on his south polar expedition. At the suggestion of Past Exalted Ruler Albin N. Johnson, who acted as toastmaster, Roth was deputized to organize a "South Pole Lodge, No. 1" and was presented with an Elk emblem and two flags, with instructions to leave the emblem and one of the flags at the pole and bring the other back.

So far as the emblem and the flags were concerned, Roth carried out his instructions to the letter, he informed the lodge at another dinner given in his honor on June 22, 1930, shortly after the expedition had returned. He presented the lodge with the flag and the late Judge Johnson with a fountain pen that had flown over the pole, the Judge having
“swapped” pens with him before his departure two years before.

But formation of a south polar lodge was no go, he reported sadly; by the time he had learned enough of the Eskimo language to make himself understood, the expedition was ready to return home and besides, there weren’t enough Eskimos around to form a quota.

**COHN, NOLAN HONORED**

An unusual event in the history of the lodge took place on January 26, 1928, when a bronze tablet in memory of an individual member was unveiled. Still displayed in the anteroom to the lodge room, the tablet honors the memory of the late Louis H. Cohn, who devoted much of his life to the welfare of the club and its members.

As the eulogy given on the occasion proclaimed, “Louis Cohn was a member of Freeport Lodge for 14 years, during which period he devoted practically all of his hours to promoting the interests of Elkdom and of all things for which the spreading antlers stand.

“Retired as he was from active business, he chose to devote himself whole-heartedly to the problems of his lodge. His sense of obligation to mankind in general was unusually keen. His charitable instincts were strong. His purse strings were open to everyone but himself. Louis Cohn took sparingly of the worldly goods that he had assembled. He gave of these goods with a prodigal hand to whoever had need of them.

“He was a trustee of Freeport Lodge from 1916 to 1926, and when the present building that houses No. 1253 was finished he made the lodge his home. When he answered the last roll call the clergy of three denominations sat side by side on the dais during his funeral services and all three delivered eulogies that expressed his virtues in the language of three different faiths.”

A year later, a bronze plaque was placed beneath the tablet. It enshrines the memory of John E. Nolan, Inner Guard of the lodge from 1911–1928. On it is inscribed a eulogy, all the more eloquent because of its brief simplicity. It says: “He never missed a meeting.”

**TRULY A MOTHER LODGE**

This outline of 1253’s history would not be complete without mention of its part in the development of other lodges. Truly, it is the mother lodge of the Long Island area.

It was instrumental in the organization of Patchogue Lodge in 1915, Glen Cove in 1922, Hempstead in 1924 and Lynbrook in 1926. In 1928-1929, while Judge Peter Stephen Beck was district deputy, his enthusiasm brought about the establishment of the Great Neck, Huntington and Southampton Lodges and he even journeyed far enough afield to form the Mount Kisco Lodge.

**GOOD HEALTH CLINIC**

Of all the civic undertakings of Freeport Lodge of Elks, No. 1253, during its half century of existence, none is perhaps more widely known and certainly none more valuable and appreciated by those whom it aided than the Freeport Elks Good Health Clinic.

Nearly 50,000 cases handled since it first opened its doors in 1925, more than $250,000 generously contributed to the work — such is the noble record of which the lodge is pardonably proud.

Like the lodge itself, the beginnings of the clinic were humble and modest. The clinic idea was the brain child of Dr. William H. Runcie, who was later to become health officer of the Town of Hempstead and the Village of Freeport, the late beloved Dr. Leo Haplin, and Dr. Milton Kaye. Trained medical men of long experience who knew how things ought to be, they could see that the unco-ordinated efforts of the lodge in its health projects were not getting it any place. If the work was to be carried on effectively, they agreed, it must be consolidated.
VENTURE IS STARTED

They broached their thoughts to their lodge brothers who regarded their suggestions so highly that the clinic idea began almost immediately to take definite form. About that time, also, the grand lodge decreed that every subordinate lodge should appoint a social and community welfare committee. Soon the two doctors and the then Exalted Ruler, Miles E. Brown, actually had the clinic started.

The new venture was first housed in three small rooms at 31 South Grove Street, where it opened in March, 1925, with a nurse loaned by the New York State Department of Health, in charge. The undertaking did not get off on its own, however, until May of that same year, at which time Miss Anna M. Lafferty, R.N., assumed the post of head nurse she holds to this day.

MISS LAFFERTY MODEST

It's hard to say anything about Miss Lafferty. She won't talk. An unselfish soul, she is so taken up with her work that she hasn't time to talk about herself and if she did, she probably wouldn't care to, anyway. However, it might be mentioned that she is a graduate of Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia. She has also taken special courses in child care and allied subjects and is highly qualified for her specialized calling.

Moreover -- and this is one of the few things she will admit about herself -- she loves children and that, as she points out, is perhaps the most necessary qualification for her work and something that cannot be learned in any training school if the instinct is not born and bred in one.

NEW QUARTERS TAKEN

But Miss Lafferty does not have to talk about herself. There are hundreds of mothers and their children in Freeport and neighboring communities who are only too willing to sing her praises and to testify to her maternal spirit and tender care.

Under her direction and with A. S. Malcolmson as the chairman of the Elks first clinic committee, the institution prospered -- so much so that by 1927 it was obliged to move to more commodious quarters at 62 South Grove Street. In the meantime, after several others had been tried and found wanting, the clinic had acquired the services of Miss Rowena Potter, a quiet young lady who has "a way with children". She was secretary and general assistant to Miss Lafferty.

The clinic's clientele continued to grow until it became a serious drain on the lodge's resources. Not one Elk thought of dropping the project -- it had become an indispensable service in the village life by then -- but what to do was a question that vexed the lodge mind.

The problem was finally solved in the spring of 1930, when the village fathers, appreciative of the usefulness of the work and loathe to lose it, made arrangements to give it space and to help support it.

An unused section of the basement of the new municipal building was chosen as clinic headquarters and the work of making the necessary alterations was begun promptly. The village also secured the necessary equipment and furniture and agreed to supply the clinic with free light, heat, water and telephone service.

DEDICATION OF CLINIC

The formal dedication and opening of the new quarters took place on October 23, 1930, with the then Village Trustee Joseph H. McCloskey, acting as master of ceremonies. Mayor Clinton M. Flint turned over the keys to Exalted Ruler Isador Lewis and Past Exalted Ruler Peter Stephen Beck introduced the village officials and visiting Elk dignitaries. The late F. Harold Loonam was chairman of the lodge Social and Community Welfare Committee that year.

Dr. Halpin died suddenly of pneumonia on the day before Christmas, 1933, but the
HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

Elks and the clinic, to which he had generously given so much of his time and professional services, did not forget him. A bronze tablet, suitably inscribed, was placed on the wall of the main clinic room the following year, a lasting memorial to one of the noblest characters in the clinic’s history.

In its new environment, the clinic continued to prosper until finally, even the village began to feel the strain of its sponsorship and cast about for further help to carry the load. Negotiations finally culminated in arrangements made in 1935, whereby the Board of Health of the Town of Hempstead gave support to the project. In return, the clinic handled cases from unincorporated communities adjacent to Freeport that had no clinic of their own.

DOCTORS DONATE SKILL

The staff of physicians in daily attendance at the clinic was composed of Dr. Runcie, chief of the medical staff; Dr. Mervin L. Schloss, chief of the dental staff; Dr. J. Furlong, Dr. R. L. Jones, Dr. Paul Owens, Dr. Edward Held, Dr. Milton T. Gaillard, Dr. Frank Drate, Dr. J. Mortimer Lempert, Dr. R. W. Morrow, Dr. Frank Varmus, Dr. Henry Appel, Dr. Harry Jaspin, Dr. Bernard Levenson, Dr. Richard G. McChesney, Dr. Milton A. Goldman, Dr. E. H. Saniter, Dr. Eugene A. Stanchi, Dr. Samuel D. Bird, Dr. Clymer A. Long, Dr. Maurice B. Green, Dr. A. J. Davis, and Dr. Willard J. Davies.

In P.E.R. Howard S. Bateman’s term as Exalted Ruler, Freeport Lodge presented a Station Wagon to the Cerebral Palsy Unit in Roosevelt. Pictured, left to right; P.E.R. Rene A. Correau, Secretary Karl V. Anton, Howard S. Bateman, P.E.R. Benjamin J. Reiner.
Last Summer the Youth Activity Committee, chairmaned by Chaplain Richard H. Funk, was host to a large group of handicapped children at Clyde Beatty and Cole Bros. Circus. Here they are with Freeport Lodge and Doe Club members, before embarking via buses to Commack, L. I.

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

All of them gave generously of their services without thought of compensation and many of them had served on the clinic staff since the institution was started.

For years, also, Arthur Frank had been donating glasses to patients whenever called upon, and Mrs. Charles R. Coffin of Baldwin, and Mrs. P. K. Winter had been faithful assistants at baby clinics.

The Town of Hempstead was represented on the combined board under which the clinic functioned by Supervisors J. Russel Sprague, and A. Holly Patterson, Councilmen S. Hyler Elderd, Frederick Hitcherich, David L. Levy, William D. Meisser and Dr. Runcie.

The Village of Freeport was represented by Mayor Robert E. Patterson, Village Trustees William F. Cornell, LeRoy C. Mountcastle, Henry VonElm and Walter M. Nichols and Dr. Runcie as village health officer.

Past Exalted Ruler William J. Murphy was chairman of the lodge's Social and Community Welfare Committee, with Dr. Richard G. McChesney as chairman of the Clinic Committee, and Karl Anton as secretary.

The Clinic is still located on Sunrise Highway between Grove and Church Streets, Freeport, but now is operated as a unit of the County Health Department.
While the celebration of our Twenty-fifth Anniversary was an inspiring and heartwarming occasion, particularly to those who had strived so hard and diligently to accomplish a feat that was thought almost impossible, back in the struggling days of our beginning, there was still much to be done. The years from 1936 to 1961 provided many problems and not a few discouraging moments.

True, we had a beautiful clubhouse, spacious enough to care for our growth for many years to come, with grounds to provide parking facilities and for outdoor events, all made possible through the bond issue of $250,000, subscribed to by our members. While some of the bonds had been retired during the first years following the completion of the club in 1926, there was still the financial obligation of providing funds to retire the bond issue in 1945. This was really a problem, considering that the country was still feeling the results of the depression, added to the fact that our membership had dwindled to an alarming low, because of the general business conditions, coupled with the establishment of three new lodges, Hempstead, Lynbrook and Glen Cove, with the resulting great number of Transfer Digits. Little wonder that an air of discouragement permeated our brothers.

Inspired by the leadership of Exalted Ruler H. Alfred Vollmer, a small group of members was imbued with an indomitable spirit and through them was fostered a determination to win over all obstacles. The present fine financial standing of our Lodge, with a property free and clear, conservatively valued at nearly a million dollars is the result of this determination.
SUMMER... 1960

Under our expanded Youth Activities Program, we took over 100 handicapped and underprivileged youngsters to see circus at Clyde Beatty's Arena. Guiding the youngsters are l. to r. Youth Chairman, Richard H. Funk; Benedict P. Ciavovino, Exalted Ruler; Howard S. Bateman, PER; and Blanche Ruethe of the DOE Club.

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

Let us see what some of the contributing factors were, in overcoming the many obstacles which faced the membership twenty-five years ago.

To quote a well known saying: "Every cloud has a silver lining," and in our case the silver lining was a game called "Bingo", that had its inception in the year 1935, during the administration of Exalted Ruler Herbert A. McIlroy. We were trying to find some "gimmick", as the expression goes, to raise money, not only to meet the ever mounting current bills, but to pay the interest of six per cent on the outstanding bond issue that then amounted to more than $125,000, as well as to build up a surplus to retire the bond issue which was due and payable in 1945. P.E.R. Arved Larson was delegated to contact a promoter who was then conducting Bingo games in Queens County and to report on the feasibility of our adopting this "gimmick" as a means to the end of our financial difficulties. Bro. Larson reported that he could see possibilities in the proposition, and it was decided to enter into a six months contract with said promoter. The promoter was to furnish the prizes, conduct the games (with the help of our members as ushers, etc.) and give us sixty per cent of the net profits. Six months went by and it was decided not to renew the contract, but to operate on our own. It is interesting to note that for the first six months our take was about $600.00. The second six months, under our own operation we netted something around $6,000.00.

This was the beginning of about eight years of Bingo and the turn for the better in our financial condition. We continued the operation until the authorities declared it
illegal. Of course the profits from Bingo were only a small part of the funds needed to carry on. But it was a healthy start and it produced an incentive among our membership for a more active interest in the overall picture.

Another movement to ease the financial stress under which we were laboring, was the satisfactory effort made to have our bond holders agree to a reduction of interest from six per cent to three per cent. In order to effect this reduction it was necessary to contact the more than 250 bond holders to secure their approval. This task was assigned to P.E.R. H. Alfred Vollmer, and it must be noted that he filled the assignment almost entirely by himself.

A very important decision that had a great deal to do with our recovery was a new plan of operation in our restaurant and bar, during the administration of Exalted Ruler Gordon H. Meyer, which resulted in profit-making years in that department, a healthy condition which has continued right up to the present time, in contrast to deficit years previous to that time.

Then, too, was the buildup of our membership, which had its first real start during the administration of Exalted Ruler Henry P. Vielbig, with an increase of 187. This upward trend continued under Exalted Ruler William J. Keil with an increase of 205, and an increase of 119 during the term of Exalted Ruler Gordon H. Meyer. Exalted Ruler Benjamin J. Reiner’s administration recorded a gain of 93.

It is not possible in the space permitted in a journal of this type, to list the many phases and activities which led to our recovery, to the final redemption of our bond issue, and to the healthy financial condition that we enjoy today, but suffice to say that it was accomplished through the perseverance and loyalty of our membership. Speaking of

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]
HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER WEEK
Freeport Lodges' Program

Elksdom honors the Free Press of our nation each year. This year, the Freeport Lodge held a dinner and special program with Mayor Robert Sweeney of Freeport, a member of the Lodge, as Guest Speaker for all local newsmen. Present at this dinner were representatives of many daily and weekly newspapers of Nassau County. The Elks also invited the editorial staffs of both Freeport and Baldwin High School papers to this affair. Pictured above in the lobby of the clubhouse are l. to r.: Sabra Williams, BHS, Maureen O'Keefe, BHS, George Bennett Smith, Chairman of the Program, Karen Diesel, FHS, Clyde M. Squires, Exalted Ruler, Nancy Schaap, FHS, Mayor Sweeney, and Joan Rappaport, BHS.


The legalization of Bingo, three years ago, provided us with a means to increase our charitable donations to the extent that more than $40,000 has been distributed to a varied group of charitable organizations, such as Cerebral Palsy, hospitals, Salvation Army, Red Cross, Boy and Girl Scouts, March of Dimes, Industrial Home for the Blind, the sponsoring of a Freeport Little League, and financial assistance to twenty other Little Leagues within our jurisdiction.

the major problem, the bond issue, special credit should be given those who handled the many details surrounding this part of our indebtedness, and also to those member bondholders, who redeemed their holdings under par, in order to lighten the financial burden of the Lodge. The Bond Committee consisted of P.E.R. Peter S. Beck, P.E.R. H. Alfred Vollmer, the then Treasurer, Karl V. Anton, our present Treasurer, P.E.R. William J. Keil, and the Board of Trustees at the time, namely: P.E.R. H. A. McIlroy, P.E.R. Thomas F. Dougherty, P.E.R. Thomas N. deGiacomo, P.E.R. Joseph P. Glynn, and P.E.R. Rene A. Carrea.

Speaking of Trustees, Freeport Lodge has certainly been fortunate in having, throughout the years, a group of high type men, willing to assume the responsibilities that are theirs when they become members of the Board, giving of their time unlimited, especially in an organization, the size of ours. Among others who served as trustees at one time or another were Edward Trayer, Smith Cox, George Fyfe, J. Huyler Ellison, Louis H. Cohn, Roland M. Lamb, Dr. William...
HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

Nassau County Executive A. Holly Patterson, a Past Exalted Ruler of Hempstead Lodge #1485, presenting Proclamation commemorating our Fiftieth Anniversary, to P.E.R. George Morton Levy, while the Junior P.E.R. Benedict P. Ciaravino looks on.

is with this in mind we hope that we may serve the youth of our community in a greater effort every succeeding year.

The following is a list of some of the activities of the Youth Committee throughout this past year:

1. Circus for underprivileged children.
2. Elks Youth Day Program.
4. 22 summer dances at Northeast and Northwest Parks.
5. Junior Olympics at Randall Park.
6. Visit and party at Cerebral Palsy Center (Spring and Fall)
7. Explorer Post 453.
8. Father and Daughter Dinner (adopt an orphan for an evening).
9. Youth Bowling Leagues (Bantam, Junior and Senior).
10. Youth Bowling Dinner and Award Night.
11. Youth Leadership Contest.
12. Youth Leadership Dinner and Award Night.
13. Father For a Day Program -- An activity where Elks take a handicapped child on a day’s outing.
15. Sponsoring of the Midget Football Bowl Game.
18. Scholarship contests and awards.
This year, our Golden Anniversary Year, is fast drawing to a close for with all things, in our life there must be an end. In a scant six weeks, this memorable year in the history of Freeport Lodge will be concluded. Our trials, tribulations, and our many, many pleasurable experiences of this Golden Jubilee will be engraved in our memory. We, as members of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge No. 1253, are proud of our record of accomplishments throughout these 50 years of Community Service.

We, during this Anniversary Year, have given much thought to our members, and the departed Brothers of whom we are ever reminded in our Eleven o’Clock Toast. The self same members, the pioneers of our Lodge and her accomplishments, are those who gave so much of their time and resources to emblazon the distinguished name and future of our Lodge on our memories as well as in our everyday life.

The greatest tribute we can pass to those who have created the first Fifty Years of this Lodge is to resolve that we will continue and further their good work to our fellow man, and to this Community, the state and the nation.

Rene A. Carreau
General Chairman

Clyde M. Squires
Exalted Ruler
Committee meets to discuss plans for the Testimonial Dinner to Junior Past Exalted Ruler, Benedict P. Ciaravino. I. to r.: Dr. John J. Provenzano, Esquire; John F. Quinn, Jr., Leading Knights; Bro. George Bennett Smith; James F. Fountain, Lecturing Knight. Seated: Charles J. Sass, Jr., Loyal Knight.

HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

19. Youth Band and Orchestra.
20. Support to Explorer Post in the form of Parents Night; sending representatives to special Scouting courses; providing instructors for the instruction of the Scouts in special skills.

Future planned activities in addition to those listed:
1. Model contests.
2. Father and Son Dinners.
4. Indian Show for young children.
This program has reached some 5,000 children of our community in the past year. We as Elks hope that through this growth of Youth Committees in all of our Lodges we may be of greater service to the young people of America.

For many years our Lodge has each year presented an annual theatrical production. The perennial chairman during the 50’s was PER Ben Reiner, who each year arranged for the production of a original musical comedy tailored to feature the Order of Elks and with casts made up of Brothers and their wives.

With the advent of the 60’s, it was decided that the annual show would be enlarged by entering the field of “Broadway Musical” productions. The first endeavor was “Kiss Me Kate” under the chairmanship of PER Ben Ciaravino, performed at the old Freeport High School. The cast included Marge Berns, wife of PER George Berns, Mary Ann Elar, wife of Bro. Tony Elar; Patricia Carbough, wife of Bro. Bill Carbough; PER Ben Ciaravino, Bros. Len Kropp, Bill Tschirhart, “Doc” George Bernhard and Bro. Frank Boate, among the leads.

Following the successful first “Broadway Production”, it was decided to continue with such type annual shows. PER Howard Bateman accepted Chairmanship of the show and “Guys & Dolls” played to a capacity audience in the new Freeport High School auditorium. The cast included many of the “hams” from the prior production in addition to Bros. Sal Salute, George Mollick, “Scoop” Micheels, and others.

These shows are complete produc-
HISTORY OF FREEPORT LODGE [Continued]

Hon. J. Russell Sprague and PER George Morton Levy, Honorary Chairman of Golden Anniversary Celebration, meet with George Bennett Smith (center) Journal Committee chairman.

tions with Elks designing the sets, scenery, building same, working the lights and all other necessary ingredients of such large productions. Bros. Bob Carreau and Clifford Krop contributed greatly to the back-stage work. Our Doe Club became experts on designing and making of costumes, besides rendering valuable assistance to the production in performing, directing, make-up and otherwise. Ladies such as Edith Bateman, Hyacinth Vollmer, Blanche Rueth, Frances Lochren, Rose Cataralli and Betty Mollick contributed greatly.

All productions were under able professional direction, complete with assistant directors, stage managers, choreographers, set designer, costume designer, complete orchestra, musical director, vocal coaches, and other production personnel.

The next production, now in rehearsal during our Anniversary Year, will be "Girl Crazy" which will be again staged in the beautiful new Freeport High School. From all indications, the show will play to a SRO house and these type of productions will continue for many future years.

In addition to the plaques displayed in our ante-room, which were mentioned earlier in this history, two others are now to be found, one in memory of Peter S. Beck, P.E.R. and P.D.D.G.E.R., and one in memory of H. Alfred Vollmer, P.E.R. and P.D.D.G.E.R. Within a few weeks a similar plaque will be unveiled in memory of Thomas F. Dougherty, P.E.R. and P.D.S.G.E.R. and Past President of the New York State Elks Association.

In preparing this brief history of our Lodge for the past fifty years, we have touched only briefly on some of the highlights. It is in no wise complete -- no attempt has been made in that direction, for such a history would require volumes.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY BALL

Earlier this month, Rene A. Carreau, PER and Chairman of the Golden Anniversary Celebration, presented Nassau County Executive Eugene Nickerson with the First Ticket to the Ball held on February 22nd at the Garden City Hotel. Looking on are l. to r. George Bennett Smith, Golden Anniversary Journal Chairman; Benjamin J. Reiner, PER and Executive Secretary of the Committee, County Executive Nickerson, and Rene A. Carreau, PER.