

B. P. O. Elks Utica Lodge No. 33 History

The idea to form an Elks Lodge in Utica began when George B. Chase, operator of the Cigar Stand in the Baggs Hotel, was approached by members of the newly formed Syracuse Lodge No. 31. Their praises of the order and its good work prompted Mr. Chase to discuss the formation of a Utica Elks Lodge with Mr. John J. Flanagan and other prominent businessmen who gathered at the hotel. A meeting of these men was set and twenty (20) attended and expressed their approval; they then went out and obtained pledges for prospective membership in the new Lodge.

The Syracuse Lodge agreed to send a delegation to Utica to perform the work of institution and Grand Exalted Ruler Harry Sanderson and Grand Secretary Arthur C. Moreland of New York City were invited to take charge of the event. The institution took place on May 17, 1885 in Pythian Hall which was located where Woolworth's used to stand.



The first executive officer of Utica Lodge No. 33 was John J. Flanagan, a very respected gentleman both in and out of the Lodge. On April 15, 1889, a committee was formed for the erection of a building for the Elks Lodge on Blandina near Union Street. The building was erected and formally dedicated on Monday evening, February 3, 1890. This building was occupied by the Elks for approximately five (5) years when financial difficulties forced them to give it up. Thereafter, they met in the St. James Hotel through the courtesy of Charles D. White.

Rejuvenation of Utica Lodge began in earnest in April 1902. Michael J. McQuade was chosen Exalted Ruler

and Amon W. Foote, Secretary. A period of prosperity followed under Exalted Ruler McQuade, who was very effective in bringing order out of chaos. The Lodge had a membership of 139 and a sizeable debt, but it was always the hope and dream of Exalted Ruler McQuade and his administration to get a new club house. By the Fall of 1902, the Lodge debt was wiped out and a fund for a new Lodge was started in the Utica Savings Bank. In January 1912, two parcels of property located at Mary and Charlotte Streets were purchased for \$7,900. Voluntary donations obtained by the Ways and Means Committee reached \$23,000.

The cornerstone of the new building was laid on Sunday, December 6, 1914 with appropriate ceremony. Past Exalted Ruler George J. Winslow was Esquire and in charge of the parade which assembled at the club rooms in the Shubert Building and marched to the site of the new building. Exalted Ruler W. Arthur Young presided.

The new home was completed and dedicated on January 5, 1916 and prompted the visit of the highest officers of the Elks. Among them were Grand Exalted Ruler James R. Nicholson, Past Grand Exalted Ruler Edward Leach of New York and other dignitaries from District and State Lodge, who conducted the Ritual for Dedication of the new Elks Lodge.

During World War I, Utica Lodge No. 33 took an active part in many activities such as Liberty Loan Drives, Conservation efforts, War Savings Stamps Campaigns and the War Chest. The Elks home was a civic center and much good was accomplished. With the outbreak of World War II, the Elks building was sold to Oneida County and it was occupied by the Oneida County War Council and other county

agencies. This also meant Utica Lodge No. 33 was again "homeless" and the Elks started house hunting for adequate quarters. A committee was formed comprised of Brothers Norman Bowne, Gordon Ferguson and Richard Perlen.



It was announced at this time that Dr. Verner Kennedy, a leader in Utica Lodge, had purchased the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Rush O. Lees at 291 Genesee Street and the committee proceeded to negotiate a ten (10) year lease with Dr. Kennedy which began August 1, 1942. Sometime later Dr. Kennedy and his brother, Dr. Herbert Kennedy of Yonkers, presented the home to the Utica Lodge as a memorial to their mother. In appreciation, the Lodge erected a bronze plaque in memory of Mrs. Kennedy.

In a short time, the Lodge was on the road to prosperity. However, under the guidance of the Board of Trustees which included Dr. Kennedy, Richard Perlen, Norman Bowne, Charles Gorman and John Farley, and a loss of membership due to the depression (there were now about 600 members), a period of austerity followed.

In the intervening eighteen years, the Lodge was able to accumulate a financial foundation for a new home through very watchful spending. Under the reign of Exalted Ruler Lester E. Salamey was born the idea for a new home, accomplished under Exalted Ruler Davies Johnson and a successful conclusion was reached under Exalted Ruler Frank G. Pratt. Dedication of the new facility took place on September 10, 1961 with Past Grand Exalted Ruler William



A. Wall, assisted by Ronald J. Dunn of Oneida, Member of Grand Forum, Exalted Ruler Pratt, John M. Liddy, Chairman Board of Trustees, Francis P. Hart, President of New York State Elks Association, William Hiller, Ilion, District Deputy and Fay A. Blum, Boonville, State Vice President. General Chairman was Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler James Doyle, assisted by Louis Cifarelli; it is also important to note that Brother Cifarelli achieved the highest rank in Grand Lodge of any Utica Member to date. He was Grand Lodge's Ritualistic Chairman Region I. It is interesting to note that there are only four regions in the entire country.

All has not been smooth sailing with a beautiful new building and with the change of membership. Our financial structure worsening, it was through the efforts of Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Louis Cifarelli that our building remained with us. Brother Cifarelli spent much time and many visits to several lending institutions to arrange the financing necessary for us to maintain our facility and bringing us to 1973. With the joint efforts of Exalted Ruler Joseph R. Carucci and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Louis Cifarelli, our Lodge acquired one and a half acres of land from the state of New York adjoining our existing property and brings our total lot size to its present four and a half acres. Again with great effort and hard work of many members and the diligent work of many trustees, the mortgage burning

ceremonies were held on September 17, 1973. Again Past Grand Exalted Ruler William A. Wall was present for this most impressive service.

Over the years many improvements have been made to maintain the high quality of our building and Utica Lodge has remained in the front rank of the Lodges of the country. Some of its members have been honored in the highest councils of the order and other individual members have given of their time and effort in the advancement of Elksdom in the wider field outside of Utica Lodge. Once again with dwindling membership, our Lodge was struggling to financially keep the Lodge going when it was determined it would be to the advantage of our order to relocate to a newer more energy efficient Lodge. In July of 2001 we began to actively pursue potential buyers of our land and look for alternate sites for our new Lodge. By the summer of 2002 the new building committee, Ed Potrzeba, Brian Knight and others, reported that structural drawings were complete along with the site plan and we were awaiting the closing sale of the existing Lodge. By December 23, 2002, Utica Lodge No. 33 finally broke ground with many dignitaries in attendance: Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Frank Parker, Past State President Charles Noonan, District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Charles Sullivan, State Vice President Thomas Yager, Yorkville Mayor Michael Mahoney, as well as Lodge officers, trustees and members.



On August 25, 2003 we opened our new facility forty-three (43) years since the building of our last new home. A new chapter has begun for Utica Lodge No. 33. It took a great effort by a good many members to prepare the Lodge for its opening, and on December 14, 2003 the Lodge was dedicated and visiting dignitaries in attendance were Past District Deputy Grand

Exalted Ruler Frank Parker, State President Anthony Gilberti, State Vice President Dwayne Ricci, Past State President Charles Noonan, District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Ken Dack Jr. and Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Arthur Langdon.

The new Lodge has been a positive influence in membership increase and we are once again financially sound. We are honored to be celebrating 120 years of Elksdom and hope "Old 33" continues to be an active part of the community with youth involvement, care of our veterans and furthering the pride of God and country with our Americanism projects.



Lodge Elks Head

One year after the dedication of our first Elks Lodge on Blandina Street, February 3, 1890, J. G. Knowlton presented the lodge with a handsome Elks Head, which was replaced with the Elks Head that now occupies a prominent place in the vestibule of our new lodge today on Champlin Avenue. This head was originally acquired from the Lodge in Saratoga.

Lodge Grandfathers Clock

This clock is between 75-100 years old and was purchased from Evans Jewelers in Utica, NY. It is a Waltham clock, cable driven with weights and pendulum, its case is made of Mahogany and at 11:00 p.m. it chimes "Old Lang Syne." In 1996 it was refurbished and continues to count the hours of Elkdom in our Lodge. We have been very fortunate through the years to have had and continue to have some very loving caregivers for this priceless Lodge heirloom: Paul Cardarelli, Karl Weibel and John Lawrence. Gentlemen, we wholeheartedly thank you for your care in the preservation of this beautiful time piece.



Officers for Our 120th Year

Exalted Ruler.....	Kevin McDonald
Est. Leading Knight.....	Michael Emmerich
Est. Loyal Knight.....	David Barr
Est. Lecturing Knight.....	Nicholas Kattato
Secretary.....	Ann McDonald
Treasurer.....	Thomas Wadas
Esquire.....	David Kelsey, PER
Inner Guard.....	Peter Cielinski
Tiler.....	Ronald Burger
Chaplin.....	Daniel Kenney

Trustees

Frank LoGalbo
Brian Knight
Josette Lucenti
John Lawrence
Steve Metzler

Committee Chairs

Auditing & Accounting.....Edward Welsh, PER
Community Activities.....Nicholas Kattato
Elks Nat'l. Foundation..Frank Parker, PDDGER
Lodge Activities.....Melanie Lambert
Americanism.....Ann McDonald
Flag Day.....Stanley Babiarz
Government Relations.....Edward Welsh, PER
Memorial Day.....Stephen Romanow, SVP
Nat'l. Veterans Service.....Michael Collver
PER Association.....Roger Kraus, PER
Public Relations.....Kathleen Kraus
Visiting Committee.....Frank LoGalbo
Membership.....Roger Kraus, PER
Indoctrination/Orientation....Roger Kraus, PER
Investigation.....Nicholas Kattato
Lapsation.....Humbert Panella
Youth Activities.....David Barr
Drug Awareness.....Kevin McDonald, PER
Hoop Shoot.....Steve Metzler
Soccer Shoot.....David Kelsey, PER
Newsletter.....Kathleen Kraus
House Committee.....Stephen Romanow, SVP

Elk of the Year 2004-2005

Kathleen Kraus

Officer of the Year 2004-2005

Michael Terminio