



The Opening Ode

Great Ruler of the universe

All-seeing and benign,

Look down upon and bless our work,

And be all glory Thine;

May Charity as taught us here

Be ever borne in mind,

The Golden Rule our motto true,

For days of Auld Lang Syne.



Middletown, N. Y. Lodge, No. 1097

B. P. O. E.

Dedication of Elks' Home

December Third, Nineteen Eight

First Anniversary



Entertainment Committee

L. G. WILSON

CHAS. H. GHAM

GEO. BOWERS

W. J. STARTUP

CHAS. A. KETCHAM

Officers

ARCHIBALD E. RUGGLES	Exalted Ruler
ARCHIBALD GORDON	Esteemed Leading Knight
GEO. BOWERS	Esteemed Loyal Knight
ADDISON N. BAKER	Esteemed Lecturing Knight
CLARENCE C. CORWIN	Secretary
WALTER J. STARTUP	Treasurer
SAMUEL K. EDWARDS	Tiler
FRED C. SCHINDLER	Esquire
GEO. W. REED	Inner Guard
CHAS. A. EVANS	Chaplain
JAS. M. WRIGHT	Trustees
ALFRED E. REED	
GEO. K. EDWARDS	

House Committee

George Bowers	Wm. Pohlman	I. E. Doran
Thomas C. Rogers	George Dorrance	

BENEVOLENT & PROTECTIVE ORDER OF ELKS

*The Grand Lodge,
Benelux and Protective Order of the United States of America*

*Benelux and Protective Order of the United States of America
is a benevolent and protective order
and its object is to aid the poor and needy in the United States
and to do so by the aid of the order of the United States of America*

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1897



Trustees.

*James H. Rogers, George W. Church,
April 16, 1897*

*First 100 members
of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks
of the United States of America*



Milestone Year



A true milestone has arrived in the history of Middletown Elks 1097 as we celebrate our centennial anniversary this year. Many things have changed since Middletown was granted a charter by the Grand Lodge on July 15, 1908 but one thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to our surrounding communities, veterans and the Grand Lodge programs. The success of our lodge has been due to the dedication of many fine officers and members that have spent countless hours volunteering their

services over these last 100 years. That continued dedication is needed by our members if the future of our lodge is to be as successful as it has been in the past. I've had the pleasure of meeting and working with many of these officers and members over the years and it has been a truly memorable experience, one that I continue to enjoy.

Elks guide their course in life by practicing the principals of our order, Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity and those principals can be accomplished by following what I would like to call "The Three 'C's'" which stands for "Commitment, Community and Camaraderie". First, it begins with commitment as an Elk to become involved because the success of this lodge and the Grand Lodge programs depend upon it. Secondly, reaching out to our community through those programs, as a small act of benevolence reaps a large reward knowing you have touched a persons' life in a positive way. And finally, camaraderie, working with other members, making new friends in the lodge and most importantly working together for the success of the many charitable and social programs that we have in place. I have personally made many friends by joining and becoming involved in this great order, friendships I cherish and attribute to my involvement in Middletown Lodge 1097 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

This commemorative journal truly illustrates what this lodge has accomplished since its inception. Imagine, a century ago 37 men were initiated into this order and were later granted a charter to start a lodge in Middletown. I'm sure they would be proud to know the level of success the members of 1097 have achieved to make this lodge what it is today. This lodges proud accomplishments are a testament to the past and present members and an inspiration for the future members.

Richard "Chip" Allen P.E.R.
Exalted Ruler 2008-2009



Preface

THE YEAR IS 1908. The City of Middletown revels in the prosperity brought by the railroads. Several of her streets are paved with red brick, and bluestone sidewalks provide pedestrians with some relief from the horses. There is a Trolley, several fine Hotels, an Armory, a new High School and of course Theaters. The Horton Home on South Street which is now a College, the stately homes on Highland Avenue and the towering church spires speak of the wealth and power of the day.

Thundering locomotives shake the ground, belching acrid smoke. Steam whistles sound in the night. The colorful jargon of teamsters guiding their wagons to and from the sidings becomes the clandestine language of young boys. It is the feel and the sound and the smell of Middletown's lifeblood flowing.

Middletown glitters in her heyday, outshining her former rival Goshen and dwarfing Montgomery, Mount Hope and Slate Hill. The city is just 20 years old and Elkdom is 40 when Lodge #1097 is begun. What does the future hold?

In far off Detroit this same year, Henry Ford watches the first of his model T cars roll off the assembly line. The horse and buggy will disappear within 20 years. The railroads will linger and die a slow death.



This is the story of how one Middletown organization, Lodge #1097 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, born in 1908, has come to its 100th year.



The First 100 Years

Linden Hall was located on Wickham Ave. where the entrance to the Courtland St. parking lot is today. On Dec. 3, 1907, 37 men met in that hall and became Elks. This organizational session preceeded the formal granting of Charter #1097 by the Grand Lodge meeting in Dallas, Texas on July 15, 1908. This was the usual procedure to follow in starting a new lodge, and application had been made for that purpose on November 1, 1907. A team of Officers from Staten Island, aided by one each from Kingston and Port Jervis lodges, presided. During the examination of candidates, questions were asked to determine the character of the men, and also about their ability to entertain. Some were required to demonstrate their talents for the assembly. The record of the meeting mentions one "who professed to be a clog dancer, but when requested to perform he failed, and was simply rotten." Of course all were found satisfactory in the end, and #1097 had its first 37 members.



Archibald E. Ruggles

The first officers were:

Exalted Ruler	Archibald E. Ruggles
Esteemed Leading Knight.....	Archibald Gordon
Esteemed Loyal Knight.....	Charles B. Buck
Esteemed Lecturing Knight	George Bowers
Secretary	Clarence C. Convin
Treasurer	Charles E Bennett
Tier	Samuel K. Edwards
Chaplain	William T. Cornelius



Two nights later, on December 5, the first regular meeting was held at the Royal Arcanum rooms at 14 East Main Street. After the meeting, a buffet was served. Entertainment was provided by a quartet which included no less a personage than William Lloyd Bowron, an original “Jolly Cork” and the holder of card #1 of New York Lodge #1. He must have been at that time over sixty years of age, as he was a young adult in 1868, forty years earlier. Middletown had a close connection with New York Lodge #1 for many years, and was also closely allied with Patterson, New Jersey and Port Jervis, New York.



On January 30, 1908, a motion was made to purchase the Osterhout property on the corner of South Street and Washington Street. The home was formerly owned by the affable Dr. Pillsbury, and was a large, well made house. The price was \$8,000.00, and included a barn. This site is now a parking lot. The purchase was made, and alterations were completed. Plans were formulated to dedicate the new Elk's home, and what plans they were. On December 7, 1908, Elks began to gather at the Lodge in the morning. At 3 pm (well fortified against the cold no doubt) they marched off to the Erie Station on James Street accompanied by the Charles Higham Fife, Drum and Bugle Corps. Port Jervis Lodge #645 arrived 60 strong on a “special” train and with their own Munnich Drum Corps. The parade back to South Street for the dedication ceremony was followed by another at 5 pm when all marched over to Linden Hall for a banquet complete with a cigar at every plate and “sun-ray” water. The fact that this affair was held on a Thursday tells us something about the occupations of these early elks.



The Formative Years

The Lodge enjoyed prosperity, and in 1913 reported a membership of 364. On December 3, 1914 the mortgage was burned and a celebration was held to mark the occasion.

On the hill where Horton Hospital is now, was a children's home. The Lodge began its charitable work by assisting those orphans at Christmas in 1908, a tradition which has outlived the children's home, and survives today.

On a social and fraternal level, the Lodge sponsored a baseball team, a bowling team and a bridge whist team.

In the summer of 1916, an addition was made to the building, and the barn was torn down. All is well with the fledgling Lodge, but soon its patriotism will be tested. A dark cloud hangs over Europe. Tiny towns in France will become household words. The jingoistic tune "Over There" will sound the clarion call. James Street will be filled with registration lines.

How will #1097 and all Elksdom respond?





Haltingly, at first, the response comes. The Lodge supports the Food Conservation Program. The dues of enlisted men are excused. Officers are denied the same courtesy. The mood of the nation is still toward isolationism. Then, on March 28, 1917, the Lodge takes a stand:

“Resolved that it is the sentiment of this Lodge that at this crisis in our national life, the President of these United States be fully sustained in his position in the interests of humanity, charity and brotherhood, and that Congress authorize the President to use all the resources of the country to the end that the cause of right and justice may most speedily prevail.”

The die is cast. #1097 now opens its doors to the 71st Regiment, stationed at the armory. They help start a Red Cross chapter. 75 Elks are in the line of march on July 5, 1917 for the Registration Day Parade. \$433.00 is sent for base hospitals in France. Funds are raised for the Salvation Army, and when the Lodge is assessed \$2.00 per member for the Elk's Million Dollar Relief Fund, they borrow the money so that there will be no delay waiting for the men to remit their share. When it is all over, the nation soon forgets, but not the Elks. Base Hospital #8 is in Otisville, just behind the present firehouse. Requests come from other Lodges to look after their Elks at that Hospital, and #1097 proves equal to the task. Veterans are to become the special responsibility of Elkdom. At the close of World War #2, the solemn pledge was made *“So long as there is a disabled veteran in our hospitals, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget him.”* This was no idle gesture. It was immediately implemented by the establishment of the Elk's National Service Commission and by the annual per-capita assessment of \$.35. Today, every Elk supports our nation's disabled veterans through this program. #1097, in addition, visits Castle Point Veteran's Hospital.



The Roaring Twenties

January 16, 1920 prohibition becomes law. Private clubs seem to become more popular. #1097 reports a membership of 1,038 in 1927. There are minstrel shows by Elks at the The Stratton Theatre, and shows for the patients at the Tuberculosis Hospital in Otisville, which is now a State Prison. There are dinners and parties galore at the Lodge. The “Roaring Twenties” did not bypass #1097. Franz Dienst, P.E.R. was Chairman of the Entertainment Committee. Judging from the record of the time, there was no shortage of fun and good times when Franz was in charge.

In 1927, on Feb. 2, J. Frank Degnan joined the Lodge and sang “I Love You” as part of his initiation. Frank and the “Antlers” Band were to entertain Elks and their ladies for at least a decade. Their popularity helped sustain the Lodge through the lean years.

The “Antlers” were:

Bud Smith	Saxaphone
E. Faber Jennings	Trumpet
J. Frank Degnan	Base Horn
Frank Cashion	Drums
Ben Stover.....	Trombone
Billy Thompson	Piano
Bert “Tanky” Hall	Saxaphone

Ben Stover had a friend over at New York Military Academy in Cornwall who did some arrangements for the band and sat in when he could. His name may be familiar to you. His name was Les Brown and his band was known as the “Band of Renown.”



Charity was not neglected in this era. The first outing for residents of The Aged Ladies Home was October 17, 1923. In 1924 a program to locate crippled children was started, government health services being insufficient in those days. Those aided are not named in the records, except for one little girl to whom the Lodge seems to gradually have formed a special attachment. She received continuing medical care, tuition and board at school, and many years later, a set of new clothes for her graduation. How proud those Elks must have been. A typical Christmas in the twenties and right through the sixties, saw 500 and more children at the Lodge. It was not uncommon to give 250 pairs of shoes to the needy children of Middletown.

The Years Roll By

- 1924 The Lodge gets a radio.
- 1925 Elks help raise money to restore "Old Ironsides." 1926 R.D. Parker declines nomination for Exalted Ruler citing the "Wet or Dry Issue."
- 1927 the Lodge needs three stoves for the 1038 members.
- 1928 the Elks band "Antlers" is born.
- 1929 the Stock Market crashes.
- 1930 Membership is limited to 1200.
- 1931 the Elks Basketball Team defeats the House of David as 400 watch. The Detroit Clowns prove to be much better and our Elks suffer defeat.
- 1933 the depression is with us. The Lodge takes stock in lieu of deposits as the First National Merchant's Bank undergoes reorganization. H. Seely McClure is Chairman of the Auditing Committee. The membership is down to 856 and on December 5, 1933, prohibition is repealed. Private clubs will feel the effect. The membership will drop to 524 on Jan 20, 1943.

On September 30, 1935, there were 699 members. Assets were \$8,800.00 in cash and \$36,931.25 in other liquid assets in addition to the real estate. The Lodge was strong financially because it was very strong when the depression started, and the Officers have managed well. No activities were dropped, and the charitable work was not curtailed. Some measures were taken such as reducing the dues and taking over operation of the dining room which had been leased to a caterer. The Lodge remained a popular place when many others were forced to close their doors.



The War Years

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, #1097 was assembled for their Annual Memorial Services for Deceased Elks. The imperial forces of Japan were assembled to devastate Pearl Harbor. The nation again goes to war, and this time #1097 is ready.

Just 10 days later the Lodge buys \$3,000.00 in Defense Bonds. An “Elks Defend America” sign is ordered for the lawn. Gift boxes are placed in the Lodge to be sent to servicemen when filled. The dues of servicemen are excused. A cigarette dance is held, admission is two packs to be sent with the gift boxes. Dorothy Skinner is recognized as the first W.A.C. enlistee whose father is a member of #1097. Magazines are collected, letters are written, the Lodge reported ownership of \$55,000.00 in Defense Bonds in 1945. Every program for servicemen is supported. The Elks even turn out to pick apples in order to save the crop in 1943.

In 1944 the Lodge, confident of United States victory, formed a Rehabilitation Committee for Veterans and, true to its tradition, passed a resolution to close the Lodge for twenty four hours “As soon as the axis powers capitulate.” There would be no revelry at #1097 on this occasion; the thoughts of Elks were with and for the dead and wounded.

The Post War Years

The chronicles of the post war years are a record of renewed social awareness, and programs started then are still with us today. The Lodge gave to the March of Dimes, bought an Iron Lung for the Sanatorium Hospital, gave to the Cancer Fund, started a Blood Bank, built camps at Beech Mt. for the Boy Scouts, built a pavilion at Fancher-Daviage Park and significantly, on May 3, 1950, made the first donation to Cerebral Palsy. Cerebral Palsy is now our Major Project, the Lodge contributed over \$9,000.00 to Cerebral Palsy in 1982.



The Lodge Moves Forward

#1097, now well into its maturity, took the Korean conflict in stride, gearing its reaction to the experience gained ten years before. Communism, however, was of great concern and as a result Americanism probably reached its peak in this era. The records indicate that this was a subject often discussed at the Lodge, and reflects the pride which Elks felt for their country. Elks are the only American Fraternal Organization which requires each of its Lodges to hold a formal Flag Day program.

1957 was a busy year at the Lodge. The increasing membership and the parking problem caused by two movie theaters on the same block with the Lodge brought to light a sentiment to build a new Lodge home. Plans were formulated for the building, and a lot was purchased from the YM.C.A. on Highland Avenue. This property was part of the former Clemson Estate.

The same year P. E.R. Frank McBride became the first member of our Lodge to be elected President of the N.Y.S. Elk's Association. Middletown #1097 now became a factor in State wide Elk's affairs, and continues to enjoy that distinction.

1957 was also a year of preparation for the 50th Anniversary of the Lodge to be held in 1958. The highlight of that celebration was a gala affair at Shawanga Lodge atop Bloomingburg Mountain. Elks and their ladies enjoyed dinner, dancing and all of the many activities offered by the popular resort hotel.

The long awaited building project, after four years of hopes and frustrations, began with ground breaking ceremonies on August 25, 1961. Seven months later, on March 18, 1962, the building was dedicated, and a new chapter in the history of our Lodge began.



Another important addition to fraternal activity was the institution of the “Elk of the Year” award in 1963. Each year the Exalted Ruler selects a member who has contributed his time and talent to the Lodge, and formally recognize his efforts. This program has been very successful and has strengthened the Lodge.

ELK OF THE YEAR LODGE # 1097

1963	Leo Berry	1979	Tony Leo	1995	Ed Cummings
1964	Ed Turchen	1980	Frank Pizza	1996	Angelo Colantuono
1965	George Cole	1981	S. Robert Gliemi	1997	John Eagan
1966	Harry Barnes	1982	Frank L. Clark, Sr.	1998	Tony Parenti
1967	Pete Perrino	1983	James J. DiRusso, Jr.	1999	Stanley Domfort
1968	Vincent Bergamo	1984	Lou Zacharewicz	2000	Jim O’Melia
1969	Harry Behrent	1985	Ed Klein	00-01	Mike Grammas
1970	Bruce Cogger	1986	William J. Hunt	01-02	Robert Kordiak
1971	Vito Masi	1987	Dom DiVirgilio	02-03	Walter Barczak
1972	Orville Foeller	1988	Robert N. Duffus, Jr.	04-04	John Smith
1973	Joe Congolosi	1989	Frank DeMarzo, Sr.	04-05	Everett Berger
1974	William Clark	1990	Jim Cherry	05-06	Richard VanSickle
1975	Larry Duco	1991	Sonny Waizenegger	06-07	Donald Yonskie
1976	LeRoy Walker	1992	Gail R. Salsbury	07-08	Myron “Bucky” Simpson
1977	Kevin Bristol	1993	Tony Auteri		
1978	Bill Heater	1994	Lou Perna		

The Lodge paused to reflect and to eulogize its founder, P.E.R. Archibald E. Ruggles, who died on March 9, 1966, in Springfield Mass., at the age of 92. He was the last surviving 60 Years Charter Member. The hopes of the 37 men who started Lodge #1097 have been realized if not exceeded. The Lodge has demonstrated by its actions its commitment to Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity. It has been an influence for good in the City of Middletown.

In 1968, with 1603 members and still growing, 1097 celebrated its 60th anniversary. Kutcher’s Club was the scene of that affair. The May Dance that year was held at the club to The Music of Guy Lombardo and the Royal Canadians, playing to a packed house.

By 1971, membership was growing so rapidly that following the initiation of a record 102 candidates on November 17, classes were limited to 50 each. On March 31, 1976, #1097 became the second largest Lodge in New York State with 2,254 members. P.E.R. Dominick Napolitano was elected President of the N.Y.S. Elk’s Association in 1978, becoming the second from our Lodge to rise to that coveted position.



A Promising Future...

The first seventy-five years of Middletown Lodge #1097 were ones of organizational development and growth of membership. Our Lodge was well prepared to continue to build for the future. The next twenty-five years reflect mature growth, continued focus on our ideals and that keen sense of dedication that is the hallmark of an Elk. Each Exalted Ruler has faced his own unique set of challenges as the Lodge moved forward. He had to reach into himself and out to the members to keep us on a steady continuing course heading to a Century of service and beyond. To this effort we recount the first 75 years and unfold the story of the last 25 years showing a continued dedication to our charities and our community.

About 1981 or so, 2.5 acres of vacant land on Silverlake-Scotchtown Road was donated to the Lodge. After paying \$4,000 in taxes on the land, the Lodge determined that it had no use for the land and to put it up for sale. In November of 1983, the Lodge voted to sell the land and accept a \$7,000.00 offer.

In September 1983, Kevin Bristol, Exalted Ruler and Dominick Napolitano, PSP along with Lodge Steward Bill Warnock dedicated the newly renovated Tap Room. Jay Mesnica joined the Lodge bar staff in March of 1985 and his valuable service continues to this day in the position of Lodge Steward.

Evidence was found of a movement to purchase an "Advanced Life Support" ambulance for Horton Memorial Hospital. Thinking at the time was that the cost of \$25,000 would be accounted for by amending the Lodge budget to account for \$5,000.00 per year for five years. A resolution was to be voted on at the December 17, 1986 meeting. No evidence was found to indicate this resolution passed but in 1990, Exalted Ruler Michael Curtis presented a blood mobile to Horton Memorial Hospital. Perhaps a compromise was reached.



In 1987, the Board of Trustees made proposal that \$200,000.00 be financed in order to make renovations, refurbish and update the Lodge building and facilities. This proposal was read on the floor of the Lodge and voted on September 2nd, 1987. The proposal was passed and a mortgage was secured and the work performed. Also in 1987, the City of Middletown named a street after Abraham Isseks. This street is a part of the intersection of County Route 78 and Dolson Avenue. It just so happens that Abraham Isseks is a PER of our Lodge. In December of 1987, the William "Bill" Heater podium was installed in the entrance hall of the Lodge.

Middletown Lodge #1097 was central to the Middletown, NY Centennial Celebration by helping kick off the festivities with a senior citizens luncheon on June 25, 1988. A capacity crowd was on hand for lunch and dancing to start the weeklong commemoration this milestone. The week ended with a Centennial Parade in which the Lodge had a "Just Say No to Drugs" float.

In October 1988, John Egan took over as Chairman of the "Famous Pancake Breakfast" Committee from the founder and long time Chairman, Charles Petrozak. This fund raising event involved the whole Lodge then as it does today. Thousands have visited our Lodge and experienced our hospitality and helped us support the CP/Inspire Center in Goshen. Once our guests have had a chance to experience this event, they return year after year.

In December of 1988, "strip" tickets were sold at the Lodge for the first time.

Beginning in April of 1990, the "Daily Attendance Award" was instituted. Visit the Lodge, put a quarter in the slot and sign the book along with one's member number. This "award" has entertained many members over the years and has rewarded many for their faithful attendance. In addition, the "Meeting Attendance Award" was also instituted.



The June 1990 issue of *The Lodge* reported that the Lodge joined the computer age. The Lodge acquired a state-of-the-art computer system.

Peter G. Botti, PER was named Member of Grand Lodge Judiciary Committee. While serving in this capacity, PER Botti was named District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler.

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the USA is 125 years old in 1993.

In January of 1993, lunch was offered at the Lodge. Hours were 11:30 am to 2:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. The daily lunch program was discontinued after several months tryout on March 31, 1993.

Geraldo Madia enabled the Lodge to acquire the “fine” elk head from his friend Anuska Zubalsky. This elk head fell victim to the redecoration associated with the renovations of 2006/2007. This “fine” elk head served our Lodge well and was retired with appropriate respect.

On August 1, 1992, the First Annual Family Picnic was held. Esteemed Lecturing Knight, Kees deJong, chaired this landmark event.

“The Beach Party” made its’ debut in February 1994. This party is the brainchild of Lou DePew and Jay Mesnica and it continues to be so to this day. The amazing thing about this event, in addition to its’ wide community appeal, is that the tickets are “SOLD OUT” within hours of going on sale.

Kevin Bristol, PER, PDDGER, became President of the New York State Elks Association for 1994-1995. He was the third member of our Lodge to hold this position.

“Salute to All Veterans” was held on June 10th 1995. The festivities consisted of a dinner-dance and music provided by Dan Bradley’s Big Band eight piece orchestra and vocal. Once again our Lodge stands tall in its’ effort to honor our veterans. This



event was well attended, as one would expect. The Trustees of our Lodge were looking for cost estimates to excavate, grade and pave an area of approximately 8,000 square feet for a new parking lot at the Lodge. The trustees were seeking written estimates from interested contractors by July 5th 1995.

At the regular Lodge meeting on September 6th, 1995, Exalted Ruler Kees de Jong reported that at the Grand Lodge Convention in New Orleans resolutions were overwhelmingly passed eliminating the word “male” from our membership application.

Middletown Lodge #1097's Family Picnic scheduled for July 22nd 1995 at Orange County Park sold out the limited allotment of tickets.

The “Clam Diggers of B.P.O.E. #1097 revived the “Great Elks Clambake”. The event took place on August 27th, 1995 at Shawangunk Fish and Game. Tickets were limited to the first 300. “D.J In The Groove” provided music.

On January 22, 1996, a vote was held for the purpose of changing the By-Laws. There were two changes to the By-Laws. The first was to provide for a dues increase from \$55.00 per year to \$60.00 per year. The second vote was to recognize “1097 Auxiliary” as the official Ladies Auxiliary of the Lodge. Both changes passed.

On January 27th 1996, our Lodge held its “60th Charity Dinner Dance.” The person of honor at this event was William Smith, President of the New York State Elks Association. JEM Entertainment provided dance music.

1995 and 1996 saw restrooms renovated, the dance floor extended into the Lounge area and light fixtures replaced in the Lodge room.

On February 16, 1996, Middletown Lodge #1097 celebrated 128 years of Elkdome.



Kevin M. Bristol, PER, PSVP, PDDGER, PSP was named Chairman Area 1 Lodge Activities Grand Lodge.

The January 1997 issue of *The Lodge* listed, among others, our Lodge's first women applicants for membership.

Middletown Elks hosted the New York State Elks Bowling Tournament. The event started March 27th and ended May 3rd. Bowlers from throughout the state bowled at Middletown Lanes and Tarsio Lanes in Newburgh. Approximately 1,800 bowlers were expected. This did not include their guests and others. The numbers of those attending were expected to reach between 2,500 and 3,000. The Lodge went into high gear to host the event and to use this event as a fund raising opportunity. Every member needed to lend a hand.

On April 8, 1998, Mary H. Falco became the first woman member of Middletown Lodge #1097 via transfer demit.

Kevin M. Bristol, PER, PSVP, PDDGER, PSP was elevated to the Board of Grand Trustees at the 1998 Grand Lodge Convention.

Barbara Mehling became the first woman elected to membership in Middletown Lodge #1097. Barbara was a member of the February 1999 class.

"News from the Women's Auxiliary" that appeared in *The Lodge* issue January 2001 highlighted the Auxiliary's donation of a "32" inch TV to the Lodge. This donation is typical of the high level of support the ladies provide our Lodge.

The "Clean Air Act" went into effect on July 16, 2003. This meant that there would be no smoking in the Lodge building. Many members felt this law would be detrimental to the Lodge because many patrons of the Tap Room and general Lodge activities were smokers. Thanks to the leadership of Richard "Chip" Allen, Exalted Ruler, a durable patio with privacy fencing and awning were constructed with access from the Tap Room area. The patio



was furnished with tables with umbrellas and chairs. In addition, windows were installed in the Tap Room permitting daylight to add to the décor for the first time since the Lodge building was constructed. It seems the members have adjusted well to the new facility, as the patio is very popular.

To top things off, donations were solicited to buy new Tap Room furniture. Each donor's name is engraved on a plaque on the back of each Tap Room chair.

April of 2005 marked the culmination of an amazing run. Our Lodge Secretary, Ed Cummings gave up his position as Chairman of the Bingo Committee after 23 years. Today we have Angelo Colantuono and Forster Hewitt sharing the job as Co-Chairs of the Bingo Committee.

As in everything, things tend to wear out and degrade with age. The Lodge building is no exception. In April of 2005, the Board of Trustees made application to the Grand Lodge for permission to take on a new mortgage. Our old mortgage was paid off the prior year. It seems that roofs do not last forever and there was strong need and movement to renovate the Meeting room and Banquet Hall area of the Lodge. Permission for the new mortgage was granted. The mortgage instrument was executed and the funds made available by the mortgage went right to work. First of all, the roof was replaced in April and May of 2006. The old one served us well but it's useful life was coming to an end. Once that was completed, the Renovation Committee proceeded to undertake the most significant renovation/construction project this Lodge has seen since it's original construction. Plans were developed, contractors hired and member volunteers lined up to get the interior work scheduled and under way.

Patio BBQs were started....



Lodge renovations were officially completed by May 2007. The result is breath taking. The difference between before and after was quite startling. Our Lodge Meeting Room/Banquet Hall became a place of beauty, functionality and something to be very proud of. Members and guests agree it is one of the finest halls in the area.

Today our Lodge has 1551 members and is the third largest in New York State.

The “Life” of the Lodge continues to be guided by the steady hand of each successive Exalted Ruler. This guidance has enabled us to grow in stature within our community and be a beacon for the principles of our order “Charity, Justice, Brotherhood and Fidelity.” Over the past 100 years, the Lodge has had its’ struggles, failures and many successes, yet we continue to persevere. A century of service is no small achievement.

Change is to be expected in any organization. It is the successful organization that manages that change to its’ benefit and the benefit of the community it serves. It is the character of the organization that governs how this change will be employed. It is the character of our members to make sure this change is productive, positive and keeps our Lodge looking to the future. The past 100 years have cast the die. We are well prepared and ready for the next 100 years.



Past Exalted Rulers

Archibald E. Ruggles	1907-1910	Frank Degnan	1959-1960
Archibald Gordon	1910-1911	Leon Serpentine	1960-1961
George E. Bowers	1911-1912	Daniel Birnbaum	1961-1962
Addison N. Baker	1912-1913	William A. Marshall, Jr.	1962-1963
W. Laurence Gunther	1913-1914	Angelo Ingrassia	1963-1964
George W. Reed	1914-1915	Dominick Napolitano, Jr.	1964-1965
William F. Royce	1915-1916	Frank Blizard, Jr.	1965-1966
John A. Korschen	1916-1917	Jerome Markovits	1966-1967
W. Harry Gass	1917-1918	Richard C. Brisky	1967-1968
Frank H. Beakes	1918-1919	Nicholas Constanzo	1968-1969
George E. Marks	1919-1920	Francis C. Harmon	1969-1970
Ivan A. Gardner	1920-1921	Jack Isseks	1970-1971
George J. Skinner	1921-1922	Donald G. Bailey	1971-1972
Dr. Stanley N. Holt	1922-1923	Anthony Capozella	1972-1973
J. Noble Wood	1923-1924	John Degnan	1973-1974
Clarence E. Shoemaker	1924-1935	H. Ray Barnes	1974-1975
Walter T. Hawkins	1925-1926	Robert W. Stewart	1975-1976
E. P. Valkenburgh	1926-1927	William W. Weale	1976-1977
Dill H. Werley	1927-1928	Samuel Terilli	1977-1978
James D. Gaynor	1928-1929	William M. Williams	1978-1979
Samuel W. Eager, Sr.	1929-1930	William P. Young	1979-1980
Jesse L. Shelton	1930-1931	Anthony T. Amelio	1980-1981
Wilbur M. Gum	1931-1932	LeRoy Walker	1981-1982
William B. Rose	1932-1933	S. Sam Patruno	1982-1983
Franz X. Dienst	1933-1934	Kevin M. Bristol	1983-1984
C.C. Colesanti	1934-1935	Richard DiVirgilio	1984-1985
Frank House	1936-1937	Ronald N. Grammas	1985-1986
John J. O'Brien	1937-1938	Joseph Pluchino	1986-1987
Arthur H. Kimble	1938-1939	Peter G. Botti	1987-1988
William J. Thomson	1939-1940	Douglas Spelman	1988-1989
Martin Rosenblum	1940-1941	Michael Curtis	1989-1990
Anthony T. Lehmann	1941-1942	Gordon Russell	1990-1991
William J. Mulloy	1942-1943	James Reynolds	1991-1992
Raymond A. Henry	1943-1944	James Lubniewski	1992-1993
Anthony J. Veraldi	1944-1945	Eugene Dowd	1993-1994
Howard A. Meyer	1945-1946	Anthony Kocot	1994-1995
Frank H. McBride	1946-1947	Kees de Jong	1995-1996
George W. Sherrill	1947-1948	William D. Cavanaugh	1996-1997
Walter K. Doty	1948-1949	Louis DePew	1997-1998
W. Irving Seeley	1949-1950	Robert Levitt	1998-1999
Dr. Clinton E. Hartley	1950-1951	Peter Prokopchak	1999-2000
Edward F. Turchen	1951-1952	Raul Feliciano	2000-2001
J. Raymond Townsend	1952-1953	Anthony Amelio, PDDGER	2001-2002
Edward F. Meany	1953-1954	James Woods	2002-2003
Edward P. Ramsey	1954-1955	Richard Allen	2003-2004
Dr. Carmen A. Elia	1955-1956	Bobby Talmadge	2004-2005
Abraham Isseks	1956-1957	Patrick McEnery	2005-2006
Donald Beakes	1957-1958	Brian DePew	2006-2007
C. Clark Van Fleet	1958-1959	Kevin Downer	2007-2008



Grand Exalted Ruler

Paul D. Helsel 2008 - 2009



Past District Deputy Grand Exalted Rulers

Walter T. Hawkins 1931-1932

Arthur H. Kimble 1939-1940

Anthony Lehmann 1943-1944

Raymond A. Henry 1948-1949

Frank H. McBride 1952-1953

C. Clark Van Fleet 1965-1966

Dominick Napolitano, Jr. 1972-1973

Richard C. Brisky 1976-1977

LeRoy Walker 1986-1987

Kevin M. Bristol 1989-1990

Anthony T. Amelio 1993-1994

Peter G. Botti 1996-1997

William D. Cavanaugh 2004-2005



President NYS Elks Association

Jay Amodeo 2008 - 2009

Past Presidents, New York State Elks Association

Frank H. McBride 1957-1958

Dominick Napolitano, Jr. 1978-1979

Kevin M. Bristol 1994-1995

Past Vice Presidents New York State Elk's Association

E. P. Van Valkenburgh 1927-1928

Franz J. Dienst 1934-1935

John J. O'Brien 1941-1942

Raymond A. Henry 1944-1945

Frank H. McBride 1950-1951

Edward F. Turchen 1955-1956

Dominick Napolitano, Jr. 1967-1968

Richard C. Brisky 1970-1971

Samuel T. Terilli 1982-1983

Anthony T. Amelio 1988-1989

Kees de Jong 1998-1999



Officers 2008-2009



Richard "Chip" Allen

Larry Watters

Jeffrey Sarbello

Kurt Wieman*

Edward Cummings

Paul Weslowski

Art Broas

Pete Meier

John Clancy, Esq.*

Donald Yonskie

Brian Rafferty

Tammy Petrillo

Jay Mesnica*

Exalted Ruler

Esteemed Leading Knight

Esteemed Loyal Knight

Esteemed Lecturing Knight

Secretary

Treasurer

Esquire

Inner Guard

Justice of the Subordinate Forum

Chaplain

Tiler

Organist

Steward

Trustees

James A. Woods, PER, SVP – Chairman

Everett Berger

Richard VanSickle

William Lunham

Patrick McEnergy, PER

* Not available at time of Photograph



“Congratulations to all my friends and fellow members at Middletown Lodge #1097.”

Harold J. Fox, PER, PSVP

District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler
EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT
2008 - 2009



“On behalf of the New York State Elks Association, I would like to congratulate Middletown Lodge #1097 on the occasion of their 100th Anniversary in Elldom. Best wishes and continued success in the future!”

James A. Woods, PER

State Vice President
EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT
2008 - 2009



“As the immediate Past Exalted Ruler, I ask everyone to be proud of the accomplishments we have made over the past one hundred years. I thank everyone for his or her continued support of Middletown Lodge #1097. I offer my best wishes for the future.”

Kevin Downer, PER
Immediate Past Exalted Ruler
Middletown Lodge #1097





Acknowledgements.

*....to the “Brothers” of long ago and to the
“Brothers and Sisters” of today for providing a rich
heritage of Elkdom at Middletown Lodge #1097.*

*...to H.R. Decker for the many hours work and
dedication to detail in recounting the history and
providing the text for the Seventy-fifth Anniversary
Journal...the anchor for this new work.*

*...to Rich Graham for being a sounding board and
helping to keep the wheels under the “Centennial
Journal” project.*

...to everyone else!

Everett C. Berger, Editor



“The Jolly Corks”



Charles Vivian



Culver

The 11 o'clock toast to the absent: an Elk custom

11th Hour Toast

"You have heard the tolling of eleven strokes.

This is to remind us that with Elks
the hour of eleven has a tender significance.

Wherever an Elk may roam,
Whatever his lot in life may be,
when this hour falls upon the dial of night
the great heart of Elkdom swells and throbs.

It is the golden hour of recollection,
the homecoming of those who wander,
the mystic roll call of those who will come no more.
Living or dead, an Elk is never forgotten, never forsaken.

Morning and noon may pass him by,
the light of day sink heedlessly in the West,
but ere the shadows of midnight shall fall,
the chimes of memory will be pealing forth
the friendly message --

"TO OUR ABSENT MEMBERS"