The Social Side of the Grand Lodge Convention

A general view of the parade which concluded the Seventeenth Grand Lodge Convention at Los Angeles.

All the color, pomp and ceremony of tradition marked the Grand Lodge Reunion which convened in Los Angeles, Calif., on Monday, July 13, 1936. Prior to the official opening meeting of the Seventeenth Grand Lodge Convention, however, a round of memorable social events occupied the time of the Grand Lodge officials and delegates. Trains, planes, automobiles and private cars brought thousands to the gathering of the Elks at Los Angeles.

Early arrivals included Grand Exalted Ruler James T. Hallinan, of Queens Borough, N. Y., who reached the Southern California city on an eight-car special train packed with guests from the Knickerbocker State via the Santa Fe Lines. With a flash of color and a martial refrain of music by Los Angeles Lodge, No. 25, in attendance, he was received by officials, speakers and officers, and a tumultuous reception. Among the hosts of the Convention at the station were Past Grand Exalted Ruler Michael F. Shanahan; Grand Secretary John J. Doyle; Exalted Ruler Robert V. Wingrave of Los Angeles Lodge, and Trustee Robert Casev.

Late in the afternoon, Governor David S. Whitmore of Florida, who was later elected Grand Exalted Ruler of the Order, held a conference with Judge Hallinan and planned for widespread activities of an Elks Americanization campaign during the next twelve months.

In brilliant regalia, drill teams paraded in Westlake Park. Elks bands played patriotic music and the quiet of the Los Angeles Sunday evening reverberated to the cheers of the delegations prancing themselves for the important and spectacular events of the week.

On Monday, the 13th, the first day of the official Convention, many important events took place. In the morning the 54-hole golf tournament started with eighteen holes of medal play and a daily handicap at the Westward Hills Course. Other activities of the morning were the National Ritualistic Contest, the Bowling Tournament at the Lodge Home, and a float, including sightseeing at universities, Westward Hills motion picture studio and other local points of interest. Grand Lodge registration took place at the Los Angeles Biltmore Hotel.

At noon the arrival of the Purple and White Fleet, led by Ambassadors of The Elks Magazine was celebrated. The sea cants, hearty greetings from 600 Lodges which they had visited throughout the year of the United States, met with a thundering demonstration.

In the afternoon a practice trap and short shoot was held at the Santa Monica Gun Club.
Opening Public Session

At 8 o'clock in the evening the official public opening meeting of the Seventy-second Session of the Grand Lodge was held in the magnificent home of Los Angeles Lodge. The program was an elaborate one marked by many highlighted events. With P.E.K. John G. Mott of Los Angeles Lodge, presiding, the meeting came to order to hear an organ prelude by Wade Hamilton. A choral interpretation of "America the Beautiful" was sung by the audience and the celebrated Chanters of Los Angeles Lodge, under the direction of J. Arthur Lewis. The invocation was given by the Rev. Arthur O. Sykes, Grand Chaplain. Next Sign-bearer Romberg's famous "Desert Song" was sung by a trio of the Chanters.

The first speech was a greeting of welcome delivered by P.R. Robert S. Reddington, of Los Angeles Lodge. Mr. Reddington's remarks were followed by another musical number, "Carry Me Back to the Lonesome Prairie," by the Chanters. The welcome from the City of Los Angeles was delivered by Frank L. Shaw, Mayor of the city. His speech was followed by a Welcome from the State of California ably delivered by Frank F. Merriman, Governor of California. The guest soloist of the opening session was the renowned baritone, Nelson Eddy, well known to opera, movie, picture enthusiasts and radio listeners.

In a glowing address, Past Grand Exalted Ruler William M. Abbott next took the opportunity to intro-

duce Grand Exalted Ruler James T. Hallinan.

Sounding the basic keynote of the structure of the Order, Judge Hallinan redefined the fight of the Elks to destroy communism and all other "isms" opposed to the present system of government. In a stirring address Judge Hallinan urged the entire membership of the Order to continue its fight for true Americanism. "The fight must be carried on," the Judge declared, pointing out the speaker's restorium enthusiastically. "We have shown great progress this battle during the past year. We have continued sending out petitions to Congress asking for legislation. We have given our vigorous support to the McCormick bill making it a crime to distribute anti-American literature in army and navy barracks.

"I may say to the President of the United States and to the Governor of your state and to every one else that the best part of America has today in its struggle against communism and every other kind of ism is membership in the B. P. O. E."

"To preserve an organization that has only the principles of Americanism for membership requirements, that welcomes to its doors the rich and poor alike, that takes into its membership the Catholic, Protestant and Jew, is indeed a rare pleasure."

Judge Hallinan, a New York Supreme Court Justice, was candidly cheered as he struck at the subversive influences at work in the nation. He also reviewed activities of the Order during the past year, pointing with pride to a gain of 8,000 members, and was given the applause of the Elks Lodge of the nation, compared with a loss of 35,000 members during the preceding year.

"During the past twenty years," he reported, "the Order has distributed $20,600,000 in charities. In the depression years an average of $2,000,000 annually was spent."


Judge Hallinan's remarkable address was followed by two interpretations by the Chanters, "Friendship," and "To the Elks." The opening public session closed with the singing of the "Star Spangled Banner" by the Chanters and the large audience.
Tuesday's Activities

On the following day, Tuesday, July 16th, the principle event of the program was the first official session of the Grand Lodge which was held at the Biltmore Hotel and which was reconvened in the Convention story as it appeared in the August issue of The Elks Magazine.

Early in the morning the National Golf Tournament resumed its play at the Rancho Golf Course, the National Bowling Tournament was continued at the Lodge Home and those at the Santa Monica Gun Club saw the National Trap and Skeet shoot get under way. In Lafayette Park as excited crowds witnessed the Drum Corps Contest.

At the home of Santa Monica, Calif., Lodge a Fiesta Mexicana was held and thoroughly enjoyed by many Elks who had journeyed there to join in the celebration. Early in the afternoon Santa Monica held its Pioneer Days Historical pageant.

Meanwhile, back in Los Angeles the State Association Precedence and Secretaries met at the Biltmore Hotel, afterward going to the vesper organ recital in the Lodge Room of the hotel.

That evening more than 5,000 Elks, with their wives and families gathered at the Parkhurst for the Grand Ball and entertainment, presented a prominent social feature of the Convention. The brilliant throng, in the most savory array of the season, filled the Ball Hall, and the entertainment was boyish and chivalrous.

Wednesday's Activities

The morning of Wednesday, July 16th, found many of the delegates occupied by the second official session of the Grand Lodge at the Biltmore Hotel. Others Elks witnessed or participated in the Golf Tournament which this day was held at Sunset Field Golf Course, the Bowling Contest, the National Trap and Skeet Shoot and the National Drill Team Contest which took place in Lafayette Park. In the afternoon another business session of the Grand Lodge Convention at the Biltmore was held. In Westlake Park the National Band Contest drew hundreds of spectators and again in the afternoon a vesper organ recital provided a peaceful moment in the Lodge Room of Los Angeles Lodge.

That night was "City Hall Night," including an inspection of America's finest municipal building, exhibition of police shooting and entertainment and dancing in the marble corridors.

Thursday's Activities

Thursday morning opened with the Grand Lodge Session at the Biltmore Hotel. Various activities of an entertaining and educational nature occupied the hours of the delegates prior to witnessing the Grand Parade which took place that afternoon and the Elks' Motion Picture Electrical Pageant which was presented that evening in the Ball Hall.

With bands playing, flags flying, tissues tangling through the throngs, floats and pretty girls glittering uniforms, mounted men and thousands of marchers, the Parade of the 72nd Grand Lodge Convention and delegates took place, promptly at two P. M., aerial bombs bursting, flags flapping high in the air and the Parade swung into motion past the City Hall. Police estimated that at least 100,000 persons were massed.

Roberts: The smart drum and bugle corps of America, Calif., Lodge which won the best of the National Convention along the line of march with other thousands filing every window in the flanking buildings.

Drill teams and drum and bugle corps kept military motions, but there were a score of comedy entries in the marching delegations hundreds of Elks paraded joyfully along under the linden trees, but welcome, shade of every known type of parasol. Led by the police motorcycle escort swooping and circling in amazing maneuvers, corps Grand Exquire John J. Doyle and Lieutenant Harold William Roberts, Chief of Staff. Next, escorted by the Florida Color Guard, came the two men for whom this Convention marked a milestone — Grand Exalted Ruler David Spotts, Governor of Florida, and Past-Grand Exalted Ruler James T. Haddix, Governor Frank F. Merriman and Mayor Frank L. Muwro rode next in line. There is not sufficient space to include a description of the many costumed bands, drill teams, drum and bugle corps and delegations which added color, atmosphere, humor and beauty to the glittering spectacle, but perhaps the biggest hand of the Parade went to the Junior Drum and Bugle Corps of Decorah, Iowa. They were very small and young, those helmeted drummers and buglers.

In this parade of the Seventy-second Convention of the Grand Lodge the Elks were out to put on a good show and they scored a remarkable success.

The various costuming groups in the many other contests held throughout the coming conventions follow: The Drum and Bugle Corps of Americus, Calif., Lodge with 80.1 points; Atlantic, Calif., Lodge with 79.9; and Long Beach, Calif., Lodge placed third. The Band Contest was
won by Santa Monica, Calif., Lodge, Glendale, Calif. Lodge ran a close second. Of the drill teams that of Sacramento, Calif., Lodge was judged the best. The teams of Oakland, Calif., and Columbus, Ohio, Lodges, however, were close runners-up.

First place and a prize of $500 was captured by Red Oak Beach, Fla., Lodge in the National Ritualistic Competition. Second prize and an award of $300 went to Glendale, Calif., Lodge. Third prize and a prize of $100 was won by Lincoln, Ill., Lodge. Fourth prize and $75 went to McHenry, Ill., Lodge, and fifth prize and $50 to Everett, Wash., Lodge. The Florida team had a score of 97.67 compared with 97.54 for the Glendale team.

Loy Cat, Lodge received the award for the best musical unit from outside California. Among the other Lodges winning prizes for entries in the Parade were Glendale, Calif., Waltham, Mass., Columbus, Ohio, Sacramento, Calif., Grants Pass, Ore., and Anchorage, Mont.

L. J. French, of Huntington Park, Calif., Lodge, won the John J. Doyle Trophy in the Golf Tournament with the splendid score of 72 for the 18 holes.

In the Skeet and Trap Shooting Tournament Grant Isberg, of Fort Worth, Tex., Lodge, won the key event. He was followed up by E. H. Ford, Jr., of Redondo, Calif., Lodge.

Right center: The Ritualistic Team of West Palm Beach, Fla., which won the Grand Lodge Ritualistic Contest.

At bottom, right: The winners of the John J. Doyle Tournament, the team of Iowa City, la., Lodge which has captured the title for four successive years.

Below: A J. French, extreme left, of Huntington Park, Calif., Lodge being presented with the John J. Doyle Trophy as winner of the Elks National Golf Tournament.

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and W. J. Kelly, of Iowa City, la., Lodge. The double championship was won by Grant Isberg, who was run a close second and third by S. Nav, of Santa Ana, Calif., and William Buchman, of Visalia, Calif., Lodge. In the handegg event Grant Isberg also took first place. C. F. Smith, of San Bernadino, Calif., Lodge, placed second and Mrs. Mary Knight, of San Bernadino, came third. The freemasonry team event was won by five members of Iowa City, la., Lodge. They are F. M. Smith, W. J. Kelly, C. D. Schleesman, William Ruppert and W. P. Russell.

Grant Isberg and H. H. Ford took the two-man event. Mrs. Mary Knight won the Ladies' Championship Knit. The Skeet Championship was won by H. P. Kerr, of Orange, Calif., Lodge with Grant Isberg placing second and C. H. Clark, of Nevada City, Calif., coming in third. (Continued on page 52)
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Other social activities which took place during the four days of the Convention included a dinner given by Grand Exalted Ruler David Shultz at the Ambassador which was held before the Grand Ball. More than 100 Elks and their wives were also guests at a breakfast and program given by the Kentucky delegation to the Convention at the Hilton. Governor Shultz, newly elected Grand Exalted Ruler, was the honored guest and principal speaker. Prof. Henry C. Court, of Lexington, was Toastmaster. The Grand Lodge Officers attending included Past Grand Exalted Ruler Bruce A. Campbell, Grand Trustee Henry C. Warner, Judges Frank E. Leonard, of Champaign, Ill., Chairman of the Grand Lodge State Association Committee, and Judge H. B. Frederiksen and D.D. Carline, Hil of Florida. Another social feature of the Convention was a dinner party for Grand Lodge officials and their wives given by E.R. and Mrs. Robert S. Redington.

The ladies of the Convention were magnificently entertained during their stay in Southern California with bridge parties, teas, shopping expeditions, sightseeing tours and various other affairs.

Other events included a trip to Redondo Beach, Calif., Lodge, where a huge entertaining entitled "Sea-Breeze Day" was enjoyed by hundreds of Elks.

The East District of New York also gave a dinner at the Biltmore Hotel. Among the distinguished Elks present were Lodge Hallman, Charles Spencer Hart, Chairman of the Grand Lodge Activities Committee, and District Deputy John P. Doyle.

That Thursday night, the last day of the Convention, 80,000 men and women stood with bowed heads in Memorial Coliseum and offered a silent and impressive prayer to departed friends, a fitting close to the most successful Convention the Order of Elks has ever known. It was the success of not only the Convention, but of a day filled with spectacular events.

No place on earth but Southern California could stage a pageantry so inspiring as was arranged by the motion picture industry, as a tribute to the visiting Elks in the "Elks Motion Picture Electrical Pageant." Millions of candlepower in light were used to transform the field of the Coliseum into a picture from the Arabian Nights. Each of the dozen floats designed by the major studios of Hollywood was gloriously illuminated. First in the long procession of brilliant floats was that entered by No. 99, "America for Americitans," fired almost every city of any size in California a beautiful girl was sent as a representative at the pageant.

During the many motion picture stars on parade were Leo Carrillo, Toastmaster, Shirley Temple, Jack Steele, Freddie Bartholomew, Francis Lederer, Doris Nolan, Loretta Young, Irene Dunne, Weekly News, Caspar Romero, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Artie Louise, Pat O'Brien and Jack Benny.

Suddenly out of the brightness a great shaft of light from a million candlepower searchlight picked out the enormous purple clock dial. As the chimes continued to strike the hour, great gold numerals described by living figures appeared. Conrad Nagel, motion picture star, proposed the Eleven O'clock Toast, while the multicolored float with高达 towered in silent tribute. The spectacle came to a conclusion with the singing "Hail to the King, Bambino!"

Thus ended the 22nd Session of the Grand Lodge, one of the most memorable meetings in its long and honorable history.