

# **60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

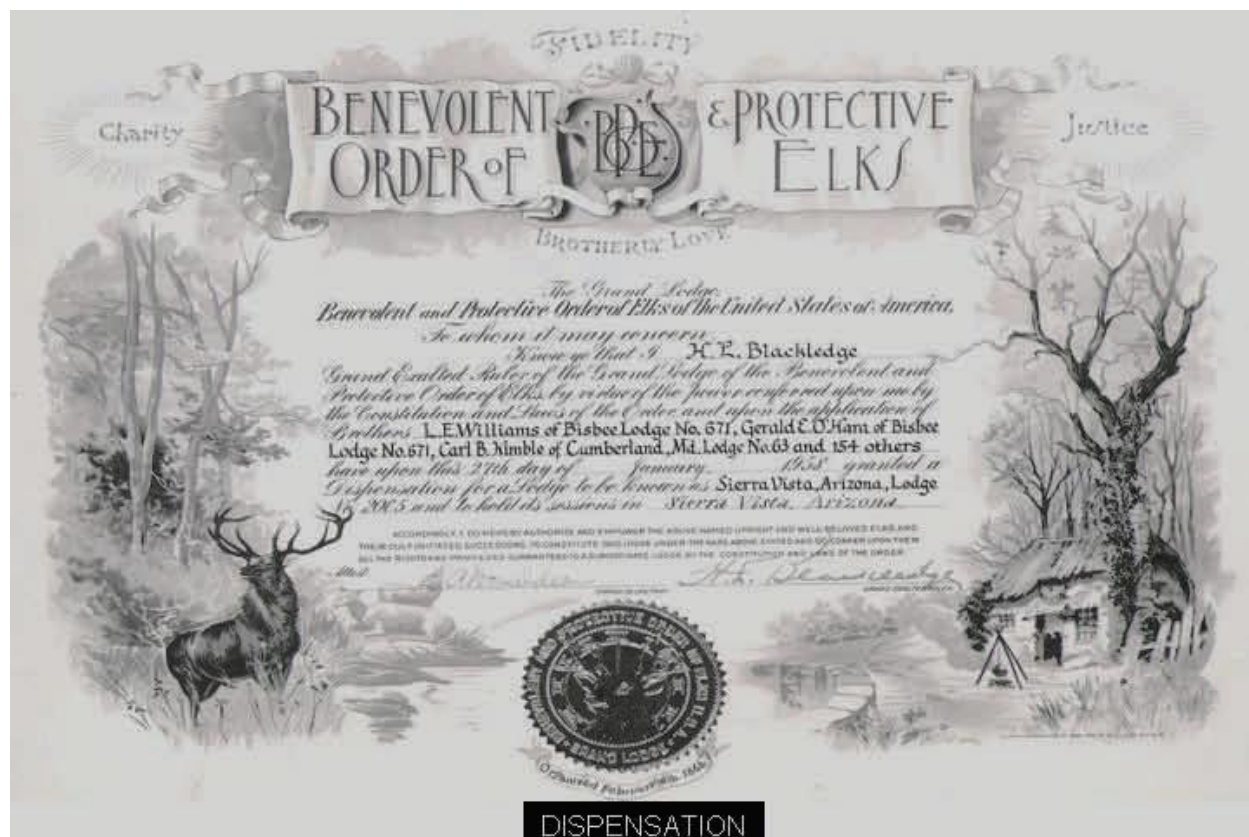
**SIERRA VISTA LODGE 2065**

**February 24, 1958**



**HONOR THE PAST - EMBRACE THE FUTURE**

Cover photo by Amy Dohmen



DISPENSATION



CHARTER

SIGNATURES TO THE  
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
of *Sierra Vista* Lodge, No. *2065*

BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE  
**ORDER OF ELKS**  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Instituted, *Feb 24,* 19*58*

One Hundred and Seventy Eight(178) became Charter members by affiliation (29) or Initiation (149) on February 24, 1958 and who were present at the institution of Sierra Vista Lodge #2065 and signed its Constitution and Bylaws on the night of institution. These 178 names also appear on the Charter for Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065. Marie Storment, the wife of Brother Frank Storment, hand scribed each Charter member's name that appears on our Charter.



**Charter Officers of Sierra Vista Lodge #2065**

Front Row L to R

Est. Lect. Knight, Elmer Retzlaff; Est. Loyal Knight, Dale Blan; Exalted Ruler, L.E. Williams;

Est. Lead. Knight, Harold Clark; Esq., Jack Drago;

Back Row L to R.

Sec., Joe Rustin; I.G., Hal Hartwig; Tiler, Ed Ryan; Trustee, John Kelly;

Trustee, Jack Sabin; Trustee, Jimmy Rustin; Treas., Carl Kimble and Chap., Gus Quennon

## THE ROAD TO OUR 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Exalted Ruler Rick Davis and the officers of Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 welcome you to our Lodges Annual Anniversary Ball. This month we celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a lodge of the Order which began on February 24, 1958. I believe it is a milestone that all members of our Lodge are very proud to celebrate this year.

This month we also celebrate the birthday of our Order, which began 150 years ago on February 16, 1868. While all of Elkdom will mark this significant milestone in our history throughout the year, the Grand Exalted Ruler urges Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 to take the time this month to celebrate our Lodge's contributions to the Order, as well as reflect on our mission as Elks and the future of this organization.

For the benefit of our newer members and volunteers (more on volunteers later) I will go back over a little background information on us becoming a lodge 60 years ago thanks to the volunteers who stepped up to the plate to make a difference when it counted.

I will call the background information, *The Road to Our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*.

Our start on Elkdom's road officially began on January 27, 1958 when Grand Exalted Ruler H. L. Blackledge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (B.P.O.E.) granted Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 its Dispensation.

The road to our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary got on track on the evening of February 24, 1958, when 178 members became Charter members of Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 by affiliation (29) or initiation (149) and, therefore, are the names that appear on our Charter that hangs on the wall in the Lodge room. When you get the time please take a look at our Charter, Mrs. Frank Storment took the time to inscribe all the 178 charter member names thereon by hand (see Charter picture above).

Our first crowning achievement along the road, however, was also realized on February 24, 1958 when Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 had the honor of attaining three firsts in the history of Elkdom. I like to refer to some of our achievements as mileposts along the road.

**Milepost one:** It was the first time that a Lodge had been instituted in so short a period of time from when an organizing committee was formed until a Dispensation, institution of the Lodge accomplished and a Charter granted (the Grand Lodge granted our Charter at a regular session of the Grand Lodge held on the 10th day of July 1958).

**Milepost two:** It was the first time any Lodge had ever been instituted in its own building. Our newly instituted Elks Lodge was built on land donated by Mrs. Margaret Carmichael. We are still located at our original site (our address was not No. 1 Elks Lane at that time). More than 350 Elks, new members, and guests from throughout the State, attended the ceremonies.

And **Milepost three;** it was the first time a Lodge building had ever been dedicated the same evening the Lodge was instituted. It can be said that a lodge building is nothing more than something built with mortar, wood and beams, but foremost on the minds of our founding members was that our Lodge building was also to be built with Love and Devotion.

Brother L. A Lewis, Past Grand Exalted Ruler (P.G.E.R.) from Anaheim, California, attended the institution of our Lodge as our honored guest. Brother Lewis was welcomed to Sierra Vista by police escort. Upon approaching the Lodge he said, "I have never seen anything like this in my Life". During his remarks to the members and guests, P.G.E.R. Lewis lauded Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 on its numerous accomplishments and the distinguished firsts it had set for Elkdom.

**Milepost four:** Following the ceremonies, P.G.E.R. Lewis added that in his many, many years in Elkdom it is the first time he had attended an institution meeting where the closing ritual was given from *memory*, rather than from notes. I would like to add, that prior to the ceremony, P.G.E.R. Lewis sat down and wept. He was weeping because of the three firsts we accomplished.

It should also be noted that in 1957, Arizona Elks Association (A.E.A.) President John Frakes (Tucson Lodge #385) informed P.G.E.R. Faye Lewis that Sierra Vista could not support an Elks Lodge. P.G.E.R. Lewis told Johnny if Sierra Vista could get enough members to start, "I will get them a Charter" - and they did enough members and the rest of the story is history. It was best not to under estimate the founding members of Lodge 2065.

Exalted Ruler Hugh Dugan, Jr. and officers of Bisbee Lodge No. 671 conducted the initiation of Charter members of Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065. A few years later I got to know several of those officers.

Several Past Exalted Rulers (P.E.R.s) from Lodges throughout the State conducted the installation of Officers and H. W. Ratliff, a P.E.R. from Yuma Lodge No. 476 acted as Grand Exalted Ruler for the Installation ceremony.

**Milepost five:** Our Charter Officers for Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 were: L. E. Williams, Exalted Ruler; Harold Clark, Esteemed Leading Knight; Dale Blan, Esteemed Loyal Knight; Elmer Retzlaff, Esteemed Lecturing Knight; John Dragoo, Esquire; Joe Rustin Secretary; Carl Kimble, Treasurer; Ed Ryan, Tiler; Hal Hartwig, Inner Guard, August Quenon, Chaplain; Jim Rustin, 1-Year Trustee; John Kelly, 2-Year Trustee; and Jack Sabin, 3-Year Trustee. Now with officially installed officers for Lodge 2065 our journey down Elkdome's road began (see Charter Officers picture above).

**Milepost six:** Our current Elks Auxiliary organization also had their beginning in 1958 as the Elks Ladies. Doubtless, the Auxiliary organization is one of our Lodge's most loyal and staunchest support groups. The first President of the Elks Ladies was Gama Williams. On November 23, 1993, we amended our Bylaws to recognize the Elks Ladies as the official Ladies Auxiliary of Sierra Vista Lodge No.2065.

#### **More mileposts:**

Since our institution on February 24, 1958 the officers and members of Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 have continued to promote and support the programs of the Grand Lodge. On numerous occasions, we have been singled out at the Grand Lodge and State level for our accomplishments. For example, each year the Grand Lodge selects a first place winner from each of the six divisions for 'All-American Lodge' honors from over 2,200 local Lodges throughout the Order. The All-American Lodge award is the most coveted of all the Grand Lodge yearly awards. Our Sierra Vista Lodge has been selected as an All-American Lodge' three times (1968-1998, 1991-1992 and 1994- 1995).

In addition, although we are a relatively small Lodge, Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065 has produced three A.E.A. State Presidents, ten A.E. A. Vice Presidents, twelve District Deputy Grand Exalted Rulers, three Grand Lodge Committee members and a current South District Leader. Our Sierra Vista Lodge has also produced eight State Ritual championship teams and a final four team at the Grand Lodge competition, which is a testimony to the proud ritual tradition, started on the day our lodge was instituted.

I wonder how many of us have ever stopped to think how we got to this lofty position of recognition. Well folks, I believe the answer is quite simple, it all started with those few and hearty member and nonmember volunteers some sixty years ago who stepped up to the plate to make a difference in time of need. Doubtless, today our lodge officers would welcome new faces with open arms in addition to their new and innovative ideas on how to make a difference going forward. In the words of one of our Sierra Vista Past State Presidents - "If you make it fun – They will come".

If we want to help make a difference in going forward, we all need to lend a hand so that we can continue in our founding members footsteps by stepping up to the plate and become the new corps of volunteers who are willing to make sure Sierra Vista Lodge will continue it's good work in achieving future mileposts.

Granted, there is no monetary gain by volunteering but yet you can become rich. You will be camaraderie rich, sharing and caring rich, making it fun and they will come rich, rich in generous community outpouring, and above all – self pride rich knowing you stepped up to the plate to be counted when it mattered.

It has been said that volunteers tend to support what they help create. With that thought in mind perhaps the title from a Willie Nelson song best says what's next – and that is- it's time for us to get back "On the Road Again" and make a difference. In words of another Sierra Vista Past State President - "Together we can – Together we will".

Yes my Brothers and Sisters, the great heart of Elksdom truly swells and throbs within the hallowed walls of Sierra Vista Lodge No. 2065. To our founding members, we say thank you for a job well done. We will never forget your efforts and we will strive to continue to build on those efforts. Perhaps P.E.R. David Dean said it best with his slogan **"Honor the past, embrace the future"**.

Well, members, future members and nonmember volunteers that is my background information in a nutshell. I will finish by saying with pride, Happy 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sierra Vista Lodge #2065.

God Bless our Lodge and God Bless America!

**Homer M. Sylvers, Jr. PSP**

## 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY TRIVIA TIME

For the benefit of our newer members let me take you on a trivia stroll down memory lane. I will call he stroll “**Did you know**”.

**Did you know that:** The name of Charter Members Stanley F. Beck, Anthony Bellantoni, Curtis M. Blatchley, Frank H. Campbell, Howard C. Nettles and John Rogers were omitted from the Lodge institution printed program?

**Did you know that:** Membership number 112 was never issued?

**Did you know that:** Michael Conway was issued membership number 199, however, there are 20 membership numbers issued to non Charter members that are lower than Brother Conway’s 199 Charter membership number? The reason was because all of the members issued these lower 20 membership numbers signed the Constitution and By-Laws after the mandated institution night of February 24, 1958.

**Did you know that:** Since our Lodge number is 2065, it was voted on by the members not to issue membership number 2065, therefore, there is a gap between membership number 2064 and 2066.

**Did you know that:** I was told by Charter members who helped with the building construction that there is a 5<sup>TH</sup> of Jim Beam and a six pack in the building blocks of North east corner of the Lodge room?

**Did you know that:** Our address has not always been #1 Elks Lane? in fact, the short strip of road between us and the moving company didn’t even have a name until Elk year 1970-1971 when Exalted Ruler Bill Dwyer took on the task of getting the City of Sierra Vista to officially name it “Elks Lane”, and assign the address #1 Elks Lane to our lodge. That was because the door which now goes into the PER room was the main entrance to the original building?

**Did you know that:** The piano in the Lodge room was donated by “Honkey” Cornwall and was used on the night of our Lodge institution? The night before our Lodge institution, a few members went over to Honkey’s place of business in Huachuca City (had a few beers) and brought the piano to the lodge (and it still works to this day). Brother Vince Fernicola, who is our current “piano man” keeps music a vital part of our lodge meetings.

**Did you know that:** Jimm (1992-1993) and Susan Krausman (2001-2002) are the first and Husband and Wife Exalted Ruler combination for Sierra Vista Lodge #2065? Now the family has provided our Lodge with our first Mother (Addie Lee Swearengin) and Daughter (Susan) Exalted Ruler combination. Not to be out done – Ken and Dianna Adams are also a Husband and Wife Exalted Ruler combination for our lodge.

**Did you know that:** In 1989, the idea of building a Ramada was the brain child of Ray Webster? Ray gave birth to the concept and mothered it to its maturation in 1990.

**Did you know that:** The Exalted Ruler’s and the Knight’s stations we still use in our Lodge meetings were constructed many years ago and donated to the Lodge by one of our members, Ognijan “OG” Lakich?



**Did you know that:** The telephone number of Gladstone 8-2065 was originally the residence telephone number of an Army Major in the Fort Huachuca housing area? A Lodge Brother, who worked for the telephone company informed the Major that the telephone number of Gladstone 8-2065 wasn't working properly and should be replaced. The Major agreed to have it replaced and the Lodge Brother made the change over at the telephone office. The Major got a new telephone number and Gladstone 8-2065 miraculously started working just fine at Number 1 Elks Lane (and still does to this day).

**Did you know that:** The Elks Ladies (now Lodge Auxiliary) has had two Mother and Daughter Presidents? Louise Lamm (Mother), 1961-1962 and Bobbie Costello (Daughter), 2001-2002; and Lee Swarengin (Mother) 1988-1989 and 1999-2000 and Susan Krausman (Daughter), 1991-1992.

**Did you know that:** There have been only two women District Deputy Grand Exalted Rulers from the South District and they both are from Sierra Vista Lodge 2065? Can you name them?