

A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR LODGE

One of the outstanding pioneers of the early days of Salisbury was Brother James Powell. Brother Powell is the recognized Father of Elkdom in this section of the country. He was elected to the State Legislature, and while attending his duties in Annapolis, became interested in the work of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, becoming a member of Annapolis Lodge No. 622.

On his return home, his love and enthusiasm for the Lodge soon convinced many of his friends that such an organization was needed in this community. This spreading enthusiasm soon resulted in action being taken to pioneer a Lodge in Salisbury. On December 4, 1902, Salisbury Lodge No. 817 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was instituted by Annapolis Lodge No. 622. A Charter was granted by the Grand Lodge of the Order on July 23, 1903, with thirty-seven charter members.

The first home of our Lodge was in the Cooper Building on North Division Street, opposite the Court House, from there we moved to the Brewington building on the south side of Main Street. In January, 1937, B.P.O.E. No. 817 moved to the last home we would occupy as renting tenants - the Lloyd Watson building on West main Street at Dock Street. Here, in more spacious quarters, we were in position to hold many social events for our members and their ladies. About this time, the Lodge, as a community project, leased the Rich Will Golf Course, which we operated for about two years.

In 1939, our members decided to purchase the Golf Course, which we acquired in a trade for two properties, which we owned in the business section of Salisbury. However, before we could begin the erection of a new home, World War II was declared, and of course, our dream had to be set aside until a later date. Even though we were prevented from building a permanent home at that time, due to wartime restrictions, we did build a temporary structure, which housed us from January, 1941, until January, 1950. With gasoline rationing and other wartime restrictions, together with the fact that many of our members were in the armed services, these nine years will be remembered as a time of great uncertainty.

During World War II, our Lodge assisted in the enlistment of the Flying Cadets for the Air Corps,

instituted the manning of the Airplane Spotting Stations throughout the County, supplied food, sponsored community sings and other entertainment at the local U.S.O., and sent "G" boxes to the members of our Lodge in the Services as well as corresponding with them. For our work at the U.S.O., we were presented with a Certificate of Award. The members of our Lodge took leading parts in all of the War Bond Sales throughout our area. As an organization, our Lodge was called upon on several occasions for special assignments by the President of the United States, and at all times we gave a good account of ourselves in the performance of our duties.

On April 11, 1945, a New Home Committee was appointed to begin working toward the raising of funds to build a new home on our property adjacent to the Municipal Park. This Committee was given full authority to raise and spend all funds raised, in U.S. Government Bonds, as thought best by the committee.

It was the original plan of the Committee to erect only a portion of the building, the balance to be completed as funds were collected, but the enthusiasm of our members grew as the building took shape, until they were insisting that the entire building be erected, according to the plans submitted by the architect. The Architect of our building was Brother Art Hoppe, and the builder, Brother Lloyd Hopkins. Through the efforts of this New Home Committee and the enthusiastic cooperation of the membership, our building was completed.

Since these humble beginnings we have added our Olympic size swimming pool, a picnic pavilion and we are currently planning construction of a new golf cart storage barn.

We can be proud that our Lodge has been actively associated with every civic improvement, as well as supporting at all times the government of the United States, as well as our State and County Government. Our charitable activities are a source of great pride to our membership, as well as the part taken by our Lodge in promoting contests for State and National Scholarships. Our Youth programs and our Veteran's programs help us stand out, as a premier fraternal organization representing the best America has to offer, and will hopefully continue to offer for one hundred more years.



100th Celebration!