

Local Elks To Mark 75 Years

By MARGARET KOCH
Sentinel Staff Writer

Santa Cruz Elks are getting ready to bugle.

That's what elks do — at least in the wilds. Santa Cruz Elks aren't all that wild, but they are preparing for a four-day, bang-up celebration which will mark the 75th anniversary of Santa Cruz Lodge 824.

July 20, 21, 22 and 23 are the dates. Festivities will include a Gay 90s oldtimers' night and charter review, golf tournament, banquet and champagne breakfast.

Kickoff event will be the oldtimers' night with nickel beer, garter sleeves, straw hats, bow ties and cancan dancers. (No ladies allowed.)

Three senior members and past exalted rulers of the Elks got together this week to talk over old times at the local lodge. They are Ray Macaulay, Gene Prolo and Dr. George Dakan.

"Actually the members with longest seniority in membership in Santa Cruz lodge are Ray, there, Allan Horton and Henry Kron," explained Prolo, pointing to Ray Macaulay. Kron lives in Williams, California. Horton, former county treasurer-tax collector, lives in Santa Cruz.

Macaulay has 63 years of Elksdom behind him; and his son, Malcolm, and grandson, Malcolm Scott Macaulay, have followed in his footsteps making it three generations of Macaulays.

The Santa Cruz Lodge, BPOE (stands for Benevolent, Protective Order of Elks), was founded with 46 charter members on December 27, 1902. San Jose Lodge did the honors.

One of the charter members was J.D. Enright, Prolo's father-in-law.

The Elks membership grew steadily through the years and today — even with competition from TV — stands at more than 1000.

"TV is a problem for all lodges and service clubs," observed Prolo, "but I believe the Elks have been hurt the least." There are several reasons for that, they agreed.

"There is almost an element of religion in lodge concepts which embody the founding fathers' concept of the American organization," Prolo pointed out.

"A member must believe in God," Macaulay said.

"And he must be an American citizen," Dakan said.

Other than that, members may be of any race or creed.

Elks don't always stick to such serious business, however. They have their lighter moments and "characters."

"There was George Dunn — remember him?" Macaulay queried. "He had HIS CHAIR — he always sat in it right by one of the bay windows overlooking Pacific Avenue."

"Where he could see everything that went on," added Dakan.

"And he chewed tobacco and he had HIS SPITOON — and he didn't have very accurate aim," Prolo put in. They all laughed.

"He ran the Coast Counties Gas and Electric power plant at Waddell Creek for years," Prolo said.

When George got old and too sick to enjoy the view from the lodge bay windows, he went into a local hospital. There he kept his worldly fortune of \$800 under his pillow, confiding to everyone that "the nurses were after his money."

The lodge hall above Pacific Avenue had several large rooms, one of which was fitted out with pool tables and card tables and other appurtenances. It was sometimes difficult to get ardent pool-playing members to quit the game and attend the meetings.

was being sought — the non-card player members were going to fine him (a common practice in civic clubs and lodges).

"We looked everywhere — he had been there just minutes before and we knew he was still there someplace, but we couldn't find him," Dakan said.

The mystery was solved later: there were full long drapes hanging between two of the rooms and the canny fellow had wrapped himself in the drapes and was completely concealed.

At one meeting which was running late due to involved business, several older members took a rope and threaded it through all three outside door handles so no member could escape until the meeting ended. The zealots were Ed Lilly, Charlie Towne, Charley Hammer and Hi Faneuf.

"That happened when we met upstairs in the Williamson Garrett Building," Macaulay said. "The rooms were arranged so all three lodge hall doors were side by side in the hallway. That was the Native Sons Hall for years."

When Santa Cruz Elks organized for the first several years of the lodge's existence it met on Locust Street in a small lodge hall owned by the late Fred Howe. (It's now a parking lot behind the I.D. Building.)

Then the meetings moved upstairs in the Williamson Garrett building, and finally in 1920 the Elks moved into their own building on Pacific Avenue. It was the former Waldo Hotel, much remodeled, located at 1214 Pacific. Dr. A.F. Cowden, father of Dr. Ambrose Cowden, was the Exalted Ruler and headed the building committee.

In the following year, October 6-8, 1921, the local lodge hosted the seventh annual California State Elks Association conclave. It drew nearly 700 members and included a parade the old timers still talk about.

In 1940 the 26th annual state convention was staged in Santa Cruz with nearly 3000 delegates and their families.

In 1948 the 34th annual get-together was again located in Santa Cruz with Past Exalted Ruler Gene Prolo and Exalted Ruler Pat Freeman in charge of arrangements. It drew about

7000 delegates and members. In appreciation for his work Prolo was presented with an honorary life membership and a solid gold-jeweled membership card (which he keeps in a bank vault).

Latest big development for the Elks took place June 5, 1966, when, under the leadership of Exalted Ruler (then) Don Mungai, they dedicated their new lodge hall.

The building program had started in 1960 with Prolo and Joe Alcantara as co-chairmen of the fund-raising.

The new lodge has attractive facilities for Elks, their families, the Elks Ladies and members of the Emblem Club. It sits on 11 acres at 150 Jewel Street and the modern building is approximately 22,500 square feet in size. Norton S. Curtiss was the architect and Carl N. Swenson of San Jose, the builder. Ernie Dillon headed the building committee.

The Elks rarely publicize the great good they do — the charity work, the aid to hospitalized veterans of all wars, the scholarships, the home for aged members, and the Cerebral Palsy project which they adopted in 1948.

Today the lodge is gearing itself more to family activities and family participation.

There are 31 past exalted rulers living in Santa Cruz. And among the honorary life members there are local men honored for their "distinguished service" — G. Darrell Cardiff, Ernest Dillon, Gene Prolo.

Ray is the oldest past exalted ruler and dates his membership from 1915. In 1923 he served as ER and in 1962 he received his honorary membership.

George Dakan joined in 1926, served as ER in 1951-52 and received his honors in 1964.

Prolo joined in 1937, served as ER in 1947 and was awarded honorary membership in 1948.

Very first honorary life member of Santa Cruz lodge was George Chittenden.

Exalted Ruler at present is John J. Regan who says he hopes "all members and their families will attend the events marking the celebration of our 75th anniversary."

PAST EXALTED RULERS, SANTA CRUZ LODGE



DR. A. F. COWDEN



JUDGE BENJ. K. KNIGHT



LLOYD BOWMAN



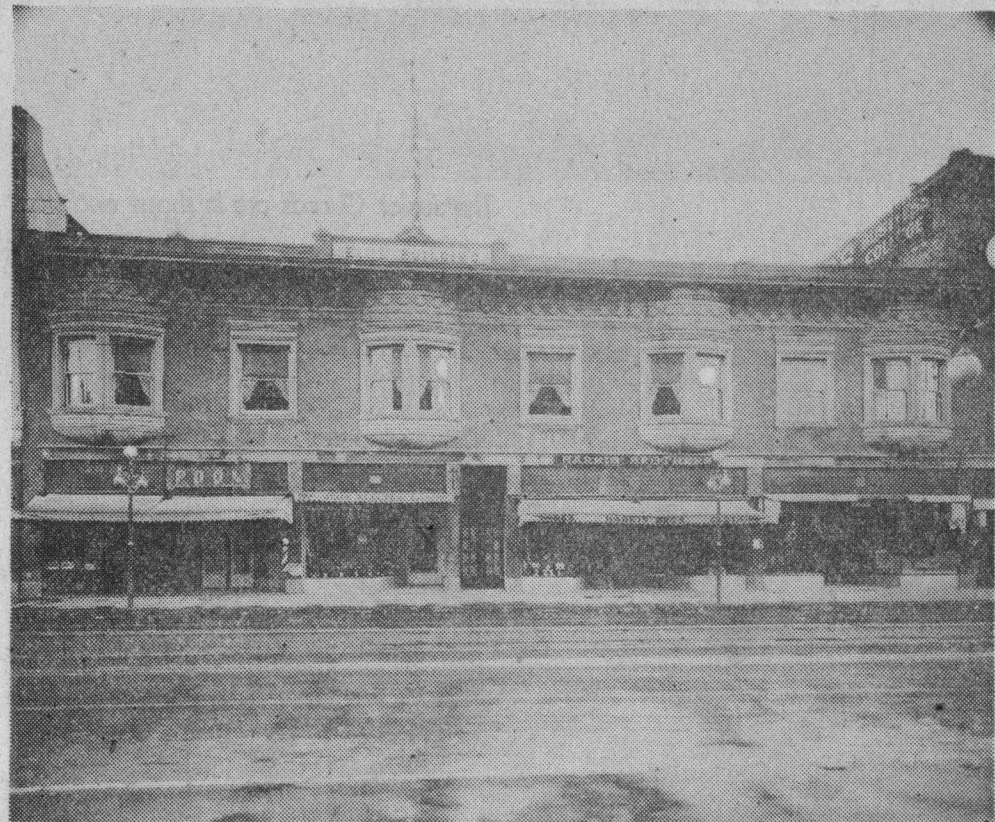
JUDGE H. J. BIAS



The slate of officers for 1921 included these Elks: top from left: Ray Macaulay, A.S.T. Johnson who was Exalted Ruler, and George Chittenden; bottom from left: James R. Williamson and Milo A. Cain.



New Elks Lodge above replaces old building on Pacific Avenue stairs led to second-story lodge rooms, in photo below





A few years back, these past Exalted Rulers got together for this photo. From left, in front row: Ray Macaulay, Roy Johnson, Laurence Canfield, Howard Emigh, Alec Petitdidier, Frank Carroll, Johnny Johnson, Lloyd Hebborn and Al Strong. Second row, from left: Gene Prolo, Roy Drieman, Dr. Maynard Linscott, Pat Freeman, Edwin Andersen, Phil Shaeffer, Bill Dean and Lloyd Foster.

"We used to turn out the lights on them — that usually worked," commented Prolo. "Except when they got wise and put candles on the bar," Dakan recalled.

Once a card-playing member

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