

ELKS FORM CLUB ON GUADALCANAL



Even in the South Pacific the spirit of the Order keeps our men together.

ON an island in the South Pacific which few Elks had heard of before the War, members of lodges back in the States have gathered together and set up a club which would do credit to many a town in America. It boasts some sort of record for having the greatest turnover in membership and officers of any group in the Order.

It all started in the late summer of 1944—the brainchild of Army S/Sgt. Ernest C. Frey of Houston, Tex., Lodge, No. 151, who was the first to be elected president. While on the prowl for Brother Elks, Sgt. Frey met Army Colonel C. H. Nichols of Bakersfield, Calif., Lodge, No. 226, who immediately offered the use of his offices in the Army Port Superintendent's Building where the first meetings were held. A handful of Elks searched this island outpost of the Armed Forces for others, and

enlisted the cooperation of the local Army Special Services radio station. Soon 35 Elks gathered at the Port Superintendent's office to discuss plans.

Meetings were held regularly from then on and now the club has an average active, paid-up membership of 60. More than 200 Elks have visited the Guadalcanal club at one time or another, when the Army, Navy and Marine Corps provided them with a temporary residence there. Almost every meeting brings new faces to the clubhouse and all too many sessions end with officers turning over their duties to others, in preparation for departure to the battlefronts, but they carry on with an enthusiasm undimmed by the shadow of war.

After two months of meeting in whatever Army or Navy building was available, the Elks began dreaming of a clubhouse. How they obtained it is one of those things generally called "American ingenuity" but which more nearly resembles a scavenger hunt.

A Quonset hut was salvaged from a dump heap. That was a start, but another problem was to find a site for the

Members of the Guadalcanal Elks club meet in their Quonset hut.

building. No Army or Navy organization wanted the responsibility of a private club on its premises, even for recreational purposes. Through diplomacy, the Elks induced one Army commander to provide land for the clubhouse by making it an official building through its use as a classroom in the daytime.

A Quonset hut, as such, is a drab looking clubhouse, especially when it has no floor, no doors, no windows, no furniture. The boys solved this problem, too. With scrap lumber and beaverboard from the dump heap they turned the interior into a bright and cheerful place. A mechanically inclined Elk rebuilt a generator from scraps discarded by the Armed Forces. From then on, things turned up from all over. Ash trays were built from old bomb casings. A bar was constructed with plywood from a junked building. An electric fan was produced from a motor

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salvaged from an old airplane turret and a fan from a wrecked jeep. We might add here that Houston, Tex., Lodge got wind of what was going on and that their fellow member, Sgt. Frey, was elected the first president, and another Houston Elk, Navy Seabee T. O. Montgomery SK 2/c, the first secretary. No. 151 decided to do something to help and very graciously sent a gift of \$100 which was used to procure a radio and an electric fan.

Chairs and tables were constructed and the Army Special Services branch and members chipped in with magazines, games and cards. The building was finished in December, in time for a Christmas party.

Among the leaders in organizing the club and obtaining the building was Army 1st Sgt. Walter C. Ridenor of Knoxville, Tenn., formerly a member of Helena, Mont., Lodge, No. 193, who is vice-president of the club.

"The Brothers really did a fine job of getting this place together," he said as he surveyed the finished product. "There were soldiers, sailors and Marines in the original group, and they pitched in like a football team in a tough game. Everyone contributed what he could find in dumps over the island and the results look pretty good.

"We just wanted a place to meet and a place where transient Elks in the Armed Forces could stop and find something like the atmosphere of the club back home."

The latest president was Navy Aviation Radio Technician 3/c Leslie E. Kephart, a member of San Diego, Calif., Lodge, No. 168, who also took care of the clubhouse, cleaning it up before meetings and seeing that everything needed was on hand.

"It's been a lot of work, and we're proud of it," Kephart said. "This building is far beyond all the expectations we had when we first started planning it."

The secretary, Army Sgt. Wayne A. Glew, of Turtle Creek, Pa., a member of Braddock, Pa., Lodge, No. 883, said he had trouble keeping track of members because of the rapid turnover.

"We issue a card to members who are in good standing in their lodges back in the States," he said. "We have a \$5 membership fee, and the men who use the clubhouse contribute \$5 a



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month to keep up the building."

"We don't have any trouble collecting money," the treasurer declared. He is Army 1st Sgt. Fred Miller, Jr., of Schenectady, N. Y., a member of Battle Creek, Mich. Lodge, No. 131. "The men out here have more money than they can spend on this island. They figure the entertainment and relaxation they get here is worth more than the small charge we have."

The bar is supplied with beer and soft drinks by members contributing from their own Government issue. Cigarettes and candy purchased at Army exchanges are kept on hand for sale. The small profits made from the sale of drinks go into the club treasury and are spent for the benefit of the members. Probably no Elks club in the world concentrates so much effort upon finding ways to spend its money. In January there was more than \$200 in the till.

Sgt. Miller explained that membership attendance was encouraged by a lottery every Monday night—the regular meeting time—when members' names are drawn from a hat and \$25 in cash prizes awarded. The winners generally turn right around and spend this money getting something for the club.

Rank is dropped at the door when members assemble, and rivalry among branches of the Service vanishes. Brother Elks ranking from colonels to privates and apprentice seamen enjoy the same privileges at the clubhouse. Honorary memberships have been given to several service officers who were helpful in getting the club started, and these members drop around occasionally to see how things are going.

In good home-town Elk tradition, the members have had one "outing"—a beach party at which beer was served free; the men induced their mess sergeants to provide the steaks which normally would have been served to the Elks at their regular service camps.

These men have given encouragement to other fraternal organizations in this war zone. The clubhouse is used by Masons who have formed a Square and Compass Club. Other fraternal orders will be permitted to use the building so long as their meetings do not interfere with Elk activities.

The members have plans for the future, hoping to establish clubs on some of the other islands when they change stations at the behest of the military. This club is one of the two known to exist in the South Pacific. The other is at Esperito Santu. A group of Elks meets occasionally in the Russell Islands but has no clubhouse. The boys at Guadalcanal claim they have the best club building their side of the International Date Line.

MEMBERSHIP LIST GUADALCANAL ELKS CLUB

NAME	LODGE
Ernest C. Frey	Houston, Tex., No. 151
Thos. O. Montgomery	Houston, Tex., No. 151
Powers S. Agnew	Greenville, S. C., No. 858
Ray A. Craven	Des Moines, Ia., No. 98
Fred Miller, Jr.	Battle Creek, Mich., No. 131
Forrest W. Buckman	Kalamazoo, Mich., No. 50
A. S. Regan	Corpus Christi, Tex., No. 1628
Walter C. Ridenor	Helena, Mont., No. 193
Henry Hawkins	Montgomery, Ala., No. 596
Gordon R. MacKerrow	Helena, Mont., No. 193
Logan D. Burd	Canton, O., No. 68
Wayne L. Howe	Kelso, Wash., No. 1482
John W. Hackelman	Eugene, Ore., No. 357
Anthony A. Post	Madison, Wis., No. 410
Michael Boyle	Freehold, N. J., No. 1454
John P. Kennedy	Jackson, O., No. 466
Gus D. Brown	Bremerton, Wash., No. 1181
Alfred M. Haynes	San Diego, Calif., No. 168
Orris G. Warthen	Hastings, Neb., No. 159
H. V. Hally	Whittier, Calif., No. 1258
R. G. Elliott	Logansport, Ind., No. 66
William McNulty	Mt. Vernon, N. Y., No. 842
W. J. Bora	Ticonderoga, N. Y., No. 1494
Wayne A. Glew	Broddack, Pa., No. 883
Jesse A. Steiner	New Kensington, Pa., No. 512
Wm. C. Rasmussen	Watsonville, Calif., No. 1300
R. C. Hoffman	Alexandria, Va., No. 758
Jack B. Allison	Eugene, Ore., No. 357
Tony Ross	Bremerton, Wash., No. 1181
A. Ingersoll	Greely, Colo., No. 809
Lawrence E. Hobbs	Houston, Tex., No. 151
Albert D. Elkins	Yanouver, Wash., No. 823
Ira J. Talton	Groversville, N. Y., No. 226
Edward P. Roberts	Madisonville, Ky., No. 738
A. A. Andrade	Alameda, Calif., No. 1015
Jeremiah J. O'Neill	Hudson, Mass., No. 959
Ernest C. Galde	Eau Claire, Wis., No. 402
John M. Wilson	Sullivan, Ind., No. 911
Fred C. Ziegenhardt	Hamilton, O., No. 93
L. E. Kephart	San Diego, Calif., No. 168
Fred C. Triebel	Grand Island, Neb., No. 604
George N. Ward	New Albany, Ind., No. 270
D. E. MacLean	Wenatchee, Wash., No. 1186
Walter A. Moore	Adrian, Mich., No. 429
George W. Jones	Pamona, Calif., No. 789
John A. Manning	San Juan, Puerto Rico, No. 972
Robert S. Lewis	New Haven, Conn., No. 25
J. M. Flannigan	Sandpoint, Ida., No. 1376
Floyd W. Peterie	Porterville, Calif., No. 1342
J. P. Germer	Olney, Ill., No. 926
Robert D. Britton	East Chicago, Ind., No. 981
John D. McGrath	Fond du Lac, Wis., No. 57
Woodrow W. Griffith	Callettsburg, Ky., No. 942
Sam J. Schillaci	Birmingham, Ala., No. 79
M. L. Earl	Mt. Vernon, Wash., No. 1604
James G. Orphan	Evanston, Ill., No. 1316
Oscar H. Gibson	Phoenix, Ariz., No. 335
George B. Witman	Ontario, Calif., No. 1419
Elmer H. Northan	Kingston, N. Y., No. 550
W. C. Shealy	Augusta, Ga., No. 205
Dermont C. Miller	Apollo, Pa., No. 386
Edward K. Crawford	Charleston, W. Va., No. 202
Joseph B. Pearson	Fairmont, W. Va., No. 294
George L. Benedict	Winsted, Conn., No. 844
Don K. Gent	Marshfield, Ore., No. 1160
O. K. Fisher	Muscatine, Ia., No. 304
R. R. Reinke	Minat, N. D., No. 1089
C. H. Nichols	Bakersfield, Calif., No. 266
Ralph W. Root	Madison, S. D., No. 1442
George C. Peterson	Martins Ferry, O., No. 895
John V. Simmons	Louisville, Ky., No. 8
Andrew B. Allen	Ashland, Ky., No. 350
Boris G. Demitroff	Jackson, Mich., No. 113
George M. Pratt	Brookfield, Mo., No. 874
Dan Estron	Manistiquie, Mich., No. 632
Edward C. Lechleitner	Hempstead, N. Y., No. 1485
C. E. Davidson	Casper, Wyo., No. 1353
Leonard A. Miller	Yakima, Wash., No. 318
W. W. Martindale	Portsmouth, Va., No. 82
James J. Guyler	Hamilton, O., No. 93
Leonard Joseph	McAlester, Okla., No. 533
Warren J. Morris	Casper, Wyo., No. 1353
Roy C. Miesse	Helena, Mont., No. 193
James E. Fritsch	Owosso, Mich., No. 753
Leo J. Orlikowski	Milwaukee, Wis., No. 46
Edwin F. Coons	Seattle, Wash., No. 92
Leonard E. Olson	Moscow, Ida., No. 249
Harrison P. Bolton	Vancouver, Wash., No. 823
Edward F. Potts	Spokane, Wash., No. 228
George R. Aigee	Napa, Calif., No. 832
F. J. Craig	Phillipsburg, Pa., No. 1173
Gerold C. Foster	Wilkinsburg, Pa., No. 577
James S. Jordan	Langview, Wash., No. 3514
W. L. Templeton	Phoenix, Ariz., No. 335
Lars A. Solland	Spokane, Wash., No. 228
Virgil R. Brinkman	Glendale, Calif., No. 1289
Wilfred G. Skeels	San Bernardino, Calif., No. 836

