

Knights Of Columbus Have Had Council Here 40 Years, Have Own Home On Main St.

It was during the winter months, just 40 years ago, that here was born the idea of establishing a council of the Knights of Columbus in Houlton. It came about through the interest of some seven members of other councils, who were members of St. Mary's Parish, plus other parishioners who were desirous of participating in the formation of a council in Houlton.

In the winter of 1916-1917 the plan was first discussed and almost immediately steps were taken to put it into effect. Rev. P. M. Silke was pastor of St. Mary's Church at the time and his support was quickly enlisted in the proposal. Help also came from the late R. F. Ward, treasurer of the First National Bank, Dr. Joseph A. Donovan, Frank Cassidy, William Doyle, manager of the F. W. Woolworth store here at that time, and Edward McLaughlin.

MEMBERS QUICKLY SIGNED

A meeting was called of those who might be interested in becoming charter members of the council and there was no difficulty in securing the names of sufficient members to make up the organization that was to become known as Houlton Council, No. 1873.

Following is the list of new members of the order who became charter members here: James W. Skehan, James McGillicuddy, Fred McLaughlin, Frank Smith, John Doherty, James B. Callnan, Edward Conlogue, Dr. Gregory P. Cassidy, George W. Coffey, Sr., John C. Fitzgerald, Jeremiah Lenehan, Fred Doherty, William J. Callnan, Leroy McQuade, James M. Pierce, George W. Coffey, Jr., Herbert Smith, Guy N. Carroll, Thomas J. Callnan, Henry Cassidy and Edward C. Donovan.

The following members of other councils, transferred their membership to Houlton to become charter members: R. F. Ward, Dr. J. A. Donovan, Thomas Monohan, Frank B. Cassidy, Michael McCarthy, Edward McLaughlin and Fred Monohan.

CHARTER RECEIVED

Houlton Council received its

charter April 25, 1917 and the charter members were initiated by the degree masters from Fort Fairfield Council. The major degree was exemplified by John F. Daley of Bangor under the direction of the state deputy, James Neilon of Biddeford.

The first meeting was held in Perks hall, the third floor of what is now the Feeley block, and James W. Skehan was named the first grand knight of Houlton Council.

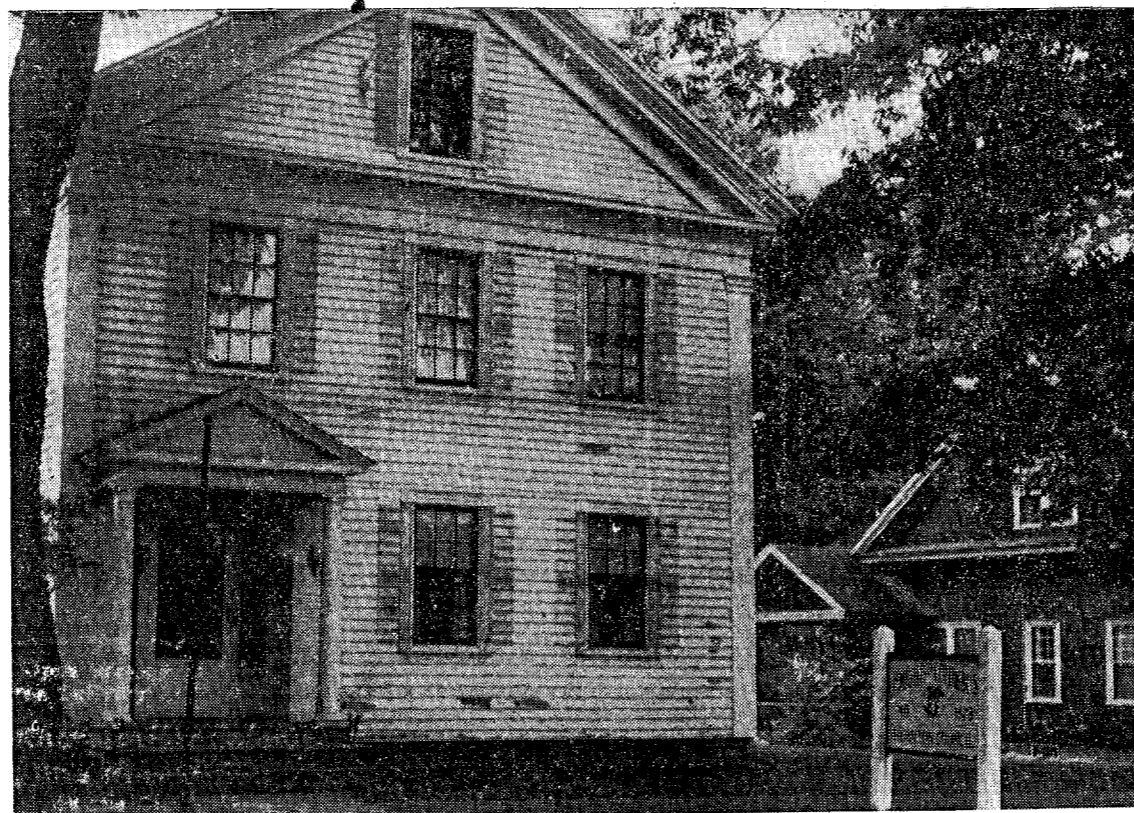
The membership increased rapidly and it soon became necessary to seek larger quarters. At about that time a fraternal order known as the Owls had relinquished their local franchise and abandoned their quarters here on the third floor of the Putnam-Ervin block. To these much more commodious quarters the Knights of Columbus moved.

A WAR ACTIVITY

World War One was begun at about this time and the Supreme office of the Knights of Columbus issued a call to all councils to give every aid to the boys who enlisted to defend their country. The order opened up and conducted what were known as "The K. of C. Huts" in which they provided entertainment, made books and writing materials available as well as knitted goods for the service men.

Houlton Council did its share of work in helping this activity, its members responding generously in contributing money as well as materials which were forwarded to the Supreme Office in New Haven, Conn. and from there to the huts. It will be remembered that the slogan of this activity was "Everyone Welcome and Everything Free".

As a part of the service it provided, the Supreme Office enlisted the services of men and women who would look out for the boys who frequented the buildings housing the huts. Lunches were served by the ladies of the parishes where the huts were located and they were served free of any charge. Regardless of creed or color, everyone was made welcome. The service was provided



The fourth headquarters of the Houlton Council, Knights of Columbus, became their own property in 1951 when the organization purchased the former Dr. F. W. Mann residence on Main street which they have since occupied.

by the "Knights Back Home" and was extended to overseas areas as well.

MOVE SECOND TIME

A year later the Meduxnekeag Club, which had long occupied a dwelling house at the northeast end of Market Square, also outgrew its quarters and was obliged to move. By a rearrangement of locations, the Knights of Columbus made their second move and transferred to the top floor of the Taggett & Gartley block and the Dux Club took over the third floor of the Putnam-Ervin block.

In these quarters they were to remain for almost the next 30 years, or until 1951. In response to a desire long held by the members for quarters better adapted to their use and more convenient, the council took steps to purchase the former residence of the late Dr. F. W. Mann on Main street where they have henceforth been comfortably located in their own home.

A distinct honor came to Houlton Council a few years ago when one of their members, James M. Pierce, was honored by Pope Pius XII by being made a Knight of St. Gregory in recognition of his outstanding work in parish affairs and throughout the community.

HOST TO STATE COUNCIL

In 1932 the Houlton Council was host to the State Council and accepted the same responsibility again 20 years later. On the occasion of the early state conclave at which the local council entertained, the ladies were invited to attend the annual banquet for the first time in the history of the State Council. This innovation turned out to be such a success it was permanently adopted.

On the occasion of the second state council meeting held in Houlton, in 1952, the delegates were given such a hearty and cordial reception by the townspeople that they were high in their praise of the hospitality of the community.

It was at this meeting that James W. Skehan was elected a delegate to represent the insurance membership at the Supreme convention, held in August of that summer in Los Angeles, Calif.

In 1925 a ladies auxiliary of Houlton Council was organized known as "The Columbus Guild" which has been a great help, not only to the Knights of Columbus but also, through their charitable work, throughout the community in behalf of needy families, Catholic as well as non-Catholic. Mrs. Marion Hogan is

currently serving as president of the Columbus Guild.

PAST GRAND KNIGHTS

Following is the succession of Grand Knights of Houlton Council

Goals of Garden Club Have Been Well Realized

When the Houlton Garden Club was organized Sept. 20, 1932, its purposes, as then stated, were, "to stimulate interest in gardening and to promote beauty in all forms of civic and community life."

The organization has well exemplified these goals during the past quarter of a century it has been in existence in Houlton.

In the beginning, as now, club meetings were held on the third Tuesday of each month beginning

cil who succeeded the charter member to hold that office, James W. Skehan: Frank B. Cassidy, Leo Downey, Charles O. McDonald, Thomas Fitzpatrick, John C. Fitzgerald, William Griffin, Paul Davenport, George McGillicuddy, Joseph McGillicuddy, Wilfred Hannan, Leroy McQuade, J. Donald McCluskey, Paul A. McGillicuddy, James Hackett, Wendell Adams and Phil Jenkins.

The newly elected Grand Knight who will serve for 1957 and 1958 is Joseph B. Skehan.

in March of each year and continuing through November.

MRS. CLARK FOUNDER

The credit for founding the club goes to Mrs. Frank P. Clark, who has been an active member of the organization since its birth and who served as president at various times during the first six years of the club's life. In addition to these duties, Mrs. Clark has also served for three years as Aroostook Director and for two years as Regional Director following the creation of that office.

The Houlton Garden Club became federated in 1933, the year following its organization.

SEVERAL PROJECTS

Among the projects successfully undertaken by the club over the years, have been conservation and community betterment programs, studies in flower arrangement, with demonstrations at annual meetings. Horticulture, too, has been especially stressed. Junior nature study has been introduced into the local schools through a guide book to Junior Nature studies.

Miss Rideout's training at National Audobon camp has been sponsored and her instructive talks have been enjoyed at club meetings.

SPECIAL ZONING ORDINANCE

The club can take great credit

for a special zoning ordinance which is now on the town's statute books. This came about through a campaign of education which was conducted by the club's community betterment committee. A zoning council composed of the heads of 12 women's organizations was formed in the community. A bi-monthly series of articles appeared in the Houlton Pioneer Times and the project was also furthered by a talk delivered at a club meeting by Dean Paul Cloke of the University of Maine on the subject of zoning.

Every year since it was organized, with the exception of some of the war years, the club has sponsored flower shows which have been a popular summer event. The club has also exhibited at the annual State Flower show and at the Danish Village, outside of Portland.

For several years the Houlton Garden Club made a welcome addition to the holiday season by sponsoring the annual Christmas lighting contest.

The local club has acted as host to the Aroostook Pilgrimage, on which occasion its guests included officers and members of the Garden Club Federation of Maine. It has also entertained regional meetings and annually extends an invitation to the regional director for the first meeting of the year.

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