

Virginia Elks Association News

November 3, 2015

GER Ron and First Lady Nancy Hicks' Visit to Massachusetts

The weather continued to amaze as we left Tilton, New Hampshire, on Thursday, Sept 24, for the "Bay State" and Mansfield, Massachusetts, just outside Boston. PGER Amos McCallum and Barb drove us to the Chelmsford, Massachusetts, Lodge 2310 for the final "handoff" in our blitz through New England. We arrived at the Lodge about 10:30, and were greeted by ER Wayne Magnuson and Mike and Donna Zellen, friends from our days on the Board of Grand Trustees. (Mike is the Endorsed Candidate for GER for 2016-2017.) Also present were Special Rep Tony Piccolo and his wife Maureen, PER Lee Bradley and a few other Lodge and State Elks. The Lodge provided fruit, pastries, juice and coffee for our brief visit. Before we left, PER Bradley gave us a tour of the relatively new facility.



Ron and Nancy and Wayne Magnuson, ER of Chelmsford Lodge 2310

After bidding farewell to PGER Amos and Barb, we climbed on board with Mike and Donna and headed to Boston. Along the way, we made a stop at the Mt Hope Cemetery to pay our respects at the "Elks Rest," an area of the Cemetery purchased for the deceased Members of our Order by Boston Lodge #10 in 1883. We were met at the Cemetery by Massachusetts State President Jeff Hopkins, Boston Lodge ER Bob Williams and Secretary Dave Greenwood and other Elks, including the Members of the Boston Lodge Committee who continue to maintain the burial site. This is the final resting place of Charles Algernon Sidney Vivian, the Founder of our Order, who died in Colorado in 1880 at the age of 38. In 1889, the Boston Lodge paid to have Vivian's body removed from a neglected and essentially unmarked grave in Colorado and re-interred in the Mt Hope "Elks Rest." Ron placed a wreath at the base of the Elk



Endorsed Candidate for GER in 2016-2017 Mike Zellen and his wife Donna, Ron and Nancy, and Massachusetts State President Jeff Hopkins at the Elks Rest, My Hope Cemetery, Boston, Massachusetts



Tony and Maureen Piccolo, Nancy, and Donna Zellen. (This was taken at the Elks Rest in My Hope Cemetery)

Statue erected on a huge Boulder that marks the grave of our first Elk Leader. Also buried at the "Elks Rest" is the first ER of the Boston Lodge, Edwin Perry, and many other Lodge Members.

We arrived at the Boston Lodge about 1:00 pm, where we were greeted by Lodge Secretary Dave Greenwood and GL Committee on Judiciary Chairman Frank Olivieri and his wife Midge. The Lodge provided lunch, including some delicious Clam Chowder (Pronounced "Chowdah" in Massachusetts!) for our entourage and the other Elks in attendance. Upon leaving the Boston Lodge, Mike drove us along Jamaica Way for a drive-by tour of downtown Boston, eventually making it to our hotel in Mansfield, Massachusetts. After five straight nights of different hotel rooms, we were looking forward to unpacking and spending the next few nights in the same bed.



Ron with Dave Greenwood, Secretary of Boston Lodge 10



Ron and Elk Riders of Taunton Lodge 150

We went to Taunton Lodge 150 for dinner on Thursday night, where we were greeted outside their new Lodge building by ER George Mandeville and a large gathering of Lodge Members. After a delicious dinner, served by the Taunton Elks Riders, we enjoyed locally-made ice cream for make-your-own sundaes. Ron spoke briefly about Elks Pride and Community Focus, as he does with all of our Lodge visits. The Taunton Lodge is a big ENF supporter and presented Ron with a check for ENF in honor of our visit. While at the Lodge, Ron was interviewed by a photographer/reporter from the Taunton Gazette about his visit to Massachusetts and the Taunton Lodge. The Officers and Members of the Taunton Lodge are excited about the possibilities of growth in their new Lodge facility.



Ron and George Mandeville, ER of Taunton Lodge 150



Ron at the 'Sundae Bar' at the Taunton Lodge

Friday was a casual day with our entourage traveling by bus, driven by PDDGER Kevin Alkins and navigated by State President Jeff Hopkins, to the Iwo Jima Memorial, followed by a visit to Battlefield Cove, the location of the largest collection of museum-quality ships and boats in the Country. There we were piped aboard the USS Joseph Kennedy, Jr, a WWII



Nancy, Ron, Donna and Mike Zellen at the Iwo Jima Memorial in Fall River, MA



Elaine Auterio, ER of Newton Lodge 1327, and Ron cutting cake at the 100th Anniversary Celebration Dinner of the Newton Lodge

Destroyer, then went through the USS Lionfish, a submarine which would have been manned by 80 sailors in tight quarters, and finally boarded the USS Massachusetts, a large battleship which would have carried over 2,300 sailors.

Lunch at Franklin Lodge 2136 hosted by ER Peter Gaw included a good assortment of sandwiches, pasta, and salad, followed by a cake decorated with our photograph from the cover of the September Elks Magazine and ice cream.

Friday evening we attended the 100th Anniversary Reception and Dinner at Newton Lodge 1327. The Newton Lodge is on the second floor of their large downtown building, with commercial tenants along the sidewalk below. Newton has the second lowest average age of any Lodge in Massachusetts, always makes the GER per capita goal, received three Community Investment Grants last year, and Lodge Member Darlene McDonald is now serving as the first female Chairman of the State Trustees.

Also attending the Dinner were Anna Rodina, widow of Departed Member Joe Rodina, Past Grand Lodge Officer and Honorary PSP, and their daughter Donna, Past Supreme National President of the Emblem Club.

The Lodge went all out for the celebration with heavy hors d'oeuvres, roast beef with stuffed shrimp, ice cream with strawberries, a 100th Anniversary cake, music throughout the evening and dancing. After dinner, Ron presented ER Elaine Auterio with a plaque in recognition of their 100 years of Elkdom, congratulated the Lodge, spoke about the legacy provided by those who had gone before, encouraged the members to make others aware of the



Ron coming out of a door of USS Lionfish on our visit to Battle Cove in Fall Run, MA



Peter Gaw, ER of Franklin Lodge 2136 with Nancy and Ron



Cake for dessert with photo of Ron and Nancy taken from Elks Magazine at the Franklin Lodge lunch

Lodge accomplishments and their value to the community, and to create their own legacy for those who will follow them. Ron also commented, "This is more than just a celebration of your heritage, it is also a celebration of the fact that the Newton Lodge remains a comfortable, fun, and relaxing home for your Members and a reliable and important partner for this Community." The Lodge presented Ron with a check for ENF and we signed membership cards and received many further donations for ENF. The entertainment for the evening was provided by "Little Paul and his Daughters." After the official festivities, the party got underway. Ron sang backup with "the Daughters" and danced with Little Paul, while Mike Zellen did his best impersonation of Bobby Vinton and sang "Roses are Red" to his wife, Donna. (Both performances made their way onto Facebook very rapidly.) A great, fun evening for all Elks!



A "Selfie" of Ron, Little Paul and his Daughters and Nancy at the Newton Lodge Anniversary Celebration



Ron with Massachusetts State President and member of Fall River Lodge 118 Jeff Hopkins and ER of Fall River Lodge Kathleen Mello,

Saturday morning provided a little time for rest and catch-up before we went to Fall River Lodge 118 for lunch. At their beautiful Lodge with several banquet/meeting rooms, a large lounge and many horseshoe pits, we were greeted by ER Kathleen Mello, State President and Lodge Member Jeff Hopkins, and his brother, PSP Bill Hopkins and former member of the Grand Lodge Public Relations

Committee. Also in attendance was the Massachusetts Senior PSP Don Podgurski, who served on the last Grand Lodge Credentials Committee. For lunch we had Clam "Chowdah," seafood salad and chicken salad sandwiches, and assorted desserts. After lunch, Ron met briefly with the State Vice-Presidents and took photos with the VPs, State Officers, and all the ladies in attendance!



Ron with Massachusetts Senior PSP Don Podgurski

While at the Fall River Lodge, Ron learned that Mansfield Lodge 2633 was close to our hotel, so on the way back we stopped by for a brief visit. We had a chance to meet quite a few Lodge members during the visit, including most of the Lodge Officers, many of whom were already dressed in their tuxedos for the evening festivities at the hotel.



Ron and Lodge Officers of Mansfield Lodge 2633

Saturday Night, prior to the Black Tie Banquet, Ron spoke with the District Deputies and took a few photos during a private gathering in the Hospitality Room. We then joined the other attendees for the Reception before dinner. Approximately 300 Elks and guests attended the Banquet and feasted on soup, salad, roasted chicken, fish, and dessert. Ron spoke about our Lodges being loud and proud of their accomplishments and service to the Community, and letting our Elks light shine throughout the Community as we work to grow Elkdom in all we do. After dinner, Ron was presented with checks in his honor for ENF and we signed membership cards and received additional donations for ENF.

We had the opportunity to visit seven Lodges during our time in Massachusetts. The Elks of Massachusetts, with their 64 Lodges and 40,000 Members led by State Chairman PSP Dan DeGregorio, had a state-wide gain in Membership last year, with many Lodges showing a Membership gain over the last 5 years. This year, William Chase has already sponsored eighteen new Members! The State Major Project, chaired by PSP John Capito, is the Massachusetts Elks Scholarship Foundation, and it annually provides over 600 scholarships and together with the Lodge and Grand Lodge Scholarships over \$1 Million is given out in college scholarships by Massachusetts each year. The Father of the Elks National Foundation, PGER John F. Malley, is from Massachusetts.

Sunday morning, Mike and Donna Zellen drove us back to Boston and the Logan Airport for our return flight home. We had a wonderful eleven day tour of New England and have enjoyed every State visit, every lodge, every meal (and there were many of them), and every great Elk we had the honor and privilege of meeting along the way!

Next week, South Dakota!

Submitted by Ron and Nancy Hicks

Send comments to webmaster@virginiaelks.org

