

AMERICA LODGE #2245

A bit of history

by Charter Member, Cathy Palmeri

1971

53 YEARS

2024

What year was America Lodge formed? America lodge started in September 1971 and its original Charter was signed at the Top Hat Club in Franklin Square. This location is now the professional building opposite Garden World. Our Lodge is blessed to have three remaining members who were signers of that Charter; Rosemarie Montemarano, Fred Tomasone, Esq. and Cathy Palmeri.

Who named our lodge "America" Lodge? Back in 1971 a committee met for the purpose of establishing a name for our Lodge. That group consisted of Joseph Montemarano, Ann Campo and Frank D' Agostino. These pioneers agreed it should be named after our country.

Who was the Chairman of our first Italian Feast? It was Raymond Mineo, Esq. in 1977 and held annually at the Plattduetsche Park in Franklin Square for many years!

Who comprised the committee that initiated our annual Scholarship Program? They were, Ann Campo, Fred Tomasone, Esq. and Vincent Muscarella, Esq.

Did you know what was the largest number of scholarship recipients? There were 17 recipients in the 1980's!

What was the largest membership achieved by America Lodge? Back in 1980 – 1983 we reached an unbelievable 800 members under the leadership of Sal Palmeri.

What was the official title given to our leader before it was changed to "President"? It was "Venerable."

Did you know that we have a NASA astronaut among our membership? Michael Massimino is an honorary member of America Lodge and his grandmother was a longtime member!

Did you know that one of our former Presidents was Editor of the NYS Grand Lodge's newsletter, The Golden Lion, for several years? His name was Frank Rossi.

Who was America Lodge's first Gift of Sight Program chair? Past President Joseph DeGennaro was our first Chairperson.

Did you know - under the leadership of America Lodge member and then NYS President, Joseph Montemarano, Past President Sal Palmeri was appointed to chair a committee to organize and make uniform throughout all the New York Lodges the Regalia, Banners, By-laws, which he did successfully for 18 years.

Where were the past State Conventions held? At the Concord Hotel in Kiamesha Lake, NY. The Concord Hotel was the largest facility in New York and the only venue that could accommodate so many delegates and attendees. America Lodge was represented by over 25 Delegates and the number of State Delegates exceeded 1500!

Did you know America Lodge used to host an annual Fashion Show? The event was chaired by Nancy Binda and went on for more than 15 consecutive years.

Did you know that there were two editors to the original Newsletter in 1971? They were Fred Tomasone, Esq. and Cathy Palmeri all done with a non-electric typewriter.

Did you know that America Lodge was a traveling group? We had among our membership, a travel agent, Josephine Migliore. Through her research and tenacity, the Lodge enjoyed extensive travel both domestic and abroad as she filled buses and planes with members allowing us to experience great camaraderie and wonderment.

Did America Lodge always participate in the Columbus Day Parade? Yes, both local and the parade in New York City. America Lodge participated with more than 60 marchers and were accompanied by the Sewanhaka High School Band. Also, the female marchers wore purple capes sewn by machine by Florence De Gennaro.

America Lodge has a glorious and rich history. It started with an idea and has established itself with a great legacy. We are all proud of its accomplishments and pray that its membership will continue to honor its legacy as we all move forward into a bright and prosperous future.

I hope you enjoyed reading about your history!

