

Landmarks Preservation Commission
August 14, 2001, Designation List 329
LP-2086

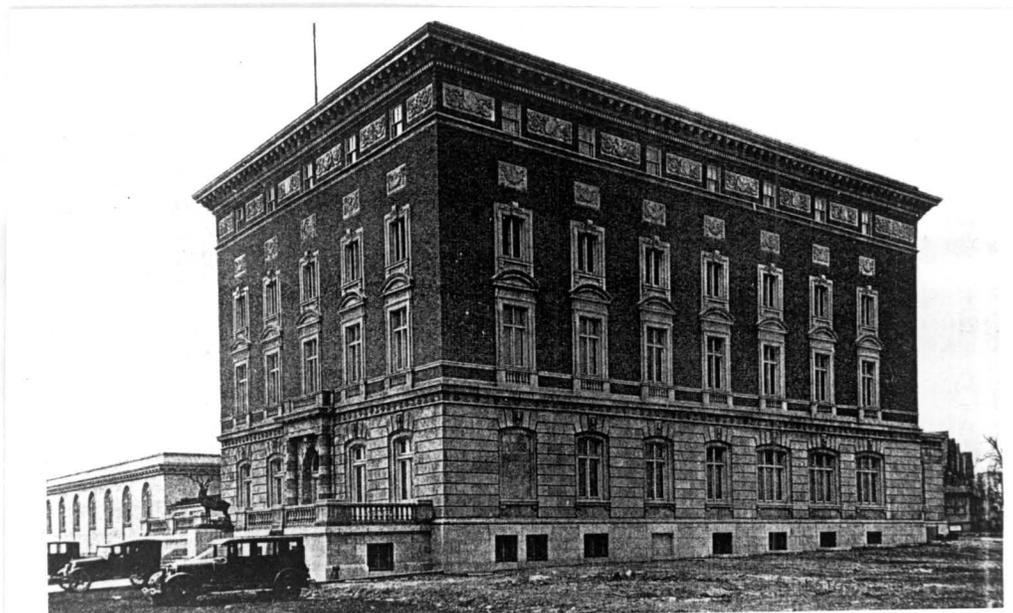
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Queens.
Built 1923-24; architect, The Ballinger Company.

Landmark Site: Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 2475, Lot 12 in part consisting of the land underneath the 1923-24 lodge building.

On April 24, 2001, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, and the proposed designation of the related landmark site (Item No. 3). The hearing was duly advertised according to the provisions of law. Four people testified in favor of the designation, including representatives of the owners of the building, Assemblywoman Margaret Markey, and the Historic Districts Council. There was no testimony in opposition to the designation. The Commission also received correspondence in support of designation from City Council Member John D. Sabini.

Summary

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, located in Elmhurst, Queens, was built in 1923-24 to the designs of the architectural firm, the Ballinger Company. The neo-Classical style building is modeled on the Italian Renaissance palazzo type and is clad in brick, limestone, and granite. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is a fraternal organization founded in New York in 1868 by a group of professional entertainers and actors. The structure, which contains a series of recreational and social spaces, was considered one of the largest and best-equipped fraternal homes in the country, and one of Queen's most handsome buildings at the time of its completion. The building was prominently featured in an article about the design of fraternal buildings that appeared in the *Architectural Forum* in 1926. The freestanding building is distinguished by a full-width front terrace, an ornate entryway, carved keystones with lions' heads, festooned panels, and a prominent cornice. A large bronze statue of an elk, based on the prototype statue designed for the club by the noted sculptor, Eli Harvey, is located on the front terrace. The lodge, one of most prominent buildings in Elmhurst and along Queens Boulevard, remains remarkably intact.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Development of Elmhurst and Queens Boulevard¹

At the time of the consolidation of Greater New York in 1898, only the three western townships of Queens County voted to become part of New York City: Jamaica, Flushing, and Newtown.² Newtown, which bordered the East River and lay closest to Manhattan, was settled by the Dutch in 1640 and incorporated in 1652. By 1790, its population hovered around 2,000. It remained mainly an agricultural community through the mid-nineteenth century, producing vegetables and fruits for the growing urban markets in Long Island City, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. By 1850, Newtown's population had increased to approximately 7,000.

Growth in Newtown continued in the late-nineteenth century, spurred on by the extension of railroads and street railways throughout Queens County. Real estate developers, hoping to capitalize on Newtown's proximity to Manhattan and Brooklyn, began buying tracts of farmland on the outskirts of the village.

Large-scale development began in 1896, when the Cord Meyer Development Company, one of Queens' major homebuilders, began operating in Newtown. Hoping to disassociate its housing development from nearby, foul-smelling Newtown Creek, Cord Meyer Development convinced the post office to rename the town Elmhurst for its large number of stately elm trees. By 1910, the company had completed thousands of houses in the community. Additional development was stimulated by improvements in transportation during the 1910s and 20s, which included the construction of another Long Island Railroad station, the enhancement of trolley service, new elevated train service above Roosevelt Avenue, and the opening of Queens Boulevard.

After the Queensborough Bridge was completed in 1909, new approach roads were needed to accommodate increasing traffic flowing into the rapidly-developing borough. The construction of Queens Boulevard, an eight-mile-long, two-hundred-foot wide arterial highway leading from the bridge to the heart of the borough, began in 1910.³ The new boulevard was completed by 1924, for the most part.⁴ In order to accommodate the wide new road, many buildings along its route were either moved or demolished, and opportunities for new development were created. The segment of Queens Boulevard through Elmhurst was completed in 1923, the same year that construction of the Elks Lodge began.

Growth continued in the 1930s with the opening of the Independent Subway (IND) line in Elmhurst with stops along Queens Boulevard, encouraging denser suburban development in the form of six-story apartment houses and long rows of adjoining houses, as well as additional commercial and industrial development.

Demographic changes followed the Second World War as Elmhurst evolved from an almost exclusively middle-class suburban community with a large Jewish and Italian population to one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the city. By the 1980s, immigrants from 112 countries had settled in Elmhurst, including people from China, Colombia, Korea, India, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Pakistan, Peru, and Guyana.⁵ Development also continued, including the borough's first enclosed shopping mall, which opened in 1973. In addition to the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, Elmhurst's other designated New York City Landmarks are the Reformed Dutch Church of Newtown (85-15 Broadway), the Remsen Cemetery (69-43 Trotting Course Lane), and the Edward E. Sanford House (107-45 47th Avenue).

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks and Queensborough Lodge Number 878⁶

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (the Elks) was founded in New York City in 1867 as the Jolly Corks, an assortment of entertainers and actors led by Charles A. Vivian, an English comic singer who had recently arrived in New York. In the beginning, this group of kindred spirits, most of whom were of British origin, regularly met to drink, sing, dine, and cavort at the Star Hotel on Elm Street.⁷ The group entertained themselves by playing a game involving bottle corks in which the loser would buy the next round. Soon, the happy little coterie styled itself the "Jolly Corks," with Vivian installed as the Imperial Cork.

After the death of one of its members, the survivors decided to organize the Jolly Corks as a lodge along benevolent and fraternal lines with rules and regulations, suitable ritual, and a new name. In February, 1868, the Jolly Corks officially became the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. The elk was said to have been chosen as the club's symbol on account of P.T. Barnum's museum's description of the animal as "'fleet of foot, timorous of wrong, but ever ready to combat in defense of self or the female of the

species.”⁸ At the order’s first meeting, the organization adopted its ritual, by-laws, and mission, which was to “inculcate the principles of charity, justice, brotherly love, and fidelity and to quicken the spirit of American patriotism.”⁹ Vivian was elected as “Right Honorable Primo,” the leader of the lodge; later that title was changed to “Grand Exalted Ruler.”¹⁰ In late 1868, the club’s first satellite lodge opened in Philadelphia, and the New York lodge, located at 193 Bowery, became known as the Grand Lodge.

In the years following the Civil War through the turn of the century, fraternal organizations proliferated in number and membership throughout the United States. The war itself was undoubtedly important to this trend, offering men the experience of military bonding, hierarchy, and ceremony that they wanted to continue in a peacetime setting.¹¹ Prior to the war, there were only a handful of fraternal organizations, the major ones being the Masons and Oddfellows, but by 1907, there were over three hundred. The period from 1864 to 1884 was a particularly important time for the establishment of new orders. Besides the Elks (1868), there were the Knights of Pythias (1864), the Ancient Order of United Workmen (1868), the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine (Shriners, 1871), the Knights of Honor (1873), the Knights of Maccabees (1878), and Modern Woodmen of America (1883). For every club that survived and grew, countless others failed.

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks grew at a rapid rate through the early twentieth century and became known for charity and community service. By 1930, there were 1,421 lodges throughout the country; in 1923-24, the year that Queensborough Lodge 878 was opened, the Elks added 20 new lodges. Membership in 1930 was 761,461. Thirteen thousand new members were added in 1923-24 alone.

Many of the fraternal organizations, such as the Improved Order of Red Men and the Knights of Pythias, collapsed during the depression of the 1930s, as members fell behind in their dues. Those that did survive, including the Elks, lost millions of members. Thousands of lodges, unable to meet mortgage payments, went bankrupt. Also, the rituals, ceremony, and symbolism of the clubs, were becoming less interesting to men as other forms of entertainment gained in popularity. The remaining orders became more enterprising by hosting dinner dances, sponsoring club nights with billiards, card games, and movies; organizing baseball teams, bowling leagues, and recreational trips; and undertaking charitable projects. This led to a revival of club activity after the Second

World War, especially in the 1950s, when many clubs also began to include ladies’ auxiliaries and youth activities.

Interest in fraternal organizations declined after the Vietnam War as a result of societal changes and aging rosters. None of the clubs have been immune. Membership in the Shriners has fallen by half since 1980; the Knights of Columbus, Moose, and Masons have suffered similar declines. Nationally, membership in the Elks has dropped over twenty percent since 1975.

The depletion in members at Queensborough Lodge 878 has been especially harsh. By 2000, its ranks had fallen to fewer than 600 members, a decline of ninety percent. This decrease was due to a variety of reasons, including the diminishing interest in fraternal societies among younger generations. To help defray the cost of taxes and maintenance on the Elmhurst lodge, the Elks began to lease parts of the building to social groups and churches, and to rent out the dining hall for special events.

The Ballinger Company, Architects¹²

The Ballinger Company, a Philadelphia-based architectural firm, was formed in 1920 by architect Walter Francis Ballinger (1867-1924), who had been in partnership with Emile G. Perrot in the firm Ballinger & Perrot since 1902. Ballinger was born in Venango County, Pennsylvania, where his father Jacob Howe Ballinger, operated a machine shop until his death in 1869. Ballinger’s mother then moved the family to Woodstown, New Jersey, where Walter Francis worked as a farmhand and in local factories, while taking evening classes in business, engineering, and architecture at the YMCA and the Drexel Institute.

In 1889, he entered the prosperous architectural and engineering firm of Geissinger & Hales, where he was employed in a variety of business capacities, including bookkeeper, stenographer, and clerk. In 1895, he formed a brief partnership with another member of the firm, William B. Brinkworth; that same year Ballinger replaced Walter H. Geissinger as a principal in the Hales firm; this successor firm, Hales & Ballinger, continued until Edward M. Hales retired in 1901. At that time, the chief draftsman in the firm, Emile G. Perrot, became a partner and the firm continued as Ballinger & Perrot. In 1920, Ballinger bought out the interests of his partner, and the firm became the Ballinger Company.

Throughout its long history, the Ballinger Company maintained the engineering emphasis that was established by Geissinger and Hales. Concentrating primarily on industrial and commercial structures, the

firm also expanded its range of building types to include institutional, ecclesiastical, and residential projects. In addition, Ballinger & Perrot were pioneers in the use of reinforced concrete, publishing a book on the subject in 1909. Ballinger was also a co-inventor of the “super-span sawtooth” type of roof construction, which he patented, that was used widely in the construction of factory buildings. By 1912, Ballinger & Perrot had opened an office in New York City.

By 1916, Ballinger’s son, Robert Irving Ballinger (1882-1974), a graduate of Pratt Institute, had become associated with his father’s firm. Although the firm closed its New York office in 1936, it continued to operate through 1969 in Philadelphia under Robert I. Ballinger and his son, Robert I., Jr., who graduated from Cornell University in 1941.

Ballinger’s most notable works in Philadelphia are the Atwater Kent Manufacturing Company Plant (1923), the Budd Company Red Lion Plant (1942) and the TWA Maintenance Hangar (1954) at Philadelphia Airport. Its major New York commissions include the American Chicle Co. factory (1919-20, Ballinger & Perrot) and the Motor Starter Co. factory (1918, Ballinger & Perrot), both in Long Island City, as well as the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Queensborough Lodge 878 (1923-24) in Elmhurst.

The Queensborough Lodge 878 Building¹³

In 1921, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks purchased land on the south side of Queens Boulevard in Elmhurst, Queens, for the construction of a new building for Lodge 878. The lodge was founded in 1903, and was holding its meetings at Lodge 828 in Long Island City, Queens. In the early 1920s, Queens Boulevard was a newly-widened thoroughfare lined by building lots ready for development. The site of the Elks lodge, not far from the major intersection where Queens Boulevard crosses two of historic Newtown’s oldest routes, Broadway and Grand Avenue, had previously been part of a nearby estate.

Plans for the new lodge were drawn up by the architectural firm the Ballinger Company, which designed a freestanding Italian palazzo with a one-story annex for the pool and gymnasium. (The annex is not part of this designation.) Construction began in October 1923 by the McIntee Construction Co. of Manhattan. Originally, the Elks had envisioned the eventual replacement of the annex with a four-story building connected to the existing lodge by a passageway; however, this plan was not carried out, although the building was subsequently extended at the rear. (The

rear addition is not part of this designation.) The lodge, which cost \$750,000, opened on October 26, 1924.

Fraternal architecture as a building type did not achieve recognition in the architectural press until *Architectural Forum* published an issue devoted to this topic in 1926. The introductory piece, “The Architecture of Fraternal Buildings,” was by well-known New York City architect Harvey Wiley Corbett, who referred to the opportunities that these often large and prominent buildings gave architects. West coast architect Herbert Greene wrote that fraternal buildings were usually designed in either the Classical or Gothic styles. R.R. Houston, of George Post & Sons, discussed the clubs’ great affinity for antiquity.

The architecture of Lodge 878 followed the design trend for early-twentieth-century fraternal buildings placed in suburban settings, which were usually treated as freestanding, monumental structures with classical detailing and occupied impressive sites. Interior design was often based on exotic styles, such as Egyptian, Moorish, or Oriental. A club building was expected to be dignified and inviting, in keeping with its environment, functionally appropriate to the needs of the organization, and expressive of the club’s desired public image. The Queens lodge is a classically-detailed, monumental structure occupying a prominent site along the area’s major thoroughfare, from which it is approached via a grand staircase and a broad, balustraded terrace watched over by a giant bronze elk. Its interior features an array of public and private spaces for its rituals and activities.¹⁴

Upon its completion, Lodge 878 was considered one of the largest and best-equipped fraternal homes in the country. Besides the pool and gymnasium, the building (the interior of which is not subject to designation) had six bowling alleys, indoor hardball courts, a grille room, a barber shop, a game room, lockers, lounges, a dining room, a kitchen, office space, a main meeting room with space for 2,000 people, and twenty-eight bedrooms. The front of the building is graced by a broad terrace on which stands a bronze statue of an Elk, based on the prototype statue developed for the Elks organization by noted sculptor Eli Harvey.¹⁵ The Elmhurst Lodge was featured prominently in the aforementioned issue of *Architectural Forum*. The lodge is one of the most prominent buildings in Elmhurst and on Queens Boulevard, and one of only a few buildings of its type in this part of Queens.

The Queensborough Lodge’s membership peaked in the 1960s at 6,600,¹⁶ and included local politicians, businessmen, and professionals. The club’s facilities

were busy at most times. The annual “Elks Bazaar,” considered the borough’s social event of the year, included raffling off two dozen Cadillacs. At the time, the lodge employed a staff of twenty-six people. In addition, it raised money for charity and for hospitalized war veterans, and performed funerary rites for deceased members. The building was sold to the New Life Fellowship Church in 2001, although the lodge’s remaining 550 members will continue to use part of the building for meetings.

Description

The Elks Club building, three stories with a raised basement and a fenestrated attic level, consists of a granite base, limestone first-story facade, and brick upper facade with carved limestone ornament. The building’s main facade, facing north towards Queens Boulevard, is five bays wide. It has a full-width granite terrace reached from the boulevard via a flight of granite steps with non-historic wrought-iron railings. A granite pedestal at the center of the staircase contains a sculpted bronze elk. The base of the terrace has regularly-spaced windows with historic wrought-iron grilles. The terrace has a concrete deck, which is enclosed by limestone balustrades. The terrace and stairs are surrounded by small lawns.

The main entryway, located in the center bay of the rusticated first-story facade, is reached by way of the front steps and the terrace. The entryway consists of a round-arched opening with an ornately-carved, oversized keystone, flanked by unusual banded and fluted Doric half-columns. It is surmounted by a molded hood, featuring brackets, metopes, guttae, and a carved frieze with incised lettering. The entryway contains two historic, paneled wood-and-glass doors decorated with rosettes, and surmounted by a denticulated wood lintel and curved transom. Non-historic lighting has been installed in the soffit.

Four segmentally-arched, secondary entryways lead from the terrace to the first-floor interior. The entryways feature paired, historic paneled wood-and-glass doors (the easternmost and westernmost pairs have been modified), molded architraves, divided-light transoms, and carved keystones with lions’ heads. The first-story is topped by a decorative crown featuring carved rosettes and floral ornamentation. Non-historic metal wire channels and lighting have been installed at the upper part of the first-story facade.

The second-story fenestration features balusters, eared architraves, and segmental pediments. The easternmost bay retains the historic wood casements

and divided transom, while the remaining bays have paired, non-historic, one-over-one metal sash with historic, divided wood-and-glass transoms. The third-story fenestration has bracketed sills, eared architraves, scrolled keystones, and non-historic, one-over-one metal sash. Carved limestone panels, decorated with swags, are located above the third-story windows. The center panel features a bronze and glass clock with flanking urns and foliation. The attic story features windows alternating with elaborately-carved panels. The windows contain non-historic, one-over-one metal sash, although the easternmost bay retains the historic two-over-one wood sash. The facade is topped by a prominent cornice featuring brackets, dentils, and egg-and-dart moldings.

The west facade, facing Simonson Street, is seven bays and features similar ornament to the main facade. The west facade has a granite basement containing windows with historic wrought-iron grilles. The first-story windows have bracketed sills. The three southernmost window openings of the first story contain grouped fenestration with non-historic, one-over-one metal sash; other bays have paired, non-historic, one-over-one metal sash, while the northernmost bay is a blind window. The second-story fenestration of the west facade has historic wood casements in some of the windows and paired, non-historic, one-over-one metal sash in the others. All these windows retain their historic wood-framed transoms. The third-story fenestration of the west facade has paired, non-historic, one-over-one metal sash in some bays and historic wood-and-stained-glass casements in the others. The attic-story fenestration has historic, two-over-one wood sash, but the northernmost bay has non-historic, one-over-one metal sash.

The east facade is seven bays and is similar in design and ornamentation to the west facade. A one-story passageway connects this facade to the east annex. (Neither the passageway nor the annex are subject to designation.) There is a non-historic, multi-story, wrought-iron stairway at the southernmost bay. The basement windows have historic wrought-iron grilles. The three southernmost window openings of the first story contain non-historic, one-over-one metal sash; the remaining bays have paired, non-historic, one-over-one wood sash, while the northernmost bay is a blind window. The second-story fenestration of the east facade has paired, non-historic, one-over-one metal sash and historic wood-and-stained-glass transoms. The third-story fenestration of the east facade has paired, non-historic, one-over-one metal sash. The attic-story fenestration has historic, two-over-one wood sash, but

the northernmost bay has non-historic, one-over-one metal sash.

The building's south facade has been largely obscured by the rear addition (not subject to designation), except for the attic story and the cornice, which are similar in design and ornamentation to the main facade. The roof contains an historic flagpole centered at the north facade, a brick chimney stack, and

a brick elevator tower featuring a terra-cotta molding and brick parapet.

Report prepared by
Donald G. Presa
Research Department

NOTES

1. This section is based on the following sources: *Atlas of the Borough of Queens of the City of New York* (Brooklyn: E. Belcher Hyde, 1915-20), v. 2A, pl. 17 & 18; *Atlas of the Borough of Queens, City of New York* (New York: E. Belcher Hyde, 1929), v. 2A, pl. 5; "How Elmhurst Got Its Name Told by Frederick Reiner," *The Queens Ledger*, March 27, 1942; Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), *102-45 47th Avenue House* (LP-1292), (New York, 1987); James Riker, Jr. *The Annals of Newtown in Queens County, New York* (New York: D. Fanshaw, 1852), 258; Vincent Seyfried, "Elmhurst," *Encyclopedia of New York City*, ed. Kenneth W. Jackson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 373; and Vincent A. Seyfried, *Elmhurst: From Town Seat to Mega Suburb*, published by Vincent A. Seyfried, 1995, pp. 93-125, 137-147.
2. The remaining towns formed Nassau County.
3. The new thoroughfare followed the route of two earlier roads, Thomson Avenue, which led from the Queensborough Bridge in Long Island City to Broadway in Elmhurst, and Hoffman Boulevard, which continued from Broadway to Hillside Avenue in Jamaica.
4. A few sections, however, were not completed until 1931 because of delays in the acquisition of some of the land along the right-of-way.
5. By 1990, eighty percent of Elmhurst's population was made up of immigrants mainly from Asia and Latin America and their children.
6. This section is based on the following sources: William Bunch, "The Moose, Elk and Mason May Not Be Long For This World," *Newsday*, Aug. 17, 1985, p. 2; Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 151; Maryann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender, and Fraternalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 123-124; Charlie LeDuff, "Elks (the Clubs) Becoming Extinct," *New York Times*, Aug. 13, 2000, p. 29; and James R. Nicholson, Lee A. Donaldson, Raymond C. Dobson, and George B. Klein, *History of the Order of Elks, 1868-1988* (Chicago: Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, 1992), 9-19, 221, 454, 473, 476.
7. Elm Street was later renamed Lafayette Street and partially re-aligned. In 1939, the Council of the City of New York renamed the two-block stretch of Elm Street that remained between Chambers and Duane Streets Elk Street in tribute to the club. Nicholson et al, 12-13.
8. *Ibid.*, 14. The other name under consideration was the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffalos.
9. *Ibid.*, 17. In addition, the club was restricted to Caucasians until 1973.
10. Vivian, freewheeling and undisciplined, was soon relieved of his leadership by the members. He later resigned from the Elks following a disagreement with the club's officers over the organization's mission. He died of pneumonia in 1880 while stranded in Leadville, Colorado, where he was performing as a strolling player.
11. Clawson, 124. In the twentieth century, after each of the World Wars, similar needs were met by the creation of organizations explicitly for veterans, such as the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign War.

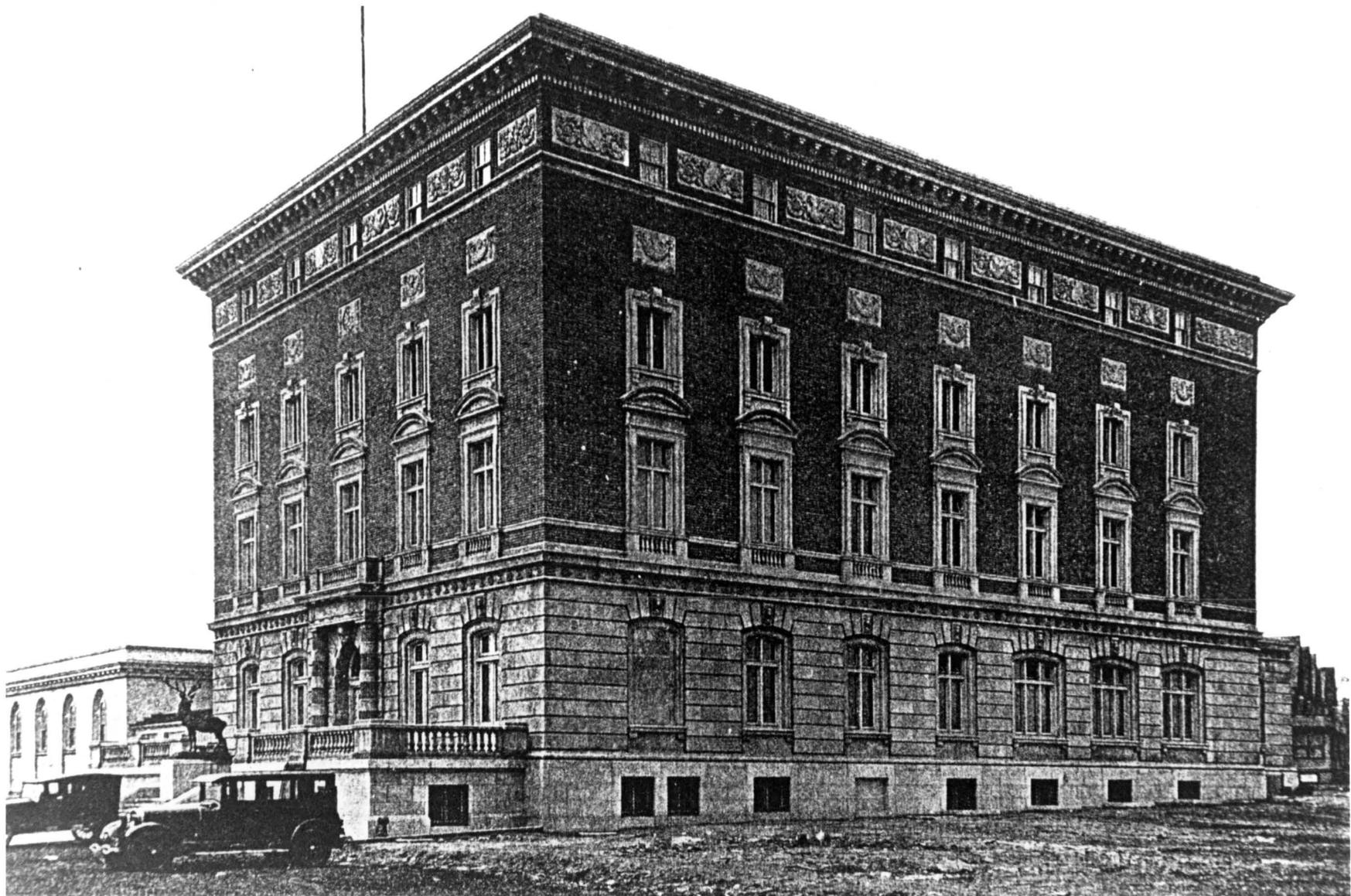
12. This section is based on the following sources: American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory*, ed. George S. Koyl (New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1962), 31; Columbia University, *Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals*, V. 1 (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1963), 588; Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), "Survey Report: Long Island City, Queens," prepared by Dennis Pidgeon and Kate Frankel, June 1991, p. 31; Sandra L. Talman and Roger W. Moss, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects 1700-1930* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1985), 31-43; Edward Teitelman and Richard Longstreth, *Architecture in Philadelphia: A Guide* (Boston: The MIT Press, 1974), 154-155, 171; James Ward, *Architects in Practice in New York City 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 5; and *Who's Who in America* (Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, 1972), 144.
13. This section is based on the following sources: *Atlas of the Borough of Queens of the City of New York* (Brooklyn: E. Belcher Hyde, 1915-20), v. 2A, pl. 17 & 18; Dwight James Baum, "The Social or Athletic; Its Exterior Design," *The Architectural Forum* (September 1926), 145; Harvey Wiley Corbett, "The Architecture of Fraternal Buildings," *The Architectural Forum* (September 1926), 129-134; Herbert Greene, "The Planning of Fraternal Buildings," *The Architectural Forum* (September 1926), 141-144; R.R. Houston, "The Interior Architecture of Fraternal Buildings," *The Architectural Forum* (September 1926), 137-140; LPC, *Baird (now Astor) Court, New York Zoological Park (Bronx Zoo)*, (LP-1888), report prepared by Matthew A. Postal and Joseph C. Brooks (New York, 2000); LPC, *City Center 55th Street Theater/formerly Mecca Temple* (LP-1234), report by Charles C. Savage (New York, 1983); E.E. Lippincott, "Benevolent, Protective, Sold: An Era Ends on the Boulevard," *New York Times* (July 1, 2001), Sec. XIV, 7; New York City Department of Buildings, Borough of Queens, New Buildings and Alterations Docket Books; *The Newtown Register*, July 21, 1923, p.9; and Vincent A. Seyfried, *Elmhurst: From Town Seat to Mega Suburb*, published by Vincent A. Seyfried, 1995, p.139.
14. The lodge room features unusual Mayan-inspired ornamentation.
15. Eli Harvey (1860-1957) was born in Ohio and studied sculpture at the Cincinnati Art Academy and in Paris, where he exhibited both painting and animal sculpture at the annual salons from 1894 to 1901 and at the Paris Centennial Exposition of 1900. He also created the sculpture for the Lion House at the New York Zoological Park (Bronx Zoo), a designated New York City Landmark. His other work is exhibited at the American Numismatics Society, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the National Collection of Fine Arts.
16. Total membership in the Order of Elks also peaked in the 1960s at over 1.5 million.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878 has a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878 was built in 1923-24 to the designs of the architectural firm, the Ballinger Company; that the lodge, one of most prominent buildings in Elmhurst and along Queens Boulevard, remains remarkably intact; that the neo-Classical style building is modeled after the Italian Renaissance palazzo type; that it is clad in brick, limestone, and granite; that a giant bronze statue of an elk, based on the prototype statue designed for the club by the noted sculptor, Eli Harvey, is located on the front terrace; that the structure, which includes a series of recreational and social spaces, was considered at the time of its completion one of the largest and best-equipped fraternal homes in the country; that the lodge was prominently featured in the *Architectural Forum's* issue in 1926 on the architecture of fraternal buildings; and that the freestanding building is distinguished by a full-width front terrace, an ornate entryway, carved keystones with lions' heads, festooned panels, and a prominent cornice.

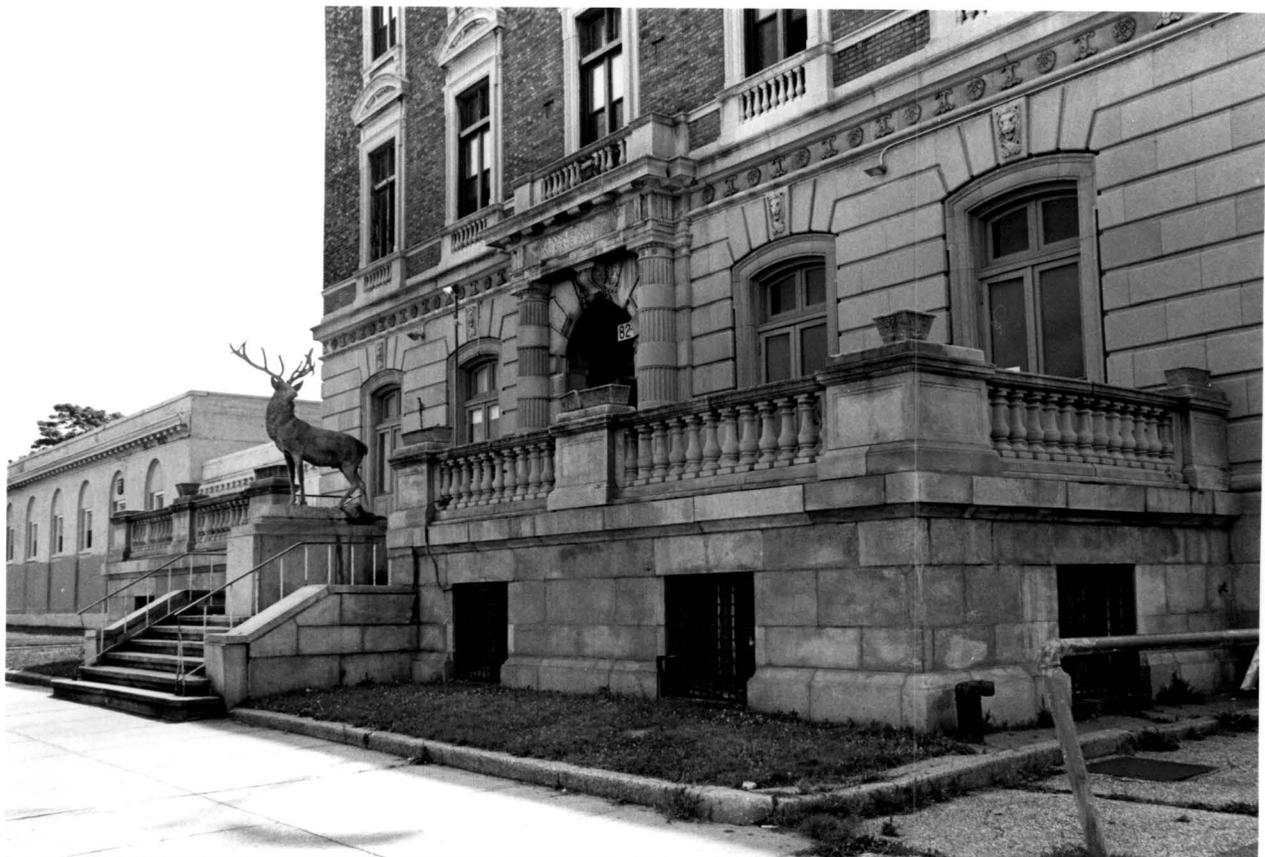
Accordingly, pursuant to provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard and designates Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 2475, Lot 12 in part consisting of the land underneath the 1924 lodge building and excluding the gym and dormitory buildings, as its Landmark Site.



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens.
Source: *The Architectural Forum* (September 1926), pl. 43.



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens
Photo: Carl Forster, 2001



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens
Front terrace.
Photo: Carl Forster, 2001



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens
Entryway and bronze elk statue.

Photo: Carl Forster, 2001



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens
Detail of first-story facade on Queens Boulevard.

Photo: Carl Forster, 2001



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens
Detail of terra cotta at upper facades.

Photo: Carl Forster, 2001



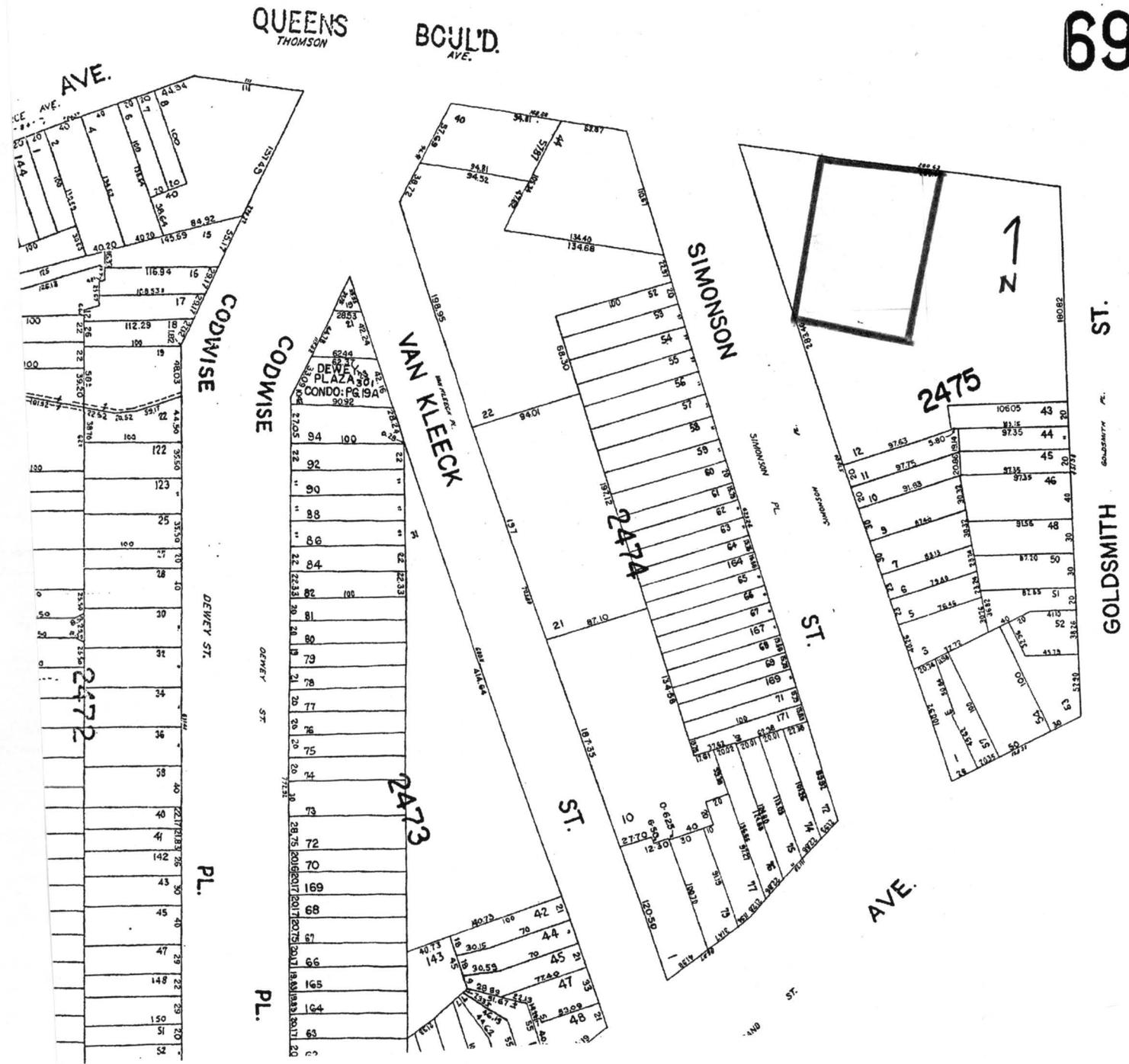
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens
West facade.

Photo: Carl Forster, 2001



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens
East facade and rear addition. (Note: Rear addition not part of the designation)

Photo: Carl Forster, 2001



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens.
 Landmark Site: Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 2475, Lot 12 in part, consisting of the land underneath the 1923-24 lodge building.
 Graphic Source: New York City Department of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map.



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Lodge Number 878, 82-10 Queens Boulevard, Elmhurst, Queens. Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 2475, Lot 12 in part, consisting of the land underneath the 1923-24 lodge building. Graphic Source: *The Sanborn Building and Property Atlas of Queens, New York, 1922* (Weehawken, NJ: First American, 2001), vol. 9, pl. 69.