

## ELKS' LODGE

A building constructed for a specific purpose, the Towson Elks' Lodge is one of several structures remaining which helps to give Pennsylvania Avenue its Victorian flavor. The large frame structure was built in 1905 as a lodge and is made distinctive by its gambrel roof and the stained glass Palladian window in the south end.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Lodge 469 of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

4 West Pennsylvania Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Ninth District

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Lodge

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Benevolent Protective Order of Elks #469

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New Courts Building, Recording Division-Land Records

Liber #: 283

Folio #: 104

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

NONE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

BA-1447

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	DATE <u>Jan., 1978</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED		
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

This Building is a two story frame structure. The basic layout is rectangular with an outside end chimney. The roof is a gambrel roof.

The south facade, facing Pennsylvania Ave., is 4 bays wide on the first story and 3 bays wide on the second story. The first story is covered by "novelty siding", or beveled clapboards, while the second story is covered by wooden shingles.

A 1-story porch extends across the entire facade, and is 3 very wide bays wide. The porch rests on a cinder block foundation (alteration) and is supported by large Doric columns (column on the east corner has been replaced by a square column). The west end of the porch has been walled in by brick at the building of a basement addition in 1953. The floor of the porch is cement and the ceiling is covered by tongue and groove boards.

Fenestration is regular with 1/1 sash windows. All of the windows have plain trim. The first story windows have shutters which are paneled above and louvered below. The two eastern windows are set directly next to one another with two shutters on each side of this "double window". The gambrel is vented by a stained glass palladian window.

The doorway is set slightly off center to the west. It is a round arched doorway with fanlight. This fanlight is of stained glass and incorporates the symbols, "B. P. O. E." and "469" which represents "The Benevolent Protective Order of Elks Lodge 469". There are wooden pilasters on both sides of the doorway. The door itself has a single pane of glass in the upper half and a single inset panel below.

The east facade is 5 narrow bays wide on the first story, while the second story is 2 very wide bays wide. The first story is made up of 3 bays of the main block and 2 bays of a northern wing. Because of the gambrel roof, the second story windows are in dormers. The entire building rests on a stone foundation, highly pointed.

A gabled projection extends to the east, slightly to the south of the center of the house. There is a pair of double doors on the east end of this projection, and a 4-pane casement window on both the north and south sides. This projection houses stairs to the basement. Its roof is covered with the same material as the roof of the main block: fish-scale shingles.

The porch from the south facade continues around for one bay on the east facade. Between the porch and the projection there is an exterior cellarway with steps leading down to a north facing door in the porch foundation.

Fenestration is irregular. Running south to north, by stories, there is: Basement - vent; 2-pane casement; 6-pane casement; (double doors); vent.

First Story - five 1/1 sashes. Second Story - four 1/1 sashes (two each in two dormers).

The roof has deeply overhanging eaves. The soffit is finished with tongue and groove boards.

Like the south facade, the north facade is 3 bays wide on the first story and 2 bays wide on the second story. The 1-story wing is 3 bays wide.

Fenestration is irregular. The wing has two 6/6 sashes placed directly together at the western end. The second story has two 1/1 sashes. There are also two doors in the wing.

The west facade is basically the same as the east facade. The roof of the brick basement addition comes up to the bottom of the first story windows.

**CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY**

## 7 DESCRIPTION (Continued) -- Interior

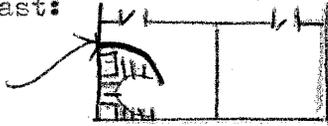
The basement is a full basement and has been refinished. The original uncoursed stone foundations are visible only at the north end. All other walls are paneled. For some time, the main area has been used as a bar/restaurant. The wall behind the bar is in the Art Deco style -- semi-circular mirrors, large square mirrors, fluted vertical neon lights.

On entering the front door, one enters an entrance hall. The dominating feature in this hall is the wooden mahogany-colored staircase. This wide staircase has square newel posts with a series of inset panels. The newel posts are topped by spheres. There are turned balusters, and ornamental brackets decorate the stair runs.

Many of the doors throughout the house have wide architrave trim. The majority of the doors are heavy and have four panels.

The northern wing was once used as a kitchen. There are several large, wooden cabinets that are probably original. A dumbwaiter runs from this kitchen to the basement.

In the small hall on the second story, the northern wall of the stairwell curves to the east:



The major room of the second story is the Elks Ceremonial Meeting Room. The design and furniture of this room is based on its intended use. The furnishings are mahogany and leather, and consist of carved chairs, benches, and podiums. The room is decorated by carved elk heads and antlers. Plaques list deceased members and leaders, and include the names of many early Towson residents. Some interesting architectural details are the set back windows (in the dormers), the trapezoidal shape of the room (due to the gambrel roof), and 3/4 corner mouldings.

Other items of original fabric found throughout the house are: oval doorknobs with scrollwork, brass "peep holes" in some of the doors, pushbutton electrical switches.

1877 and 1898 maps of Towson show an L-shaped building on the property, sitting directly next to the side alley. A later 1915 shows a rectangular building on the center of the lot, as appears today. The Elks bought the lot in 1905, so it seems that the house must have been built between 1905 and 1915. This hypothesis is corroborated by a statement in the pamphlet "Towson Bicentennial: Then ... Now" which reads: "The lodge grew steadily from its inception, and after the first meetings in the Grange Hall on Alleghany Ave., it was necessary to provide a larger facility. It was in 1905 that the site at West Pennsylvania Ave. was purchased and the Elks lodge then constructed."

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES	BUILDER/ARCHITECT
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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Architecturally, the Towson Elks Lodge Building is significant for both its general and individual characteristics. In terms of general style, the building shows the influence of both the classicism of the Colonial Revival and of the more organic Victorian style. The fanlight, palladian window, and columned porch are classical elements, but the stained glass, fish scale shingles, and gambrel roof are more indicative of the Victorian ideal. Distinctive features of note are: the porch continued from one facade to the next ; the double windows of the north facade and dormers; the basic floorplan which accomodates two large meeting halls; the curved wall on the second floor; the dumb waiter.

The interior still retains much original fabric: the carved wooden staircase; early oval doorknobs, large four-paneled doors; pushbutton electrical fixtures; brass "peep-holes" in doors.

The Elks Lodge is now one of the very few turn of the century structures left on this section of Pennsylvania Avenue. Examining the few buildings remaining, however, it seems evident that the street was once a fashionable area to locate in. The Elks Lodge is thus one of the few remaining documents of that era of prosperity in the street's history.

The lodge's presence also documents the sense of "neighborhood" which was lost as the street changed to a commercial area. A list of its members suggests that the lodge was a meeting place for many residents of the the early Towson residential area.

The most significant aspect of the lodge is found in its function. The building was specifically built by the Elks as their lodge, and was tailored to the needs of their organization. The floor plan, with practically one huge room per floor, was designed to accomodate meeting space. The basement was converted to a bar/restaurant to serve the members' social needs. Even the stained glass fanlight was made especially for Lodge 469 to be used in the building. But the section of the building that is most indicative of its specialized use is the Ceremonial Meeting Room. The furnishings and the layout of the room are dictated by its function. With its heavy, carved furniture and official trappings of the organization, this is a decidedly unique room, of virtually a mystical quality.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1877 Map of Towson by G. M. Hopkins  
 1898 and 1915 Maps of Towson by George Bromley  
 Conversation with caretaker Phil Crone  
 Pamphlet "Towson Bicentennial: Then ... Now" , 1968  
 Various land records (see complete title search on attached sheet)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Druscilla J. Null

WAYNE L. WELD, II  
 HISTORIC TOWSON, INC.

ORGANIZATION

Historic Towson/Goucher College

DATE

1/13/78

STREET & NUMBER

Dulaney Valley Road

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 267-1438

## TITLE SEARCH

## OWNERS:

LIBER/FOLIO

Present Owner. Towson Lodge Number 469, B. P. O. E.  
of Baltimore County

(LR 283/104)

Bought property from Osborne Yellott acting as executor of  
Mary E. Owings who died November 24, 1900. Deed dated  
January 27, 1905.

## II. Mary E. Owings

(WR 8/132)

Inherited property from James W. Owings by will dated  
April 19, 1888.

## III. James W. Owings

(LR 40/335)

Bought the property from Washington Townsend by deed  
dated April 7, 1864.

## IV. Washington Townsend

(LR 34/277)

Bought property from Enos Smedley by deed dated March  
24, 1862.

## V. James W. Owings

(LR 19/108)

Leased property from Enos Smedley by deed dated May  
9, 1857.

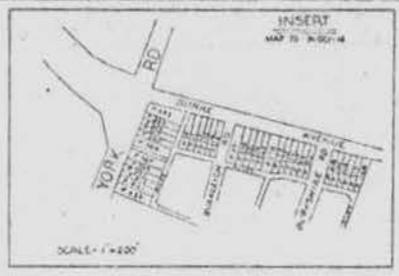
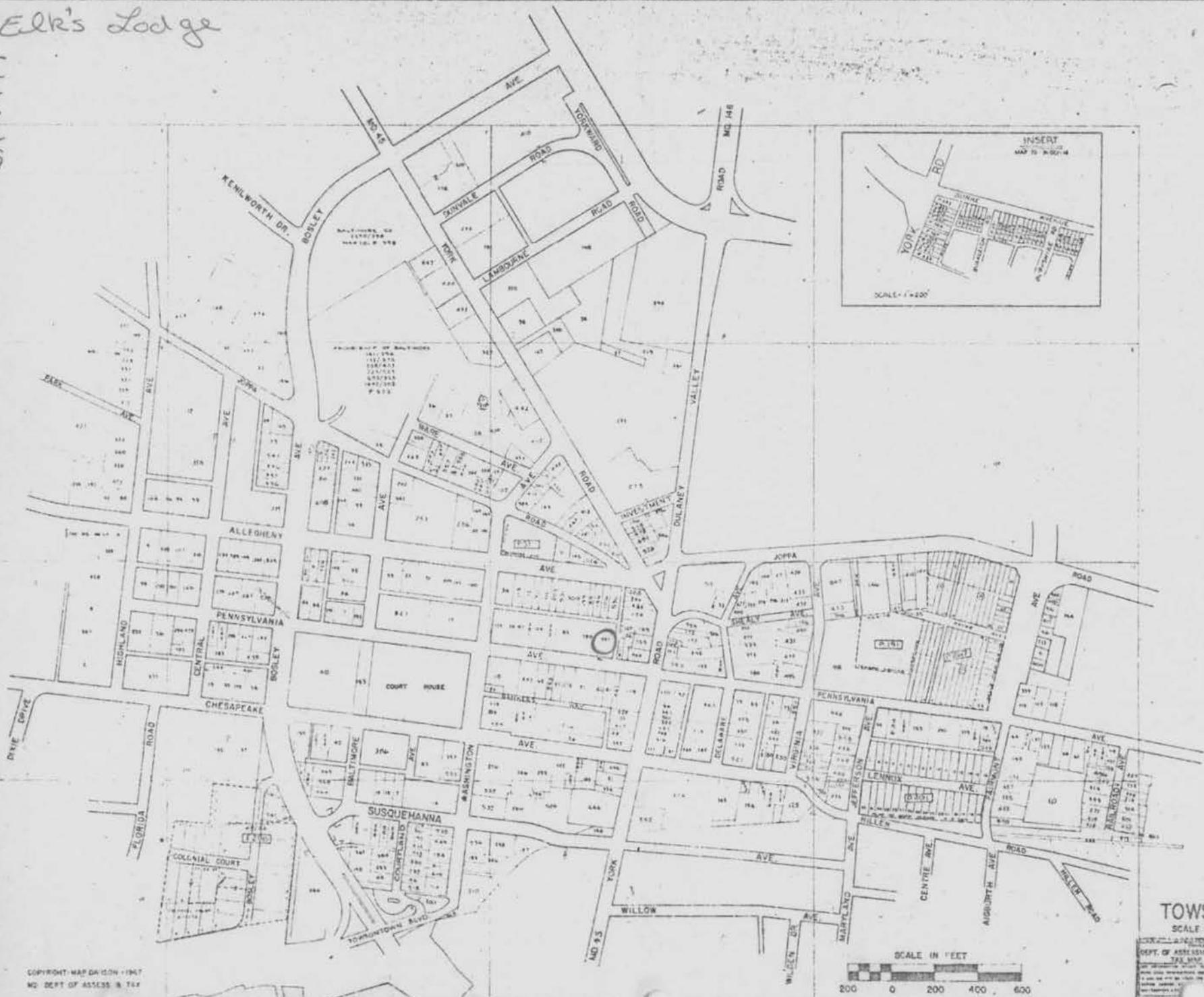
## VI. Enos Smedley

(LR 9/222)

Bought property from Grafton M. Bosley by deed dated  
July 24, 1854.

BA-1447

Elk's Lodge



COPYRIGHT MAP DIVISION - 1967  
 MD DEPT OF ASSESS & TAX



**TOWSON**  
 SCALE 1"=200'  
 DEPT. OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION  
 TAX MAP DIVISION

MAP NO.  
**70A**



BA-1447

ELIK'S LODGE  
S.E. CORNER

W. NIELD  
WINTER 77-78



NO  
PARKING  
CALL TOWERS  
TO REMOVAL

NO  
PARKING  
CALL TOWERS  
TO REMOVAL

TOWERS

BA-1447

ECK'S LODGE  
N.E. CORNER

W. NIELD

WINTER 77-78



BA-1447

ELK'S LODGE  
N.W. CORNER

W. NIELD

WINTER 77-78