A History of Council 4022
from the 50th anniversary brochure of the
Knights of Columbus, Maria-Joseph Council 4022.

MARIA-JOSEPH HOME CORPORATION

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| The early beginnings of our council found us meeting in various locations including a church undercroft, the basement of a bank and even Bella Villa Hall. In order to find a permanent home for our council, a committee was formed to conduct the search for a suitable facility. Members of this committee included Pete Donohue, Roland Eichner, Dan Nagle, Shearl Roberts and Mike Longo. They located a vacant night club, called the Racquet Club, located in the Hills and Dales Shopping Center. The property was owned by the Shank Brothers of Fort Wayne, Indiana. On March 14, 1960, we entered into an agreement to purchase the property, in the name of the MariaJoseph Home Corporation, and renamed it the Christopher Club. | Oh, we had great plans for the property which consisted of the night club, an in-ground swimming pool and a large parking lot. First, we hired full-time managers for the both the club and the swimming pool. In order to finance the investment we sold bonds and swimming pool memberships. We were off to a great start. However, we soon found out why the previous owners went bankrupt. The club was not large enough to accommodate venues of the sizes that most potential renters desired. Unable to obtain sufficient rentals, we soon found that we could not meet our cash flow and we struggled to make ends meet. |
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| During the reign of GK Doug Cox in 1973, a group of concerned knights met to plan a course of action to make sure we would not lose our home. First, we terminated all paid employees and staffed the operations of the facility with council volunteers. This included bartenders, maintenance, repairs, and clean-up. The Ladies Auxiliary also stepped in to help staff some of our requirements. In 1975 we expanded the club fifteen feet to the east thereby increasing the capacity by almost a half. This enabled us to secure some larger bookings which we were previously unable to do. In 1979 the lower level, the council chambers, underwent a major remodeling In addition to a social/meeting area, the Gene Koop recreational room and Joe Geis Bar were made operational. | In 1980, the 25th anniversary year, there were many long range plans for the Christopher Club many, of which, have come to fruition. In 1983 we were able to pay off the mortgage and receive a clear title to the property. We were also able to retire most of the bonds. A hip roof was added to the club and the exterior facade was finished in stucco and stone. With the help of the city of Kettering the "front yard" was beautifully landscaped . We expanded the kitchen, the swimming pool was updated, the Holt Tower was completed and many other improvements were made. So maybe we didn't expand the club to the south, add a mini-rise apartment building or a shop complex. But what we do have reflects the needs and resources of the membership and is a source of pride to us all. |
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| Who would have guessed 25 years ago that we would find ourselves today in the midst of a major urban renewal effort by the city of Kettering. Gone is the blight and decay of the Hills and Dales Shopping Center with the emergence of the upscale Governor's Square. Though we are now the oldest facility in the "new neighborhood" we still take pride in our surroundings. Fortunately, there are members who are willing to provide the dedication necessary to generate rentals and ensure the operation of the Christopher Club. The hope is that there will continue to be knights who will provide the leadership to guide the Home Corporation through the next 50 years. | Bill Gregor Past President, Maria-Joseph Home Corporation |